REMAN WARBIRD SCIMITAR

TYPE: WARBIRD
ORIGIN: REMAN
LENGTH: 890 METERS
THALARON WEAPON
The Scimitar was a massive, heavily armed ship that carried a devastating thalaron weapon. The Scimitar was a Reman warbird that was built by Shinzon in secret some time before 2379. Shinzon, who became the Romulan Praetor after his Reman rebels wiped out the Romulan government, made the Scimitar his flagship and used it in a failed attempt to wipe out life on Earth which he believed would bring the Federation to its knees.

The Scimitar was twice the size of a Sovereign-class Federation starship and commensurate with its role as flagship for the rebellion, it was heavily armed. In fact with its 52 disruptor banks and 27 photon torpedo bays, it outgunned any Romulan Warbird or Federation starship which came into contact with it.

In addition to its conventional armaments, the Scimitar was effectively a massive weapon that...

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Shinzon summoned the U.S.S. Enterprise to Romulus to conduct peace talks. When Picard arrived, the Scimitar decloaked in a show of strength.

The Scimitar was a massive weapon that could fire a thalaron beam that could wipe out organic life. In order to fire, the wings had to separate into different panels. Energy from the thalaron generator was then channeled to the wingtips.

The tips of the wings were fitted with powerful emitters that were used to focus the thalaron radiation on its target.

The thalaron generator was located off the Scimitar's bridge. Shinzon used a smaller version of the generator to wipe out the Romulan senate when he assumed power.

The Scimitar's thalaron generator was a type of radiation capable of destroying any organic material in the vicinity. It was powerful enough to turn living creatures to ash and to destroy whole planets. The thalaron generator was housed just off the Scimitar's bridge and was fired through a series of emitters on the tips of the ship's wings. When the thalaron beam was deployed, the wings split into a series of different panels, each of which had a thalaron emitter at its tip. Deploying the weapon took seven minutes but once it was activated, there was no defense against it.

The Scimitar was heavily protected thanks to a system of primary and secondary shielding. If the primary shielding failed or was compromised, the vessel could immediately switch to its secondary shielding thus making it more difficult for an enemy starship, to inflict serious damage. The Scimitar was also fitted with warp engines that could outstrip even a Sovereign-class Federation starship.

Like conventional Romulan warships, the Scimitar sported a cloaking device, however, the Scimitar's cloaking technology was far more sophisticated than anything else available at the time: its cloak emitted no tachyon beams or antiprotons. This rendered the Scimitar completely undetectable to Federation scans. On top of that, the ship could activate its shields and travel at warp speed while remaining cloaked, something that had previously been impossible.

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The Scimitar was eventually destroyed in the Bassen rift. It was powered enough to overcome both the Enterprise and two Romulan warbirds, but Picard rammed the Enterprise into her, causing significant damage. At this point, Data fired into the thalaron generator, resulting in the complete destruction of the ship and all hands.
DESIGNING THE SCIMITAR

Shinzon’s ship was described as being a breathtaking vessel that was like an enormous spider and dwarfed the U.S.S. Enterprise.

STAR TREK: NEMESIS was built around the conflict between Captain Picard and his clone, Shinzon and introduced us to one of the darker corners of the STAR TREK universe – Romulus’s sister planet Remus. Shinzon had been brought up in the darkness of the Reman dilithium mines before rising to power, taking control of the Romulan senate and making peace overtures to the Federation. As concept artist, John Eaves explains, Shinzon’s flagship, the Scimitar, was designed to reflect his personality. “The Scimitar has a very aggressive shape. It was an extension of Shinzon’s personality. That was the attitude that inspired the design. That’s where all the sharp angles, the very, very deep color and the dark shadowed areas came from. It was who he was. Their whole planet was dark and based in shadows.”

John Logan’s script described the Scimitar as a massive vessel that would...
For a long time, the Scimitar had spindly arms that curled over from the back to fire the thalaron radiation. To Eaves’s amusement, Logan described the Scimitar as “unlike anything we have ever seen before,” an instruction that was frequently given to the art department.

Eaves and another concept artist, David Negron Jnr, both began work on the design process. The two men worked in different buildings but would talk to one another and ultimately collaborated on the look of the ship. They were also responsible for the design of the new Romulan warbird, the Valdore.

Eaves’ first design was inspired by the work of John Berkey, an artist who was famous for his work on sci-fi book covers, and on the movies ‘2001: A Space Odyssey,’ ‘Star Wars’ and ‘Dune.’ Several of Berkey’s ship designs were based on predatory fish, and Eaves used this as a starting point. However, the producers felt that the shape he came up with was too “ambiguous,” so he returned to the classic Romulan bird-of-prey for inspiration.

“Since Romulus and Remus were sister planets,” Eaves explains, “I was trying to morph the design of the bird-of-prey into something new rather than develop a whole different type of architecture. I figured the Remans took Romulan design and made it more angry.”

Eaves’ next drawing was rejected on the grounds that it was too literally like a hawk. Eventually, everyone settled on a heavily faceted design that Eaves felt owed a lot to the Klingon bird-of-prey.

**SPIDER LEGS**

From the beginning, Logan’s story involved the Scimitar unfolding its wings as it deployed a deadly weapon. “The script said the wings opened up like a spider,” Eaves remembers. “so at first we had the idea that the Scimitar was going to house these rods that would come out from the back of the ship. Very thin, spider legs would come together and hold the weapon at the front.”

Negron spent some time working out how the wings could articulate as the ship attacked. He turned out a variety of sketches that were very obviously spider-like, including one variation that
Other concepts showed the Scimitar spreading its wings like giant sails.

David Negron also worked on the design, concentrating on different ways the Scimitar could spread its wings.

This design was reminiscent of Andrew Probert’s original concept for the Romulan Warbird, which had vertical rather than horizontal wings.

Other concepts showed the Scimitar spreading its wings like giant sails.

In other versions, the wings folded down to make a point below the ship or formed a series of arms that folded out from the back.

UNFOLDING WINGS

Around the same time Eaves made a sketch where thin arms unfurled from the body to hold a weapon in front of the ship. “The producers thought that looked too spindly,” Eaves says, “so we came up with the idea of breaking up the wings into six or seven different pieces that would fold out. There’s one big main wing; the majority of the other wings are stacked on top of that, and there’s one secondary wing on the bottom.”

Since Eaves came from a traditional modelmaking background, he automatically thought about how the articulation Logan’s story called for could work in a very mechanical way. However, ultimately the wings operated in a way that could never have been built practically.

“When I was doing the sketches,” Eaves says, “I would collaborate with the visual effects house Digital Domain, but in the end it was always me making the sketches.”

showed the wings splitting so they could fold into position above and below the ship, as a result making it look like Andrew Probert’s original design for a vertical version of the Romulan warbird.

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At this stage the Scimitar had “spindly” spider arms that were used to fire the thalaron weapon.

A guy named Rory McLeish was doing the Scimitar. We made a real quick study model to show them in an open position. Domain did all the modeling showing how the wings would hinge out. This is one of those things they would never be able to do in a practical model because there are multiple hinge points on each wing: they don’t just fold at one point, they’re multifaceted. They all had unique start and finish points.”

When Eaves looked at the finished design, the shape reminded him of Picard’s lionfish Livingston, which hasn’t been seen since FIRST CONTACT. “Ironically from the front when you look at it, it looks like Livingston,” he laughs.

This design was rejected on the grounds that it was too literally birdlike.

Eaves’ final design for the Scimitar was based on the familiar outline of the Klingon bird-of-prey, a shape that he knew appealed to the producers.
McLeish also made a significant contribution to the look of the front of the Scimitar. Eaves original version had a very flat front, but as he and McLeish worked together, the front became more involved as it filled up with weapons. "Rory did his own version of what that front end would look like. It’s a very organic, almost gothic look, with all these bristling weapons. It’s almost like looking down on an evil cathedral."

Eaves was also working on the design for the new version of the Romulan warbird, the Valdore, and he was keen to make sure that there was a link between them. "If you look down on the top view of the Valdore and the Scimitar," he says, "it looks like one could morph into an evil version of the other. That was the thinking behind it."

Other aspects of the design were influenced by the work that the art department was doing on the interior sets. Eaves and Doman keyed into the dark color palette that was developed for Shinzon’s control room, giving the exterior a gun metal look that had rarely been used on Star Trek.

SOMETHING MISSING

Eaves remembers that Doug Drexler stepped in to help out. "When it came to the texturing, Doug came on and he worked out how the panels were going to look. He did a matte/gloss variation for them so even though the color is the same the surface finish determines the way it looks when light hits it."

The design was all but finished but the producers felt that there was still something missing when the ship spread its wings ready to attack. "They described it being like an incomplete sentence," Eaves recalls. "They wanted a final little push in the effect so when it’s in the final open position with the wings split open and these focusing devices come out, almost like a cat whipping out its claws before it attacks."

The final solution was to break the wings into different facets that were hinged so they could ‘fold out.’ Each smaller wing had a unique design.