



# The Runabout Chronicles

An STA Gameplay Concept

C Jenkins

# The Runabout Chronicles



## The Runabout Chronicles

### Introduction

What are the Runabout Chronicles? Simply put it is a concept "idea" that is designed to be done with only three players, a Storyteller and two Player Characters, because it isn't always possible to get a big enough group together, or maybe people dropped out last minute. Whatever the reason, this concept is to allow smaller groups to still play Star Trek Adventures in some form, playing on the (oddly) common occurrence where two Senior Crew members go off on their own. I have also designed several Mission Briefs to work with this format.

So, as I said the idea of these is to invoke the feeling that the main ship the crew come from is elsewhere, and these officers are on their own, in a small craft.

This concept can be a good chance to have a rotating Storyteller, allowing everyone a chance to run games and also to take part.

### Creating the Crew and Ship

If you do not have a crew and ship set up already, then there are a few steps you can take to prepare the group for doing one (or more) of these missions:

- 1 Create a crew, divide up the positions below amongst the players as evenly as possible

(amongst all of you if you intend to have a rotating Storyteller) for them all to make a character for that role, the positions are:

- Captain
- Executive Officer
- Chief Engineering Officer
- Security/Tactical Officer
- Flight Control Officer
- Chief Medical Officer
- Chief Science Officer

You don't have to make all the positions yet if you don't want to, and instead make them when/if a mission requires them, but names at least are useful to "flesh out" the crew and ship. This effectively creates you a "pool" of characters to use, with each player having the choice of a couple that they can use for the mission.

- 2 Pick a ship, the main ship isn't hugely important to these missions, but it is nice to have one for times it will be referenced, the only prerequisite is that the ship is capable of maintaining a Runabout.
- 3 Name your Runabout, Runabouts tend to be named after rivers, but in the end, you can name it whatever you want as it will be your ship for most of these missions.

# The Runabout Chronicles



- 4 You are then ready to begin your Runabout Chronicle!

## Milestones

Milestones work in the same way as they do normally, the only difference is that any spends to improve the ship, instead apply to your shuttlecraft.

## Supporting Crew

Shuttlecraft don't generally have a compliment of "Supporting Crew" however there will be instances when you may have/need some additional personnel with you, or the story may split up the main characters. As such create supporting crew as the mission requires it, using the Main Ship to determine the limit on how many Supporting Crew are available.

## Optional Change - Danube Class Runabout Modules

Even though the core rulebook does cover a couple of Module/Pod options for the Danube class runabout, I felt that the options were quite lacking, that Starfleet would go further, given that these interchangeable modules are a key feature of the ship. Firstly, these are the options currently available as per the Core Rulebook:

- **Passenger Transport** - The runabout's aft module has been configured for carrying large numbers of passengers. The runabout may carry up to 10

passengers, or up to 40 in an emergency (maximum 2 hours).

- **Cargo Transport** - The runabout's aft module has been configured to carry cargo.
- **Long Duration Mission** - The runabout's aft module has been configured to serve as a rest area and sleeping quarters for up to four personnel.
- **Attack** - The runabout's aft module has been converted to provide additional, and higher-powered, weaponry. Add +2A to damage of the runabout's weapons.

Other than the Attack module, none of the modules actually say they do something in a rules sense (though, naturally, their description gives you enough to work on). So the first thing I would suggest is to treat practically all Modules effectively as "Traits" for the Danube (Attack being the exception), this makes it so that everyone can identify quickly what they might or might not be able to do, for example:

*The USS Ganges has been equipped with the Passenger Transport module, so the traits for the USS Ganges are "Federation Starship, Small Craft, Passenger Transport."*

Now with a quick glance we get enough of an idea of what this ship can do, and the Trait can impose Advantages/Complications/etc as any other trait in the game.

# The Runabout Chronicles



## New Modules

As I said at the start, I felt that the modules available for the Danube were quite limited, why design a ship to be highly modular and then have such a limited selection? So, I have come up with a few additional modules I think would work well with this craft and give it some more versatility. I'll try and explain my reasoning behind each module.

Each of the new modules, as I propose above, is to be considered as a possible Trait for the Danube, as such they won't add any additional rules, Talents, or bonuses to the vessel.

- **Sensor/Reconnaissance** – Additional sensors are added to the craft along with the generators to power them, giving the craft enhanced sensor range and detail for a vessel of its size.
  - *This seemed like an obvious use for the craft, both from a military standpoint and potentially an exploration one.*
- **Laboratories** – The back section of the vessel is fitted with a small laboratory and a range of equipment to assist research. While not on par with those aboard larger starships, it provides adequate facilities for scientists to get by.

- *While obviously only a small set up, it is shown in Trek that not everything can be brought aboard a starship easily, so a module like this would allow scientists to gather samples and conduct analysis "in the field".*
- **Hospital** – Several medical beds and various medical equipment are fitted in the rear of the craft, allowing it to act as either a field hospital, or a medical transport for those with injuries too serious to allow transporters.
  - *Similar to the laboratories set up, I see this as a good use for the vessel alongside a larger medical ship, able to ferry critical patients to the main ship and still able to provide them with emergency treatment. It could also be used as a field hospital in wartime, able to simply land and be fully ready to go.*

Those were the main ones I thought of, below are a couple of, possibilities that I wasn't 100% sure about, but decided to include anyway.

- **Environmental Transport** – The rear of the runabout is turned into a self-contained area that can simulate the environment to suit a species needs, such as

# The Runabout Chronicles



aquatic dwelling species or those from low/high gravity worlds.

- *It is often hinted upon, but rarely shown, that there are species out there, even among Starfleet, that require different environments to survive, but it seems that, beyond the ships they must have, there isn't much to facilitate transporting them! So, the rear compartment and cockpit area are separated to allow the environment in the back to be modified to facilitate a different environment.*
- **Duckblind** – Holoprojectors, quarters and sensors are fitted to the vessel allowing it to disguise itself and observe an area, designed primarily as a "Starting point" for a Duckblind operation, while any main facility is being constructed.
  - *Given the Danube's ability to be effectively self-sufficient for periods of time, this seemed like an interesting possible use for newly discovered species; allowing starships to leave an observation team behind while a more dedicated team are sent by Starfleet.*

- **Diplomatic** – Some small office/quarters and a large meeting room allow diplomats to receive dignitaries within the vessel and undertake minor negotiations etc when a larger vessel is unavailable.

- *This seemed like another good possible use for the vessel, good for minor negotiations etc and also possibly able to provide a good neutral ground when facilitating talks between two or more parties hostile with each other.*

## Missions

Included in the rest of this document are several Mission Briefs that are written with this concept in mind, each will Spotlight a certain role which will be required to play the mission, the other player can be whatever role they wish, some will be more useful on the mission than others but still the choice is theirs.

# The Runabout Chronicles



## The Cure

### Spotlight Role – Chief Medical Officer

#### Synopsis

With the ship docked and the crew given some time for R&R, an old colleague, Dr Leni Thro has contacted the CMO to request help to save a race that's dying due to an accelerating genetic condition. The Salren of the planet Ren will reach the point of no return in a matter of weeks. The shuttle has just arrived in orbit of the planet and begins its descent.

#### Opening Log

*"We've just dropped out of warp near the planet Ren, it will be good to see my old friend again, after I heard that she'd resigned her commission to stay and try and help these people. I just hope we can do something before it's too late."*

#### Major Beats

##### The Ket

The genetic condition (known as the Ket) is causing the Salren to die younger and younger with every generation, but their genetic structure is highly resilient to modification. Starfleet had to withdraw their research efforts after the Salren accused them of giving their people "false hope" The CMO must discover a cure before it is too late.

##### The Assistant

Dr Tho's only remaining assistant, a Selran named "Yareal" has been hiding symptoms of the Ket with secret injections of stimulants to keep her going and heavy make up to hide the outward signs, she is far along before it is finally discovered. This is a do or die test to see if the cure will work and save the Dr's friend.

##### The Delivery

Even with a cure, it still needs to be administered to an entire planetary population, a population which mistrusts Starfleet. All within the few remaining weeks before the Salren population becomes too small to recover. The race is nearing its end, success and the Salren will survive, failure, and they will die out.

#### Minor Beats

The Salren weren't always afflicted with the Ket, historical records show a time when they lived normal lives, the origins of the condition itself are unknown. Some of the population are angry with Starfleet, and want to drive them off the planet, while the facility itself hasn't been attacked, it could just be a matter of time. The facility is a Starfleet prefabricated base, built quickly to start work as fast as possible, unfortunately, with Starfleet leaving the planet and only Dr Thro and her assistant in the facility, it hasn't had its usual maintenance and not everything works reliably.

#### Key Non-Player Characters

Dr Leni Thro has given up a promising career in Starfleet to continue to fight this condition, use the Physician Notable NPC in the Sciences Division Supplement (Page 119). The Dr's assistant Yareal, is one of the few who aren't angry with Starfleet and desperately wants to save her people, even if it costs her own life, use the Nurse Minor NPC in the Sciences Division Supplement (Page 125). If Salren attack the base, they are desperate and angry, use the Starfleet Security Officer Minor NPC but only with Type-1 Phasers from the Core Rulebook (Page 314).

#### Conclusion

While the genetic affliction is intended to be difficult to cure, it should prove possible in the end, and how it is applied to the population can determine how long it takes the Salren as a species to recover, but they could turn up in future encounters as a fledgling member of the Federation, or maybe it could provide an avenue for diplomatic encounters as the Federation attempts to build trust with the Salren.

# The Runabout Chronicles



## Deadlock

### Spotlight Role – Captain or First Officer

#### Synopsis

Two species are in open war, and both have applied to join the Federation, the Federation has agreed to consider their application only if they resolve their conflict. Starfleet has dispatched one of their captains to mediate the talks between the Reywl and the Aseri, but not everyone wants to see peace come to pass...

#### Opening Log

*"We have just put the runabout down on the planet Inda, a neutral world for the two parties, their delegations shall be arriving shortly to which we will be playing both host and mediator, I hope a peace can be realised."*

#### Major Beats

##### Opening Salvos

Eventually both delegations beam down to begin the talks, but both sides are more interested in simply throwing insults at the other and trying to "one-up" each other and make themselves out to be the only ones who should join the Federation. With generations of built up hatred between them, it will take considerable effort to get them both to be quiet, let alone listen to what the other wishes to say, a feat of diplomacy in itself.

##### A Deadly Taste

After a few days of talks things are better between the two species, they will agree to eat meals hosted by the mediators at any rate. As the main course arrives, a member from each delegation begins convulsing, collapsing to the ground, and frothing at the mouth, the poison is fast acting and deadly, saving just a single delegate will be a challenge, saving both will be hard! All trust is lost, but where did the poison come from?

##### The Enemies of Peace

The perpetrators of the poisoning flee once the poison's origins are discovered, a delegate on each side, Romulan infiltrators surgically altered, they have a cloaked shuttle nearby

where they have reinforcements, if they can't destabilise the talks, they will end them prematurely. The Romulans are armed and have the advantage of cover from their shuttle, but they're determined that no trace of their involvement will remain.

#### Minor Beats

These two species have been at war for as long as they can remember, what initially caused this enduring conflict? Inda seems to have pockets on its surface that scanners can't penetrate, what could be causing this?

#### Key Non-Player Characters

Yoot, leader of the Reywl delegation is much like his counterpart Laek, they are both combative and stubborn, driven by ingrained hatred of the other, but also a desire to join the Federation, as generations of focusing on war have crippled their economies and devastated their ecosystems; use the Ferengi Salesman Notable NPC in the Core Book (Page 326), changing their values appropriately. Nuhir and Dhael are Romulan deep cover agents, dedicated to their mission singularly focused to achieve it, Dhael however is the mission leader, for both use the Romulan Centurion Notable NPC in the Core Book (Page 320), use the Romulan Uhlan Minor NPC in the Core Book (Page 320) for any additional Romulans on the shuttle.

#### Conclusion

With the Romulan's discovered, it should be easier to work out why the species hates of each other have been stoked continually over the years, and eventually some kind of initial peace can be brokered, in the end both are desperate for the Federation's help. However, it begs the question as to why the Romulans want this region to remain unstable, is there more to the Romulan's actions than meets the eye?

# The Runabout Chronicles



## Extraction

### Spotlight Role – Chief Security/Tactical Officer

#### Synopsis

Starfleet Intelligence have lost one of their agents, captured by the Dominion, as the closest ship, you're dispatched to extract the agent from the POW facility before the spy is discovered.

#### Opening Log

*"We've put the shuttle down a few kilometres from the camp so as not to be detected. We shall continue on foot and plan our next step once we see the camp properly. Starfleet Intelligence have given us a code phrase and the correct response so we can identify their agent once we get inside."*

#### Major Beats

##### Infiltration

Watchtowers, an energy barrier and a combination of Jem'Hadar, Cardassian and Breen guards all protect the base. Observation and planning will be key to work out how to infiltrate the base. Once inside they'll need to find the agent amongst all the other PoWs. Will other prisoners beg them for help as well? This may end up being a terrible dilemma for them.

##### The Agent

Badly hurt from numerous interrogations, the agent is in no fit state to travel anywhere fast, though their true identity hasn't been discovered yet by their captors. The players will need to keep their own presence secret while they work out how they'll escape with the agent. Remaining hidden from the guards will get harder the longer they remain.

##### Exfiltration

Once again the watchtowers, energy barrier and guards all provide a challenge here, and with at least one other person with them the risk is greater than before. If they get out though, more guards will be sent after them as they try to get to their shuttle and a ship will be waiting for them in space to further attempt to

intercept them. This will be a demanding challenge for them both on the ground and in space.

#### Minor Beats

The Cardassian Interrogator is taking people for questioning with alarming frequency, do they know they've captured a spy and are on the hunt themselves? Even though their mission is only to rescue the spy, there are many other Starfleet personnel in the camp, could they rescue more, and how many can their shuttle reasonably hold?

#### Key Non-Player Characters

The Vorta Kiana oversees the camp and, like all Vorta, has total control over the Jem'Hadar and is fanatically devoted to the job, with the air of indifference common to most Vorta, use the Vorta Diplomat Notable NPC in the Gamma Quadrant Sourcebook (Page 98). Cruel, and sadistic, the Cardassian Interrogator Niji Alnam sees what they do as entertainment as much as it is a job, and not all their subjects survive, use Gul Dukat Major NPC in the Alpha Quadrant Sourcebook (Page 105) changing a Focus to Interrogation. The Agent, though wounded, is loyal and determined to their mission, use the Starfleet Intelligence Agent Notable NPC in the Operations Supplement (Page 85).

#### Conclusion

This mission will be combat heavy, the players may be detected and become prisoners themselves, but eventually they should hopefully be able to achieve their objective. The information the agent has could provide a significantly important tactical target, and perhaps Starfleet Intelligence will reach out to them again if they prove themselves adept during the mission.

# The Runabout Chronicles



## Risa

### Spotlight Role – Chief Engineering Officer

#### Synopsis

There is little time for rest and relaxation when the engineering conference, on the pleasure destination of Risa, is brought to an abrupt halt when a key note speaker is murdered, mid-speech.

#### Opening Log

*“Risa, a much better choice for the Engineering Conference than that starbase they picked last time. Looking forward to actually being able to get some R&R between the speeches and events this time around.”*

#### Major Beats

##### Opportunity

Risa is always busy, and more so with the engineering conference at the moment. There are various speeches and events being given by leaders in their respective fields. During one, lead by Professor Tam, the professor stutters mid-sentence then drops down, dead.

Unfortunately, Risa’s Law Enforcement aren’t adept at dealing with much more than minor domestic incidents.

##### Means

Preliminary scans show the professor suffered from ruptured blood vessels in the brain, exotic metals in the blood indicate some kind of nano-explosive. How did it get into the Professor and who came into contact with them? Who works with this kind of technology in the first place, or at least who had access to it? Working these out should help to narrow down the field of suspects at least.

##### Motive

Who could’ve wanted the Professor dead? Dr Wight, had an ongoing, and well known, disagreement with the Professor over an old partnership that broke down. Yael had been an outspoken critic for the last few years. Parlet, is in love with the Professor’s partner. Dorel had a public brawl with the Professor only a day into the conference. The murderer, once confronted

will try to flee, and has a warp capable shuttlecraft landed nearby.

#### Minor Beats

The Professor’s partner is having an affair, at least that’s what the gossip is, is this true? Or is it just gossip and rumour mongering? There is a display on the potential theoretical applications of nanotechnology across a broad range of fields, horrible coincidence? The Professor did seem to suffer from some kind of illness or food poisoning the day after they arrived on Risa, was this a previous murder attempt that failed?

#### Key Non-Player Characters

All of the attendees of the conference are Scientists and Engineers, either Civilian or members of Starfleet, as such the Professor Minor NPC from the Sciences Division Book (Page 120) will suit them all, though mixing them up with the Engineering Specialist Minor NPC from the Operations Divisions Book (Page 91) would be good for variety. If you really want to focus on these characters, it could be good to take Notable NPCs from various books and personalise them to suit.

#### Conclusion

The murderer is left up to the GM to decide, all have potential motives, and can be given the means and opportunity with some thought. Obviously the murder at the conference will all but put and end to it, but the Risian Law Enforcement are grateful for the help, acknowledging how out of their depth they would’ve been.