

W.T.F.- WANTON TERRAN FUSTIGATION

A PvT GUIDE FOR THOSE TIRED OF GETTING OWNED

Foreword

I'll tell it to you straight, I'm by no means an exceptionally good Protoss player. However, I've had my share of getting my ass kicked and my share of winning by sheer dumb luck, so I made this guide in hopes of helping the people that are scared shitless of the "[Terran Ball](#)" (term copyrighted by IntoTheWow) and to just illustrate how I approach the Terran matchup in general. I'd like to thank ArC_man for helping me suck less at Starcraft and for giving me advice on the guide, ShybalNoom for always playing me despite my suckage, IntoTheWow for his wtfamazing guides that made me start playing Zerg for fun and inspired me to write this guide, Nony for the most entertaining and informative FPVods evar (not to mention being ownagez), Tasteless just because, and almost everyone at TL for being classy gamers.

PvT Philosophy

Before mechanics, before BOs, and before kicking Terran ass, the first thing that you should do is the most important of any matchup in general:

Don't be a god damned pansy.

You will NOT improve if you turtle. You will NOT improve if you run away because "omgthere'sonesiegetankrighthere!" You will NOT improve if you're scared of taking expansions. And most importantly, you will NOT improve if you think all Terrans are "lawl lemme wait for 3-3 200/200 ggnore." Trust me; I used to bitch, piss, and moan about how hard the Terran matchup is once they get the macro game going, but the fact is if you want to start winning, you got to play the right way before you can start adding your own style back into it. And no, you're [Nal_rA](#) because you did something cute – cheesing may get you some wins, but in the long run, you're not going to get better at the game and the matchup itself. It's not to say you can [Mantoss](#) everything or play stupid aggressive – rather, if you're scared of Terrans to start with, then what you should be doing is not focusing on how big and scary the Ball is, but how to start approaching the game that'll help you get those wins. Remember, this IS a game, and the only way you can get better is to not bitch at your losses, take everything in stride, LISTEN to people's advice instead of getting super defensive (not EVERYONE is wrong about what they say), and be flexible enough to change your way of play when it's necessary. This is not life or death. Unless you're going pro, this is not your LIFE, either. This is meant to be fun and challenging.

If you're just starting/not playing well, start playing safe, playing standard, playing smart, and most of all, playing like a fucking man. You're playing Protoss, for gods sake. You have balls the size of jackfruits – it's time to use them.

So let's start things off. If you're not sure how to approach the PvT matchup, don't

worry, because we'll start from the basics. From now on, you're [Safetoss](#). That's your name.

Safetoss PvT Approach

The PvT matchup is macrofest at its finest. It's a relatively straightforward matchup that can be fun or boring as fuck depending on the players' styles. What does this mean for Protoss? That's right, it's time to channel the inner Cheater Protoss in you (no I don't mean maphacks <_<) and start learning that you can't afford to be behind Terran in macro-- this means good probe count, throwing up them gateways in a timely matter, good money management, and most of all, nabbing bases.

You've probably heard this a million and one times, but just to reiterate: at the very least, try to be one base ahead of Terran at all times and keep your probes pumping. You need the economy because Terrans can, in general, make more mistakes with their units than you can because the Ball is a resilient mother fucker. It's not to say if they've had their natural a few seconds longer than you that you MUST throw up that second and third base and disregard whatever you were planning on doing because likeomgwtfI'mgoingtoloseifIdon't, but once mid-game rolls around and the Terran Ball is about as big as your nads, then you're going to be needing every bit of economy you can get to break that thing down. So try your absolute best to be ahead of the Terran in expansions as soon as you can, whenever you can – you need it a LOT more than Terran does.

Secondly, if you're losing a lot of games on the first push/getting contained way too much/just sucking right now or just getting started with the PvT matchup, all I can say is go double gate/range for your opener. It's Safetoss approved – as long as you have semi-decent Dragoon control, you generally won't get screwed by anything that the Terran can throw at you (unless it's cheese, but you're SAFETOSS. You saw the cheese, amirite?). Not only that, it's a wonderful opener to put a bit of pressure on the Terran early game and your sexy Dragoons are great as early scouts. What's not to love? Dragoons are almost cuddly, if you squint...

Always keep observers floating around – not only at possible expansion locations, but also keep tabs on what the Terran is doing. Note his factory count at all times and add your own gateways accordingly – the chance of you managing to win if your gateway count is the same or less than the Terran factory count at late game is slim, unless your micro/macro is extremely good bordering on pro, your tech. was somewhat early, and/or you somehow got the Mothership before SC2 even came out. Knowledge is power, and hell, the Terran is scanning your ass whenever he has the chance to – it's only right that you get to see what he's up to as well. So be sure to move your observers around and keep one or two with your army so they don't step onto mines and you find yourself pressing 1 and having nothing pop up for your hotkey group.

Your third base's timing should be relatively quick, particularly if the Terran is getting his natural early (which is the case almost always in this age of macro). If you STILL feel like you're scared shitless about expanding, then it never hurts to put down the

pylon and one or two cannons to prevent the vulture raid before you add the Nexus, though hopefully in the future you can be a bit more gutsy about it. You'd much rather have that expansion up and running as soon as you can rather than never have it going at all because you're scared of some Terran **PRESSURE**. Needless to say this shouldn't be an issue for your natural, because you're NOT turtling and your units are either around the map or at your choke, ready to kick ass. However, once mid-late game rolls around, it again does not hurt to add a few cannons at the natural too because vulture raids DO happen and playing safe is better than getting hardcore owned when you shouldn't be. Once you start nabbing other bases, just try to wall off with pylons (and the occasional shield battery if you're a straight up badass) with a cannon here or there. It never hurts to have one or two by your mineral line as well, in case of vulture drops or when a Terran just lands his barracks and builds a Firebat to scorch your probeline. >_>

So with that out of the way, it's time to focus on that wonderful thing that is the Protoss Probe.

Safetoss Scouting: The TvP Openings

So the game has started, you've started your first gateway, and now off your hero probe goes to scout the opposition. Try to keep your hero probe alive as long as possible to see what the Terran is up to, because remember, your probes ARE wonderful creatures and it's time to treat them as such.

You make it in, and your hero probe relays this information back to you. WTF should you do?

1. MEOW. I see nothing/only one supply depot.

Wow, you either must have scouted right on the first try, sent a hero probe early, this guy really sucks, or...

HOLY CRAP IT'S CHEESE.

First off, no need to panic. At this point, your Safetoss mentality is kicking in and you're ready to deal with this bullshit. Get Zealots as soon as you can and get ready to go to war.

Check your base ASAP to make sure that a bunker isn't going up near your buildings – if it is, start taking probes off the probeline and try to snipe marines and/or snipe the SCV that's building the bunker. Both work to varying degrees of success; I personally aim for the SCV because it's slightly less micro intensive (lawl I'm lazy), but if the guy has no Marines left to load up then he's pretty screwed too.

If nothing is really going on, there's a chance that he might be going for double rax, in which case the Dragoon will be very helpful depending on how long it takes for the guy to choose to attack. The Zealot(s) and a few probes will be okay to hold the guy off, so just constantly check your minimap and make sure that your first scouting

probe is scouring the map to see what it is the other guy is doing while you yourself start to slowly tech. and get back into your normal Safetoss groove. A bio rush/build of any sort has a limited window of opportunity before your army and your tech. is too powerful for it, so at this point play carefully and hopefully your probe can spot whatever is going on. Once Goon range is up, you're in very good shape to beat this crap off. If you hold off cheese, you're in an extremely good position to take the game as long as you play well.

If you found nothing with your scouting probe, your Reaver/DTs/holyshitevenCarrierswtf? are popping out, and STILL nothing is going on, the guy just sucks. Win please.

2. MEOW. This guy's a douche and walled off.

Um... god damn.

That's okay, but you're going to have to count on your Dragoons to be doing the majority of the scouting via their marine count, particularly on a map with a ramp. If it's like Longinus and there's open space, your Dragoons will have ample time to harass the supply depots/marines (possibly even snipe a depot), so at this point just play carefully. When a Terran walls off, considering you're Safetoss, you want to always be thinking that the guy might be trying for something to catch you off guard (BioMech, Fact/Port), so just keep those things in mind if you never get a clear idea of what the Terran is doing. Going for observers as soon as you can is probably good advice if you think something is really fishy or you don't feel comfortable.

You can send your hero probe back to mine if you so choose, or you can let him sit outside the wall and chill. It's up to you. I would generally leave the probe outside because there's a chance the barracks will lift or you might be playing with some sort of faster tech and you want to see when the Terran decides to push out. If you got a Zealot first and the wall is made of buildings and not guys in spacesuits... um, it can pop a beer and relax or something. =/

3. MEOW. I see a supply depot, and a Barracks and Refinery going up.

This will be what you normally see. Try to take note of how far along the Barracks in relation to your scouting time because there's still always the chance of the guy having gone another barracks somewhere else on the map, but that's pretty rare.

But the good part is it's time for PROBE HARASS OMG YAY.

Just try your best to keep the Probe alive while bothering the building SCVs as much as possible, and once the marine pops out (hopefully your hero probe got many SCV kills by this point and it'll be GG soon), just race around and wait to see what the guy plans to do. Hopefully you can keep your probe alive long enough to see the Factory go well under-way, or perhaps even longer (which would be great =D).

4. MEOW. ONE FACT.

We could have either a Fact/Port or a Fact/CC (FD) on our hands here. Both can mess you up if you don't play right, but it could also mess up the Terran if he screws it up.

If you think it's something like Fact/Port, keep your Dragoons on standby and be ready to protect your probeline at all costs. If you expanded, you want to be extra cautious about your natural since it will be a bit less protected. A nifty thing to do if you're relatively successful at holding off the drop is to move a few Dragoons that are around the map/at your choke to the possible route the dropship may take back to base if it doesn't get shot down at your main. It slips the mind of some people, but I think it's something worth remembering since a few hits may be all you need to get that thing down for good. If the dropship gets shot down and the Terran loses all his vultures while you take little damage, you're in good position and can take a few risks if you feel like it (i.e. sneaking an expo), because an early Terran push is not as effective without vultures and mines. Keep in mind, however, that it likely won't be the last drop you see – you should be getting your observers up soon so you can get a more accurate idea of when he decides to push out or if he's going to try and send more stuff by air.

If you think it's the FD (note the marine count and pay attention to what the Terran is doing: expansions tend to come when generally the Terran has his stuff at his second choke), things open up a bit more. Whatever tech. you've been going for will be a lot more viable at this point, and essentially you can wreck a bit more havoc with what you have if the Terran isn't adequately prepared. Just be sure to get your own natural going (and your third base a bit earlier if you weren't doing any sort of real tech. and were doing the macro game) in good time because the Terran is certainly strong at this point, but not strong enough to stop you from what you're doing particularly if you did something like 2 gate/obs.

If the Terran did FD and pushed out with what he had somewhat early (i.e. only 1 vulture or not enough marines), AND he's far away on the map (i.e. cross positions), even with SCVs, the Terran made a huge mistake. 2 gate/range is, in my opinion, more than strong enough as long as your Dragoons were already outside the Terran's base/around his choke to start engaging the force as soon as you can, while sending Dragoon backup all the meanwhile. The big thing here is to snipe what you can and always try to take out the vultures and mines ASAP, because the mines are what REALLY mess you up if you aren't careful with your control. The Terran has to keep very good track of his units at this point, and essentially you can punish him if he's not careful or if he starts thinking he's the bomb diggity just because he pushed you back into your main, because he's not going to win or contain you with the FD even if you one gated unless, as I said, he's a lot better than you or you were careless with your units.

If he loses most of his shit (which he will, if you have decent micro) and decides it's time to turn tail and run, unless you've already nailed the Tank (actually, even if you nailed the Tank), try not to let him get out of this clean and judge if you can chase after him. I've seen contains get set up or Terrans run away completely unpunished

just because the Protoss got a bit lax when he could have saved himself some headache and took apart what the Terran had. The key here, however, is you sort of estimating how many/where the mines are. If you take out most of the FD push and you still have decent numbers, just make sure your goons are watching their step because you land on a mine and it's back to square one in terms of any advantage you had. If you're very careful and the Terran was cocky enough to not build his CC in his base, you can likely snipe the SCV and whatever pitiful force he has and camp outside, wrecking havoc on all who dares venture out because the build is very reliant on the mines saving the Terran's ass from a counterattack.

5. MEOW. DOUBLE FACT.

Okay, this is going to be a pretty big push, so get your ownage glasses on so you get +10 kickassness. You're going to be relying a lot on Goon Micro, which I'll talk about a bit more later. If you double gate/ranged, you should be okay if you micro extremely carefully (no matter what tech tree you're climbing up at this point), but if you one gated, if your micro isn't good enough chances are you're going to get contained for a while until your tech. comes out and you get gateways up. If you somehow get contained off a two-gate, hopefully you did good damage and the contain will be relatively easy to break out of... I'll talk a bit more about containment later, so just sit tight.

6. MEOW. TRIPLE FACT.

This is very rare (I've personally never been on the receiving end of it), and you very likely won't see it either because the probe is dead, the third factory is somewhere else, or you got walled out. Either way, this is dangerous for you, and at this point you better tug your pants on tight because a huge all-or-nothing attack is coming your way. You're going to get contained hard, pushed back hard, and just be in a pretty bad state. However, always keep in mind that this move IS basically all-or-nothing for the Terran, and if you beat this, the game is strongly in your favor. The timing of a three fact. won't really come before your natural is starting to get up, so if you do think that there's way too many units/you're going to get overpowered, don't hesitate to cancel that Nexus and power in your base. Deal with the contain carefully (as I said, I'll talk about it later), snipe what you can, and just be ready for a rather stressful situation all-around.

7. MEOW. DOUBLE STARPORT.

Lawl.

8. MEOW. 14 CC.

Double lawl.

Unless this is an island map/you 14 nexused/Arcadia. In which case you can't lawl.
=(

9. MEO-- *explosion*

You... you let your probe die? >_> Ah well, can't be helped. Hope you saw enough to get a general idea of what to do, but if you really didn't no worries! Your Safetoss ways have set you off in the right direction, and now your tech. is settling in, Dragoons are out and about, and hell, maybe you even got your natural started! By golly, it'll be midgame soon (and you're still alive! =D). So it's time for you to grow up a bit and start taking the game into your own hands with some kickass control.

You're Babytoss now. Your balls haven't dropped, but you're well on your way to becoming manly.

Babytoss Dragoon Control

Let's start from the moment your first Dragoon is out. Own that scouting SCV as soon as you can, and then either sit on your ramp to watch for more scouts or hell, if you have nads the size of Jupiter (who cares if Terran sees my tech amirite), just move out to the Terran's base and lie in wait for LE AMBUSHZ.

Generally your Dragoons are not going to be particularly strong until the range goes up, so be a bit patient (unless you're super confident in your micro/you went Zealot first, so none of this applies/you see good opportunities) and wait for your initial Dragoon numbers to increase slightly and range gets finished – just nail SCVs leaving his base or what have you. 2-3 Dragoons with range is a decent number to start engaging whatever the Terran has at this point, and if you're rallying more Goons towards the Terran's direction, you can focus a bit more on your micro while getting good reinforcements to fall back on.

Be very careful with your Dragoons at this point, because as the extremely wise Tasteless always says... "(person's name here) CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE (whatever is getting raped) AT THIS POINT IT'S SO PIVOTAL FOR THE MATCH I'M NOT EVEN JOKING." And honestly, you want to try your absolute best to not lose your early Dragoons; it'll really hurt, ESPECIALLY if you can't get a few kills with your Dragoons. So just keep those suckers dancing and poking around with what the Terran has – you really only want to start hardcore retreating if the Terran manages to take one (or two, but that won't happen because you're Babytoss) of your Dragoons down, a good amount of SCVs are following his units (obviously to contain your ass), you're hopelessly outnumbered (judge that more by the mech. than the marines), or if siege mode goes up. But even as you retreat, keep trying to get free hits off whatever is chasing you.

In almost every case the Terran will have gotten mines before siege – but just try to think that all this means is you have a bit longer window to kick major booty right now (seriously). As long as the Terran's units aren't up a ramp being gay and are on a level field with your Dragoons, you are very much in control at the moment. Snipe mines if you can and just try to pick off as many things as possible; the goal here isn't to win (though you might if you're a LOT better than your opponent) but to

significantly weaken whatever early push the Terran is planning on doing and to stall long enough so that your own tech/expo/whatever starts going up while his own army is too weak to try and punish you. Whether you kill units or force the Terran to use up the mines, early Dragoon pressure is extremely beneficial and gives you something to do while you macro/tech.

Either way, you're likely going to get forced back in due time or it won't be safe for you to engage whatever the Terran has any longer. At this point I would really recommend KEEPING your Dragoons close to the Terran base (depending on the circumstances, of course) because your Dragoons are your best friends right now for keeping tabs on what the Terran has up his sleeve while you wait for your observers. Don't keep a lot: just a small number that will be able to pick off any scouts SCVs/vultures or give you the friendly "YOUR FORCES ARE UNDER ATTACK OMG" message when the Terran is really deciding to push out.

Here's the thing – as long as you're keeping an eye on the minimap/listening to the Judicator piss and moan, Dragoons can take care of themselves. You're not their mother, and you're a Babytoss yourself without any pubic hair for gods sake – the amount of "babysitting" you need to do for Dragoons is really... well, not that much. As long as they're away from Siege Tank range, they're really the best thing you can have out there, waiting to drink some Terran blood. Plus, it is absolutely crucial that you have the Dragoons there for the simple fact that they can severely slow down early pushes and to see the unit makeup (double fact/two fact. vultures, etc.) while you get yourself ready for what's coming and build up forces – it's a shit load better than panicking when the Tanks are outside your door, elephant trunks out. Try to make the Terran fight on your terms, not theirs. Even mid-late game, just be sure that you don't lose Dragoons needlessly to a slow push and you really don't have to worry about them that much – you don't want all your units to be stuck in your tiny ass choke when the Terran reaches your base. You just don't. >_>

Naturally, if the Terran is up his ramp/you can't get to his forces, just leave those small handful of Dragoons out there for the time being and do your own thing. Keep your senses on full alert, because whatever the Terran has coming will come soon enough... and if it never comes in good time, you'll have observers there around this point to see whatever gay he's up to and act accordingly.

Mines are Our Friends (sometimes)

Mines are the best things to happen to Protoss.

Now I know that they can literally own the blue goo out of your army, but don't fret – the mine is a wonderful double-edged sword for the Terran that can fuck them over big time if they're not controlling their units well. So don't think of that mine as something dark and evil that will help the Terran turtle – think of it as a weapon that can easily turn back on them.

In every single case, you want to just clean up those mines as soon as you can to prevent your units from unnecessarily getting exploded. Don't be stupid and think

that mines are there JUST to help you out and you never get rid of them – you seriously want to pick off as many stray mines as you can because you need maneuverability for your army to flank easily instead of having to worry about a mine owning your stuff. So grab a few Dragoons (please don't send your entire Dragoon army for janitor work and then have a control group of vultures run into your base, my god), one or two obs, and send them out to do cleanup work. However, if the mines are extremely close to the Terran (as in, not just in front of his push but around/under his forces)... then lawl, you have yourself a good gambling opportunity.

Very early game (with your early Dragoons), you shouldn't ever run them into mines unless you think the potential payoff is winning-the-jackpot-huge at little cost to you (1 goon for tank+vulture+few mines? YES PLZ) or if you think you'll be in very bad position if you don't get rid of them (i.e. you lost two goons already and you haven't stalled his opening push enough). Using your units to bomb the Terran is very situational, but you generally want to dodge around the mine and move in at a good angle – you don't want to run your unit straight into it unless the Terran is moving forward in your direction at the same time. Just to reiterate – this honestly will very rarely occur and a good Terran will not let you do this sort of crap because his control will be good enough, but it does happen, and as I said before, it's a gamble.

Around mid-to-late game, most of your bombs are coming off Zealots in shuttles, Zealots running straight into the push, or Dark Templars being sneaky as hell. I do think that Reach's philosophy is best: as I recall, he essentially said that what helped make his bombing effective when attacking the push is that you should wait for the Terran to move his units over or near the mines he placed to keep you at bay, because Terrans are usually overeager to own your forces and skip killing off their mines with their vultures. It's a small window, but it's a good enough opportunity to increase your chances of getting some good bombs during the attack on the push. Also, you can't really get efficient bombs by dropping just one zealot and being stingy with them-- the first zealot is going to get focus-fired and the mines are very likely not going to get above ground and splash. So if you're intent on bombing, don't do it halfway. Keep in mind good Terrans will have their mines in a manner that is not particularly threatening to them (i.e. directly in front of their giant army and well in range of siege mode), so don't be stupid with your units.

Remember – using bombs depends a lot on luck and the situation. Play smart. Don't play scared.

I Got Contained = (

Contains are gay. Moving on...

No, there's obviously a bit you need to do to break out. I'll try to help. =)

First, you really shouldn't be getting contained/having a lot of trouble with them if you're doing one base because contains in general are aiming to crush or actively

deny your second nexus. Here's how you should probably react, and in all cases (except if you were going hardcore for DT), adding Robotics is your top priority:

2 gate/range: Add your robo. as soon as you can because you need the observers and possibly a shuttle. If your macro is not that great/you think there's too many units/the contain is getting too strong, add that third gateway as necessary, and if it's something like triple fact., even the fourth gateway won't hurt.

1 gate/any tech: Stick with that tech. because the timing of it should be good enough to help you deal with the contain. Depending on the type of tech. you're doing, add 1-2 more gateways to what you already have and get ready to bust out. If it's say Reaver, your second gateway should probably be coming along/almost done so you can first try and see if you can harass the Terran's mineral line (no moniez=no army funding law!) while you add that third gateway. If you were going DTs, the timing of a 1 gate/DT is probably early enough so that the DTs+whatever you have should be enough to break out. Just watch for mines, no matter what you're doing.

Natural is going up: Use your best judgment. If it's early or you really think you're going to get overwhelmed, cancel it and just macro like a madman, and when you break out, try and go delay their own natural from mining while you get yours back up. If your Nexus has just finished and you haven't even gotten it up and running, just try your very best to defend the Nexus from getting taken down because you're going to be very behind if it gets knocked off.

Natural is operating: Power hard, get up to 5-6 gateways accordingly, and just try your very best to break out while keeping your natural and your poor probes from getting blown to bits.

A major key to breaking out of a contain is knowing when you have enough and when you're just suiciding your stuff. This will come from experience, so just play through it... the most important thing is to keep your calm and always think in the back of your mind that the Terran is devoting a lot of time and resources to this contain, so if you can get out, there'll be hell to pay. Just don't let the contain get out of hand, or else you'll be the one that'll be in big trouble. =(

Babytoss' Templar Tech

Oh man, things are looking good for you now. You're not only still alive, but your bases are pumping merrily away, cash is flowin', and you've been happily climbing up that tech. ladder while the Terran cowers in fear at the sheer force of your ownage. So now it's officially time to incorporate all that the Templar caste has to offer into your main force and lay some smackdown.

Obviously, you don't have to go anything Templar related if you don't want to – I personally like to, but if you've been macroing fine, your bases are running great, and you're in good position overall and just want to go air/keep hardcore macroing, go for it. However, I feel like at times during the mid-late game you're going to be

somewhat gas heavy and you can spare to throw in a few HTs and DTs here and there to mix things up and let the Terran have something else to deal with.

High Templars, while very fragile, can mess up the Terran push badly as long as you have good control and good timing. Their psi storms can cut away vulture meat shields so your Zealots can get up and close and personal with the tanks, soften up the tanks for easier ownage, and flat out rape Goliaths when you go air. Obviously pair them with whatever you have and PLEASE keep them alive as long as you can – most Terrans will just send most of their stuff at your retreating units or try to snipe your Templars, and if you get a good storm in while the vultures are chasing you, the tide can very potentially turn back to your favor. Going for a storm-drop or two is obviously a great idea as well and I feel that High Templars particularly shine when the Terran takes his min-only and you decide to attack, which is where the defense is often lax, there's good cliffs or the playing field is level for straight up ownage, and it's a great place to score a lot of SCV kills.

Which also brings in the Archon, which is so rarely used that I often wonder why people don't just keep one or two with their army if they're in a good position to do so. They're fantastic mine-cleaners, awesome for absorbing that first volley of tank/vulture shots, boosts your army's badass factor by a few hundredfold, and are hilariously efficient at owning the hell out of bunched vultures and SCVs. Can't spare to send your entire army to an expansion that's been mined up? Lawl, just send some Archons and feel the power. See a moderately clear path into their mineral line? Send that Archon in and make him pull the SCVs. It's just something to consider, even if it may not be the most practical unit choice all the time.

But the most useful is arguably, of course, the Dark Templar.

What I feel is so wonderful about the Dark Templar is that it is a versatile unit that can give your army a huge boost without too much hassle – just micro them a bit more carefully. They're absolutely outstanding bombs to punish mine-whoring Terrans, a huge threat early-game in terms of stopping pushes/going on raids and forcing the Terran to get detection, and just a major annoyance in general – and you definitely don't want the Terran being too comfortable sitting behind his little metal army. If the Terran isn't mining hard and there's no Turrets, sneaking in some DTs from the side/back and getting them situated in the Tank line at the moment you attack is also a great idea to divert Tank fire/draw vulture fire away from your Zealots. Your DTs are your ninjas infused with REAL ULTIMATE POWER, so treat them like it and don't let them just randomly charge head-long into battle; force the Terran to use scans and keep him on his toes with the DTs and just go for all-around harass. Always get the DTs set up well if you ARE engaging a push, because you want them to get a few swipes or let them splash the units around them from tank fire before they fall so they were at least worth the extra time and gas you invest in them.

Babytoss: Time to Own the Push

Before the Terran starts pushing, you want to always having your army out and

about the map, because you want to exert as much map control as possible while you grab expansions and restrict Terran movement. Your advantage is that you don't have to be a giant stationary blob on the map to kick butt, so you don't want to be restricted to certain areas by mines or the like – keep your units moving every once in a while, let your Zealots get some exercise, and overall, just keep your opponent guessing and fearful as he stays in his base. The way to beat a push with minimal losses is really catching the Terran unprepared and his units not set-up; the reason so many people have problems with slow-pushes is because the tanks are spread, mines are well-placed, turrets are lawling, and vultures are racing around ready to harass. You want to try your best to not let that happen.

FLANK.

Flanking will save your ass and make all your Protoss units happier because they won't be dead. It's important that you always have your units around the map and not turtling in your base/just at your choke because the Protoss army is a lot more maneuverable than the Terran Ball, so always have them around, get them spread out, and have them ready to lay some smackdown. Usually you should keep some Dragoons at your base to guard vulture harass (hopefully your observers will have a general idea if he's trying something like that... look for the winding snake on the minimap), but for the most part, you want most of your forces around ready to engage the push. So be sure that you're not leaving a crap load of idle Zealots around, because you're seriously going to need them – every unit is going to count in breaking the push.

It would obviously be best if you can get some sort of good pincer motion in or a good surround to really mess the Terran up – however, it's not always the case, and oftentimes if you don't judge distances/terrain correctly, your first few groups could get slaughtered before your others come, and then your attempt at a flank will just turn into a lawlfest for the Terran. I basically always just think that the real way to beat the push is to try and make your force similar to a Pac-man mouth, because everyone knows Pac-man will eat everything including Terran armies.

If you can get this to work, it's extremely effective-- but it calls for a few seconds to set-up, which sometimes you just don't have. So if you can't, the absolute LEAST you can do is get your units spread out and ready to envelop the Terran army. Sending your army in a straight line or in giant balls is like asking the tanks to try some Protoss target practice.

So let's say that you weren't really set up and now the Terran is breathing down your neck. You can choose to either turn tail and run the hell away or engage the push. Try your absolute best to be assertive about this decision (your mother taught you this crap for a reason) – if you choose to attack a push and about two seconds in realize that your stuff is going to get owned, you're obviously going to run-- but keep in mind you just took losses and the Terran scored a lot of free hits while being in good condition himself. So at least try to stick with your decision, whatever it may be, and hopefully the more you play the better you are at judging things right the first time.

If you decide to attack and WTF HE'S RIGHT THERE UNSIEGED THIS IS AWESOME OPPORTUNITY BUT HE SEES ME HE'S ABOUT TO HIT "1o2o3o" WHAT DO I DOOOOO, you need to act quickly. What you should do in the very very short time you have, while the Terran is still unsieged and the opportunity to strike is in the here and now, is to just click-move your units in a parallel line in relation to the Terran's stuff, try to adjust a few Zealots here and there, and then go for it. Every little bit helps because you want to come out on top of this – as I said before, the Terran force is just going to steamroll your ass if you don't beat the everlasting hell out of most of his pushes, particularly the big ones. BluzMan sort of summarizes this very quick means of getting your units spread out:

"A2.....
.....B
A1....."

Now, you don't just A-move your army to B, but first order in to move to A2. While moving, your army formation changes from a blob to something more resembling a line. Then, before your troops reach the destination, A-move dragoons to B. The difference is tremendous."

So those few seconds before and during the push, micro like mad with what you have because this is seriously one of the big showdowns-- each time you discourage the Terran from moving up and out with his push, the more you're in control of the map and the closer you are to starving him out/getting to your win. By micro I mean trying your best to make the Zealots get into the tank line instead of making them attack vultures, making Dragoons target Tanks that will attack your weak point for **massive damage**, and spreading out any Dragoon clumps you can spot (if you attacked the push rather hastily, you WILL find lots of clumps). Try your very best to time it so your melee units (Zealots/Archons) take the first few hits before your ranged stuff (Dragoons/HTs) start joining the fray. Timing is really one of the most important things in terms of engaging a push and beating it. You WANT to come out on top of this because if you don't, the Terran can keep pushing forward and things are just going to get very, very bad for you.

At the same time, take advantage of psychology and try to bait your opponent every once in a while – being creative with push-breaking, capitalizing on Terran mistakes, and just doing things that Terran doesn't expect/doesn't react to well goes a long way.

But say that you don't really feel comfortable engaging a push outright... you only have a few excuses for such a case. If the Terran has the terrain to his advantage (you can't flank/he's on higher ground), well yeah, better to revert back to Safetoss for a bit and not lose your units needlessly; you don't want to be playing right into the Terran's hands. You should instead just wait for a better opportunity or try and see if there's some better way to break the attack, or even if you're safe enough to go harass the Terran's base for a bit and make him come home. The other reason might be if the Terran is really slow-pushing and being gay for just about every tiny

bit of ground he's covering. If that's the case or you've been beating most of the pushes and the game is starting to get to a standstill, it's time for the Babytoss to start closing this game out.

Going Airborne

So, when should you start getting air tech? The good news is (or bad news, depending on how you look at it)... it's up to you.

It's more of a "judging the scenario" type thing. Terrans are an absolute pain to beat especially because their defense is so strong, so if you always feel like pure macro isn't working no matter how much you send, then yeah, maybe it's a good time to go air. However, going air isn't something that's just random: you definitely want to have a decent economy to do it, the smarts to try your best to hide it and make sure the Terran doesn't see your air tech until you WANT him to, and finally, the nads to go air at the right time. The biggest weakness of going air is that you're cutting troops to do it, so if you give Terran ample preparation time and he sees your air tech before it comes out, your attack is severely weakened and you just blew a crap load of money on whatever you just did. Once you have whatever air unit you chose in satisfactory numbers (you know you want to choose Arbiter. You know you do. Stop depriving yourself) and you spy no Goliaths from the Terran, it's time to go out and kick some ass.

Naturally, the first thing you want to be doing is owning up the tanks while the Terran goes ~~OMGWTFWHERE~~TOSSFLEETCOMEFROM so whatever ground force you may have can start regaining some map control. If you went Carriers, you're a lot more flexible with what you plan on doing and oftentimes after you soften up the push you can just head straight for the Terran base to harass while you macro more ground/air-- remember, the Terran at this point is being forced to change up his unit mix and so you should take advantage of this while he adjusts to you. If you're feeling especially devious, you can even try to just straight up own the Armories and cut off his Goliath production for a while if you really managed to catch the Terran with his pants down. Carriers are not instant win, but they're extremely powerful so as long as you micro them well. They should generally own the everlasting hell out of nearly everything, particularly if the Terran just spams Goliaths, in which case you should have a moderate ground force to help your air fleet out. So be sure to get air upgrades for your Carriers (3/3 Terran lawls at you without upgrades) and abuse those cliffs and the terrain to the best of your ability!

If you went Arbiters (hopefully with some spells researched), the same thing applies except you obviously need to be very careful that they don't get shot down by Goliaths. If you decide to recall into the Terran's base, remember to always aim for the factories because cutting off production=awesometastic for you. So if there's a ramp, just send a Dragoon there and stasis that sucker while you wreck havoc on the Terrans buildings. Be sure to keep an eye on your Arbiters-- they're not there to do much damage, they're there to give everything you have ninja powers and with the gas you spent on them you damn well better make sure they don't get randomly owned.

If you went Scouts, you're either completely dominating the matchup or you're insane. Or both.

If you went Corsairs, you're just insane.

So I'm Still Losing...

You're still losing? No worries, it happens to the best of us...

If you've been losing when both you and the Terran were playing standard, there may be many small mistakes you're making, your mechanics aren't good enough yet, or hell, you might even be slumping. The real key here is to watch those replays and really pay attention to what it is that you aren't doing right; after all, isn't that the rule of the TL.net Strategy forums? =) Analyze your mistakes, learn from them, and keep them in the back of your mind as you go into your next series of games.

If you lose to some cheese or something sneaky, watch the replays and think of how you responded to those things. Chances are you're very likely going to have to deal with something like this again, and unless it was really hardcore cheese (in which case a lot of it would depend on how lucky you were), there's often things you could have done to react better.

If you lose because YOU tried some cheese/something absurdly sneaky, check what you did wrong and work out the kinks of the BO. With the way the PvT matchup is evolving, Protoss generally does need to do something outside of standard play once in a while to mix things up, so try and see what went wrong and whether it was sheer dumb luck that the other player countered your ass or if you did something wrong with how you executed it.

If you lose a really close game (or even win a really close game), and even if you already know what you did wrong during the game, it doesn't hurt to watch the replay through your opponent's vision and see how they react to what you did and how you can better improve your own play.

Find yourself a practice partner or a Starcraft professor (someone a shit load better than you) to give you tips and watch replays with you – it'll really help a lot. And make sure your practice partner can beat the everlasting shit out of you most of the time, but isn't infallible – as long as he's within shooting range of your own skills, you can keep developing, keep improving, and someday be able to take more than a few games off that person. Losing is the best way to get better.

Watch replays of pros and watch the outstanding games that are on live during the season to really get an idea of how the best of the best do it. Try to understand their logic and incorporate the best of their games into your own.

And finally... no, your mechanics aren't good enough. Don't even ask. There's ALWAYS room for improvement. Even if you're on a huge mega win streak that

makes you want to e-mail KTF and be like "yo manz let me inz [garmtoss](#) is law! compared to mez," there's something wrong with your game that someone better than you can exploit (either by BO, mechanics, decision-making, WHATEVER)-- always be on the lookout for that and don't get cocky. You *can* get better.

Manto-... nah.

Great! So you're not as scared of the Terran now as you used to be, and you can start racking up a few wins! Fantastic! =)

However, the road to becoming a Mantoss is long and arduous... so far, there is only One. So keep playing, training, and hopefully someday, you can be a great Protoss player. Best of luck to ya. =)

[Originally posted by crescendo in teamliquid.net Broodwar Strategy forum. Nal_ra , Mantoss, Tasteless and 'garmtoz' (=garimto) are progamer's nicks]