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microcomputer games DIVISION The Avalon Hill Game Company

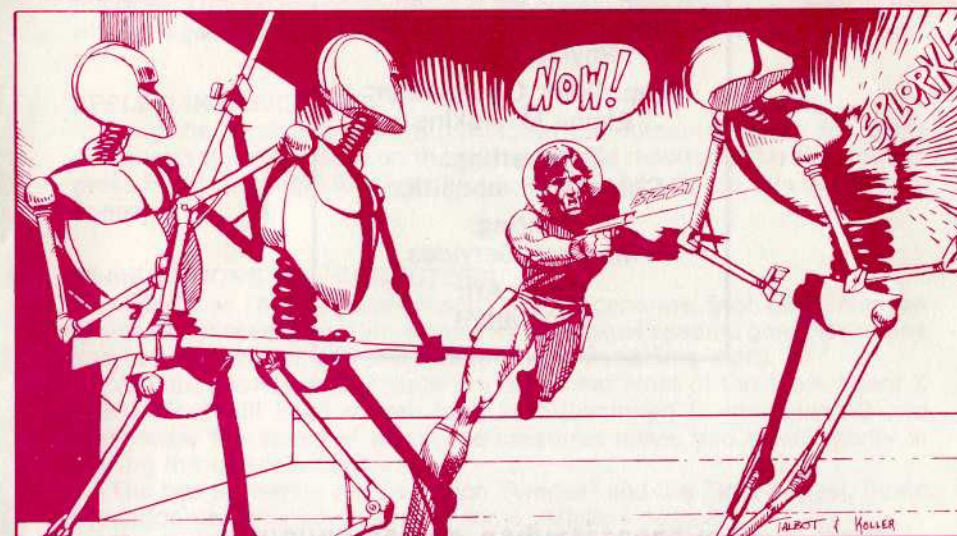
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#4935201 Z6357 2/86

MISSION on THUNDERHEAD

COMICS! No.1



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MISSION ON THUNDERHEAD RULEBOOK

DEEP BACKGROUND

Mission on Thunderhead is the action adventure game where you are a member of a human resistance group. Dedicated to the overthrow of the Eternals, the mysterious rulers of your galaxy, you have two missions to fulfill: **Operation Tempest** is the attempt by an agent to locate the power source of Thunderhead, and destroy it with the X-Tron device.

The Final Appeal is not a mission, but an attempt by a convicted agent to escape from the complex before his sentence is carried out.

Instructions for beginning the mission depends upon the computer you own.

COMMODORE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Plug the joystick into the first controller port.
2. Turn on your disk drive, computer and monitor. When the busy light goes out, open the disk drive door and insert the game diskette.
3. Type **LOAD***,8,1** and press the Return key. The game will load and the title screen will appear.

ATARI INSTRUCTIONS

1. Remove any program cartridge from the cartridge slot of your computer console.
2. Plug the joystick into the first controller port.
3. Turn on the monitor and disk drive, and insert the game diskette in the drive. Turn on the computer. (On the 800XL, hold down the **OPTION** key while the game is loading.) The game will load and the title screen will appear.

APPLE II INSTRUCTIONS

Plug the joystick in before turning on the computer. Insert the game diskette in the drive. Turn on the computer and monitor. After the prompt, press Return to begin loading, the game will load and the title screen will appear.

GAME OPTIONS (ALL COMPUTERS)

Mission on Thunderhead consists of two scenarios. Each game must be assigned a three digit option number consisting of specific game variations (the first two digits), and the skill level (the remaining digit).

Variation numbers distribute the ikons and most of the tools Agent X needs. The skill level ranges from zero (beginner) to nine (expert) and determines the speed at which the creatures move, and the difficulty in moving through the complexes.

The two scenarios are Operation Tempest and the Final Appeal. Some scenarios can only be used with some variation numbers.

The option number can be changed by toggling the joystick. Move it right to change the skill level, left to change the first variation number, forward to change the second variation number (this number also determines the scenario: Operation Tempest appears with the odd numbers, Final Appeal with even), and back to change the two variation numbers at random.

Depending upon the computer you have, press the following key to begin the game: **START** on the Atari; **F7** on the Commodore; and the **Space Bar** on the Apple II.



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THE MAIN DISPLAY SCREEN

The upper area of the screen is the player's window into the world of Thunderhead. Below the window is the information area. The left side displays the current score, and below it information about the objects you are carrying and using. On the right side is your energy reserve (the E rating) and the room's radiation effect (the D rating, see the Energy section below for more information).

In the center of the information area is the name of the room or—when you press the fire button to SELECT an object—a list of your equipment.

ENERGY

Agent X has only one life, measured in the amount of energy he has. Thunderhead is highly radioactive, and while his Statis Suit protects him, energy is still drained from him every minute. The amount of energy he has left is the E rating that appears on the right side of the information screen.

The rate at which energy is drained depends upon where Agent X is. This rate is measured by the D rating that appears in the lower right corner of the screen. This rating measures the number of energy points per second drained from Agent X. Therefore, when moving through an area with a D rating of 01.0, Agent X is losing one point per second. If it is D: 00.5, about two seconds will pass before a point of energy is lost.

Agents X's Statis Suit is of a special design that places his body in temporary suspended animation whenever a life-threatening blow is received. Agent X does not die, but "floats" in statis until the joystick is moved. Agent X can then move as before. Placing Agent X in and out of Statis costs him energy.

Using certain tools (such as the pocket beamer) will also cost Agent X energy.

TOOLS AND TREASURES

As Agent X moves through the Thunderhead complexes, he will discover a variety of objects to aid him in his quest. The tools and tanks were left by previous agents, while the ikons are objects belonging to the Eternals. The agent gets these objects by moving over them.

There are three types of objects: ikons, energy tanks, and tools.

Ikons: there are 14 of these that must be acquired in order to open the Freedom Gate in the Final Appeal scenario. They provide 50 points of energy.

Energy Tanks: these bottles replenish the Agent's Statis Suit.

Tools: these objects left behind by previous unsuccessful Agents may be picked up and used. They are:

RAYGUN: press and release the fire button to shoot.

IONIC SHIELD: when used, will deflect most things.

POCKET BEAMER: this homing device will teleport the Agent to a specific location. When dropped in a room and then picked up, the Beamer is set to return there.

IONER: this is used to disrupt locally polarized ion energy flows emitted from ion-powered dangers.

X-TRON: this anti-matter device must be used to destroy the complex in the Operation Tempest scenario.

?????: this device, of unknown origin, is known to affect certain parasitical creatures that feed on the energy contained in your statis suit.

MISSION BRIEFING: THUNDERHEAD (NGC #49066) OPERATION TEMPEST (12,010 A.D.)

Thunderhead (originally called Fell's Star) was constructed by terran work gangs under Eternal direction in 11,965 A.D. Extensive terraforming was required to allow construction of the orbiting station that gives Fell's Star its new name.

Thunderhead is actually two separate complexes: the Justice Tower rotating at the same speed and degree of inclination as the planet, and the Planetary Surface complexes immediately below it. The Eternals also burrowed beneath the planetary surface, into the tunnels and caves. Agent X will be teleported from the scout ship onto the top of the Justice Tower.

The Eternals: the masters of ten thousand planets, they have never revealed themselves, but rely on their agents, terran and alien, to enforce their will. Despite their attempts at complete suppression of scientific enquiry, we have determined that Thunderhead serves as a nexus point that must be continually operational to ensure their existence in this universe. Therefore, the destruction of the planet is a top priority for the Agents of Light.

THE FINAL APPEAL

The Eternal's attitudes towards humankind place great emphasis in encouraging evolution of the species. This attitude has influenced their sciences, such as genetic engineering and the mental "weeding out" of undesirables, and has extended into individual matters as well. With their total disregard for human moral attitudes, the Eternals have instituted The Final Appeal as a way of allowing those that they consider to have fitting strengths to survive. Before execution, felons have the option of running through the appeal process. They are given a statis suit and are immediately teleported to the Death Ray cell, where a laser awaits them and a chance of escaping their fate.

The felon must run the gauntlet of various challenges and search for 14 ikons—energy tanks which also provide the key to escaping through the Freedom Gate. Those who succeed are given unconditional freedom. Agents of Light are advised to select The Final Appeal in all cases.

INFILTRATION REPORT: JUSTICE TOWER

Efforts to infiltrate the Justice Tower have succeeded in discovering a complete layout of the complex. The tower consists of the following rooms (top to bottom):

Central Receiving: orbiting transports send supplies to this room, where they are routed to various points on the planet.

Girder Drop: a trapped room providing access between Central Receiving and the Side Access.

Side Access: the agent will enter the tower at this location.

Ion Chamber: excess energy from the Small Ion Reactor below accumulate and are absorbed by the leadline shielding on the walls.

Small Ion Reactor: this is the central power source for the tower. Passing through the reactor's coolant drains, the agent will drop out of the tower onto the Anti-Gravity Stabilizing Grid. This grid is the conduit through which the duel-link anti-gravity subsystem passes, providing additional support for the Tower in the way of energy, communications and teleportation systems. The walkways are ion shielded and passable, but agents are warned not to stray off them. Moving north, agents will encounter the Laser Fence leading to the planetary surface. Passing around the fence is up to the agent's skill matched with his experience.

AGENT MOVEMENT

Your agent moves in two different ways, depending upon whether the agent is shown in profile or overhead view. Areas are shown in either profile or overhead views, never both.

In the overhead view, the agent moves in all directions, and no jumping is allowed. The first scene in the Final Appeal scenario (the Death Cell) is an example of an overhead view.

In the profile view, the Agent can move and jump to the left and right. Moving up or down can be accomplished only if there is something in that room that allows it (i.e., ladders or tunnels). Jumping is done by moving the joystick to the upper left or upper right. Experiment with jumping to find the movement that is right for you. The first scene in the Operation Tempest scenario (on top of the Justice Tower) is an example of the profile view.

In general, there are two sets of commands, depending upon whether or not the fire button is pressed while toggling the joystick. If the fire button is not pressed, then the joystick will execute movement commands (including jumping). If the fire button is pressed, the joystick will execute equipment commands. These commands are using the object in hand, exchanging the object in hand with another object, and dropping the object in hand.

Equipment commands are performed by toggling the joystick with the fire button pressed. The agent can have only one object at a time in his hand. The rest are carried on him in reserve. The object in hand is used by pressing and releasing the fire button quickly. (When you do so, the word USE appears in the lower right corner of the screen.) Holding the fire button down causes the word SELECT to appear. By toggling the joystick to the left and right (with the button still down), the agent can cycle through the objects he has on him. If the joystick is toggled down, the object in hand will fall to the ground (it has been dropped).

KEYBOARD CONTROL OF AGENT X

Some commands can be entered using the keyboard. Simply press the letter within the parentheses below.

(P)ause stops the game until another key is pressed or the joystick is used.

(C)hange exchanges the object in the Agent's hand with another object from his inventory.

(D)rop causes the object in the Agent's hand to fall to the ground (useful really with one particular object).

(S)ave and (L)oad are "bookmarks", allowing you to stop the game and save it to the game disk. Four separate games may be saved and recalled at any time. Note that sometimes an agent whose position is saved in one part of a large room will reappear in a different place.

Attention Apple II owners: your games can be saved to the game disk or a blank formatted disk. When the (S)ave or (L)oad commands are used, the phrase "INSERT GAME SAVE DISK" will appear on the screen. Swap disks and press any key. Because the Apple II will access the game disk throughout play, it is important to put the game disk back in the drive as soon as possible.

(As a point of interest, when the computer tries to read from the save disk, the disk drive will chatter, and the screen will display the "CHECK DISK DRIVE" prompt. It will continue to read the disk until the computer is turned off, or you switch disks. Removing the save disk and putting in the game disk will put you back in the mission.)

RESTARTING THE MISSION

Depending upon the computer you own, pressing the following key(s) at any time will start the game over. When the title screen appears, the variation and skill levels can be changed.

Commodore: the **F7** key.

Apple: press the **CTRL** and **RESET** key at the same time.

Atari: the **START** key.

YOU NAME IT, WE GAME IT . . .

The Avalon Hill Game Company is the world's largest publisher of a great variety of strategy board games of skill. We manufacture over 150 games, including wargames, sports strategy and statistical replay games, games of power politics, adventure and role-playing games, as well as fantasy and science fiction games. For complete information with pretty pictures, write the factory and ask for a *Complete Game Catalog*. Consult parts list for current price.

QUESTIONS OF PLAY

The clarity of these rules has been verified by *Software Testers of Universal Microcomputer Programmers (STUMP)* and deemed "complete" in all facets of instruction. Please re-read them in areas that seem unclear at first reading. Questions on play can be answered by the factory *only* upon receipt of a self-addressed envelope bearing first-class postage.

IF YOU CANNOT LOAD THE PROGRAM

1. Unless specified elsewhere, this game was designed to be run on "standard" computer models. We cannot guarantee that the game will run on computers that have been modified by hardware from the original or third-party manufacturer. Hardware such as 80-column cards, memory cards and different operating systems could cause problems.

2. Check your equipment carefully to be sure that all cables and connections are correct.

3. Re-read the section in your computer's manual that tells you how to load software. Try to load software again.

4. If possible, load another program from a tape or disk you know works on your computer. This will prove that your equipment works. Try once more to load your game.

5. The normal reason software will not load is tape recorder or disk drive head misalignment. Your computer may be able to save and load programs on its own disk drive, but be unable to read software made on a different disk drive for this reason. Be sure your heads are correctly aligned. Your local computer store or dealer can help you with this.

6. If the program still cannot be loaded, send the software, with a complete description of the problem (what type of computer you have, what the computer says, if anything, when you try to load the software or play the game, and what you did to try to get it to load) to:

The Avalon Hill Game Company
Microcomputer Games

4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21214

Defective software will be replaced.