CONQUEST of MARS
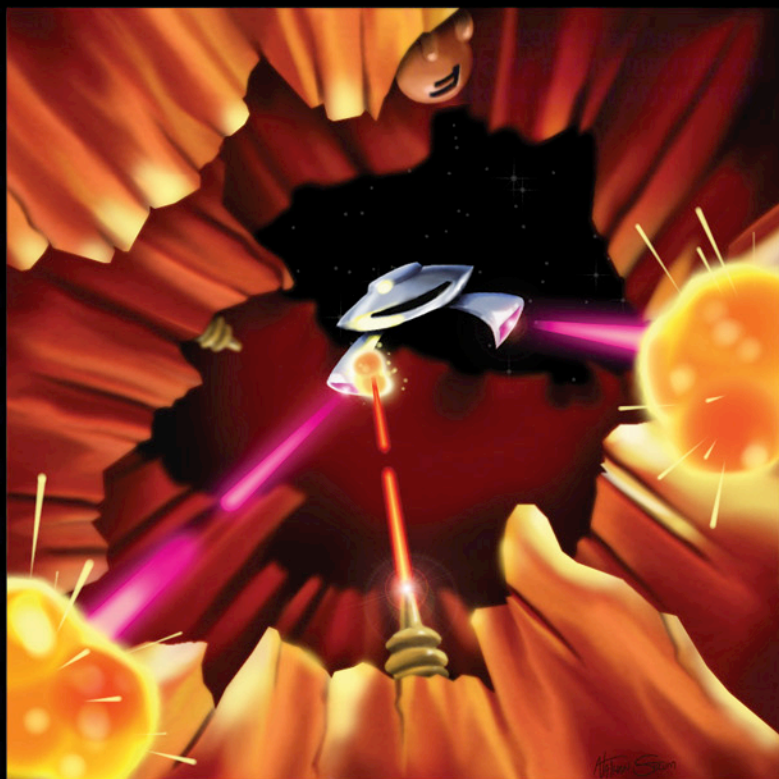
CONQUEST of MARS

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

NOTE: Always turn the console power switch off when inserting or removing an ATARIAGE Game Program cartridge. This will protect the electronic components and prolong the life of your ATARI® Video Computer System™ game.

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Cartridge and Manual
produced by:

CHAMP GAMES

AtariAge

CRUSH THE REBELLION!

In the year 4014, the planet Earth and the planet Mars are locked in a century-long war. The Martians have devised a plan to destroy Earth using the power from their latest weapon: the Destructo-Bomb!!

The Martian forces have managed to construct five bombs and have placed them deep inside the Martian caverns, awaiting the final command from their leader to attack!!!

Do you have the skill to navigate to the depths of the Martian caverns, activate the Destructo-Bombs and escape before they explode?

Good luck!

GAME PLAY

You begin the game with a fleet of five ships. Maneuver your ship through the many stages of the six caverns while avoiding the jagged walls and enemy arsenal. Along the way you must shoot the fuel pods to keep your ship's engines moving. Once you reach the base of the cavern, activate the Martian Destructo-Bomb and escape to the surface before it detonates.

Your game ends when all of your ships have been destroyed or your ship is trapped in the cavern while escaping and the bomb explodes. You win the game when all six caverns have been cleared and the Martian rebellion has been crushed!

USING THE CONTROLLERS

Plug one controller into the LEFT CONTROLLER jack for one-player games; plug a second controller into the RIGHT CONTROLLER jack for two-player games. In two-player games, the player using the left controller starts the game. Hold the controller with the red fire button to your upper left, toward the television screen. Press the red fire button to start the game.

Use your Joystick to maneuver your ship. Press left and right to move your ship side to side; press up to slow down and press down to move faster. When descending down the cavern, press the red button to fire your missiles.

Your ship is equipped with a dual missile. Once fired, both missiles must either exit the screen or hit a target or cavern wall before you can fire again. Be careful – your shots cannot travel through the debris of destroyed enemy targets. Finally, be aware that your cannons take a few moments to re-energize between shots.

When escaping the cavern once the bomb has been activated, use the Joystick to maneuver your ship to avoid the cavern walls. Press the red button to fire off your ship's after burners for extra speed. Be careful though – the ship will not maneuver as well when in overdrive.

If you crash into the cavern wall or into an enemy object, or if your fuel gauge reaches 00, you will lose a ship. For 2 player games, player 1 and player 2 alternate turns until all the ships in that player's reserve are depleted. Player 1 controls a blue ship and Player 2 controls a green ship. Once all reserve ships have been used, the game ends.

From the title screen, press GAME RESET to start the game or press the red button on the left controller. Press GAME SELECT to cycle through the skill levels and 1 or 2 player games.

Title Screen

You may also use the left controller to change skill levels and the number of players. To switch between a 1 or 2 player game, press the left controller UP or DOWN. To cycle through the four skill levels, press the left controller LEFT or RIGHT. The four skill levels are described in detail under GAME VARIATIONS.

To start over the current game at any time, press GAME RESET. To return to the title screen, press GAME SELECT. If you do not move the controller for 20 seconds on the title screen, the game will either show a brief demo of the game or display the scores of the last game, along with the high score that has been accomplished.

TO PAUSE A GAME

2600 users: Toggle the TV TYPE switch from COLOR to BW or vice-versa to pause the game.

7800 users: Press the PAUSE button to pause the game. Press PAUSE again to return to the game.

NOTE: The game will only stay paused for 5 minutes, at which time the game will end and return back to the title screen.

Use the difficulty switches to select whether or not the enemy cannons fire during the game: set to B (NOVICE) to disable the cannons; set to A (EXPERT) to enable the cannons. The LEFT DIFFICULTY switch is used for the LEFT player; the RIGHT DIFFICULTY switch is used for the RIGHT player.

The status area displays information about the current player. The top line displays the score. Below the score is the number of reserve ships. The bar indicates the current stage and the number of flags specify the cavern.
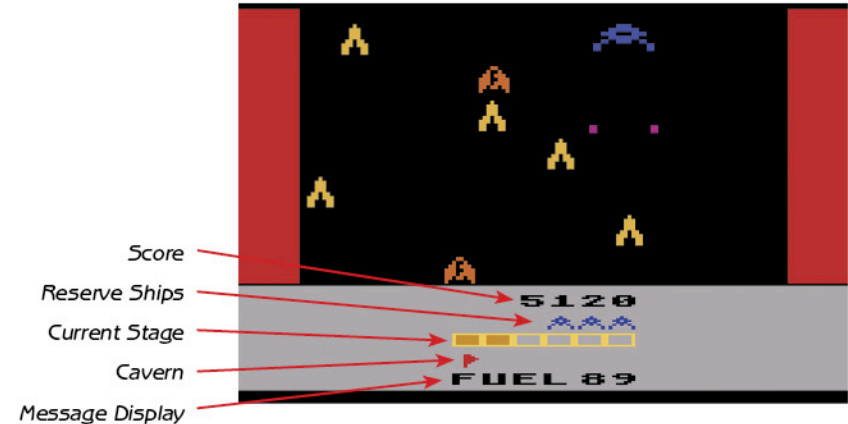
Below the flags is the message display. During normal game play, this will display the number of fuel units left. It will also display important messages, such as when the bomb is activated. When escaping, the remaining time until the bomb explodes is displayed.

GAME VARIATIONS

There are four skill levels, each with either 1 or 2 players. The four skill levels are Novice, Pilot, Warrior and Commander. The difference between each skill level is the number of stages that must be completed for each cavern:

NOVICE

The Novice setting is recommended for beginners. In the first cavern you only need to clear the TUNNEL and the ROCKET stage before activating the bomb at the end of the cavern. Each subsequent cavern adds one more stage to clear until the fourth cavern when all 5 stages must be cleared.

PILOT

On the Pilot setting, you must clear the TUNNEL, ROCKET, and LASER GATE stages on the first cavern. Each subsequent cavern adds one more stage to clear until all stages must be cleared starting with the third cavern.

WARRIOR

On the Warrior setting, the TUNNEL, ROCKET, LASER GATE and SPACE MINE stages must be cleared in the first cavern. By the second cavern, you must clear all 5 stages before activating the bomb.

COMMANDER

The Commander setting is the most difficult of them all. You must clear ALL stages (TUNNEL, ROCKET, LASER GATE, SPACE MINE and MAZE stages) before activating the bomb for all caverns.

This is the order of stages for the 4 skill levels on the first cavern:

	TUNNEL	ROCKET	LASER GATES	SPACE MINES	MAZE	BASE
NOVICE	1	2				3
PILOT	1	2	3			4
WARRIOR	1	2	3	4		5
COMMANDER	1	2	3	4	5	6

An additional stage is added to the order each time a cavern is cleared until all 5 stages (and the base) must be cleared to complete the level.

ENEMY STAGES

To reach the end of each cavern, you must first travel through a number of stages. In Conquest of Mars™, there are five unique stages, each with their own challenges. Depending on the skill level and the cavern, there are two to five stages to clear before reaching the base stage and activating the bomb. Most of the stages contain generators; these are a major source of power for the Martians and destroying them earns big points. Another major Martian defense are its cannons. In some game variations, these fire disruptor bolts that destroy your ship on impact. In every stage, you must shoot the fuel pods (marked with the letter 'F') to keep your ship from running out of energy and crashing. Your fuel supply is increased by 10 units for every fuel pod that you destroy.

The following is a description of each stage:

TUNNEL STAGE

The Tunnel stage is a winding tunnel that is fortified with enemy defenses. You must maneuver your ship through the tunnels, destroying everything in your path. In this stage, there are fuel pods, generators and cannons.

Tunnel Stage

ROCKET STAGE

Once the Tunnel stage is complete, you will enter the Rocket stage. In this stage, the Martians have unleashed their arsenal of rockets. Colliding with these rockets will destroy your ship. Dodge or shoot them with your missiles. You must also shoot the fuel pods to increase your ship's ever-dwindling fuel supply.

Rocket Stage

LASER GATES

In the Laser Gates stage, you must still contend with the cannons and destroy the generators and fuel pods. Additionally, the Martians have constructed a series of Laser Gates to impede your progress. Careful timing is necessary to avoid the deadly touch of the lasers.

Laser Gates

SPACE MINES

The Space Mine stage is similar to the Tunnel stage. There are cannons to avoid and generators to destroy, as well as fuel pods. The Martians have also placed a number of their deadly Space Mines in the cavern to try to stop you. These mines pulsate with energy, making them difficult to shoot. They also are equipped with an energy displacement device that allows them to transport short distances almost instantly. These erratic movements make the mines difficult to destroy, and even more difficult to avoid.

Space Mines

THE MAZE

The Maze is a series of narrow, winding tunnels that must be navigated with precise and careful handling. There are many fuel pods in this stage; shoot them quickly and fly through the debris to continue your journey towards the base and your ultimate mission.

The Maze

THE BASE

The base is the final stage of each cavern. As the tunnel gets more and more narrow, you will eventually reach the Destructo-Bomb. Pilot your ship carefully and make contact with the bomb to activate its countdown procedure.

The Base

Once activated, you will get a certain amount of time to escape the cavern, depending on how many stages you cleared before reaching the base (not including the base stage). If you can reach the end of a cavern without losing a ship, you will be awarded with a survival bonus. The following table summarizes the amount of time given to escape and the survival bonus for each number of stages cleared:

STAGES CLEARED	TIME TO ESCAPE	SURVIVAL BONUS
Tunnel, Rocket	30 seconds	2000 points
Tunnel, Rocket, Laser Gates	55 seconds	4000 points
Tunnel, Rocket, Laser Gates, Space Mines	75 seconds	8000 points
Tunnel, Rocket, Laser Gates, Space Mines, Maze	99 seconds	15000 points

Once you have activated the bomb, the FUEL indicator is replaced with a TIME clock (you do not expel fuel while escaping). The timer will count down as you escape back through the stages you've cleared.

Escape Sequence

Use the Joystick to maneuver your ship through the winding caverns. Press the red button to activate your turbo thrusters to speed up your ship. Because your ship diverts most of its power to the engines while using turbo, your ship's maneuverability will be hampered as a result. Release the fire button to turn off the turbo thrusters and resume normal ship navigation.
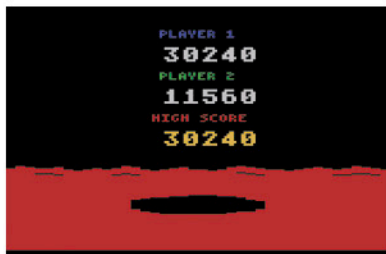
If you reach the surface before the timer reaches 00, you will earn 500 points for each second left and your ship will hover above the cavern as the bomb explodes. You are awarded an extra ship for each cavern cleared. A message congratulating you on your accomplishment is displayed and then your are sent to the next cavern. Each successive cavern is faster and more difficult than the last and adds another stage to clear until all 5 stages must be breached.

If you are in the cavern when the timer reaches 00, your entire fleet of ships is destroyed and the game ends.

GAME OVER

Once your game has ended, the high score screen is displayed. On this screen, the scores of player 1 (and player 2, if a two player game) are displayed, along with the high score that has been accomplished.

Additionally, if you have at least completed the tunnel stage of the first level a message will be displayed asking if you wish to continue the current game (only available for one player games). You will have 10 seconds to continue from the beginning of the stage you were on when your game ended. To continue, press the red button before the timer reaches 0. To reset the game from stage 1 of the first cavern, press RESET. The game will automatically return to the title screen after 20 seconds or if SELECT is pressed.

End Game

SCORING

The following table describes the scoring for the enemy objects than can be destroyed by your missiles:

TRAVELING ONE PARSEC*	10 points	
DESTROYING A FUEL BUNKER	150 points	
DESTROYING A GENERATOR	200 points	
DESTROYING A CANNON	250 points	
DESTROYING A ROCKET	250 points	
DESTROYING A SPACE MINE	300 points	

*You do not get any points for traveling through the base stage

If you can travel through an entire cavern without losing a ship, you are awarded a survival bonus depending on the number of stages you cleared to reach the base stage:

STAGES CLEARED	SURVIVAL BONUS
2	2000
3	4000
4	8000
5	15000

If you can successfully reach the surface of the cavern when escaping, you will be awarded 500 points for each second remaining on the timer.

TIPS AND STRATEGIES

- On the tunnel stage, be sure to shoot all of the enemy objects and collect as much fuel as possible.

- On the rocket stage, try to line up your missiles to take out two enemy objects with one shot.

- Studying the patterns in which the laser gates are activated is the key to getting past them.

- Approach the gates aggressively to give your ship plenty of time to fall back and wait for an opening.

- Get a feeling for the timing of the mines; there are certain delays when they will remain stationary, giving you a chance to avoid them.

- Remember that your ship cannot fire if any of its previous missiles are still on the screen. There is also the small delay needed to recharge your cannons during shots.

- You must be very aggressive when navigating the maze, especially on the higher levels.

- On the expert difficulty (A), the enemy cannons will fire disruptor bolts. Try to destroy them before they have a chance to lock on to your ship.

CREDITS

Production:
- Code, graphics, and sound effects: John W. Champeau
- Manual text: John W. Champeau
- Manual layout: Nathan Strum
- Cartridge label design and illustration: Nathan Strum
- Cartridge production and manual printing: AtariAge

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