

Cobra III Free Trader 1

TECHNICAL BRIEFING



The Cobra Mk III is an update to the famous Cobra class of free trader. Bigger, faster and tougher, it is one of the most sought after free traders of all time.

Overview

The Cobra Mk II was the long awaited successor to the venerable Mk I. However, design and financial issues led to the project being cancelled. The designs were bought out, and finally released as the Cobra Mk III.

The Mk III is a more expensive design, using the latest technologies and being 50% larger. It is better suited for carrying passengers and larger crew, and has increased armour thickness. Along with added firepower, the Mk III can be a formidable combat vessel despite being officially designated as a trader.

The rather ominous appearance looks good on the outside, but has led to some questionable design choices on the inside. The ship has been described as appearing as a hooded cobra rearing to strike. This is a description that the target market are often happy to be associated with.

Even if this ship was not meant to go to war, it was designed to skirt around the edges and pick off stragglers.

Crew

The Cobra Mk III has enough automation to enable it to

be flown by a single pilot. However, like all ships of its size, more hands are always appreciated and can lead to a smoother running ship.

There are two gunnery stations located on the bridge, along with a sensor operator station. Again, these positions can be automated, but live crew can increase the ship's effectiveness, especially in combat situations.

The high tech jump drives, tuned for greater fuel efficiency, could always use an engineer to keep them running smoothly.

However, like its predecessor, a Cobra III can be flown by a single pilot. They come with a full virtual crew software as standard, and its TL 13 computer systems can be easily upgraded to run Fire Control and Evade software packages as well.

It is not uncommon for Cobra IIIs to be flown by a crew of two or three multi-skilled individuals. Unless the individuals are rich, or they've stolen the ship from a graveyard, newbie crews are unlikely to be using a Cobra III as their first ship.

As with many ships, there are several variants of the Cobra Mk III. In particular, the Type P which is outfitted for passengers, and Type X which expands the cargo capacity. These are described in more detail later.

Source: Elite (1984)
Company: Cowell & MgRath Shipyards
Technology Level: 13
Total Tonnage: 300t
In Service Date: 1000
Cost: MCr126.3825

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TL 13	Cobra III	TONS	COST
Hull	300t Streamlined hull	-	18
	Crystal iron armour 6	27	5.4
M-Drive	Thrust 4	12	24
J-Drive	Jump 2, Fuel efficiency 10%	20	37.5
Power Plant	TL12 Fusion Power Plant, 240	16	16
Fuel	2 Parsec Jump	54	-
	4 weeks operation	1	-
Bridge	Bridge, holographic controls	20	1.875
	1 Sensor station	1	0.5
	2 gunner stations for turrets	-	-
Computer	TL 13, Computer/25	-	10
Sensors	Improved sensors (+1)	3	4.3
Weapons	Double pulse laser turret x2	2	6
	Missile rack fixed mount	0	0.85
Systems	Staterooms x6	24	3
	Low Berth x4	2	0.2
	Common areas	18	1.8
	Fuel Processor (180t/day)	9	9
	Fuel Scoop	-	-
	Cargo Scoop	2	0.5
Software	Manoeuvre, Intellect, Library	-	-
	Jump Control/2 [10]	-	0.2
	Virtual Crew/0 [5]	-	1
	Virtual Gunner/0 [5]	-	1
Cargo		89	-

Common Roles

Trader

The Cobra Mk III is classed as a trader, and that is its primary function. Heavily armed and armoured, it is capable of carrying trade to worlds which are normally off limits to those in less well equipped vessels.

However, the higher running (and often mortgage) costs mean that owners are forced to take the riskier jobs that the ship is designed for. Few people buy a Cobra III to fly the standard trade routes. This gives them a reputation of being if not illegal, then somewhat dangerous individuals to trade with.

The lack of good passenger facilities doesn't prevent the

ship from taking passengers, it just means that they need to be fitted into the third deck along with the rest of the crew. This lack of security is seen as a downside, but there are always the four cold berths which can be used if potential passengers are willing to take the risk.

Pirate

It is said that you can assume that any Cobra III has at least at some point in its life been used in piracy. Its two turrets provide good firepower against smaller craft, plus a belly full of missiles allow it to take on larger craft with a good chance of success.

It comes equipped as standard with a cargo scoop, making it well suited for retrieving cargo left behind by fleeing victims. Officially these scoops are for use in mining or salvage operations, but the ship is rarely ever

Crew

1 Pilot, 2 Gunners,
1 Sensor Operator, 1 Engineer

Hull: 120 Armour: 6

Costs

Maintenance Cost

Cr 10,532 / month

Purchase Cost

MCr 126.3825

Power 120

Basic Systems

60

Manoeuvre Drive

120

Jump Drive

60

Weapons

9

Sensors

4

Low Berths

1

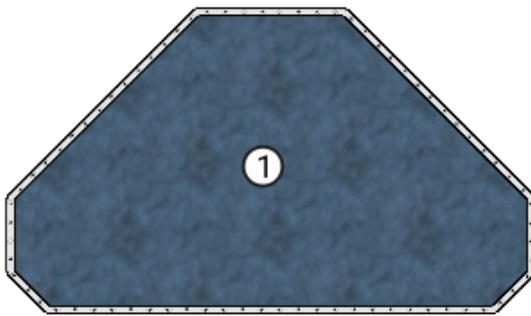
Fuel Processors

9

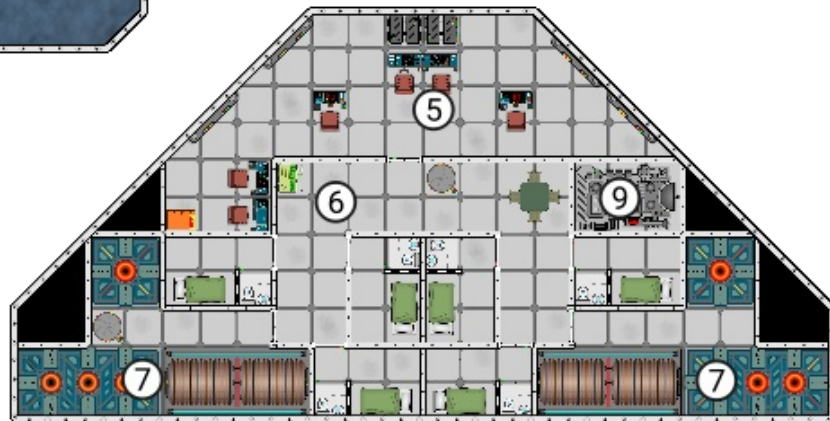
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TECHNICAL BRIEFING

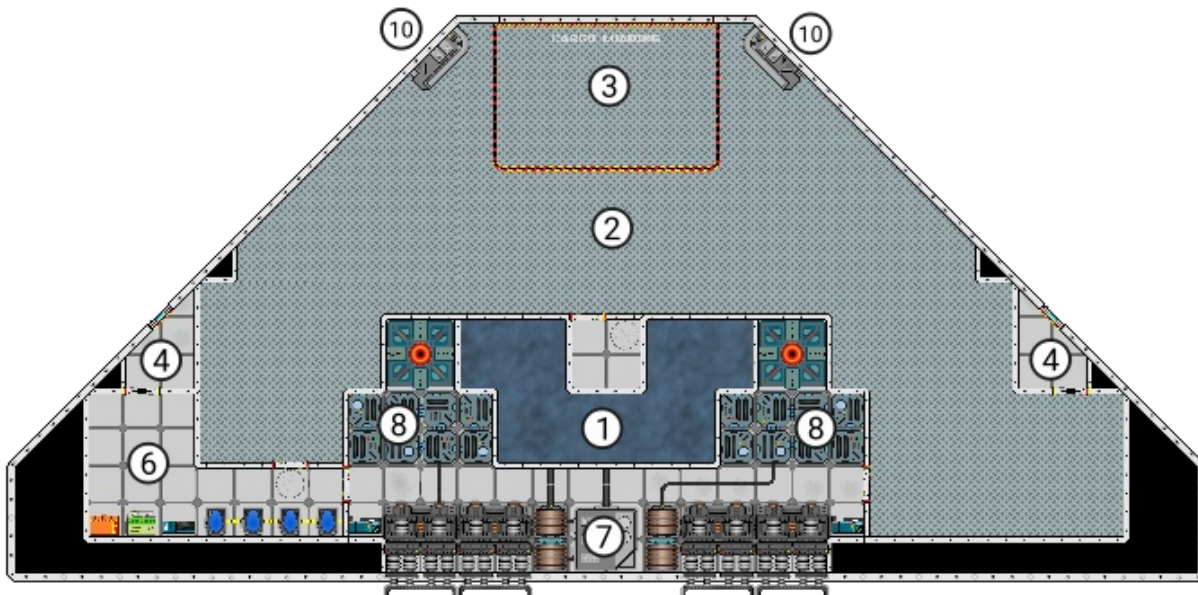
Deck 1 (Lower)



Deck 3 (Upper)



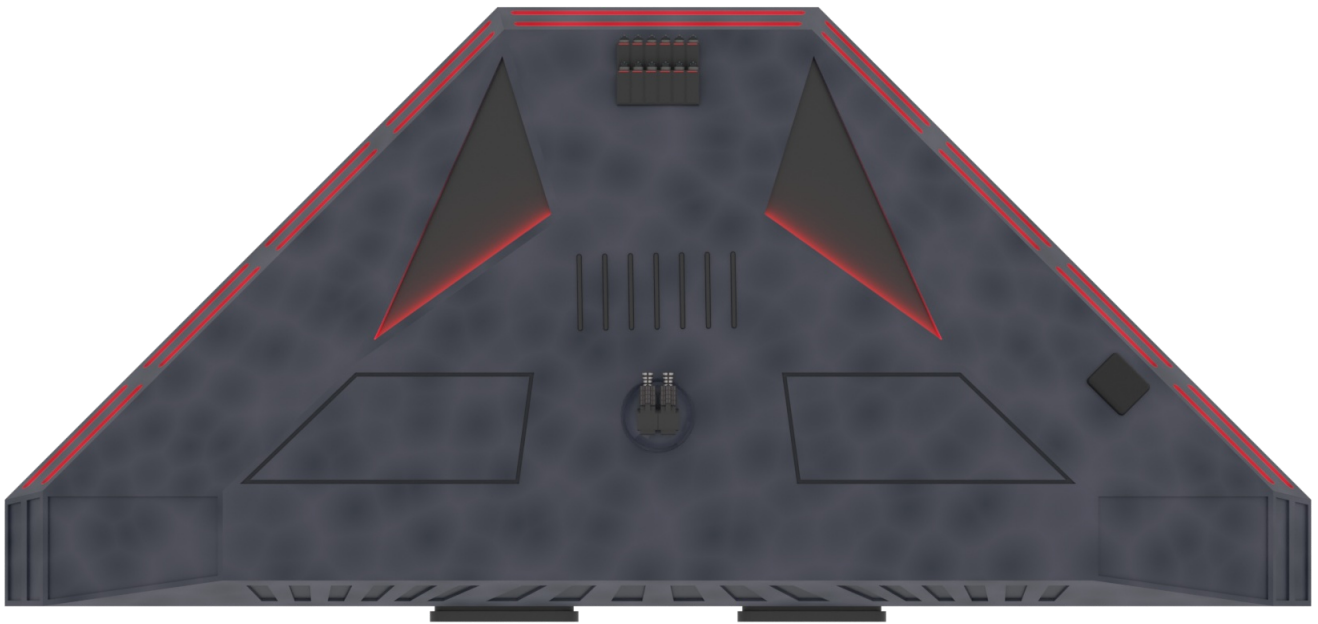
Deck 2



- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| ① Fuel | ④ Airlocks | ⑦ Engineering |
| ② Cargo Holds | ⑤ Bridge | ⑧ Fuel Processors |
| ③ Cargo Hatch/Ramp | ⑥ Living Quarters | ⑨ Sensors |
| | | ⑩ Cargo scoops |

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deployed in these roles.

For this reason, a Cobra III appearing at a star port is going to get everyone's attention, but not for the right reasons. In some respects, the fact that a Cobra III is good at piracy makes it a bad choice. Everyone is edge and on alert when a Cobra III is in system.

Smuggler

With a thrust 4 drive, the Mk III is more than capable of fast landing and take off. The big open front loading cargo ramp makes it quick and easy to transfer goods at unregistered ports.

Some would say that the fuel processors are over-specified, but being able to process a full tank of fuel in six hours makes for a fast turn around time, something smugglers and others riding at the edge of the law are often grateful for.

Some smugglers modify their ships to have hidden



compartments inside the fuel tanks on the first deck. This requires extending the tanks on the 2nd deck to make up for the loss.

Hunter

Tough, fast and well armed, the Cobra III is the favoured ship of many bounty hunters and assassins. The ship allows the crew to keep up the pretense of being honest traders whilst going about their business of hunting down their prey.

Bounty hunters work on both sides of the law. The Mk III is a decent anti-pirate ship, and some captains take it

upon themselves to make the space lanes safer for everyone by hunting down pirates. The bounties that are put on the more notorious pirates is often a big incentive over and above the desire to do good.

Some bounty hunters work for crime bosses though, seeking out those that have caused trouble for the various criminal enterprises operating out of the less civilised systems.

Deck Layout

The two decks of the Adder are arranged such that the cargo hold is on the first deck, with living quarters and engineering on the second deck.

Deck 1

The first and lowest deck is where the bulk of the ship's fuel is stored. This is not normally crew accessible, though maintenance hatches from engineering on deck two can be used to reach it.

This has sometimes led to it being used for smuggling compartments. This has the downside of eating into the ship's fuel capacity, which generally needs to be made up elsewhere.

Deck 2

Most of this deck is cargo bay. It is dominated by the cargo ramp at the front of the ship, which allows quick and easy loading and unloading of cargo.

There are two airlocks, on the port and starboard side, as well as limited living quarters on the port side of the ship. This can sometimes lead to an imbalance in mass distribution due to the asymmetrical cargo hold, but the ship's computer has been programmed to automatically correct for this. Some pilots claim that they can perform a clockwise rotation faster when cargo mass is distributed to the ship's starboard though.

The manoeuvre drive systems and rest of the fuel tanks can be found here, along with some parts of the jump drives and fusion reactors.

Access to this deck is either via an interior airlock in

front of engineering, or a secondary hatch from port engineering on deck 3.

Deck 3

The upper deck contains the bridge and main living quarters. There are quarters for six crew, or twelve if double bunking. There are some general living quarters here as well, and access down to the cargo hold.

The bulk of the fusion reactors and jump drives have also been located on this deck, rather than down on deck two. The engineering sections here are split into two, located in both 'wings' of the ship.

This allows living quarters and bridge to be centrally located in a single area.

Weapons

As standard, a Cobra comes with a double pulse laser mounted on a dorsal turret. This is controlled from the gunnery station on the bridge.

There is a fixed mount on the front, which is equipped with a missile rack of 12 missiles. There is no spare space for carrying reloads of the missiles, but 12 is normally considered to be enough.

The missiles can be controlled from the main pilot's console, or the gunner's console.

Variants

Shortly after the standard Cobra Mk III was released two further models were produced. These use the same hull and basic layout, but have modifications to the middle deck to allow for specific use cases.

Model P

The Type P is the slightly more expensive passenger variant, which trades cargo space for extra staterooms. These staterooms are located on the middle deck, with a security hatch between them and the rest of the ship.

This allows for an extra 8 (or 16 if doubling up) passengers to be carried, at the expense of cargo space.

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TL 13	Cobra III/P	TONS	COST
Hull	300t Streamlined hull	-	18
	Crystal iron armour 6	27	5.4
M-Drive	Thrust 4	12	24
J-Drive	Jump 2, Fuel efficiency 10%	20	37.5
Power Plant	TL12 Fusion Power Plant, 240	16	16
Fuel	2 Parsec Jump	54	-
	4 weeks operation	1	-
Bridge	Bridge, holographic controls	20	1.875
	1 Sensor station	1	0.5
	2 gunner stations for turrets	-	-
Computer	TL 13, Computer/25	-	10
Sensors	Improved sensors (+1)	3	4.3
Weapons	Double pulse laser turret x2	2	6
	Missile rack fixed mount	0	0.85
Systems	Staterooms x14	56	7
	Low Berth x2	1	0.2
	Common areas	28	2.8
	Fuel Processor (140t/day)	7	7
	Fuel Scoop	-	-
Software	Manoeuvre, Intellect, Library	-	-
	Jump Control/2 [10]	-	0.2
	Virtual Crew/0 [5]	-	1
	Virtual Gunner/0 [5]	-	1
Cargo		52	-

Crew

1 Pilot, 2 Gunners,
1 Sensor Operator, 1 Engineer

Hull: 120 Armour: 6

Costs

Maintenance Cost

Cr 10,772 / month

Purchase Cost

MCr 129.2625

Power 120

Basic Systems

60

Manoeuvre Drive

120

Jump Drive

60

Weapons

9

Sensors

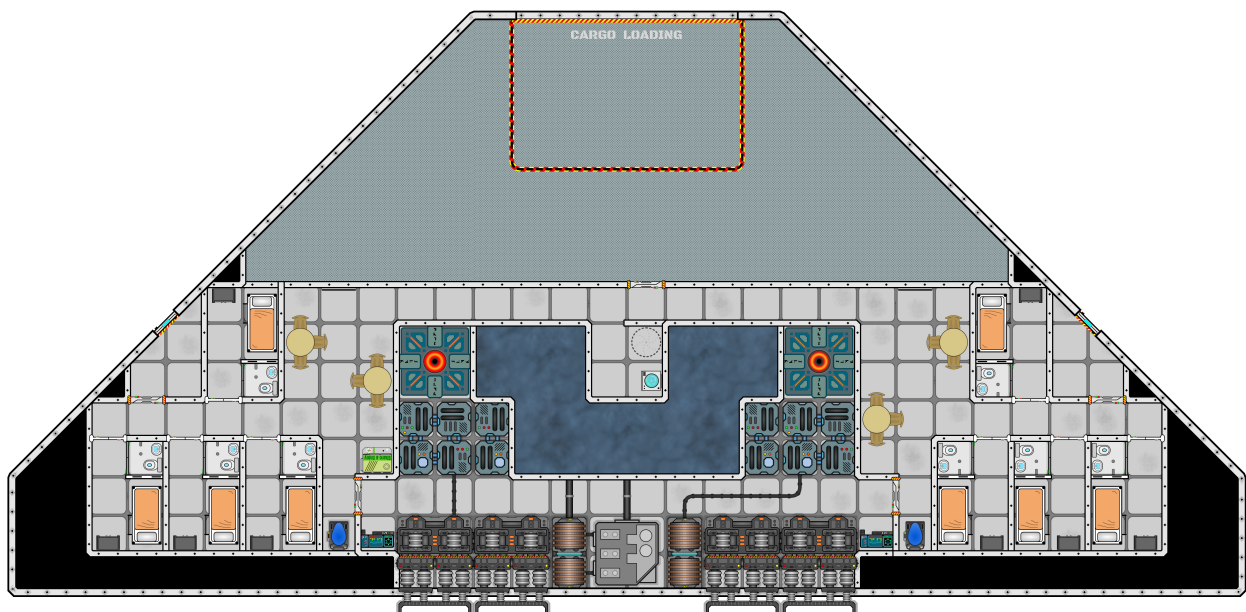
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Low Berths

1

Fuel Processors

7



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TECHNICAL BRIEFING

TL 13	Cobra III/X	TONS	COST
Hull	300t Streamlined hull	-	18
	Crystal iron armour 6	27	5.4
M-Drive	Thrust 4	12	24
J-Drive	Jump 2, Fuel efficiency 10%	20	37.5
Power Plant	TL12 Fusion Power Plant, 240	16	16
Fuel	2 Parsec Jump	54	-
	4 weeks operation	1	-
Bridge	Bridge, holographic controls	20	1.875
	1 Sensor station	1	0.5
	2 gunner stations for turrets	-	-
Computer	TL 13, Computer/25	-	10
Sensors	Improved sensors (+1)	3	4.3
Weapons	Double pulse laser turret x2	2	6
	Missile rack fixed mount	0	0.85
Systems	Staterooms x6	24	3
	Common areas	10	1.0
	Fuel Processor (40t/day)	2	2
	Fuel Scoop	-	-
Software	Manoeuvre, Intellect, Library	-	-
	Jump Control/2 [10]	-	0.2
	Virtual Crew/0 [5]	-	1
	Virtual Gunner/0 [5]	-	1
Cargo		108	-

Crew

1 Pilot, 2 Gunners,
1 Sensor Operator, 1 Engineer

Hull: 120 Armour: 6

Costs

Maintenance Cost

Cr 9,947 / month

Purchase Cost

MCr 119.3625

Power 120

Basic Systems

60

Manoeuvre Drive

120

Jump Drive

60

Weapons

9

Sensors

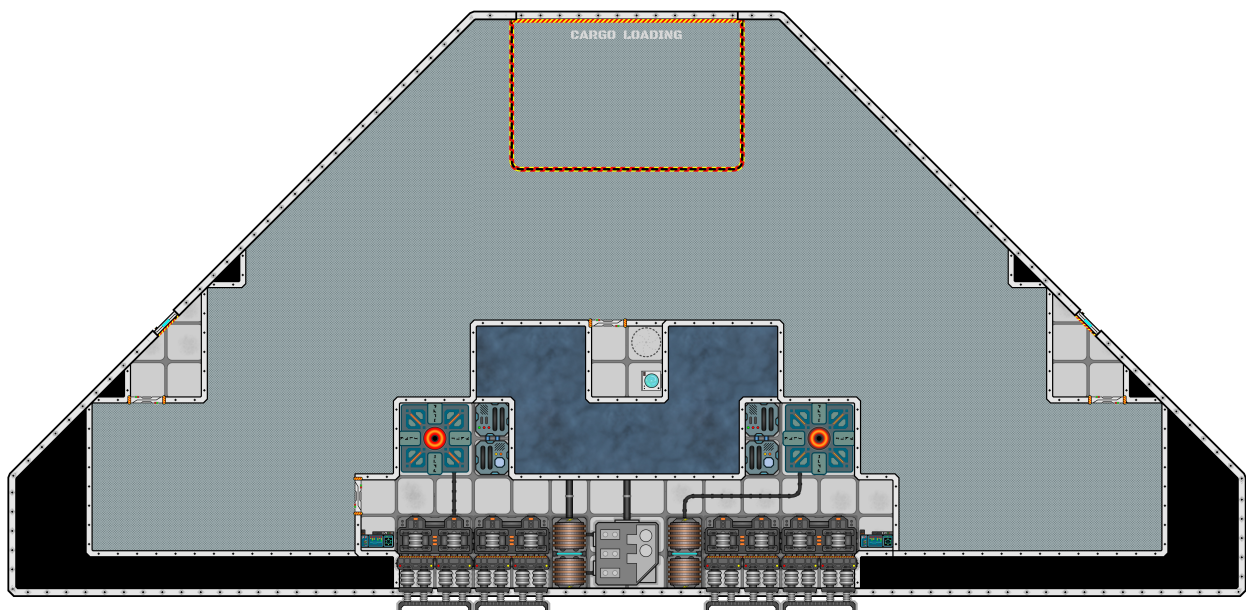
4

Low Berths

1

Fuel Processors

2



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As part of the space saving, the cargo scoops are removed by default (though they can be added back in as an optional extra), and the fuel processors are reduced in size.

The Model P is expected to spend more of its time on standard shipping routes, rather than performing wilderness refuelling, so the extra processing units were considered an unnecessary cost.

Model X

The third official variant of the Cobra Mk III was the Model X, or "Max". The cargo bay in the Max has been extended to fill as much of the middle deck as possible. This means the loss of living space, including the cold berths.

Like the Model P, the fuel processors have been cut back, though to a much more extreme state than then Model P. This gives the Max a full 108t of cargo space.

The reductions bring the total cost to under CrM120, making the Max the cheapest of the three models.

Up to 4t of extra fuel processors can be added, as can cargo scoops, at time of purchase. These are at full price without the 10% discount.