TYPE: Y-CLASS
LAUNCHED: 22nd C
LENGTH: 270 METERS
MAX SPEED: WARP 1.8
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Stand assembly:

Push the stand up through the middle of the ship
Push the stand up through for stability of the ship

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Development Director:

Maggie Calmels

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The ECS Fortunate was a Y-class freighter, one of Earth’s most common types of cargo transport ships in the early-to-mid 22nd century. Its modular design consisted of a long central spine with the bridge and crew accommodation at the bow. As many as eight cargo pods could be attached to the backbone of the ship, meaning it could haul over 20 kilotons of freight. One of the most common cargos hauled by freighters was dilithium ore, but they also took on unusual consignments too, including small lifeforms such as stromatopod larvae.

All goods had to be evenly balanced inside the cargo modules. Improperly balanced loads could cause the whole ship to shake when approaching faster-than-light speeds and above. The warp nacelles were located inboard of the cargo modules near the stern of the ship. They were capable of propelling the ship to a top speed of warp 1.8, meaning it could take at least a year to cross star systems, and voyages of five years or more were common.

The ECS Fortunate was the space-going equivalent of a freight train in that a number of large modules could be attached to its central framework and hauled to various outposts along its trade route.

Matthew Ryan took command of the Fortunate after Captain Keene was injured while defending his ship from Nausicaan pirates. Ryan had previously lost members of his own family on board another freighter, and his grief made him determined to exact revenge, even though the Fortunate was ill-equipped to take on the Nausicaan ships.
The crew on freighters, such as the Fortune, were often referred to as ‘boomers,’ a slang term for people who spent their entire lives on ships running cargo. As boomer crews spent so much time on their own, they tended to be highly insular and independent, preferring to rely on their own resources rather than seek help from others. It was particularly important that the crew of freighters were self-reliant, as they could often find themselves weeks away from help. They were also vulnerable to attack from pirates who wanted to steal their valuable cargo.

To help defend itself from raids, the Fortune had rudimentary polarized hull plating and was armed with a plasma cannon. This weapon was often referred to as little more than a “popgun” because it was not very powerful and had a weapons lock range of less than nine kilometers. In fact, it was primarily designed to blow apart oncoming asteroids that were in the ship’s path. Captains of Y-class freighters often upgraded the plasma cannon by tying it directly to the impulse engines, which at least gave it more power and a better chance of repelling attackers.

**DANGEROUS OCCUPATION**

Even with upgraded weapons, these pioneering spacefarers knew they were far from safe. One freighter, called the ECS North Star, met with disaster which resulted in almost the entire crew being killed. Matthew Ryan, who was one of the few survivors, had been born on the North Star and lost both his parents in the catastrophe. He subsequently transferred to the Fortune and by 2151 had become the first officer. The tragedy that Ryan suffered perhaps explains why he so often charged his first officer, Captain Keene, when the Fortune was attacked by Nausicaan pirates. Ryan wanted retribution, and he ordered the Fortune on an ill-conceived mission to destroy their Nausicaan attackers.

When the Fortune eventually caught up with a Nausicaan ship, it disappeared behind a small asteroid. This turned out to be the site of a docking facility for multiple Nausicaan ships, but rather than retreat, Ryan pressed on with the assault. Their phase cannon had no effect on the Nausicaan ships, and soon the Fortune was overwhelmed. With the propulsion systems knocked out, the Fortune would surely have been destroyed had it not been for the intervention of Enterprise NX-01. Backed by Enterprise’s superior weapons system, Captain Archer negotiated a settlement that allowed the Fortune to leave without further incident. When Captain Keene recovered, he demoted Ryan to able crewman, where he would spend the rest of their long journey purging hydraulic pumps. Keene acknowledged that times were changing, and that he would have to upgrade the Fortune to a warp three engine to stay in business. It would also mean that his ship would no longer be as isolated, and their mindset of being alone and doing things for themselves would have to change.

**DATA FEED**

Before Ensign Mayweather became helmsman of Enterprise NX-01, he lived and worked on board a freighter operated by his family called the ECS Holstian. In fact, Mayweather had been born on the freighter during a cargo run halfway between a colony on Vega and the planet Draylax.
STUBBORN INDEPENDENCE

Despite Matthew Ryan's experiences being colored by the tragic loss of his parents, his attitudes was typical of many boomers. They were used to doing things for themselves and were resentful of interference from outsiders. Thus, Ryan was less than thrilled when Enterprise NX-01 offered assistance with repairs after the Fortunate had been attacked by the Nausicaans. To get rid of them, Ryan trapped Captain Archer and his officers in a cargo bay, before detaching it from his ship. This allowed him time to head off in pursuit of the Nausicaans, but he was lucky that Enterprise managed to track him down before his ship was destroyed.

DATA FEED

During the 22nd century, all Earth Cargo Service freighters were regulated by a government body known as the Earth Cargo Authority. This agency governed the operations of Earth-registered interstellar cargo transport vessels, and required them to gain a license to operate. This license to operate could be withdrawn if a delivery was missed.

RESUE CONVOY

Two unnamed Y-class freighters similar to the Fortunate were part of a fleet that led the last surviving humans to Ceti Alpha V after Earth was destroyed in an alternate timeline by the Xindi.

FREIGHTER NAMES

Earth freighters known to have been operating in the 22nd century included the North Star, the Horizon, the Constellation, and the Ticonderoga, which was destroyed by a Romulan drone ship in 2154.

FAMILY PET

In 2151, one of the children living aboard the Fortunate kept a Teneebian skunk as a pet. Presumably, the animal had been acquired from one of the two inhabited Teneebian moons, one of the stops on the ship's route.
When the original STAR TREK was on air there were frequent references to Earth freighters and to human crews hauling cargo around the galaxy, but we never actually saw one. An Earth cargo freighter did appear in the animated series but remarkably, they didn’t really feature on TNG or DS9, so when the script for Fortunate Son called for us to spend time on an Earth Cargo Ship there really wasn’t much to go by.

Concept artist John Eaves produced three alternative drawings for the ECS Fortunate, all of which shared the same basic architecture: a central framework with a series of cargo pods on either side. In this case the script dictated a lot about the design - it made it clear that the ECS Fortunate was a massive ship and called for one of the cargo pods to be blown off during the episode. So Eaves concentrated on slightly different takes on basically the same thing, offering up different shapes for the pods, and the “cab” at the front. In one of his drawings the front section was like a tug, with twin warp nacelles on either side, but the producers rejected this approach in favor of the two other designs, which were passed on to the VFX team to be built as a CG model.

MAKING CHANGES
Fortunate Son was being supervised by Ron B. Moore, and his input had a major influence on the final design. As he explains, the VFX supervisors and their modelers were often given a substantial...
degree of freedom to interpret what they were given. “The producers understood that the drawings weren’t final. It’s very different looking at a 2D drawing and what we built in 3D. They usually gave us quite a bit of latitude to make changes, so when I got the drawings, in this case there were two on the same sheet, I would talk to the modeler and we would discuss what we would like.”

In this particular case, Moore wanted to design the ship to work for some very specific shots that were called for by the script. “We knew we had to have a sense of the scale, the shot of the shuttlecraft was going to come around and dock on the side of the cab and I wanted to design something that would work for that – which meant I had to make sure that I had a proper hatch, and there was room for it.

BEST OF BOTH DESIGNS

“Also I needed to have one of these cargo modules come off and float off into space. So I varied the model a little bit to make all of that work as well as possible. Either one of the drawings we had would have worked but if you look at the model in the show, what we came up with is kind of a cross between the two.”

Specifically, what Moore did was to take the nose section from the right-hand design and the cargo modules from the one on the left. “Sometimes it was just because I liked one element better,” he says, “but we had reasoning for some of it too. I thought the nose on the one on the right gave us a little more bulk and we needed that, because you had the shuttle roll over and mount on the side. I think also subconsciously it reminded me of the Leonov, which was the Russian ship in 2010, which I worked on. The nose section of the one on the left was more aerodynamic and I didn’t feel that was all that necessary, especially for a freighter.”

When it came to the cargo pods, Moore had two concerns: one of the pods had to be ejected when the freighter’s acting captain, Ryan, turned on Archer, and Moore was planning a shot when a Nausicaan fighter flew the length of the ship, establishing its size.

“The cargo modules on the right were probably more functional,” he admits, “but I thought the symmetry of the ones on the left worked a little better and the design gave us an opportunity to get in closer when they ejected the pod. I remember I wanted to push them a little bit further apart so I could create this valley. That was something that was in the drawing on the left. That was because I wanted to get an alien ship in between them. One of the shots in the teaser is looking down the main body of the ship between these cargo modules as this alien ship is coming towards us. You need to establish that this is a big cargo ship – and having that ship do a Grand Canyon flyby helped with that. I love those kinds of shots and we wanted to build it and get the spaces just right to make that work.”

Moore and his modeler also added warp nacelles to the design, which were tucked into the unseen underside of the ship. Looking back he couldn’t have been happier with the results. “I really liked this episode,” he says, “I liked building this ship and I really like the final design.”

Two of John Eaves’ drawings were on the same sheet, and this was what was passed to the VFX team. They took elements from both drawings and added their own ideas about what was on the underside to create the final model.
In the early 22nd century, freighters such as the ECS Fortunate were among Earth’s earliest pioneering spaceships, but it was the invention of the warp 5 engine that allowed humans to really explore the galaxy.

**SPACE EXPLORATION IN THE 22nd CENTURY**

In the STAR TREK universe the dream of interstellar travel became a reality on April 5, 2063, when Zefram Cochrane successfully tested the Phoenix, the first faster-than-light starship developed by humans. His seminal flight drew the attention of the Vulcans and the rest, as they say, is STAR TREK history.

The years between Cochrane’s daring flight, as portrayed in STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT, and the voyages of the U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701 helmed by James T. Kirk, remained something of a mystery, as in 35 years of the franchise, not one episode had involved a visit to this time period. But all that was about to change with the debut of the fifth STAR TREK television series, ENTERPRISE.

**WARP BREAKTHROUGH**

Set in the year 2151, some 90 years after Cochrane inaugurated the warp age, ENTERPRISE followed the adventures of the crew of the first warp 5 starship. By 2151, humans had been puttering around the nearby stars at low warp for nearly a century. They’d visited a handful of star systems, and established a few research stations. Cargo ships, like the ECS Fortunate, crewed by “space boomers” – people born and raised on starships – transported supplies and exotic alien goods. It was these cargo freighters that were at the forefront of human space exploration. But with the advent of the warp 5 engine, humans were finally ready to get out into really deep space.

The reason for this, although it may not sound like it, is that the difference between warp 2 and warp 5 is significant. The warp speed scale isn’t linear; it’s geometric. Warp 1 is equivalent to the speed of light (commonly designated by the letter c). Warp 2, however, isn’t twice c; it’s nearly 10 times c. Warp 3 is about 40 times c, warp 4 is about 100 c, and warp 5 a bit over 200 c. This speed scale was established during the first season of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION and doesn’t exactly conform to the warp factors referenced in THE ORIGINAL SERIES, but it was followed on ENTERPRISE.

**HABITABLE PLANETS**

Our galaxy, the Milky Way, is a big place; its spiral arms span 100,000 light years, and contain several hundred billion stars. A sizeable fraction of those stars have families of planets like our sun.

Proxima Centauri – the next nearest star beyond our solar system – is about four and a quarter light years away in the constellation of Centaurus. At warp 2, about the maximum speed Earth ships like the ECS Fortunate could achieve prior to Enterprise NX-01, getting there would take 156 days, or about six months (this is about as long as it takes present-day spacecraft to get to Mars, the next planet out in our own tiny solar system.) But at warp 5 you could make the trip in just a week. A voyage that would have taken 10 years on the ECS Fortunate would take just five weeks traveling at warp 5 on Enterprise.

There are a dozen or so stars within 10 light years of Earth, including Alpha, Beta, and Proxima Centauri, and Sirius, the Dog Star. All are perfectly lovely places to visit, but a 10-light-year radius from Earth...
Earth spans a pretty limited territory, galactically speaking. And at a measly warp 2, it would take a whole year to cover that distance. This was why freighters, like the *ECS Fortunate*, had only visited a handful of inhabitable worlds and colonies by the mid-22nd century. Some of these earliest off-world human settlements were established about four light years away in the Alpha Centauri system, and this was where Zefram Cochrane moved to after 2069. Human colonies were also established in the Terra Nova, Neubilia and Vega systems, and on Deneva Prime. Other destinations inhabited by humans included the Teneebian moons and Trillius Prime, which at 24 light years from Earth would take a warp 2 vessel about three years to get there. Only a handful of aliens were known to be in regular contact with human freighter ships by the mid-22nd century. These species included the Draylaxians, the Demerians and the Deltans. The fact was that the relatively limited distances warp 2 vessels, like the *ECS Fortunate*, could travel, meant that the galaxy was largely unexplored. For humanity to make any meaningful space exploration possible, a faster warp engine needed to be developed.

**WARP PIONEERS**

The advent of the warp 5 engine as used by *Enterprise* NX-01 changed all that. Following the successful test flight of the Phoenix in 2063, Zefram Cochrane continued to work on his propulsion system. In 2119, aided by engineers such as Henry Archer (Jonathan Archer’s father), Cochrane began the work to create faster warp engines at the Warp Five Complex in Bozeman, Montana. Thirty-two years later, humanity's first warp 5 engine was ready. Travelling at warp 5 meant that covering distances of 10 light years took just two and a half weeks – a walk in the park relative to what had been possible before. At warp 5, covering a distance of 100 light years could be achieved in less than six months. How many stars are there within a hundred light years of Earth? Thousands, including many familiar to STAR TREK fans: Aldebaran, Regulus, Arcturus and Vega, to name just a few. Warp 5 pushed back the final frontier big-time and opened up the possibility of contact with hundreds of alien species.

**NEW FRONTIERS**

In the episode ‘Two Days and Two Nights,’ *Enterprise* NX-01 set a milestone by becoming the first Earth ship to travel more than 90 light years from its homeworld, as Captain Archer explained to Keyla while on Risa. This distance finally made it possible for humans to encounter a whole array of exotic alien species. During its first year alone, *Enterprise* had made official first contact with numerous species, including the Andorians, Avaran, Coridans, Eska, Kantare, Malurians, Menk, Suliban and the Xyrillians.

As Cochrane correctly predicted in a recording played at the launching ceremony of *Enterprise*, the warp 5 engine would allow humanity to explore “strange, new worlds,” and “go boldly where no man has gone before.”
ON SCREEN

TRIVIA
One of the planets on the ECS Fortunate’s trade routes was Draylax. Captain Keene (pictured below) believed that Draylaxian whiskey was “one of the galaxy’s real pleasures.” Enterprise NX-01’s helmsman, Ensign Travis Mayweather, had visited Draylax when he was part of the crew of his family’s freighter, the ECS Horizon. Mayweather confirmed Commander Trip Tucker’s belief that Draylaxian women were endowed with “three…”, and claimed to have had “first-hand, second-hand, and third-hand” experience.

In 2155, an unidentified Y-class freighter, similar to the Fortunate, was in orbit of Verex III when Enterprise NX-01 arrived there looking for nine members of their crew who had been abducted by the Orions to be sold into slavery.

An earlier type of freighter utilized by the Earth Cargo Service was the J class. This was similar in appearance to Y-class freighters, but smaller. The warp reactors fitted to J-class freighters were designed by warp pioneer Zefram Cochrane, and it was rumored that he personally signed the inside of each reactor casing.

KEY APPEARANCES
STAR TREK: ENTERPRISE
‘Fortunate Son’
The ECS Fortunate freighter ship is on an eight-month cargo run when it comes under attack from Naussicaan pirates wanting to steal its goods. Before the Fortunate’s crew fight off their attackers, they send out a distress call.

Starfleet Command picks up the signal and orders Enterprise NX-01 to go to their aid. Once there, Captain Archer discovers that Captain Keene, the commander of the Fortunate, is out of action after being hit by weapons fire during the raid. His first officer, Matthew Ryan, has taken charge, and is reluctant to accept help. At first, Captain Archer puts this down to the fact that freighter crews are renowned for their stubborn independence, but then he discovers that Ryan has kidnapped a Naussicaan pirate.

Rather than give up his prisoner, Ryan is so intent on revenge for the attack that he traps Archer and several members of his crew in one of the cargo modules before jettisoning it into space.

While Archer and the others are being rescued, Ryan leads his ship off in pursuit of the Naussicaans. Once they find them, Ryan orders an attack, but the Fortuneate is soon overwhelmed. Their only hope for survival is if Enterprise can track them down and come to their aid before they are destroyed.

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