

= Star Trek : The Next Generation ( season 3 ) =

The third season of the American science fiction television series Star Trek : The Next Generation commenced airing in broadcast syndication in the United States on September 25 , 1989 and concluded on June 18 , 1990 after airing 26 episodes . Set in the 24th century , the series follows the adventures of the crew of the Starfleet starship Enterprise @-@ D. Season three featured the return of Gates McFadden as Dr. Beverly Crusher after she was replaced by Diana Muldaur for the second season . The season also saw the debut of several actors who would reappear in the same roles and others throughout the franchise , such as Dwight Schultz as Lt. Reginald Barclay , and Tony Todd as Kurn .

Further changes occurred to the writing staff , with Michael Piller brought on board as executive producer after Michael I. Wagner held the position for three weeks . Ronald D. Moore also joined the staff following the submission of a script for " The Bonding " . Hans Beimler , Richard Manning , Melinda M. Snodgrass and Ira Steven Behr all left the staff at the end of the season . Actor Wil Wheaton also asked to leave following the way his character , Wesley Crusher , was written during the season , a decision he later regretted . Other changes included a modification to the opening sequence , and changes to the Starfleet uniforms on the show , which resulted in the creation of Patrick Stewart 's " Picard Maneuver " .

The season opened with Nielsen ratings of 10 @.@ 8 for " Evolution " with the highest rated episode being " Yesterday 's Enterprise " which scored 11 @.@ 9 . This was the highest rating received since the sixth episode of the first season . The lowest rating of the season was received by the 23rd episode , " Ménage à Troi " , which was given a score of 9 @.@ 1 . After a couple of initial ranking decreases , the episodes in the second half of the season rose back to third place in its timeslot . The season was well received by critics , who called it one of the best of the series . Particular praise was given to several episodes including " Yesterday 's Enterprise " , " Sins of the Father " and the first part of " The Best of Both Worlds " . Box sets of the season have been released both on DVD and Blu @-@ ray , and " The Best of Both Worlds " was given a limited theatrical release .

= = Production = =

= = = Writing = = =

Senior writer Maurice Hurley left at the end of season two , and Michael I. Wagner was brought onto the show by executive producer Rick Berman . Wagner 's tenure was brief , lasting three weeks , and he recommended Michael Piller to replace him . Wagner and Piller had previously worked together on the 1988 American television series Probe . Piller 's agent had advised him not to join Star Trek as he would be " pigeon @-@ holed as a freelance writer " , but he ignored the advice . He would also look at leaving at the end of the season , but stayed after Berman and show creator Gene Roddenberry convinced him . Piller wrote the episode that opened the season , " Evolution " and took over as executive producer from " The Bonding " onwards . He explained to the writing staff that there was two requirements for every episode , saying that " every episode is going to be about a character 's growth . And every episode has to be about something . "

The season also saw internal promotions to the existing writing staff . Both Hans Beimler and Richard Manning became co @-@ producers , while Melinda M. Snodgrass became an executive script consultant . Following " The Vengeance Factor " , Ira Steven Behr joined the crew as a writing producer . All four writers left the series at the end of the season . Behr would go on to become executive producer for Star Trek : Deep Space Nine . Richard Danus also acted as executive story editor between " Booby Trap " through to " Yesterday 's Enterprise " . Because of the open door policy on spec scripts Piller employed , the season saw the first script for Ronald D. Moore with " The Bonding " . Because of his success with that script , he was subsequently hired as executive story editor from " Sins of the Father " onwards .

Because of the way his character was written during season three , Wesley Crusher actor Wil Wheaton asked to be written out of the series . It was a decision he later regretted , as he realised that all the main cast outside of Picard , Riker and Data had similar roles at the time . He praised the writing of Moore in " The Bonding " and Piller in " Evolution " , and said that " Yesterday 's Enterprise " was one of his favourite episodes . The season also saw a relaxation in Gene Roddenberry 's previous direction that The Next Generation could not touch on aspects of The Original Series . This was seen in the episode " Sarek " , but was specifically related to the end of the episode where Captain Jean @-@ Luc Picard mentions Spock during a mind meld with Sarek . Piller described this one act as " the breakthrough which allowed us to open the doors , that allowed us to begin to embrace our past . "

= = = Casting = = =

Gates McFadden returned to the role of Doctor Beverly Crusher in the third season , the character had been written out for season two and replaced with Diana Muldaur playing Doctor Katherine Pulaski . Roddenberry had ensured that Crusher was not written out permanently to allow for her return in the future . Keith DeCandido blamed her departure on Maurice Hurley . After he left the series , McFadden returned . Fans started a letter @-@ writing campaign to reinstate McFadden throughout the second season . Both Roddenberry and Berman decided that it would be better to bring back McFadden than to look for a third doctor in three years as they agreed that the Pulaski character was not working .

Season three saw further appearances for several recurring characters from the franchise , including John de Lancie as Q in " Déjà Q " , Majel Barrett as Lwaxana Troi in " Ménage à Troi " , who had both appeared in multiple episodes of previous seasons . It also featured an appearance by Mark Lenard as Sarek . Lenard had previously appeared in this role in the Star Trek : The Original Series episode " Journey to Babel " as well as the film franchise . Denise Crosby , whose character Tasha Yar was killed in the first season episode " Skin of Evil " , returned in " Yesterday 's Enterprise " due to changes to the timeline seen in the series . The events of that episode would set up appearances in The Next Generation for the actress as the half @-@ Romulan character Sela in later seasons .

The season also featured the first appearance of actors who would later reappear both in The Next Generation and later series of the franchise . These included Tony Todd as Worf 's brother Kurn , who would appear in this role later in the series and also in Star Trek : Deep Space Nine . " Hollow Pursuits " marked the first appearance of Dwight Schultz as Lt. Reginald Barclay in the franchise . He would become a recurring character in the series , and go on to appear in several episodes of Star Trek : Voyager and the film Star Trek : First Contact ( 1996 ) . Schultz had previously been known for his role as Murdock in the television series The A @-@ Team .

Susan Gibney appeared as Dr. Leah Brahms in " Booby Trap " , and would later return in that role in " Galaxy 's Child " . Gibney was also considered for the role of the Captain Janeway in Voyager and played Captain Erika Benteen in the Deep Space Nine episode " Paradise Lost " . An actor who later gained a recurring role in Deep Space Nine following an appearance the third season of The Next Generation was Max Grodénchik . He appeared as the Ferengi Sovak in " Captain 's Holiday " , and as another Ferengi in the fifth season 's " The Perfect Mate " . In DS9 , he was initially cast as a " Ferengi Pit Boss " in the pilot episode , " Emissary " . That character would soon become Rom , who by the end of the series was the leader of his race . Jennifer Hetrick also made her first appearance in " Captain 's Holiday " as Vash . She would also appear as that character in " Qpid " and Deep Space Nine 's " Q @-@ Less " .

Andreas Katsulas made his first appearances as the Romulan Tomalak in " The Enemy " and " The Defector " . He would later reappear in episodes of later seasons , in both " Future Imperfect " and the series finale " All Good Things ... " . Charles Cooper and Patrick Massett appeared as K 'mpec and Duras respectively in " Sins of the Father " , and would also appear in those roles once more in " Reunion " in the fourth season . A number of other actors also appeared during the season in prominent guest star roles , including Saul Rubinek , Tricia O 'Neil , Harry Groener and James

Sloyan . Groener returned to Star Trek during the final season of Star Trek : Enterprise in a different role during the episodes " Demons " and " Terra Prime " .

= = = Crew and effects = = =

Robert Blackman joined the crew prior to the start of the season as costume designer . He had been recommended by his predecessor , Durinda Rice Wood . He later recalled that he wasn 't interested in the job and only took the interview as a favor , but he was so struck by producer David Livingston 's enthusiasm that he accepted the post . One of his tasks was to redesign the Starfleet costumes which had been used for the first two seasons . The previous versions were made of spandex and caused back problems in the cast . The new costumes cost \$ 3 @ , @ 000 , and were made out of a wool gabardine .

With Roddenberry 's permission , Blackman changed the primary color on the uniforms to black with only blocks of red , gold or blue to signify the branch . This change was intended to set off the faces of the cast and to smooth out their figures on screen . While the men 's costumes became two piece outfits , the costumes for McFadden and Marina Sirtis remained as jumpsuits requiring them to maintain a specific weight each . It was following the introduction of these costumes that the nickname of the " Picard Maneuver " was given to Patrick Stewart 's habit of tugging down his uniform tunic . Blackman also overhauled the Starfleet Admiral 's uniforms , and worked on a variety of alien costumes including designed Klingon and Vulcan outfits .

Associate producer Peter Lauritson was promoted to co @ - @ producer and both Michael Okuda and Rick Sternbach were credited with the addition title of technical consultant due the level of technical help they had been giving the writers since the start of the series . The opening sequence of the series was changed from the third season onwards . Instead of showing the Enterprise exiting the Solar System as in the first two seasons , it now showed the vessel coming in from the Milky Way .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

By the end of season two , The Next Generation had risen to become the third most viewed series in its timeslot . " Evolution " opened the third season with Nielsen ratings 10 @ . @ 8 according to Nielsen Media Research . These were among the second lowest ratings of the season , with only the 23rd episode , " Menage a Troi " , scoring lower with 9 @ . @ 1 . Although other episodes received higher Nielsen ratings , they were ranked lower in comparison to other series in the same timeslot . " The Bonding " was ranked 6th , while " The Vengeance Factor " was ranked 5th . Following the latter , the series rose back to 3rd with only occasional drops to 4th place . " Yesterday 's Enterprise " was the highest rated with Nielsen ratings of 11 @ . @ 9 . It was the highest rated episode since the eighth episode of the first season , " Justice " which was broadcast on November 8 , 1987 .

= = = Reviews = = =

Keith DeCandido for Tor.com thought that the third season was where the series " really came into its own " . He praised the changes to the show , such as the modification to the uniforms , and especially the new writing staff that joined the crew during the third season . He said that some of the episodes were highlights of the franchise , not just The Next Generation . Those episodes praised were " Sins of the Father " , " Yesterday 's Enterprise " and the first episode of " The Best of Both Worlds " . He particularly thought that the season finale had never been matched in the entire franchise . He summed up the season by saying that it had " solidified TNG as a show that had finally outgrown the shadow of its predecessor and could stand on its own as a truly fine television

show . "

Michael Simpson in his review of the Blu @-@ ray release for SciFiNow magazine said that season three was where the series " found its feet " . He thought that the increase in quality was due to the changes in writing staff , such as the addition of Piller , Echevarria and Moore . He also said that it was the most consistent and memorable season of the series , and several episodes were an " object lesson in clever , suspenseful plotting " . Richard Edwards in his review for SFX magazine , said that it was in the third season that the " chemistry really clicked " between the main cast . He compared it to The Original Series , saying that in this season the show started " to vie with Kirk and co for the mantle of Trek 's definitive incarnation " . He too praised " Yesterday 's Enterprise " , " Sins of the Father " and " Best of Both Worlds " , calling the latter the show 's greatest story . In Jeremy Conrad 's review of season three for IGN , he said that " Yesterday 's Enterprise " and the first part of " Best of Both Worlds " lifted the season and " define [ d ] it as the best of all seven years " .

= = = Accolades = = =

" Yesterday 's Enterprise " was nominated in three categories at the 1990 Emmy Awards , winning one for Outstanding Sound Editing for a Series . " Deja Q " was also nominated in two categories , but was not successful in either . In total , the series was nominated for nine awards , with the only other win coming in the category of Outstanding Art Direction for a Series for " Sins of the Father " . " Allegiance " , " Tin Man " and " Hollow Pursuits " were the other episodes nominated . For the second year in the role , the series was nominated in two categories at the Youth in Film Awards . At the 1990 awards , they were for Best Off @-@ Prime Time Family Series and Best Young Actor in an Off @-@ Primetime Family Series for Wil Wheaton . However , it did not win in either categories .

= = Cast = =

= = = Main cast = = =

= = = Recurring cast = = =

= = Episodes = =

In the following table , episodes are listed by the order in which they aired .

= = Home media release = =

The previous Blu @-@ ray releases of The Next Generation has been marked by one @-@ day cinematic releases of chosen episodes . For the third season , the cliffhanger episode was broadcast for the first time with both parts of " Best of Both Worlds " shown in cinemas on April 25 , 2013 . The two @-@ part episode also received an individual Blu @-@ ray release which coincided with the releases of the season three box set .