

Stella

GETS A NEW BRAIN!

THE
STARPATH
SUPERCHARGER
GAME COLLECTION ON CD

AR-4601

Published by
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User's Manual/CD front cover and new game box artwork by **Dan Skelton**.

Rendered CD back cover by **Glenn Saunders**.

Remaining artwork derived from Starpath materials owned by Bridgestone Multimedia.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Larry Anderson, Jr., Randy Crihfield and Chris Crawford for work toward inclusion of previously-unpublished games.

Werner Bleys for providing copies of the first nine Starpath games in PAL format.

John Brazier of Epyx for initial information and assistance.

Barry Cantin for loaning Vectrex materials included on the CD-ROM.

John Dondzila for allowing us to include his Vectrex games "Vector Vaders" and "Patriots" on the CD-ROM.

Tim Duarte for permission to use the Stephen Landrum Interview which originally appeared in *2600 Connection*.

Steven Hales and Stephen Landrum of Arcadia/Starpath for information and support.

William P. Lanphear IV of Bridgestone Multimedia Group for helping procure rights.

Craig Nelson of Arcadia/Starpath for the Sweat demo tape and for initial queries into rights.

Carol Shaw and Ralph Merkle for helping obtain the rights to include Carol Shaw's unpublished game "Polo."

John Skruch of Atari Corporation for helping procure rights.

Dave Staugas of Atari Corporation for initial queries and general support.

Omar Thameen for loaning materials used to create this manual.

For more information about Classic Video Games:

2600 Connection covering the Atari 2600 and its many games. Write 2600 Connection, c/o Tim Duarte, 8 Jenna Drive, Fairhaven, MA 02719-5123

Digital Press dedicated to all classic systems. Write Digital Press, c/o Joe Santulli 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442-2037

Slap-Dash "America's Videogame Resource." Write Slap-Dash c/o Russ Perry, Jr. 5970 Scott Street, Omro, WI 54963-9413

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The Starpath SUPERCHARGER Game Collection On Compact Disc

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An Introduction By Steve Hales, Starpath Game Designer

When I was asked to write an introduction for this project, I never thought that the work I did for the Atari 2600 would ever be seen again. So I thank you for the interest. You may not believe it, but that era was a defining time for the entire video games industry.

It was 1981. I was 19 years old. I started going to college in the 11th grade of high school, so I was already pretty bored. I spent most of my time hacking on Apple II's and the college campus DEC terminals. I knew Craig Nelson, who then worked at Atari, from his brother Scott. Craig did the original Backgammon for the Atari 2600. When he asked me to join his new startup company making games, I was blown away. I knew enough to be convincing, but I wasn't sure I could complete an entire game. It was quite an opportunity and I owe Craig a big thanks for getting me into the industry.

I have vivid memories of myself and Landrum. We always called each other by our last name - never knew why, just a left over from high school, I guess. We were hacking on a Rockwell 6502 wired to be an Atari 2600. It had extra features like stack trace, and breakpoints. It was very useful for understanding how the hardware worked. I was told it was found in the garbage bins at Atari. It seems possible, but I never asked. Our goal was to "clean room" reverse engineer the 2600. Since Craig had worked at Atari, he could not help us. Atari never released specifications, so we had to hack until everything was discovered. We poked around, wrote down what happened, were very careful and described everything for the eventual lawsuit from Atari that never came. I found a few things here and there, but Landrum found and understood most of the hardware. Stephen was the first person I met that I would consider to be a genius. Once we had this map, we could begin programming our games. One of the hardest pieces to understand about the 2600 was the fact the video display was controlled by the CPU. All of the computers that I had played with at the point had graphics and text displays that were independent of the CPU. Stephen was the one who figured this out. He discovered that you had to poke into one register to setup a sprite, then wait for some amount time, and poke again and then a pixel would light up.

Other memories were of a cramped office in Livermore California without air conditioning, with three, then four programmers and Craig Nelson building the Starpath hardware. Cans of Coke were stacked high against the wall like a monument to the Caffeine God. I remember us eating at a dive of a burrito place across town and talking about what we wanted to do. We breathed in each other's air, but we didn't seem to mind. We had something that drove us. It let us forget how uncomfortable things were and make games. It was a blind passion. We had an unwritten rule about what we were doing then: "Nothing is Impossible." Maybe it was youth, ego, I don't know. But it worked. Practically everything we tried to do, it happened: bitmap displays, multiple independent sprites, unique graphics, and larger worlds (directly related to the fact that we had more RAM.)

I remember passing around our code and taking turns hand optimizing to squeeze out that extra 2 or 3 bytes for a feature we wanted to put into the game. We only had 6K of code space, and we had to share that with any memory that we wanted to use for data. This simple act, of having someone else look at your code, changed the way I program forever. Most coders refuse to let others look at their code for fear of seeing the true naked self. I felt this way in the beginning. But after I saw how it helped I continue this practice of coding for others to this day.

We built a custom development system around an Apple II Plus. It downloaded our code through the Apple's cassette port directly into the SuperCharger unit. We had a custom assembler that sent the code directly down the wire, so we had two to ten second turnaround times for development. Back then, it was incredibly fast.

Craig designed the hardware. The main goal was to have RAM instead of ROM, and the games would be distributed as tapes. Because of cost, 6K of static RAM was the best that could be done. There was no real discussion of expansion. We focused on games and a very reliable tape reader. Craig had this old beat up tape player that was his test bed. It changed speed all the time. If the game could be loaded with this tape player, then anything would work.

After the hardware was pretty much built and designed, Craig became the tester and instigator for improvements. He instilled a quality of product in all of us, one that I still carry with me today. One particular bug that he was always after us to fix was when the 2600 lost vertical sync with the television. The image would roll for one frame, and then be back to normal. Since the programmer had total control of the image, this was a bug that was easy to fix but hard to track down. Lots of product for the 2600 had this problem. Since the programmer had to spend code time drawing the image, non-image time was used to calculate the next frame. If you spent too much time and didn't store into the vertical sync register before the television got there, you'd lose it. Craig defined a quality product by how stable the image was, and how responsive it was to control. Quality is not an overriding factor in design today. It may be the complexities of the design, or the insane delivery schedules, or the greed. I don't know. There are a few good products out there, but they are hard to find.

We discovered pretty quickly that we could make copies of other ROMs and play them with the SuperCharger. Nothing was really done with this idea, but it was fun to have all the games on a Apple II, and download them within 6 seconds to play.

That was a time in the video games industry where everyone you met was there for one reason: to make great games. There was an innocence about it. We shared ideas with each other, teased each other, and competed to impress each other with our programming skills, ultimately moving the industry forward. There was a group of us that met socially for exchanging ideas and going to movies. We all worked at different companies, but that didn't matter. We would show work in progress, get and give criticism. I remember working on a display the night before to show off. When it wasn't received well, I worked harder until it was perfect.

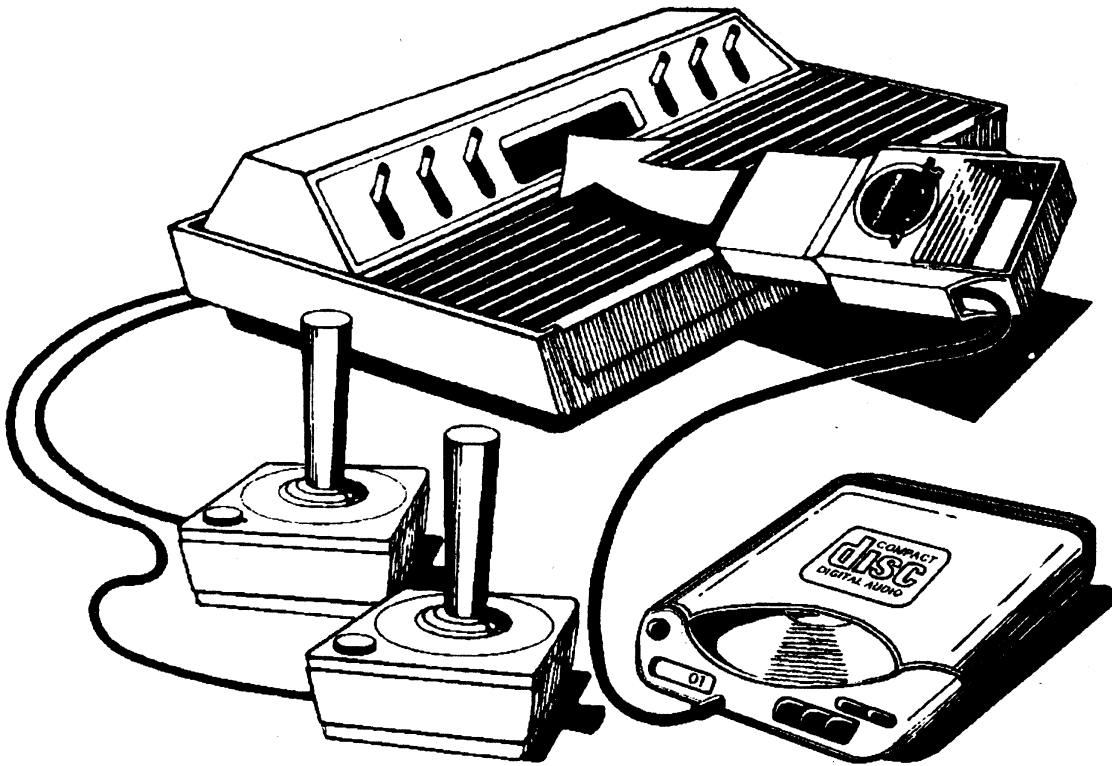
I think today of what each of these people have contributed to the industry and I'm amazed: Craig Nelson, Scott Nelson, Stephen Landrum, Dennis Caswell. Later when the games industry was collapsing Epyx and Starpath were merged. This team went on to create the Summer Games and California Games series. They were ahead of the curve for sports games. Dennis created a classic game, Impossible Mission, that was smart and fun to play. Scott Nelson did FastLoad for the C64. Stephen did most of the adventure games for Epyx. They were involved in the design and delivery of the Lynx portable game system, and the 3DO game platform. I was involved with Synapse Software from the beginning, creating a few games. Fort Apocalypse is probably the most well known. I worked with great people at Broderbund, and Maxis.

This story is not unique. Every group of old timers has connections and stories like this to tell, from humble beginnings to where we are today: an industry that is bigger than Hollywood. This was not what I expected to see. The exciting thing is, I still see this happening today. There are small groups of people building games that may or may not be successful. But they have the drive, the vision, and you can bet they will have an impact on the industry. The best ideas will come from these groups. Search these products out. As Hollywood tries to gain control of our industry, it will try to change it into the movie business: video game rentals, sequels upon sequels, boring stories, rehashed ideas. It's no wonder people still like to play the classic games. They were the original bright stars before the smog set in.

Programming the 2600 is not easy, and it's almost a lost art now. Very few people understand the techniques that were required to get anything to happen. Consider yourself a digital archeologist, about to uncover the treasure created by Starpath in these games over a decade ago. Enjoy our enthusiasm of days gone by, and remember that "Nothing is Impossible."

Aloha,

Steve Hales



How To Use The Starpath Supercharger

- ▶ Set up your Atari 2600 Video Computer System (or similar game system that takes Atari 2600 cartridges) according to manufacturer instructions.
 - ▶ Make sure the power switch is OFF, then insert the Starpath Supercharger with label up. Be careful not to force it or insert it crookedly.
 - ▶ Connect the plug on the end of the Supercharger cable to the earphone jack of any CD player. (This jack may be labeled "monitor," "mon," "ear," or "output.") If your CD player is part of a hifi system, you may need an adaptor (mini mono female to 1/4" stereo male).
 - ▶ For best results, keep the CD player at least a few inches away from the TV set.
 - ▶ Turn the power switch of the game ON. The TV screen should read "REWIND TAPE, PRESS PLAY." If not, turn the power off and check to be sure the system is properly hooked up and the Supercharger is fully inserted.
 - ▶ Insert the *Stella Gets A New Brain* compact disc into your CD player.
 - ▶ Set volume and tone controls near high or maximum. If your CD player has a bass boost feature, turn that feature OFF.
 - ▶ Select the track of the CD for the game you want to play, then play that track using your CD player's "seek" feature. Note that the first track of the CD is actually the CD-ROM data portion of the disc. Some CD players will consider this to be track #1, so the track numbers printed in this book will match your CD player. However, some CD players will ignore that non-playable track, so the track numbers printed in this book will be off by one. How to tell? If *Phaser Patrol* loads from track #2, the track numbers of your CD player match the book; if *Phaser Patrol* loads from track #1, the track numbers of your CD player will be one less than the numbers printed in this book.
 - ▶ In a few moments, you will hear the sounds of the game loading and see colored panels fill the screen.
 - ▶ When the "STOP TAPE" message appears onscreen, you'll be ready to play the game. Press STOP on your CD player.
 - ▶ To load another section of a multi-load game ("Escape from the Mindmaster," "Party Mix," "Survival Island"), select the appropriate track than play that track on your CD player. Remember to account for an inaccurate track number, if your CD player has this problem.
- If you have trouble...**
- ▶ If you hear a screeching noise, your CD player is hooked up to an audio amplifier, and may not be correctly hooked to the Supercharger.
 - ▶ If the CD does not spin, check the CD player's batteries or power cable.
 - ▶ If the CD will not go to the track you need, open the CD player and re-seat the CD.
 - ▶ Check the volume control, tone, bass boost, and try the same track again.
 - ▶ Move the CD player farther from the TV set and try again.
- To load another Supercharger game:**
- ▶ Turn your game system's power switch OFF, then turn it ON again.
 - ▶ Select a different track from the Supercharger Collection CD, and press play.
- To remove the Supercharger:**
- ▶ Turn your game system's power switch OFF.
 - ▶ Gently remove the Supercharger.



PHASER PATROL™

Your Mission

Fly your interstellar interceptor like you've never flown before...because only you stand between the Dracon armada and their cruel objective.

The Situation

Serious trouble.

The Human Federation has been caught napping. While pretending to sign a peace treaty, the devious Dracons have launched a surprise attack. And they've virtually captured the Federation's farm galaxy.

Victory seems so close the Dracons can practically smell it with their hideous nostrils. One lone defender stands between them and control of the human food supply.

You.

About Your Enemy

You wouldn't want to have lunch with a Dracon. They're not nice to look at, and they're very hostile. They live by raiding peaceful planets, stealing everything they can, and taking no prisoners.

To make matters worse, they are absolutely fearless.

The Dracon Armada

They're tough.

Each Dracon fighter is armed with lethal photon torpedoes. You've got shields, but a direct hit can disable them. And a series of direct hits could reduce you to space dust.

Getting Started

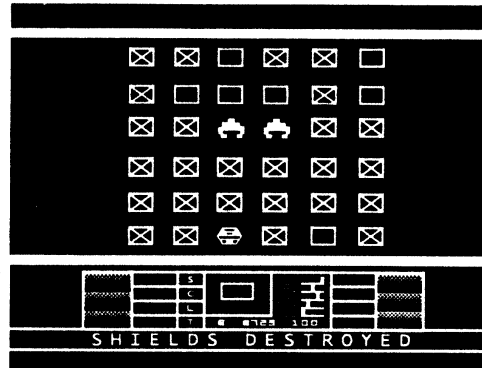
Phaser Patrol™ has lots of unique features, and you should get to know them before attempting to play the game.

One special feature is Phaser Patrol's™ two screens, the Sector Map screen and the Combat Action screen.

You will use the Sector Map screen to plan your strategy, maneuvering to efficiently eliminate the Dracon threat. You will use the Combat Action screen to engage the enemy directly.

Sector Map Screen

The Sector Map enables you to warp-hop from one location in the galaxy to another. It also lets you know what to expect when you arrive in certain sectors.



Call the Sector Map by switching the LEFT DIFFICULTY SWITCH to the "B" position. You'll always begin the game in an empty sector. The symbols in other sectors have various meanings.



Empty Sector



Friendly Starbase



Dracon-Occupied Sector



Unknown

Data File

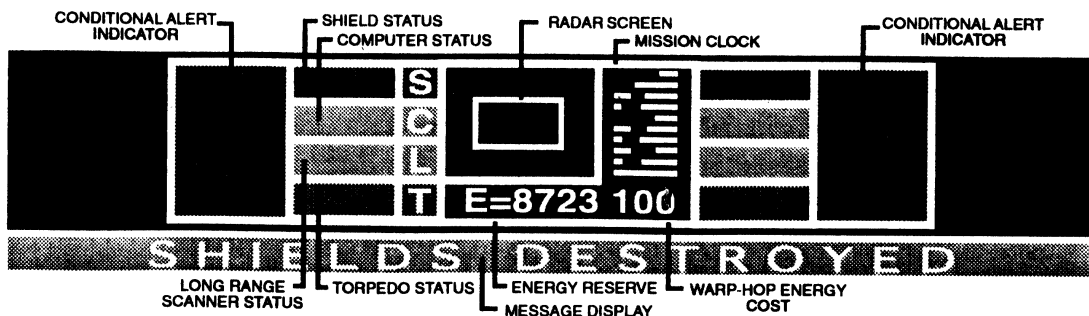
Phaser Patrol

Release number: 1
CD Game Track: 2 (NTSC), 25 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: none
Catalog number: AR-4000
Designed by: Dennis Caswell
Released: 1982

'Arkie' Certificate of Merit, 1983 Arcade Awards, 'Best Videogame Audio/Visual Effects.' "It makes saving the universe more fun than ever."
--Electronic Games, January, 1984

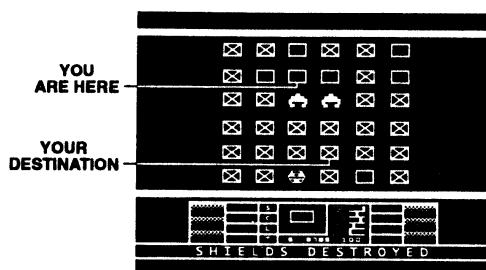
Named one of the "50 Best Games" then available by Electronic Fun magazine in March, 1984

Packed with the Supercharger, which was designed by Craig Nelson.



Navigating Sector-To-Sector

Your Long Range Scanner tells you the contents of the sectors above, below, and to the sides of your ship. Additionally, once you've visited a sector, its current contents appear on the Sector Map for the duration of the game.



Sector Map Screen

- The flashing sector symbol indicates your current position.
- The solid white sector symbol indicates your destination. Choose different destinations by moving the white symbol from sector to sector with your joystick.
- When you're ready to warp-hop to a new sector, simply press the red button on the joystick. This engages hyperdrive and sends your ship to the sector occupied by the white symbol.
- If Dracon fighters occupy the sector, you'll see the Dracon symbol appear. If you choose not to fight at this time, simply warp-hop to a different sector.
- Some players may choose to warp-hop around the Sector Map until all sector contents are revealed.
- Note that each warp-hop uses energy (more about energy depletion later). You can see how much energy any proposed warp-hop will use by consulting the computer display.

Visiting A Starbase

The Starbases can bail you out when you get in trouble. Starbases have reserve supplies of fuel and spare parts. When you're low on energy or damaged, simply warp-hop to a Starbase sector and wait. Soon your energy will be replenished and your damage repaired.

Time For Action

To get from the Sector Map to Combat Action, flip the LEFT DIFFICULTY SWITCH to the "A" position.

The Instrument Panel

At the bottom of the screen, in both Sector Map and Combat Action modes, is a unique computer display. This display gives you the vital information you need to out-fight the Dracons.

Condition Alert Indicator Keep your eye on this warning light. "Red" means Dracons in your sector. "Yellow" means you're running low on energy. "Green" means an empty sector. "Multicolor Flow" means you're in the midst of a warp-hop.

Shield Status Advises you of the condition of your force field shields.

Computer Status Advises you of your radar map, rangefinder, and torpedo tracking condition.

Long Range Scanner Status Advises you of your sector scan capability.

Torpedo Status Lets you know if you can effectively fight back against the Dracons.

Radar Screen Shows the location of Dracon attackers both inside and outside of your viewer.

Mission Clock Indicates elapsed time, critical to earning a high rank upon mission completion (more on this later).

Energy Reserve Keep your eye on your energy indicator! Run too low and you'll be unable to get to a Starbase for refueling.

Warp-Hop Energy Cost Shows you how much energy you'll use on any proposed sector-to-sector travel.

Message Display Gives you important messages concerning damage control, combat performances, etc.

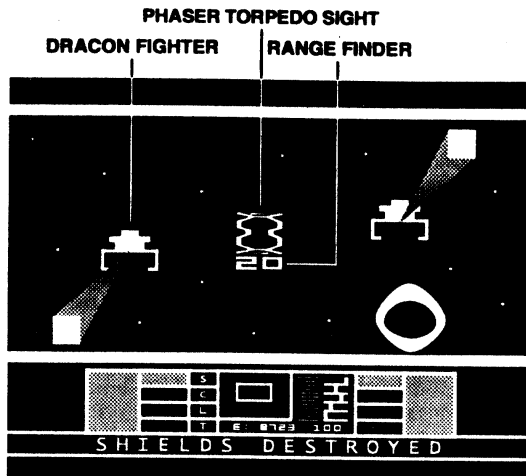
Damage Status Summary

Device	Green	Yellow	Red
Shields	Fully Operational	Middle Section Down	Shields Destroyed
Computer	Fully Operational	Radar Map and Range Finder Down	Torpedo Tracking Down
Long Range Scanners	Fully Operational	Intermittent Sector Scan	Sector Scan Down
Torpedoes	Fully Operational	Won't Explode	Won't Fire

Combat Action

Torpedo Sight Lets you lock your phaser torpedoes on target. Fire as soon as the sight changes color and your torpedo will chase the Dracon...and destroy it. If you fire without lock on, your chance of a hit is reduced.

Rangefinder Advises you how far away the enemy ships are. The lower the number, the closer the attacker.



Using The Controls

Joystick Use the LEFT JOYSTICK only. Pull back, and the ship climbs. Push forward, it dives. Move left or right and the ship will too.

Color - B/W Switch Controls the Shields. COLOR turns Shields on. B/W turns them off.

Left Difficulty Switch Controls the screen mode. "A" gives you Combat Action. "B" gives you the Sector Map.

Right Difficulty Switch Adjusts the challenge level before starting the game. "A" is more difficult. "B" is where you should start.

Game Reset Switch Starts a new game at any time.

Game Select Switch Isn't used in Phaser Patrol™

Scoring

- Destroy a Dracon fighter, go up 1/2 Level.
- Use 100 units of energy, lose 1/8 Level.
- Use up a space/hour (one movement of the second-lowest clock indicator), lose 1/8 Level.
- Destroy all Dracons in Difficulty "A," go up 2 Levels.
- Destroy all Dracons in Difficulty "B," go up 1 Level.

Conserving Energy

Using the minimum amount of energy to complete your mission is the key to becoming a Hero, Level A. But every time you waste motion, you lose energy.

Fire a Torpedo

Use 15 units of energy.

Warp-Hop Between Sectors

Use up to 900 units of energy.

Get Hit by Dracon Fire

Use 100 units of energy with Shields ON, 200 units with Shields OFF.

Keep Shields On

And use energy at a faster rate.

Becoming A Champ

Phaser Patrol™ rewards the player who destroys the Dracon armada quickly and efficiently. At the end of each game, you are awarded a Rank and Level. The highest ranking is Hero, Level A. The lowest is Greenhorn, Level D. In order of achievement:

- HERO (highest)
- ACE
- PILOT
- GREENHORN (lowest)

Working Up To Hero, Level A

If you sustain damage, you should get to a Starbase as soon as possible. When damaged, the odds of being totally destroyed by Dracon attack are greatly increased.

Before you warp-hop into an unknown sector, figure out your escape route. If attacked and damaged, you'll be ready to switch into Sector Map mode and retreat into a predetermined safe sector.

For top ranking, minimize the length of your "Warp-Hops." Clear out one nearby sector after another. Try to arrive near your Starbase when you anticipate the need to replenish energy.

Use your Shields only when you need them. Shields consume energy, so turn them off when no Dracon fighters are near enough to pose a threat.

Combat Action Techniques

Make good use of the Rangefinder. Your Phaser Torpedoes are deadly at a longer range than the Dracon weapons. Attack them while they are still far away and you'll take fewer damaging hits.

Fire only when you're sure to score a hit. Use your Torpedo Sight to ensure that you'll get the Dracon with one shot.



COMMUNIST MUTANTS FROM SPACE™

Your Mission

Vaporize the mutant warriors before they overrun your home planet.

About The Enemy

The evil ruler of the planet Rooskee has launched a diabolical attack. A cunning Mother Creature, filled with irradiated vodka, transforms helpless slaves captured on peaceful planets into bloodthirsty COMMUNIST MUTANTS.

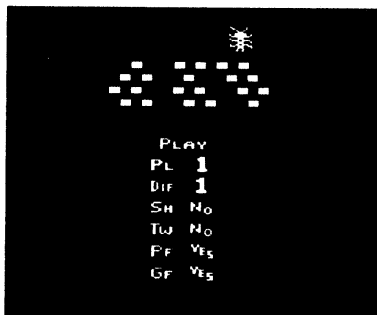
The Commie Mutants attack like crazy! Wipe out wave after wave of them, and they will keep on coming. And the more you vaporize, the nastier they get. You've got trouble.

Game Options

Press GAME SELECT and your Game Options menu will appear on the screen. You can customize your own variation of COMMUNIST MUTANTS FROM SPACE™ by choosing options from the menu.

Move the joystick up or down to place the highlight over the feature you wish to select. Move the joystick right or left, or push the fire button, to select options and number of players.

Note: If you leave the menu on the screen for a few moments, the game will begin "self play." You'll see the game play by itself, and you'll see the current high score displayed. To get back to the menu, simply tug on the joystick or press GAME SELECT.



Game Options menu

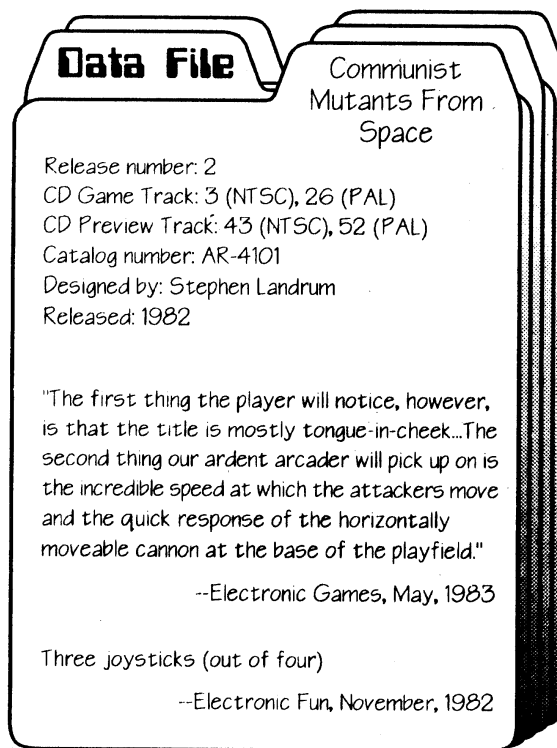
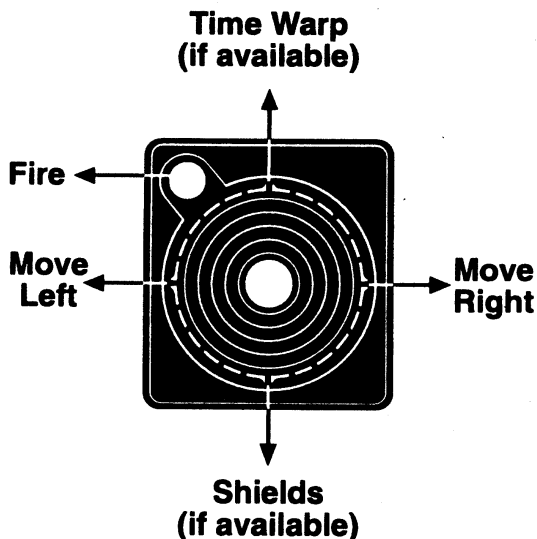
- PLAY** Starts the game action.
- PL 1-4** Selects the number of players (1 to 4)
- DIF 1-9** Selects the difficulty level (1 = easy to 9 = hard)
- SH NO/YES** Allows you to activate SHIELDS during the game.
- TW NO/YES** Allows you to activate TIME WARP during the game.
- PF NO/YES** Gives you PENETRATING FIRE
- GF NO/YES** Gives you GUIDED FIRE

Controls

Game Select switch calls the Game Options menu to the screen.

Difficulty switches affect the horizontal speed of your cannon.

Game Reset switch starts a new game instantly.



As soon as play begins, you'll be under attack. The Mother Creature will constantly create more COMMUNIST MUTANT attackers. The attackers start as mutant eggs and soon hatch into nasty creatures.

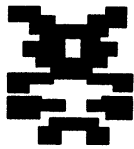
Some of the mutant eggs appear not to hatch. Don't be fooled. They are actually shield-penetrating bombs in disguise.

You begin with a small reserve of anti-mutant cannons. Each time the mutants destroy one of your cannons, a reserve is called up. When the last cannon is destroyed, the game is over. You can, however, earn bonus cannons after every other wave of mutant attacks.

You'll never run out of ammunition, so keep shooting. Your cannons destroy Communist Mutants, Mutant Bombs, and the Mother Creature itself.

Scoring

● Point Values:



Mother Creature 500 Points



Diving Mutant Attackers 60 Points

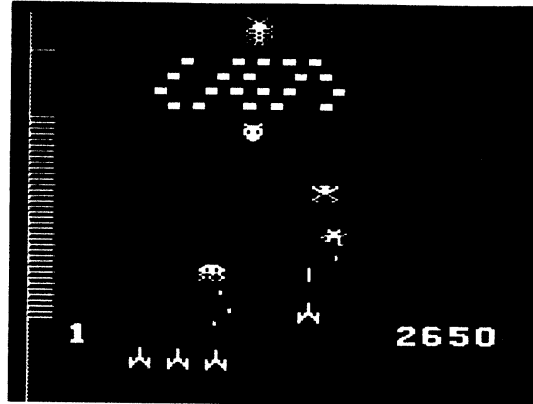


Mutant Eggs 10 Points



Clearing the screen of Mutant Attackers (earns a "flag") 100 Points

- Bonus cannons are awarded on each odd numbered wave of mutant attacks.
- High score for the current playing session will be displayed at the end of each game.



Gameplay In Progress

Game Variations

Difficulty Levels.

Start with level 1 (relatively mild mutants) and work your way up to level 9 (really mean mutants).

Maneuverability.

Control the speed of your anti mutant cannon with the difficulty switches. "A" makes it slow. "B" makes it fast. The left difficulty switch is shared by players one and three, the right switch by players two and four.

Shields.

Shields are activated by pulling back on the joystick. You can use your shields only once, until a new wave of mutant attacks, or a cannon appears.

Time Warp.

Slow down the mutant attack with time warp. Activate it by pushing forward on the joystick. But you can use the feature only once, until a new wave of mutant attacks, or a cannon appears.

Penetrating Fire.

This feature permits your cannon fire to blast through one mutant and wipe out the next in line.

Guided Fire.

This feature permits you to steer your cannon fire with the joystick.

Multi-Player Games.

Players one and three share the left joystick. Players two and four share the right joystick. The number in the lower left corner of the screen indicates which player is "up."



FIREBALL™

Imagine This

You're a juggler. You've practiced long and hard to become a very good juggler. You can juggle rubber balls, fragile plates, even razor-sharp daggers. Now you're ready for the ultimate test — the Fireball Competition.

The Situation

You've done well in the early matches of the International Tournament of Jugglers. Most of the competitors have been eliminated. You've survived. Now it's down to the final event: *the Fireball™*.

Your Objective

Catch the blazing Fireball and hurl it back at the wall of blocks. Rack up points by smashing blocks and clearing the screen. And prove your skill as a juggler by keeping a number of Fireballs in the air. First one, then two, three, four... You have five tries, just in case the Fireball becomes a little too hot to handle.

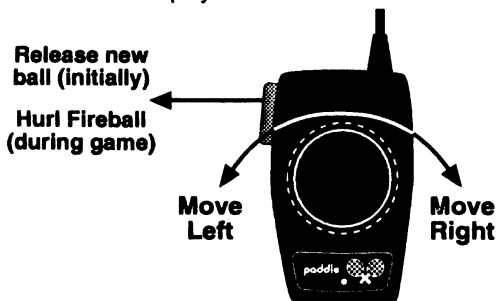
Juggling A Fireball

You move left and right across the bottom of the screen, using standard paddle controllers. When you get close to a falling Fireball, you'll be able to catch it with your closest free hand. Press the red button on the paddle controller and you'll hurl the Fireball back toward the blocks. The Fireball will travel at an angle toward the side of the hand holding it.

You can hold up to two Fireballs at any time. But not for too long, because you'll automatically hurl the Fireball when it gets too hot to handle.

If you choose not to catch the Fireball—and want to deflect it back immediately—keep the controller button pressed down.

Each time you eliminate a set of blocks another ball will be added to the game—up to a maximum of six balls. If you wish to add a ball at any time, you can do so by rapidly pressing the button three times. As described later, you will get more points when more balls are in play.



Controls

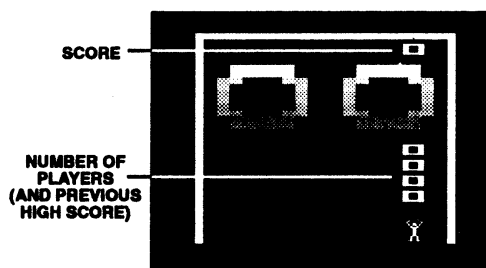
Use the paddle controllers to play Fireball. Players one and two will use the paddles plugged into the left controller jack; players three and four will use the paddles plugged into the right controller jack.

Game Options

Select the game and number of players with the Game Select switch. Each time you tug on the switch, you'll add a player—or move on to the next variation. Pressing the games select switch and the Game Reset switch at the same time moves you directly to the next game.

The numbers on the lower right of the screen show the number of players and their high scores during the current playing round.

Gameplay In Progress



Game Selection

In the illustration above, there are four players. Since all "high score" figures are zero, this is the first match of the current playing round.

Data File

Fireball

Release number: 3
CD Game Track: 4 (NTSC), 27 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: 44 (NTSC), 53 (PAL)
Catalog number: AR-4300
Designed by: Scott Nelson
Released: 1983

"Starpath pulled out another old theme from the archives (Breakout) and molded it into a very simple but addictive "block buster"...Intense action."

--Digital Press, November/December 1992

"This Breakout variation is a favorite of mine."

--2600 Connection, January/February 1993

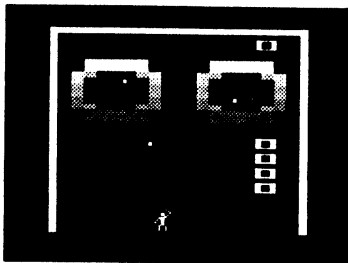
"This Starpath cassette gives the traditional wall-busting game a science fictional slant - and a few new wrinkles."

--Electronic Games Software Encyclopedia, 1983

"Graphics: B, Gameplay, B

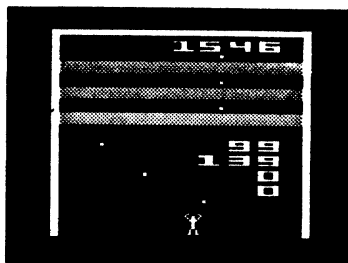
--Electronic Fun, December 1982

Fireball Games



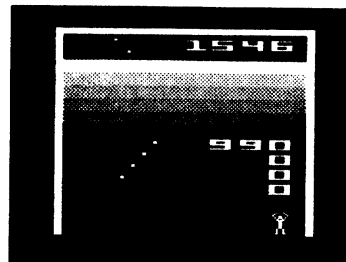
Firetrap

Smash away at the block walls imprisoning the two additional Fireballs. Once you've broken through, the extra Fireballs will come tumbling toward you...



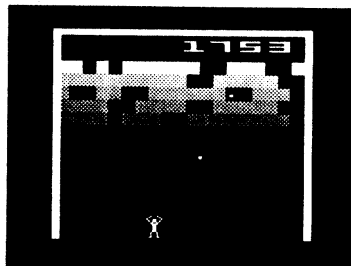
Marching Blocks

Each time you catch a Fireball, the rows of blocks march one step toward you. You'll be able to free Fireballs trapped between rows of blocks. And, every once in a while, a mystery Fireball will appear.



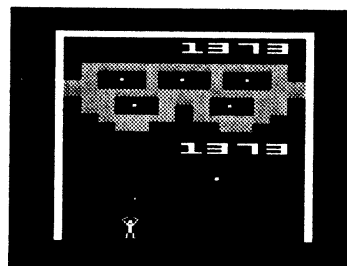
Knock-A-Block

A good variation for beginners, for warm-up, or perhaps for that occasional game before breakfast. Blast away at solid walls of blocks until you've reduced them to...a whole new wall of blocks.



Migrating Blocks

Just when you think you're about to hurl the Fireball into a convenient cavity... the cavity disappears! Every few seconds, the rows of blocks rotate in one direction or another.



Cascade

Five extra Fireballs, trapped in five cavities. Smash through and release them. And get ready to juggle for dear life.

Starting Play

- Press RESET when you have selected the game and number of players desired.
- The first player up then presses the button on the paddle controller to launch the first Fireball.

Tips For Top Scores

- Try to anticipate where the tumbling Fireballs will land. Then get there ahead of them and wait.
- If you're juggling more than two Fireballs, you may find it easier to *not* catch them. Keep the controller button pressed down, and the Fire balls will simply bounce off you.
- Stay alert for the arrival of mystery Fireballs.

Scoring

- You earn points for each block smashed.
- You earn points for each set of blocks eliminated.
- The closer to the top of the screen, the more the block is worth.
- The more Fireballs in play, the more each block is worth.

Keeping It Challenging

- One of the variations that forces you to handle six Fireballs simultaneously should be challenge enough for any video game connoisseur.
- Make the game more challenging by flicking the difficulty switch from "B" to "A." In the "A" position, you have to be more precise in catching the Fireballs.
- Players 1 and 3 share the left difficulty switch. Players 2 and 4 share the right difficulty switch.



SUICIDE MISSION™

The Battleground

A growing abscess, perilously close to a human heart. An invasion of lethal virus, multiplying faster than the body's warrior leukocytes can destroy them.

Your Mission

Shrink down, down, down. Smaller than a speck of dust. Board a microscopic submarine. And navigate through the bloodstream until you encounter your deadly foes. Any volunteers?

A Million To One

Those are the odds against you. Even though you're fast, tough, and smart. You're simply outnumbered. And the enemy is tough.

The Bad Guys

Fiendish virus. Tough to kill, too. A direct hit with a penicillin torpedo divides the colony. Hit again, and they divide into creepy little virus. A third blast pulls their plugs for good.

Most of them just cruise along attacking their host's cells. But watch out for a particularly nasty number who goes straight for your throat.

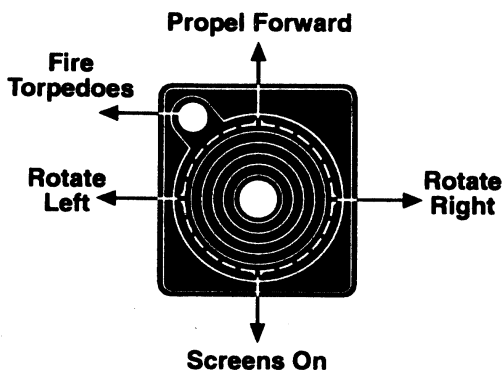
Starting A Game

Press select to choose the number of players and the easy, medium, or hard options.

The DIFFICULTY SWITCHES determine shooting style. "A" gives you single torpedoes, "B" gives you salvos. The left difficulty switch is for player number one, the right switch for player number two.

To start the game press reset.

Using The Joystick



Screens

Tugging back on the joystick turns screens on. But in so small a submarine, the screens only last a few seconds. Hold them on too long, and they will heat up causing you to vaporize all of the virus — along with yourself! To avoid this, allow the screens to cool between use.





Difficulty Options

Easy: This is the place to start.

Medium: Your screens will heat up faster.

Hard: The current keeps your ship always moving.

Scoring

- Viral Colony: 30 Points 
- Sub Colony: 60 Points 
- Creepy Crawling Virus: 100 Points 
- Deadly Little Virus: 150 Points 

Bonus Submarines

Easy: One for every 20,000 Points

Medium: One for every 80,000 Points

Hard: One for every 200,000 Points

Data File

Suicide Mission

Release number: 4
CD Game Track: 5 (NTSC), 28 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: 45 (NTSC), 54 (PAL)
Catalog number: AR-4300
Designed by: Steve Hales, Stephen Landrum
Released: 1983

"The pace is frantic, and I was very much taken with the ultra-realistic animation of the ship and especially the Coils. The graphics are very effective, sketched in the Vectrex-style of line figures on a color field...this is a fine and thrilling game, one which will tax the skills of even the most seasoned videogamer."

Videogaming Illustrated, June, 1983



ESCAPE FROM THE MINDMASTER™

The Situation

You've been abducted. Kidnapped. Snatched in your sleep, right out of your bed. Right in your own home town.

Nobody could stop him. His proton beam made you glow like a Christmas tree. A few seconds later you disappeared.

You never even woke up.

Until now.

You slowly awaken. Surrounding you are giant walls, smooth as glass. Endless corridors, with no apparent escape.

As you explore your strange prison, you encounter various games. You realize that these games are tests—of your intelligence, memory, coordination, and reflexes.

It slowly dawns on you that you're the subject of an incredible experiment. Then you realize that you're not alone.

The MindMaster looms above you, watching your every move. You must use all the brainpower you possess. Not only to be able to solve the maze—but to preserve the honor of the human race.

The MindMaster's Mazes

To escape, you must pass through a series of six mazes.

Each maze is more difficult than the last. The first five mazes have problems to solve and surprise intelligence tests. The last maze is something special.

Passing The MindMaster's Tests

Listen for a fanfare. It signals a special test the MindMaster has devised to probe your intellect and coordination.

There's a test hidden in each of the first five mazes. The better you do, the higher your final score. As you leave each maze, your test score is added to your total.

Test 1: Agility Dance from side to side to avoid the falling bricks. The fourth collision is a knockout. Slip between the bricks and impress the MindMaster.

Test 2: Reflexes Watch for the flashing arrow. Follow its movement as quickly as you can with your joystick. Baby MindMasters even score high on this test.

Test 3: Recall Memorize the sequence of arrows on the screen. Then recreate the pattern with your joystick. The MindMaster wants to see if you qualify as an intelligent life form.

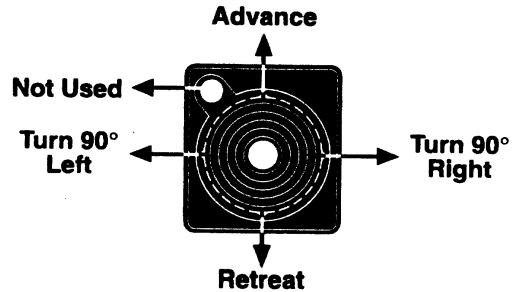
Test 4: Dexterity Scamper through the stream of bricks without touching any. The MindMaster can do it with three legs tied behind his back.

Test 5: Coordination Here's a test especially for space-traveling species. Make a nice soft landing on the platform without using too much fuel. You get five attempts. The MindMaster can do it with his eyes closed.

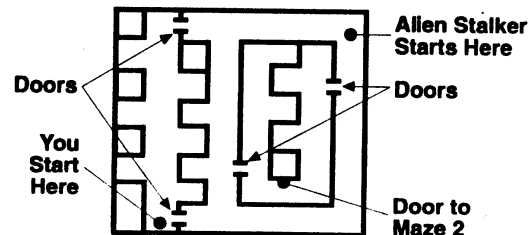
Moving Through A Maze

● **Joystick Control** Push the joystick forward and back to advance or retreat. If there is a door in front of you, you may advance through it, but you may not "back" through a door. When a "beep" sounds, you're trying to walk through a wall or a locked door.

Pushing the joystick left or right lets you turn 90 degrees in that direction.



● **One-Way Doors** From Maze 4 on, you'll notice that some doors are one-way only. Pass through them, turn around, and they will seem to have disappeared. Keep this in mind as you plan your solution to these mazes.



Map of Maze 1

● **Leaving A Maze** Each maze has a door to the next maze. This door stays locked until all the pegs are in their proper holes. As you mount the stairs to the next maze, your total score will be displayed near the bottom of the screen.

Data File

Escape from the MindMaster

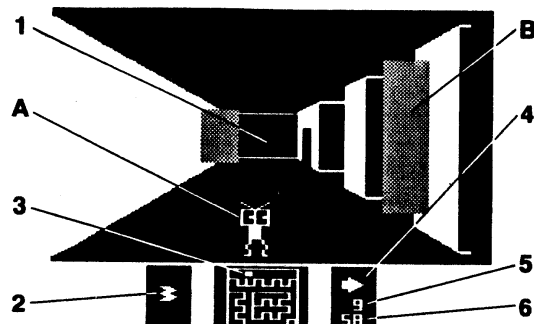
Release number: 5
CD Game Tracks: 6-9 (NTSC), 29-32 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: 46 (NTSC), 55 (PAL)
Catalog number: AR-4200
Designed by: Dennis Caswell
Released: 1983

Named one of the "50 Best Games" then available by Electronic Fun magazine in March, 1984.

Voted one of the "Top Ten Games of 1983" by Radio-Electronics Magazine.

Golden Floppy award as "Maze Game of the Year" for 1984, Video Games Division, from Computer Games Magazine.

Clues To The Mindmaster's Mazes



- 1. Human's Eye View** This is how the maze looks from where you stand. As you move, the maze approaches or recedes in 3-D perspective. As you turn, you can see all around you.
- 2. Puzzle Peg** One of your tests is how quickly you can locate a number of colored pegs and place them in their corresponding holes. In this case you have a wing-shaped peg and are looking for a wing-shaped hole. Pick up a peg or insert a peg in its corresponding hole by pushing the joystick button. Note that you can carry just one peg at a time.
- 3. Maze Map** The map shows you the general layout of the maze. The bright square is you. You won't see any pegs, doors, tests, or aliens on the maze map though. You'll have to find those yourself.
- 4. Direction Finder** The arrow tells you which way you're facing. You'll find this feature useful, because after a few minutes in the maze you won't know which way is up.
- 5. Chances Left** If you use up all your chances, the game is over. And the MindMaster will dismiss you as an inferior intelligence. There are two ways you lose chances. One is to bump into the Alien Stalker (A). This little creep is also trying to escape from the maze—and at your expense. Every time he bumps into you, he gains a point—and you lose one. You can't defeat the Alien Stalker, but you can avoid him.

You can hear him coming. When the beeping sound is high pitched, he's close. If there is a wall between you, you're safe. The Alien can't pass through doors. But be careful, and get ready to retreat when you hear the warning.

The other way to lose chances is to run into a sliding force field (B). You won't find any in Maze 1. But from Maze 2 on, watch out. If you see a big moving square panel directly in front of you, stop. Let it pass by before advancing.

Note that when you lose a chance, you'll return to the spot where you began the maze.
- 6. Scoring Countdown** You start with 60 points in every maze. Every few seconds, a point is taken off your score. The number of points left when you leave a maze is added to your total score.

Difficulty Switches

You can increase the Mind Master's patience with his human experiment by placing the difficulty switches in the **B** position.

The left difficulty switch controls the number of chances you start with. **A** gives you 5 chances. **B** gives you 9.

The right difficulty switch controls the speed of the Alien Stalker. **A** makes him fast. **B** slows him down.

Note that the difficulty switches only count at the beginning of a game. Changing them in the middle won't help you at all.

The Multi-Load™ Feature

ESCAPE FROM THE MINDMASTER™ is too complex a game to be "loaded" into the Starpath™ Supercharger™ at one time. So the game is divided into four sections, each of which is loaded separately from the CD player into the Supercharger™:

Load 1: Mazes 1 and 2 (track 6 NTSC, 29 PAL)

Load 2: Mazes 3 and 4 (track 7 NTSC, 30 PAL)

Load 3: Mazes 5 and 6 (track 8 NTSC, 31 PAL)

Load 4: Your Evaluation (track 9 NTSC, 32 PAL)

If the beginning of a load is missed, or if a loading error occurs, a "REWIND TAPE" message will appear. No problem. Just position the CD at the appropriate track using your CD's track select feature, then press PLAY. The Supercharger™ will load the game segment, and once again the "STOP TAPE" message will appear. When in doubt, simply choose the first Mindmaster™ load (track 6 for NTSC, track 29 for PAL). The Supercharger™ will find the correct load automatically and when it's loaded, a STOP TAPE message will appear. Be patient, and let the CD pass through the unwanted tracks.

Starting A New Game

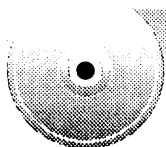
You can get a fresh start by pressing the game reset switch—except if "PRESS PLAY" is on the screen or if the game is loading from CD.

Press the reset switch while you're in Maze 1 or Maze 2, and you'll start again in Maze 1. Likewise, if you're in Maze 3 or Maze 4, the reset switch will take you to the beginning of Maze 3. Or if you're in Maze 5 or Maze 6, you'll go back to the start of Maze 5.

To start a whole new game after you've left Maze 2, flick the power switch off and on, then reload the game from the first CD track (track 6 for NTSC, track 29 for PAL).

Load Four

When you complete Maze 6—or lose all your chances—the "PRESS PLAY" message appears. You should play **Load 4: Your Final Evaluation** (track 9 for NTSC, track 32 for PAL) from the Supercharger CD, and you'll learn your final score—as well as the MindMaster's impression of you and the human race.



CD Bonus!

Maps to all Mindmaster mazes have been included on this CD!
Use any CD-ROM reader that can read ISO-9660 CD-ROM format!



DRAGONSTOMPER™

Only the Dragonstomper™ can save the kingdom!

Once this was a happy place to live. There was plenty to eat and drink, and the children could play safely in the forests. The King was wise and ruled with a gentle hand.

Then a Druid magician completed the enchantment of a powerful amulet. The amulet, thought the Druid, would subdue the dragon. The Druid, controlling the fierce beast, would become invincible. So, amulet in hand, the Druid Magician entered the dragon's cave.

And fell into a trap.

The amulet skidded out of the Druid's hand . . . and into the dragon's claw. The Druid fled in terror. The dragon lay still, puzzled and fascinated.

Slowly, the magic powers of the amulet flowed into the dragon. To his physical strength were added cunning, intelligence, and far greater magical powers. As the dragon gained power, he became obsessed with evil. And he turned the full force of his evil powers against the once happy Kingdom.

From his cave, the dragon cast spells that caused crops to parch and die. Hidden pools of quicksand snared travelers on their way to village markets. Savage creatures—maniacs, scorpions, demented monkeys, and worse—attacked without warning or provocation.

The Kingdom became a degenerate and treacherous place. The King's loyal knights had all fallen to the dragon's evil warriors. The King's Wizard was helpless against the dragon's magic. There was only one hope left: The Dragonstomper.™

So here's where you come in. As the fabled Dragonstomper™ you'll need all your wits, strength, intuition, and resourcefulness to dispatch the evil that hangs over the Kingdom. First, you must battle your way across the countryside, giving the dragon's creatures a taste of your blade.

Then, you must prepare yourself for the big brawl, recruiting men and supplies from the oppressed village. Finally, you must conquer the dragon and smash the evil amulet.

Another day in the life of a Dragonstomper™!



Fighting Your Way To The Dragon's Cave

Dragonstomper is a Multi Load™ game. The three levels of Dragonstomper™ play are far too complex to be loaded into the Starpath™ Supercharger cartridge at one time, so the game is divided into three sections, each of which is loaded separately from your CD player into the computer memory of the Supercharger™:

- **Load One:** The Enchanted Countryside (track 10 for NTSC, track 33 for PAL)
- **Load Two:** The Oppressed Village (track 11 for NTSC, track 34 for PAL)
- **Load Three:** The Dragon's Cave (track 12 for NTSC, track 35 for PAL)

If you see a REWIND TAPE message appear when you are loading a section of the game, it means that you are loading the wrong track from the CD. When in doubt, simply choose the first Dragonstomper™ load (track 10 NTSC, track 32 PAL). The Supercharger™ will find the correct load automatically and when it's loaded, a STOP TAPE message will appear. Be patient, and let the CD pass through the unwanted tracks.

Data File

DragonStomper

Release number: 6
CD Game Tracks: 10-12 (NTSC), 33-35 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: 47 (NTSC), 56 (PAL)
Catalog number: AR-4400
Designed by: Stephen Landrum
Released: 1983

"Dragonstomper...is the first game which captures the spirit of Dungeons and Dragons. ...the game grows by attacking the mind and imagination more than appealing to the trigger finger."

--Videogaming Illustrated, June, 1983

Graphics/Sound Rating: Excellent
Play-Action Rating: Outstanding
Solitaire Rating: Excellent
Overall rating: 9 (out of 10)

--Electronic Games Software Encyclopedia, 1983

How To Play

Start the game by loading the CD into the Supercharger™ and picking up your left joystick.

To move across the landscape, just push the joystick in the direction you wish to travel. You can move when the message area at the bottom of the screen reads:



To deal with adversaries you can choose to MOVE, FIGHT, or USE a weapon or magic spell. When the screen shows the "action menu" below, push the joystick in the direction of the arrow next to the action you wish to take:



When fighting, you'll find that the battles are given blow-by-blow descriptions on the message block. Every time your adversary scores a hit, you'll see how much of your strength was lost. The less strength and dexterity you have left, the more likely you are to get the worst of a battle. When your strength is low, you'd better MOVE on.

To learn your status, you press the joystick button and the "action menu" appears. Push the joystick in the indicated direction, and you'll see how much gold, strength, dexterity, and useful objects you possess. (Note that there are times during combat when you can't switch to the "action menu.")



Pushing the joystick in the INVENTORY direction shows you how many of each object you have accumulated. When you have more than three object types, you can review them all by calling for MORE.

To use various objects, during a battle or at any other time, select USE from the action menu. Then the message area shows which objects are available (you may need the MORE command to call up all the objects), and you need only push the joystick in the appropriate direction to use it.



To resurrect yourself if you drop dead during the first load (if your strength drops below zero), just press RESET. You'll lose all your magic objects, but you'll have a fresh supply of gold, strength, and dexterity.

The Enchanted Countryside

Your objective during your trek across the countryside is to obtain the power and magic you need to get into the village. You start with 400 gold pieces and a good deal of strength and dexterity. But not enough to take you across the bridge into the village.

You'll have to fight the dragon's creatures, taking possession of their gold, spells, and weapons. Once you have enough, you can bargain with the guard at the bridge.

But be careful, because each battle can cost you some of your strength. And when your strength is all gone, you're a dead Dragonstomper™.

The Oppressed Village

Your objective during your stay in the village is to equip yourself with what you need to battle the dragon. The shops have a variety of provisions you may find useful. Enter the Magic Shop, the Trade Shop, or the Hospital and buy or barter what you need.

You'll find the few warriors in the village, but you'll have to use your wits before they'll join you in your journey into the dragon's cave.

Once you're satisfied that you've got what it takes to take on the dragon, just step up to the cave's gate. But you better be absolutely sure you're ready. There is no turning back.

The Dragon's Cave

Now we'll find out if you're worthy of the name Dragonstomper™

Proceed into the cave with care. It's riddled with traps, snares, and guardians. It's also riddled with the bones of other would-be dragon stompers.

You'll need all the strength and magic at your disposal to survive this adventure.

Be A Better Dragonstomper™

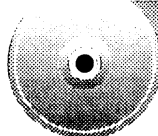
When your strength is down, stay out of fights until you build it up again. Your strength builds gradually with time. A more dramatic increase in strength may be obtained by visiting church and making a suitable contribution.

Think before you fight. Your adversaries will wear you down if you battle them mindlessly. Try using an appropriate object during the first exchange of blows. Or just move along if you don't think you need any objects in your adversary's possession.

Watch out for booby traps. Don't get fooled by a seemingly peaceful landscape. The cunning dragon has laid traps by the front entrance to certain castles. Try the back entrance.

Get by the bridge guard, the easy way. He's too tough to fight. So give him lots of gold. Or (*Giveaway Alert!*) show him your scroll as identification.

The clever Dragonstomper™ can prove he is smarter than the dragon by outwitting him and stealing the amulet. The dragon can then be rehabilitated instead of killed.



CD Bonus!

Dragon Stomper strategies have been included on this CD!
Use any CD-ROM reader that can read ISO-9660 CD-ROM format!



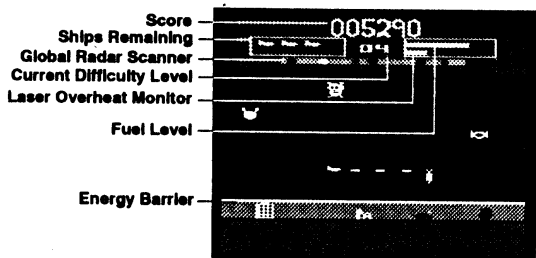
KILLER SATELLITES™

The Situation

An orbiting junkyard of dormant killer satellites has been circling the earth for untold decades. But now these mechanical maniacs have come to life and are bombarding the earth with wave upon wave of vicious attacks. Their objective is to completely obliterate all life forms on the planet. The invaders are destroying everything in their path and are now hurtling at an incredible speed toward your hometown. The invasion has started . . . can your hometown survive? Can the human race survive?

Your Mission

Only you can save your hometown and life itself from these deadly attackers. As the test pilot of the only rocket ship that can intercept and outmaneuver this deadly rain of molten metal, you must destroy them before they destroy you!



- **Six Rocket Ships.** A ship is lost if you collide with a killer satellite, a meteorite, or fly into the force field at the bottom of the screen. You receive an additional ship each time 10,000 points is scored. If you already have six ships when 10,000 points is scored, a bonus is awarded. If a ship is destroyed, all invaders on the screen will also be destroyed.
- **Fuel Level Indicator.** You begin the wave with 4,800 pounds of fuel. The green gauge at the upper right of the screen indicates the amount of fuel remaining. Your ship consumes fuel as you fly and maneuver. At the end of each wave, you will receive a bonus for any remaining fuel. If you run out of fuel you will crash... one less chance to save the human race!
- **Laser Overheat Monitor.** Temperature is indicated by the red gauge below the fuel gauge. With each shot, the temperature of your gun gets hotter and hotter. When the temperature gauge reaches maximum capacity, safety interlocks will prevent you from firing until the gun cools.
- **Global Radar Scanner.** The radar screen shows you which direction to fly to find the killer satellites. Your field of view is always at the center of the radar screen. Fly in the direction of the radar blips to find the satellites.
- **Energy Barrier.** This force field protects the earth from asteroids. It vaporizes asteroids but not killer satellites...they have discovered how to penetrate the energy barrier safely. Watch out—the force field also vaporizes your ships!

Variables

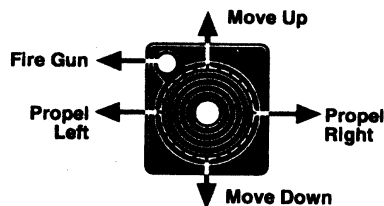
As the game progresses, meteorites will begin falling to earth. You can't kill the meteorites, but they will destroy your ship if you collide with them. There are eight different kinds of invaders, each having a different point value.

Starting A Game

- **Game Select Switch.** Use the game select switch to select the beginning wave of the game. Holding the select switch down causes the starting wave to advance. The higher the wave number, the more difficult the game; the killer satellites increase in number and in speed of movement. If you begin at a wave higher than 1, you will be awarded a bonus of 1,000 points times the wave number at which you started...if you complete that wave without losing a ship.
- **Difficulty Switches.** The LEFT difficulty switch controls the speed of your ship. In the B position, the maximum speed of your ship is lower and its rise of elevation is greater.
The RIGHT difficulty switch controls the rate of fire of your gun. Select B for rapid fire; your gun will automatically fire as long as the button is pressed. In the A position, the gun will fire once each time the button is pressed.

- **Game Reset.** Press game reset to start a new game.

Using The Joystick



Scoring

Each time you zap a killer satellite, you receive the score displayed on the screen, ranging from 10 to 90 points. At the end of each wave, you receive the following bonus points:

- 50 points for each remaining ground object.
- 100 points for each wave you have completed.
- 10 points for each 100 pounds of fuel remaining.

Data File

Killer Satellites

Release number: 7
CD Game Track: 13 (NTSC), 36 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: 48 (NTSC), 57 (PAL)
Catalog number: AR-4103
Designed by: Kevin Norman
Released: 1983

"You may want to start at level 10 or 20."
--2600 Connection, January/February 1993"

"The graphics are sharp in this game"
--Digital Press, January/February 1993"



RABBIT TRANSIT™

The Object

You are a rabbit trying to get through the Mysterious Meadow and the Land of Ledges to start a family and make it grow.

The Situation

Meadow meanies are trying to prevent you from getting to your friend, the turtle, who will carry you down the river to the Land of Ledges.

Sneaky snakes, bothersome butterflies, chattering choppers and other meanies will send you back to the top of the Meadow or take away one of your chances.

If you avoid all these obstacles and leap atop the turtle, you will go to the Land of Ledges.

Here, you will hop from ledge to ledge, attempting to turn them all into one magic color.

But beware of a heartless man who will interfere by dropping rocks and undoing all your hopping efforts.

If you do succeed in changing all the ledges into the magic color, you will go to the Bunny Bushes and start your family.

Each level of play consists of three screens:

- Screen 1: The Mysterious Meadow
- Screen 2: The Land Of Ledges
- Screen 3 The Bunny Bushes

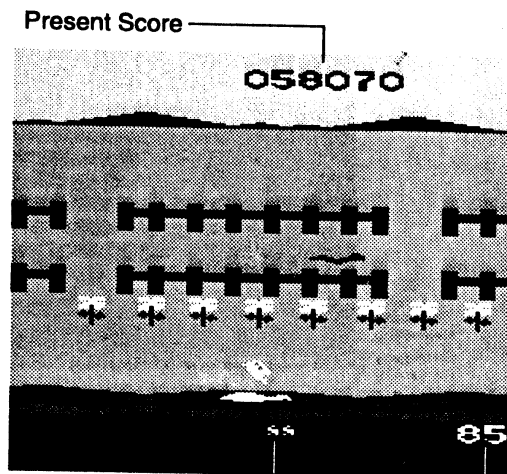
The Mysterious Meadow

Race as fast as you can through the Mysterious Meadow, down to the river and atop the turtle's back. Your friend will carry you to the Land of Ledges.

On your way to the river, you will face a variety of meanies—snakes, butterflies, choppers and others. The butterflies will send you back to the top of the Meadow.

Other meanies will take away one of your chances.

There may be fences in the meadow.



Chances Remaining Time Remaining

Mysterious Meadow Screen

You must go through the fence gate to continue your progress. You can only make diagonal jumps in your journey to the river.

Once you have reached the river and jumped on the turtle's back, he will transport you to the Land of Ledges.

You will lose a chance if the clock runs out before you hop onto the turtle's back.

When you return to the Meadow, it will be different and more difficult.

Data File

Rabbit Transit

Release number: 8
CD Game Track: 14 (NTSC), 37 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: 49 (NTSC), 58 (PAL)
Catalog number: AR-4104
Designed by: Brian McGhie
Released: 1984

"Graphics and sound are up to Starpath's consistently fine standards. Joystick control...is very responsive, making this the most easily controlled of all the 'cube hopping' games available for the 2600 ... For younger players, ... an attractive and entertaining contest."

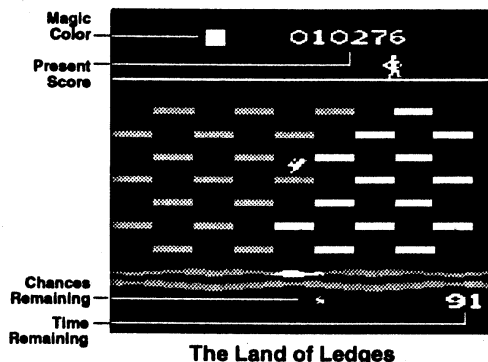
--Video Games, April, 1984

Four stars (out of five)

--2600 Connection, January/February 1993

The Land Of Ledges

Now your task is to jump from ledge to ledge and change each one to the magic color indicated at the top left of the screen. Be careful of the nasty man throwing rocks at you. If a rock hits you, you'll lose one of your chances.



As the game progresses, the man will start undoing your magic by reversing the colors of ledges you have already changed. You'll have to retrace your jumps and convert the colors again.

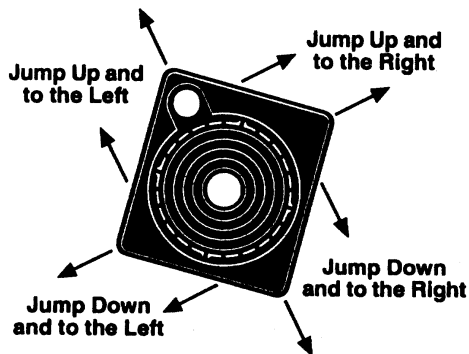
Complete the Land of Ledges screen before time runs out and you'll move to a new screen, the Bunny Bushes.

The Bunny Bushes

In this segment, you have at long last found your mate. This cartoon screen will allow you to stop, rest and watch your family grow before venturing back into the Mysterious Meadow again. (You can skip this screen by pressing the joystick button.)

Using The Joystick

The joystick should be held at an angle as shown below. Note that all jumps are made diagonally. This means you cannot jump straight up or down, or directly to the left or right.



Player one's joystick plugs into the left controller jack. Player two's joystick plugs into the right controller jack.

Pressing the button will bypass the Bunny Bushes screen.

Console Switches

Game Select Switch.

This switch selects a one or two player game.

Left Difficulty Switch.

This switch selects the difficulty level for player one.

In the B position the turtle will stay up all the time.

In the A position the turtle will submerge and surface. In the A position things will move faster on both screens.

Right Difficulty Switch.

Selects the difficulty level for player two.

Game Reset Switch.

Press game reset to start a new game.

Color B/W Switch.

Not used.

Scoring

Screen 1: The Mysterious Meadow.

Points are awarded for jumps to each new row as you advance toward the turtle. Points are also awarded for the time remaining when you reach the turtle, so the faster you reach the turtle, the higher your score.

Screen 2: The Land of Ledges.

Points are awarded each time you change a ledge to its magic color. Points are also awarded for the time remaining when the screen is complete.

You must complete each screen before the timer shown in the lower right corner of the screen reaches zero. A warning tone will sound when the timer is almost out.

If you do not complete the screen in time, you will lose one of your chances.

An extra chance is awarded at 10,000 points. The number of extra chances remaining is shown at the bottom of the screen.

Tips For Top Scores

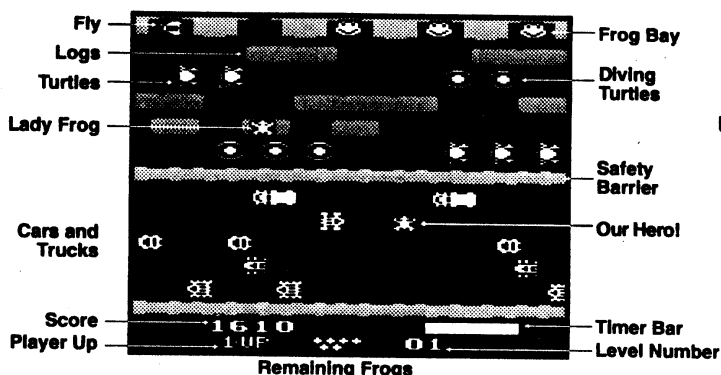
Remember to hold the base of the joystick at the correct angle to avoid jumping the wrong direction.

Lure the heartless man toward the center ledges. As soon as he hurls his rock, hop over and change an edge ledge or two. But hurry back to the center ledges before the man returns with another rock.

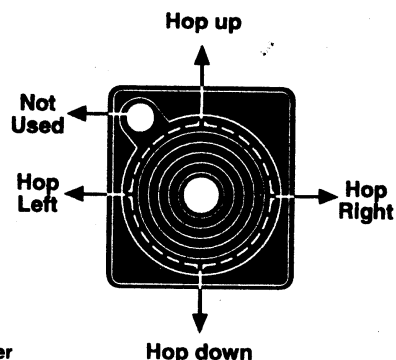


The Official FROGGER™ by Sega™

The Playfield



Controls



The Object

Jump across the freeway and the river to the safety of home.

The Situation

You are a frog with seven lives. You are on the shoulder of the freeway waiting for the opportunity to cross. Cars, trucks and bulldozers are traveling past you at various speeds. Try to jump across the freeway to the safety barrier. But watch out, if you get hit you'll lose a life.

Next you must navigate the river. Leap on logs and jump upon turtles' backs to make your way to the opposite bank and the safety of the frog bays. Beware of diving turtles; you can only use them while they're floating.

In more difficult levels, you'll encounter snakes, otters and crocodiles. They will make the river more dangerous than ever.

Scoring

Each safe leap forward on the highway or river is worth 10 points. Going back and forth will not add points. Getting into a frog bay is worth 50 points. Filling all five frog bays (completing a wave) gives you 1000 extra points. Each count left on the timer will add 10 bonus points. If you carry the lady frog home, you will receive 200 bonus points. Catching a fly will give you 200 more bonus points. You will get an extra life when you reach 20,000 points.

At the end of the game, your score will be displayed along with the current high score.

Tips For Top Score

If the lady frog is too far away, it may not pay to use the time to try for the 200 bonus points.

The backs of the crocodiles can be used for travel, but stay away from their mouths.

Game Select Switch

The game select switch is used to select either the one or two player mode. When first loaded, the game will be in the one player mode.

Reset

Press reset to start a new game.

Color B/W Switch

Color B/W Switch is not used.

Difficulty Switches

In the "A" position (more difficult), you'll lose a life if you float beyond the edge of the river (screen). In the "B" position, you will appear again on the other side of the screen. The left difficulty switch is for player 1 and the right difficulty switch is for player two.

Data File

The Official Frogger by Sega

Release number: 9
CD Game Track: 15 (NTSC), 38 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: 50 (NTSC), 59 (PAL)
Catalog number: AR-4105
Designed by: Stephen Landrum
Released: 1984

"The graphics are superb: detailed, flicker-free, with especially good animation for Frogger himself. In fact, if the arcade game and Starpath's adaptation were placed side-by-side, one would be hard pressed to tell which was which, no small feat for the Atari 2600."

--Video Games, March, 1984

"Parker Bros. also released Frogger for the 2600, but the Starpath version has an edge...Definitely recommended."

--Digital Press, January/February 1993

Ω PARTY MIX™

The Party Mix Philosophy

Humans are better video game opponents than computers. They are more attractive and certainly more adept at conversation, but the true advantage lies in the fact that you can gloat over them when you win, and yell at them when you lose.

So get one or two sets of paddle controllers, one or three humans (not included) and mix it up.

The Multi Load Feature

Party Mix's five games are stored on the cassette tape in three separate segments ("loads"), only one of which may be loaded into the Supercharger at a time.

The games are arranged on the tape as follows:

- **Load 1:** Bop A Buggy (CD track 16)
- **Load 2:** Tug of War & Wizard's Keep (CD track 17)
- **Load 3:** Down On The Line & Handcar (CD track 18)

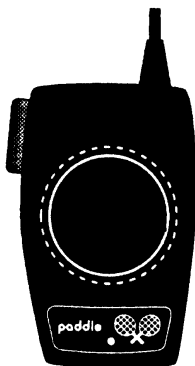
To load Bop A Buggy, proceed as indicated on page 5, "How to use the SuperCharger."

Be sure to stop the CD within a few seconds after the "STOP TAPE" message appears. Otherwise, the CD may advance past the beginning of the next load. Bop A Buggy is now ready to play.

To get the second load, turn the VCS off, then on, and play track 17 on the CD. Load two will be loaded into the SuperCharger.

To get load three, repeat the process, this time playing track 18 from the CD.

Using The Paddles



Four-player games use two sets of paddle controllers, one in each controller jack.

The players are divided into two teams of two, with one team using the left paddles and one using the right.

Two-player games use the left paddles only.

For details on using the paddle itself, see the individual game instructions.

Starting A Game

- **Game Reset Switch** Press game reset to start game play and to begin a new game at any time.
- **Game Select Switch** Use this switch *only* in loads two and three, to jump from one game to the other on that load. (Reminder: to get from one load to another, turn the VCS off, then on, then play the appropriate CD track. Do not use the game select switch to change loads.)
- **Right Difficulty Switch** Select the number of players with the right difficulty switch. Position B is for four players and position A is for two players.
- **Left Difficulty Switch** This switch controls the difficulty of the game for *all* players.
 - **Bop A Buggy** No effect.
 - **Tug of War** No effect.
 - **Wizard's Keep** Adjusts the speed of the targets. Position A is faster.
 - **Down On The Line** Controls how many packages come toward you on the belts. Position A brings more packages.
 - **Handcar** Controls the ease with which you can accelerate the handcar. Position A is more difficult.
- **B & W Switch** This switch affects Down On The Line only. Moving the color/black & white switch to the black and white position may help you to distinguish the roller colors more easily. Adjusting the contrast and brightness controls may also help.

Data File

Party Mix

Release number: 10
CD Game Tracks: 16-18 (NTSC), 39-41 (PAL)
CD Preview Track: 51 (NTSC), no PAL
Catalog number: AR-44302
Designed by: Dennis Caswell
Released: 1983

"A lot of games claim to be two-player games. Well, we say, Ha! ...in very few two-player games can both players actually play at the same time. Party Mix succeeds where other multi-player games fail...Three joysticks (out of four)"

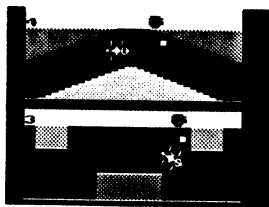
--Electronic Fun, December, 1983

"Against the common wisdom that it's better to do one game right than two or more not-so-right, Starpath has bucked the odds and come up with a super package...Graphics: B, Gameplay: A"

--Videogaming Illustrated, January, 1984

Bop A Buggy

The object is to get your two-wheeled buggy through a variety of screens and across the checkered finish line first. Avoid the ever-so-colorful obstacles—they'll slow you down.



Watch for buggy boppers, too. They will be heaving bricks that will knock your buggy backwards and cause it to make a most embarrassing noise.

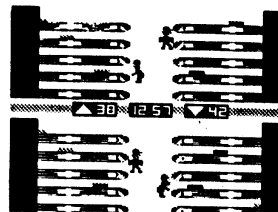
In the four-player game, each team controls one buggy and one buggy bopper. Spin the paddle knob to point your buggy. Press the fire button to make it go. Rotating the other paddle knob will cause your bopper to slide from side to side; press the fire button to unleash a brick in the direction of your hapless adversary.

Boppers are allowed nine bricks per screen. The digit to the left of your bopper indicates how many bricks you have left. The left paddles control the upper buggy and the lower bopper.

In the two-player game, each player drives a buggy; the boppers are automated.

Down On The Line

Each pair of workers must take packages off the left-hand set of conveyor belts and place them on the same color right-hand belts.



In the four-player game, each paddle controls a worker. Spinning a paddle knob causes the corresponding worker to scurry dutifully from one conveyor belt to another.

The left-hand worker of each pair stands next to any belt and takes a package off. He must then move next to his partner where he will pass the package by pressing the fire button.

The right-hand worker must then move to the belt whose roller is the same color as the package and push his fire button to place it on the belt.

In the two-player game, each paddle controls a pair of workers. The members of each pair will always be standing next to each other.

Catch a package by moving to the appropriate belt as the package comes off. The left worker will pass the package to the right worker automatically (unless the worker on the right already has his hands full, in which case the left worker will wait). To deposit the package, move the pair of workers to the correct belt and press the fire button.

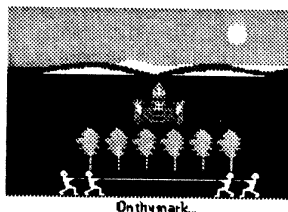
When the game starts, the clock at the center of the screen is set at 8:00 and will run until 5:00.

For each package successfully transferred, the team gets a point. The team with the most points at quitting time gets the glory.

If you're feeling especially industrious, move the left difficulty switch to position "A" for a more frantic pace.

Tug Of War

This game is simplicity itself. Forget the knobs—just press the fire button as fast as you can manage. The faster you push, the harder your team pulls. Just drag those weaklings at the other end of the rope across the white center line and you win.



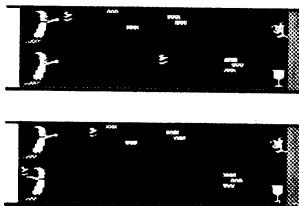
In the four-player game, the left paddles are for the left team (in red). When you press game reset, the center line will be replaced by a couple of messages; but save your energy -- the game doesn't begin until the center line reappears and "The William Tell Overture" begins.

Wizard's Keep

You now control your very own wizard. Spin your paddle knob to control the speed at which the wizard's arm revolves. Push the fire button and he will release his fireball -- hopefully in the direction of the targets. Points per target are as follows:

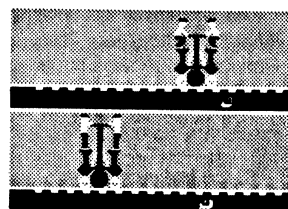
Chickens: 2 pts	Ships: 3 pts
Chalices: 5 pts	Jesters: 7 pts

The first team to conjure up 99 points emerges victorious. In the four-player game, the left controllers are for the upper pair of wizards. The left difficulty switch adjusts the target speed. Position "a" is the faster of the two. Note that both teams see the same targets at all times, and when either team zaps a target, both teams see it vanish. So if you want the points, your team must hit the target first.



Handcar

This is a race through the desert. In both two- and four-player games, each paddle knob controls a handcar driver.



Hold the driver's arm even with the crossbar of the handcar, and it will start to accelerate. Continue to touch the crossbar and the handcar will continue to accelerate, but if you let the crossbar get away from you, the handcar will start to slow down.

Don't try to lead the bar; let it lead you. Moving the left difficulty switch to position "B" may also make your handcar a bit easier to handle.

The first hand car to reach the second crossing sign wins this desert classic.



SWORD OF SAROS™

The Object

Find your way out of the dungeon of the evil wizard as you discover pieces of the magical Sword of Saros.

The Situation

You are an adventurer, and your quest for the Sword of Saros has brought you to the maze-like dungeons of an evil wizard. The wizard knows you are there, and he and his giant tracker bat pursue you relentlessly. If the wizard catches you, he will send deadly skeletons to attack you.

There are seven levels to the dungeon, and on each level there are eight rooms. The rooms contain treasures which are guarded by evil monsters. Some of the treasures are magical items that you can use. Much of the treasure is gold with which you can bribe the monsters on the final level.

In one of the rooms on each level you will find doors to which you need keys to pass through. Behind one door is a piece of the sword you need, and it will magically teleport you to the next level. Treasures lie behind the other doors.

On the final level of the dungeon, the rooms contain only open doors. One of these doors will provide your escape—all you have to do is find the right door. The monsters there will leave you alone as long as you have at least 100 gold pieces, and they will take that amount from you as payment for each door tried.

When your adventure is over, you will be given a ranking. The highest ranking is **WIZARD**.

The Maze

As you move, you leave an invisible trail for some distance behind you. The wizard and his tracker bat wander through the maze searching for you.

If the wizard stumbles across your path, he will follow you from there on.

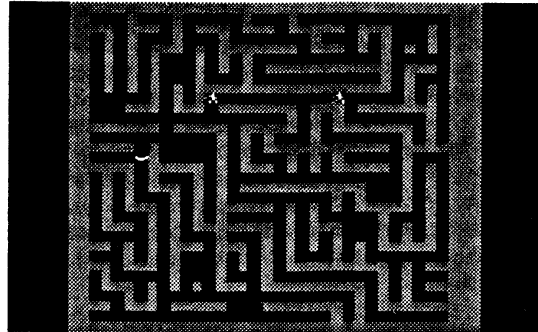
If the bat crosses your path, the wizard will teleport to the point where the bat found you and will follow you from there on.

On the first two levels of the dungeon, you will automatically see the entire maze on the screen.

On the third and fourth levels, the wizard's magic is stronger and the maze will only be revealed to you as you explore it.

On the later levels, the wizard's magic is stronger still, and you will only see the small area immediately surrounding you.

Of course, there is magic you can use to temporarily overcome these later handicaps.



Inside the Maze

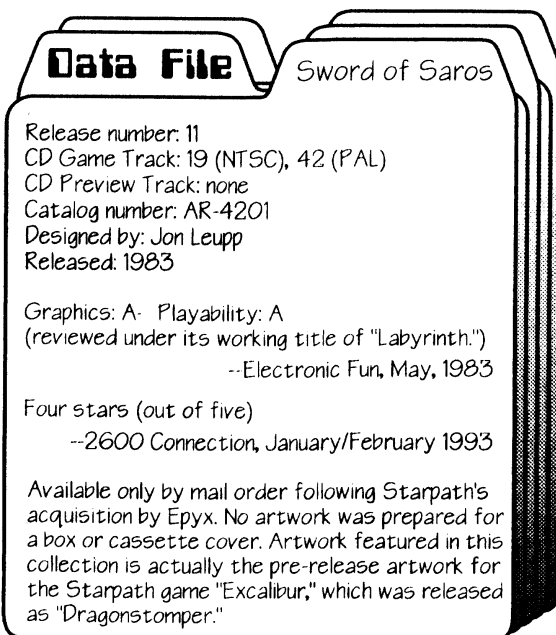
The Rooms

When you enter a room, the room will be displayed on the screen. There are niches at the top and bottom of the room.

To get an item or to try a door, move in front of the niche containing it and remain there a short time. You cannot pick up an item if you already have nine of that particular type, and you cannot pass through a closed door. If a door is closed, it means you do not have a key and must go find one.

If a monster touches you, you will take 1 to 5 life points of damage. Be careful—the monsters get quicker as the game progresses.

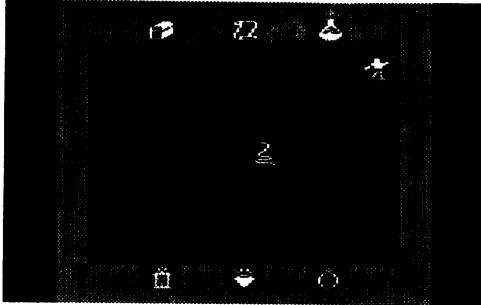
Exits from rooms are in the corners but they are hidden. To leave a room, you must try to guess where the exit is and move through the wall.



Life Points

You begin your adventure with 25 life points. Getting hit by monsters reduces life points and, if they reach zero, you lose your life.

While in the maze, you will see a flashing green warning when your life points go below 10. Watch your life points carefully!



Inside a Room

The Wizard Encounter

When you encounter the wizard, you will be hit instantly for 1 to 5 life points. The wizard will stand at the top of the screen and you will begin at the bottom.

The wizard will send waves of skeletons to attack you. You must maneuver through the skeletons and reach the top. If the skeletons touch you, you will take 1 to 4 points of damage.

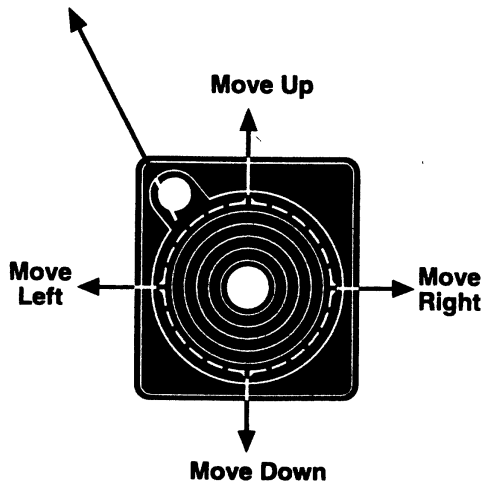
When you reach the wizard, he will teleport to where the giant bat lies, and begin searching for you again.

Controls

Pick Up Object (In room)

See Magic Menu (In maze)

Select Magic Item (from menu)



The Magic Menu

To see the magic menu while you are in the maze, hit the joystick button. Your life points and the amount of gold you have collected are displayed at the top of the screen. Below that you will see a list of all the items you possess.

You begin the game with one of each magical item. The items you find in the rooms are added to your collection. You cannot have more than 9 of any item.

To use an item, select it with the joystick and press the button. If you do not wish to use any item, select—RETURN—. An item vanishes when it is used. Most have a duration of about 10 seconds.

Magic is not cumulative, and using an item while another is still in effect cancels the previous magic.

Here is a list of the magical items and their uses:

Gold Cannot be selected. It is automatically used on the final dungeon level to bribe monsters to leave you alone as you try doors.

Gems After you have collected 9 gems, using them provides you one or more of each other type of item.

Lamp Makes the entire maze visible.

Potion Causes you to recover from 4-7 life points. Your life points can never be greater than 25.

Cross Causes the wizard and the bat to move as far away from you as they possibly can.

Scroll Allows you to see the wizard and bat even when they are not in the visible portion of the maze.

Ring Causes you to be invisible to the wizard, the bat, and the monsters in the rooms.

Key Cannot be selected. A key is used each time you pass through a door, except on the last level. You will lose all your extra keys each time you go to a new level.



Enter a continue code on the title screen.

The Object

Meet the challenges of a devastating shipwreck and a desolate wilderness island; then explore the mysteries within the secret temple.

The Situation

While sailing across uncharted waters in the South Pacific searching for the ruins of a lost civilization, a sudden storm ravishes your vessel. As your ship sinks, you struggle to keep afloat, knowing that your only chance is to reach the island that looms in the distance.

A raft from the ship floats nearby. Swimming with grave determination through shark infested waters, you reach the raft and manage to clamber aboard.

Now you stand a chance.

Food and water are your next concerns. Without an adequate supply, you will surely perish. Occasional debris from the ship floats by as you slowly drift toward your destination. Containers of food and water appear.

If you could only collect them before you reach the island, you would be able to live on them while you explore the island.

The Multi-Load™ Feature

Survival Island™ is too complex a game to be "loaded" into the Starpath™ Supercharger™ at one time. So the game is divided into three sections, each of which is loaded separately from the CD player into the Supercharger™.

Load 1: Shipwrecked
(track 20 NTSC, track 43 PAL)

Load 2: The Wilderness Island
(track 21 NTSC, track 44 PAL)

Load 3: The Secret Temple
(track 22 NTSC, track 45 PAL)

If the beginning of a load is missed, or if a loading error occurs, a "REWIND TAPE" message will appear. No problem. Just position the CD at the appropriate track using your CD's track select feature, then press PLAY. The Supercharger™ will find the correct load automatically—and once again the "STOP TAPE" message will appear.

Load 1

You start with 99 LIFE points. If your life reaches zero, you perish. To gain life, feed the black octopus some food while you're in the raft. The display shows your game time and LIFE, FOOD, and WATER points. Watch for special messages.

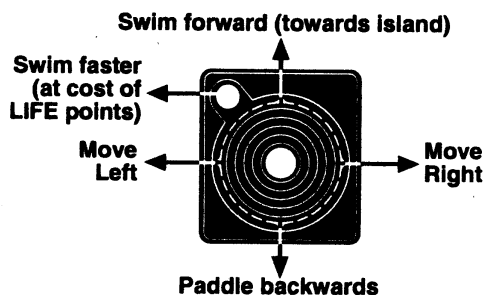
You are constantly drifting toward the island (unless you paddle backwards, toward the bottom of the screen). You must collect food and water in order to survive on the island.

When you touch floating food and water with your raft, you increase your supply. Be careful to avoid the sharks and sea creatures—they can knock you out of your raft and if they touch you in the water, you will perish. If you do lose your raft, you will also lose all your supplies. Keep swimming—your raft will reappear.

The joystick button can be used to move faster, but this will cause your LIFE force to decrease. Watch your LIFE!

When you reach the island write down your code, then hit the joystick button and go on to the next load.

Controls (Load 1)



Data File

Survival Island

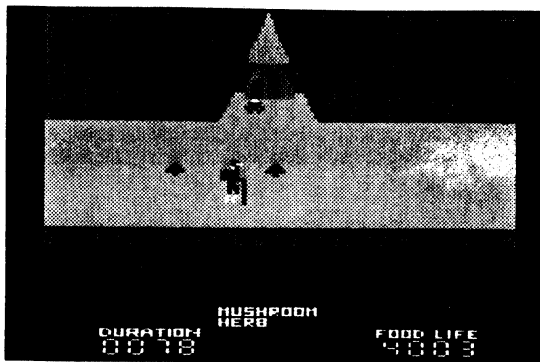
Release number: 12
CD Game Tracks: 20-22 (NTSC), NO PAL
CD Preview Track: none
Catalog number: AR-4401
Designed by: Scott Nelson
Released: 1983

Four stars (out of five)

--2600 Connection, January/February 1993

In the "been there, done that" list of Atari 2600 firsts, Survival Island was the first video game that featured a "continue" code to allow a player immediate access to higher levels of the game.

Available only by mail order following Starpath's acquisition by Epyx. No artwork was prepared for a box or cassette cover. Artwork featured in this collection is actually a new image prepared in 1996 for this project.



Explore the Wilderness Island in Load 2.

Load 2

Having reached the island, you are now attempting to find the secret temple. Beware of the many hidden traps, snakes, toadstools and other obstacles. Remember to collect all the materials you will need to storm the temple. Once you are in the temple, there is no turning back, so be sure you are properly equipped.

The menu will show the following:

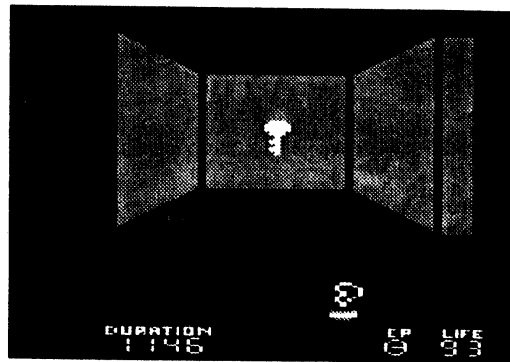
- Normal Mode** The fastest way to travel.
- Search Mode** A slower way to travel, but it allows you to touch objects with your stick without getting hurt.
- Eat Food/
Drink Water** Use if nourishment needs replenishing.
- Discard Item/
Use Item** The item selected (shown by inversed color) can be discarded or used.

The display will also show you the objects you are carrying. Touching an object collects that object, if you can carry it. Otherwise, the effect of the object will take place immediately. If you don't know what an item is, touch it with your cane while in the search mode and it will not harm you.

Mode changes are made by first pushing the joystick button, and then moving the joystick which allows you to step through the different modes. Pushing the button again will execute the mode selected.

Entering the temple completes this load, but to do that, you must first find the key to unlock the door. Save your code. Hit the joystick button and go to the secret temple.

Hint: You may wish to map out the whole island on paper to learn how to get to the temple and to find where all the needed objects are located.



Search the Secret Temple in Load 3.

Load 3

The maze of the temple is divided into numerous sections. To progress from one section to another requires finding the key object for that section and then passing through the magically barred wall. Beware of one-way walls, transporters, and other inconveniences—all are designed to thwart outsiders from being able to map their way to the secret chamber within. If you find the chamber, your survival will be guaranteed.

Note: Transporter squares are invisible and can only be found by walking into them. There is no other way to detect them.

Hint: A map may wish to map out each section on paper. Take into account transporters and one-way walls.

Special Instructions

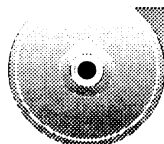
The right difficulty switch will place the game in PAUSE.

Code Number: If you have already completed the first or second load, you have been given a 12-digit code which you should have written down. Entering the code at the beginning of the first load will allow you to continue the game from where you left off. If you don't have a code, just hit RESET to start the game.

To enter a code, use the left joystick to move the "pointer" left and right along the displayed code. Push the button to change the number highlighted. Place the pointer on START and push the button to start a game with the displayed code value.

Scoring

Your performance is determined by the amount of time required to find the chamber and your LIFE points when you get there.



CD Bonus!

Survival Island solution maps have been included on this CD!
Use any CD-ROM reader that can read ISO-9660 CD-ROM format!



SWEAT: The Decathlon Game™

The Game That Might Have Been

Bring the Summer Olympics to Los Angeles in 1984, and what do you get? How about four Olympic-themed releases for the Atari 2600: Activision's "Decathlon," Epyx's "Summer Games," Konami's "Track & Field" and Starpath's "Sweat" for the Supercharger.

You may own the first two in your game collection, maybe even the third, but you say you've never heard of "Sweat?" Not surprising, but read on...

As things wound down at Starpath, three games from their library remained unreleased: Sword of Saros, Survival Island, and Sweat. Of the three, only the first two had been completed, so they were released via mail order to registered Supercharger owners. (See, sometimes it makes sense to send in that warranty card!)

The 13th game in the Starpath library would have been Sweat, programmed by Scott Nelson. Unfortunately, by the time work began on this title, the days were numbered for Starpath, and only a non-interactive title screen and a working javelin event had been completely programmed. Both of these are included on this Compact Disc, which means that the complete works of Starpath have finally been released for the first time.

So sample this "taste" of Starpath's last game. But if you want the full dish, you may want to check out the aforementioned "Summer Games," one of the first projects after Starpath was acquired by Epyx. It may share some minimal code with Sweat, although the game design evolved quite differently.

The Situation

You've made it through your country's Olympic trials, and now you stand poised to compete in the toughest of events, The Decathlon -- ten individual track and field contests which will test your strength, your accuracy, and your endurance. If you win, you will claim the title traditionally accorded to the Olympic Decathlon champion: The Greatest Athlete In The World!

Your Objective

You will compete in each of ten different events, accumulating points toward the overall Decathlon competition; or you can practice any one event for no points. You can complete the events in any order. The events which comprise the Olympic Decathlon are:

100 Meter Dash	110 Meter Hurdles
Long Jump	Discus
Shot Put	Pole Vault
High Jump	Javelin
400 Meter Race	1500 Meter Race

Game Options

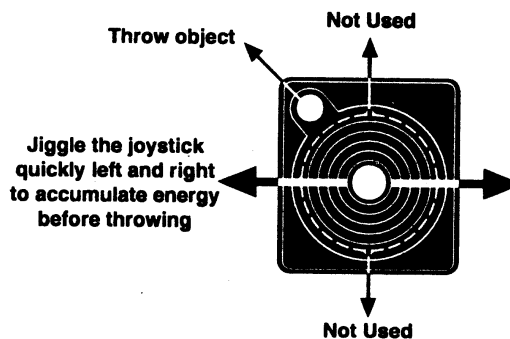
Select the game and number of players with the GAME SELECT switch. Each time you tug on the switch, you'll add a player.

The numbers on the lower right of the screen show the number of players and their high scores during the current playing round.

You can choose to practice in any one event, to compete in a single event, or to compete in all events -- the full Decathlon.

Controls

In the throwing events (discus, javelin, shot put), you will use the joystick to control gameplay as shown below:



This Incomplete Version

In this incomplete version, the first load displays a title screen with a runner, and is not functional. In the final version it would have allowed you to specify your country, and whether you wished to practice or compete.

The second load is the completed javelin event, which uses the throwing control described above.

Data File

Sweat:
The Decathlon Game

Release number: N/A
 CD Game Tracks: 23-24 (NTSC), NO PAL
 CD Preview Track: none
 Catalog number: AR-4???
 Designed by: Scott Nelson
 Released: 1995, on this CD!

Of the three games in the Starpath library when the company merged into Epyx, this incomplete game was the only unreleased title.

This game inspired the Epyx game "Summer Games," though only a few routines from this game were used in Summer Games.

Therefore, Sweat can be considered to be the grandparent of later Epyx releases "Winter Games" and "California Games."

An Interview With Stephen Landrum, Starpath Game Designer

By James Hague

Reprinted Courtesy Of 2600 Connection

Stephen Landrum will go down in 2600 history as the man responsible for *Communist Mutants from Space* for the Starpath Supercharger. He has also been involved in the design of several other 2600 games, including the excellent Supercharger version of *Frogger*. Since then he has left his mark on dozens of games, including *Blue Lightning* for the Atari Lynx. Stephen was kind enough to recall days gone by for **The 2600 Connection**.

Q: How did you come to work for Starpath?

SL: A friend of mine Craig Nelson was starting a company in 1981 called Acom. He and Bob Brown had worked together at Atari and then later at HMSI (Hitachi's American branch) and they wanted to make a device that could load games into the Atari 2600 from cassette tape. I had gone to school with Craig's younger brother Scott and when Craig first started looking for programmers he started with friends and acquaintances. At the time I was working for Science Applications Inc. but I jumped at the chance to write computer games. After several name changes the company was eventually called Starpath. Actually some units of the Supercharger and the first three games went out while the company was called Arcadia.

Q: Had you programmed any commercial games prior to *Communist Mutants from Space*?

SL: Sort of. I had written a number of simple BASIC and assembler games on the Apple II. None of them were of any commercial value but another friend wanted to start a software company and asked if I would spruce up one of my games (it was originally done in lo-res graphics and had no sound effects). The game was called *Viper*, and was similar to the UNIX game *Snake* or to the ancient coin-op games *Surround* or *Dominos*. Sirius Software was coming out with a nearly identical game called *Snake Byte*, and they bought the rights to my game to take it off the market. *Communist Mutants from Space* was my first real commercial title.

Q: Was *Communist Mutants* an original design or was it something you were assigned to write?

SL: It was my idea but I doubt that you could call the design very original. It was based on coin-op games that I liked at the time: *Space Invaders*, *Galaxian*, *Eagle*, and others.

Q: How long did it take to write?

SL: I don't recall exactly how long it took to write the game, but I think that the total time spent was around six months. Of course, I also spent some of that time just working out how the 2600 worked. We had to reverse engineer the unit, and discovered that it had some capabilities that its designers didn't even know about. The game was experimental in many ways. I was trying to push the limits of the 2600 to see what I could get it to do. The 2600 is very limited in its graphics capabilities. Little things in the game that don't mean anything to the consumers blew away people who knew how to program the 2600. The fact that I had six digits of score on one side of the screen, and another digit on the other side, or that the flags could show more than six on a row were both believed impossible until *Communist Mutants* did them.

Q: Did you work entirely by yourself?

SL: Yes. I did all of the programming, artwork and animation design, and sound effects. In computer or video games today, it is rare for any project to be done by fewer than three people, and it is not uncommon to have teams of a dozen or so.

Q: The obvious question I'm sure you've heard many times: about the name *Communist Mutants from Space*...

SL: I would like to take credit for the name, but I can't. It was developed by our advertising agency, and was the best thing that they did for Starpath. I must admit that I was really surprised when they suggested the name. I thought they were joking, but when I realized that they were serious, I couldn't believe it! It took me a little while to realize that the outrageousness of the name would actually help the program. We had a great poster made up from the artwork for the box cover, but unfortunately I only have one of them. We should have sold the poster, it would have made quite a bit of money.

Q: Were there any so-called "Easter eggs" in any of your games?

SL: In *Communist Mutants*, you can get the word "HI" on the score screen to change to "SHL" by holding down the button on the joystick while the game loads. In *Dragonstomper*, enter the "use shield" command while the image of the axis is on the screen and "SHL" appears on the bottom line of the command box. *Frogger* has no hidden messages or bonuses. I had intended to put one in, but never got around to it.

Q: Tell me about *Frogger*. Your version was a big improvement over the Parker Brothers cartridge. How was Starpath able to release the same title?

SL: Parker Brothers had licensed the ROM cartridge rights for *Frogger* for home computers and game systems. Sierra On-Line had licensed the magnetic media (cassette tape and floppy disk) rights for home computers and game systems. Starpath sub-licensed the rights from Sierra On-Line. Since our games were on cassette tape, we got a good arrangement on the license because there was no other way that Sierra was going to get a 2600 version of the game. I remember seeing *Frogger* at a CES trade show, and people were saying that Parker Brothers had the best conversion that had ever been done for the 2600 of an arcade title. I looked at it, and their version was good, but I insisted that I could make one that was much better. When we discovered the loophole in the licensing arrangements, I got the opportunity to prove it. When I did *Frogger* for Starpath, we got a coin-op machine and moved it into my office so that I could study the game. I got really good at it, and could wrap the score eventually, I tried to make the patterns and timing as similar as possible in the 2600 version, and did my best to copy the music as well. The whole conversion from start to finish took about three and a half months.

Q: What other 2600 games did you have a hand in?

SL: The titles that were all mine were *Communist Mutants*, *Dragonstomper*, and *Frogger*. I also did the final programming on *Suicide Mission* after Steve Hales left Starpath (Arcadia at that time). *Dragonstomper* took about several months to complete. I chose to do *Dragonstomper* because nobody had done a real Fantasy Role Playing game on the 2600 up to that point. There was *Adventure* (by Atari), but at the time I didn't consider it a real FRP.

Q: Technical information about the Supercharger is hard to come by. Could you give an overview of the features it provided or any internal information about it?

SL: The Supercharger plugs into the cartridge slot of the 2600, and has a mono jack to plug into a portable tape cassette player. Internally, the Supercharger has 16Kbit ROM (2Kbytes), and 48Kbit RAM (6Kbytes), and a custom gate array chip that monitored the tape signal and controlled the bank switching and read write control to the RAM. The tape loading code in the ROM of the Supercharger could load data at variable speeds, and in fact our tapes were recorded at different speeds on the two sides. The A side of the tape had an average bit frequency of 3KHz and the B side had an average bit frequency of 2KHz—the A side would load faster, but the B side was more reliable if the cassette player needed head cleaning or alignment. Having all of our game memory in RAM proved to be a big advantage for programming the 2600 at the time. The base unit only has 128 bytes of RAM. Loading games from tape also had another advantage—we could develop games that weren't all in memory at one time. *Dragonstomper* and *Escape from the MindMaster* were the first games to use the multi-load capability of the system.

Q: What sort of computer system did you use for development of Supercharger games?

SL: All of our Supercharger games were developed on Apple II computers. We used an assembler derived from the SC Assembler for the Apple II, but heavily modified by us. All of our systems had Axlon 320K RAM disks, which we used as RAM for our assembler, and some of the systems had accelerator cards.

Q: Did you leave Starpath when the market crashed? Those were hard times for game designers...

SL: I didn't exactly leave Starpath. Starpath, as with many other companies at the time, was in serious financial trouble. The programmers at Epyx had just left to form another company, and Epyx and Starpath shared some common investors, so the investors decided that it would be a good idea to merge the two companies together. Most of the management at Starpath was let go, but the programming staff was kept on during the merge.

Q: What have you done since then?

SL: From March 1981 through November 1983 I worked at Starpath. From November 1983 through February, 1987 I worked at Epyx.

At Epyx I was the lead programmer on a number of games for the C64, Apple II, and Atari 800. I also did a lot of fire fighting—that is, join a project that was in trouble, and bring it to a close. From February 1987 through November 1988, I worked at Electronic Arts. At Electronic Arts, I was the lead programmer on *Skate Or Die!* for the C64. After *Skate or Die!*, I was technical director for the action games group. From November 1988 until October 1990, I returned to Epyx to join the Lynx development project (we called it Handy at that time). This time around, I wrote *Blue Lightning* for the Lynx, worked on the system software for the Lynx, and finished the programming on *Gauntlet: The Third Encounter* after Jon Leupp left.

Q: What are you up to these days?

SL: I am working at a new company called New Technologies Group—nice and vague, isn't it—with RJ Mical and Dave Needle. RJ and Dave had headed up the Lynx division at Epyx. Unfortunately, I can't say what it is that we're working on. (*Editor's update: the secret project turned out to be the 3DO System.*)

Q: Did you have any unfinished 2600 games which were never released?

SL: Not really. I had several early screens and animations that I was playing around with, but nothing which was really approaching a game.

Q: Any ideas for games you would like to have done for the 2600?

SL: If you had asked me a few years ago, I could have answered. I've worked on too many things since then to really recall.

Q: It has been many years since the crash. Do you think video games have improved or taken a step back?

SL: Video games have definitely come a long way. I don't necessarily like every new trend I see in video games, but the industry is still really in its early stages.

Q: What do you see to be the biggest problems facing the industry today?

SL: Too little forward-thinking. Most people and companies are out there trying to make a buck today, and are not planning for anything for the future. Of course, it is not easy to plan for the future given the rate of change that everything is going through today.

Q: On a lighter note, what are your all-time favorite games?

SL: I like so many games, it's so hard to choose. I'll give it a stab, though. One of my all time favorite coin-op games was *Tempest*. I also played *Q*Bert* and *Dig Dug* a lot.

As for home computer games, *The Bard's Tale* held my interest for quite a while, and I was absolutely addicted to *Tetris*. *Populous* was fun, too, but it had too many levels that were too similar. Oh, yeah, *Super Breakout* on the Atari 800 was definitely a winner. *Zork*—on the mainframes, I didn't really like the home versions—has to be one of the all time classics. Of course, when I was playing it, the programmers were still changing and expanding the dungeon, so it was very exciting to enter familiar territory and find something new. For the Nintendo system, I thought that *The Legend of Zelda* was very well done, and *Super Mario Brothers 3* and *Super Mario World* were a lot of fun. To be honest, though, I prefer pinball games to video games. One of my favorite pins of all time is *Middle Earth* by Atari. *Flash* was fun. *Terminator II* and *Fun House* get my quarters these days when I drop by the arcades. I also play board games with friends on the weekends. Can you guess why I might have gotten into this industry?

Stephen Landrum's Softwareology

For Atari 2600 (requires Starpath Supercharger)
Communist Mutants From Space
Dragonstomper
Frogger
Suicide Mission*

For Commodore 64
Summer Games (Epyx)
PitStop II (Epyx)
Super Cycle (Epyx)
Temple of Apshai Trilogy** (Epyx)
Ballblazer* (Epyx)
Barbie* (Epyx)
Movie Monster Game* (Epyx)
Summer Games II* (Epyx)
Skate or Die! (Electronic Arts)

For Atari Lynx:
Blue Lightning (Epyx)
Gauntlet: The Third Encounter* (Epyx)

* finished the programming

** converted to C-64, Apple II, Atari 8-bit

CD-ROM EXTRAS!

What--There's More?

There's a *lot* more to this CD than just the game loads which allow you to play the classic Supercharger games using your compact disc player. In fact, the audio tracks (including previews) take up only a fraction of the 640 megabyte capacity of this CD.

Not being inclined to waste that much space, we have included a completely separate section of the disc which can be read by any computer that recognizes the ISO-9660 CD-ROM format.

To access this portion of the CD, you will need a CD-ROM reader that reads multi-session formatting. The CD is mastered to ISO-9660 Level 1 format, so it can be accessed by IBM and Macintosh (though the files have MS-DOS 8.3 character names).

Happy exploring! And keep playing that audio!

Development Information

Ever wondered exactly how a Supercharger works? There's a wealth of development information on this CD-ROM, including the materials used to translate the cassette tape loads to the much faster CD-ROM load format. There may even be enough information here for some enterprising Supercharger fan to program the first new Supercharger game in over a decade!

Check out the following files in the CD-ROM:

Macintosh-Only

- **Tape2Raw** - analyzes audio data and rewrites the data in raw digital format.
- **Raw2Bin** - validates the raw data, strips unnecessary header information, and verifies block checksums.

Macintosh Development Tools

- **XAsm** - a full-featured 6502 cross assembler.
- **SoundApp** - a shareware application for playing .WAV audio files (a common PC format).

Mac, PC, Amiga

- **Bin2Tape** - takes a 6K binary image and writes a .WAV audio file to disk which can be played into the Supercharger.
- **Source Code** to Supercharger programs including actual game source code.
- Note that the Macintosh development tools will run under emulation on an Amiga.

The Supercharger Archives

There are a number of files which document the lifespan of the Supercharger. Some images are stored as JPEGs, with others stored in TIFF format, uncompressed, with bytes in Motorola order.

Check out these directories in the CD-ROM, which can be found under the directory **SUPRCHGR**:

- **ADS** - several color advertisements for the Supercharger and its games that appeared in classic video game magazines.
- **BROCHURE** - The Arcadia and Starpath promotional brochures which include some unreleased games.
- **ENCLOSUR** - Enclosures found in your Supercharger package, including the warranty card.
- **GAMES** - a separate directory for each Supercharger game, including the original rule books, boxes, cassettes, as well as playing tips and maps for some games.
- **MISC** - all the scans that would not fit elsewhere.
- **SCRSAVER** - a series of bitmap files in 640x480 pixel format in 256 colors, suitable for use with popular screen savers that allow you to display a "slide show" of images in a single directory. The images are presented in Windows BMP, CompuServe GIF, and Macintosh PICT formats.

GCE Vectrex

When the Supercharger was first released, it was one of a number of classic game systems that appeared during the early days of the videogaming industry. One of the more interesting systems was GCE's Vectrex, which featured an integrated Vector Scan monitor. Vectrex material has been released for usage providing that it is not used for profit.

Check out the directory **VECTREX** to find:

- **3DIMAGER** - information about the Vectrex three-dimensional glasses, which allowed images to be in color and in three dimensions.
- **ADS** - several advertisements for the Vectrex system that appeared in video game magazines.
- **CONTROLS** - data and images about the Vectrex control panel and light pen.
- **ENCLOSUR** - Enclosures found in your Vectrex package, including the warranty card..
- **EXECUTES** - executable images of the Vectrex game ROMs, including new games "Vector Vaders" and "Patriots" by John Dondzilla.
- **GAMES** - scans of game boxes, rule books, etc..
- **MISC** - all the scans that would not fit elsewhere.
- **OVERLAYS** - heavily cleaned-up images of the rare Vectrex colored overlays, in GIF format, suitable for printing on a color printer.
- **RULETEXT** - Text files of the Vectrex game rule books.

How the Supercharger CD Came To Be

Compiled from various sources

This compact disc, released under the auspices of the tongue-in-cheek "CyberPuNKs," is a non-profit labor whose timeline stretches back nearly as far as the brief history of videogaming. It is the story of a pioneering company whose lifespan was far too short, and it is later the story of dedicated fans of classic videogaming systems and their desire to produce, as well as to enjoy the works of others. How did this CD end up in your hands? Let's start at the beginning...

In 1982, a company named **Arcadia** shook the videogaming world by introducing the **Supercharger**, a device which allowed Atari 2600 owners to load special games from cassette tape with better graphics than those found in cartridge-based games. In these days of Sega's 32X unit and 3DO's M2 upgrade, it is difficult to recall just how radical a move it was to insert an upgrade module into an existing cartridge slot; in this time of Playstation and Saturn, it is difficult to recall how innovative it was to load a game from a serial device into RAM.

But the Supercharger worked, providing enhanced gameplay to the then-aging Atari 2600. The first few games from Arcadia provided top-notch graphics and gameplay, even if the game concepts were fairly standard. Later games such as *Escape from the Mindmaster*, *Dragonstomper*, and *Survival Island* sequentially loaded additional game scenarios into memory, allowing a depth of gameplay that otherwise would have taken several cartridges. Twelve games were released for the Supercharger, and a thirteenth was begun but never completed or released.

When Emerson released a video game system named the Arcadia 2001, Arcadia Inc. changed their name to **Starp**ath to avoid potential legal troubles. This was the least of their worries. Timing is everything, and Arcadia/Starpath had the bad luck to release their product about six months before the Great Video Game Crash.

When some "firm" commitments for orders failed to come through, Starpath ran out of money and in November, 1983, merged with **Epyx** (who happened to be searching for new development staff). While the Starpath programmers began work on Epyx projects, A & B Sales liquidated Starpath's remaining stock, releasing the final two Supercharger games, *Sword of Saros* and *Survival Island*. Box and cassette artwork were never prepared for those two games, so they arrived in a "baggie" with one-color manuals. A thirteenth game, *Sweat: The Decathlon Game* had been begun, but being incomplete was not released by A & B. *Sweat* eventually inspired Epyx's popular *Summer Games* program, though only minimal *Sweat* code was actually used in *Summer Games*.

When Epyx later went out of business themselves, the rights to the Supercharger games became the property of **Bridgestone Multimedia**, though no Starpath developers made it as far as Bridgestone.

Many years later, following the release of the GCE Vectrex games into the public domain by the remaining copyright holders, several avid classic video game fans considered the possibility of transferring the Supercharger game library to Compact Disc before consumers' cassette tapes from 1982-83 deteriorated to unreadability.

Russ Perry, Jr., who had won a copy of every Supercharger Game from *Electronic Fun* magazine in 1983, began researching the possibilities in 1991. After contacting Craig Nelson at Epyx to ask about obtaining the rights, he realized he could not afford to finance the project. In 1994, he discovered that **Glenn Saunders** had begun rounding up a group to do a CD. Perry offered to try to obtain the rights through his prior contacts, eventually working through Bill Lanphear at Bridgestone. Though Bridgestone was amenable to a limited non-profit CD to accommodate classic game fans still using their Superchargers, usage rights to the games had been given

to Atari by Epyx. In fact, a cartridge version of *Rabbit Transit* had been prepared as a test. Perry and Lanphear's signatures were joined by John Skruch's of Atari, and the project became officially legal in December of 1994. Saunders immediately put out word on the Internet that the project was under way and that reservations would be taken by way of an Internet mailing list.

Soon into the project, hardware/software designer **Jim Nitchals** took charge of mastering the CD. He abandoned the idea of a simple cassette-to-compact disc audio dub in favor of taking a digitized recording of the cassette audio, analyzing it the same way the Supercharger would, then reconstructing the tape from actual program data. It was rough going because the tapes he was using were marginal, and his Supercharger even more so. He had already figured out how the Supercharger does bank switching when Craig Nelson of Starpath found the specifications, including information on doing multi-loads.

Finally in January of 1995, classic game collector and computer documentation specialist **Dan Skelton** read about the project in an Internet Newsgroup, and, when writing to reserve his CD, offered the use of his equipment to scan rule booklets and to capture game screens, if needed. Finding that no one had yet volunteered to write the manual, he offered to create the manual based on the original rule booklets, and to flesh out the booklet with additional material -- like this page.

Nitchals, familiar with compact disc formatting, realized that multiple-session formats would allow for the Supercharger audio tracks to be stored on the same disc as hundreds of megabytes of CD-ROM computer files. So Nitchals and Skelton began separate tasks: Nitchals organized the tools he had developed and used to create the Supercharger audio tracks, thereby turning the CD into an Atari 2600 development system for the creation of new Supercharger games; simultaneously, Skelton began scanning all published Supercharger materials, so that the CD would serve as permanent documentation of the output of Starpath. Since the materials for GCE's Vectrex had been released to public domain for non-profit use, they could be included on the CD, so searches were begun to obtain Vectrex materials -- especially the rare color overlays.

But during these years of work, with four people coordinating a project as complex as many new games, it is a tribute to the flexibility of the Internet that none of these people have ever met -- in fact, they have never even talked to each other. This entire project was begun, coordinated, and executed entirely over the Internet, with only the occasional mailing of diskettes and printed materials intruding on the pure electronic nature of the project.

Even though this project was organized to preserve the contents of 12 audio tapes before they disintegrated, it became a permanent archive of two classic game systems, as well as development tools for the Atari 2600 which are in many ways superior to those available to classic game programmers during the VCS's heyday. And the project became a cutting-edge business model for the distribution of development over widespread locations.

All this inspired by one of the most unique devices ever to grace a classic video game system, the Starpath Supercharger.