Brotherhood of the Kestrel

a plug-in for Escape Velocity Nova

Support Documentation

PLEASE READ THIS SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION
BEFORE ATTEMPTING PLAY

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About this Plug-in

[Brotherhood of the Kestrel for EV Nova](#) is actually a combination of (E4) Empire of Crime and (E6) Brotherhood of the Kestrel, two installments of **The Empire Trilogy**, a series of plugins for Escape Velocity Classic by Tim Isles. Tim's other work include Empire, E2: Dark Horizons, E3: Endgame, (E5) Heart of Darkness, as well as Realm of Prey, which is set in a non-Empire universe. The original plug-in was built using `ResEdit` 2.1.3 whilst `EV-Edit` 3.3.2 was employed to add the new systems. Tim's own outfit designs were drawn using `ClarisWorks` 3.0 and `GraphicConverter` 4.4.3. All of the missions were created using `Schmelta-V` v1.0d10 and the entire plug was both designed and tested on a 700 MHz eMac using 30 Mb of memory for EV (boy technology has come a long way!).

The Nova conversion of Brotherhood of the Kestrel was done by Agee (a.k.a. MacDevil) with Tim's blessing. The port was started on a Powerbook G4 1.67GHz with 1.5 GB of RAM using SpacePort v1.2.0 and Mission Computer v3.3.3. After a long hiatus, the plugin was completed on a MacBook Pro (early 2011) using Mission Computer 4.2.0. There have been several changes made to take advantage of the more advanced EVN game engine. These changes are detailed more fully later in this readme.

The plug-in offers no more than 70 new outfits and weapons. Some of the standard EV weapons have been renamed (eg. proton cannon is now the pulse cannon) or altered. Please note that some of the new outfits are only available as mission rewards. As you travel and discover new worlds and stations, you will come across different technologies, all of which have their pros and cons depending on the circumstances. You must decide which weapon or device is best for the job.

Expect to discover over 55 new ships (as well as numerous variants), ranging from simple cargo transports to heavy cruisers. Some of these ships are available only at certain planets and some only upon success of certain mission suites. Wherever possible, the starfighter types have had their spin sizes set at 24x24, which not only adds greater realism but also makes for a more challenging target.

Changes for the Nova Release

As mentioned above, there have been many changes made to the original plugin. These were made with the goal of taking advantage of some of the features of the Nova game engine that were not present in the EVC engine. At the same time, the goal was to make no changes that noticeably altered the gameplay. The changes include:

Gameplay

- Combined the entire Empire of Crime plugin with Brotherhood of the Kestrel. Both are set in the same universe and the new combined plugin has a whopping **6** complete mission suites!
- Altered a handful of Empire of Crime missions to better integrate them with the BOTK missions. None of the major story points have been changed, though a few missions were completely rewritten.
- Tweaked the behavior of a few governments.
- Increased the in-game speed by 50%. This was done to make gameplay closer to that of the original plug-in
- Added map borders and modified attributes of a few governments.
- Changed the Mafia and Darkside jump point generators from one-way hyperlinks (not possible in EV Nova) to EVN-style hypergates.
- Added reinforcement fleets to major systems.

Graphical

- Added smoke trails to all projectile weapons
- Added Nova-style explosions.
- Added government specific news graphics and news reports
- Updated most planet graphics and landing pictures

Ships

- Added ship variants for all ships
- Escorts can now be upgraded and sold
- Altered the weapon exit ports on all ships for greater realism
- The shield and armor values for all ships have been multiplied by 10 to make the gameplay closer to that of the original plug-in.

<u>Outfits and Weapons</u>

- Made armor mass and price dependent on ship mass
- The ion laser and a few other energy-based weapons now ionize
- Flares now function as a point defense weapon (they will fire automatically)
- Added several new "Nova-style" outfits including deionizers, marines, fake IFFs, and reinforcement jammers.

Installation

Though this plugin is based off of the Nova port of Escape Velocity Classic, it is distributed as a self-contained total conversion. For this reason, you must have EVN version 1.1 or higher to run BOTK.

To install Brotherhood of the Kestrel for EV Nova:

1. On your Mac, navigate to /yourusername/Library/Application Support/EV Nova.

2. Copy the <u>entire</u> 'BOTK' folder included with this archive to this location.

3. If you wish to use the optional graphical addon plugins, open the 'Optional Plugins' folder in this archive. Copy any plugins you wish to use into the plugins folder **inside** the 'BOTK' folder you just copied over. (That is, they should be placed in /yourusername/Library/Application Support/EV Nova/BOTK/Plug-ins)

4. Launch EV Nova and <u>hold down the shift key</u>. Select BOTK from the dialog that appears. You should see the BOTK splash screen, indicating the plugin has been loaded.

5. Start a new pilot file and enjoy!

<u>NOTE:</u> This guide assumes you are using a Mac to play EVN. It is possible that this plugin can also be used on Windows machines, though I do not know how to do the conversion. Please refer to the EVN support documentation and online forums for details on the conversion process.

<u>It is also recommended that you read the Preamble, which is included with this plug-in archive, before attempting to play.</u>

Troubleshooting

The following is a list of common questions that may arise about this plug-in. Should you experience any problems please consult the following list before e-mailing me with any concerns - it will save both of us a great deal of time and effort.

Brotherhood of the Kestrel F.A.Q.

- How do I install Brotherhood of the Kestrel?
- Can I use cheater applications or third party pilot files?
- Why can I still see ships, systems, etc. from the stock EVN scenario?
- EVN crashes while loading. Why?
- Who can I fly for?
- How do I get missions for...?
- Can I play for more than one faction at once?
- Are there any hidden systems?
- How do I get access to the faction warships?
- Why is it that on some planets, I find a unique ordinance but no related launcher?
- What if I find a bug?

- How do I install Brotherhood of the Kestrel?

See the installation section of this guide

Remember, it is vital that you install this plugin as a separate, self-contained TC as described in the installation section. Do NOT try to combine this plugin with the default EVN scenario or any other EVN plugins. Also, you MUST start with a new pilot file.

- **Can I use cheater applications or third party pilot files?**

Downloadable "cheater" plug-ins or utilities should <u>**never**</u> be used with this plug-in under <u>**any**</u> circumstance. Failure to follow this instruction will lead to a variety of situations such as disappearing systems, altering legal status and sudden ship changes, just to name a few. <u>Consider yourself warned</u>!

- **Why can I still see ships, systems, etc. from the stock EVN scenario?**

If you are still seeing anything from the stock EVN scenario, it is likely that you still have either original EVN data files in your "Nova Files" folder or other plug-ins in your "Nova Plug-ins" folder. Check to make sure you have installed the plugin correctly as described in the installation section.

- **EVN crashes while loading. Why?**

Usually, when EVN crashes while loading, it is because the pilot file being loaded tells the game to look for a resource (like a ship or outfit) that does not exist in the data files and plug-ins currently installed. The easiest way to deal with this is to remove all of your pilots from your pilots folder (put them in a safe place) and try launching the game again. If this does not fix the problem, make sure you have installed Brotherhood of the Kestrel correctly.

- **Who can I fly for?**

You can fly for any one of 6(!) major pirate factions in the game. These are (in no particular order): the Mafia, the Serpens Triumverate, the Subnebula Cartel, the K'rali Syndicate, the Darkside Faction, and the Mercenaries Guild. There are several other governments and smaller pirate factions you will find yourself interacting with as the game progresses.

• How do I get missions for...

(1) THE MAFIA

The first mission for the Mafia is available at ANY non-Mafia stellar, with a probability of 8% each time you land. An "Excellent" combat rating is needed and legal status should be at least "Clean". Any and all future missions will be available from Evildrome unless directed elsewhere by the mission text.

(2) THE SERPENS TRIUMVERATE (TRIAD)

The introductory mission for the Triad is at Blackthorne, with a probability of 8%. You will need a minimum of a "Clean" legal record and an "Excellent" combat rating. Future missions for this faction will be from Blackthorne, though the mission text may direct you elsewhere.

(3) THE SUBNEBULA CARTEL

The first mission for the Subnebula Cartel is available at ANY Empire controlled stellar with a probability of 8% each time you land. An "Excellent" combat rating is needed and legal status should be at least "Decent Individual". Future missions will generally be available from Ambush Point.

(4) THE K'RALI SYNDICATE

The introductory mission for the K'rali is at ANY Weave controlled stellar with a probability of 8%. You will need a minimum of a "Decent Individual" legal record and an "Excellent" combat rating. Future missions for this faction will be from the Syndicate's home port of Kraa'sach, though the mission text may direct you elsewhere.

(5) THE DARKSIDE FACTION

The introductory mission is available from Blackthorne. Your chances of getting it are about 8% each time you land. Legal standing is not important though an "Excellent" combat rating is required. All future missions are at Blackthorne until the mission text directs you elsewhere.

(6) THE MERCENARIES GUILD

  The introductory mission is available from the Guild's home base of
  Gridrunner Starport. Your chances of getting it are about 8% each time you
  land with a "Clean" or higher legal standing and an "Excellent" combat
  rating. All future missions will begin at Gridrunner unless the mission text
  directs you elsewhere.

• Can I play for more than one of the factions at once?

This is not possible as mission bits are set to make the three storylines mutually
exclusive. You must start a new pilot to successfully complete all six
adventures.

• Are there any hidden systems?

There are NO hidden systems in this plug-in, though some systems may change
hands over the course of the story.

• How do I get access to all the different faction warships?

You have the opportunity to purchase ONLY playable government warships and
outfits in BOTK. While some are available at the outset (mostly "entry level"
platforms), the majority of these are mission bit controlled and you cannot
access them until you have completed a particular mission or campaign.

Bit-activated items are available from:

- the Mafia
- the Serpens Triumverate
- the Subnebula Cartel
- the K'rali Syndicate
- the Darkside Faction
- the Mercenaries Guild

Though you will discover that many of these factions have unofficial ties to the
galaxy's more legitimate governments, you CANNOT purchase technology from

The Weave, Empire or Sauridian Freehold <u>except</u> for the simple entry-level platforms and outfits available at the outset of the game.

- **Why is it that on some planets, I find a unique ordinance but no related launcher?**

Specialized ordinance (eg., LRMs) are available at certain faction homeworlds; however, their associated launchers are not and to get them you must successfully compete specific missions throughout the game. You will ALWAYS be advised as to when new technologies become available and where they can be purchased.

- **What if I find a bug?**

This plug-in has been thoroughly beta tested, and no fatal bugs have been discovered.

<u>Any problems encountered should be reported to the author of this conversion at</u> agee.springer@gmail.com

Acknowledgements

Escape Velocity Nova is ©2002 by Matt Burch and Ambrosia Software.

Escape Velocity and Escape Velocity Override is ©1997 by Matt Burch and Ambrosia Software.

Empire of Crime for Escape Velocity (Classic) is ©2001 by Tim Isles.

Brotherhood of the Kestrel for Escape Velocity (Classic) is ©2003 by Tim Isles.

Brotherhood of the Kestrel for EV Nova is ©2009-2013 by Tim Isles and Agee Springer.

Nicholas Williams (www.geocities.com/Shades_Shipyard and nicholas@netaccess.co.nz) provided the new Blockade Runner, armoured shuttle, the Mafia ships and plasma gun outfit, the Weave Superdreadnought, the K'rali Syndicate warships, the Cartel set and the Darkside Faction raiders.

Matthew Dailey (http://www.grand-novice.com) designed the Atinoda Kestrel and Raptor, some outfit pictures and a few landing scenes. He also designed the optional graphics for the Cartel ships from the Nova release.

Eeun's EV Shipyard (this website can now be accessed via http://www.evula.com) yielded both the bulk freighter and the hauler.

Weepul (http://www.jps.net/btaenzer/shipyard) provided graphics for the Weave Dreadnought, Hunter raider and the Gunship. NOTE: this website was permanently down as of December 2000 and is apparently not returning.

EVO Incomplete (courtesy of UniversalWolf) yielded the Widowmaker in addition to several starports, the Sauridian lasers and sound and a few new landing pictures.

Caernarvon Station (www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Battlefield/8064 /Caernarvon.html) yielded the Atinoda Super Destroyer, Pirate Argosy, Tigershark starfighter and the corvette variant in addition to graphics for the swivel laser and rear pulse cannon.

Warlock Shipyards (www.sendanet.es/sastre/ruipernet/warlock) provided the three new station graphics and their corresponding sprites (Mafia HQ, Gridrunner Starport and the Badlands Fuelstop) and was also the source of the Mercenary Dragon Interdictor and its shipyard and comms pictures.

The Final Battle (plugin for EV Classic) provided most of the Empire, Weave, and Sauridian ships.

Onyx (http://www.onyxshipyard.net) made the replacement default station graphics included with the Nova release.

rEV (see included rEV license file) was the source of all the replacement planet graphics, as well as a few of the landing pictures included with the Nova release. Reuse of these files was done in accordance with the included rEV license document.

Michael Judkins created the map dialogue screen seen in the Nova release and gave permission to alter the comm dialogue for escorts to allow for upgrading. These dialogue screens came from his "EV Novarized" collection.

It should be point out, in all fairness, that the term "The Weave" was not coined by Tim. It was drawn from a trio of books by Alan Dean Foster called "The Damned", which included the titles A Call To Arms, The False Mirror and The Spoils Of War.

Final Thoughts (from MacDevil)

It has been a pleasure developing plugins for EV Nova over the past 10 years. I have played every EV game since the original and loved how the plugin system allows for nearly any story that can be imagined. Tim's plugins are widely regarded as among the best out there, and I am glad that I have been able to preserve them for the future by converting them to Nova format. Unfortunately, the demands of real life have forced me to conclude that I no longer have the time needed to undertake the development of large-scale plugins. Therefore, it is with great sadness that I must announce that Brotherhood of the Kestrel will be my last plugin for EV Nova. Thank you to everyone who has supported and enjoyed my work over the years. Your encouragement has made plugin development worth doing!

If you happen to find a bug with the plugin or need to contact me, I can be reached at agee.springer@gmail.com. Please do not send bug reports to Tim, as he was not involved with the details of the Nova conversion. However, should you wish to contact Tim, you can email him at islest@islandnet.com.

Special Thanks

To Tim for creating this plug-in and for providing invaluable support during the Nova conversion process!