

Cycles...

must, and take our blessing."

The children embraced us.

So young, I thought, and so soon the choices begin. So many paths to choose from when you're young, each promising, tempting, new. But each time, you may choose only one, and with each choice you seal away alternatives until the day a single path remains. And then you cannot help but wonder: What if?

What if you had walked those other roads?

My beloved Jango, supple of body, agile of mind. At the university, an extraordinary boleador with world class potential. Athlete? Or scholar? You made your choice, my love, and for you I do not believe it was a trap. Yet each time we watch Team Brasil, your face betrays your secret longing.

And I, I might have remained in the jungle, forever a savage by the standards of the cities. Or I might have wed Loceyto, if either of us had found the tongue to speak before he met Paula. Or I might have died in Astrud São Tome's place, had I chosen to orbit with Robeiro Silveira rather than with Osmar Boavista.

Now my path runs narrow with no real alternatives, but it is the path I wished to walk. My goal looms before me, the moon, waxing ever fuller, overbrimming my horizon. Yet beyond that luring globe, I can distinguish nothing clearly.

And here my son and my new daughter stand together on the brink, at that most lovely moment of life when everything and anything is possible.

You are the future and the future is yours. I pray you choose wisely.

"There is one thing I would ask before you go." The children looked at me questioningly. In the distance, the bright orange *telesférico* cab slipped silently out of its dock into the blurred air and began the long return glide down its wind-strummed cable to Nova Brasília. "I wonder if you would look at each other and speak each other's wedded name as you did at your nuptials? Would you do that for me?"

The children glanced at one another, at me. Their grins gleamed white, white against rich dark skin.

"Would you do that for me?"

"Of course, mother," Sergio said.

So young, yet they understand so much.

Jango moved closer and encircled

JAYNZ SHIPS

Star Trek
Gaming Material

ARAL (OSB-0762) Orion Blockade Runner

by David Miles and
Dale L. Kemper

Ship's Data

Hull Data:

Numbers—OSB-0762
Model Numbers—Mk. 1
Date Entering Service—1/9902
Number Constructed—1
Size

Length—110m
Width—34m
Height—32m
Weight—25,000mt
Cargo Units—500

Other Data:

Crew—28
Shuttlecraft—none
Transporters—
1 standard 6-person
1 cargo

Engines and Power Data:

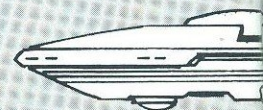
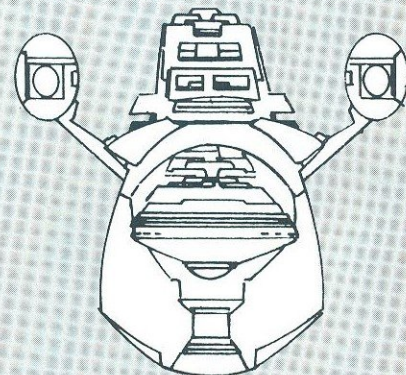
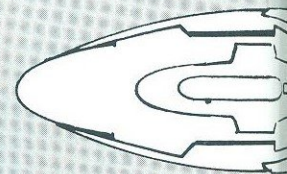
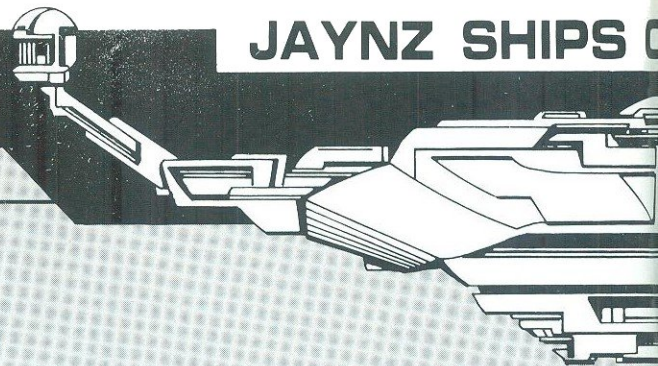
Total Power Units Available—31
Movement Point Ratio—2/1
Warp Engine Type—FWB
Number—2
Power Units Available—14 each
Stress Charts—M/O
Maximum Safe Cruising
Speed—Warp 8
Emergency Speed—Warp 9
Impulse Engine Type—OIB
Power Units Available—3

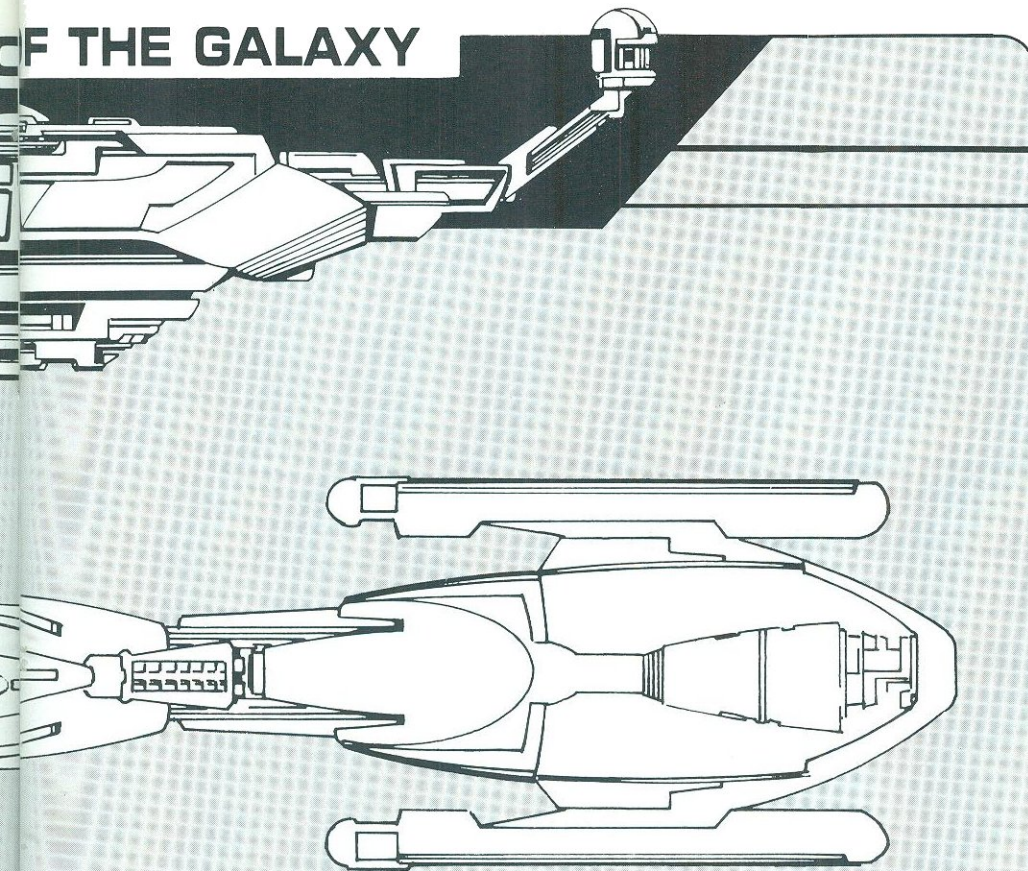
Weapons and Firing Data:

Beam Weapon Type—KD-3
Number—6 in 2 banks of 3
Firing Arcs—fwd, aft
Firing Chart—I
Power Range—0-5
Damage Modifiers—+1 (1-12)

Shields and Damage Control Data:

Superstructure Points—16
Damage Chart—C
Deflector Shield Type—OSE
Shield Point Ratio—1/2
Maximum Shield Power—6



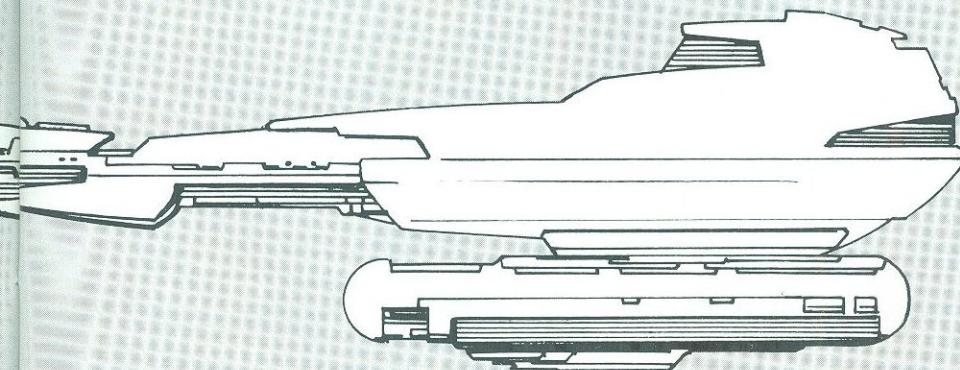


The *Aral* is typical of the hundreds of independent Orion vessels used by various smugglers and privateers in and around the Orion Neutrality Zone. Constructed of mostly prefabricated parts shipped from various locations or stripped from derelicts and captured vessels, she is simple to operate, if not pretty to look at.

The *Aral* is allegedly part of the fleet of an independent band of privateers who raid the spacelanes

usually in groups of three to six ships. Most are as lightly armed as is the *Aral* but their preponderance of numbers usually tells in a battle against convoys or armed merchantmen.

Like most vessels of her type, the *Aral* is a one of a kind vessel, although she has many near-sister ships in the 20,000 to 30,000 ton range who conduct the same type of business as she does.



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my waist with one gentle arm. "Your mother, a sentimental." He pressed my body tenderly against his.

Sergio cupped Ekali's ritual-scarred face in his hands. She touched his smooth jaw with slim black fingers.

"Sergio Agostinho da Cunha... e Salvidia," she whispered shyly.

"...Ekali Paula Salvidia... e da Cunha..."

Love each other. Choose wisely. You are the future.

★★★

The *jivaro* approached us in a *Praça do Presidente*. A small, wizened man in a striped hooded robe, a ghostman, one of the street-people.

"Tell our future," Jango agreed, and I humored him.

The ghostman chewed a fortune-bean from his wristpouch.

"Your wife," he said in a voice surprisingly strong for one so old, "will dance on the moon. But she will not be the first, for there were others, tall men, who danced before her. And one of these was first."

"Who?" I said, knowing what he would answer.

"A man named Armstrong danced upon the moon."

I struck him, and today I am sorry. My husband helped him to his feet, whispered apologies into his ear, slipped silver into his fist. Jango's eyes accused me, but in my rage I would not speak.

The ghostman had recognized me and thought to mock me with a tattered bit of legend. That the mythical ancient Northern Folk had put one of their own on the moon while they could still outrun their death-wish. That the man was called Armstrong and that in the full earthlight he had danced upon the moon.

I know the Ur-Inglis. I learned at the university. I knew there had been no Armstrong. He was but the stuff of fable, the flight of a balladeer's imagination, a storyteller's fancy.

Consider. In the Ur-Inglis, Armstrong means *he-of-the-strong-arm*. If a man had indeed stood upon the moon, if the man were real and not some construct of the taleweaver's art, would he have borne so poetic, so heroic, so symbolically perfect a name? Would old women, when asked to do the im-