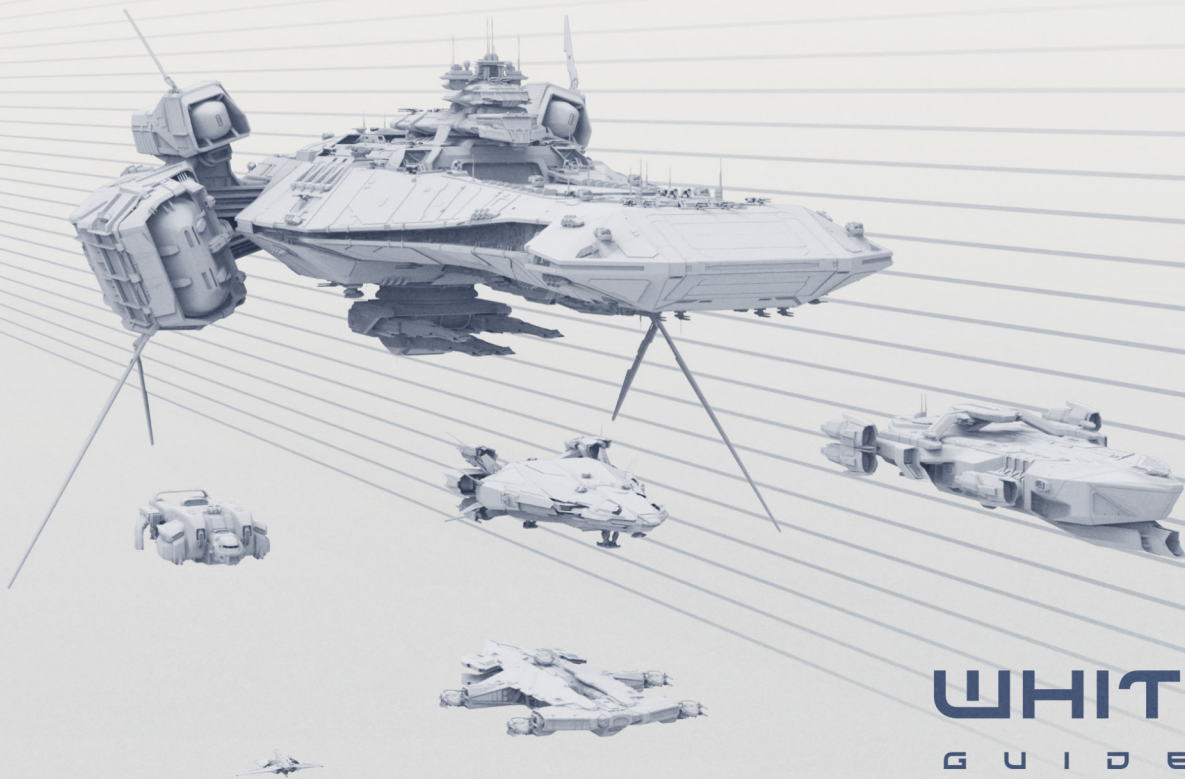


THE IMPARTIAL GUIDE TO THE SHIPS OF THE KNOWN UNIVERSE

2947 EDITION



WHITLEY'S

GUIDE 

RIGOROUS TESTING, HISTORICAL INFORMATION AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS





THE ANVIL AEROSPACE

'HAWK'

H - 3



SHIP DEVELOPMENT

In August 2935, the United Empire of Earth's High Command issued a set of tentative specifications for a new spacecraft role: a single-seat fighter oriented towards close-range dogfighting, logistics support and ground attack missions. The idea, codenamed BRAWLER, was sourced to Aegis Dynamics, Anvil Aerospace and Drake Interplanetary, who all submitted first round bids for the contract. The Drake proposal, which called for an underwhelming rework of the existing Cutlass platform, was rejected out of hand. Aegis and Anvil's proposals each consisted of brand new designs, each tackling High Command's requests in different way. Both were advanced to the next phase and were asked to produce a prototype.

From the start, Aegis' proposal, nicknamed Bearcat, seemed the likely victor. The company funneled over a billion credits into a custom-tooled spaceframe intended to exactly meet the multi-role specifications. Anvil, with a more limited budget, opted to develop a spacecraft that shares several expensive components used in their active Hornet lineup. Although this place was considered risky, especially after Drake's showing in the initial bid, but their thinking was that the consolidation of shared parts would make their prototype the most appealing long-term option, even if it could not match the Bearcat in every performance category.

The result was the Hawk, a spacecraft best described by her first test pilot Macey "Push" Gregg as "overpowered, over gunned and under budget." Built around a larger-than-expected powerplant, the Hawk team opted to trade engine performance for a full set of six cannons. While the Hawk shared components and construction methods with the Hornet, one difference was immediately visible: variable-geometry wings intended to allow the spacecraft to better operate from forward bases and short runways.



In January, 2937, both prototypes were transferred to the Wreckless 999th Test Squadron and deployed to the Godiva Lake facility for a full comparative performance program. It was here that the wisdom of Anvil's approach was quickly established: where the technically superior Bearcat struggled to accomplish the mission goals, the Hawk passed with flying colors. While the Bearcat was better at ranged engagements and more traditional dogfighting, Anvil's design better matched the original specification. Their

engineers had constructed a spacecraft that was both rugged and workable. Military observers took to referring to the hardy spacecraft as the 'IronHawk,' a term that would go on to see extensive use in Anvil's marketing campaign.

Unfortunately, the Hawk's taste of victory was short. While it earned the production contract, it ultimately saw limited adoption by the military. The first fleets to deploy the Hawk (designated U9A) found it suited to a specific set of mission types,

but not to the modern realities of space warfare.

Luckily for Anvil, the Hawk story did not end here. While the Hawk did not have a strong military purpose, word of its performance quickly spread to the thriving Bounty Hunting community. It took little convincing for Anvil to roll out a civilian model, taking advantage of the massive increase in bounty licenses in 2940 with several additions, including EMP weaponry and a containment pod capable of safely storing a second "passenger."

SERVICE HISTORY

The first delivery of production model U9A-1 Hawks occurred in October, 2938; the first unit to transition was the 38th Reconnaissance Wing based in the Corel System. Although assigned to a forward strike base at Lo, the reasoning for the deployment was to allow the Hawk trial-by-fire all-weather training on Castor. These Hawks performed well, though they found themselves with only a limited set of mission options as the relevant ground and close-range targets quickly learned to avoid the area. Nine additional military units moved to the Hawk, and another five reserve wings continue to operate the spacecraft today.

Private Hawk sales began in 2940 after a military oversight panel confirmed Anvil's ability to provide the design to the public. In civilian service, it became immediately clear that the Hawk's design could be incredibly successful in particular roles, chief among them bounty hunting. So-called 'gold rush' hunters, lured by the high payouts and romanticized media attention given the career around this time, purchased Hawks in droves.

The first bounty collected by a Hawk pilot happened only sixteen hours after the ship was first sold. The capture was that of Jorg "Dart" Klevo, a notorious raider for the region who had been taking seemingly ineffective potshots at commercial convoys for six months. His captor, an anonymous hunter, managed to locate him by running silent alongside a seven-ship food convoy. When the Cutlass opened up at extreme range, she brought her Hawk online, hit him with several full volleys and disabled several thrusters. The bounty hunter was rewarded with an additional sponsorship bounty by Anvil for her contributions to the press surrounding the civilian Hawk's rollout; Klevo was sentenced to five years on Quarterdeck.

Veteran Hawk pilot Thom Horne explained the spacecraft's appeal thusly: "The secret to [the Hawk's] success is that it is a practical example of a ship design that allows novice pilots exposure to more power than they are used to but that also scales up alongside experience. Where a rookie bounty hunter can make good use of the six guns and not worry about the more limited engine output, a better trained expert can balance the ship's strengths



and weaknesses together quite artfully. You don't learn to fly a Hawk so much as you learn to play it like a musical instrument. And in the hands of a virtuoso, it's a real killer."

Bounty hunting is not exclusively the domain of ship-to-ship combat, with almost 75% of live captures typically happening 'on the ground.' Here again, the Hawk excels by allowing its compact landing form to park even on a busy city street. Current models of the Hawk also mount a gun rack, allowing working hunters to equip themselves for missions more easily than other military designs for which such a luxury would have been an afterthought.

In the wake of the Battle of Vega II in 2945, Anvil began leasing of Hawks to frontier militias looking to outfit with inexpensive modern spacecraft

rather than legacy military hardware. The Magnus Militia was the first to purchase a Hawk unit, deploying them effectively for fast responders to outlaw activity. In the years since, several dozen militias have adopted or been built around Hawks, with positive marks for their performance all around. Where vintage military spacecraft like the Gladius may be better traditional dogfighters, they are generally not as versatile as the Hawk.

The latest model of Hawk was introduced on November 24, 2947 to much fanfare. It is a rare example of a spacecraft being delivered early; the initial plan had been to launch the upgrade in Q1 2948. Factory overruns and the recent addition of a new production line meant that Anvil was able to premiere the ship early.

SHIP HISTORIES



THE HAWK TODAY

Several examples of known and notorious Hawks are listed in this section, but they are a small sample of the overall population. Countless private contractors operate Hawks today and they do so in a myriad of liveries and configurations; we have attempted to note several distinct hulls and several common uses.

For more information on the development of the Hawk you may refer to the independent documentary Six Shooter, which follows six very different bounty hunters who are connected only through their ownership of Hawk-class ships. For technical details and schematics, Hedgecris Repair Manual #135 covers model years 2942 through 2948.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Anvil has announced via earning's call that active development of two Hawk variants will continue into FY48. The DireHawk project, which is based on a popular third-party conversion, aims to add an additional two Scattergun mounts and supporting battery. The second variant is ShadowHawk, a stealth variant intended for more advanced hunters and potentially military sale. At present, the ShadowHawk removes two guns in exchange for stealth armor coating and the addition of a data spike array. The ShadowHawk's future at retail is less certain, but it is expected to reach the prototype article stage before any decision is made.



"HOME RUN"

Home Run was the cause of the 2943 Cestulus Aerospace Show crash which took 386 lives. The spacecraft had just completed a series of maneuvers which focused around using dummy lasers to demonstrate the Hawk's combat effectiveness and appeared to be attempting to buzz a crowd of onlookers positioned atop an observation dome, but did not pull away in time. Analysis of the wreckage revealed that two thrusters had simultaneously failed, prompting a recall/replacement program from Anvil. Home Run's pilot ejected and survived the incident.

"MILLION CREDIT BIRDIE"

Known as 'MCB' in the media, Captain Steven Baslin's Million Credit Birdie is the current champion Hawk of all those owned by licensed Bounty Hunters. At press time, MCB has been responsible for over 400 successful bounty captures, earning millions of credits. In a normal career trajectory, so successful a hunter would have long ago upgraded to a more comprehensive spacecraft, but Captain Baslin has repeatedly stated that he intends to "dance with the bird that flew me here" as long as possible.

UNNAMED

This example is best known for its role in solving the murder of socialite Henry Graves. Graves was found dead in, what was initially believed to have been, a transport accident on Terra, but a series of unexpected clues revealed that Graves' sister Heuss had actually plotted the accident. The ship's owner, licensed bounty hunter Striven Moore, responded to the call and captured Heuss Graves as she attempted to exit the system

"RED RAIDER"

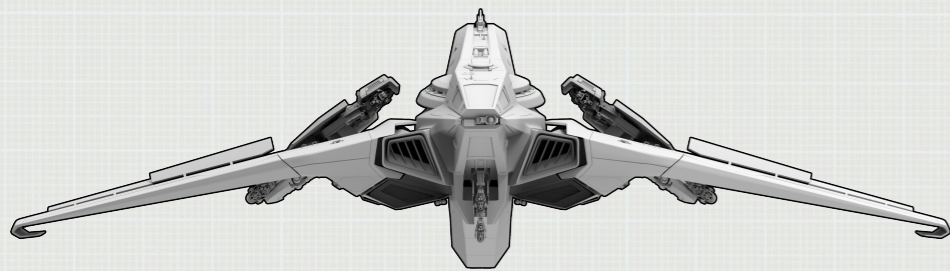
Red Raider is a notorious (and largely mysterious) Hawk-class fighter which has been linked to a series of brazen attacks on frontier settlements beginning in August, 2946, numerous cargo raids, info runner interdiction and one apparent assassination. Analysis of the Red Raider's flight behavior has led many to believe that the pilot is not human, as the craft often engaged opponents in a manner more in line with Xi'An battle doctrine.

"GOLDEN EAGLE"

Modified early-model Hawk belonging to noted treasure hunter Dr. Rico Chang. The Golden Eagle recently rose to public prominence when Dr. Chang made use of it to locate the derelict starliner Chilhowie, which went missing in the late 27th century. Chang parked the Golden Eagle inside Chilhowie's hangar bay and filled his containment pod with artifacts and documents taken from the wreck. Golden Eagle was later repossessed by authorities after he refused to reveal the location of the wreckage to the port authority.

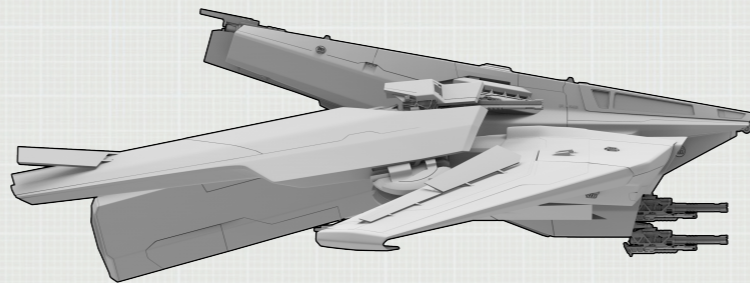
SCHEMATICS

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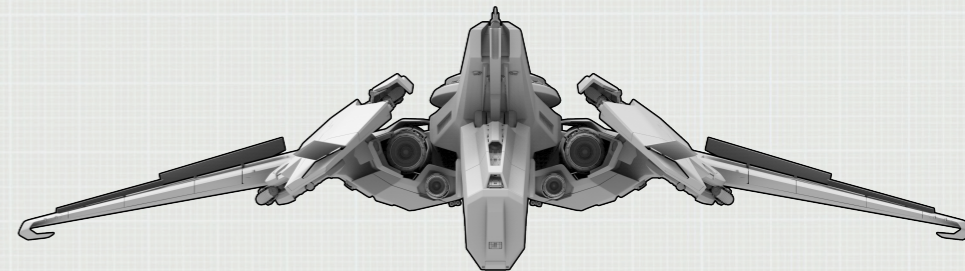


WINGS EXTENDED

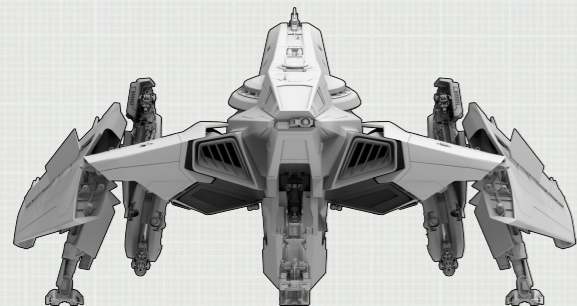
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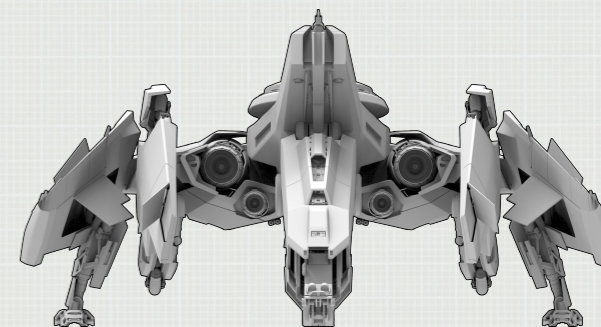
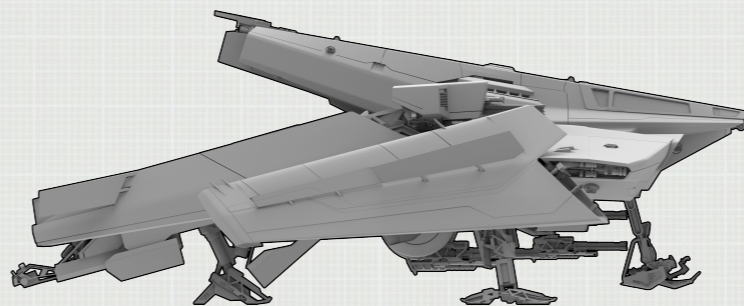
REAR - ORTHOGRAPHIC



WINGS EXTENDED



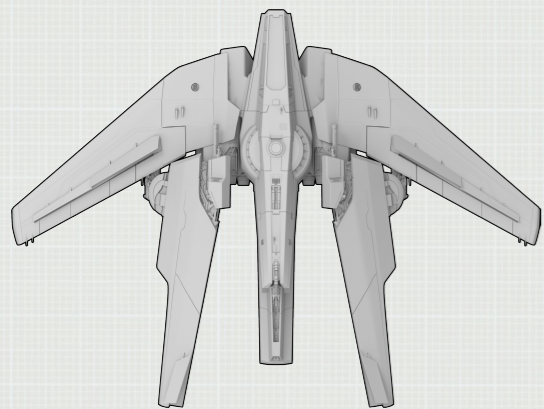
WINGS RETRACTED



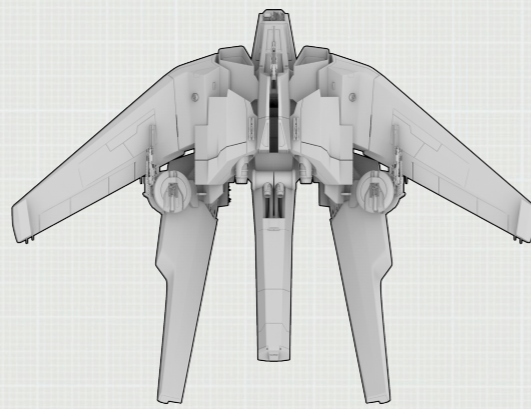
WINGS RETRACTED

SCHEMATICS

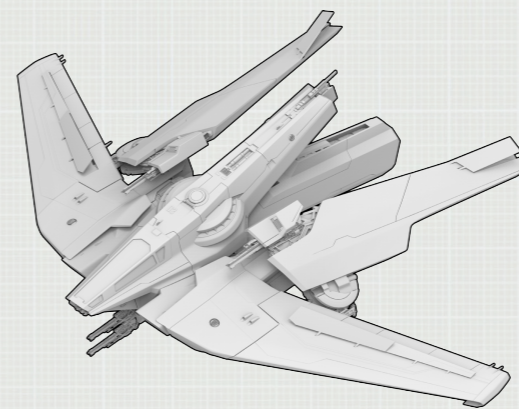
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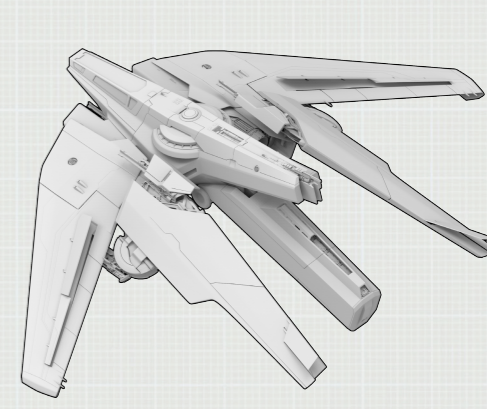
BOTTOM - ORTHOGRAPHIC



ABOVE/FRONT - PERSPECTIVE

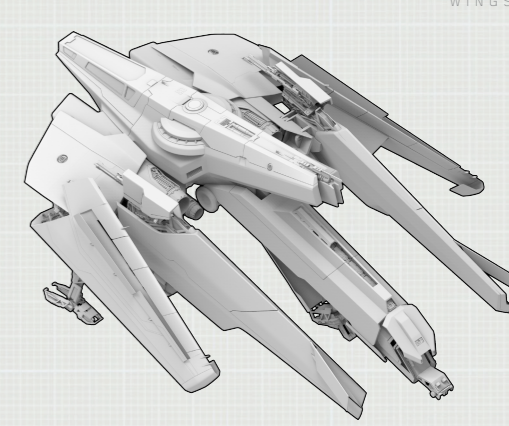
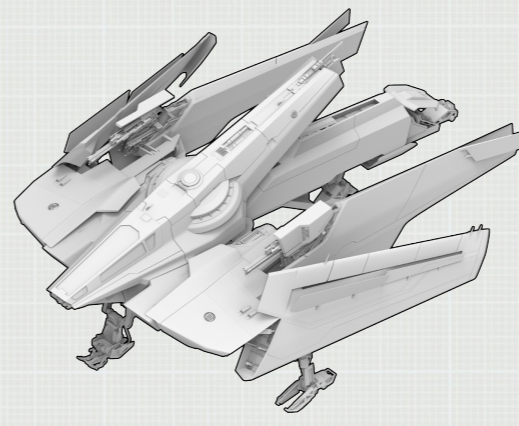
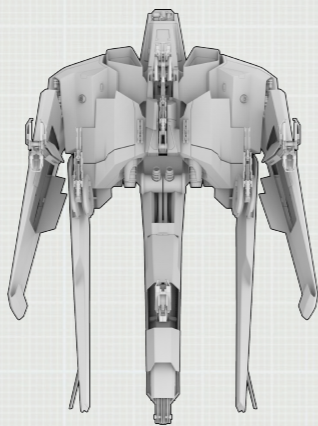
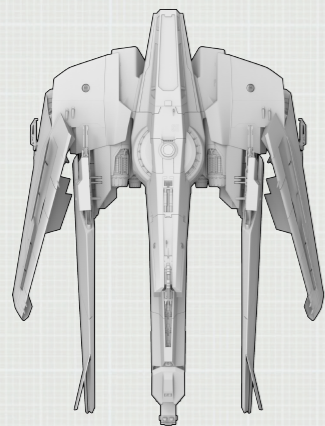


ABOVE/REAR - PERSPECTIVE



WINGS EXTENDED

WINGS EXTENDED



WINGS RETRACTED

WINGS RETRACTED



ANVIL AEROSPACE 'HAWK'

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