

Efficient Heavy Drone “AFK” Ratting in Drone Hordes

DISCLAIMER: The information presented in this document is based on my own personal findings only. It is in no way to be taken as conclusive fact and you should be certain to understand how the ship is performing and how it can be optimized for your personal preferences after becoming familiar with the basic concept and procedure. I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LOSSES INCURRED FROM USING INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

These 10MN Active Shield Tanking Heavy Drone Cruisers are designed to run Drone Hordes safely and efficiently with a very low required amount of attention and input. Ratting in these ships is akin to “AFK Mining”; you only need to monitor the client with a low level of attention and only need to interact with the client every few minutes. **You can expect 15-20 million ISK ticks with these ships**, or 45-60 million ISK per hour, not including Sentient spawns and escalation bookmark sales. You will complete a Drone Horde in 25-30 minutes.

These ships (10MN Active Shield Tanking Heavy Drone Cruisers) are successful at accomplishing efficient low-input safe ratting for several reasons:

- Low signature and high-transversal velocity (due to orbiting with an afterburner) means that NPC battleships have great difficulty applying significant damage to these ships. Often, they miss completely.
- With good capacitor skills, you are cap-stable running all modules. This is especially important for the Shield Booster, as this is likely your most essential module, besides the afterburner.
- Shield tanking leaves your low-slots open for damage modules (most shield modules are mid-slot modules whereas armor modules and damage modules are low-slot modules). We want to maximize our DPS (among other things) in an efficient ratting setup, so we want as many damage modules as possible. It is usually not advisable to place more than 4 of the same damage module on the same ship, as the efficacy of the 5th module (and beyond) is negligible due to stacking penalties.
- Heavy drones are optimal for this type of ratting (as opposed to sentries) because their position on-grid relative to the NPC target does not matter. Smaller ships cannot get “under the tracking” of heavy drones when they engage in a tight orbit. This means that you do not have to recall sentries and drop lights to

kill webbing frigates in tight orbit, and also means that you have a great chance of recovering all your drones if you need to suddenly warp-out due to massive incoming damage or a neutral in system.

- Heavy drones are especially strong for this type of ratting on the Ishtar, due to the Ishtar's heavy drone tracking bonus. This bonus effectively allows heavy drones to apply their damage to smaller ships with the same accuracy and tracking as medium drones. This accuracy can be further improved by adding tracking modules.

However, these few circumstances are extremely dangerous for these ships:

- NPC frigates that web (they also often warp-disrupt) are very dangerous to these type of set-ups, and are the main threat to the survival of your ship besides hostile players. When webs are applied to your ship, your velocity (and thus, transversal velocity) falls, allowing the NPC battleships to apply nearly all of their damage to you. **It is essential that you manually target and engage drones on the webbing frigates as soon as they spawn. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!** Depending on how many battleships on-grid, if you get webbed you could lose your ship in less than 1 minute.
 - **Large numbers of NPC cruisers/battlecruisers on-grid are also threatening to the survival of your ship.** NPC cruisers/battlecruisers apply their damage to your ship more effectively than NPC battleships. Usually, your Shield Booster can easily deal with this incoming damage, but with many NPC cruisers/battlecruisers, the damage can be overwhelming. The "Strain" variety of NPC cruisers are especially strong. It may be in your best interest to manually target/engage several NPC cruisers/battlecruisers if there are many of them on-grid.
- Forgetting to turn on your Afterburner or start your orbit can lead to a ship loss.
- Of course, neutrals are a significant threat. If neutrals arrive in system, immediately recall heavy drones. Turn off your afterburner and as it is de-cycling warp to a safe POS. Your align time will be lower if your afterburner is shut off. If you get tackled by an NPC frigate, launch light drones while aligned to POS and kill them as soon as possible. If you get tackled by a hostile player, launch ECM drones and engage them on the hostile while aligning to the POS. If the drones get a successful jam and the hostile loses tackle, warp to the POS immediately.

The Ishtar is the King of "AFK" Ratting in Drone Hordes, however, the Gila and Vexor Navy Issue are both solid alternatives. All three can be fit in a variety of ways to fit all of your preferences and budget:

[Ishtar, Drone Horde_AFKtar-Basic]

Drone Damage Amplifier II

Drone Damage Amplifier II
Drone Damage Amplifier II
Drone Damage Amplifier II
Power Diagnostic System II
Damage Control II

Adaptive Invulnerability Field II
EM Ward Field II
10MN Afterburner II
Medium Shield Booster II

Drone Link Augmentor II
[Empty High slot]
[Empty High slot]
[Empty High slot]

Medium Capacitor Control Circuit I
Medium Drone Speed Augmentor II

Praetor II x5
Hornet EC-300 x5
Praetor II x5
Hornet EC-300 x5
Acolyte II x5
Infiltrator II x5

Nanite Repair Paste x200

- This is the basic AFK Ishtar fit that all other variations can be based off of. It has no faction or dead-space modules so it is certainly the cheapest, and will pull in very good ticks. The Afterburner can be downgraded to the “Enduring” meta variant if you run into capacitor, fitting, or SP issues. The tank needs to be at least T2.
- PRICE -- <http://evepraisal.com/e/8865823>

[Ishtar, Drone Horde_AFKtar-Standard]

Drone Damage Amplifier II
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Drone Damage Amplifier II
Power Diagnostic System II
Damage Control II

Pithum C-Type Medium Shield Booster

Omnidirectional Tracking Link II
10MN Afterburner II
Adaptive Invulnerability Field II

Drone Link Augmentor II
[Empty High slot]
[Empty High slot]
[Empty High slot]

Medium Drone Speed Augmentor II
Medium Drone Speed Augmentor II

Praetor II x5
Hornet EC-300 x5
Praetor II x5
Acolyte II x5
Infiltrator II x5
Hornet EC-300 x5

Nanite Repair Paste x200
Optimal Range Script x1
Tracking Speed Script x1

- This is the “standard” AFK Ishtar fit. It adds the deadspace Medium Shield Booster but this particular variant is not prohibitively expensive. This booster gives greater boost than the “basic” fit, and it allows you to drop the EM Ward Field II and add an Omnidirectional Tracking Link II (loaded with a tracking speed script) for better damage application with your drones. You may also fit a Drone Navigation Computer instead of the Omnidirectional Tracking Link II if you prefer. Dropping the EM Ward Field II also allows you to be cap-stable without an engineering rig, so you can fit a second Drone Speed Augmentor II. This fit grants you a stronger tank than the “basic” fit while making your drones faster and more accurate for a moderate price of a dead-space shield booster. It is my recommended fit.
- PRICE -- <http://evepraisal.com/e/8865837>

[Vexor Navy Issue, Drone Horde_AFKtar-Standard]

Drone Damage Amplifier II
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Drone Damage Amplifier II
Power Diagnostic System II
Damage Control II

Pithum C-Type Medium Shield Booster
10MN Afterburner II
Cap Recharger II
Adaptive Invulnerability Field II

Drone Link Augmentor II
[Empty High slot]
[Empty High slot]
[Empty High slot]

Medium Capacitor Control Circuit I
Medium Capacitor Control Circuit I
Medium Capacitor Control Circuit I

Hornet EC-300 x5
Praetor II x5
Praetor II x2

Nanite Repair Paste x200

- This is my recommended fit for those that cannot fly an Ishtar. You get the same DPS as an Ishtar, a bit more speed, but somewhat significantly less effective hit points boosted per second. Thus, you should be more attentive to priority killing NPC cruisers/battlecruisers if flying this ship.
- PRICE -- <http://evepraisal.com/e/8865839>

[Gila, Drone Horde_AFKtar-Standard]

Drone Damage Amplifier II
Drone Damage Amplifier II
Drone Damage Amplifier II

Pithum C-Type Medium Shield Booster
Omnidirectional Tracking Link II
10MN Afterburner II
Cap Recharger II
Drone Navigation Computer II
Adaptive Invulnerability Field II

Rapid Light Missile Launcher II, Mjolnir Fury Light Missile
Rapid Light Missile Launcher II, Mjolnir Fury Light Missile
Drone Link Augmentor II
Rapid Light Missile Launcher II, Mjolnir Fury Light Missile
Rapid Light Missile Launcher II, Mjolnir Fury Light Missile

Medium Core Defense Capacitor Safeguard II
Medium Capacitor Control Circuit II
Medium Capacitor Control Circuit I

Hornet EC-300 x4
Infiltrator II x2
Infiltrator II x4
Warrior II x4

Mjolnir Fury Light Missile x20000
Nanite Repair Paste x200
Optimal Range Script x1
Tracking Speed Script x1

- This fit works but I don't really encourage it. You do get a larger booster per second than with the Vexor Navy Issue, but less DPS due to the Gila only having 3 low-slots to fit drone damage amplifiers. However, you are able to fight rapid light missile launchers, which may help you deal effectively with webbing frigates. Of course, you may use any meta variant of Rapid Light Missile Launchers if you cannot or do not want to fit T2.
- PRICE -- <http://evepraisal.com/e/8865873>

The actual ridding procedure is very simple and easy to commit to memory after just a few completed anomalies:

1. Undock and turn on all modules except for your Afterburning. Set your default orbit radius to 8500m.
2. Choose a Drone Horde close to your current position and warp to it.
3. While in warp, queue 1 unit of a junk item (ie. T1 ammo) for jettison and idle on the "Are you sure?" screen until you land (you "land" when the velocity is indicated as a number, on your HUD). If you want to salvage, launch a Mobile Tractor Unit (and bookmark it) upon landing instead of jettisoning a container.
4. Upon landing, jettison the container (or MTU), launch a flight of 5 Praetors, orbit the container (or MTU) at your default orbit distance (8500m), and turn on your afterburner.
5. Manually target and engage all frigates as soon as they spawn. If you are running a "ring" variant Drone Horde, kill the sentry towers before killing the cruiser in the first wave. Once the frigates (and towers) are dead, you may allow the drones to auto-engage until the next wave of frigates spawn (be sure to set drones to "aggressive" and "focus fire"). Repeat until anomaly is complete.
6. If you receive an escalation, I recommend finishing your current anomaly, docking up, getting into an interceptor or fast-frigate (nullified anything is best), warp to the escalation system, make a bookmark of the escalation entry acceleration gate, and make a public contract for the bookmark for 100 million

ISK in the nearest blue station. Make sure to include the system the escalation is in as well as the time it expires in the description of the contract.

7. Restart at Step 2.

Notes:

- It is not a problem if you cannot field T2 heavy drones. If you can afford them, I'd recommend using Imperial Navy Praetors instead of Praetor Is. You get significantly greater DPS with the faction drone variant than T1 for a price that in my opinion, is reasonable for the performance.
- These fits are significantly safer when being boosted with Skirmish and Siege Warfare Links. Ideally they will be boosted with a max-skilled Republic Fleet Mindlink-ed Slepindir running all three T2 Siege Warfare Links and both T2 Skirmish Links that do not affect the range of warp scramblers and disruptors. If these boosts are provided, the fits can be augmented to lose resistance modules in favor of additional Tracking Link Enhancers or Drone Navigation Computers.
- With fitting implants and/or dropping certain modules to less CPU-intensive meta variants, you can fit a T1 salvager to some of these ships (Gila will be easiest) if you want to salvage the Mobile Tractor Unit's wrecks while your drones work on the remaining rats. You may have to adjust your default orbit slightly to reach all wrecks, however.
- Faction Drone Damage Amplifiers really do not give a great enough damage increase to justify putting them on one of these hulls. I strongly discourage you from using them. If you really want to "bling your ship", put on a more expensive tank.
- Geckos can be used (best combo is 2 Geckos, 2 T2 Infiltrators, and 1 T2 Hobgoblin) but I do not recommend it. Although your drones do not seem to take much aggro while you are on-grid, if you need to warp off before you can recall your drones, or if you disconnect, then it is easy to lose a Gecko. The added DPS does not merit the price or added risk, in my opinion.