

An Excellent E-Wing Demonstration

By Jagged Fell III

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...

The TIE Corps of the Emperor's Hammer has recently reactivated the Infiltrator Wing and placed it aboard the MC90 Mon Calamari Cruiser Renegade, a part of Battlegroup III under Admiral Stryker. The Infiltrator Wing is a special unit within the Emperor's Hammer dedicated to performing both covert operations within New Republic territory and false flag operations posing as New Republic forces. As such their command ship, the Renegade, a captured MC80 rebel cruiser, re-built as the improved MC90 model, and their fighter craft are all of apparent New Republic manufacture.

As such they are limited in the craft they can deploy as unlike in the main TIE Corps fleet, Infiltrator can not utilize the engineering and creative geniuses of the TIE Corps Science Office to field new and improved craft. But are limited to the fighters and ships developed by the New Republic. The wing fields squadrons equipped with the various rebel craft, the A-Wing, B-Wing, X-Wing, and Y-Wing. But a notable omission in the craft selection can be noticed. Where is the E-Wing? A craft designed to replace the X-Wing with superior firepower, speed, and defenses, yet has never been widely adopted in the New Republic, and as such not used by the Infiltrator Wing either.

Colonel Locke Setzer and General La'an are ardent believers that the E-Wing is a far superior craft to any that the Rebels are currently using. They chalk this up to an overly powerful X-Wing lobby. They wish to show the rest of Battlegroup III the merits of this forgotten craft. They have, with the blessing of Admiral Stryker, arranged a demonstration of the E-Wing's formidable capabilities. Their hope is that by showing the E-Wings superiority, it may become a more widely used craft in the Infiltrator Wing of the Emperor's Hammer. Although how effective that would be as the New Republic does not widely use the craft is not important in this operation.

General Master was annoyed. He had sourced an expensive and incredibly hard to find bottle of Whyren's Reserve. He also liked chalcuila, but when he could get it, his go to drink was Corellian whiskey, and Whyren's was the best that Corellia had to offer. Today was a day off for Typhoon Squadron, and he had plans to go to the pilots' lounge and get quite "happy" today while playing cards and swapping stories

with his mates. But now he had been summoned to the briefing room by the Wing X Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Denys Elara, and he wasn't happy about it. Up ahead of him walking along the dark grey corridor was his Squadron Commander, General Triji Boliv.

"So, you are getting dragged into this too? Got any idea what Elara wants? It's our day off and I was just about to start having some fun."

"Good morning to you too, Master. I think I heard something about a dog and pony show they are putting together, but I don't know any more than that."

"But if that is true, why do I have to be involved? I mean I can understand you being the squadron commander and all, but why am I here? I got plans I want to get to."

"You know what they say, 'ours not to reason why.' But we both know what your 'plans' are and you can get back to them once we finish whatever they need us for."

They entered the briefing room and took their seats around the holo-projector in the center of the room. Master was surprised by those in attendance. Looking around he saw the expected faces of Lieutenant Colonel Elara and Admiral Stryker, but then also saw Colonel Locke Setzer sitting near the podium, and General Jarek La'an, Major Colo Delste, and Lieutenant Commander Vanguard88 were also in seats around the projector.

"What is going on here?" he asked. In that moment, almost as if in response to his question Admiral Stryker stepped up to the podium and the lights in the room automatically dimmed as lighting focused on the podium brightened.

"I am sure many of you are wondering what you are doing here today," began Admiral Stryker. "Colonel Locke Setzer and General La'an are ardent believers that the E-Wing is a far superior craft to any that the Rebels are currently using. They chalk this up to an overly powerful X-Wing lobby. They wish to show the rest of Battlegroup III the merits of this forgotten craft and have, with my blessing, arranged a demonstration of the E-Wing's formidable capabilities. Their hope is that by showing the E-Wings superiority, it may become a more widely used craft in the Infiltration Wing of the Emperor's Hammer. Although, how effective that would be as the New Republic does not widely use the craft, is not important in this operation."

"Colonel Setzer is flying lead position during this demonstration with General La'an flying on his wing. They will both be flying Series 1 E-Wings that Fleet Admiral Xavier Siemar helped provide to the fleet earlier in his career. Members of Battlegroup III, including myself and Lieutenant Colonel Elara, will be observing the demonstration from a Lambda class shuttle at the outskirts of each demonstration area."

"Now here is Colonel Setzer to provide a detailed briefing on what we expect to see during this demonstration," finished Admiral Stryker and he step down from the podium and took a seat as Colonel Setzer took the stage.

The projector fired up beginning to show red icons of E-Wings flashing up into the space in the middle of the room as Locke began to speak.

"General La'an and I will be flying in Series 1 E-Wings for this operation. For simplicity, we will retain our normal call signs of Typhoon 1-2 and Typhoon 2-1 respectively."

Now more icons of a Class II Star Destroyer and a Mon Cal Cruiser appeared.

“Battlegroup III is currently in the Iphigin System, among the Core Worlds. We will first travel to the Aleron System for the first stage of the demonstration.”

The field flashed showing the transition to a new area and icons of TIE Fighters and TIE Interceptors started to appear and join in combat with the E-Wings.

“Here, General La’an and I will take on increasingly larger groups of Imperial fighters to show the capabilities of the E-Wing against the Empire’s forces.”

“The opposing fighters are all being remotely piloted, and no TIE Corps personnel will be injured in this demonstration.”

“After the opposition has been destroyed, resupply ships will be available to General La’an and myself to refresh our ordnance and we will then travel to the Vindalia System.”

The projector field again flashed and now blue pirate platform and fighters appear as the E-Wing into the area. The simulated combat is quite mundane, just the ships coming near each other and then the blue pirate icon flashing and disappearing.

“Our reports are that there is a pirate presence in the Vindalia System. This will give the General and I the ability to show the E-Wing against pirate forces.”

“Once again, after all pirate fighters have been destroyed, we will be able to be resupplied before traveling to our destination, the Fondor System.”

One final time the field flashes and a green rebel base dominates the field with similarly green X-Wing and Y-Wing icons dancing around the area with the red E-Wings. Once they too flash and disappear the E-Wings move to the resupply ship and then attack the rebel base itself.

“The rebels have established a base in the outskirts of the Fondor System that we will attack to show the E-Wing against the New Republic’s current fighter forces.”

“After all the rebel fighters are destroyed, we will be able to resupply in case we wish to do some damage to the rebel’s base before we leave. That will be all for today.”

The lights in the room came back up as the projector powered down. A light buzz of conversation about the demonstration broke out among those present.

“Ok, so Locke is to blame for us losing our day off,” said Master with more than a little displeasure in his voice.

“It would seem so,” replied Boliv neutrally.

“Did it look like to you that all the drones in the first area will be unshielded?” asked Master.

“I noticed that too. That doesn’t seem like it would really show the abilities of the E-Wing,” answered Boliv.

“Or the skill of their pilots. Maybe we could do something to help the quality of this demonstration,” mused Master.

“Maybe,” Boliv said in response, possibly a bit of mischief in his eye.

Master gave him a big toothy grin and beckoned him to follow him out of the room. They would have to hurry; the demonstration would start as soon as Locke and La’an transferred over to the Renegade where the E-Wings were being hangered.

Colonel Locke Setzer had just finished his preflight checks for the E-Wing he was about to take out to show all that it, and he, could do. He had selected a loadout of Advanced Proton Torpedoes and had them fit an Energy beam generator to the ship, to give him that bit of extra speed. He looked over and saw that General La’an was finished with his pre-flight checks too and was waiting on his signal to launch. He gave it and shunted power to his repulsor lift coils and moved his E-Wing out of the Renegade’s hanger, into open space.

His sleek fighter with it’s bent wing design, armed with it’s three Taim & Bak IX9 laser cannons, rocketed into the space of the Iphigin System, quickly reaching it normal cruising speed of 120 MGLT. Locke shunted the power from the extra energy beam to the engines and the fighter accelerated to 150 MGLT as he brought his fighter around onto the heading for his first hyperspace jump to the Aleron System.

As he flew up over the organic flowing form of the Renegade, in its mottled shades of blues he took a moment to look around at the ringed gas giant they where in high orbit above and the multiple nebula large in the sky of this core world system. He keyed his radio to the fighter-to-fighter frequency and hit the push-to-talk switch.

“Alright La’an, let’s show them how good these fighters really are.”

“You bet, Colonel. I can’t wait until they see what we can do,” came the prompt reply.

Just as he reached the hyperspace exit point marked on his display, he smoothly moved the hyperdrive activation levers back and leapt forward with that brief moment of pseudo-motion and into hyperspace. He didn’t have long to wait as the Aleron System was a short journey for the Class 2 hyperdrive equipped fighter.

As he reverted to real-space he saw the asteroid field all around him, a yellow sun off to his port side, high above the plane of the asteroids. Of course, this was not a surprise to him as he and La’an had been setting up this demonstration for days now, getting the hanger craft positioned across from each other and a marker buoy anchored in the middle of the test area. La’an’s E-Wing popped out of hyperspace behind him and so did the Lambda shuttle Monsoon carrying the observers.

“Let’s head to the center of the Test Area to start,” announced Locke into the radio.

The shuttle started its orbit of the hyperspace exit point while Locke and La’an moved towards the marker buoy to start the demonstration.

“Remember that we are not to damage the hangers or Stryker might put an end to this demonstration,” reminded La’an. They had agreed they wouldn’t shoot the drones as they left the hangers

as that would be a fair test. And Admiral Stryker was quite clear than he would not tolerate damage to his hangers. Already he was having to sacrifice two dozen fighters to this demonstration and did not want to lose any more Battlegroup assets. As they reach the marker buoy the first wave of two TIE Fighters launched from the hanger to their rear.

“Ok, here they come,” Locke called over the radio to La’an.

Locke quickly targeted the lead craft and brought his agile fighter around to make a head-to-head pass on the unshielded foe. He trusted that La’an would down his target and the shields on their craft would protect them from any shots the drones got off before they were destroyed.

The opposing forces quickly closed the initial 4-kilometer distance and Locke began his linked fire shots from just outside of optimal range. His scarlet bolts stabbed into the unshielded ball cockpit of the TIE fighter and it exploded in a small ball of fire. At the same moment General La’an’s opponent also succumbed to a quick, fiery death.

Even as the debris clouds were still spreading, another flight of TIE fighters, this time with four craft, launched from the other hanger, now over 6 kilometers to their rear. Locke quickly turned his fighter end-over-end and punched his throttle to it maximum to try and close the distance with the new flight before the drones drifted too far apart. Too late, just as he was beginning to get a target lock for his proton torpedoes the flight broke apart to begin their attacks on him and La’an. He quickly switched his firing controls back to his lasers and dived towards the nearest fighter. It was no match for his E-Wing’s speed and maneuverability. He quickly vaped his two fighters and soon after saw La’an finish a looping turn to get on the tail of his last target and quickly turn it into an expanding vapor.

Dumping the power from his laser systems into his engines, this time Locke managed to get into warhead lock range and quickly launched a double warhead shot at the middle TIE all before the drones broke their formation. The brilliant explosion destroyed all six TIE fighters of this final wave at once. Suddenly his radio crackled to life.

“Locke, that was lame. I mean a guy in a spacesuit with a good pistol can take down an unshielded TIE,” General Master’s voice broke in.

“Come on Master, they got Interceptors coming in now, they are just showing a progression of targets,” reasoned General Boliv.

“I guess,” replied Master, unconvinced.

Locke pushed Master’s skepticism from his mind as he dove at the pair of TIE Interceptors now coming up to meet him and La’an. They worked well together, as befitted the years they had served together in the TIE Corps. They made short work of the still unshielded TIE Interceptors. This time, Locke’s dual torpedo tactic only took out two craft of the final wave of interceptors and they had to go at it with lasers once again.

After the dust settled Locke signaled for the Combat Utility Vehicle Storm Cloud to hyper in and he keyed his mike.

“Ok, let’s rearm if needed and head to Vindalia to see if we can find some pirates.”

But as he was making his way over to the reload craft he heard his radio crackle to life once again, he had a bad feeling about this...

“That was too easy Locke. Here is a better challenge,” announced Master as a pair of TIE Advanced fighters entered the system from hyperspace and immediately locked onto Locke’s E-wing.

He dived away from the vulnerable CUV and quickly came about to engage the high-tech fighter who had him in its sights. It took him a moment to break the advanced’s lock of him and to engage it in turn war. The E-Wing was on near equal level this time and it was down to the skill of Colonel Setzer to win his contest and start pouring red bolts into the aft shields of the TIE. It tried to jink away but Locke was determined to not let it get away. As its shield finally collapsed and the fighter was destroyed by his lasers he looked down to see that La’an had finished his off first this time and had been maneuvering to take out Locke’s target if it had managed to shake Locke off of its tail.

Locke didn’t have time to get on the radio to ask Master what he was doing as just after the second TIE Advanced was destroyed, four more jumped into the system. Locke was ready for them though and he quickly got a dual torpedo shot off at the closest fighter, reducing it to dust before it had finished slowing from hyperspace. This time he and La’an were the attackers and managed to make quick work of the other three advanced fighters, although not without taking a few shots against their shields.

Just as Locke was about to radio Master and give him a piece of his mind, the last thing he expected in that moment happened. His friend Triji came on and said, “Ok, but what about against top-of-the-line fighters?”

Just then two kriffing TIE Defenders jumped in. Now he was in trouble. The E-Wing was a great fighter, but not at the level of a Defender. He wasted no time on how unfair it was that his supposed friends had messed with his craft demonstration and quickly tried to get a torpedo lock on the closest Defender. It was no good, the Defender was just too fast for the computer to get a good lock. Locke switch back over to lasers and did a button hook maneuver to get onto the first Defender’s tail. Quickly he triggered shot after shot into the shields of the Defender but before he could batter down its shields the other Defender came in from above and put half a dozen shots into Locke’s shields before he knew quite what was happening. Locke’s finely honed instincts saved him as he quickly climbed up and to starboard getting him out of the line of fire.

His shields indicator showed his shields were down to a quarter of their full strength. But he didn’t let up the pressure. He knew that if he let the TIE Defenders make uses of their greater speed he would be done for. He made his evasive maneuver into a hammerhead loop and got back on the original Defender’s tail and finished it off before its wingman could slow and turn from its attack run. Just then a torpedo raced in from out of the blue and skewered the second TIE Defender, ending the fight.

As Locke dumped all his fighter’s power into bringing his shields back up to full strength, he heard General Boliv over the radio say, “Ok, color me impressed. I didn't think my Defender would do that badly.” Locke didn’t tell him how close he had been to having to punch out. Locke calmly flew over to the Storm Cloud and reloaded his expended torpedoes as his shield’s finished recharging. He rebalanced his fighter’s power systems and leapt into hyperspace towards the Vindalia System.

As they all came out of hyperspace, they saw a pirate space platform in the system above a turquoise world. Fighters were starting to launch from it as Admiral Stryker's voice came over the radio, "Looks like you have found the pirates you were hoping for. Destroy them."

After the initial waves had been dealt with, Supra fighters began to be deployed, but after the TIE Defenders they were not much of a challenge. As Locke destroyed the last craft in the second wave of Supras he heard Major Delste offer the opinion, "Those are easy to kill, but they at least have shields."

Once La'an and Locke finished the last of the defending fighters they just fired their proton torpedoes at maximum range into the pirate platform until it was melted into slag. Once again, they reloaded and flew onto Fondor, excited to show the E-Wing against true New Republic targets.

In the Fondor System, orbiting a blue and white gas giant they found their ultimate target for the demonstration, a rebel base. Just as they approached the rebel base an obviously drunk General Master came on the radio.

"Finally. <hic> A real fight <hic>"

"General Master, is that a whiskey bottle? We are on duty!" an outraged Elara broke in.

"What? I'm not flying. <hic> They are," replied smartly General Master.

"General, please go sit down. We will talk about this at a later time," ordered Admiral Stryker.

"Yes <hic> sir," managed Master before the radio finally went silent.

Y-Wings began launching as they approached, a quick strafing pass and the first wave was destroyed. Locke once again took advantage of the fact that the fighters would have to be close together as they launched and fired dual torpedoes into each wave as they cleared the hanger. La'an then did his part to finish off the wounded with his lasers. After a total of 8 waves of first Y-Wings, then X-Wings, and finally A-Wings fighters the base finally went quiet.

As Locke made his way back to the Storm Cloud to reload his ordnance so that he could blow up the rebel base an unfamiliar voice broke over his radio channel.

"Do you think we are going to let 2 E-Wings destroy this base? Think again Imperials!" It was the rebel base calling on their frequency, Locke didn't know how they had managed it.

Just then a whole rebel fleet jump in on top of the base. There were three Mon Calamari cruisers and two Corellian Corvettes, along with two full squadrons of X-Wings all bearing down on Colonel Locke. This did not look good. Just then Admiral Stryker called and said the most unexpected thing of the day, "Colonel Setzer, you have shown the E-Wings ability well. Let the rest of the Battlegroup handle this Rebel Fleet." As the whole of Battlegroup III jump in above the rebels.

The rebels had no chance against a full Emperor's Hammer Battlegroup. They fell quickly to the torrential fire unleashed from the Imperial fighters and Infiltrator craft alike. So too did the rebel base succumb to the awesome might of the Challenge and Renegade.

After Locke and General La'an returned to the Challenge from the Renegade they joined Admiral Stryker in the briefing room for the admiral's normal post mission debrief, their flight suites were a little damp from the day exertions.

"You certainly have shown the E-Wing to be very capable against all manner of opposition forces, Colonel Setzer and General La'an. We here in Battlegroup III, and in the TIE Corps Command as a whole, have much to think on for how to best use this resource," began Admiral Stryker.

"I still have concerns on the effectiveness of its use in the Infiltrator Wing due to the lack of widespread adoption in the New Republic, but they are not unheard of either in Republic Space, so their use could be justified," he continued.

"I will give this more thought and get back to you on how we can best use this craft in the future," concluded Admiral Stryker.

The day's demonstration was completed, with more action than Locke had anticipated. Now to go find Generals Master and Boliv and get some payback for those unexpected drones in the first region.

THE END