Starships D6 / The Explorer

The Explorer

Shortly following the introduction of the Sulanko support frigate into the Republic Fleet, Vaufthau went to work overhauling one of its own Sulankos and turning it from a combat vessel into a deep space explorer. This vessel was aptly named the Explorer.

Vaufthau finally debuted the Explorer to the public several years later as the most sophisticated deep space exploration vehicle ever created. The Republic soon became extremely interested in it.

The Republic purchased the Explorer from Vaufthau for an undisclosed price and deployed it to a secret research facility on the edge of controlled space. The Explorer was to sent out beyond the reaches of the known galaxy where it would hopefully arrive in another galaxy - something never before accomplished.

The Explorer varied greatly from the standard Sulanko frigate which it originated from. The turbolaser batteries were removed and replaced with a pair of extremely powerful sensor domes. The hyperdrive was upgraded from the standard Mark Three at the time to the most advanced they could develop, a Mark One. This Mark One hyperdrive required a staggering amount of power to keep in operation so the only systems kept powered during the hundred year hyperspace trip were those vital to the crew's survival in their cryochamers and the maintenance of the hyperdrive motivator.

The Explorer was only equipped to operate for a maximum of ten years out of hyperspace without a resupply. If the crew either chose to or became forced to remain in unexplored territory then they would be forced to locate their own fuel and supplies within that ten year period. In the slight chance of both the main and backup hyperdrives failing, the ship would shut down all non-vital systems and the crew would return to hibernation in hope that someday they would be rescued.

The Explorer crew was carefully selected, only those crewers with the top qualifications and no long term connections (family) were even asked to participate in the project. The final crew consisted of six special operations soldiers, a Jedi Knight and Master and a team of forty researchers who each specialized in a unique field of study.

The trip across the expanse of space between galaxies would take nearly a century with a Mark One hyperdrive. The crew would be forced to remain in hibernation for most of the trip there and back. During the flight,

a crew of twelve droids programmed to maintain each other and the ship itself would takeover the tasks that a normal crew would perform in a normal hyperspace flight.

Republic engineers reconstructed much of the vast cargo holds on the vessel into working decks for research labs and a cryogenic chamber to maintain the entire crew in deep hibernation for the duration of the flight. The research labs would serve the purpose of mapping new territory while providing the ability to adequately examine and study new specimans and samples.

The Explorer departed Republic space four years after its purchase and was never seen again. The vessel was forgotten about after it failed to return to Republic space some 250 years later - this was considered to be the maximum amount of time it would take to complete a round trip. The project itself was wiped from the databases as the grounds of the Galactic Empire were laid.

Craft: Modified Vaufthau Shipyards' Sulanko Frigate
Type: Deep space exploration vehicle
Scale: Capital
Length: 352 meters
Skill: Capital ship piloting: Sulanko frigate
Crew: 12 (droids); Skeleton: 1/+15
Crew Skill: Astrogation 5D+1, capital ship piloting 6D, sensors 5D+2
Passengers: 40 (researchers), 6 (troops), 2 (Jedi)
Cargo Capacity: 4,500 metric tons
Consumables: 10 years
Cost: Not available for sale
Hyperdrive Multiplier: x1
Hyperdrive Backup: x6
Nav Computer: Yes
Maneuverability: 0D
Space: 2
Hull: 3D+2
Shields: 1D
Sensors:
- Passive: 50/1D
- Scan: 90/2D
- Search: 170/2D+2
- Focus: 4/3D

Starship Complement:
- 2 light transports

Ground/Air Complement:
- 2 ground exploration vehicles

Game Master Notes:
- A good GM could make use of this vessel in many ways. The most subtle way would be to only mention it as a spacer's tale and never actually

include the ship itself in any games. However, for the more inventive GMs, the ship could finally return to known space at any time period ranging from 50 years prior to The Phantom Menace or as far into the post-Imperial galaxy as needed. A few little plot twists could easily be thown in with it ranging from the ship returning crewed by a hostile alien species, it returning with a sort of planet-destroying super bomb, it returning with the crew having never actually waking up from their hibernation or anything one could think of.

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