

Appendix S&P – Surveillance & Probing Example

Headknockers' Reconnaissance Fleet 1 consisting of three Scout Ships arrived in an unexplored system that is the known location of the Crowd-Funded Civilization's Capital Colony (see Capital Colony and Capitol Declaration, 2 Order, pp. 532-533). They are 'looking' for Longcount Colony Transports that 'escaped.' One Scout Ship has an expendable PROD enhancement, a technology developed in-game by Headknockers.¹

Each Scout is required to make a Hazard Roll separately upon entering an unexplored system. The die rolls are 1, 5 and 3, two Scouts are destroyed. However, in anticipation of this danger, Headknockers committed one Enlightenment to the Expansion Power Activation for the purpose of Scouting that initiated the Scouts' movement to the Capital System, so one failed die roll is rerolled, and the result is a 6. Thus, only one Scout is destroyed exploring the system, and two survive. As at least one survived, the system is automatically explored (see Then Never Comes, 3 Expansion, p. 907).

Observation (automatic)

Observation by the Scouts shows two colonies in the system, one is the obvious Capital Colony owned by Crowd-Funded Civilization (probably the clue was the giant flag with the green K) and a colony on another planet owned by Longcount. Ownership shown is not always the same as the Native Population on the planet. Further, the Scouts observe, as expected, ten orbital installations around the Capital Colony, two Orbital installations around the Longcount colony (numbers, but not types), and surprisingly, the only other ship in the system is a Cargo Ship belonging to Crowd-Funded Civilization. See ABBA Arrival, 2 Information, p. 1340.

- ✓ All of this information will be shown on Headknocker's turn results, and of course, Longcount and Crowd-Funded Civilization will see the Headknocker Scouts (and possibly drifting debris) when they receive their next turn results. *Id.*, p. 1341.

Surveillance

No warships protecting the system! Since there is no one to chase us off, Headknockers decides to do a peaceful Surveillance with two Scouts in the system on the next turn, using an activation of the Special Operations Power for the purpose of Reconnaissance with one Act (see Pistols & Posies, Patience, 2 Information, p. 1342). No check is made for Power Activation failure because a Scene was not required or used, see Acting Lessons and Making a Scene, 1 Special Operations, p. 1274.

Both Scouts are eligible to participate in the Surveillance, see Private Eyes, 2 Information, p. 1342, as they are not currently "fighting, running, cowering, cargo, landing or leaving." *Id.* No immediate report will be obtained on the turn of the Surveillance activation, but on the next Regular Turn after results for Headknockers, the report will be available as a snapshot of what happened between Regular Turns (see Taking It All Down, 2 Information, p. 1343). Headknockers also decides that this is very important and activates a Writ related to the Reconnaissance in the same turn, giving all units double chances at Surveillance that turn.

¹ PROD – Probing Residuals of the Dead.

- ✓ The Writ represents a non-technological specialization of Headknockers in Reconnaissance action that is paid for by the actualization and removal of a Fuzzy Group. Headknockers may be doing Surveillance elsewhere in the same Regular Turn; it may also be necessary to free up Monads on the Public Space. All of these could be a factor.
- ✓ Further, activation of the Writ satisfies the Interpretation requirement for the Special Operations Power activation on the same Regular Turn, meaning that no News Event must be published (but one must be provided, just in case), see Writ of Extent, 3 Writs, p. 444. This might be especially useful in this case of snooping on someone...

On the third turn in the system, the two Scouts report that the Cargo Ship departed and another was launched by Crowd-Funded Civilization – Surveillance first reports changes in what is seen by regular Observation and this would have been noted by *regular Observation*. Obviously, Crowd-Funded Civilization constructed a new Cargo Ship at their Capital Colony, which is nothing especially surprising. There are still no other ships in the system.

Normally, each ship involved in Surveillance has a 10% chance to obtain information not available by normal Observation; the more ships involved, the better. Because of the Writ however, each Scout will have two chances at 10% on the turn the Writ was activated with the Power Activation. Probably because of the Writ, one Scout confirms that the Longcount colony has 30 RPs of Fighters, 10 Industry and a 10 RPs Ground Unit, see Field Reports, 2 Information, p. 1343.

- ✓ Information on the Native Population Type of the Longcount colony is still not known, but is highly likely to be Longcount Native Population Type. It is certain however, from basic Observation, that the planet is not Balkanized.
- ✓ The Longcount colony is obviously old; it is much larger than a colony that would have recently been established by the escaped Colony Transports. Thirty RPs of Fighters alone indicates a colony that must be at least 30 population (see *How Big is Your Flight Stick*, 1 Carriers & Fighters, p. 1050). Further, the Colony Transports are not in the system; had they simply Unloaded Population to the colony, they would still exist (see *Opening the Can Of...*, 3 Expansion, pp. 914-915).

On the fourth turn in the system, normal early game Scouts with the Ship Systems Existential Patent would be running out of Operational Supply Limitation (OSL) (see *Imperial Interstellar Scout Service*, 3 Movement, p. 855). Whether or not Headknockers has improved their Ship Systems Existential Patent, they decide to send one Scout to Probe each colony. You know, since nobody seems to mind...

Probing

The Special Operations Power is again activated in the system using one Act for the purpose of Reconnaissance and both Scouts are assigned to Probing (see *Private Eyes*, 2 Information, p. 1342). One Scout is targeted to each colony in the system for a ‘closer’ look, see *Flyby*, 2 Information, p. 1346. Additionally, two Enlightenment are also assigned. Which should we do first?

On the approach to the Longcount colony, there is a 50% chance that each defending unit will be able to execute one normal fire against the Probing unit, see *Bloody Noses*, 2 Information, p. 1346. So the first determination is what is available in defense, and can they fire? The Longcount colony has two orbital facilities (this is known from Observation, see previous), one of which is an Orbital Shipyard and the other is an Orbital Defense Base. It is also known from the previous Surveillance that the colony has 30 RPs of Fighters. The colony has no other defenses

(though it could have unknown defenses) so there is a 50% chance that each of those will be able to fire at the approaching Scout.

The Orbital Defense base is unable to fire (the crafty Scout stayed on the other side of the planet on approach) but the 30 RPs of Fighters catch up. Enlightenment cannot be used here as it cannot be used to affect opposing position's rolls. Further, no Combat Power activation is necessary for the defenders to fire at a Probing ship (see *Bloody Noses*, 2 Information, p. 1346).

Normal Fighter combat ensues with two Sorties attacking the Probing Scout. As two Sorties are attacking one target (a 'concentrated attack'), each Sortie counts at 75% of the 30 RPs strength, so each attacks at 22 RPs (see *Blacksheep*, 2 Carriers & Fighters, p. 1054). The Effectiveness Die roll for each Sortie, however, is horrible, a 1 and a 2 are rolled, converting to .1 and .2 Effectiveness which is multiplied by the RP value and the resulting number is converted directly into a chance to hit expressed in percentages (see *Fighter Combat*, 2 Carriers & Fighters, p. 1054). The first Sortie thus attacks at 2.2 % (22 RPs x .1 = 2.2 converted directly to a hit percentage) and the second at 4.4 %. They are 1st Era Fighters so the chance to hit is multiplied by 1.5 to 3.3% for the first Sortie and 6.6% for the second Sortie. Fractions are truncated, giving the Fighters a 3% and 6% chance to hit the Scout. The Scout has a natural one Defensive Shift in any combat, which subtracts 10% from the chance to hit by the Fighters... neither of them hit.

- ✓ As this was a Probing defense, there was no Power Activation and Enlightenment cannot be used to re-roll the Effectiveness Rolls (see *Bloody Noses*, 2 Information, p. 1346).

The Scout Probing the Longcount colony escaped without a scratch on the Headknockers logo, so has a 15% chance of obtaining information in *each category* of the seven found in *Field Reports*, 2 Information, pp. 1343-1344. As such, the Enlightenment assigned to the Probing action will easily be used to reroll the first two failed category die rolls; there are seven categories to check at 15% chance each. See *The S-2*, 2 Information, p. 1347.

The Probe of the Longcount colony is successful in learning information in two categories: It is confirmed to be a Friendly colony (for Longcount) with an Orbital Shipyard and Orbital Defense Base. This latter information would not have been clear from the defensive fire against the Probing Scout as the Scout would only learn normally the units that fired at it. Taken with the Surveillance information obtained previously, Headknockers has a decent read on the Longcount colony.

- ✓ The Probing does not cause a Disruption Event at either target colony, see *The Burning Sky*, 2 Disruption, p. 275 and *Alien Probes*, 2 Information, p. 1346).

The Scout with the expendable PROD enhancement runs into a fusillade of flak at the Crowd-Funded Civilization Capital Colony. All three 2nd Era Orbital Bases fire at the Probing 1st Era Scout (which has one Defensive Shift against each to offset the Era differential shift, see *Combat Shifts and Civilian Targets*, 3 Combat, both p. 978) and one scores a 'Hit' on the Scout forcing it to turn away (Probing defense is not 'combat,' see *Bloody Noses* and *Results Rolling In*, 2 Information, pp. 1346-1347).

- ✓ Either Crowd-Funded Civilization got lucky or based on average results at 50%, there were three others (Orbital and System Bases, Fighter Complements) which couldn't fire at the Probing Scout.

The PROD Scout which is turned away still has a 5% chance of gaining information on each of the seven categories (see The S-2, 2 Information, p. 1347); however, the PROD expendable enhancement doubles the chances of any Probe discovering information by reading the mental residuals of the recently deceased at the colony. As a result, Headknockers learns that the Crowd-Funded Civilization Capital Colony has currently 193 population factors, including 23 on a 1st Era Orbital City!

- ✓ Wow! How is that possible?

Taking Selfies

Both colony owners, Longcount and Crowd-Funded Civilization, will be informed of the Probing attempt (see Bloody Noses, 2 Information, p. 1346) on their respective colonies (and probably will inform each other) but not what was learned, with a 50% chance of properly identifying the offender. Between the two, it is likely that blame will be properly pinned (if it is not obvious, regardless of the die rolls as Headknockers' Scouts were the only other ships in the system) and what happens subsequently is the game...

- ✓ In addition to the huge – impossible – population of the colony, Headknockers also learned that the Capital Colony has at least three 2nd Era Orbital Defense Bases, an Orbital City, and an Orbital Shipyard (required to build the other orbitals), accounting for five of the ten known orbital installations observed initially at the Capital Colony.

Both Scouts survived the Probing action, but the PROD enhancement is expended. The ostensible purpose of the mission – finding the escaped Colony Transports – has failed here, but a large amount of information has been gleaned and a pair of anthills kicked over. Is it time to leave now? What will Headknockers do with the Scouts next turn? Fly before the cops arrive?

- ✓ Did you bring the selfie-stick?