Starships D6 / Earth Alliance Skylark 650



SKYLARK 650 TRANSPORT

Craft: Skylark Model 650 Series Transport
Type: Light freighter
Scale: Starfighter
Dimensions:
-Length: 37.7m
Skill: Space transports: Skylark 650
Crew: 3
-Skeleton: 1/+10
-Emergency Evac: 40/3 days
Crew Skill: Astrogation 3D+1, Sensors 2D, Space transports 3D
Passengers: 10 (semi-luxury)
Cargo Capacity: 700 metric tons
Consumables: 1 month
Cost: 270,000 (new), 120,000 (used)
Hyperspace Jump Engine: No
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 2D
Speed:
-Space: 7
-Atmosphere: N/A
Hull: 4D
Shields: N/A
Sensors:
-Passive: 15/0D
-Scan: 25/1D
-Search: 35/2D
-Focus: 2/2D+2

AUXILIARY CRAFT: N/A

WEAPONS: N/A

GAME NOTES:

-ROTATING SECTIONS: If the rotating sections take damage, roll 1D. On 1 they stop rotating, the ship loses gravity, and the crew have to operate in zero-g with all the penalties that apply. Damage to rotating sections may also cause the crew to be thrown about (roll 1D, 1-2 causes this). If so, the crew must roll Dex against Difficult Difficulty. Failure incurs 4D damage. Ships built with

rotating sections in Earth Alliance/Earthforce ships have less speed (between -1 and -2) and maneuverability (between -1 and -1D) to than if they were built without them (with their crews operating in zero-g).

-GRAVITY: This class of ship has no artificial gravity, but uses rotating sections for gravity simulation. Parts of the ship operate in zero-g. The crew may operate in zero-g. If they use the available straps, belts, handholds and other appartus to stay seated or positioned correctly, they can operate with no penalties. Otherwise, they incur all the penalties for operating in zero-g.

DESCRIPTION:

The Skylark Model 650 is an improvment to the design of the Model 600, working on what the design was already good at: speed. This craft had some work done to its engines for improved speed, as well as having some cargo space taken up to carry more fuel. The result was what became for the time the fastest ship in the Earth Alliance, even compared to Earthforce military craft. Due to this, Earthgov watched the sales of this craft very closely, as they did not want any falling into the hands of raiders or other malcontents.

While the 650 had its moment in the sun, sales dropped off after less than a year due to the ship's fuel consumption. It made an exellent courier, able to get from point A to point B very quickly to deliver light cargos, especially very important and expensive cargos. But past this, the 650 just didn't make the best affordable transport. Passengers liked the ship if they were traveling light, but later regulations on cargo limits and possible passenger fee increases led to customers looking into older Skylarks or other commercial transports entirely.

This led to the Model 650 quickly being shelved, relying on the Model 600s and moving on to the development of the Skylark Model 700.

The purpose for the 650's development was the Earth Alliance's need of the fastest possible ships during the Earth-Minbari War. Introduced by 2245 and marketed as a devoted courier ship during the war, sales were high for the first year of its release. While these ships saw great use as couriers during the war, their use slowed during the conflict a they began to be a draw on what few resources the Earthforces had left near the war's end. The end of the war was what brough the fame of the Model 650 to an end, as well as the 670.

General

The Skylark series was a common type of commercial transport craft seen used by Earth Alliance and commercial space transportation businesses. Compared to most other human made space transports, each kind of craft had traits that set them apart from the rest: Asimov liners had rotational gravity and relative luxury quarters for their passengers; TA series had a good mix of cargo and passenger space in different sizes, but no gravity; Achilles series were good at moving large amounts of bulk freight, but were slower than the rest and had no passenger space; Skylarks, while smaller than most and having less passenger and cargo space, were the fastest human made space transports around!

While other types of trasports and freighters had a basic design that had not changed much in the hundred years that humanity had been in space, the Skylark was made with ingenuity and innovation in mind. Many Skylark models are made along specific design parameters, yet most maintain a degree of modular compartment adaptability. In truth, many models of Skylark are

simply the same basic design with different module types added onto the hull to make a ship that fills a different purpose or role in the spacecraft market. This also makes the Skylark popular among civilians who enjoy owning their own ships and tinkering to make them more unique. The skylark would even make a popular ship to be used by raiders, an alternative besides the common use of "Raider" fighters and their battlewagon base ships, if they ever get their hands on one.

Most space transports are often the victim of raider attacks, being heavily damaged or destroyed after raiders take their cargos. However, victims of raider attacks are usually other ship types (Asimov, TA, Achilles, etc). Skylarks are often just fast and maneuverable enough, if not more so, to outrun a raider attack. This is another trait that makes the Skylark very popular with among all kinds of passengers.

Many officials in distant parts of human controlled space often make requistions of some kind that require something or someone to be transported to a distant part of space. These requests are often fullfilled by a Skylark transport of some kind (i.e. Babylon 5 The Lost Tales). For this reasons, Skylarks are often called courier ships, as well as being called trasports or light freighters.

Design Notes

For all the civilian spacecraft seen in babylon 5, this one is arguably my favorite. Also, more than any of the other spaceship types, this was the only one I remember seeing several variants of through the series and the other expansions to the B5 franchise. After a while, as I thought about writing up B5 ships, this ship stuck in my mind as the Babylon 5 equivelant to the Star Wars YT series or other such Corellian designs, as the YTs always tend to come to mind when one thinks of a Star Wars "light freighter".

I also liked the idea of making the verious types of civilian ships in B5 stand out for some kind of easily noticeable trait, as mentioned above. If GMs/players play in a Babylon 5 setting and decide to get their own ship, they'd have many options to choose from depending on what their purposes are. In that regard, Skylarks would be at the top of the list for me, next to getting some kind of long range capital ship.

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