

WING COMMANDERTM
PROPHECY
HINT BOOK

**Strategies and Tactics for
Simulator Missions!**





WING COMMANDERTM PROPHECY



HINT BOOKLET

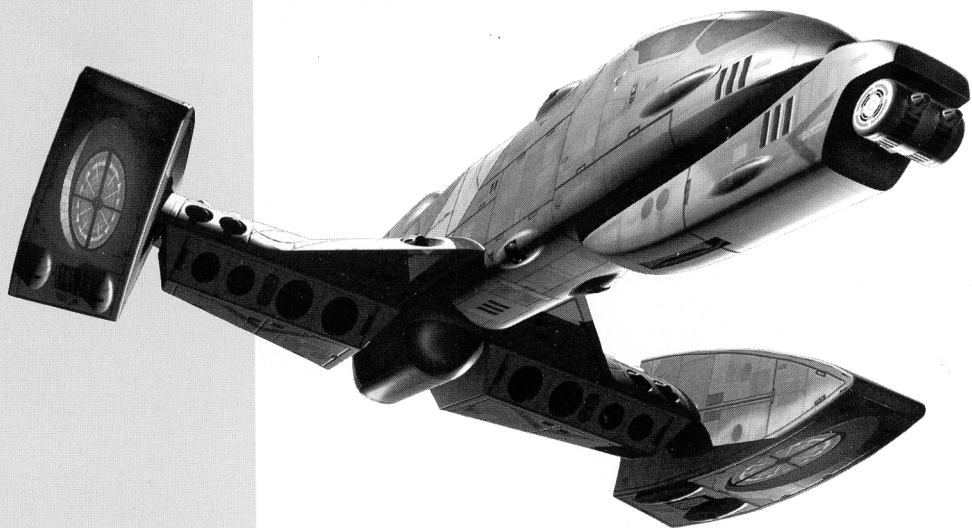


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A PRIMER FOR PLEBES

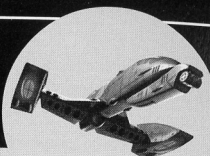
Veterans of the Wing Commander games have doubtless developed a variety of techniques that have served them well in battle—including enabling the Invincibility toggle in the scariest situations.

For plebes and purists, however, there are a few tactics that will serve you well as you develop a feel for *Prophecy* beyond the first few missions, wherein other members of your squad tend to defuse the most dangerous situations in short order.

There are, of course, a variety of weapons at your disposal throughout the game. And the simulator missions, detailed herein, provide you ample opportunity to test most of them in increasingly demanding situations. Take advantage of that as you practice in the simulator.

We'll start off here with some general tactics, and then progress to situational analysis, extrapolating from the simulator scenarios to the situations that are more common within the actual game missions.





WEAPON SELECTION

The first thing you'll notice when you engage an enemy vessel is that its shields, like your own, regenerate after a few seconds. Since the only way to actually destroy a ship is to bring down its shields completely and then damage its hull, you need to make every shot count.

FULL GUNS

Missiles aside, the most effective way to cause major damage to an enemy is to always run with Full Guns, and then pick your shots carefully, from relatively close range.

The reasoning here is that the Full Guns designation employs every weapon system that the ship has to offer simultaneously—again, with the exception of the high-end missiles.

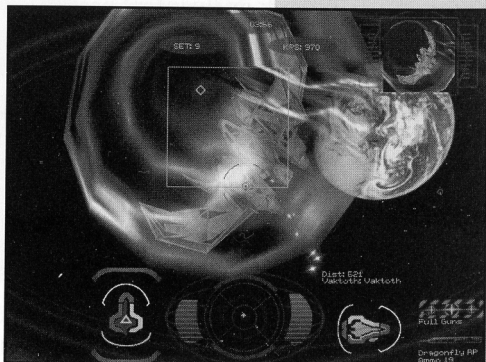
If you pick your shots carefully, you'll find that an enemy's shields are depleted quite rapidly, and thus its hull is soon susceptible to damage.

The caveat here is that you can't strafe in Full Guns mode and have a decent effect. Full Guns need a certain recharge time after each shot fired—usually two or three seconds.

If you fly around with your finger twitching on the trigger, Full Guns won't have time to recharge adequately. Instead, the one system of the Full Gun array which requires the least energy will begin to charge first, and thus that will be the only system which fires when you pull the trigger. That fact, coupled with the fact that the single weapon will be firing with a minimal charge, means that your shots will have a truly puny impact on whatever you happen to hit.

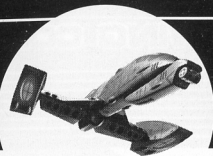
However, you can safely fire off two or three consecutive bursts. If you're willing to wait an extra second or two between shots, this method stands to deliver more damage—especially if the first shot or two can punch through an enemy ship's shields.

So use Full Guns, but take your shots wisely, and try to take them from relatively close range. That'll ensure that the maximum amount of beams and projectiles strike the target.



Picking your shots carefully with Full Guns selected is the best way to quickly bring down the enemy.





MISSILES

Missiles in *Wing Commander: Prophecy* come in many strengths, and some are definitely better than others with regard to their tracking properties.

In a nutshell, you should save your best missiles—usually the “smart” ones with serious firepower—for when you’re really in trouble.

The Friend-or-Foe Missile and the Image Recognition Missile fall readily into the upper end of the usefulness spectrum, since these can be launched with no regard for the position of an enemy’s ship relative to your own. Image Recognition has to have a lock in front of you. Their position relative to you doesn’t matter. If an enemy is peppering you from behind, simply let loose two or three of these babies, and that should give your foe something else to worry about for awhile—perhaps even for an eternity or so. Once they’ve locked onto the closest target, these missiles continue in pursuit, sometimes even avoiding an enemy’s Decoys while maintaining their lock.

Of course, not all the missiles in your arsenal are so impressively tailored to pull your plebe butt out of the deepest holes. The Dumbfire Rocket and the Heat Seeker Missile come to mind as examples of projectiles that, though deadly, are best used in only certain situations.

In the case of the Dumbfire or Heat Seeker, you should really only be firing from your enemy’s six—directly behind the target craft—in order to get the desired effect.

The Dumbfire is appropriately named, in that you’ll have to do all the work yourself, laying it on the foe from close range. Otherwise, the enemy can usually avoid the impact. In the case of the Heat Seeker, you should really be behind the target, since that’s where most of the heat is being generated, and thus the missile has a much better chance of holding its lock. And, if either the Dumbfire or the Heat Seeker miss the mark on their first pass, neither will re-acquire the target.

COMBAT TACTICS

**SHOOT YOUR ENEMY UNTIL HE EXPLODES.
CLASS DISMISSED.**

OK, there’s a little more to successful combat than that, but it’s still not rocket science. A big part is weapon selection, which we covered previously. There are some other subtleties which bear examination, on both the offensive and defensive sides.





OFFENSIVE SUGGESTIONS

Weapon considerations aside, *Wing Commander: Prophecy* requires that you exhibit a certain skill as a pilot, even though you're often fighting as one member of a well-trained squadron.

The fact that you generally won't be flying solo missions is, in itself, a major benefit as far as you're concerned. Not only does that mean that you'll have help when the going gets roughest, but it also means, conversely, that you won't always be the center of enemy attention. And you can further divert enemy attention with a little forethought to your flight patterns.

Consider that, as you and your squad are approaching an enemy fighter group, the opposing groups begin to select their targets at roughly the same time—at a certain distance where each ship's combat computers become capable of acquiring a target.

If you're playing on the ROOKIE or VETERAN difficulty level, the strategy here is simple: If you break from the main group before your enemies begin to acquire targets, fewer enemies are likely to pick you up. (At higher difficulty settings, however, this isn't a viable option—up to 3 enemies may follow you.) Assuming that you're traveling on the same relative plane as the opposing fighter group, radially adjust your flight vector—pull the stick straight back or push it straight down—

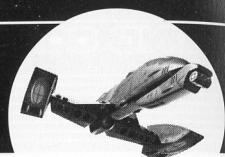
NOTE: This tactic only works at two lowest difficulty levels. At higher ones, the enemies are specifically sent after you, not your group.



until the opposing group is almost entirely out of your sight. You don't want to lose all contact, just in case someone notices what you're up to, and an enemy drops onto your six. But by making a wide loop, you can usually rest assured that most of the enemy ships will designate another member of your flight group as their initial target. That gives you time to circle around behind the enemy wave, and perhaps even assist anyone in your squadron that is in dire need of help.

When attacking an enemy group of fighters while playing with lower difficulty settings, you can break from the pack, and hopefully get the drop on some of the Kilrathi by circling around behind them before they pick your ship as a target.





Don't Over-Correct

When you have a target locked, a little red indicator arrow will appear on your HUD, pointing in the direction you should turn to quickly bring the enemy into your sights. As soon as the enemy ship is within your view, that red indicator arrow will vanish, re-appearing only if the locked target moves off of the screen. You'll find that when it vanishes is usually a good time to pull out of your turn, i.e. return the joystick to a neutral position. When firing your guns, keep a close eye on the green I.T.T.S. diamond in your viewscreen. It's part of your computerized targeting system, and indicates how far ahead of a moving target you need to fire in order to hit it. This is called "leading" the target—if you aim for the green diamond, your shots are more likely to land on your enemy.

NOTE: I.T.T.S. is useful, and should be taken advantage of during gun attacks against enemies.

STICK TO ONE TARGET

Once you've picked a target, stay with it until it's dust. If you switch from enemy to enemy during a dogfight, all you'll accomplish is to wear down their shields a little bit. Then, when you break off, the shields will have time to recharge.

If someone is on your six and giving you serious grief, there are better ways to get rid of them than to turn and target them with your Full Guns, thereby letting your current target off the hook (See Defensive Tactics, next page).

KEEP CLOSE

Once you've selected your target, don't let it shake you for an appreciable amount of time. You need to be as close as possible to make sure that your Full Guns are hitting for the maximum damage, and, if you let a target get away from you, it'll pivot to deal damage on your own craft.

Use your ability to match speeds to keep tight with the target, and don't neglect the Afterburners as a means of rapidly closing the gap if an enemy goes to full throttle in an attempt to escape your wrath.





DEFENSIVE TACTICS

Defensively, the tactics that serve you best in *Wing Commander: Prophecy* are simple enough to understand. Through whatever means possible, you want to avoid getting in a situation where an enemy can concentrate fire on any single aspect of your shields, thereby whittling away and damaging your hull.

Of course, by staying close (and, if at all possible, behind) your own target, you can keep it from doing much damage to your ship in return. In most cases, it's the other enemy ships in the area which make things difficult, as they drop in behind you and begin to hammer away at your craft's rear shield array.

AVOIDING MISSILES

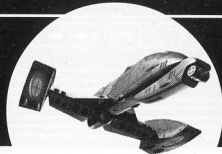
The major worry of plebes everywhere is the instance when an enemy drops onto your six, and lets loose with a missile. Your Heads Up Display will flash a warning on either side of the display, indicating that you're the unlucky recipient of a missile lock.

The best method of breaking the lock is to use a Decoy, which is especially designed for just that purpose, then punch your afterburners. Plan on using two or three decoys to break an enemy missile lock. Drop them until the lock indicator disappears from your HUD, and perhaps send a few missiles of your own out to seek and destroy if the problem persists.



By letting loose with Friend or Foe missiles even when an enemy is out of sight, you can sometimes take a bad guy off your six.





USE YOUR MISSILES

If you're out of decoys and an enemy's on your six, it is sometimes possible to use a Friend or Foe missile to throw him off. Make sure that the enemy you want to shake is the closest ship to you, then launch a couple of missiles—but only if you can spare them.

NOTE: This tactic is more of a desperate measure and should be used only if you're out of decoys or have extra missiles.

Even if the missiles don't destroy your tormentor outright, they may cause the enemy to take evasive action, and keep him occupied until you can take care of the immediate business of disposing of your primary target.

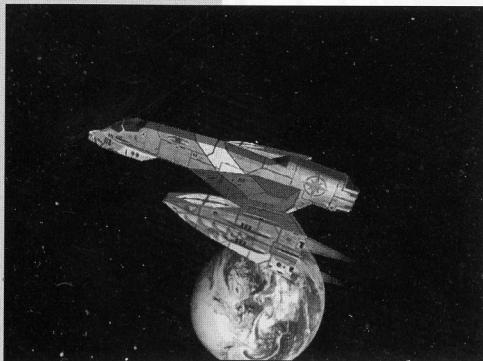
AFTERBURNER ESCAPE

You can break a missile lock—or escape a withering hail of gunnery—by radically altering your flight vector, and laying on the Afterburner. That usually means that your current target will be able to escape your attention for the moment, but letting one enemy off the hook temporarily is preferable to ejecting in deep space.

You might also consider laying on the afterburner after every kill, especially if you've been chasing around the same fighter for awhile. It's likely a crowd has gathered nearby, and that one or more vile Kilrathi™ are closing in from behind. If you hit the Afterburner before seeking out your next target, you may shake loose an enemy that's about to give you grief from behind.

SIMULATION TRAINING MISSIONS

LEVEL 0



Using your afterburners to make a quick exit can help to diffuse the most dangerous situations.

**AFTERBURNERS
AND SPEED
CONTROL
NAV POINTS AND
AUTOPILOT
WEAPONS,
TARGETING AND
TARGET TRACKING**

The Level 0 training mission is a straightforward exercise meant to familiarize pilots with the most basic of the ship's navigation and combat technology. Follow your





instructor's direction from each NAV buoy, engaging the relatively tame enemy ships along the way. Get used to using the small green diamond that appears near a Locked Target. By angling your shots towards the green diamond, instead of directly at an enemy ship, you can effectively lead the enemy vessel.

LEVEL 1

ADVANCED TARGET TRACKING

FLYING WITH WINGMEN

ASTEROID FIELD NAVIGATION AND COMBAT

Travel to the first NAV point, and engage the enemy fighters near the large vessel. Once you have taken care of the few enemies in the area, you'll lead two wingmen to the next NAV point, where you'll encounter increased resistance. Don't neglect your missiles if an enemy is giving you a particularly hard time. Missiles go a long way toward quickly evening the odds.

During the battle, you'll receive a distress call from another cargo ship back near the first NAV point. Once you've taken care of the fighters nearby, you'll have to take your wingmen back in that direction, and again defend a larger ship to successfully complete the mission. The final round of fighting isn't quite as intense as at NAV Two, so don't worry if you have to use up all of your missiles before heading to that last NAV point.

LEVEL 2

CLOSE ESCORT TECHNIQUES

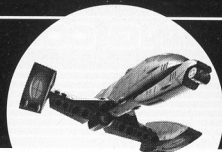
CAPITAL SHIP DEFENSE TECHNIQUES

Make your way to the first NAV point, and clear the area of enemy fighters pending the arrival of a Federation Transport. The Level 2 mission turns up the dogfighting a notch, so be ready to employ all the tricks in your bag to avoid taking a serious pummeling from the many Kiltrathi fighters. Use decoys to shake off any missiles headed your way, and Afterburners to quickly hunt down your primary target.

Finally, watch out for the Corvette. If you try and dogfight anywhere near it, its larger guns will make short work of your budding combat career. Keep your distance and take out the smaller fighters, and save your most damaging missiles to help you get through the Corvette's defenses. It's a real chore to get the Corvette's shields down, and then destroy it before the shields have a chance to regenerate.

If you're having trouble, consider switching to a heavy fighter to fly this mission. You'll find that the larger fighters have a significantly larger gun array, which allows you to torch Kiltrathi fighters with ease as long as you're employing Full Guns.





LEVEL 3

BOMBER MELEE TECHNIQUES

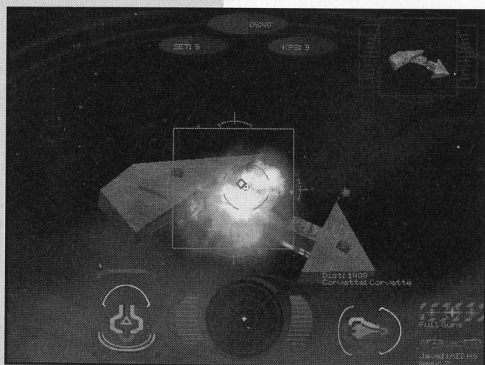
CAPITAL SHIP ATTACK TECHNIQUES

BOMBER ORDINANCE MANAGEMENT

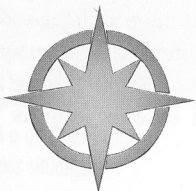
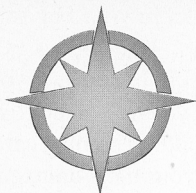
At the first NAV point of Level 3, you'll be greeted by a contingent of heavy Kiltrathi fighters, awaiting the arrival of a Kiltrathi transport to the area. As you make your way between the NAV points, encountering swarms of Kiltrathi defending larger capital ships, you are tasked with properly managing your resources (under duress) in order to complete your objectives.

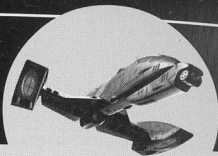
Be certain that you keep one finger on your Decoy button, as the cursed Kiltrathi will be looking to slip a missile up your exhaust port given the slightest opportunity. Also, since you're piloting a much heavier craft than you are perhaps used to, you'll want to be constantly utilizing your Afterburners so that the more nimble Kiltrathi ships can't escape from you long enough to let their shields recharge.

Finally, don't be led into the vicinity of the large capital ships while you dogfight, or their large guns will tear you apart in a moment. Keep your distance until you're ready to let loose with some of your large missiles, and then use your afterburners (and the Rear View camera) to avoid taking too much damage when you make bombing runs. As in the Level 2 mission, you'll have to be accurate as well as nimble in order to bring down the larger ships' shields and then destroy the big craft before they can recharge, thereby wasting the effect of your missiles.



That's gotta hurt.





LEVEL 4

FIGHTER MELEE TECHNIQUES

ENHANCED STAMINA

FIGHTER ORDINANCE MANAGEMENT

This is your dogfighting final exam, with waves of Kirlathi craft arriving for a major melee. Remember to utilize Decoys and Afterburners, and don't get suckered into fighting near the Corvette. Between waves of fighters, your targeting system will usually lock on to the larger ship, and thus you'll be tempted to turn toward it. Realize that as each wave wanes, the last ship in the area is going to be the biggie. Unless you'd really like to impress the other pilots, you can simply keep your distance, and fend off the waves of fighters. If you decide to tackle the big ship, you might consider drawing off the last couple of fighters in the first wave, and then making a missile run on the Corvette, using Afterburners to open a gap with the smaller fighters trailing behind you.

LEVEL 5

OPERATING WITHIN TIME PARAMETERS

FIGHTER MELEE TECHNIQUES

This is another dogfighting exercise, albeit with tighter time parameters than you've experienced before. Realize that missiles are the fastest way to take out a Kirlathi: You'll need to pick your shots from relatively close range, and follow up with Full Guns to make sure that the scum doesn't manage to escape momentarily and soak more time off the clock.

LEVEL 6

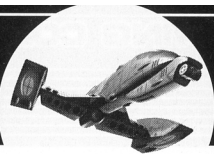
FIGHTER MELEE TECHNIQUES

CAPITAL SHIP ATTACK TECHNIQUES

OPERATING WITHIN TIME PARAMETERS

The encounters of the Level 6 simulator mission are a series of melees with Kirlathi fighters, each joined in the area around a Corvette. As before, make sure that you don't get baited into dogfighting near the larger ship, and save those missiles to quickly take down the Corvette's shields when it comes time to make attack runs on the larger vessels.





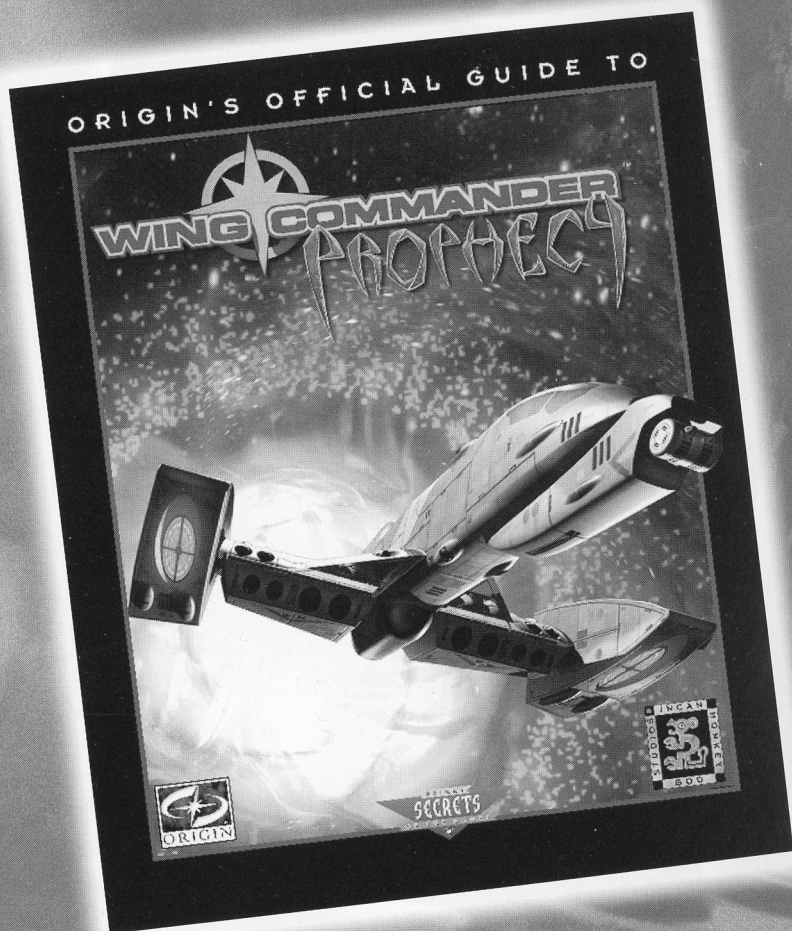
LEVEL 7

FIGHTER MELEE TECHNIQUES

CAPITAL SHIP DEFENSE TECHNIQUES

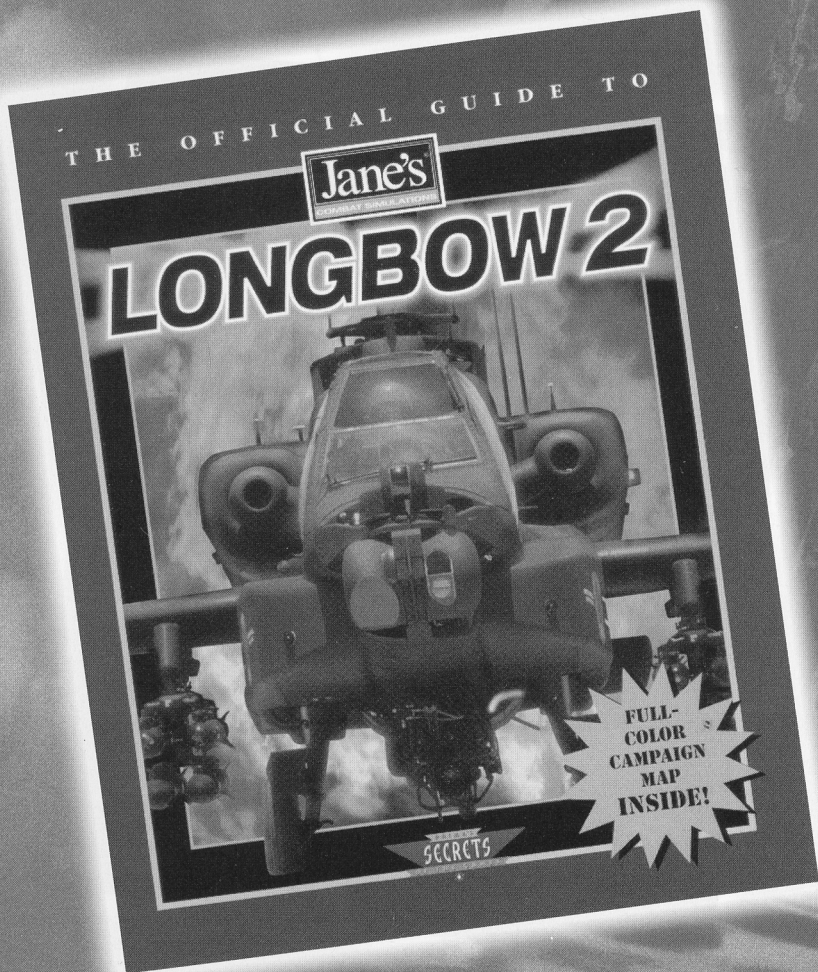
In this mission, you're charged with fending off a Kilrathi attack on the Midway. Fortunately, the attacking ships are naught but fighters, and so the Midway is able to offer ample support. You'll find that the Kilrathi seem well aware of the capabilities of the Midway's gunners, and so you can use that to an advantage when fighting near the large ship. Realize that the Kilrathi are going to want to keep their distance, so that limits their choices somewhat when it comes to being evasive. If a Kilrathi fighter is near the Midway, it will almost invariably turn away from it when it becomes evasive—with that forewarning, you should be able to anticipate enough to already be leading them in that direction.





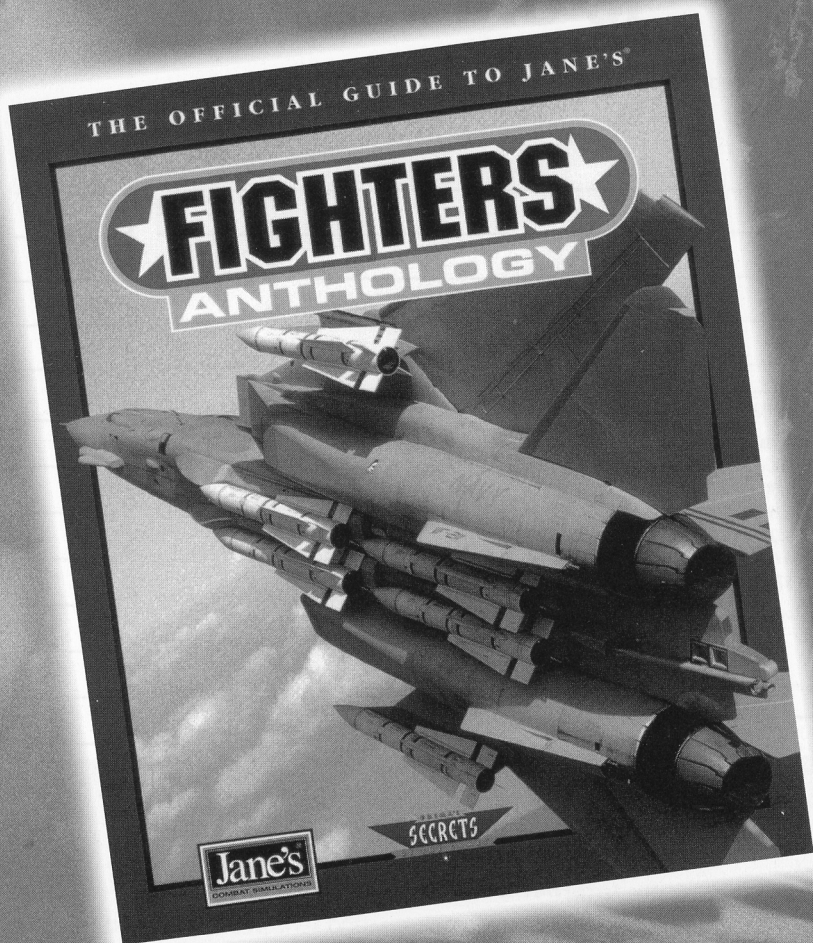
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