

# Message to Spacers 7

## Cygnus Spaceworks *Alpha*-class XG-1 "Star Wing"

Patrick Stutzman

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### Message to Spacers Archives!

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### **Alpha-class XG-1 "Star Wing" CL 10**

Gargantuan starfighter

**Init** +5; **Senses** Perception +6

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**Defense** Ref 16 (flat-footed 12), Fort 26; +7 armor

**hp** 130; **DR** 10; **SR** 30; **Threshold** 46

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**Speed** fly 16 squares (max. velocity 1,050 km/h), fly 4 squares (starship scale)

**Ranged** laser cannons +5 (see below) or

**Ranged** ion cannons +5 (see below) or

**Ranged** medium concussion missiles +5 (see below)

**Fighting Space** 4[ts]4 or 1 square (starship scale); **Cover** total

**Base Atk** +2; **Grp** +33

**Atk Options** autofire (laser cannons, ion cannons)

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**Abilities** Str 43, Dex 18, Con —, Int 16

**Skills** Initiative +5, Mechanics +6, Perception +6, Pilot +5, Use Computer +6

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**Crew** 1 (skilled); **Passengers** none

**Cargo** 100 kg; **Consumables** 3 days; **Carried Craft** none

**Payload** 16 missiles

**Hyperdrive** [ts]1 (backup [ts]10); navicomputer

**Availability** Military **Cost** not available for sale (likely valued at 125,000)

*\*If the ship has an astromech droid, use these skill modifiers instead.*

**Laser cannons** (pilot)

**Atk** +5 (+0 autofire), **Dmg** 5d10[ts]2

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**Ion cannons** (pilot)

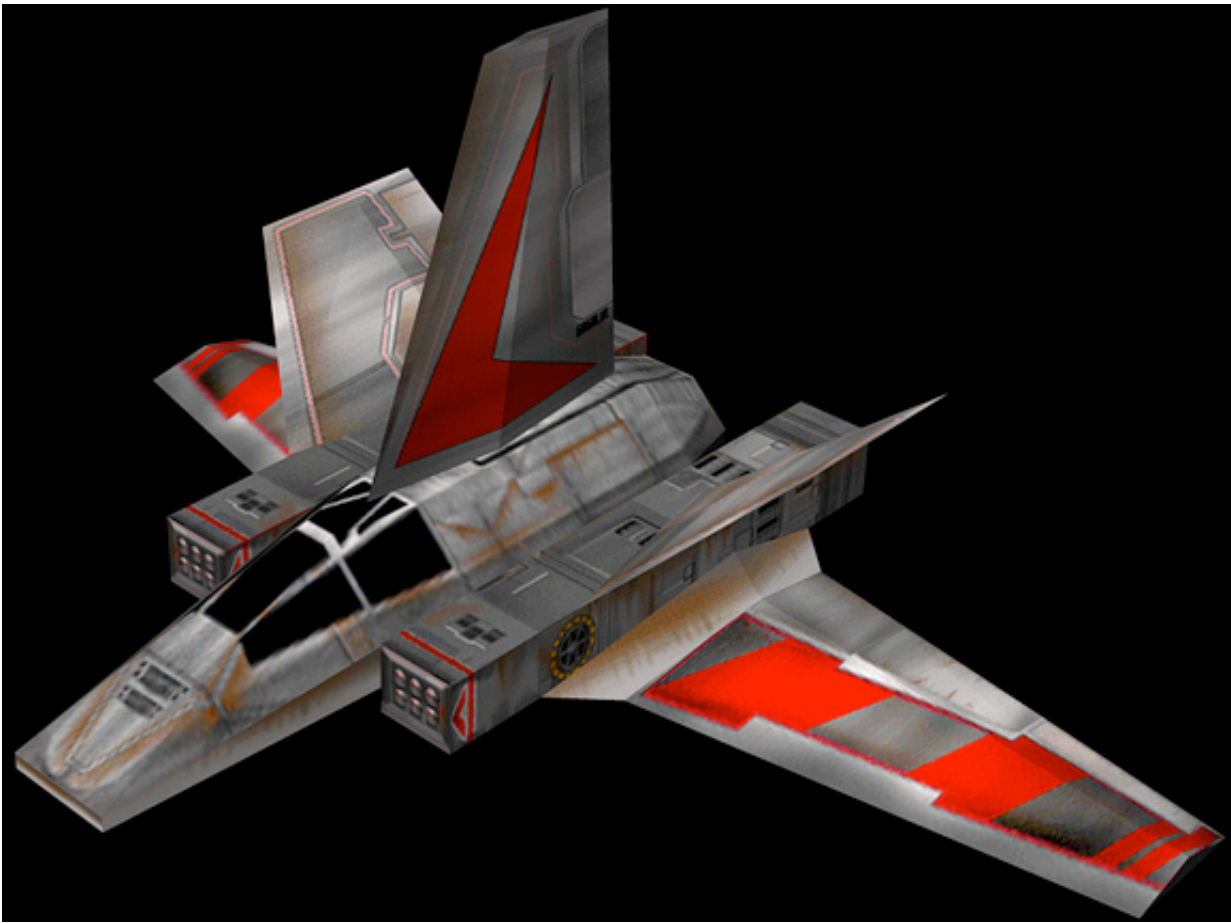
**Atk** +5 (+0 autofire), **Dmg** 6d10[ts]2 ion

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**Medium concussion missiles** (pilot)

**Atk** +5, **Dmg** 9d10[ts]2, 4-square splash

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**T**he *Alpha*-class XG-1 is a starfighter in use by the Galactic Empire throughout its fleet. More commonly known as an assault gunboat, the "Star Wing" represents the Empire's first attempt at implementing a space superiority fighter in its defense force.

Wider than it is long, the XG-1 is modeled very similarly to the well-known *Lambda*-class shuttle used throughout the Empire. Its wing design also has the set dorsal fin and two primary lateral wings that fold up while in landing configuration, but the *Alpha*-class also has two additional smaller wings positioned about halfway between the dorsal fin and the primary wings that act as stabilizer fins to improve the ship's maneuverability over its shuttle counterpart. In fact, the fighter earned its nickname "Star Wing" from the five-point silhouette it creates when in flight mode and all five wings are extended.

Unlike the TIE fighters in common use in the Empire's navy, the *Alpha*-class gunboat has a shielding system installed as added protection during combat. Specifically designed to directly counter the space superiority fighters in use by the Rebellion, the shields improve on those used in the *Lambda*-class shuttle, providing a higher energy output for better protection. In addition to the shields, the XG-1 also carries a hyperdrive and a larger array of weapon systems at the pilot's disposal, making the fighter a vastly superior fighter over the standard TIE fighter. The missile package normally carried by the *Alpha*-class consists of 16 concussion missiles, but it can be exchanged for up to 12 proton torpedoes, 8 heavy concussion missiles or shieldbuster torpedoes, or 4 heavy space mines.

Like so many others, the ship is not without its flaws, the most notable of which is its flight control computer. The performance of the computer is not the issue; the RCS-6 computer system has performed admirably in the past. The main issue is that the system was developed by Miradyne, a computer production company that went out of business several years before the *Alpha*-class fighter was designed. Why Cygnus Spaceworks decided to use a computer system from a company that could not provide technical support is a question that has largely remained unanswered to date. But, Cygnus compensated by providing their own technical support for the system.

Critics of the design stated that the gunboat's results in performance testing by Cygnus indicate that the ship is too slow and maneuvers much like other fighters in its class, making it a poor choice for a space superiority fighter. The Empire compared these results to other fighters and found that it is less maneuverable than its

counterpart, the X-wing fighter, and slower than even the standard TIE fighter. However, it proved to be highly effective against the Y-wing fighter and even performed well in groups against smaller capital ships.

#### History

When the XG-1 was first introduced into the Empire's arsenal, it was the only fighter with hyperdrive capability. Although it was initially looked upon favorably by naval commanders and squadron leaders, its ability to undertake long-range missions were limited due to the fact that no other fighters could escort the ships anywhere beyond the range of their sublight engines. As a result, the *Alpha*-class ships were forced to engage in heavy assault runs where they relied on TIE fighter escorts to protect them against superior starfighters like the X-wing. Once their escorts were lost, they found their attention split between fending off Rebel fighters and striving to accomplish their mission.

As time went on, Imperial strategists devised a plan to use the *Alpha*-class ships on missions where travel through hyperspace was necessary. The ships would be divided into two groups: one group would attack the intended target with heavy ordnance, while the other group would fly as their escorts. Within a short span of time, Sienar Flight Systems introduced the TIE Avenger to the Imperial fleet, which also came equipped with shields and its own hyperdrive. The Avengers would accompany the *Alpha*-class gunboats as escorts, allowing a greater number of the "Star Wings" to concentrate on the primary target, while they kept any defending fighters distracted.

Several years later, the Empire elected to phase the XG-1 out of service, since plans to deploy the newly-developed TIE Defender throughout the fleet to replace it were already in place. However, Admiral Zaarin's move against the production facilities for the TIE Avenger and Defender forced the *Alpha*-class out of retirement to stop the incursion. Upgraded with current technology, the gunboat piloted by the Imperial pilot named Maarek Stele defeated both the Rneekii pirates and Admiral Zaarin's TIE Defenders, proving that the ship was still fully capable of serving the Empire.

#### *Alpha*-class XG-1 "Star Wings" in the Galaxy

The *Alpha*-class gunboat's deployment throughout the Empire makes it highly likely that it will be encountered at some point in one's travels. Each Star Destroyer in the fleet carries five XG-1 vessels as part of its support ship contingent, although the ship does not necessarily need the support of a Star Destroyer to fulfill its duties like TIE fighters do.

Typical missions that call for the use of the *Alpha*-class are those where TIE fighters would be incapable of accomplishing successfully. They are sent out for attacks on orbital stations, smaller capital ships, or groups of ships as well as long-range scouting. The ion cannons also allow the "Star Wings" to be used for situations where starships need to be taken intact, such as customs assignments.

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## About the Author

Patrick Stutzman is a freelance game designer whose credits include *Threats of the Galaxy* and the upcoming *The Clone Wars Campaign Guide* for the **Star Wars Roleplaying Game** Saga Edition. He also maintains his Web site, [Star Wars: The Forgotten Tales](#), and works on [SWRPGNetwork](#) under the name of Jan Tolbara. Currently, he lives in Kansas City with his wife, two children, and an annoying Force spirit that follows him wherever he goes. If you have any tips on how to get rid of this spirit, let him know.