**Needle-Class Transatmospheric Fighter**

The Needle-class transatmospheric fighter is a specially made craft intended to perform recon, screening, and specialized forms of attack without risking a far larger, expensive vessel. As such, it is not treated as a traditional fighter in its purpose, for otherwise missiles and similar weapons would have already replaced it. The vessel measures nine meters long, three meters tall, and six meters wide, with it weighing 8,000kg at a standard load. It has a single biological pilot trained for excess G force and a basic AI core to help automatically stabilize the craft, with the vessel using a hydrolox engine capable of switching from hydrogen burning to liquid oxygen for atmospheric or vacuum conditions. The pilot seat is capable of ejection, and has inbuilt survival gear along with rations that last one week. A fire control system is built into the craft, and has conduits of basic sealing foam that can quickly re-seal minor holes and fuel leaks, with the craft also having FTL comms that rely on experimental technology. A full detection suite is integrated into the craft as well, granting detection and tracking capabilities ranging over 5,000km out in space, with the AI being able to clean out or focus on general debris from the radar as needed. RCS thrusters are mounted primarily at the stern and forefront, enabling rapid 3-D maneuvering, and a set of reverse engines are placed onto the vessel as well, allowing one to rapidly brake or slow when in space without air to bank on.

The Needle-class fighter is armed relatively lightly, and relies on a pair of hull-mounted VP-02 chain guns which use tracer ammunition intended for the vacuum to adjust firing patterns in the depths of space or a surrounding of nebula gas. Each of these guns have 800 rounds for a combined load of 1,600 rounds, and use a conduit gas/water cooling system to work just as well as they would in atmosphere. Each of the wings also have three hardpoints placed on their undersides, letting a Needle-class fighter mount either AW-01 missiles, small AW-05 bombs, or a specialized form of ordnance. Chaffe, flare, and basic ECM countermeasures are included on the craft as well, with the underside or hardpoints being usable to carry decoy, recon, or attack drones as a form of assistance. The hull itself is a three centimeter thick layer of peltor alloy for staving off micro-debris and bursts of shrapnel, with a thin layer of magnidar plating sometimes being included for handling enemies that use laser weaponry. Otherwise, it relies on its speed and performance, with it having 60 to 70 m/s² acceleration speeds and the power to vertically turn 180 degrees in half a second.