

Posted by Jesse Heinig on Decipher's forums:

*While I would normally post a weblog on a Friday at the end of the week, in this case I was pretty busy so Saturday is it. The last week has seen a lot of work on the web adventures. Pending approval from Paramount, we should have a few ready to go live once the new web site is done. That'll be a nice treat, and we'll continue to post 'em as they're done. Some of them are older LUG convention adventures converted over, but the majority are new ones submitted by people here and developed for the web.*

*With the web adventures out of the way, it's back to the usual book schedule. That means I've been starting on some new material, like the rules for hologram and android characters and the outline of a possible book on psionic powers. Plus, there's the usual back-and-forth to see if we can fit everything. Production (i.e. Kieran) is working on the Star Trek: The Next Generation sourcebook, and some playtesters have seen a few chapters already. One of the neat things is that we have room in there to include material that didn't fit into earlier books or didn't make it for some reason, like the Constellation-class ship, which was supposed to be in **Starships** but didn't make it at the last minute when we didn't have the art for it. So, to show you guys I'm not sitting on my hands, here's the text for it, written by the most excellent Don Mappin!*

## **STARFLEET CONSTELLATION-CLASS**

Exploratory Cruiser; Commissioned: 2285

### **Hull Data**

Structure: 30

Size/Decks: 6/16

Length/Height/Beam: 302/78/157

Complement: 350

### **Propulsion Data**

Impulse System: RSV-2 (.5c) (CC)

Warp System: LN-64 Mod 3 x2 (8/9/12) (CC)

### **Operational Data**

Atmosphere Capable: No

Cargo Units: 60

Life Support: Class 2 (C)

Operations System: Class 3 (D)

Sensor System: Class 3a (+3/CC)

Separation System: No

Shuttlebay: 2a

Shuttlecraft: 12 Size worth

Tractor Beams: 1 fv, 1 ad, 1 av

Transporters: 6 standard, 6 emergency

### **Tactical Data**

Phasers: Type VIII (x4/D)

Penetration: 5/5/4/0/0

Torpedo Launchers: Mk 22 DF (x4/D)

Photon Penetration: 5/5/5/5/5

Deflector Shield: CIDSS-1 (AA)

Protection/Threshold: 13/4

### **Miscellaneous Data**

Maneuver Modifiers: +2 C, +0 H, +2 T

Traits: None

### **Mission**

The Constellation-class was initially designed as an exploratory cruiser intended for exploration and scientific missions coreward of the Milky Way Galaxy and along the frontier of the Federation. Despite its commissioning profile, limitations forced its use closer to Federation starbases and outposts. Nevertheless, the class serves as an all-around excellent surveyor and scientific vessel, capable of delivering a number of dedicated scientific personnel to a specific location.

### **Features**

The Constellation-class is the first Starfleet design to use a multi-layered warp field through the use of a quad-nacelle design. The LN-64 Mod 3 warp engines generate an overlapping warp field perpendicular from the centerline, as opposed to along the centerline. The intent was to mimic some of the theoretical speeds promised by the transwarp engine, but ultimately the gains were minimal.

A number of other enhancements are built into the Constellation-class for her role as an explorer, including the uprated Class 3a sensor suite and dual shuttlebays similar to those found on the Miranda-class. The bulk of the Constellation's internal space is made

up of scientific laboratories and lateral sensor pallets. This space comes at something of a cost, as living accommodations on board the cruiser are cramped.

As with most Starfleet cruiser designs, the Constellation-class is well-armed and able to defend herself as necessary. Equipped with the latest Type VIII phaser arrays, this cruiser can project a respectable amount of firepower. Unfortunately, the profile of her warp nacelles provides several blind spots aft of the vessel. The Mk 22 direct fire photon torpedo launchers extend her range capabilities.

The CIDSS-1 shield grid, the first of its kind, provides adequate protection and enhanced particle dispersal—ships of the class can withstand a number of strikes with minimal penetration. Unfortunately the CIDSS-1 grid is also underpowered and relatively easy to overload and knock out in a sustained conflict. Thus, the Constellation-class is not advised to take part in sustained engagements.

The two shuttlebays allow the vessel to fill a limited support role, but because of space limitations her cargo and personnel carrying capacity are restricted. As such, the Constellation-class is ill-suited for diplomatic or courier missions beyond first contact situations.

Starfleet's Corps of Engineers lists the Constellation's standard mission duration at three years, although in the last twenty years that has been lowered to a more reasonable two years to account for both the class' deficiencies and wear and tear on older systems.

The class was designed to last for at least 15 years between system overhauls, and there have been no significant refits during that time. The replacement of her linear warp drive engines was at one time attempted, but proved to be too time-consuming to rollout fleetwide.

## **Background**

The late 23rd century was one of exploration for Starfleet—not only within the Federation but also on the drawing boards of starship designers. After the failure of the transwarp experiments of the Excelsior-class, Starfleet engineers turned their attention to different methods of increasing the warp travel speeds. While multi-nacelle designs had always been considered, maintaining the stability of the subspace warp fields necessary for faster-than-light travel had proven too difficult a hurdle to overcome. New duotronic computer models in the late 2290s allowed for real-time warp field monitoring and adjustment, allowing the first fully realized quad-nacelle starship: the Constellation-class. Originally it was theorized that by overlaying multiple symmetrical warp fields the then-current warp envelope (still expressed in Original Cochrane Units) could be pushed even further.

Prototypes of the Constellation-class achieved warp field stability with little difficulty; the gains that had been hoped for were simply not realized. Instead the class gained only a modest cruising speed upgrade. Too far along in the design process to begin anew, and with Starfleet eager to have a deep-space exploration cruiser to replace the aging Constitution-class, the Constellation cruiser was commissioned on 2292.

Her speed aside, the Constellation-class performed as expected, and better, at the task of exploration and research. Constellation-class cruisers surveyed a number of stellar anomalies over the years, including the first extensive review of a particle fountain. Never intended as front-line combatants, ships of this class nevertheless saw action in the Cardassian and Tholian wars, and even limited duty during the Dominion War. Long since out of production, any vessels currently in service continue to remain active throughout the duration of their operational lifetime and are then retired.

## **Ships in Service**

Name Registry Notes

U.S.S. Antietam NCC-2874 Lost in unknown circumstances along the Tholian border (2335)

U.S.S. Constellation NX-1974 Lead ship of the class, scrapped after extensive fire while in Spacedock (2309); (R2)

U.S.S. Fading Sun NCC-2902 Commanded by Captain Andrew Greenberg; heralded as one of Starfleet's finest tacticians during the Pale Wolf Conflict (2322)

U.S.S. Gettysburg NCC-3890 Commanded by Captain Mark Jameson; resolved hostage situation on Mordan IV by arming both sides of the conflict

U.S.S. Hathaway NCC-2593 Abandoned and later recovered for use during wargame simulations against the Enterprise-D (2365)

U.S.S. Magellan NCC-3069 Commanded by Captain Conklin; participated in the G'oun Cluster Mapping and Exploration Initiative

U.S.S. Stargazer NCC-2893 Commanded by Captain Jean-Luc Picard (2355); presumed lost at the "Battle of Maxia;" recovered by Ferengi and returned to Starfleet (2364)

U.S.S. Vespucci NCC-3864 Commanded by Captain Tara Oltitavano; attached to the Tenth Fleet; performed with distinction during the Dominion War (2375); (R6)

U.S.S. Victory NCC-9754 Commanded by Captain Zimbata; responsible for halting Orion smuggling operations in Riley System (2362)