

DIABLO!

INTRODUCTION

It was bred to kill, now it's loose....

DIABLO!

PLAYER'S GUIDE.

SPECTRUM

FILE COPY

DIABLO!

INTRODUCTION.

By the twenty second century man has spread far beyond the confines of our Solar System, the new colonies controlled by the corporations, themselves regulated by the International Corporate Council (said by the more cynical to be the real planetary government).

So profit orientated are these colonies that many have rebelled, the so called 'Break Away' colonies who fight for their independence.

Under prompting (and some say command) from the I.C.C, the national governments of Earth mobilised their forces under a UN flag, instigating what may be considered the first galactic war as Earth forces battled successfully to regain the lost colonies until only a hard core remains, bitterly resisting all efforts to oust the rebels.

However these events only set the scene to the background in which this interactive story takes place and has nothing to do with the mysterious reappearance of a 'dead' ship or the events which will follow in the game - or do they?

The game.

DIABLO was written and programmed by Mark Cantrell using the Professional Adventure Writer from Gilsoft International Limited. Copyright(C)1988 Mark Cantrell. All rights reserved.

Loading the Game.

Spectrum I28K/+2 version.

- 1: Insert the correct tape into the cassette recorder and if necessary rewind to the beginning.
- 2: Reset the machine to clear any junk from memory and make sure the TAPE LOADER option is highlighted on the main menu before pressing ENTER.
- 3: Press PLAY on the cassette recorder.
- 4: The required section of DIABLO I28K should now LOAD and RUN.

Spectrum 48K/+ version.

- 1: Insert the cassette (side 4) into the cassette recorder and wind on to the start of the correct section.
- 2: Ensure the cassette leads are correctly connected before typing LOAD "" and pressing ENTER.
- 3: Press PLAY on the cassette recorder.
- 4: The required section of DIABLO 48K should now LOAD and RUN.

Should the game fail to load then adjust the volume or tape head alignment and try again.

Storyline.

The research vessel Discoverer, bound Earthwards after a six month expedition to the Edanus System, ploughed silently through the black void of space, she appeared normal, her engines quiet, all systems apparently functioning normally, yet there was something not quite right, apart from the fact that the Discoverer had been lost to Earth some seven months previously, strange mis-shapen figures flitted past the windows while the vessel herself was surrounded by a strange halo of orbitting debris.

Suddenly the Discoverer's ghostly solitude was broken by two sleek starfighters on routine patrol of that sector, surprised by the Discoverer's presence they flew close to her hull, surveying for damage and attempting to communicate with the crew when, without warning, the wingman screamed in cold terror and, closely followed by his bemused flight leader, veered away from the ship and streaked Earthwards in a state of sheer panic, leaving the Discoverer to the solitude she had known for many months....

Captain Payne walked briskly towards the door of the Interstellar Shipping Coordinator's office, he was just about to knock when the secretary looked up from filing her nails and said "Mr McBride said you should go right in Sir." before once more tending to her nails. Payne mumbled a brief reply and wondered if secretaries ever did anything other than file nails as he entered the office.

"Ah! Good morning Captain, have a seat." said McBride while pointing to a row of seats positioned before his desk.

"Can we get down to business?" replied Payne curtly who didn't like big fat executives like McBride, particularly those who have him called back from leave early, "What's this all about? We have no authority over civilian shipping so I can't see what you want with me!"

McBride stood up and went to look out of his window, an action Payne was sure meant he would not be told exactly what was going on, "I'm sure you

recall the E.S.S Discoverer? She went missing seven months ago after a research expedition to Edan III, we lost all contact with the vessel and assumed she had been destroyed!"

Payne looked puzzled "What's this got to do with the military? Ships often disappear, space is a dangerous place!"

"The Discoverer reappeared on course last week, a routine patrol found her, they failed to communicate with the crew, either they are dead or have been incapacitated in some way. One of those pilots is on sick leave at the moment, claims he saw the Devil beckoning to him from the Discoverer! Apparently the doctors diagnosed 'Space Fatigue' so I wouldn't pay any heed to that 'devil' rubbish, he was long overdue for leave anyway." replied McBride.

At last Payne understood the reason for his presence, "So you want me to go aboard the Discoverer and find out what happened? But why not a civilian investigation team using your own people? Or do you think the Discoverer has been ransacked by pirates or commandeered by terrorists to mount an attack against us?"

McBride returned to his desk and took out a thin folder from a drawer, "You're quite right, we want you to find out what happened and if necessary to bring back the ship. Your team comprises mainly of military personel except for a Doctor Russel and a civilian named Lawson. The Discoverer's disappearance may be due to pirates or rebels but it's more probably due to an alien viral infection, your job is to add a bit of... security!"

Payne opened the folder and examined the brief amount of information on his fellow team members. "Who is Lawson and why is he a member of the team?" he asked as he noticed the total lack of information within his profile.

"Lawson... er, we don't know! As far as we can tell he's just a civil servant, he was forced on us by higher authorities so I don't think we'd better argue, though it may be a good idea to keep an eye on him."

"Hmmm... right. Where's the Discoverer now?"

asked Payne.

"Well she's about three weeks away at sub-light speeds. She's quite an old design and was due for a refit after this voyage, every so often she has to return to sub-light speeds to rest her drive motors. She's in just such a rest period now. Read the dossier, you'll find all the information in that. There's a shuttle waiting for you on the launch pads so you'll be leaving right away. You and your team will need to work fast, it can't be much longer before she re-enters hyperspace. Good luck and goodbye!" finished McBride.

After a gruelling ten hour flight through hyperspace and a nights recuperation, the BCIS shuttle docked with the Discoverer. Payne ordered the access hatch to be opened, allowing the strangely stale air of the ship to mingle with that of the shuttle, air like that of a tomb. It was then that Payne noticed one of his team was missing, somehow the mysterious Lawson had entered the Discoverer!

Screen Presentation.

The display for DIABLO is split into a number of 'windows' to display the various sections of the location text and responses. The picture window and the character window are fixed, they remain on screen with all text and input scrolling off screen underneath them. The character display window will inform you which character you are currently controlling by displaying his/her picture and their name.

The text window displays the location text and the responses to player input, long player input lines (which are formatted on entry) will intrude upon the main text area eventually causing any text so far displayed to be scrolled off screen.

The location text is split into three sections, the actual location text, the available exits (which is printed in green upper case (CAPITALS) letters) and, if there are any, a list of any present objects.

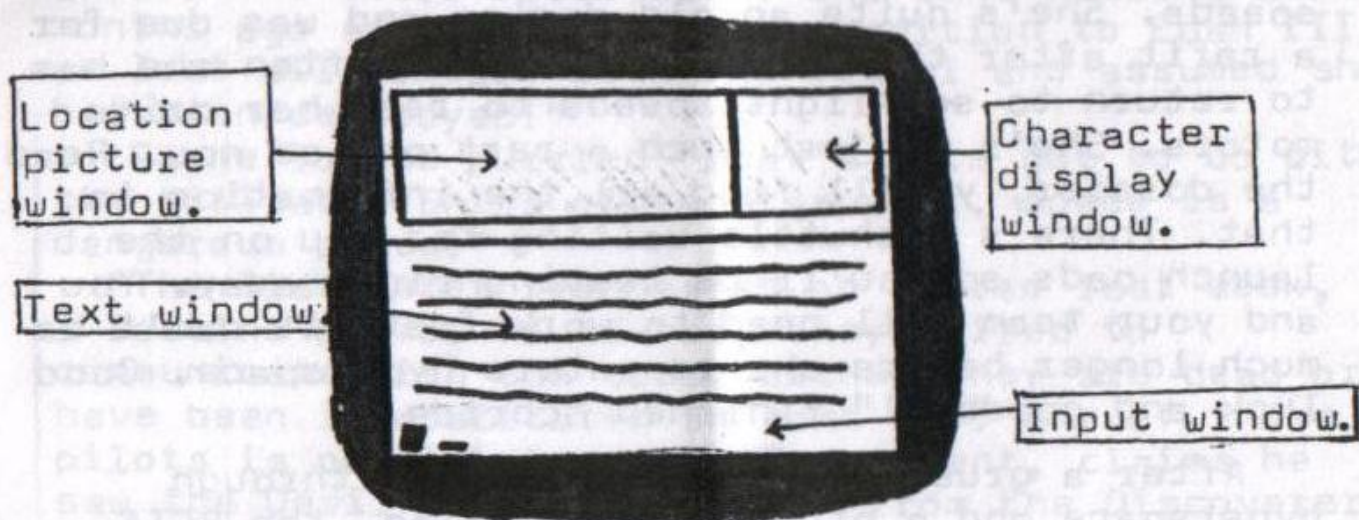


Fig I: The Screen Display.

The object nouns/adjectives will be displayed in magenta upper case letters within their object text.

The picture display can be turned off giving a text only game. In this mode the display and operation is as normal except the graphics windows will be absent, being replaced instead by the main location text.

Instructions.

The game's parser will allow the use of adverbs, nouns, adjectives and prepositions within complex chained commands or speech with other game characters - as this subject differs between 48K and I28K versions it will be covered later.

Should the game ever pause and display 'MORE' or 'PRESS ANY KEY' then read what is currently on screen before pressing a key. The game is played in realtime, that is things without you typing in commands, ie characters moving, though the game can be PAUSEd (note this command is classed as a turn and so may prove dangerous or fatal in tight situations).

DIABLO features the rare (if not unique) option of duel direction display - that is SHIPBOARD (port, aft etc) or the more normal COMPASS (north, south etc) directions. In both systems the mid-point directions are displayed in the form PORT-AFT for SHIPBOARD or NORTH-WEST for COMPASS etc. These should be typed in as displayed though

substituting the '-' for a space. Directional commands may be shortened to their first letter, eg (N)orth, (S)outh, (P)ort, (S)tarboard etc. This also applies to the mid-point directions, though this time it is not essential to include the space between them, eg (P)ort-(A)ft can be entered as P A or PA.

The I28K version also features a FOLLOW (char) command which will allow the player character to follow a PSI. This is an experimental routine and so is not essential to the completion of this game. Following characters can be aborted by holding down a key or moving away from the character.

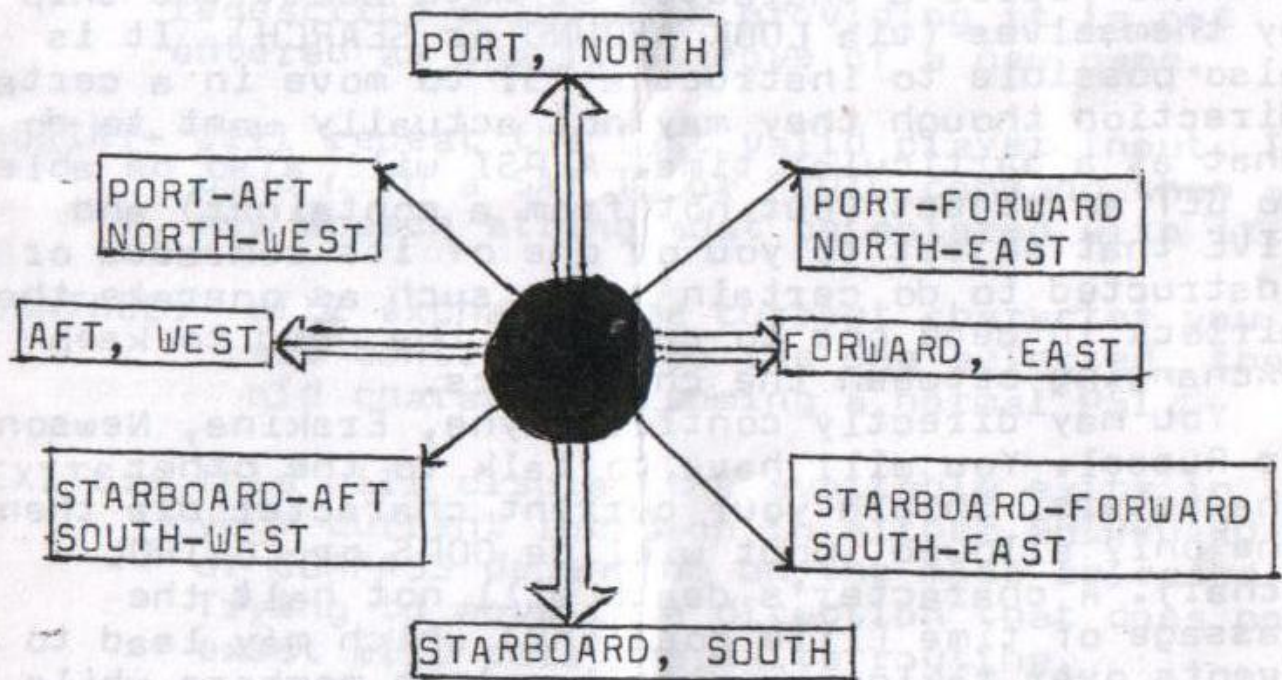


Fig 2: Directional commands (SHIPBOARD and COMPASS).

Speech.

Speech with other characters must be enclosed within quotes ("") and the character must be present. The RADIO command can be used to speak to a character who is not present and takes the same format as the SAY TO command.

In the smaller 48K machine speech is limited to the rudiments, ie FOLLOW ME, STAY or ASKING them what they are CARRYING, therefore you will have to alternate between the four player characters more often.

In the I28K version speech has been extended a little further. It is possible to ask a character where they are (this gives a more detailed response than the 48K version), who is with them or tell them to follow a character or move about the ship by themselves (via LOOK AROUND or SEARCH). It is also possible to instruct a PSI to move in a certain direction though they may not actually want to do that at a particular time. A PSI will also be able to GET an object (but not from a container) and GIVE that object to you or one of its comrades or be instructed to do certain tasks such as operate the airlock in deck one to cut down the need to keep exchanging between the characters.

You may directly control Payne, Erskine, Newson or Russel. You will have to talk to the other characters. Should your current character die then the only allowed input will be OOPS or CONTROL (char). A character's death will not halt the passage of time (life goes on?) which may lead to events over taking your fellow team members while you are 'dead.' The OOPS command, if you are fortunate, will let you reincarnate a dead character. Once all the team members are dead then naturally the game will end.

Him & Her.

PSIs will not respond to pronouns such as 'IT' or 'THEM,' however there are certain special pronouns which will apply to the last referenced character. As Russel is the only female character SHE will always be converted to her name without referring to her by name in any previous input. But HIM will be converted to the last referenced male character, ie X PAYNE then CONTROL HIM will work but X PAYNE then CONTROL IT won't.

Vocabulary.

There now follows a list of useful commands....

OOPS:- This command will retrieve a bad move and redescribe a location providing it is not entered as the first move of a new game.

AGAIN:- Will repeat the last valid player input. If used with a SAY TO or RADIO command then a new speech string must be entered with it.

CONTROL:- Will exchange the current character you are controlling to the one selected, the old character becoming a normal PSI.

EXITS:- This will display the available exits in your current location in either SHIPBOARD or COMPASS depending on the mode selected. Trying to move in a direction that does not exist will call the exits routine.

SHIPBOARD:- Will set the EXITS routine to display the exits in the form of PORT, AFT etc. This is the default mode.

COMPASS:- Will tell the exits routine to display available exits in the normal compass points.

RAMSAVE:- Will save the player's position and status to a buffer in memory and redescribe the current location.

- RAMLOAD:-** Will retrieve a stored position and status from the buffer and redescribe the current location.
- SAVE:-** As RAMSAVE but to cassette.
- LOAD:-** As RAMLOAD but from cassette.
- FONT:-** Will change the current character set to that selected from the fonts supplied, the ROM set or the default set.
- TEXT:-** Will turn the picture display off and redescribe the current location.
- PICTURES:-** Will turn the picture display on and redescribe the current location.
- EXAMINE, X ALL:-** Will allow the player to examine an object, the player must specify whether all the objects carried, worn or present are to be examined.
- REDESCRIBE, LOOK, R, L:-** Will redescribe the current location with or without graphics depending upon the picture mode. You may also LOOK INTO a container.
- RADIO:-** Allows you to speak to a character who is not present at your location and issue commands etc.
- SAY, SPEAK, TALK, ASK:-** This operates exactly the same as the RADIO command except the character must be at the same location as the player.
- SEARCH:-** Allows you to find whether an item hides another object not uncovered by the X command. On the I28K version it may also be used to instruct a PSI to move about the ship.

A couple of commands available to the I28K version:

FOLLOW (char):- This command has been extended from the 48K version to allow you to instruct a character to follow you, another PSI or for the character you are currently controlling to follow a PSI. The movement of a character is turned off (stay) when ever they are selected for control. To abort following a character you should either hold down a key or enter a movement command to leave the followed character behind.

WHO:- This will print up the characters who are currently with you or another character if asked. As the routine only deals with PSIs it will ignore your character should ask a present character who is with them.

ALL Commands.

Certain commands allow the use of ALL, ie GET, DROP SEARCH and EXAMINE. When using ALL commands you may omit a particular object by typing EXCEPT (object). However this does not apply to ALL commands which involve a second object, ie GET ALL FROM the DRAWER. When GETting an object from a container it is not necessary to specify the container unless using the ALL variant.

This pack should contain:
One player's guide, one BCIS dossier,
and two cassettes containing the I28K
sections and the 48K sections.