GameMaster Notes
Introductory Guide

Hopefully, you're reading this **<u>before</u>** you dive into the Border Patrol campaign rules.

Why? Because at about 200 pages, the written rules can intimidate...**<u>don't be intimidated by them!!</u>**

A reasonable question would be to ask if the campaign is fairly simple (and it is), then why does it have that many pages of rules? It's a fair question to ask, and it deserves an answer.

As with any game system, the Border Patrol rules have to deal with a lot of circumstances that, while not unlikely, aren't always common. As an example, <u>over a third</u> of **Section 13: Tactical Combat Interface** deals with what happens to a ship that escapes a battle by *sub-light evasion*. Now, no one <u>wants</u> to get out of a battle that way – if that's how your ship escaped, then it was lucky to have escaped at all (and is <u>not</u> in one piece).

It's entirely possible that the campaign could run from start to finish and no one ever uses sub-light evasion to get out of a battle. In that case, all those pages in Section 13 will never be used. But the campaign had to account for the possibility that someone might need to use a last-ditch, roll-the-dice-and-pray survival option.

Another example: the rules devote more than ten pages to how to build and maintain bases. But your Team may never decide to do that, in which case large chunks of **Section 11: Bases** will never see the light of day. The rules still had to cover the topic, however, because building bases is a perfectly reasonable thing to do, if circumstances permit and the need arises.

If the campaign rules didn't have to account for reasonable but unlikely situations, or just plain ol' corner cases, then one can literally trim the rules down to **<u>half the size</u>**. A lot of effort has been put into making them complete...but not complex.

All that said, here's a roadmap to the campaign rules, and some advice on what portions are most important to understand:

Section 0: Introduction

This Section is mainly used during the set-up and first Turn of the game. Only about 2 pages are routinely referenced during the campaign.

Section 1: Sequence of Play

The Sequence of Play is a reference tool, primarily. It spells out the order in which things happen. As for actual rules, only about 1 page, for determining Initiative, is routinely used.

Section 2: Supply System

With this Section, we start to get into the "meat" of the campaign. The first 4 sub-Sections are going to be used constantly, but that's less than 3 full pages. The rest of the Section deals with circumstances that may never happen, but are still quite possible.

Section 3: Economy

This is a Section that will be used a lot during the early part of the campaign, and then parts will tend to not be routinely needed. 8 of its pages remain important throughout the campaign.

Section 4: Production

While an important Section, it is another example of large portions of rules that may never actually be needed. Out of the first half of this Section, only about 6 pages will be consistently used. The rest of the Section will only be needed occasionally, if at all.

Section 5: Bombardment

It is entirely possible that this Section will never be used. It's worth reading, just to see what is possible to do to an enemy, but there's no requirement that anyone use this Section.

Section 6: Terrain

It's a single page. Can't get much shorter than that.

Section 7: Building the B-10

Another Section that may end up never being used, this describes an option for one Team...an option that they may very well decide not to pursue. Everyone should read this Section, but no one will routinely use these rules.

Section 8: Operational Movement

A very "meaty" Section, 11 pages of which are used on an ongoing basis. It is important that all players understand and know this Section.

Section 9: Zones of Control

This Section is important, although only about 2 pages (half) will be routinely used.

Section 10: Team Influence

Similar to the previous Section, it is important, but brief. These 3 pages are well worth knowing.

Section 11: Bases

Like Section 7, this Section may never actually get used. It covers some very reasonable activities and options, but Teams may choose not to pursue them.

Section 12: Fighters and PFs

Most of the rules for Fighters and Fast Patrol ships (PFs) are in the SFB materials, and Border Patrol doesn't rewrite them. This Section is mostly about unusual circumstances; worth reading, but unlikely to be used regularly. The Crew Chief is an option, not a requirement.

Section 13: Tactical Combat Interface

In one sense, the campaign rules are a vehicle to starship combat, and in that way, this Section is the engine and transmission. About 16 pages (or two-thirds) are likely to be routinely referenced – the last third of this Section is more corner cases and unusual circumstances.

Section 14: Victory and Rank

This is an important topic; with any luck, you'll need to use 6 of its pages on a regular basis.

Section 15: Auxiliary Units

A Section that presents options and variations for Teams to consider, but nothing in it is required and it may, in fact, never get used.

Section 16: Incidental Units

This Section may be used rarely, not at all, or quite a lot. It all depends on how play goes and what choices the Teams make. At the very least, everyone should read a and understand this Section, but it is unlikely more than 7 pages will be used with any regularity.

Section 17: Ship's Officers

A deceptively large Section, it may or may not be routinely used. A given player may go the entire campaign and not reference more than 4 pages on even a semi-regular basis.

Section 18: Crew Quality

Another Section that's larger than its likely utility to all players. About 5 pages are going to be routinely useful to most players.

Section 19: The Orion Pirates

If you aren't playing the Orion Pirates, then you need to read this Section, because you need to know what the Orions can do for your Team...or **to** your Team. The Orion Pirate player will need to know all 22 pages.

Section 20: Campaign Notes

Another one of those deceptively large Sections, most of it is optional material. Only about 3 pages (less than a quarter) will be needed by most players in most circumstances, although everyone should at least read through this Section once.

That's it...**less than 99 pages** of rules you're likely to really need. The rest cover unusual cases, oddball circumstances, situations you may never encounter or options your Team may decide to forgo.

Of the remaining campaign materials (beyond the rules), most are references, only needed occasionally, and not used in routine play.

So don't let the number of pages coming out of the printer scare you. They're the mark of a game system that was designed to be complete, not complex.

<u>End of GameMaster Notes: Introductory Guide</u>