

Trading in your Hornets for Falcons

Converting *HORNET LEADER* into "Falcon Leader"

By David Schueler

When *HORNET LEADER* first came out I spent many hours in the simulated cockpit and every time a new *C3i* module came out I found myself pulling out the game and flying the new missions. As I eagerly waited for new games in the *Leader* series, I also looked for potential variants for *HORNET LEADER*. The interservice rivalry in the US military seemed like it would provide a good source for ideas and I began to wonder how other aircraft in the US inventory would fare when given the same missions as the Hornet. The aircraft closest in size and ability to the Hornet in the Air Force's arsenal is the F-16 Falcon. The Hornet and Falcon have many similarities, but there are still many differences in the tactics and operations for each plane. This variant allows you to see how the Falcon performs when presented with Hornet missions. Until the new games and modules in the *Leader* series actually make it to print, I hope you will enjoy taking up one of the Air Force's best.

GENERAL CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

- Whenever a card or the rulebook refers to "Hornet" substitute "Falcon," for "F-18" substitute "F-16," for "Carrier" substitute "Airfield," for "Carrier-bound" substitute "Airfield-bound," for "Aviator" substitute "Pilot."
- For this variant, the N-Pod refers to a LANTIRN (Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting InfraRed, Night) pod not the FLIR pod.
- Ignore references to Harpoon missiles, F-16s are not equipped to use this missile.

RULE CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

4.4 Airfield Defense Missions:

This is a new mission type and replaces the Fleet Air Defense Mission. When a Fleet Air Defense Mission Target Card is drawn it is really an Airfield Defense Mission. All rules that would normally apply to the Fleet Air Defense Mission apply to the Airfield Defense Mission.

7.3F Weight Points and Load

Area Limits: Each Falcon may carry at most ten Weight Points of munitions. Each Falcon has seven Load Areas. Three of the load areas (at the bottom of the card) may be used to carry a variety of weapons. The other four areas may only carry Air-to-Air missiles. Look at the Weight Points and Load Areas listed on the Mission Briefing Card to determine the limits for the current Mission (the remaining Weight Points and Load Areas are assumed to be used for fuel tanks).

7.31F Wing Tip Load Areas: The two Wing Tip Load Areas may always be used. They are in addition to the Load Areas designated on the Mission Briefing Card. Each may carry one Sidewinder or AIM-120 AMRAAM missile only.

7.32F Outboard Wing Load

Areas: The two Outboard Wing Load Areas may always be used. They are in addition to the Load Areas designated on the Mission Briefing Card. Each may carry one Sidewinder or AIM-120 AMRAAM missile only.

7.33F Inboard Wing Load Areas:

The two Inboard Wing Load Areas may either be used to carry

one Mk 84 bomb or two of any other type of weapons or pods that can be carried by an F-16. If carrying two counters, they can be of different types (i.e. a Mk82 and a Rockeye).

7.34F Center Line Area: The Centerline Area may carry one Pod (N, E, or Gun), Mk 83 or Rockeye.

10.53 Dogfight Bonus: Because the Falcons are slightly more maneuverable, they receive an automatic +1 Dogfight Modifier.

14.51 Pilot Check Modifiers:

Landing at an Airfield: Subtract 1 from the pilot check roll. This modifier applies because landing at an airfield is less stressful than landing on an aircraft carrier.

18.2 Fatigue: Subtract 1 fatigue point from the total. This applies because landing at an airfield is less stressful than landing on an aircraft carrier.

19.8 F-15C Eagles: The following rules are used for the Special Conditions/Mission Events involving F-15C Eagles. Eagles may use "Leader/Wingman" tactics in Dogfighting. The Eagles may also both be Leaders; the choice is left to the player. All Eagles have an Aggressive air-to-air style. MiGs have a -1 to achieve a Fire Position against them. Enemy MiGs shot down by Eagles are counted toward the player's Mission Points for Fighter Sweep or Airfield Defense Missions. Eagles DO NOT gain a bonus for AIM-120 AMRAAMs (should that Special Condition be present). Apply all Air Combat modifiers to Eagles that are applied to Falcons. Do not apply cannon or missile modifiers, as

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the values for the Eagles take into account pilot Skill and weaponry. When resolving a Dogfight Attack, apply the "+3 Sidewinder" bonus to the Fire Position Result die roll. The Air Combat Numbers for the F-15C Eagles are: 8/7/5/3. These numbers are used in the same manner as the MiG and F-14 numbers. Eagles have the same chance to Strafe as a Falcon pilot with a +0 Air to Ground Skill.

19.9 F-15E Strike Eagles: The following rules are used for the Special Condition involving F-15E Strike Eagles. Apply all ground Attack modifiers to Strike Eagles that are applied to Falcons. The "+1 on Ground Attacks" takes into account the Pilot Skill and equipment for the Strike Eagles. Strike Eagles have the same chance to Strafe as a Falcon pilot with a +1 Air to Ground Skill. Use Munitions counters for the Strike Eagles. The counters provided are to be used for both the Falcons and Strike Eagles, how they are divided is left to the player. Strike Eagles may take part in air-to-air combat. Strike Eagles may use "Leader/Wingman" tactics in Dogfighting. The Strike Eagles may also both be Leaders; the choice is left to the player. If they are involved in air-to-air combat the Air Combat Numbers for the F-15E Strike Eagles are: 7/5/4/3. These numbers are used in the same manner as the MiG and F-14 numbers. All Strike Eagles are considered to have a Normal air to-air style.

CAMPAIGN CARDS

Because the operating bases and missions for an F-16 Falcon Squadron are different than those of an F-18 Hornet Squadron only certain Campaign Cards are used for Falcon Leader. There are also some modifications that must be made to the Campaign Cards to represent different missions for the Falcons.

The following Campaign Cards are recommended for use with Falcon Leader:

Iraq, Iran, Central America, North Korea and World War III: Mediterranean, Cuba (from *Inside GMT Games #2*), and Yugoslavia (from *Inside GMT Games #2*)

For any Falcon Leader campaign, the following target cards should be removed: 2, 8, 9, 10 and 19. These are naval targets and the Air Force lets the Navy handle these targets.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS & MISSION EVENT CARDS

Because the missions, operating conditions and support aircraft for an F-16 Falcon Squadron are different than those of an F-18 Hornet Squadron, there are changes to certain Mission Event Cards used in the game. The changes to the cards are given below:

The "F-14 Tomcat Support" card is changed to "F-15C Eagle Support." All other items on the card remain in effect. See rule 19.8 for the information about the F-15C Eagle Support.

The "A-6 Intruder Support" card is changed to "F-15E Strike Eagle Support." Each F-15E carries two Mavericks, one E-Pod, (one N-Pod if on a night mission) and three Mk 83's (or two Mk 84's). There should be a +1 to all Air to Ground Attack die rolls for the Strike Eagles. See rule 19.9 for more information about the F-15E Strike Eagle Support.

The "Rough Seas" card is changed to "Stormy Weather." The rolls and results printed on the card are used and remain in effect.

The "No E-2 Coverage" card is changed to "No AEW Coverage." The effects listed on the card are used and remain in effect.

WEAPONS LOADOUT

The Falcon Load Areas diagram on the next page replaces the "Hornet Load Areas" section of the Mission Display. This is used

when arming a Falcon for a mission.

AVAILABLE WEAPONS

The F-18 Hornet and F-16 Falcon have similar weapons capabilities, but they cannot carry or employ all the same weapons. The list below shows the weapons that are available for use by the F-16 Falcon.

Mk 82	N Pod
Mk 83	E Pod
Mk 84 ^A	Maverick
HARM ^B	Sidewinder
Rockeye ^C	AIM-120
AMRAAM ^C	
Gun Pod ^C	

NOTES:

a From *C3i #1* and reprinted on this issue's insert.

b Only F-16C/J (Block 50) model aircraft have the capability to target these weapons. Standard F-16C's will not carry HARMs.

c From *C3i #3* and reprinted on this issue's insert. If you don't have a copy of *C3I #3*, Use the following rules:

Rockeye:

Weight Points: 1
Load Area Allocation: Mk 82
Usage: Bomb, Hit Number 2/
/-

Due to its Cluster Munitions characteristics, the Rockeye has a very good chance of scoring one hit, but no chance of scoring a second or third hit.

Gun Pod:

Weight Points: 1
Load Area Allocation: Mk 82
Usage: Cannon
A Falcon may carry only one Gun Pod at a time. When the Falcon executes a Strafing attack, add two to its die roll. A Gun Pod does not increase the Cannon Bonus in Air Combat. A Gun Pod is treated as an AGW Weight Point for purposes of Dogfight Modifiers.

AIM-120 AMRAAM:

Weight Points: 0
Load Area Allocation: Sparrow
Usage: Long Range Air
Combat, Hit Number +4, +8,
(+1)
AIM-120 AMRAAMs are state

of the art air-to-air missiles. They have an active radar homing seeker (like the Phoenix missile) and are very good at hitting enemy aircraft. Add 1 to the Fire Position Result die roll for each AIM-120 fired by a Falcon. However, the cost of these missiles is very high. At the start of each mission (after drawing the Mission Briefing Card) roll a die. The result is the number of AIM-120 counters available for this mission. Counters may not be saved for future missions. If the AIM-120 AMRAAMs Special Condition Card is drawn, the die roll number is automatically 10.

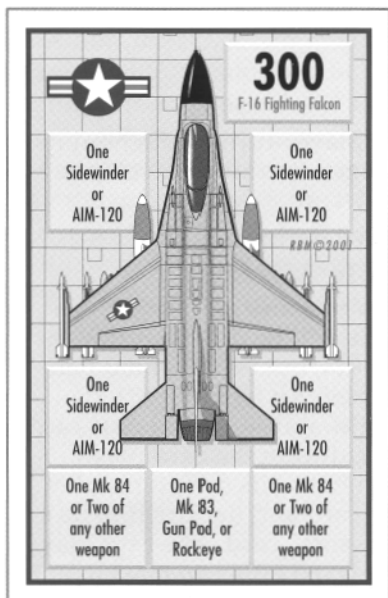
Munitions shortages: If a Munitions Shortage card is drawn it has the following effects for these weapons:

Minor Munitions Shortage:

Rockeye = 8, Gun Pod = 4, AIM-120 = -3 to die roll
Munitions Shortage: Rockeye = 6, Gun Pod = 3, AIM-120 = -6 to die roll

Severe Munitions Shortage:

Rockeye = 4, Gun Pod = 2, AIM-120 = Unavailable.



Falcon Load Areas



AIR DEFENSE SUPPRESSION

Unlike the F-18 Hornet, the standard F-16 Falcon does not have the ability to target the AGM-88B HARM missile. Only the F-16 C/J (Block 50) model of the aircraft has the capability to target this missile. The F-16 C/J's are assigned to special SEAD (Suppression of Enemy Air Defense) squadrons and do not participate in normal F-16 missions. Typically external assets (such as EA-6B's, F-16 C/J's, or even F-18's) are assigned to assist in suppressing SAMs and AAA during an F-16 mission. If the "EA-6B Support" Special Condition Card was not drawn for a mission, the player may choose to use other SEAD assets to support the mission. First the player determines what SEAD assets are available for the mission by rolling one die and referring to the table on the next page.

The player may choose to use or not use the available SEAD assets. If the player chooses to use the SEAD assets on the mission, the player treats the selection as if

extra aircraft had been allocated to the mission and automatically loses Mission Points equal to the "Points Per Hit" listed for the Target. If the SEAD assets are added to the mission, they only may be used to attack air defenses (SAMs or AAA) on the Mission Display or "Target of Opportunity" and "SAM Site" events from the Mission Event

Cards. The player may still choose to take extra F-16's on the mission in addition to taking the SEAD assets. The standard *HORNET LEADER* rules apply if extra F-16's are taken on the mission.

AIRFIELD DISPLAY

The Airfield Display replaces the Carrier Display for the Falcon Leader variant and is used to organize your pilots and Falcons when they are not flying a mission.

COUNTERS

Thirty-Four *HORNET LEADER* counters are included on the insert in this issue of C3i. The F-15, F-16C/J and most weapons are for this variant, while the JDAM and JSOW will be needed for a forthcoming *HORNET LEADER* mini-campaign. During play, use F-18 aircraft counters to represent F-16s wherever necessary.



SEAD Asset Availability		
Target SAM Level	Die Roll	SEAD Assets
Minimal	1 - 5	None
	6 - 8	2 F-16C/J (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder)
	9 - 10	2 F-18 (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder)
Light	1 - 3	None
	4 - 7	2 F-16C/J (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder)
	8 - 10	2 F-18 (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder)
Moderate	1 - 4	2 F-16C/J (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder)
	5 - 8	2 F-18 (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder)
	9 - 10	2 EA-6B (use the same information as is on the "EA-6B Support" Special Condition Card)
Heavy	1 - 4	2 F-16C/J (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder)
	5 - 8	2 F-18 (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder)
	9 - 10	2 F-16 C/J (each with 2 HARM, 2 Rockeye, and 2 Sidewinder) and 2 EA-6B (use the same information as is on the "EA-6B Support" Special Condition Card)

DiF Preview: Revised Swordfish Cards

By Chris Janiec

The Swordfish was a World War II anomaly—a biplane which outlived its successor (the unpopular Fairey Albacore) and flew combat missions right into 1945. Despite a top speed of less than 140 mph and open cockpits which mercilessly exposed its crewmen in the winter, it survived because it was a marvelously maneuverable yet stable torpedo launcher which handled superbly around a carrier. Nonetheless, it is over-rated in *8AF* and the Malta variant, since sources such as Captain Eric M. Brown (who actually flew them both) indicate that a Bf.110 could (and did) destroy it with ease. The present ratings also don't allow

much leeway to differentiate the Swordfish from more modern designs such as the B5N2 "Kate," Avenger and Barracuda. All the maneuverability in the world doesn't make the "Stringbag" equal to a P.11c, so its Performance is reduced to 3. However, like most of the biplanes in *DiF*, the Swordfish does merit the same special "Agile" capability which will be afforded to aircraft such as the A6M2 Zero in future games. Also, with a service ceiling of 10,700 feet and a climb rate falling to less than that of a laden swallow (African OR European) soon after takeoff, it is the only aircraft worth including in *DiF* to have a Ceiling of Low and a Horsepower of 0 (which, of course, still allows it one draw

per player-turn throughout its meager operating envelope).

New Rule: Agile Aircraft

This rule and new Swordfish cards will be detailed fully in C3i #14, but is presented here in brief. An aircraft with the 'Agile' ability listed on its card may, during the card play segment of its own turn, play one card and declare it to be a "Scissors" card. The card may be played either to maneuver or to respond to a response. This ability may be used only once per turn. It is not used by Wingmen.

