Starships D6 / Earth Alliance Skylark 670



SKYLARK 670 TRANSPORT

Craft: Skylark Model 670 Series Transport
Type: Light freighter
Scale: Starfighter
Dimensions:
-Length: 37.9m
Skill: Space transports: Skylark 670
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: 200 metric tons
Consumables: 1 month
Cost: 280,000 (new), 130,000 (used)
Hyperspace Jump Engine: No
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 2D
Speed:
-Space: 8
-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 670 was built along the same lines of the 650, modifying the already fast 600 design for more speed. This design had the same changes that the 650 had, with the addition of reinstalling the lighter particle thrust engines in the direct aft of the ship. This is the basic engine layout from the Model 500 and most designs prior to it. However these engines have been improved upon for more thrusting power to make a difference when adding its thrust power to that of the engines mounted on the sides of the craft.

The result is a ship that was faster than the Model 650, a powerfully fast ship for its time. But, as the Model 650 had its brief time in the light, this ship's moment of glory burned even brighter but faster. It had much less cargo space due to the extra engines, and though it could reach its destination very quickly, fuel consuption was a problem. The 670s would have to refuel either at its destination, or immediately upon returning to an operational center for whoever owned it. This meant that these ships could not operate nearly as long or as far as previous models of Skylark. At least not on their own. The idea of establishing refueling ships was kicked around, as other commercial transportation businesses had considered for some time. But with raider activity constantly o the eb and flow of commerce, a commercial refueling vessel would become much too easy a target for these raiders.

Released in 2246, these ships had widespread use for most of that year. But by the next year, sales started plunging as Earth Alliance simply could not maintain the resources needed to keep the ships going, let alone buy and operate more of them.

Therefor, after only a couple years of use, the Skylark 670s began to be phased out by most commercial businesses along with the 650s, when SDC began moving on to te Skylark Model 700. Some 670s can still be seen here and there by a few small businesses that could make them work in the fields they'd chosen, or by spacer enthusiasts who have a weak spot for it or who found ways to modify the ships to work better at long range, long term operations.

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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