Galaxis

... a little game of strategy

Background

It was a normal day for the people aboard the starcruiser *Sirius Leap*. At least until the cook had the brilliant idea of protecting the galactical environment. Instead of dumping all kitchen waste into open space, he thought of a better idea. The cruiser was powered with one of these ultra-brand-new matter-antimatter engines, the physics of which escapes the scope of this report.

Anyway, all the cook knew about the engines was that they produced a tremendous amount of heat. And yes, instead of just dumping the waste, he thought of burning it first. Nothing easier than that, just throw it into the mattering-chamber, he thought.

Unluckily, before he could do that, he had to open the chamber, breaking the magnetic seal that kept the anti-matter core neutralized. Emergency measures contained the resulting catastrophe long enough for everybody to rush to the life-capsules and bail out. The *Sirius Leap* had four capsules that as soon as they disengaged tried to put as much nothing between them and the mothership as possible. But when the cruiser blew, the shockwave hurled the four capsules far, far away into the black nothingness.

Object Of The Game

It is the object of the game to find the four lost capsules that are somewhere out in the galaxis. A turn consist of trying to figure out where a capsule might be and then sending a rescue ship to this place. If there is no capsule at this place, the rescue ship will return with some data about how many capsules can be detected from this place. It is this data that you have to process carefully to win the game.

Requirements

Since this game was written as a Christmas '91 present for my girlfriend (see also **XMasWare - What's That?**), I designed it to specially complement her Mac which happens to be a Macintosh LC, equipped with a 16 grayscale monitor and System 7. Alas, here are the minimum requirements to run Galaxis:

- 16 grayscales (4 Bit) or 256 colors
- System 7
- 4 Megabytes of RAM
- 68020 Processor

This means it should run fine on any of the following Macs: LC, SE30, Classic II, Mac II, IIcx, IIci, IIfx, Quadra.

Users of low-end Macs (e.g. Mac Plus, SE etc) should turn off the background music for better performance. Note that background music works only on Macs with at least a 68020 processor installed. If you can't turn the music on, chances are high that your machine can't handle background music.

The b/w version runs on any Mac that runs System 7.

Note for Color Users:
If you run Galaxis with a color monitor, make sure to switch to 256 colors or 16 grays if performance is unacceptable at 256 colors. If you play Galaxis at 16 colors it will still work but the colors look wierd. Oh, some people wrote and asked me if I was going to colorize Galaxis. I sure did. Now the title is in red and my name in green letters. Big deal. The rest is as it was.

How To Play Galaxis
The Galaxis
In order to faciliate the rescue mission, the galaxis has been divided into a grid of 20x9 sectors. In each of these a capsule may be found. If you begin the game, you have no clue where a capsule might be. But with each turn you can narrow down their location until you find them.

A Turn
To look for a capsule in a certain sector, you double-click it. A rescue ship will be sent there. If it finds a capsule, the computer will display it on the screen and rescue it.
On the other hand, if there is no capsule, the rescue ship will scan the galaxis and report how many capsules it can see from its position.

The Rescue Ship
You send a rescue ship to a certain sector if you double-click on it (the setor, of course!).If a capsule is found, it is recovered. This doesn't take long so this is *not* counted as a turn. If there is no capsule in this sector, the ship turns on its scanners to scan the galaxis for the capsules. The number detected is reported back. *This scanning takes so long that it counts as a turn.*

However, to faciliate good results, there are two things that have to be observed:

1. The scanners work only on the so-called main axis, i.e. the horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines. This means that only those capsules will be detected that are positioned *exactly* in one of the directions illustrated in fig. 1:
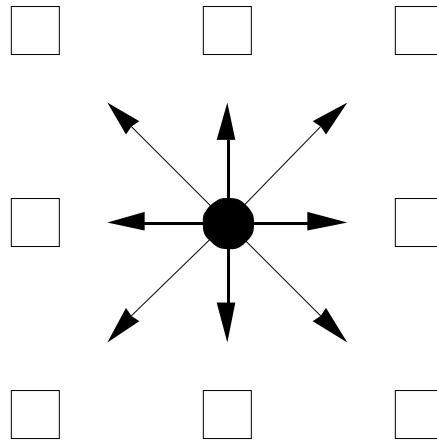

Fig.1 : Scan-Directions

2. A capsule eclipses all other capsules that might be on the same line of sight:

In above example, the rescue ship would be able only to detect the first capsule, since the second one is eclipsed by the first.

The number of detected capsules is entered automatically on the screen.

Blanks

To simplify the process of eliminating sectors, you can use so-called *Blanks*. You place these blank on the screen just for informational purpose. Placing them represent no real action and therefore the placement of one or many blanks does *not* count as a turn. If for example a rescue ship reports that no capsules can be seen from its sector, you can place a blank on all sectors that can bee seen from the ship's position. You place and remove a blank simply by clicking on the sector. The correct use of blanks is the key to a successful game.

Other Functions
What Do I See From Here?

Especially beginners have some difficulties visualizing which sectors can bee seen from where. More experianced players might

quickly want to verify if a certain sector can bee seen from a specific position.

This can be done by pressing the option-key and clicking on a sector. All sectors that can bee seen from there are shown. Use of this function does *not* count as a turn.

Multiple Blanks

Sometimes you want to blank out many sectors, not just one. To do this, click on the starting sector and drag to the ending sector you want to blank out. All sectors will be blanked.

Note that the line of blanks aligns to the main directions from the starting field. This is to ensure that you will not accidentally blank out wrong sectors.

Of course, the use of this Function does *not* count as a turn.

Blanking an Idicator

Sometimes while playing you might find it useful to ignore an indicator (i.e. one of those messages that tell you how many capsules can be seen from a given position) .

To do this, simply double-click on the indicator. It will be replaced with a framed black rectangle. To see again what the indicator originally said, simple double-click on it again.

Diagonal Lines

Some players prefer a playing field that contains only the horizontal and vertical but not the diagonal lines. Use the 'Diagonal Lines' item in the 'Settings' menu to switch between the two.

Sound

OK, not everybody likes the sound effects as much as I do. To turn them off, use the 'Sound'-item in the 'Settings' Menu. If you don't like the sound at all, remove the file 'Galaxis Sounds' from the folder Galaxis is in. The Sound item will get dimmed and no Sound played.

Music

Since version 1.1, Galaxis can play music in the background. To turn it off, use the Music item in the Settings menu. Information on how this high-quality music was implemented can be found at the end of this document. Those of you who have a good memory will probably recognize the 'Galaxis Theme' as the song 'True Faith' written by New Order. This is the 'MOD'-adaption, performed by some kind but to me unknown artist.

Frame Found

For those of you who have difficulties seeing the cute little capsule picture, I have included this option. If active, a white frame is placed around the capsule marker.

Clearing The LowScores List

Galaxis automatically saves the five best rescue missions. To reset this list (i.e. to remove your little sister/brother from it), simply trash the file 'Galaxis Scores'.

Saving And Loading A Game

Like in any other game, use 'Save...' in the 'File' menu to save it to disk and 'Load' to restore it.

Starting A New Game

To begin a new game use 'New Game...' in the 'File' menu. If you want to play with the time limit option, click into the 'Time Limit' checkbox and set the time-limit per turn (minimum 10 seconds, maximum 120).

Setting Preferences

You may also set the seetings on a permanent basis. If you choose the 'Preferences...' item from the 'File' menu, you are presented with a dialog where you can enter your preferences. This is saved to the Galaxis game itself, so make sure the Game is neither locked nor on a locked disk.

Time Limit Option

For Those of you who have played this game before, here comes an addition challenge:

A Turn may last only a certain amount of seconds (you, however can specify the time limit to a maximum of 120 seconds). After the time runs out, the turn is considered as finished and a new turn starts. When the last five seconds run down, you will hear a warning signal every second.

Whenever you play with time limit, the remaining time is displayed to the right of the remaining ships.

Multiplayer/Network Game

A future version of Galaxis will include a multiplayer option in which each player will hide four capsules and the other player has to try to find them as fast as possible. If the response is big enough I will attempt implementing this.

The Tutorial Game
To make things easier for new players, I have included a tutorial game. It is a saved game to enable you to reproduce the things I'm trying to show you now. So let's begin with the tutorial:

In order to enable you to identify the sectors i'm talking about, i've taken the liberty to label the horizontal lines 'A' to 'T' and the vertical '1' through '9'.
A turn now will consist of two coordinates and a result that I want you to reproduce: 'I-6:2' thus means that I double-clicked on the sector I-6. The rescue ship found no capsule and reported that it saw two capsules. If you do this now, the result should look something like this:

Now, lets execute the three following turns:

A-1:1
T-1:1
A-9:0

The last turn requires some additional work:
Since no capsules can be seen from A-9, we can blank out all sectors that can be seen from here. To find out which sectors can be seen, use option-click on A-9 and blank out all sectors

that get shown. After blanking out all those sectors, your screen should look something like this:

Galaxis View

Tries: 4   Ships still lost: 4
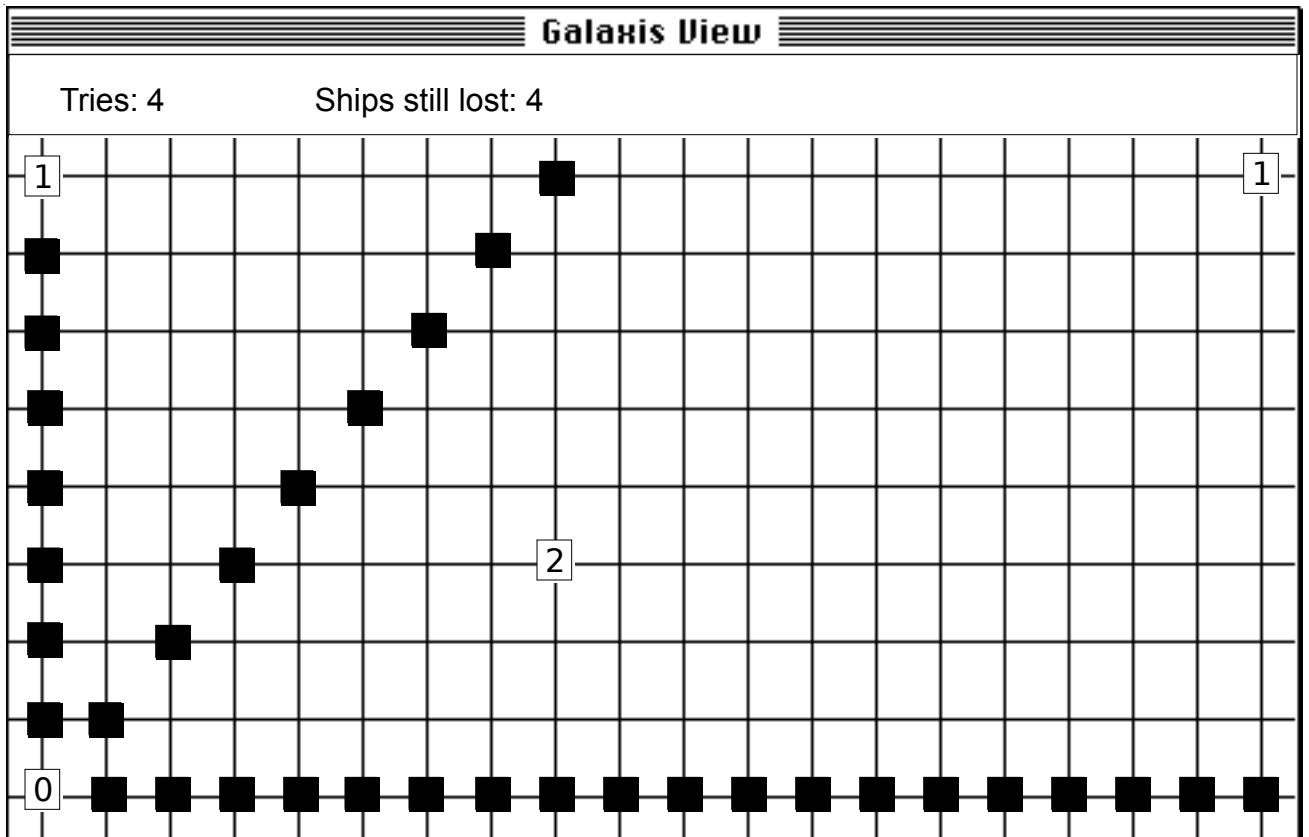
Instead of blanking all sectors individually you could of course also have used the click-and-drag blanking function described above..

A final word to the blanks:
You should use blanks as often as possible. There are more occasions than when a '0' is reported where you can use blanks.

Backgound Music - How it was implemented

The background music is played using the drivers that are also used in the famous 'Sound Trecker' program by Frank Seide. These drivers enable any programmer to use high-quality background music with almost no efford. The songs played are of the standard MOD song file format that are even platform independent. To see an example of this, get hold of a different MOD file, name it 'Galaxis Theme' and place it inside the Galaxis folder. Next time you play Galaxis, the new file will be played.

The Sound Trecker Drivers, contained in the Galaxis program in the **resources `PSyn 128`** and **`STrI 128`** are **copyright © 1992 by Frank Seide.**

For more information on the Sound Trecker and the Sound Trecker Drivers, please contact

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XMasWare - What's That?

This Program was written as a Christmas '91 present for my girlfriend Barbara Wedekind. If you like it, please send a postcard to

> Barbara Wedekind
> Friedensallee 73
> **D-2000 Hamburg 50**
>
> (West) Germany

I have invested lots of time into this game and would be very grateful if you reward my efforts with a little postcard to Barbara. Thanks alot.

Bug-Reports And Imrovement Hints

No program is perfect. If you have any bug-reports or improvements you would like to see, send them to cfranz@iiic.ethz.ch. Please use the enclosed Bug-Report Form whenever possible.

If you have no Internet or email access, you still can use the snail mail (i.e. postal service) using the 'Project Gutenberg' approach. Send bug reports, comments, ideas to

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