

Pathfinder Deep Space Explorer

Flushed with its success during the Dilgar War, Earthforce decided to redefine its exploration program. Advances in EA technology coupled with secrets learned from salvaged Dilgar ships gave the Alliance a better understanding of hyperspace and its navigation. Although still dangerous to leave the safety of the beacon network, it was now possible to guess more accurately which disturbances in hyperspace were stars and which were only nebulae or other anomalies. As a result, a new generation of pioneers grew hungry to again seek out new worlds.

To organize this new effort of stellar mapping and discovery, the Deep Space Exploration (DSX) command was formed. Unfortunately, the ultimate financial cost of the Dilgar War led to the Earth Senate's decision to reduce the Earthforce budget and redirect the savings towards internal growth. As a result, any new exploration by Earthforce would have to be done on a very limited budget. With no new research dollars forthcoming, Deep Space Command was forced to borrow heavily from existing projects.

From the Omega Advanced Destroyer project, designers had finally managed to develop the technology to put a large, high duration spinning habitats on space going vessels. While rotating habitat's were certainly not new, the ability to mount them on a long range space vessel was. The original rotation system was bulky and needed a large amount of space and power to use. But a gravity section was a crucial piece of the puzzle, making it possible for crews to perform long-term exploration missions. From the Dilgar research projects, came pulse cannon technology. Any ship deep in uncharted space would carry the very latest in Earth Alliance weapon technology.

Constrained by the rotating section's large size and the need for high endurance, Earth Force designers now turned to the largest ship then available, the Nova class dreadnought. By ripping out the entire center section, a large rotating section could be added. Due to budgetary constraints, only four dreadnoughts were subsequently modified into a deep space explorers. The new explorers were christened the Pathfinder, Surveyor, Mariner and Pioneer.

These four went into service in Y2241, exploring the rim of known space in shifts, with two of the four on missions while the remaining two were re-supplied and refit. The Mariner was rumored to have been lost while exploring along the edge of Centauri space, in a region that would later be recognized as the edge Vorlon space. To date, Earth Force will neither confirm or deny this rumor. The Pathfinder was apparently lost on the Rim during a long jump into a new system but again, details are limited. The remaining two, Surveyor and Pioneer were destroyed during the Earth Minbari war at the Battle of the Line.

Shortly before the Minbari War, the DSX command proposed, and received preliminary funding for the Explorer Class ship. A new, larger and vastly more capable vessel. The funding was due, in no small part to the success of the Pathfinder series of explorers. The price for this success was that the new Explorer program absorbed the original Pathfinder program ending the chances of any additional Pathfinder Class vessels being constructed.

Designer Notes

The basic idea of the Nova Deep Space Explorer is from "The Babylon Project Gamemaster's Resource Kit" by Chameleon Eclectic Entertainment. The original idea of doing an SCS was debated by a number of people the History Repair Team (HRT). I revamped the design a second time during the Variants-4 contest based on comments from a number of different people. This latest addition, is simply a modification of the silhouette to produce a more "Omega" look which dovetails in with the visual evidence as noted from the "In The Beginning" movie.

EA Path Finder Deep Space Explorer (Alpha Model)

SPECS

Class: Capital Ship
In Service: 2241
Point Value: 700
Ramming Value: 360
Jump Delay: 24 Turns

Speed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Turn Cost	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Turn Delay	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

MANEUVERING

Turn Cost: 1 x Speed
Turn Delay: 1 x Speed
Accel/Decel Cost: 3 Thrust
Pivot Cost: 3+3 Thrust
Roll Cost: 2+2 Thrust

COMBAT STATS

Fwd/Aft Defense: 17 (14)
Stb/Port Defense: 18 (15)
Engine Efficiency: 3/1
Extra Power: +0
Initiative Bonus: +0

WEAPON DATA

Medium Laser

Class: Laser
Modes: Raking
Damage: 3d10+12
Range Penalty: -1 per 2 hexes
Fire Control: +3/+2/-3
Intercept Rating: n/a
Rate of Fire: 1 per 3 turns

Med Pulse Cannon

Class: Particle
Modes: Standard
Damage: 10 1d5 times
Maximum Pulses: 6
Grouping Range: +1 per 4
Range Penalty: -1 per hex
Fire Control: +4/+3/+1
Intercept Rating: -2
Rate of Fire: 1 per 2 turns

Standard Particle Beam

Class: Particle
Modes: Standard
Damage: 1d10+6
Range Penalty: -1 per hex
Fire Control: +4/+4/+4
Intercept Rating: -2
Rate of Fire: 1 per turn

Interceptor Mk-I

Intercept Rating: -3
Rate of Fire: 1 per turn
OFFENSIVE MODE:
Class: Particle
Modes: Standard
Damage: 1d10+5
Fire Control: -/-/+5
Range Penalty: -2 per hex

FORWARD HITS

1-4: Retro Thrust
5-6: Med Laser Cannon
7-8: Med Pulse Cannon
9-10: Interceptor
11-18: Forward Structure
19-20: PRIMARY Hit

SIDE HITS

1-6: Port/Stb Thrust
7-8: Std Particle Beam
9-11: Port/Stb Cargo
12-18: Port/Stb Structure
19-20: PRIMARY Hit

AFT HITS

1-5: Main Thrust
6-7: Med Laser Cannon
8-9: Med Pulse Cannon
10-11: Interceptor
12-18: Aft Structure
19-20: PRIMARY Hit

PRIMARY HITS

1-8: Primary Structure
9-10: Jump Engine
11-13: Sensors
14-15: Engine
16-17: Hangar
18-19: Reactor
20: C & C

SPECIAL NOTES

Unique Ship (Only 4 Exist)
ELINT Ship

SENSOR DATA

Defensive EW

Target #1

Target #2

Target #3

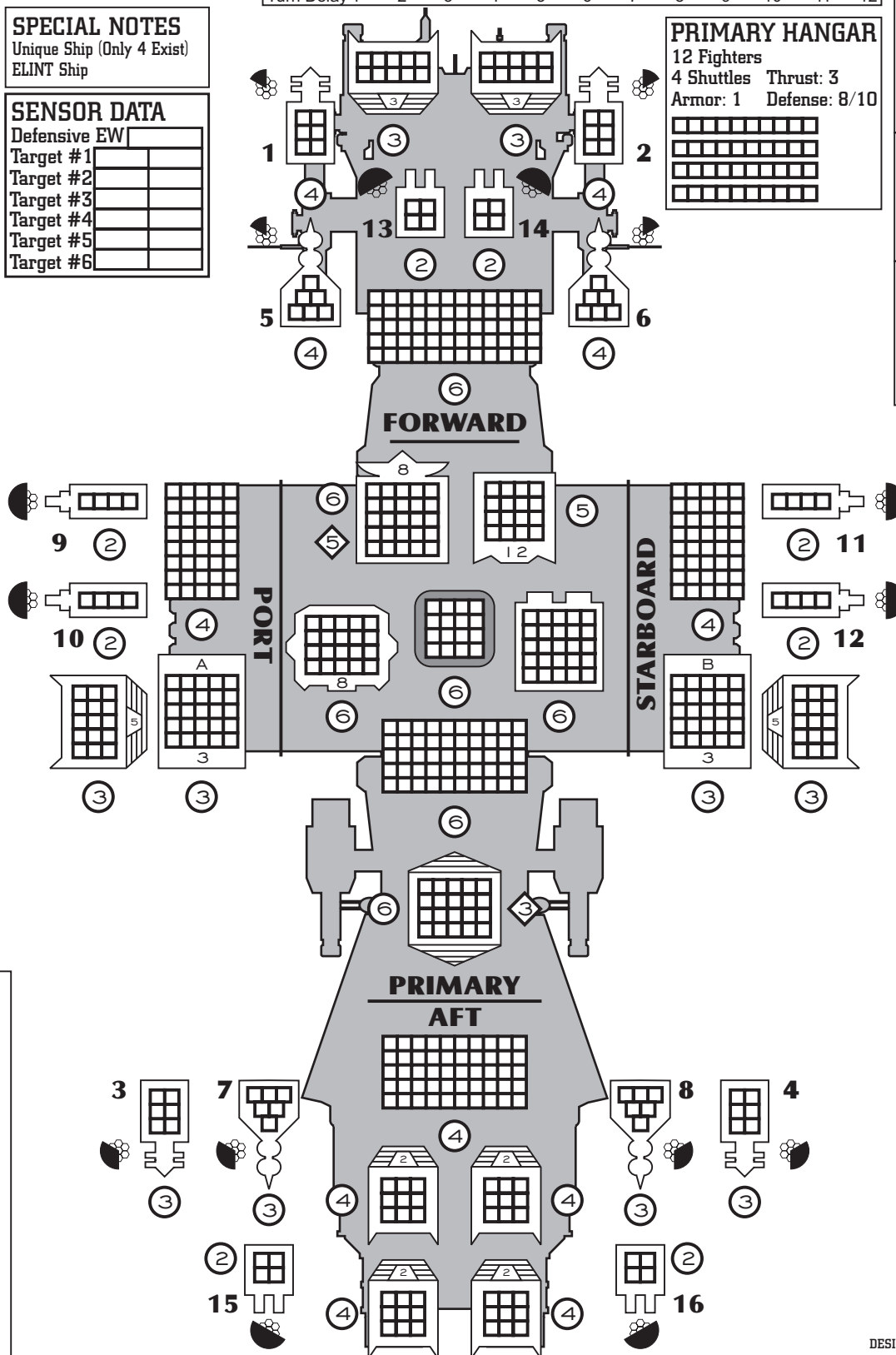
Target #4

Target #5

Target #6

PRIMARY HANGAR

12 Fighters
4 Shuttles Thrust: 3
Armor: 1 Defense: 8/10



ICON RECOGNITION

- Thruster
- C & C
- Sensors
- Engine
- Jump Engine
- Reactor
- Hangar
- Med Laser Cannon
- Med Pulse Cannon
- Std Particle Beam
- Interceptor