

LOKNAR

CLASS FRIGATE

The successor to the indigenously designed *Kumari* class Battlecruiser, the *Loknar* (FF 2700) class Frigate answered an initial Andorian request for a starship to fulfill system defense/policing and intermediate range patrol duties and would also go on to bring about the concept of 'active reserves' in Starfleet—acting as a patrol combatant during wartime while enforcing local law during peacetime.

Following the formation of the Federation and the absorption of the Andorian Imperial Guard into Starfleet in 2161, the Andorians retained their *Kumari* class vessels for local patrol and self-defense purposes. 360 meters in length, armed with multiple particle beam cannons and becoming the earliest known vessel from any power to utilize deflector shield technology, they were more than capable of taking on lone intruders, mercenaries, pirates and the like. As time went on and technology advanced however, they gradually became outclassed.

By the turn of the century and the advent of the Class I era, Starfleet Command had begun to supplement them with *Mercury* class Corvettes that were somewhat more capable owing to token modernization efforts, but still lacking in vital areas such as speed and endurance. Given the large number of *Saladin* (DD 500) class Destroyers produced, these were occasionally used to supplement the much smaller ships, however as the 2230's wore on and relations between the Federation and Klingon Empire worsened, it was clear that a replacement was needed.

The ineptitude that paralyzed Starfleet during this period made finding a solution difficult. Reserve forces proved adequate enough—indeed, this was one reason the Reserve Forces Command was created in the first place—though they were soon called on to



reinforce the front-line positions. In the mid 2230's, this ineptitude slowly began to evaporate. Carrying a full group (36) of *D-17* class Attack Fighters, an *Independence* (CVL 1590) class Light Carrier was theoretically capable of exercising control over a system with limited external support. The members of the admiralty no longer needed to wring their hands over decisions on whether or not to commit the *Constitution* (CH 1700) class Heavy Cruiser to combat either with the introduction of the *Pyotr Velikiy* (CA 1670) class. Other combat-capable classes that had any value such as *Marklin* (DH 1200), *Detroyat* (DH 1100) and *Kearsarge* (CL 1500) were already being heavily utilized in front-line service and thus unable to fulfill the basic roles the Andorians specified.

With that said, the Klingon issue meant that any potential *Kumari* replacement had to function well as a patrol combatant during wartime in addition to fulfilling its peacetime duties (law enforcement, anti-piracy and the like). A design that could fulfill both roles as well as one that was extremely familiar to both the Andorians and Terrans alike was Earth Starfleet's famed *NX* class. Of course the Andorians weren't so short sighted as to try and advocate for its reintroduction, on the contrary, they saw potential in melding it with cutting edge Class I technologies.

Working with the ASDB, the external design of this new ship that they codenamed '*Loknar*', mirrored *NX* quite closely, differing only in relatively minor areas. A fleet-standard saucer and bridge module were used, with the saucer's aft portion being prominently 'forked'. As opposed to *NX* which linked the warp nacelle assembly to the hull in a catamaran style arrangement, *Loknar* featured a blocky, horseshoe-shaped engineering section that extended aft from the saucer and supported the reinforced nacelle pylons.

Internally, *Loknar* conformed closely to Andorian standards, with crew accommodations and life support systems designed around their specific physique and cultural norms. Given the Andorian predisposition to violence, the fact there was very little room for anything aside from the most essential command and operational facilities and the fact that redundancy was engineered into the design right from the start and it was little wonder then that *Loknar* was compared in some quarters to a Klingon warship or that it was 'Klingon-inspired'.

Armament remained close to fleet standard as well, centered around 3 Type VI Phaser Banks (2 dorsal, 1 ventral) in the saucer. Differences included additional aft phaser coverage courtesy of two separate emitters on the engineering hull (1 port/starboard) and an additional forward torpedo launcher that brought the total to 3. This, plus the dimensions (290m L, 140,000mT displacement) put *Loknar* in a gray area squarely between Destroyers and Cruisers. Despite the fact that it lacked many accoutrements of later classes like *Surya* (FF 1850) and *Coventry* (FH 1230), it would go on to hold the distinction of becoming Starfleet's first Frigate. With production beginning in mid-2239, the class was in service in strength by late 2240, being joined in the core systems and other nearby regions by the *Saladin* (DD 500) class Destroyer (which itself was replaced on the frontier by the new *Larson*/DD 4300 class).

In 2243, the class made its first and only foray out onto the frontier when the *Antares* (FF 2714) and *Chicago* (FF 2738) were attached to an expeditionary squadron and sent to Nozseca VIII to establish a listening outpost on behalf of Starfleet Intelligence. A lush, tropical world just over a light year from the Klingon border, it was an ideal spot from which to gather, analyze and relay intelligence on Klingon activities. The two Frigates were joined by three of the fleet's newest Destroyers, *Trafalgar* (DD 4304), *Normandy* (DD 4309) and *Agincourt* (DD 4314) as well as 5 Light Cruisers, *Alabama* (CL 1502), *Repulse* (CL 1503), *Calypso* (CL 1507), *Beowulf* (CL 1509) and *Iron Horse* (CL 1513). Given that the Klingons were expected to move against targets with more direct routes to the Federation's core, stationing a light force here was of little concern.

Indeed, for the next 4 years all the squadron had to contend with were random probing attacks by inferior enemy assets—*G-1/Sentinel* class Gunboats and *F-5/Kuve* class Frigates. As the value and importance of this outpost to Starfleet grew, it conversely became a bigger and bigger obstacle to the Imperial Klingon Defense Forces (IKDF). In November, the IKDF seized the opportunity to both eliminate this obstacle as well as test their new *D-7/Klolode* class Battlecruiser. Swarming the area with 1 *D-7* and 2 *D-6/Raxor* squadrons in addition to numerous smaller classes, they outnumbered and seriously outgunned not only Starfleet's support squadron in orbit, but its forces on the ground (a SFMC Ranger Battalion and Special Forces Platoon) as well.

The *Loknar*, *Larson* and *Kearsarge* class ships would've been hard pressed to defend against a single *D-6* squadron, let alone two. For a Battlecruiser (which, in traditional naval parlance, was defined as a large ship with heavy weapons that sacrificed armor for the sake of speed), it was impressively armored and featured weaponry that eclipsed Starfleet's by a thin margin. *D-7* took these attributes much further making the ensuing battle sadly predictable. Given the outcome of the Battle of Andromeda and the fact

that the Klingons were using virtually the same tactics, Starfleet had correctly surmised what would likely happen and quickly deployed a sizable relief force that prevented the support squadron's utter annihilation.

The only ships to survive the battle prior to the relief force's arrival were the *Chicago*, *Agincourt* and *Alabama* which were crippled and had to be towed from the area by the *Pyotr Velikiy* (CA 1670), *Nicholas II* (CA 1674) and *St Vincent* (CA 1693).

The battle's outcome and the subsequent removal of *Loknar* from front line combat duty was less of an indictment and more a reflection of Starfleet's maturing shipbuilding & deployment doctrine. The heavier *Surya* and *Coventry* Frigate classes featured capabilities that were much closer to those of larger Cruisers while the *Kiaga* (DD 820) class was a Destroyer that 'took no prisoners', packing bleeding-edge weaponry and tactical systems into a compact, highly maneuverable spaceframe.

Due to inferior Starfleet numbers still, *Larson* and *Kearsarge* kept their places on the battlefield while *Loknar* was now the 'tip of the spear' when it came to the defense of the fleet's supply lines and logistical infrastructure.

Unlike *Saladin*, nearly the whole line of which was deployed with the rest of the fleet for the war's concluding battle at Kolm-An in 2250, *Loknar* missed out on this penultimate encounter. The early days of the war saw the majority of Starfleet's reserves assuming front-line combat responsibilities while Command and the Admiralty worked to shed ineptitude, indecision and bureaucratic largesse where the redevelopment and evolution of the fleet was concerned. After 5 years though, those forces were thoroughly decimated, leaving precious little left over to support a robust defense. Thus, *Loknar* together with a handful of *Akula* class Heavy Destroyers and other smaller assets (Corvettes, Starfighters etc) remained behind.

Following the end of the war, as Starfleet and the Federation moved into a so-called 'Golden Age' of exploration and expansion, little changed. A new doctrine of 'spherical defense' saw Starfleet reorganize and redeploy all of its assets, lining its borders and frontier regions with the smallest and lightest ship classes and progressing upwards on the size/capability scale as one moved further inwards toward the core worlds. Though *Loknar* class production had been terminated in 2246 (a month after the Battle at Nozseca VIII), the roughly 100 surviving vessels were upgraded in line with their fleetmates, all of which followed the pattern established by *Constitution*, reaching their ultimate 'Mark II/Block II' status in 2261.

An uncharacteristic footnote in class history, but one which would foreshadow future class developments was the discovery of the volatile region known as the 'Badlands' in 2263. The *Yorkshire*, under the command of Captain Thelin th'Zarath was on convoy escort duty in sector 21305 when it passed close to the region packed full of dense plasma storms and gravitational anomalies. A wartime veteran, th'Zarath was naturally suspicious and wary of an ambush. Though *Loknar*'s sensor range was lacking compared to larger vessels and it didn't possess defenses that would allow for a detailed

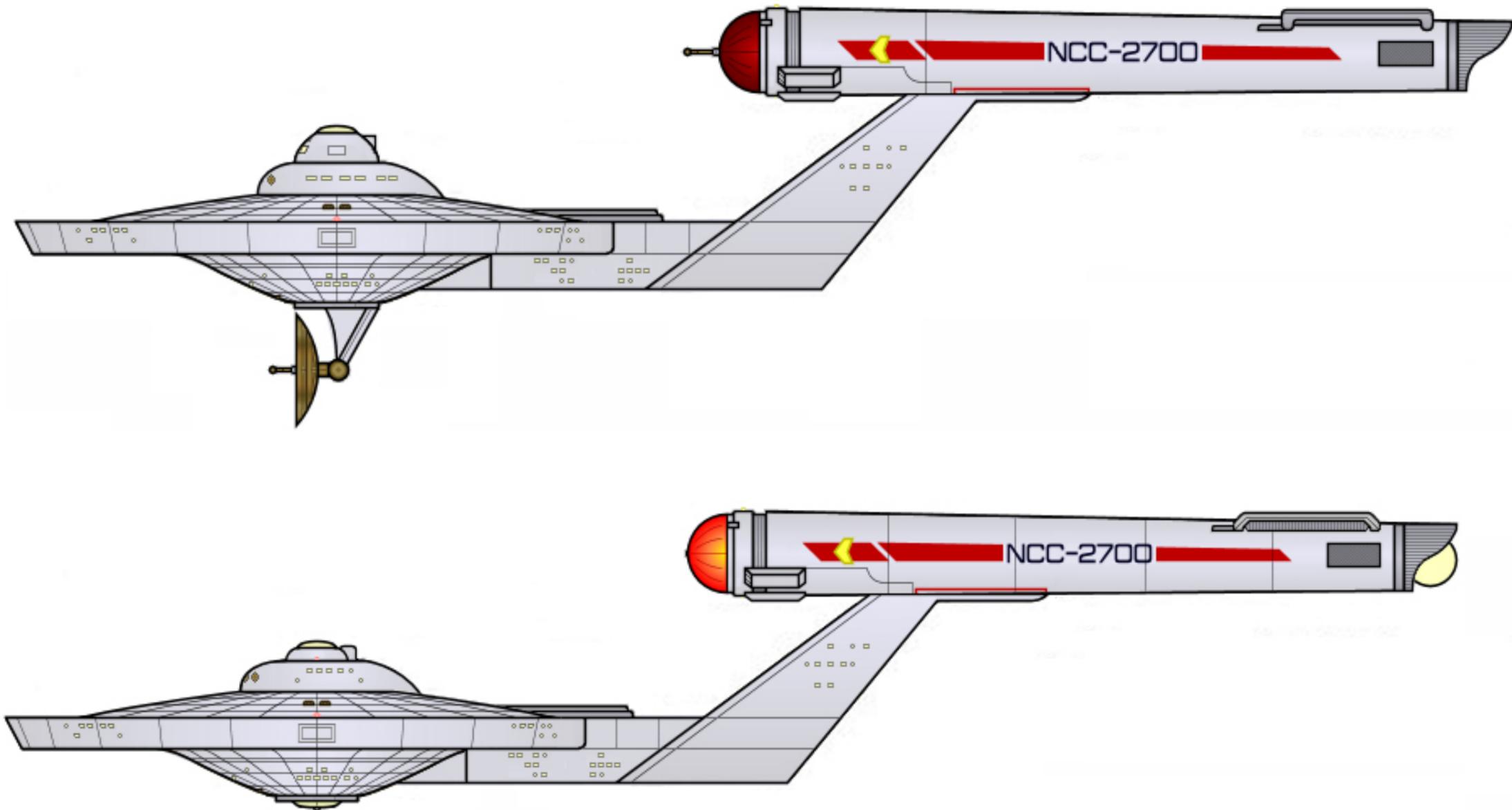
survey, the data collected would prompt a number of extremely concerted scientific expeditions that would later come to define the 23rd Century.

More typical though was the move in 2266 that saw the *Ahkeil* (FF 2701), *Hannibal* (DD 512) and *Theseus* (DD 552) assigned to support Starbase 47-*Vanguard* in the wake of the USS *Bombay*'s destruction. The ineptitude and bureaucratic largesse that severely hamstrung fleet development and shipbuilding in preceding decades had not been totally purged and despite the fact that the frontier and border regions had been flooded with ships, this assignment was only a temporary one. Just two years later, this would prove to be a fatal mistake. In 2268, top-secret experiments carried out in support of **Operation Vanguard** prompted an all-out assault on the station by a large Tholian task force. The station could only muster 4 ships—the *Endeavour* (CH 1716), *Buenos Aires* (FH 1860), *Panama* (FG 427) and *Sagittarius* (CU 1894)—to mount a defense and as such, this battle was sadly predictable as well. Only the arrival of the *Enterprise* at the last moment saved the *Sagittarius* and *Endeavour* from almost-certain destruction.

By 2268, the halcyon days of the Class I era had begun to fade, giving way to an era of cold war in which the spectre of open, unrestrained warfare remained ever present. Astro-political developments aside, the shift from circumferential to linear warp technology presaged the development of a new generation of starships and opportunities. Seeking to avoid the same pitfalls experienced during the transition from the Baton Rouge to the Class I era, Starfleet introduced a pair of Cruisers—*Belknap* (CS 2501) and *Constitution II* (CH 1700)—and also modernized the *Saladin* class, introducing the first of three variants. Development on other classes, including *Loknar*, would be forthcoming over the next 5-7 years.

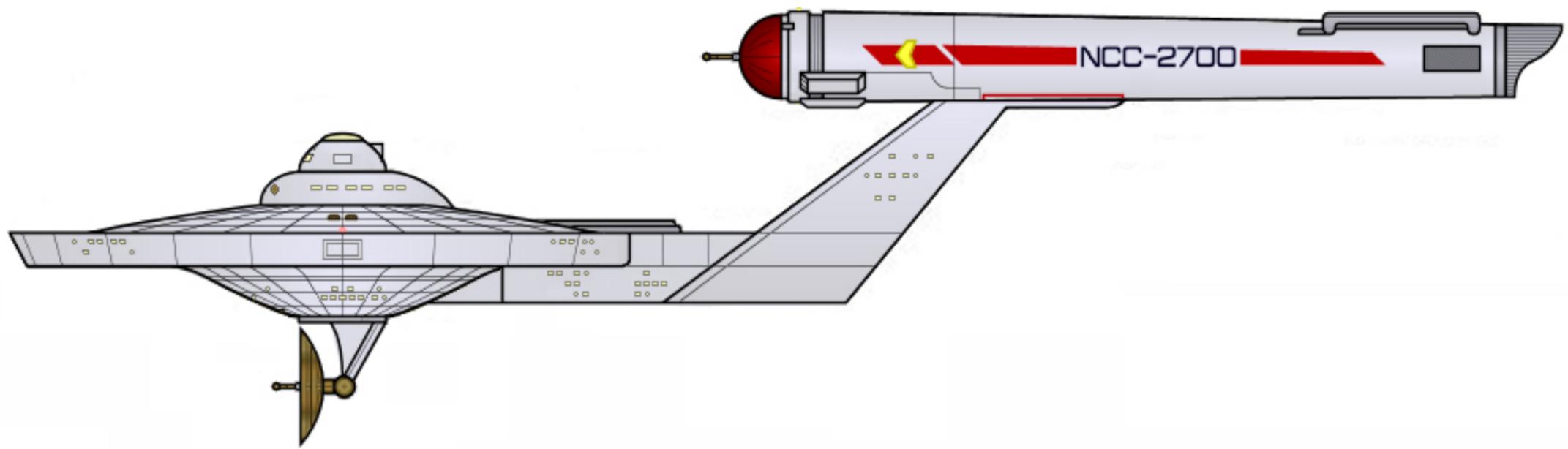
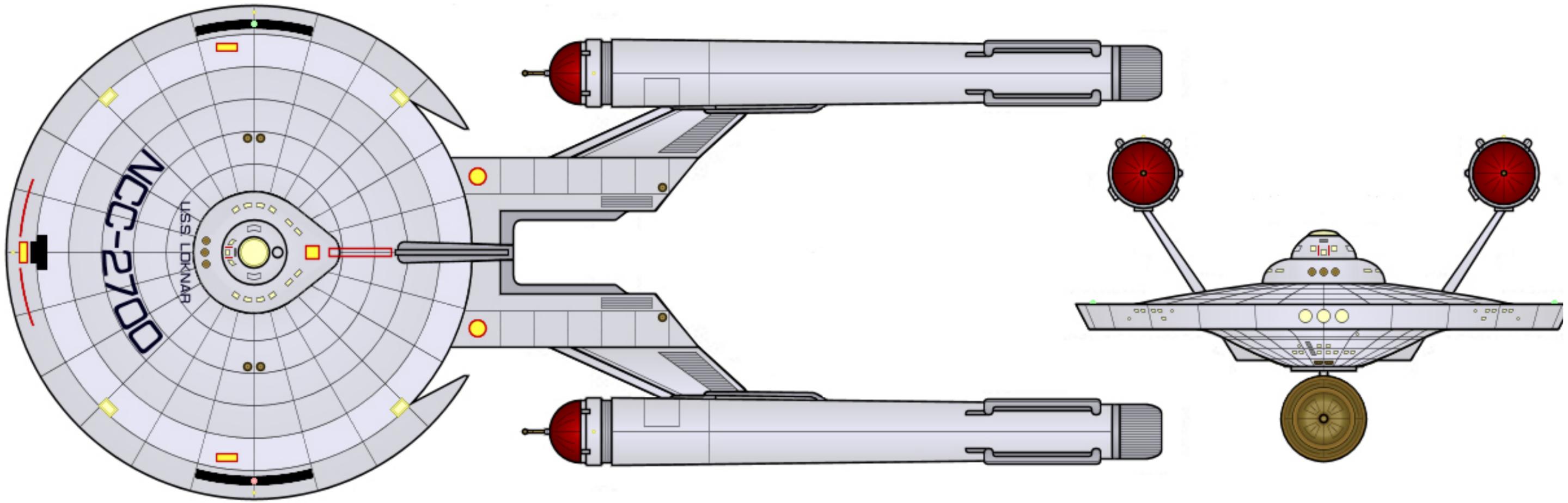
One final development linked the history of *Loknar* to the infamous Kzinti Incursion. Following a series of extremely bloody conflicts with the Kzinti Patriarchy that stretched back to the 21st Century, Earth forces forced the Kzinti to sue for peace and imposed on them the Treaty of Sirius. Given the extremely grievous losses suffered by the Terrans and their allies, the terms of the treaty were extremely restrictive on the Kzinti—stripping them of most of their territory (save for a 50LY sphere around their homeworld), completely dismantling their military and denying them access to advanced propulsion and armament technologies. For two centuries, the treaty held until the Beta Lyrae Incident of 2264. Following that, the Kzinti began a secret program of rebuilding and rearming aided by various vassal states, the Orions and even the Klingons (who themselves began a shift toward more asymmetric warfare). In late 2268, Starfleet Intelligence began to suspect something was amiss, Starfleet itself beginning covert 'hemming in' operations in 2269. Though they justified these in the name of 'freedom of navigation' and other such superlatives, the operations were blatant violations of the treaty. Inept, sloppy and ill-advised as they were, they were still the only way to gather intelligence and even though they remained unopposed by the Kzinti, it was the opinion of many that they would eventually provoke a reaction. On stardate 7446.78 (07 August 2272) it did. The *Norma Ra Den* (FF 2779) and *Encounter* (CS 2632) were on routine patrol in border sectors on either side of Patriarchy space. *Norma Ra Den* was due to be relieved by the *Hashishiyun* (DD 516), but while the Destroyer was en route, the *Norma Ra Den* was ambushed by multiple vessels of Kzinti origin.

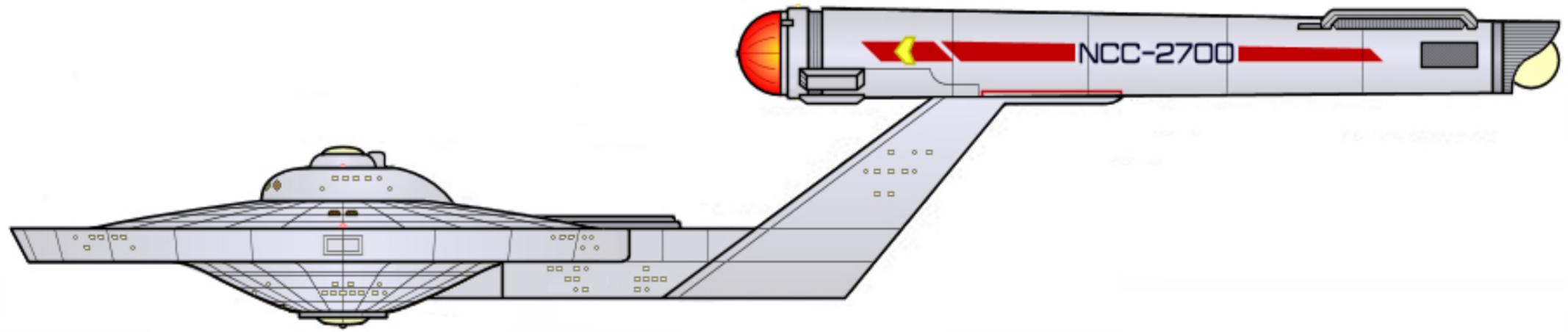
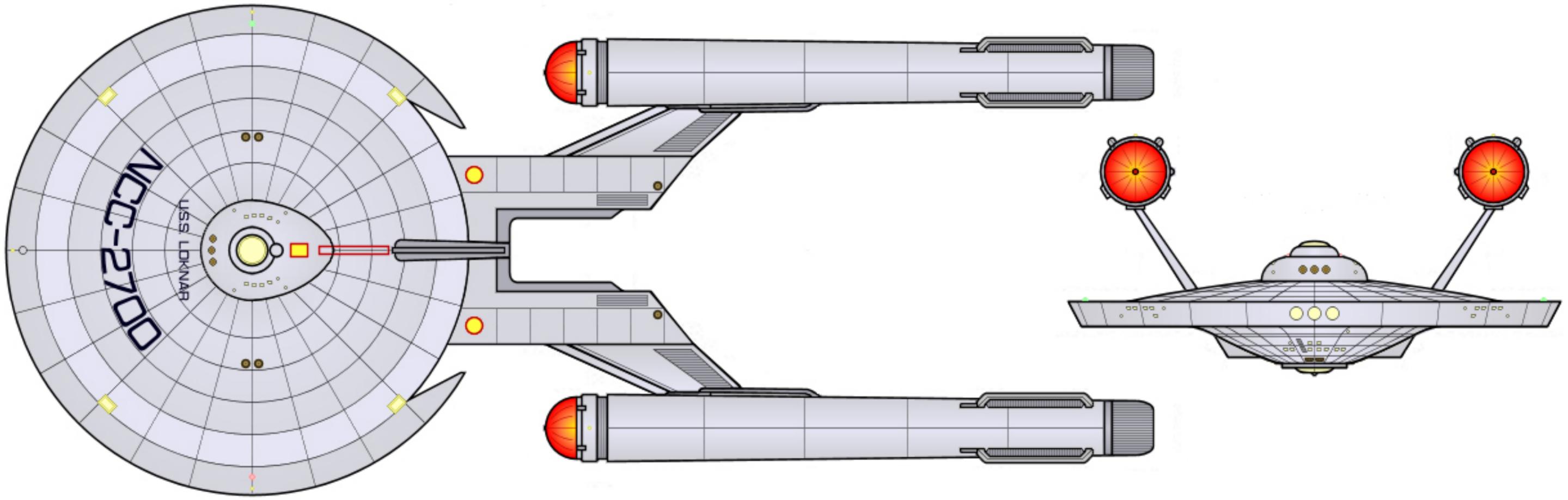
This was the spark that set off one final, bloody conflict that saw the fierce felinoids destroy numerous starships & a starbase, capture a number of worlds between the Patriarchy and the Federation's core and kill hundreds of thousands of Federation citizens. *Loknar* played a relatively minor role, but the conflict, along with past ones proved incentive enough to put the entire line through a linear warp uprating program beginning in 2271 (uprated ships entering service in 2273).



Loknar – Block I Configuration, 2239-61 (Top); Block II Configuration, 2261-71 (Bottom)

Class	Loknar	Mass	645,975 metric tons	Armament	6 Phase Banks (2239-49)
Classification	Frigate	Compliment	113		3 2 nd Class Torpedo Launchers (2239-71)
Service	2239-2271				3 Type VI Phaser Banks (2249-71)
Number Active	0				2 Type VI Phaser Emitters (2249-71)
Length	290m			Defense Systems	Standard Deflector Shield System
Beam	127m				total capacity 284,550 terajoules (2239-61)
Height	56m				371,525 terajoules (2261-71)
Decks	14				Light Monotanium Single Hull





Editor's Annotations

Well here it is. At the outset, I thought *Loknar* would take as long as *Surya/Coventry*, but in retrospect, it ended up being just a little more work than *Saladin*. In describing the armament, I expanded a little bit on what I mentioned in *Surya/Coventry* about *Loknar* being Starfleet's first frigate. While it's sized similarly to and internally, is as sparse as a typical Destroyer, the armament levels stick out a bit making the classification easier to justify.

As I mentioned elsewhere as well, given the fact that the design didn't survive into the 24th Century (probably due to the acrimony between FASA and Paramount/CBS), pushing *Loknar* back and having it play second fiddle to *Surya/Coventry* is again, quite easy to justify, especially given the results of the Battle at Nozseca VIII. I expanded slightly on my idea of having the class be the first to encounter the Badlands and then mentioned a bit about its participation in **Operation Vanguard** (where *Ahkeil* was misspelled by the series' authors as *AkhieI* – not that it really matters, but still...) and was just going to let it peter out after a few more bits of fluff/filler. I suddenly remembered though about the class' participation in the ill-fated Kzinti Incursion and thus, expended a little more time summarizing that mess up before drawing things to a close.