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### 1. "Operation Clean Sweep, Gnug style"

Do you sometimes feel in need of metal, but can't seem to find the time to go about reclaiming the rocks lying scattered about there in the middle of King Of The Hill? Try picking a construction unit and setting it on patrol through all the rocks. You can even use the minimap: "M" move construction unit to starting point, SHIFT-P at end of patrol route.

On maps with less dense gatherings of reclaimable rocks than the abovementioned one, try picking a construction aircraft and go crazy SHIFT-P'ing all over the map. Although the unit itself is less efficient than if you gave it a specific rock-to-rock route, this should save you above 90% realtime in issuing the commands, thereby giving you more time for things like spelling out your name in Dragon Teeth in your own personalized bitmap-font.

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### 2. "Bombing Runs, Gnug Style"

With a little practice, bombers can increase in effectiveness manyfold. The trick is that bombers have ZERO reload rate - if you time it well enough, you can release bombs from your bomber in a steady ongoing stream almost without pause. It is possible in this way to cut a straight line all the way through a base. Or you can just target a row of metal mines, like f.ex. on Lava & Two Hills, islands on Gods Of War, or Coast To Coast (well, any map really). Your bomber should be able to take out no less than four mines in one raid diagonally across your opponents' base, providing it isn't shot down before it completes it's run, ofcourse.

How? Just "A" attack the spot where you want it to bomb. As soon as you hear the sound of the bombs being released, you are free to choose your next target. It takes little practice to really optimize the tactic, but it's easy enough once you get the hang of it. A cheap countemeasure that comes in handy on the abovementioned maps is placing Defenders/Pulverizers right in front of the metal extractors.

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### 3. "On Reclaiming Functional Structures/Units"

The time it takes to reclaim a building depends on two things: the speed at which you are reclaiming (like build speed, there is the oppotsite: reclaim speed), and the health of the struture or unit you wish to reclaim.

So besides using your cmdr to reclaim something rather than a construction aircraft, there

is one more thing you can do to speed up the process: damage the building to within a sliver to destroying it, so that the reclaiming business becomes only a matter of seconds.

Here's a quick example:

You play on the map Coast To Coast. You want to build a Big Bertha asap. The road to the quickest Big Bertha is a strongly debated subject, but one of the only certain things about it is that at some point should reclaim your adv. kbot/veh/air lab/plant to put the 2400 metal or so into the Big Bertha instead of having to wait approximately 4 minutes longer in order to earn the metal by normal means to get it online and pumping. Use your defensive units/structures (defenders/pulverisers should do nicely here) to pummel on the building before you reclaim it, thereby shaving off additional precious seconds in your mission towards your main goal.

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#### 4. "That Little Extra Something"

A very small, yet still occasionally useful trick, is to exploit a weapons' blast and/or random radius to take out otherwise unreachable targets. Let's say you've spotted a juicy target just out side your Big Bertha's range. Try doing an "A" attack as close to the target as possible. The randomness of the Bertha's range will result in a shot occasionally travelling far enough to strike the target.

Another alike trick is to exploit the blast radius of a unit's weapon. Many types of weapons have a blast radius, like f.ex. CORE's Dominator kbot and both sides' Plasma Cannons.

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#### 5. "Line of Sight, Gnug Style"

When your huge Samson/Slasher army patrolling the highways on Painted Desert gets attacked by something out of their LoS, there is a quicker way of retaliating than trying to get a visual on the enemy units: hit "G" for guard with your samson group selected and guard the unit being attacked. Your group will fire at the enemy unit without having to obtain contact via LoS or radar first.

This way is far more effective than setting the group to rush forward into more direct fire in order to obtain visual contact so they start firing by themselves. Then again, it requires far more realtime in guiding the battle, leaving you less time for resource management and base decorations. The trick of guarding the unit receiving fire from something out of LoS and radar can be applied in many situations, ofcourse, with many different units. You could f.eks. use a sub and guard the skeeters getting hit by shells from an enforcer to make sure the sub attacks the enforcer from max range without even having to get into visual or radar contact with it.

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#### 6. "Low-level Harassment"

When you play a large map such as Painted Desert, harassing your opponent in the beginning can be well worth it. One way to take out a series of metal extractors the opponent might just have placed in, around, and away from his base, is to pick just one unit and shift-"M" it to each metal mine you can see. With +shootall activated it will shoot the metal extractor until it is dead, and move on to the next spot in it's move-queue. If there is no mine built on the spot, it will ofcourse move on to the next predesignated location immediately. Another way of doing this is

setting a unit to circle the area around a mine a few times before moving on.. this just takes more time for both you and the unit, esp. if there turns out to be no extractor built on the mine.

Obviously the point is that you only have to issue the commands once, and not follow the unit while it's on it's way, thereby saving you precious amounts of the all-important resource called Real Time.

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## 7. "Cutting down on RealTime micromanagement"

If for nothing else but to avoid your units from clogging up your own base and vehicle plants etc, it is almost always worthwhile to set your vehicle plant (or whatever) to "M" move the units away and even set them to patrol somewhere useful. (Select plant, "M" move to starting point, shift-"P" patrol thru waypoints to end of route).

The most common use of this is to set a gathering point somewhere where you can later go and select them for use as a fresh new group, but through utilization of the ctrl-Z command or the new grouping options in 3.0 where one can set the production facilities themselves to automatically assign new units to predesignated group-#'s, one wastes little by immediately setting them to a patrol route either in an area you wish to control, protecting your own base or acting as a part of a seige on your opponent's base.

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## 8. "Become Familiar with the Command Controls"

Make sure you are familiar with every option you have for issuing commands in the game. Everything and anything may well come in handy some time - if not now, then maybe when you get more experienced. A few examples of commands you might not be aware of could be:

- Capturing locations with Ctrl-F5-F9 (center on captured locations with Alt-F5-F9) - useful for remembering where that antinuke silo was for later raiding.
- Selecting all construction units with Ctrl-B - cycle through them once they're selected with "T" in order to find the ones waiting for orders.
- Cycling thru order/build menus with "." and "," (or 1-6 if you have +switchalt off) - saves you the extra time it takes to hit the buttons on the menubar with your cursor.
- Etc etc...

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## 9. "Airplant Orders"

Try to make sure your aircraft do anything but just land on the ground after they are built. They do no good there but get in the way, and you might get them damaged or even lose them all in a surprise ground rush, bombing raid, sudden incoming Bertha shells, nukes etc etc.

With construction aircraft this could be setting the airplant to patrol the units it produces over itself, so that each construction aircraft automatically starts helping out the aircraft plant with it's next unit. With fighters it might be by setting a patrol route for them right off the bat. With bombers it might be placing them in a hovering position in the corner for later use ("M" move to spot, shift-"P" on same spot).

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## 10. "Save Dying Metal"

When one of your production plants is getting attacked, and the unit you have ordered it to produce doesn't stand a chance of completing it's construction, cancel it to get the metal you have already put into it back at a 100% rate.

This is obviously more important the more expensive and close to completion the unit is. Subs are some of the most important units to make sure to cancel when it looks as if they wont make it off the assembly line, with their approx. 1100 metal and fast build time. Also, maybe you should give your budding Krogoth a little rational consideration when you spot those 80 advanced bombers make a nice-looking bow formation and head right for the your Krogoth Gantry.

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## 11. "Loop Your Build-Queues"

When you order a construction unit out into the field to build defensive fortifications, radars and metal extractors, one way of ensuring you don't forget them out there is by issuing them an order to return and help out in your base upon completion. This is a good habit to get into, and will ensure you don't - ever - have contruction units just standing around on the battle field doing nothing.

There are endless ways of Looping. Setting them to guard a plant or another construction unit when they are done is the safest way to make sure they aren't forgotten. Another way might be to build a radar as the last structure. When you notice the sound of it coming online you know a construction unit is finished - this is maybe not quite as foolproof though (you being the fool).

Looping your construction units back to guarding a plant or other construction unit (cmdr, f.ex.) works far best with construction aircraft, and not so well with kbots. The size of the map and the flow of the battle is also quite relevent, ofcourse. If you're pounding away at your opponents' base on the other side of Painted Desert, bringing your construction vehicles back from the middle of the map rapidly loses it's relevance.

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## 12. "On Group Numbers"

Units aren't alone in benifitting from being assigned group numbers. Having your defenders, Bertha, Nuke silo, Cloakable Fusion and Metal Makers etc on a number also comes in handy.

New in 3.0 is the ability to assign a group-# to f.ex. vehicle plant (or any construction structure). All units produced by the structure will automatically be assigned that group number. There are several useful uses for this new option, but I'll let you figure them out by yourself..

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## 13. "Oh, Stuff It"

A way to disable an your opponents' Krogoth Gantry with minimal resources is to simply park a unit in the driveway, and let it die there. You'll notice your cursor goes into Attack mode when you hold it over your opponents' Gantry with your unit selected? Just hit "M" for Move, and you'll be able to drive/walk your unit right in there and clog up the exit. The Gantry wont be able to release any Krogoths before the mess it cleaned out of the way.

Ofcourse, this goes for Vehicle, Kbot and Hovercraft production facilities too. And no, it's not "cheap" or "cheating" - it's effective. Learn it, use it, gnug it.

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## 14. "Jeffy-bombing"

Originally invented and mercilessly implemented by a Swede called SJ, an effective Jeffy-bombing will leave your jaw down by the floor the first time you experience it. The idea is simple, the result devastating.

Build bombers, preferably adv. ones. Build a scout vehicle, like f.eks. the Jeffy (ARM) or the Weasel (CORE). Set a group of bombers to Guard your Jeffy/Weasel. Scout your enemy's base with stuff. Shift-"A" Attack a target in your opponents' base with enough bombers to take it out. Select a new group and repeat ad nauseum, picking a new target with a new set of bombers every time you scout.

When you're ready, selfdestruct (CTRL-D) your Jeffy. The bombers will stop guarding it (since it's dead), and move on to executing the next order in their Order Queue: each squad will set forth to bomb it's pre-designated target in the opponents' base, thereby maximizing the blow on the base in one single fly-over, while minimizing the effect of his or her anti-air measures.

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## 15. "Heat-Seeking Bombing Raids"

Yes, it's another tip to do with bombing. Guess there's a lot to know about it. As usual, I'll be brief:

Select a squad of adv. bombers, "G" guard one of your units like in yesterday's tip. Use Peepers/Finks to scout your opponent. When you spot his cmdr, shift-"A" Attack him with your bombers. Wait a bit, about enough time for your opponent to know that you weren't intending to bomb his cmdr - right away, at least. When you think he's feeling relaxed again, maybe distract him with a small raid or something, just enough so he pays attention to the skirmish. Then self-"D" Destruct the unit your bombers were guarding. They'll proceed to bomb your opponents' cmdr, even if he's moved since you targetted him.

I've seen this work on Coast To Coast in a game once: one side had been shelled by a Bertha for a while, but managed to keep building adv. bombers and set them to Guard a metalmaker in the corner. When he had no structures left he raided his opponents with a few Skeeters and then released his bombers on his opponnent's cmdr by self-"D" the Metal Maker they had been set to guard. His opponent, who had wandered up to hide in the corner after he had been spotted guarding an airplant on the middle of the coast about two minutes earlier, must have been surprised to see the bombers come thundering in from above, half of them from outside the screen even, and take his cmdr out in one pass-over. And all one heard from the guy pulling off this upset victory was a tentatively phrased "gg".

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## 16. "D-Gun is THE Gun"

When using your cmdr's Disintegrator Gun to take out enemy units, be sure to use it as effectively as possible. Instead of aiming at the unit itself, try aiming just in front of your feet in a direction towards the unit. There are three main reasons for this:

- Often one's opponents units are rude guest, and don't stay put in the same spot when you tell them to. If you target the actual unit you might find that your cmdr just keeps tracking it instead of firing at it (usually this happens when it is travelling in a line perpendicular to your cmdr).
- The D-Gun's Radius and speed is the same no matter how you use it, so you might as well get as many of those little sparkling dots as you can.
- When the Lag Gods kick in and start doing their stuff, you really don't want to target a unit, and shooting right in front of your cmdr's feet is a good way to avoid it.

One more thing: for maximum firing rate shift-"D"-click in the directions you want to shoot. Watch that ctrl button as you do this though (btw, if you're in the PGL finals or something just try to remember that winning isn't everything :).

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## 17. "No, not Tea Gun... THE Gun"

Using the D-Gun as effectively as possible means more than mentioned in the last tip. Extreme uses might include:

- D-Gunning subs. It's easier the closer the sub is to sure, but always possible as long as it's in range. Remember, don't target the sub, target just in front of your feet in the direction of it.
- Spires like the ones on Pincushion are no obstacle to a cmdr's D-Gun. Go ahead and use them to your advantage - D-Gun right thru them to take out anything on the other side (yes, they can be very handy indeed when you need to survive a flashtank rush).
- It's possible to D-Gun airplanes (go figure), although construction units and slow-moving Brawlers are probably easier to swat than stealth fighters are.
- There are rumours of incidents where one cmdr D-Guns the other over a sharp ridge or from a steep slope at the water's edge, and living to tell the tale because the natural obstacle shielded the blast. Hard to replicate, though (and here too, unfortunately, lag can play a significant role).

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## 18. "Locating Enemy Cmdr, Gnug Style"

A Gnug only needs to spot his opponent's cmdr once to be able to locate him later on without much trouble. Have a Defender/Pulverizer on a group number. When you spot your oppoent's cmdr, quickly target him with your Defender. From now on, at least until the Defender gets destroyed, you'll be able to pinpoint your cmdr's whereabouts at any time by noticing which way your Defender is pointing.

If you would like to have a better idea as to his location than just the direction, try targetting him with Defenders from two different locations on the map, then follow their Line Of Sight - his cmdr will be where their LoS appers to cross each other.

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## 19. "Adv. Targetting, Gnug Style"

Yesterday's tip has more possibilities to it than the one mentioned. You can track everything from Weasels to Krogoths in the same manner, or use a torpedo launcher to track something underwater.

Having that Defender on a group number when you scout your opponent's base can also come in handy in other circumstances. When you spot the juicy buildings you can target them with the Defender - this even works great for multiple targets. Later on, when you your bombers or nukes are ready, simply hold shift down with the Defender selected, and the targets will show up as small red crosses on the screen. This goes for Cloakable Fusion Reactor too, ofcourse.

If you spot someone building something juicy, but can't target it because it isn't finished yet, target the spot it's being built on for later bombardment. Remember, though, that targetting a spot as opposed to a target with something means the red X target won't dissapear when the target is... well, not with us any more.



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## 20. "That Little Extra Something, Part Deux"

- Try "A" attacking with your Nuke Silo, then "S" Stopping it. It will open up, but not fire. This shaves about 6 seconds of the time it takes to launch the nuke when the time comes for such drastic measures.
- All units use energy when they do their stuff. If you're in desperate need of energy, you always have the option of turning your Radars, Sonars and Radar Jammers off (ctrl-"R", "Off"), landing all your various Aircraft (ctrl-"P/W", "S") and even turning off your Metal Extractors. Hell, just hit ctrl-"A", then ctrl-"S" and toggle "off" in the menu.
- After your bombers have released their bombs on a target that didn't die, and they are about to head out in a wide arc in order to make another run, there's no reason for you to have to wait for this. Let them continue a small distance after the target, then "S" Stop them. Give them a few seconds to slow down, then click on the target again. With practice, you can get them all to turn on a dime on all their respective positions, and proceed to bomb the target again with minimal approach distance.

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## 21. "Know Your Numbers"

Sure, you might have a good feeling about many things, but would you bet against a guy saying that:

- Four Lancets take out a cmdr in one fly-by - if he isn't moving.
- Adv. Kbots build with 160 build speed.
- CORE fusion plants produce 50 energy more than ARM's do.
- Two shots from a Leveler will remove a Solar Plant wreckage.
- CORE's Searcher is 5% cheaper than ARM's Skeeter (metal-wise).
- ARM's cmdr outpaces CORE's by 1.2 to 1.07 m/s.
- The actual Nuke Missile itself costs about 2k metal and 20k energy.

You never know when stuff like that can come in handy and earn you a beer at some LAN party or something. Go do your homework now.

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## 22. "Forced Attack, Gnug Style"

The Attack command is not only useful when bombing or shelling something. Ground units can also benefit from a little hands-on guidance from time to time.

Take the latest craze, Pelicans, f.ex. People think they're oh so great. Perhaps they are - if one's opponent isn't a gnug, at least. Gnugs know that while a sub can't target them, they can still hit them and do very good damage. Just "A" Attack past them - if the torpedoe crosses their path it will make contact. This goes for units like Enforcers too, who can utilize both their weapons at the same time in this way.

If the target is moving, you will need to target ahead of it. This applies to Sub vs. Sub and Sub vs. Enforcer battles too. On a map like Gods Of War, mastering the forced attack is extremely important, as the Sub vs. Enforcer battles that take place can determine the outcome of the game. You have 1100 metal swimming around there. Treating it with the utmost care is much more important than getting that Metal Extractor in place 10 seconds earlier. (ed: that's how 215 earned his nickname Unit Gnug - thru superb control of naval units)

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## 23. "The Share Metal Makers Thingy"

One of the less honorable tricks of the trade in TA is the one where one gives ("shares") one or several Metal Makers with one's opponent in order to deplete his precious energy storage of energy. Usually this is used just as one attacks his cmdr with some units, so that he can't D-Gun much or at all. This trick was seen used in the PGL finals at one point, and won the game for the trickster.

There is no way to defend against this trick 100%, but if one is a little coolheaded and has good reactions, one can minimize the damage done a great deal. One way of doing this is to have Metal Makers of your own on a group number, and when you notice your energy use rising drastically and realize something is amiss, choose that group, hit ctrl-"Z" and turn them all off. Note this won't work if the opponent is Core while you are Arm - in which case you'll just have to locate the makers asap and turn them off manually, so to speak.

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## 24. "The Metal War"

Getting to reclaim the wreckage after a battle, esp. at sea, is about as important as winning the battle itself. If you lose 4 enforcers but get to reclaim the wreckage afterwards, all you really lose is the build time. Add to that your opponent's wreckage and one begins to understand why it is so important to hold sea-battles on one's own turf where it is easier to reclaim the wreckage afterwards.

Enough chit-chat, on to the actual tips:

- Adv. Construction Subs play their role here. With their underwater ability, reclaim speed & range, you can sometimes get away with reclaiming wreckage from right under your opponent's patrolling Skeeters' noses. Decoy cmdr's can also be used for this.
- A kinky little trick to deprive one's opponent from being able to reclaim wreckage at sea is "M" Moving a Skeeter/Searcher over on top of the wreckage and letting it die there. It's puny little wreck will replace the Conqueror's (or whatever), thereby causing a huge loss in income to one's opponent. A penny lost is a penny lost, as the saying goes. Be sure to put your Skeeter on Hold Position when you do this, or it will scuttle about and not stay in place after you've positioned it.

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## 25. "Minimap Tricks"

The minimap is an extremely useful tool when issuing orders to your units. Apart from tons of "normal" - yet nonetheless essential - uses, there are a few nifty tricks one can use it for as well:

- Select an Atlas/Valkyrie and try to "L" Load one of your opponent's dots on the minimap. If you get the load icon on your screen it means it's a loadable unit (as opposed to f.ex. a structure).
- If you think you've spotted your opponent's cmdr on the minimap, select a construction unit of your own and try to Reclaim (remember the time-saving "O" - "E" keyboard combo) the dot. If you can't, it means it's his cmdr alright. Now maybe you'll start using those jammers more on the small maps, huh? :)

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## 26. "I'm a Lumberjack and I'm OK..."

This funny little trick, which I have taken the liberty to name The Woodchopper, is about how to get rid of tight packs of trees in a fast manner, a problem common to Commanders on some of the new Lush World maps.

Here is what you do: Place a small cheap building in the middle of a pack of trees in the area which you wish to clear. Now ctrl-"D" self-Destruct this building and watch the blast wipe out the surrounding trees. They will disappear totally, not light up in flames and leave a burnt tree instead - all trees in an area a bit bigger than an Arm Vehicle Plant will be Swept away totally. Being small and cheap, Metal Makers do nicely here, with their low construction cost and good blast radius. You shouldn't be running out of such small amounts of energy considering the energy-abundant surroundings being the problem in the first place. Btw, I might add that kamikaze Krogoths also do a good job as lumberjacks.

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## 27. "That's not a bug!"

The almost gnug-like Cavedoggies designing the maps in TA did a great job, no doubt about that. They did, however, make one slight mistake when they designed the Metal Maps. The Thermal Vents on those maps allow for no less than four Geothermal plants to be placed on them, each one barely overlapping a corner of the vent, yielding a combined energy income equalling than of an ARM Fusion Plant, but at a greatly reduced cost. Add to that the fact that each Geo starts paying off as soon as it's in place, reducing the burden of constructing the next one, and it becomes obvious that it's worth getting the Geo's in place asap.

Ofcourse you all know this - the game has been out for 9 months, afterall. Well did you know that the same goes for the thermal vents on Urban Maps? And that the same thing is possible with all metal mines? A mine yielding 2.0 with one metal extractor in place will yield 2.2 if four Metal Extractors are placed correctly on it instead of the one... That the 159 metal for the three extra Extractors would have to be in place for approximately 13.25 minutes just to break even is another point entirely (not to mention the energy cost).

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## 28. "Now THAT is a bug!"

You've probably dabbled in the use of Crawling bombs a little bit - maybe even tried the self-destructing flying Crawling Bomb trick. But not much came of it; there were too many random factors and too much micromanagement involved for it to seem worth it. And on their own they do seem a bit hard to find a good use for, don't they?

Well have you considered moving them underwater? That's right - they're amphibious. They can target and attack underwater. Sure, they're slow as hell, but there are still some fun uses for them. Try them on GoW or C2C. If you're not in the water, f.ex. if you're building a Bertha instead, crawling out with these might excite your opponent, making him think you're in such a state of despair that you've given up building the bertha and seek a quick death at the hands of his well-prepared defense. He might even pump 1100 metal into a sub when he sees that dot halfway across the water on C2C - only to discover it's was a cheap version of a decoy cmdr, innocent attempt to take out maybe a few tidals, and general diversion. The little buggers unfortunately have a lousy LoS, making it difficult to detonate them in time even if you're giving them your undivided attention. It is possible to react to the Enforcer's incoming depth charge in time though: you don't need to self-destruct it in order to get them to detonate - "A" force attacking the spot right in front of their nose will do the trick as soon as you issue the order.

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## 29. "High-precision Skirmishing"

At gnug-level play, winning Unit-vs.-Unit battles is paramount to winning the game. Thus, it can be well worth it spending a few moments of your time learning to control f.ex. a Freedom Fighter or group of Hawks optimally.

What is even more important is scenarios involving expensive yet fragile units such as submarines. When it comes to Mexican standoffs between subs, there is what Nakor would describe as a Good Trick to winning the battle. You need to keep your most expensive unit alive as long as possible, and one way to do this is to put other inexpensive units in front of it to take the damage. One sub and half a dozen Skeeters should stand a fair chance of taking out two enemy subs in this manner, just like placing your cmdr in front of your sub give you a tremendous advantage in sub vs. sub battles.

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### 30. "Repair Time"

The time it takes to repair a unit or structure depends on two things: it's build time, and the build speed of the construction unit doing the repairing.

"uhm... and?" you ask. Well, there is at least one situation where one can take significant advantage of this knowledge. Try using your cmdr to repair a sub. You'll notice it repairs extremely fast. With experience, the cmdr/sub attack can be very effective - I've personally been able to take out two whole Enforcers in this fashion on more than one occasion, using three tricks: placing cmdr in front of sub, using forced attack so my sub's torpedoes hit the moving enforcers, and repairing the sub with my cmdr. Sure, things can get hairy since you're pretty much dead if you lose your sub, but sometimes stunts like this are required to make a comeback.

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### 31. "Let's Go Watch the Submarine Races..."

A somewhat overlooked yet very useful unit is the ARM "Fibber", a submarine sonar jammer. The jammer effectively makes any of your underwater units or structures invisible to sonar and **any** other units' (such as destroyers, cruisers, subs etc.) Line of Sight in the main map display. As a result of this, your opponents' units will only open fire on a jammed unit if fired upon by that unit.

This characteristic leads to interesting uses in combination with other units. Try taking a group of subs set to "hold fire", guard them with a couple Fibbers, and move them into your opponents naval base. Because they're jammed and on hold fire, nothing will fire at your submarines and you can do some serious selective destruction of your opponent's sea base with relative impunity, oftentimes eliciting an expression from your opponent of "Huh? How'd you do that?".

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### 32. "What Do You Think of the Races, Gnughoney?"

Another interesting sonar jammer unit combination is to have the jammer guard a construction sub. You can then move the construction sub into your opponents base and have it reclaim anything they have that can't launch an undersea weapon, including their shipyards. This Gnug was holding his ribs and chortling with glee in a recent game at the thought of what his opponents expression must be. Gnug had a jammer masked construction sub following along after one of his opponents construction ships, reclaiming structures it was building as soon as they were done. On the map, he could see structures being built and then disappearing a short time later. Mmmmmm - free metal.

You may be wondering why you can't just reclaim anything your opponent has in the sea. It's essential to not try and reclaim things such as torpedo launchers, destroyers, etc. They

consider your reclaiming them an attack and will return fire at your construction sub, even though they can't see the unit in their LOS.

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### 33. "But Gnug dear, I Can't See Anything!?"

"Aaaaargh"

Indeed, having one's naval base ripped apart by an unseen foe is an aggravating experience, at best. Not knowing what to do about it next time is much worse. Well, thank gnug we're around to help you :)

There is no way whatsoever to see underwater jammed units on the main display. And since they're jammed, they won't show up on even with sonars on the minimap radar. The story doesn't finish here, however - when any of units (incl. airborne ones) get within LoS of the jammed units, they will show up - but on the minimap! So be ready to target your invisible guests on the minimap with torpedo launchers and -planes and go bump into them with a few skeeters or patrol the seas with cheap Peepers in order to obtain LoS. Also, don't forget the forced attack option when you know something is out there. Another noteworthy fact is that a submarine's LoS is practically nonexistent; if you have your own ship jammers in place, you can render your opponent's subs practically blind.

That your opponent can complicate matters greatly by adding his own skeeters to the fray is another story entirely.

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### 34. "Doh! Well Gnughoney, it works like this..."

As hinted at above, an extremely effective tactic for attacking with jammed submarines is to take along a good deal of skeeters, and add to the group slowly yet steadily, all the time moving them about in a distracting manner. Because your only recourse for finding jammed underwater units is the minimap, the skeeters mask which dots they are. This makes it extremely difficult for your opponent to target them, letting your submarines shoot your enemy to your heart's content. Also, smuggling in an adv. con sub will let you repair your other subs and reclaim any DT that might be in the way.

When using destroyers and cruisers to target jammed subs, you'll notice the same thing as when you try to target Pelicans with subs - "A" targetting on the minimap on the actual unit won't cause your unit to fire anything. Like with subs vs. Pelicans, you need to target just behind the enemy unit.

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### 35. "Interesting, dear. But did you consider..."

Nukes will work wonders against large groups of subs. At around 2k metal for the missile vs. 1100 for every sub you take out this can be well worth it, and the threat alone a considerable problem for the subber.

Actually what has proven to be one of the most effective weapons against groups of subs is a self-destructing Hive/Colossus. These Aircarriers, with their large energy production (they produce 370 energy and use 40 for their adv. radar, in case you hadn't noticed) make for excellent kamikaze units. With their slow speed, the subs don't even stand a chance of evading this rather unusual counter-attack. Also, being the preferred energy-producing unit/structure on water maps by many people, Hives don't need to be built solely in anticipation of a sub rush, and are often close at hand when a large sub rush materializes well into the game.

Guard towers like Pulverizers, Guardians, Intimidators and Buzzsaws can actually also hit underwater units, so feel free to go run amok with everything you've got. Finally worth mentioning is that with the Adv. Targetting Facility your units will automatically fire at any dots that appear on the minimap, incl. jammed subs.

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### 36. "Remember to use protection"

The high walls built by an adv. con unit will offer your Bertha partial protection from practically anything. They won't do much to stop incoming Bertha/Intimidator shells though. If this is the kind of protection you need, f.ex. if you're in a Bertha Race on a map like Evad, C2C, L&2H or whatever, try building a Metal Storage in front of your Bertha. The structure will take one hit from a Bertha shell, thereby prolonging your own Bertha's life a little longer. And you can keep rebuilding it to your hearts content. In fact, the structure doesn't even need to be finished - you can just have a con aircraft hovering above the site and set it to start building a new Metal Storage every time it gets blown to pieces.

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### 37. "Dogfighting Maneuvers"

The late fad of going air first on maps like GoW has meant that Dogfighting is back in style. Winning the very first Freedom Fighter Fight can be very important, and as such, it might be well worth it touching up on your dogfighting skillz. When you blunder into an enemy FF, try to do these things (these tips are for situations where the FF's are the only units with weapons, ie there aren't any Defenders or Skeeters in the area):

- Pick your fight on home turf, where your other units will distract the opponents' FF, causing it to have trouble targetting your FF. Even if you don't have any units that can attack your opponent's FF, your cmdr will provide your opponent's FF a target, maybe saving the life of your own FF.
- Do **not** have +shootall activated, as your FF will fire at your opponents' buildings instead of waiting for an enemy unit.
- Stay right on your opponent's FF's tail the whole time. Hopefully he will at some time try to fly away, either to escape your FF or to maneuver into a firing position. Give him a tiny lead, then follow up. Your FF should fire a shot without your opponent being able to escape or return fire.
- You can just click around the map in a normal fashion, but then you're risking targetting a solar or something. For this reason, I prefer to use "P" Patrol-click instead.

Of course, lag plays a significant role here. On LAN things can get delicate, on TEN, totally random.

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### 38. "Strafing Maneuvers"

After winning the first FFF (Freedom Fighter Fight), and your opponents hasn't gotten his 2nd aircraft up, you have the possibility of practically securing the win. A FF is enough to take out the aircraft being built in an Airplant. Just fly south of the plant, and "A" Attack the spot where the new aircraft is being nanolathed.

There is fortunately a simple way to deal with this though. Move your cmdr to as close to the bottom of the airplant as possible. The FF won't be able to hit the aircraft being nanolathed because of your cmdr absorbing the shots. Alternatively you can build a structure in that spot, like

a Metal Storage or a Solar Panel.

The only other option you have of making a comeback against a better player is reclaiming the plant and going sea or something else futile. A LLT will also repel a FF, but that will put you way behind the resource race too.

If you've never lost to a FF rush before, I guess you're prolly thinking "wtf is this guy rambling about?". Look any Gnug up for a game sometime, and he'll be glad to enlighten you.

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### 39. "Offscreen Repairing/Reclaiming"

You can use your Construction Aircraft to build, repair and reclaim things offscreen. Anything placed at the very top of the map is subject to this. On GoW, the two rocks at top of the screen are offscreen reclaimable. I once had a guy annoy me by starting to reclaim a BB I had places at the very top right of the map. Once he got started, there was nothing I could do to shoot the plane down. He didn't actually finish reclaiming it, as I just repaired it, but it bugged me nonetheless.

If you set a kbot or two to reclaim a BB and at least ten con air to Guard it, they will hover above it constantly and repair it at a tremendous rate, even when it gets bombed. When it does get attacked, your con air will be in place to repair it straight away, and you can reissue your kbot's orders to repair it too. If your con air are moving in and out too much, the reclaim/repair ratio is off. Still, even f they do stray a bit, at least it won't be way the hell out to sea like they'd do if the BB is at full health. And if you place your BB up at the top of the screen, the con air might stay offscreen a lot, sparing them somewhat from skeeter/pelican attacks.

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### 40. "Surround & Slaughter"

No, it's not some lame plug for Tiberian Sun, but rather a proven method of dealing with stray commanders. Obviously, S&S is a good idea in any situation, but this tip specifically concerns the situation when you're playing a water map like Gnugs of War (4.08 MB) and you spot the enemy cmdr wandering about underwater somewhere. Your Enforcers or Lurkers might be too far away to reach and kill him before he gets ashore and to safety, but there is a different approach. Try sending all your Skeeters to surround him. Even though he is underwater, ships can't pass right over his head – or more importantly, he can't pass right under ships. If he is surrounded by Skeeters, the only way he can get out (besides sending other units to help him, ofcourse), is reclaiming or capturing a Skeeter one by one. If you have a sizable amount of Skeeters, this will take him quite a while. Just a dozen is enough to slow him down a long time, and a with practice, only a few can be used effectively for this cause too.

It goes without saying that while you have him slowed down, you should move in your Units with depth charges or torpedos if you can. It takes a long time to take a cmdr out with an Enforcer, but a pair of them, or a sub, can do the job pretty quickly. Or ofcourse the Goode Olde Two Lancet & Nuke Combo works wonders, and calmly building a torpedo launcher with a con ship within shooting range is as beautiful as it gets.

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### 41. "That little extra ... mile!"

Scratch the "few extra inches due to the BB's randomness" tip. How would you like adding a few extra *screenlengths* to it's range?

It's pretty easy, actually; just hard to be precise with it. Try targetting as close as possible to your own Bertha using "A" Forced Attack. The Bertha will fire it's shot in the same direction, but somewhere between 30-40% further than it's usual max range. Target a little further away and it



will fire a wee bit closer, but still outside max range. It's not as if this is a game-winning trick for big maps, but I can definately picture it coming in handy in those games where you've got your DT rows and several Berthas already in place on Painted Desert.

This trick does however practically double the worth of a Vulcan/Buzzsaw though, as their short range render them relatively worthless otherwise, and inaccuracy not an issue anyway.

Thanks to Larry Lee for posting about this tip on the GnugBoard.

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#### 42. "Pelicans schmelicans"

The TA engine is not 100% perfect. One of it's faults is that while weapons like lasers and artillery shells aim for the body of the unit, missiles aim for the bottom of targets (maybe to do with having to hit aircraft, who knows). So what, you ask. Well, I'm sure you all know: Pelicans. While lasers and artillery units still work, missiles and rockets will aim for their feet, with the effect that when the Pelicans are in the water, they barely touch them.

This is where the Gnug Tip comes in: when you have Defenders shooting at Pelicans, try using "A" forced Attack just beyond them. Fortunately, the TA engine is still a far cry ahead of the SC engine (heh, sounds like an oxymoron - "SC engine"). The missiles will hit the Pelicans, because they occupy the space where the missles are travelling. The most common use for this tip is with Defenders (both land and NS) vs. Pelicans. It's also very useful for when your enemy's cmdr is being silly and strolling along your shore, D-gunning everything he can reach while not leaving the water. Just when he thinks he's being clever, surprise him with this little trick. This also goes for when you have Missile and Rocket Kbots, Vehicles and Hovercraft. *Curiosum: This won't work for Skeeters (and Pelicans themselves), since their missiles are their secondary weapon, and can't be used to "A" force Attack anything (if you try, they will swim close to the target in order to fire their shorter primary weapon).*

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#### 43. "Resource Trick"

The gall of us Gnugs to post a tip ilke this just while the heated debate concerning bombers is going on! Well, I would like to make it clear that, yes, this is a bug - but then, it's a very small one, just like many others we have publicized before. On with the good stuff...

The tip concerns Moho Metal Makers, and it's very simple. When you're building it, try shooting it with something (Defender, f.ex). Just give it a single shot, and then stop. Even though it isn't finished, it will start doing it's stuff. This means you can start it with an adv con veh or whatever, shoot it once, and then let a con air finish the job. Also, this makes it easier to manage very large excess Energy flows.

There is a downside, however: once you have given it a peck, you can't turn it off before it's done. So if you've experienced suddenly losing tons of energy without knowing why, maybe it's because your opponent found your MMM in progress of being built, gave it a little nudge, and left it alone, laughing madly while imagining your total confusion and subsequent panic as your energy begins to drain at 800/ a tick before you're ready! .. well, ok, maybe that's a bit far out.

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#### 44. "Cmdr Assistance"

You know when you set your cmdr to guard something, and the something is both at 100% health and done producing units, the cmdr will wander around the something in silly circles? Well, there's a trick to avoid this, and even multiply the usefulness of the Guard command manifold.



Basically, position your cmdr next to the something and hit shift-"P" Patrol **right** next to him. He will stand there and assist in building new structures, repairing damaged ones, and reclaim metal, within his own build radius (*note: CORE cmdr's build radius is larger than Arm's*). If you're desperately trying to maintain a foothold on an isle on Oooweeee, you can use this trick, and he can be used to automatically repair up to 8 Defenders without moving.

Putting the cmdr on a longer patrol route is also possible. F.ex., set a con air to build a row of Defenders, and set your cmdr to patrol right along this planned row - he will stop to help build each Defender. Usually the most efficient way is to set the con air to build two rows, with room for the cmdr to walk along the middle. Micromanaging the cmdr 100% is slightly more efficient, but also requires 100% of your time, unlike just setting the patrol route once.

There are many uses for using the patrol command with your cmdr in this manner, but I especially like the one where he stands still and does it. I dunno why - they don't call me Weird Gnug for nothing.

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#### 45. "Gnug's Teeth"

Sometimes the only way to stop a huge army rolling your way is to line up a row or two of Dragon's Teeth. Cavedog made it so as the DT's real cost is actually the realtime it takes to place them, and the build time of the buggers. The 8 metal cost is obviously practically irrelevant. While I can't really tell you how to click faster with the mouse, I can share a little Gnuggy trick with you on how to cut the effective build time of a row of DT's down considerably.

Obviously, guarding the DT builder with con air is one way to speed things up, and using the cmdr in the same manner as mentioned in the last tip is also a very efficient way to get the DT's up fast. Most often, however, you'll probably be using a con vehicle for the job. A small but clever change in the build order for you DT row will reduce the con veh's wasted time (ie non-building time) by about 60%.

Instead of the normal 123456789 order of building DT's (ie one after the other), try this order instead: 132654987. The first 132 is to align the con veh with the line of DT's, the subsequent 654 and 987 are the most effective way for a con veh to build a straight line of DT's - instead of build one, drive, stop, repeat, it will build three, drive, stop, build three. The fact that the con vehicle builds the DT's even when the arm is retracting/protruding is what saves the most time by using this build order.

Obviously this isn't a revolutionary trick, but I'm sure we've all tried being rushed thru a hole in our DT walls before it wasn't finished in time. Maybe this trick'll save your non-furry little behind next time.

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#### 46. "Urban Schmurban"

Gnugs don't fancy urban dwellings much, but we have noticed a thing or two about them that we thought we might share with you. Pretty obvious and straightforward tips, really, but here goes anyway:

The tall reclaimable structures can be useful in more ways than one. Some of them are large enough to completely cover a structure built right behind them. When looking for a place to put your nuke silo, Advanced Targetting Facility, or even \*gasp\* Core Wind Generator, you might consider hiding it from view entirely behind one of these superstructures.

In the unlikely case that your cmdr is next to one of the structures, and you desperately need a bit of metal asap, you might consider dgunning it once or twice. This damages the structure and decreases the metal stored by a 1000 a shot, reducing the time required to reclaim it. Careful, though - the third dgun blast will destroy it entirely. Hmm - there's a new idea for why to cmdr rush: dgun all your opponent's metal on his side of the urban map.

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#### 47. "Scouting 101"

There comes a certain points in large games when Finks just won't cut it. More effective ways of scouting are required in order to penetrate far enough into the enemy base. Hawks, with their increased speed, armor, maneuverability and small size make great scouting units. Combine these units with some experience and a couple gnug tricks, and you'll be finding that elusive BB that's been shelling you for hours in no time.

What you need to do is get your Hawks to spread out nicely, so you get to see as much area as possible of your opponent's base. One very easy and effective way of doing this is simply to "A" attack a spot somewhere behind the area you want to scout. The Hawks will fan out something like 30 degrees to each side until halfway there, then turn towards the spot you attacked, giving you a broad sweeping view of your opponent's base. The more AA your opponent has, the more Hawk's you'll need, ofcourse.

Couple this with some sneaky offscreen-flying, and your opponent's base will have to be formidable indeed to hide juicy targets effectively. In order to get all your Hawks offscreen, simply fly towards the edge of the screen and "A" attack the ground just before it. The Hawks will fire their missiles and proceed into their usual wide arc behind the target before they would normally turn around and attack the target again. When they're all offscreen, simply "M" move them towards the corner of side you want them to travel in. Then, "T" track them as they fly along the side of the map (just offscreen ofcourse) and "M" move them into the map again when the Hawks have reached the area you want scouted.

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#### 48. "Eagles Galore"

This tip is primarily directed at you Eagles out there who enjoy producing massive armies of Adv. Air units, but is applicable to everyone searching for ways to get their production rolling faster and cheaper.

I cannot begin to count the times I've seen ppl build several - even rows - of Adv. Aircraft Plants, with little or no units guarding the production of the plants already constructed. I'll Give you a simple example of why this is Just Plain Wrong:

- Six Adv. Aircraft Plants = approx. 12k Metal, build speed =  $6 \times 200 = 1200$
- One Adv. Aircraft Plant + 5 Adv. Con. Veh's on Guard = approx. 5k Metal, build speed =  $6 \times 200 = 1200$

That's what, about 7k Metal difference between the two combinations? There are other benefits to the second combination too: you can use your 5 Adv. Con. Veh's for plenty of other things than building Aircraft should you feel like it. Sure, one plant might be easier to destroy than 6, but six plants also take up quite a lot of room, are spotted easier, and generally provide a psychologically juicier nuke-target because of their high metal worth.

And don't even get me started on how many Adv. Con Kbots or Air can Guard the same plant. Think about it: rather than build a new Adv. Airplant, build two Adv. Con. Aircraft - about 2k metal cheaper, gives you the same build speed and a helluva lot more versatility (you're not going to see your airplants fly off and build Adv. Radar where you need them, or reclaim a couple thousand metal from wrecks after clashes near your borders etc). The extra energy cost for the Con. units contra the plant is more than negligible by the amount of Metal you can save.

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#### 49. "Mr. No Excess"

Having almost no excess resources on the end-screen after a long, epic battle is always an impressive feat (esp. if you won) - it shows you know how to take your production to the next level, and use it.

The trick is how to use it productively. This is always easier to do when you're in the offensive, which is usually the best "strategy" (altho "deciding" 'I'm going to Surround & Slaughter my opponent' is far from actually doing it - afterall, your opponent might well be trying to do the same thing). While you might have upto two dozen plants producing units (samsons, hawks, bombers, cruisers, subs, pels etc), that still rarely strains your resource income above 150 metal/sec, +/- 50 (you can tell I'm talking big games here ;).

In any case, whether you're producing +300 metal/sec and are having problems using half of it, or have hit the unit limit and beginning to run into excess, here's a few ideas to using the otherwise wasted resources:

- Adv. Targetting Facility - at 15k metal total cost, and about -28 metal/sec for each adv. construction vehicle building it, this is a useful and extremely quick way of spending resources quick, with minimal effort. There's nothing wrong with having an extra adv. targeting facility or two to give to your teammate, or simply as backup for when one gets destroyed (you might turn the extra ones off to save the -1250 energy/sec running cost).
- Have a group of 20+ adv. construction aircraft build expensive, yet still useful structures - one can always use a few more BB's, Flackers and Fusions, and these all have a relatively short buildtime compared to their cost, so they make great excess-avoiding-structures. The advantage of construction aircraft contra vehicles/kbots is mostly their mobility, so use them to place the buildings where the other con units have a hard time getting to, rather than in open areas in your base (where your other construction units should be utilizing their higher build speeds to do the job).
- Build more expensive, yet still useful units: subs, gollies, albatrosses, lvl. 2 ships, kroggies or whatever might come in handy sometime. You can always self-d your units if they get in the way or annoy your unit limit.

Ofcourse, some of these examples are rather extreme, and quite unrealistic in anything but the largest Crystal Cracked games. The idea can be applied to smaller games too, tho - excess metal early in the game is far from optional. When you notice your resources filling the max storage capacity, just build a metal storage or some kinda plant.

Excess energy is also un-good, so don't forget useful energy-consuming units suchlike all Metal Makers, BB's, Nuke and Antinuke Silos etc. Getting +3 metal/sec out of your +200 excess energy income early on can spell the difference between success and failure in tight, low-resource games.

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## 50. "Live Longer"

On many water maps, the first clashes will doubtless be skeeters trying to overcome each other's few numbers, as getting your opponent out of water in the beginning can give you a significant head start, and even win the game for you right there.

Getting back into the water can be a tough deal indeed.. with no resources, almost impossible, but with a few (and help from a teammate maybe), it can be done. If you have a shipyard out there which you would like to keep, and it's in danger of being destroyed by Skeeters with +shootall activated, try setting it to build tons of units. Many of the Skeeter's missiles will keep hitting the next unit trying to be built, and not damage the shipyard at all - thereby maybe saving it for when you can reclaim your harbour.

Many factors go into this, ofcourse: amount of units attacking your shipyard, it's proximity to

the shore and your cmdr's D-gun, any land support you might have (Defenders etc), opponent's willingness to risk losing the skeeters he has, etc etc. But overall, you lose nothing by trying to save your shipyard this way. You can even use the trick while running on any kind of resource deficiency. You need to set it to produce quite a number, though, as it's production-queue will usually be counting down at a rate of ½-2 units a second.

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## 1. Thursday 11th of June - Indigestion Relief, Gnug Style

Ever have that too stuffed feeling of vehicle lab indigestion when someone has rudely parked one of their vehicles in your lab... and you thought the only way to fix it was to reclaim the entire lab? Well, gnugs spell relief using the 'E' order to do a forced reclaim of the offending vehicle. You can use your commander to do this, or, if he's busy wandering somewhere else on the map and you have a spare construction unit nearby that's not busy spelling your name with DTs, use the construction unit to do the reclaim. - [D\_Old\_Man]

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## 2. Wednesday 17th of June - Peeper Bombing

The Peeper, in it's own way, is much akin to the Gnugs. Friendly and innocent on the surface, but capable of mighty feats in battle. On those occasions where you send out a peeper to scout the enemy base, and are surprised to find serious gaps in his anti air cover, you can use the Peeper, or Fink, to cut off your enemy's information. Simply land your Peeper next to his radar, hit Ctrl-D and watch your self destructing Peeper take the radar with it. You can then feel free to charge in with an assault force. - [lonosphere]

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