

STRÄTOS

ATARI Version by Neil Larimer

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SUBSPACE DISPATCH 1407.1

SOURCE: Alpha Prime/Tactical HQ/Sector 23.87

DESTINATION: Galactic Security/Stratos/New Earth/Sol System

SUBJECT: M'korg Invasion

Security Commander:

Not since the devastation wrought during the Eugenics Wars in the late 1990s has a threat of such magnitude existed. Little need be said about the M'korgs; their transformation of fertile, populated worlds into smoking cinders is known throughout the Inner Orbits.

Now we fear the worst — surveillance reports indicate that the Martian colonies have fallen and that the M'korg fleet is now en route to New Earth.

Due to the extreme gravity of the situation, the Prime Admonishment is officially rescinded and permission is hereby granted to defend the capital city, Stratos, with the Armageddon Wave Device, which generates the only known form of energy capable of penetrating M'korg Starjammer defense shields.

Good luck.

Alpha Prime, Commander of Planetary Defenses

DISPATCH COMPLETE

STRATOS — ATARI VERSION — 16K TAPE/32K DISK

Welcome to ATARI STRATOS!

The invasion is only moments away — prepare for a battle that will shake the world to its very core! Exiting hyperspace in the wink of an eye, M'korg Starjammers appear in groups of three — death-dealing trinities of raw force which methodically rain terrible Atomic Core Disruptors (known in the vernacular as 'matter ravagers') onto the capital city of New Earth, Stratos. Not even the protective force envelope surrounding the city can long endure the effects! But the situation isn't hopeless — the force envelope can be repaired by means of a special Repair Saucer. And, of course, there are the awesome offensive energies of the Armageddon Wave Device. . . .

A high-speed, machine language game for one or two players, ATARI STRATOS challenges you to successfully defend a futuristic city from the attacking M'korgs. Please take a few moments to read through this manual; it will greatly add to your understanding and enjoyment of this entertaining game.

ATARI STRATOS — A Glossary of Terms

(Or: You Can't Tell the Bad Guys Without a Score Card)

ARMAGEDDON WAVE DEVICE (AWD) — Sometimes known as the 'Last-Ditch Device'; manipulates and focuses highly unstable 'Q-energy' — the only known form of energy capable of destroying neutronium-hulled M'korg Starjammers.

ATOMIC CORE DISRUPTORS — See MATTER RAVAGERS

FORCE ENVELOPE — The protective shield that shrouds the city. Heretofore believed to be impervious to all forms of weaponry; however, the appearance of the M'korgs and their awesome matter-destroying bombs has resulted in a revision of that theory.

MATTER RAVAGERS — Colloquialism; refers to Atomic Core Disruptors — the small, explosive devices dropped from M'korg Starjammers.

M'KORG — Any member of the race of slug-like beings believed to originate from the Antares Nebula region.

REPAIR SAUCER — A small, maneuverable drone craft, repairs damage to force envelope by neutralizing damaging energy residue left by matter ravagers and meteors.

STARJAMMER — Broad-based terminology for any of the 7 classes of M'korg faster-than-light warships.

ANXIOUS TO BEGIN PLAYING? TRY THESE CONDENSED INSTRUCTIONS!

1. Attach joystick(s) to port(s) on the front of your ATARI.
2. The tape and disk Loading Instructions can be found at the end of this portion of the manual. Follow them.
3. When the title screen appears:
 - (a) Press **OPTION** to select one or two players.
 - (b) Press **B** and **C** to alter the colors of the background and city respectively.
 - (c) Press **S** to 'flip' between the two available sound routines.
 - (d) Press **SELECT** to choose novice or expert playing mode.
 - (e) Press **START** to begin play.
4. Object of game is to destroy enemy Starjammers and to prevent destruction of city. Use joystick handle to move cross-hair sight over attacking ships or meteors; press joystick button to fire weapon.
5. Force Envelope Repair: Press **SPACE BAR** to activate Repair Saucer during pauses in action. Maneuver saucer out of city and over force envelope with joystick handle. To effect repairs, use joystick handle to 'touch' saucer to holes in envelope. Return saucer to resting pad via same route of exit.
6. Game ends when power towers are destroyed.

GAME ELEMENTS

Although STRATOS is not an overly complex game, the prudent player will want to become familiar with the tools of the fray. Examine each in turn carefully.

ENEMY SHIPS — M'korg Starjammers always attack in groups of 3. They will first appear as small points of light which will grow in intensity until their true shape is evident. Once their ships have 'solidified,' they will usually attack immediately.

M'korg attack strategy remains consistent: a brief search for either an opening in the protective force envelope or a direct assault on the envelope itself. Upon completion of the attack, the M'korg Starjammers will retreat into hyperspace and a new group will take their place. Each type of Starjammer has its own special 'approach' pattern. A new type of Starjammer (there are a total of 7 distinct shapes) will be added to each wave. At the same time, however, one will be subtracted, keeping the number of ships constant while permitting a little variety.

ATTACK WAVES — Each attack wave consists of 15 groups of ships. As mentioned above, the ships attack in groups of 3, so there will be 15 groups of 3 in each wave for a total of 45. There are an unlimited number of attack waves.

REPAIR SAUCER — The continuous attack brought to bear against the protective energy envelope will result in 'holes' throughout the body of the envelope. These holes can be sealed by a special craft especially designed for the task. The Repair Saucer can be activated at any point during play by pressing the **SPACE BAR**.

It is strongly advised to use the saucer only during the pauses between waves when the craft is least vulnerable to meteors and attacking M'korg ships. To repair a hole, press the **SPACE BAR** to activate the saucer; then press the joystick forward until the saucer reaches its 'limit,' which is just above the energy envelope itself. You can then use the joystick to guide the saucer over the damaged portion of the envelope. By 'touching' the Repair Saucer to a hole, the rift will be sealed.

Upon completion of repairs, the saucer **MUST** return via the same route it emerged or else **IT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PENETRATE THE ENERGY ENVELOPE**. Don't become discouraged if you encounter difficulty in reentering the city; the passage of entry/exit is not only narrow, it's invisible, too!

METEOR SHOWERS — Even more destructive than matter ravagers due to their greater size, meteor showers can and will appear from time to time. Fortunately, you will be warned of their approach. During this warning 'pause,' you will have a brief opportunity to activate the Repair

Saucer and patch some holes, if necessary — make the most of it! Once the meteors appear, use the AWD to destroy as many as possible. A meteor will damage the force envelope ONLY if it strikes a section of the shield already weakened; otherwise, it will have no effect.

CITY, TOWERS and the ARMAGEDDON WAVE DEVICE — The awesome AWD is powered by the 8 flashing towers that lie within the confines of the city itself. Needless to say, these towers are crucial to the city's survival. The power, or more precisely, the range of the AWD is related directly to the number of flashing towers remaining at any given time. Each time the AWD is fired, there is a 'spilling' effect that causes the the energy burst to spread out around the cross-hair sights. This effect will diminish as the power towers are worn down by meteors and/or enemy fire.

The AWD is aimed by pressing the joystick handle in the direction you wish to fire. To score a 'hit,' push the joystick button as soon as an object is sighted through the small movable cross hairs which are superimposed over the playing area. There are an unlimited number of 'shots' available to the player — provided that at least some portion of the power towers remains intact. Rapidly pressing the joystick button will cancel the energy 'spilling' effect, so remember: timing is very important.

POINTS, SKILL LEVELS and GAME CONTROLS

SKILL LEVELS - NOVICE/EXPERT — By pressing **SELECT** on the right side of your ATARI's keyboard, NOVICE or EXPERT playing level can be chosen. Points are awarded for each Starjammer destroyed; additional point values are as follows:

NOVICE — Starjammers and meteors have a value of 20 points each. An additional 400 points is awarded for a surviving Repair Saucer at the conclusion of each wave. One bonus saucer is awarded every 5000 points. The bonus score is estimated in the following manner: $20 \times \text{WAVE NUMBER} \times \text{NUMBER OF REMAINING TOWERS}$.

EXPERT — Starjammers and meteors have a value of 50 points each. An additional 1000 points is awarded for a surviving Repair Saucer at the conclusion of each wave. One bonus Saucer is awarded every 20,000 points. The player's bonus score is estimated in the following manner: $50 \times \text{WAVE NUMBER} \times \text{NUMBER OF REMAINING TOWERS}$.

HIGH SCORE — The computer will note any score that is higher than the previous score listed. High scores and current scores are listed at the top

of the screen, and will alternate between games when the title screen appears. Disk owners will have their high score saved to disk. Make sure that your drive is on, the STRATOS disk is inserted, and that no write-protect tab is on the disk.

JOYSTICK CONTROLS — By pressing the joystick handle in the correct direction, you can control the cross hairs and position them over the attacking enemy. To destroy a meteor or enemy ship, press the red button on the joystick when you have the object sighted as closely as possible to the cross hairs.

KEY FUNCTIONS

Below, you'll find a complete listing of the various key functions necessary for play.

B	CHANGE BACKGROUND COLORS
C	CHANGE CITY'S COLORS
S	CHANGE SOUND PITCH
SPACE BAR	ACTIVATE REPAIR SAUCER
OPTION	SELECT 1 OR 2 PLAYERS
SELECT	SELECT SKILL LEVEL
CTRL 1	PAUSE GAME

BEGINNING THE GAME

While STRATOS is loading (see Tape and Disk Loading Instructions at the end of this section), the phrase 'PREPARE FOR STRATOS BY NEIL LARIMER COPYRIGHT 1982 BY ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL' will scroll horizontally across the screen (disk version only). In a moment, the title screen will appear. When it does, you will have the opportunity to exercise several options, including altering the games's color schemes and sounds, selecting the number of players and picking a skill level.

PLAYER SELECT — STRATOS can be enjoyed by either one or two players. For a one-player game, press **OPTION**; for two players, press **OPTION** once again.

COLOR AND SOUND CHANGE — These features will allow you to select colors from a wide range of combinations and to choose between two differently pitched sound routines.

To alter the background colors, press **B** until you are satisfied with the color; to change the colors of the city, press **C**.

To change the pitch of the sound, press **S**. You will be able to toggle between two distinctly different effects.

SKILL LEVEL — To select the Novice or Expert skill level, press **SELECT**. (For more information, see POINTS, SKILL LEVELS and GAME CONTROLS above.)

After you've chosen the appropriate options, press **START** to begin play.

STRATOS — Game Synopsis

As you can see, the screen is graphically composed of two distinct areas. Towards the bottom is the city, Stratos; the upper portion of the screen is the area in which the enemy ships will appear. Within the city are the flashing power towers — the sources of your offensive energies — and just above the city is the protective force envelope.

Moments after the game begins, the first of the enemy ships will appear. Their sole objective is to penetrate the force envelope — a goal which is met by repeated and persistent attacks with the shield-damaging matter ravagers dropped by their ships. By moving the cross hairs with the joystick and aligning them over the attacking ships (or as closely as you can), their ships can be destroyed.

Frequently, the M'korgs will retreat into hyperspace long enough to avoid the deadly meteor storms that have plagued Earth in recent years. The meteors can be destroyed with your firepower for additional points. Once the 'storm' has passed, one may be assured that the M'korgs will return and resume their attack.

At the conclusion of each attack wave, there will be a brief pause before the next group of enemy ships appears. This is an excellent time to use your handy Repair Saucer to mend those unsightly holes in the city's damaged force envelope. (For more information, see REPAIR SAUCER above.)

END OF THE GAME

Since the object of STRATOS is to prevent the annihilation of the city, the game will terminate once the power towers have been destroyed. When this occurs (and it will happen sooner or later!), be prepared for the awesome arrival of the Vessel Supreme. . . !

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS - ATARI 16K TAPE

If you have the tape version of ATARI STRATOS, you'll need to follow the loading instructions below. Before you begin, make sure that the cassette head is clean. Even the smallest speck of material on the surface of the record/play head can prevent a successful load.

1. Remove all cartridges from your ATARI, including BASIC.
2. Turn off ALL peripherals such as disk drives, printers and expansion interfaces. You may leave the monitor on.
3. Insert the STRATOS tape into the cassette player. Rewind if necessary.
4. While holding down the **START** key on your ATARI, turn the computer on. (The power switch can be found on the right-hand side of the system.) The video display should be clear and you will hear a single tone.
5. Press PLAY on your ATARI cassette player.
6. Press the **RETURN** key on the ATARI.
7. The tape will load and the game will begin shortly.

TAPE DIDN'T LOAD? HERE'S HELP.

If you get a BOOT ERROR or if the prompt MEMO PAD appears within a few moments of loading, you may need to remove the tape and 'cue' it to the beginning of the first long tone. This cueing procedure will have to be done on a separate cassette player — one that is capable of audio playback. After you've cued the tape, place it back into your ATARI cassette player. Repeat the loading procedure.

Still having problems? ATARI STRATOS has been recorded on both sides of the tape. Repeat the procedure above — this time using the flip side of the tape. Remove the tape, turn it over and place it back into the cassette player. Rewind it to the beginning and go through the loading procedure once more. Again, we cannot overemphasize the importance of a clean record/playback head!

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS - ATARI 32K DISK

If you have the disk version of ATARI STRATOS, you'll need to follow the instructions below. If you want to have your high scores recorded permanently, be sure to leave the disk in the drive during play.

1. Turn off your ATARI computer.
2. Turn on your disk drive.
3. Wait until the red busy light is off and then place the STRATOS disk into the drive.
4. Remove all cartridges from the computer, including BASIC.
5. Turn on your ATARI computer.
6. The program will load and begin.