Armada 1 Economy

The Most Basic Requirement or Maximum Gain

As in any other RTS game, only with a decent macro management will you be able to be a successful player. But what does that mean in numbers? First of all, it is always mandatory, to max out a dilithium moon, regardless whether it is an infinite one, or a limited one. Usually that means 3 mining freighters, so 2 on top of the automatically provided one from the built mining station. Only when the map geometry or mining station positioning is bad, it may require more than 3 for maximum output.

The mining rate of a fully maxed moon is always roughly 10.5 dil/sec. or approximately 630 per minute. That means, a full 20'000 dilithium moon is mined down in about 32 minutes. On most maps you have 2 moons relatively close by to your starting location, which together would give you an income of about 1'260 per minute. When you compare that with the time and resource requirements for ships build, you can have an idea of how much production rate you can muster with such an income. It also implies the following: A maxed out station costs 1'000 dil. for the station and another 800 for the two freighters. So the 1'800 units of dilithium are returned after round about 3 minutes.

Also consider: A standard Starbase gives 3.5 crew/sec.. Depending on the race, the modifier for planet-site starbases is 1.5 (Borg) or 1.25 (rest) which gives a maximum of 5.25 crew/sec for Borg and 4.375 crew/sec. for the other races. Crew and dilithium are the main resources accumulating, depending on sources. Energy for special weapons is also created out of nothing but only per unit/building. Supply on the other hand is exclusively created from dilithium and capped by the number of starbases and their extensions.

Borg Cube Example

Let's take a straight forward example, the Borg Cube. It costs 1'200 dil., takes 120 seconds to be build and requires 1'000 crew + 7 supply. When comparing that with your dilithium income, you can build actually one cube per minute, which means, you can fire up two Advanced Assembly Matrizes at the same time. (Or half a cube per minute and moon.) You will end up with 50-60 dilithium spare per minute as well. But be aware that the other cost is also to be taken into account. 2 Cubes per minute also means, 14 supply per minute and 2'000 crew per minute. Considering, that the max of one starbase is 5.25 crew/sec. or 315 crew/minute that means the 2000 crew are a time equivalent of 6 minutes.

When playing with limitations on both resources, you *will* run into resources stalling of that kind rather soon, when trying to build Cubes. E.g. starting with 3'000 crew already requires you to wait some time for the second Cube and/or to build another Nexus, as the buildings required for full techtree up to two Advanced Assembly Matrizes costs 2'700 crew of the 3'000 starting. Idealizing the build time to be 215 for the required buildings would only give you an additional 1128 crew which is just enough for *one* Cube.

Also the starting supply is not that much in terms of fast building. The build up to two Advanced Assembly Matrizes costs 43 of the 100 Energy Nodes (minimum value and if you recycle your scout that is). With a Holding Beam it costs even more. So the supply will run out after 7 Cubes and an increase of supply will cost 500 dil. and gain 20 supply (another 3 Cubes) but take additional time.

So for a full squad of eight cubes a supply upgrade is necessary, as well as a second Nexus is highly advised. Otherwise the additional 7 cubes would take another 42 minutes of crew gain. When playing with starting crew limited to 3'000, the borg mostly suffer from lack of crew and not so much from a lack of dilithium.

The Sphere Example

You can also go smaller, e.g. for Spheres: A Sphere costs 500 dil., 250 crew and 5 supply. The process takes 50 seconds. In 50 seconds one moon gives approx. 525 dil. So you can perfectly support one Assembly Matrix per moon producing Spheres. But again, mind the drain of the other resources. 50 seconds per Sphere also translates to 250 crew in 50 seconds, meaning 5 crew per second or 300 per minute. For a Nexus in orbit or a planet that's OK. For only one Starbase without planet bonus it's not enough for a stable production cycle. On the long run you will crew-stall.

The supply adds up to 6 per minute, meaning after 10 minutes with one moon and one Assembly Matrix or 5 minutes with two moons and two Assembly Matrizes you will begin running out of supply. This will mean 12 Spheres, which is already a lot. But you would also have to muster the crew requirements of 3'000 Crew (more than 9 minutes with one Nexus with planet bonus). So it's again rather likely, that at some point you will *want* to build a second Nexus. Otherwise high production rates of ships are not feasible. You might turn to supplementing defense stations instead as they don't take crew (but still supply).

The Interceptor Example

If you go even smaller, let's say, only Interceptors and one moon to rush your opponent, the calculations are similar: One moon giving you at best 630 dilithium per minute. An Interceptor costs 250 dil, 3 supply and 100 crew per 30 seconds, so meaning, 500 dil. per minute, 6 supply per minute and 200 crew per minute (Nexus equivalent: 38 seconds, so this is doable for even a normal Nexus). Interceptors are a bit less draining on crew than Spheres, but comparable on supply and dilithium. That's two Interceptors per minute and moon and 130 spare dilithium as well as a crew gain of 5 per unit.

Bottom Line of Borg Crew Management

So for the early game one normal Nexus is sufficient for one Assembly Matrix producing Interceptors. Building Spheres will require to have a Nexus near a planet, to be maintainable. Once you build an Advanced Assembly Matrix, a second Nexus will practically become mandatory, unless you play with high starting values of crew. Similar Considerations are in effect for the other races, too. Just not to the same extend as for Borg players.

Damage, Shield Equivalents and Unit Roles

Just keep in mind: A Sphere can inflict a damage rate of 12 per second while two Interceptors

together have 16 per second. The shields are at a recuperating rate of 1.41 per second for one Interceptor and 2.81 for the Sphere (which is comparable to 2 Interceptors). What really sets them apart, is the Sphere's Regeneration special weapon, that let's it recharge a lot faster (up to 100% shields when using 100% special weapon energy) than the Interceptors, while the latter are *really good* at jumping away, once you have their Transwarp Drive ability. So the Interceptors are meant more as a powerful harass unit, while the Spheres are more sturdy and therefore meant for a more heads on approach. The Cube on the other hand deals a whooping 34.7 damage per second (on average) which is the top value, besides the super weapons, and reloads its shields at 8.44/sec. So it's a damage equivalent of four Interceptors and a shield equivalent of 6 Interceptors. It's an all out battleship. This in turn justifies, why a Cube is a lot more expensive in terms of crew, than other units. So on the long run, Borg will tend to pile up dilithium, unless they spend it early on building more Nexus. And even then, using stationary defenses may become necessary for actually making use of the excess dilithium. They don't cost any crew but a bit of supply. So basically they only cost dilithium.

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