Intro

Dominion Strike is a strategic space simulation system based on web technologies – HTML and Java applets. Simple web pages represent game menus, briefing and help systems. Robust Java applet makes all game action. The game is distributed under General Public License so anybody can take a part in its development. Actually, the game's architecture encourages user changes. All missions have written on simple script language and stored in ordinary text files. Object models also stored in text files. All game's graphics available in gif and jpeg formats so anybody can modify it. Finally, game builds by Sun's Java Development Kit which available at no charge on www.sun.com. This deliver to final user full control under the game.

Acquiring the Program and Installation

To begin playing Dominion Strike you first will need web browser with support Java Runtime Environment version 1.4 or above. You can obtain JRE installation program at no charge from Sun Microsystems – visit http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.4.2/download.html.

After Java Runtime Environment is successfully installed you can play the game.

The game totally bases on web technologies, therefore needs no or little installation settings.

Basically you have two options – play the game from you local system (recommended) or play the game through the Web. We suggest that you download game files to you local system. Playing through the Web requires robust Internet connection, otherwise you can face with long delays while files passing to you computer.

Actually, it is no difference at all how to play – from local system or from the Web. In both cases game represents using web browser interface. To start the game you just need to point web browser on game's start page.

To play on-line go to http://www.gamelet.somee.com/dominion/strike/.

To play on local system: download zipped archive from www.gamelet.somee.com/dominion/downloads.asp.

Unpack archive in any place on you hard drive. When unpacking is complete, folder named 'Dominion' will appear – open it. Finally, open in web browser file dominion.html to start the game.

Getting Started

Welcome to our Network, Commander.

Our ancestors were surfing WWW for text and graphical information. Now we can control through the Web interface whole fleets leading them to the victory.

This part of the manual familiarizes you with the basics of web control.

You begin your exploration of Dominion Universe from start page. Explore menus to see what options you have.

It will take some time for a new player to become familiar with all aspects of space flight we recommend you to start with training missions. This allow you to get

basic skills which will be of use to you in campaign missions. It is well worth taking time out to flight on miscellaneous space crafts and to control them by sophisticated task management system. Tactical experience will be useful later on.

Mission Structure.

Currently, the game has linear mission structure. However, future missions can include winning and loosing branches (like ones we've seen in Wing Commander). Engine has all capabilities needed.

You can choose any mission you like. But the overall plot of campaign makes more sense if you complete them in numerical order.

Briefing page with some bits of story and objectives are displaying before every mission. It is necessary information and we suggest you read it before clicking on Begin Mission link.

Web Console

Todays modern fleets control through the Web by experienced commanders. You belong to these elite.

It might sound obvious, but it is impotent to learn Web control if you are going to win impending battles. Outside the basic movement and firing there are many other key commands that allow you to control entrusted fleet group.

In Dominion Strike knowing what is going on is a key to success. You can be the best star pilot in the Galaxy, but only several missions will be depended on flight skills. The others demand from you tactical movements and skilled maneuvers. All your crafts must be attacking the right targets in the right time. And Web Console control gives you all tools helping to understand what is going on and to take appropriate actions.

Tactical controls

It seems like movement and fire control must be the main goal of this section. Instead we start with some tactical keys. Movement and fire are significant in space simulators. But in strategic space simulation tactical controls obtain more impotence.

Basic thing to remember is that you can get into any craft of you fleet group (sometimes it is only one craft). But also you can surf the battlefield in the free-look mode – that gives you more freedom and more information about surrounding space.

The mission usually begins in some craft. Press Q key to switch into the free-look mode. Camera will detach from the craft and take some negative acceleration. So you will see the craft flying ahead of you.

Now you are in free-look mode. You can move quickly around the scene and watch for you and enemy ships and fighters actions (see the section below to know how to do it). If you sight on one of you craft you can push down 'Space' button. In this case camera will bind to this object. It very useful feature and we suggest you use it on the battlefield.

Key E puts you in the next craft from the list. Key W puts you in the previous. You can cycle all available object using these keys. Pressing Enter key will bind camera to ship, currently tracked by targeting system (displayed on Task Screen).

Pressing Shift+1-9 keys combination switch camera to specific camera views (Shift+1 inside the ship, Shift+2 behind the ship and so on...). Pressing Shift+Q will cycle through all available views.

And the most impotent key – T. It allows you to get manual control over the craft.

Movement controls

You can change movement vector by cursor keys. Up and down keys change your pitch speed, left and right affect your yaw speed. It will be some time before pitch or yaw speed reach its maximum value or back to zero. That effect especially perceptible on the massive crafts. You must take into account inertia than flying capital ships or heavy boat.

Speed controls

Velocity is the one of the most significant variables in the game.

Velocity is always relative value. It sets relative to a planet or another significant object nearby. Value is expressed in meters per second.

Current object speed shows on Status Screen (described below) as blue column. It can be positive or negative (yes, you can flight backward; it is space after all!).

To increase speed value press A key. To decrease press Z key. S will set you speed to zero value. Press X to adjust velocity to cruise value. D will adjust you speed to the speed of you current target (showed on target display). It is useful to escort and intercept mission. But this will not work properly when target can get more speed that your are.

Velocity changed with fixed acceleration which depended on mass on the craft and its engine power. Which means that larger ships will be accelerate or decelerate slowly. Meantime, smaller space crafts are more agile.

Radar

This sophisticated instrument shows three-dimensional view of the battle scene. Radar screen located at top right of web console. On radar you are placed in center of the screen.

Objects detected by your radar are displayed in dots. You can approximate the size of the target by size of dots. Therefore, capital ship appears on radar screen as big spot. Fighter will be only small dot. But note, that buoys appear on radar screen as big marks. That is not correspond their size – buoys are quite small. But they have enormous reflective properties to be well remarkable.

Radar shows color image that based on friend-or-foe scanning system. Color reflects side of the object. However there is no specific color for friend or hostile crafts. Color depended on mission adjustment and can change from mission to mission. Your color is a color of the dot in center of the screen (this is craft binded to your camera). The spots of the same color is another ships or boats on your side. Neutral objects are displayed in white (usually all buoys are neutral).

View creates from horizontal plate in which placed your camera (changing camera view reflects on radar screen regardless of the fact that camera still binded to

the same object). Vertical line coming out the spot indicates distance from object to the plate in which your camera placed. So, if spot doesn't have vertical line the object is in you plate. Yawing you camera eventually bring it in your sight. This is basic targeting practice. To bring object in your sight you must remove vertical line and place spot on central vertical line on the screen.

Reading radar spots is essential for orientation in surrounding space.

Initially, radar screen adjust to show picture 6000 meters ahead (so, from center of the screen to the top of it displayed space 6 kilometers ahead you). You can change screen resolution from 2000 meters to 100000 by pressing + and – keys.

Target Screen

This device located on right down corner of web console.

There are current task in top of the target screen. First indicator can be in three states: None, Follow and Attack. Next to it in two rows displayed primary and secondary task target. Objects class short name and objects name are displayed. Aggressive level adjustments placed below – numbers from 1 to 4. Current aggressive level shows in red color. Right to it current flight plan are printed. What mean all this stuff and how to change it described below in Task Control section.

Below your ship task placed information about current target (it could be primary or secondary target, but generally any object can be tracking by targeting system right now). Wirefare diagram of corresponding class-type are displayed. And right to it printed current information about target velocity, shield, hull and current objectives. Objects class, objects name and distance to object are displayed below. Note that object name are displayed in color of its side.

Task Screen is most significant and sophisticated device on the web console. In the beginning its readings seems meaningless. But after some practice you will never regret having such useful and informative device on console.

We will describe some Task Screen key below.

Pressing space adjust targeting system to object nearby your sight.

To cycle all objects on scene in forward or backward orders press [or].

Press P to list navigation objects only (navigation points, buoys).

Key O list only hostile objects while key I list all friends.

To select nearest enemy, targeting you, press U. To select nearest enemy, attacking you target, press Y.

Status Screen

This screen shows status of the craft your camera currently binded to. On top of the screen showed current craft class and name.

Here described all columns from left to right.

SPD: Current speed. Can be positive or negative. Zero value indicates horizontal green line in the center of bar.

FUL: Fuel banks value. Decreasing during maneuvers.

SHD: Shield level. Shield protecting the ship from hits. Every hit decrease shield level and when shield level completely shrinks hulls integrity indicator begins decreasing. Shield level slowly restoring from energy bank.

HUL: Hull integrity level. Decreasing when craft got hit and there are no more shield energy left. Then it reaches to zero value, space ship blows up.

LEB: Energy bank. Provide crafts systems with emergency power. If space ship's shield was affected, it restored from energy bank. Laser fire also takes big amounts of energy from banks. Energy bank level slowly restoring by ship's fusion reactor.

Missile/Rocket/Torpedo launcher – Letters under this red indicator identify type of the device that will be launched. This bar shows how many devices available to launch. Note, that it could be not only missiles and such, but fighters, bombers and the other light crafts (if camera binded to a carrier). This is good thing about launchers – you will launch carrying fighters in the same way as launching missiles or torpedoes. This is very useful unification since there is no needs in special launch mechanism for carriers.

RCH: Launcher's ready status. Indicates how many seconds left to ready status. When bar full and on top of it zero value displayed you can launch device. This indicator is essential since you can't launch missiles one by one. There is always some time pass before next missile will be loaded to launcher. In case with fighters this will continue about a minute.

Indicators

In bottom of the screen, near the Task Screen, you will find several useful indicators. First displays current control status. AUTO means that ship is under computer control and execute current orders (displayed on the Task Screen). MANUAL means that ship is under your control.

Next indicator – COLLISION. It will be bright red when collision threat appeared.

Next indicator shows mission time. Minutes and seconds.

Message Board

This device allow you tracking all events on the scene. Message board prints reports about destroyed ships and also impotent information about mission objectives.

You can list messages by pressing PageUp and PageDown keys.

Game Control

You can change timing to pass through boring moments by pressing Ctrl+T. Time can be set to x1, x2 and x4 values.

Press Ctrl+P for game pause. Press any key after to bring game from pause. Many gamers prefer to use statis space (turned by F4) instead of pause.

Press F1 for help and F2 for quick key reference. Game turns to pause and new browser window will appear.

Pressing Esc key brings message about current mission status and after confirmation by Space key mission ends.