**Wraith Practice:**

Wingmates in attendance within Phantom Room:

Mike

Ranger

Maestro

Paladin

Purpose:

Individual and group ascertainment of effectiveness of strategies and tactics outlined earlier in practice labs.

Flight parameters:

Utilization of disabled offscreen indicators.

Utilization of weapons platform organization and objective set as utilized by Team Cheese for opening contact.

Utilization of Fighter class starfighter equipped with a complete ion loadout (minimum of ion cannons and ion missiles).

Games of ranked fleet battles played: 4

Results: W / W / L / W

Assessment:

The opening Team Cheese implements is tougher to organize even in a stack of 4 coordinating members. We chose mainly to orient

The use of an ion-based loadout on a fighter-class weapons platform such as an X-Wing or TIE Fighter (Working Classification: “Pika-Chua” or “Blue Buckaroo”) has a few key advantages:

1. An ability to rapidly remove energy-based defenses and barriers erected around the starfighter s and capital ships of a force in opposition.
2. An ability to destabilize (and even render entirely inoperable in limited cases), with prejudice, the functionality of externally mounted subsystems of said capital ships of a force in opposition.
3. An ability to offer a variety of methods to disable, for quick subsequent dispatch, starfighters deployed by a force in opposition.
4. The advantage of an extended and capable payload that is singular in purpose to dispose of multiple ion-vulnerable objectives in rapid succession.

This dedication also carries clear disadvantages:

1. Such a loadout removes the flexible nature of the equipped fighter. Capabilities in play focused on zone superiority are significantly diminished. Disabling enemy starfighters is a temporary solution that requires assistance to confirm the kills, often at the expense of both time and focus. Supplementary rocket-based damage could make use of this time to ultimately down the targeted bogey, but at the cost of advantage no.4 as enumerated above.
2. Due to a lack of objective-based targets (aside from the shields of an incoming corvette/raider) on defense and a stronger necessity for anti-starfighter-based play, having this loadout puts the pilot in an ineffective position to assist in pushing back an assault and, probably, earning more points towards the morale bar to shorten the time spent on defense. The only viable solution to overcome this disadvantage is to switch loadouts. It is wiser to avoid returning to the hangar to switch anything if at all possible.
3. Once either the shields surrounding enemy frigates have been effectively stripped or a flagship’s power subsystem has been destroyed, the pilot will likely want to retreat the full distance to conduct a swap of either their loadout or their starfighter. Equipping rockets for supplemental hull damage could prolong this loadout’s usefulness in a sustained sortie, but the effective damage per second of rockets is only that: supplemental. They are not enough alone to provide an effective source of damage against hulls without laser cannons or other weapons.
4. Because of the aforementioned increased likelihood of returning to the hangar, decreased survivability (likely due to increased focus from an enemy squadron), and diminished effectiveness in engagements with other starfighters, the pilot, particularly on offense, risks leaving his wingmates in reoccurring 3 or even 2v4 situations (this assumes both teams employ a bomber as in either an ai farmer or anti-capital ship role and that the friendly support will likely be assisting the bomber in offensive phases).

Conclusion:

This is exceptionally deadly against shields and the power subsystem. I think its employment is situational and mostly contingent on the enemy team’s chosen method of defense. That being said, if dispatched from a hangar in a timely manner to solely eliminate the enemy flagship’s power subsystem (and do significant harm to the flagship’s shields on the way to the objective), this loadout could prove useful in any team’s arsenal to gain a significant advantage at the start of the final phase.

(I have not yet gathered enough data on if delivering an ion torpedo to one frigate’s shields and then remaining in the combat area to use ion cannons and ion missiles on the other frigate’s shields is worth the exposure and possible death).

I have thoughts on whether bombers might prove a more effective weapons platform for this strategy; however, my concerns are with the available ordinance choices on either side. Imperials, sadly, only have access to ion cannons and ion bombs. It should be noted that the payload’s total damage (40k) can be split into 5 bombs per objective per sortie during the frigate phase and supplemented by ion cannon fire (1920 ion dps) to meet the damage threshold to eliminate both shields. A bomber’s ion cannons are more powerful than a fighter’s, and bombers are more durable, in most cases. There is a non-negligible increase in the likelihood of fatality when engaging the power subsystem with ion bombs, as both sides deploy a target with limited surface area that is more heavily guarded. “Mosquito-ing” alone with no mask for a full 2-3 seconds (observed in practice mode after seeing power be destroyed after 2-3 bombs) or more to deploy enough bombs accurately will likely end in death.

I have observed that the B-Wing’s ion beam, in practice mode, does not destroy the power subsystem alone on one full charge. It must be supplemented by the starfighter’s integrated ion cannons to ensure complete destruction.

It should be noted that the bomber would have to return to the hangar to exchange their loadout after either of the sorties on the frigates’ shields or the power subsystem are successfully completed.

The use of the bomber pilot to implement this strategy is also advantageous in that the fighter pilot is now free to provide extra cover against enemy starfighters.