

The Famed Commodore Amiga Game

109%
Amiga
Computing

BATTLE SQUADRON

Insert Coin

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SATIII-0845 PULSCOM BULLETIN

IMMEDIATE NOTIFICATION: ALERT STATUS 2.

To: Squadron Commander/Battle Group V
From: GALAX LUNAR HQ
Subject: Hostage Situation
Immediate Action:
All orders cancelled. All Pilots confined to base. Await orders.

Date: 01/08/2400

INTEL reports that Commander Berry Mayers and Commander Lori Bergin are being held hostage by Barrax forces. Pulse-variable communications indicate that they were attacked by a Barrax Nova Cruiser at 3900 hours S.R.T. in the Karnus Sector, 671 988 4360.

The commanders were able to partially transmit a final message.

Trace lock analysis follows:

"ability to....invisible...limited..time.....

fast.t..acce....brigg.ht.light..beaming us aboard..."

Shortly after the attack, Inter Trak scans identified a massive energy source in the same sector moving toward the planet Terrainia. It is believed that the hostages are being held in the inner recesses of that planet.

Mayers and Bergin were returning from a successful mission to Urania, the home planet of the Barrax Empire, and are in possession of information that is integral to the defense of Earth and the success of any future counteroffensive actions.

SATIII-0845 PULSCOM BULLETIN

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION: ALERT STATUS 1

To: Squadron Commander/Battle Group V
From: GALAX LUNAR HQ
Subject: Mission Briefing
Mission Code: C61-178DE

Date:01/09/2400

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE:

Eliminate Barrax life forms from the planet's surface and subterranean emplacements. Proceed without delay and begin immediate rescue efforts of the hostages. It is imperative that we free commanders Mayer and Bergin before Barrax interrogators are able to break through their psychological defenses.

INTEL Brief:

Barrax activities have escalated in the Terrainian region for the last 10 years. An analysis of transport patterns and laser scan results indicate that this planet is a major weapons research and development center for the Barrax Empire. It is highly probable that any offensive action will be met by genetically engineered and biological weapons technology never before encountered in this galaxy.

INTEL Recommendation:

A large attacking force would prove counterproductive, due to the 100% probability that early warning Barrax defenses would be alerted. The only chance for a successful rescue mission (50% confidence level) is to send a small strike force comprised of one or two Delta II class cruisers with stealth capability.

INSTALLATION / STARTUP

Windows

Start the installation program by double-clicking on the respective icon, then follow the on-screen instructions. When the OpenAL sub-installer window appears, install OpenAL by pushing OK. Upon installation completion, run the game by double-clicking the corresponding desktop- or start-menu-icon.

AmigaOS 4.x

Unpack the LHA archive to where you want the game to stay on your partition. You can do that manually by opening a shell, go to the folder where the archive is located and type something like

`lha x battlesquadron.lha Work:`

where Work: should be replaced by your preferred destination folder or partition. A Battle Squadron folder will be created there. To run the game just open that folder from the Workbench and double-click the Battle Squadron icon.

Mac OSX

Start the installation program by double-clicking on the respective icon, then follow the on-screen instructions. Upon installation completion, run the game by double-clicking the corresponding icon in your Applications folder.

BEFORE YOU START...

... you should know how to exit the game:

On all systems you can quit the game through the main-menu's **Exit** button. If you run the game in window-mode you can also quit by clicking the window's close-gadget.

Depending on your operating system a standard keyboard-shortcut will also immediately terminate the game:

AmigaOS 4.x:	Ctrl+C
Windows:	Alt+F4
Mac OSX:	Command+Q

Pressing the **ESC key** while playing will immediately **pause** the action and invoke the pause menu, which among other options that are explained later also offers a button to return to the main-menu.

MAIN MENU

After the initial Cope-Com intro animation you will automatically enter the game's main menu. Here you can chose to start playing, view high scores and achievements or to adjust the game's settings.

If you don't perform any activity for a certain amount of time the game's demo mode will start automatically, demonstrating a typical 2-player scenery, introducing some enemies and scores and showing the credits. You can always exit the demo-mode and return to the menu immediately by pushing Fire / Return / left mouse button.

Depending on your settings pushing **Start** will start the game, either in single- or dual-player-mode.

Single Player Mode

In single player mode, you won't encounter the same number of enemy air and ground emplacements like in dual-player combat. You will be using the controller selected for player 1 on the controller options menu. Nevertheless, the game is more difficult to complete as a single player.

Dual Player Mode

In dual-player mode, each ship has full-scrolling mobility across the screen. It is not necessary for the player who starts on the left to remain on the left during battle. When missile upgrades or "smartbomb" capsules become visible (see Acquiring Weapons), only the first player to catch the capsule acquires the weapon. When you wish to enter a new level (see Changing Levels), both players must access the entry point simultaneously.

Team Combat Mode

In team combat Mode, both players are working together to rescue the commanders Mayer and Bergin from the Barrax Empire. You will have to keep track of your partner's progress and difficulties, as well as your own, in order to succeed on this perilous mission. It is recommended that your team carefully collect the *Nova* missile capsules and ensure that neither player exhaust their supply.

Free-for-All Competition

During free-for-all competition each player is trying to collect the most points. Proceed with caution at entry points to new levels, because both players must enter simultaneously.

GAMEPLAY OPTIONS

There are several options that influence the game-play, all adjustable inside the Gameplay sub-menu. You can also watch the background story and a quick tutorial from here.

Difficulty Level

Select one of the game's 4 difficulty levels. Which level you chose influences the number of lives you possess at startup, your initial ready weapon, the maximum number of enemy bullets, the speed of enemy bullets and missiles, the size of you hit-box and the time delay for enemy fire.

Cadet

Piece of cake

Lieutenant

normal difficulty. This matches the classic Amiga OCS version and is the default.

Squadron Leader

Hard

Air Commodore

Extremely tough

Number of players

Select whether you want to fly alone or simultaneously want to play with a friend on the same machine.

Game speed

50Hz PAL

The game speed will match the original European PAL Amiga version of Battle Squadron.

60Hz NTSC

The game speed will match the original US NTSC Amiga version of Battle Squadron.

Device Native

The game will run as fast as possible, useful for slow computers.

Story

Watch the game's background story.

How To Play

Watch a brief introduction on the basic game mechanics.

GRAPHICS OPTIONS

There are many options that influence the game's visual appearance as well as its performance in terms of "frames per second". While on PC and Mac performance is no issue it may be necessary to tweak those settings to get the best out of the game if you run it on AmigaOS 4.X hardware.

Scanlines On/Off

If you turn this on, scan-lines will be simulated, giving the game a nice additional retro flair. Note that your vertical screen/window size should be ≥ 768 rows, otherwise it won't look as good as it could.

Turning scan-lines off increases performance a bit.

On AmigaOS-machines equipped with rather old Radeon cards (≤ 9200) it may be quite a lot though...

Shadows On/Off

If you turn this on then all floating enemies, extra-containers and enemy-bullets will cast a drop-shadow, enhancing visual appearance.

Turning shadow off does not increase performance but only restores the look of the original 1989 Amiga version.

FPS On/Off (AmigaOS 4.x only)

If turned on a small number on top of the screen will display the current "frames per second" while playing. If that number is constantly below 50 the game runs too slow. In that case you should reduce graphics quality to get a higher performance.

Zoom

The original game was designed for old TV screens and Amiga monitors. Today most monitors are wide-screens. This makes it necessary to adjust the game accordingly. Depending on your screen setup and your personal taste select one of the following options to tweak the playfield's size and aspect-ratio.

Zoom Off

The playfield will appear 100% aspect-correct. If you own a wide-screen a rather larger border will occlude the unused screen space.

Half Zoom

The playfield will be stretched horizontally so that the abovementioned borders are cut to half. So you get a bigger playfield, but slightly stretched graphics.

Full Zoom

The playfield will be stretched to fit the complete screen, no side-borders. So you get a full-screen-playfield at the cost of rather heavily stretched graphics, depending on your screen's aspect-ratio.

Resolution Low/High (AmigaOS 4.X only)

If you select Low Resolution then the game will internally don't use the full playfield resolution but skip every 9th pixel-column. As a result you may experience a huge performance gain at the cost of some visual quality.

This should be your "last resort" in case the game doesn't run fast enough on your machine. If possible keep High Resolution.

Filters

The filter option is the one that has the biggest effect the visual appearance (and in case of AmigaOS 4.x also has the biggest effect on performance). The filters influence the overall visual appearance of the playfield and everything on it. There are 4 different filters to choose from:

Retro

Actually no filter at all. The playfield is drawn as is and corresponds to the original Amiga output as exactly as possible.

The fastest filter.

Smooth

People who don't like blocky retro pixels should consider choosing the smooth-filter. It really softens the picture.

Almost as fast as the "Retro"-filter.

Retro Plus

Provides blocky retro pixels while at the same time adding a very subtle softening. The preferred filter for real classic-fans.

Needs significant CPU-time.

Modern

Unlike the Smooth-filter the Modern-filter applies a "smart" smoothing. It analyzes every frame and only smooths diagonal and round shapes.

Needs a huge amount of CPU-time.

Window / Full screen

Toggle between windowed and full-screen mode. In full-screen-mode the game will cover the whole display.

Notes for AmigaOS 4.x users:

When you toggle to full-screen-mode an ASL screen-mode-requester will appear.

Selecting a 16-bit screen-mode may increase the game's performance significantly!

Selecting a small resolution (like 1024 x 768) will significantly increase the game's performance too!

If you don't want the requester to appear you can also define your own custom screen and enter its name in the game icon's

FULLSCREENNAME tool-type.

The tooltype **FASTWINDOW=1** enables a special experimental blitting mode. It is used if you run the game in window mode with vsync enabled and may get you some extra frames per second.

Important hint for AmigaOS 4.x users:

You may select for example 1024x768 even if your monitor is a 1920x1200 16:10 screen where 1024x768 would normally lead to distorted pixels!

The game automatically adjusts its drawing to correct such distortions, so you can consider selecting such a resolution to get a huge performance gain.

VSync On / Off

Enable or disable vertical synchronization with your display. Usually you should leave this on, since this provides the best experience and avoid tearing artifacts.

However, in case the game runs too slow you may try to get a better performance by disabling VSync.

Note that depending on your system- and graphics-driver-settings this toggle may have no effect at all.

Note for AmigaOS 4.x users:

As of now vertical-sync doesn't seem to work in window-mode. In window-mode the OS' sync-function only waits for a certain amount of time, effectively simply reducing the games performance without any true sync at all. If you want to run the game in window-mode and find it running too slow, then consider turning off VSync.

Sprite-Skip On / All frames (AmigaOS 4.x only)

To get additional performance at the cost of quality you may select to enable "Sprite-Skip".

The original game, as well as this new version, updates the enemies and background every 2nd frame (to be exact: all BOBs and the playfield) and the player-ship, bullets, etc. every frame (all sprites).

If you enable "Sprite-Skip" the sprites will also only be updated every 2nd frame.

Depending on your system this may allow you to even use the CPU-intensive Modern filter.

CONTROLS OPTIONS

Your joystick, keyboard or mouse can control the movement of your ship, the firing of particle beam weapons and the release of *Nova* smart bombs.

The mouse can always be used to control player 1. Simply move it around and your ship will follow your movement. The left mouse button controls firing of the current weapon, the right mouse button releases a *Nova* missile.

The controls menus, one for each player, allows you to configure joysticks or the keyboard to control your respective ship.

Default settings are a cursor-key-mapping for player 1 and a WASD-mapping for player 2.

Note: If you play in single-player-mode then you can either use player 1's or player 2's controller assignments.

Up, Down, Left, Right

Assign the key or joystick-direction you want to use to move your ship in the respective direction.

Fire

Assign the key or joystick-button you want to use to control your weapon. Depending on the Auto-Fire setting this will either activate or deactivate shooting.

Nova

Assign the key or joystick-button you want to use fire one of your *Nova* missiles.

Slow, Fast

Assign a key or joystick-button you want to hold during moving your ship to adjust its velocity.

Auto fire mode

Select one of the following 3 shooting variants:

Manual Fire

You have to constantly tap and release the fire-button to shoot. While this is the most exhausting way to shoot it allows the highest fire-rate.

Semi-Auto-Fire

Hold the fire-button to keep shoot.
Release the fire-button to stop shooting.

Auto-Fire

The ship fires automatically all the time.
Hold the fire-button to stop shooting.

Speed Scale

Adjust the general velocity of your ship.

AUDIO OPTIONS

Here you can adjust the music and sound volume and access the “music box” which allows you to play all the four game tunes.

SCORES

Battle Squadron features local and online high score lists, as well as achievements. In the scores-menu you can watch all high score lists and the achievement you unlocked so far. You can also login to or log out from the online-high-score server.

High-score tables

Click the button of the high-score list you want to inspect. There are 8 different high-score lists, one for each difficulty level and for single- or dual-player-mode. You can toggle between the online or offline scores for the respective table through the cycle-button at the bottom of the list.

Achievements

Here you can inspect all of the game's 36 achievements you can possibly unlock, each represented by a medal and a descriptive text. Achievements you still didn't achieve are displayed as silhouette.

Achievements are unlocked during game-play. Whenever you accomplish a certain task a message will pop up telling you that you just unlock the matching achievement as reward for your bravery.

Enable / Disable online scores

When you enable online-scores by logging into the online-scores-server your high-score is automatically submitted to the server to appear in the corresponding online-high-score-table.

Initially online-scores are disabled. To enable it you will have to supply a user-name, which will be shown in the online-list, and a valid e-mail-address of yours. A verification-mail will be sent to that mail-address.

PLAYING BATTLE SQUADRON

GENERAL

Battle Squadron is a classic shoot'em up, so the general rules are quite simple: shoot everything that moves, dodge enemy bullets, collect extras, score as many points as possible, stay alive as long as possible.

CHANGING LEVELS

You can enter the subterranean levels on Terrainia by moving your ship onto the entry point identified by an "Enter Here" sign. Care must be taken in two-player combat, because both players must simultaneously place their ship on the sign. Each time you enter a new level, the enemies' number increases and new weapons will be fired at your ship. It is advisable to upgrade your weapons and collect additional Nova missiles before taking on the challenge of a new level.

ACQUIRING WEAPONS

You will find it difficult to succeed on your mission using only the weapons supplied on your Delta 1 Strike Cruiser. New weapons and upgrades can be acquired on Terrainia if your combat skills are up to the test (See Weapons Systems for details on weapons types). Previous engagements with Barrax fighters have led to the discovery that certain jettisoned Barrax weapons can be recovered for use by your spacecraft.

Once you have destroyed specific targets, you will notice a rectangular capsule moving back and forth on your computer display.

Two different capsules have been identified:

[X] This glowing capsule changes color at every turn. The weapon you acquire or upgrade is based on the color when you catch it. For example, if you have captured a "red" *magnetic torpedo*, you can upgrade the weapon by capturing another red capsule.

[M] This capsule is released whenever you defeat a 4-member Barrax fleet. You automatically receive a *Nova* missile for capturing this one!

WEAPONS SYSTEMS

You will discover 25 different weapons configurations in BattleSquadron. As you work your way through the various levels, you will find that certain weapons are best used in specific situations.

MAGNETIC TORPS (RED)

These balls of energy are absolutely devastating, but in the first versions you acquire, enemy ship can slip right through. There are six upgrades available and the last one cuts the widest swath through Barrax defenses.

ANTI-MATTER PARTICLE BEAM (BLUE)

This radiant blue beam weapon is deadly and accurate, and will fire with amazing rapidity. One of the upgrades is the only weapon in your repertoire that fires backward and forward at the same time. At one level, that's a distinct advantage. This weapon, however, cuts the narrowest path through the opposition.

MAGMA WAVE (ORANGE)

The swirling magma wave may provide the best combination of raw power, speed and accuracy. The width and duration of its "devastation zone" are amazing.

EMERALD LASER (GREEN)

This laser sends the longest burst into space after a few upgrades and fires very quickly. Its upgrades are never very wide, but a single shot is enough to annihilate most enemies. The emerald laser is favored by "hot-shots" pilots who depend on decisive maneuvers and lightning reflexes to gain advantage over the enemy.

NOVA SMART BOMB

The *Nova* smart bomb is the only weapon that can help you out of the tightest jams. When you've been backed into a corner and destruction seems imminent, launch a *Nova* and you will destroy most of the enemies on your computer screen. Use the joystick or mouse to fire your *Nova* in a specific direction.

You enter the fray armed with three smart bombs. Additional *Novas* can be acquired by catching the special capsule marked with an "M".

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CREDITS

Original 68k-Code and 68k-to-C-conversion

Martin Pedersen

Graphics/Game Design/Box Art

Torben Larsen

AmigaOS 4.X, Win32, OS X versions and enhancements

Daniel Müßener

Music Scores

Ron Klaren

Story

Viet Nguyen

Map Editor

Thomas Jakobsen

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