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Introduction

Guardian is a fast-paced arcade style game requiring fast thinking and quick reflexes. An army of evil robots is trying to steal the city's energy pods. You must protect the pods to prevent the city from being plunged into darkness. You accomplish this (and score points) by eliminating the robots before they can escape with the pods.

Since no human can withstand the energy generated by the pods, you must defend them by directing a remotely-controlled Pod Guardian. The Wired Remote Controllers (joysticks) are used to maneuver the Guardian. In addition, the fire button activates the Guardian's photon generator. A direct hit from this powerful weapon will destroy any robot.

Unlike most action games Guardian pits two allies against the forces of evil but recreates the real world of global politics by allowing the two allies to score points by blasting each other. The trick is to correctly determine when your ally can be zapped without losing control of the field of energy pods to the forces of evil!

Getting Started

To run Guardian, the following hardware is required: TI99/4A, Disk Memory System, Memory Expansion Unit (32K), and Editor/Assembler cartridge.

In order to run the game, insert the Editor/Assembler Command Module into the console. Press a key to pass the master title screen. Next, insert the Guardian diskette into Disk Drive 1. Then press the appropriate key to select the Editor/Assembler. Select 'LOAD AND RUN' from the Editor/Assembler selection list. Respond to the 'FILE NAME?' prompt by typing:

DSK1.GUARDIAN

and pressing 'ENTER'.

After the game is loaded, the Guardian title screen appears. When a key is pressed (or after 10 seconds have elapsed), the game proceeds to the option screen. Pressing 'QUIT' while the title screen is visible will return you to the master title screen.

The option screen allows the difficulty and number of players to be selected. Press the numeric key corresponding to the desired option (higher numbers indicate greater difficulty). Pressing 'QUIT' will return you to the master title screen; pressing 'BACK' or 'BEGIN' will return you to the Guardian title screen.

Playing the Game

After you have selected the desired option, the play screen is displayed. At the top of the screen, the player's current score is displayed (in two player mode both players' scores and a combined score are displayed). The remainder of screen displays the play field (the black area, framed by blue).

As the game begins, eight energy pods appear near the center of the screen.

The round number is displayed, and a Pod Guardian appears on the left hand side of the screen (in two player mode, a second Guardian appears on the right hand side of the screen). Shortly after the Guardian appears, robots begin to appear around the perimeter of the play field and the action begins.

The Guardian moves horizontally and vertically. To move the Guardian, press the lever on the Wired Remote Controller in the direction you wish it to go. Pressing the fire button on the Wired Remote Controller causes the photon generator to begin firing in the direction that the Guardian is facing. The Guardian may be turned while the fire button is depressed by moving the lever in the desired direction. In one player mode, either controller directs the Guardian. In two player mode, each controller directs one of the Guardians.

If you want to pause while playing a game, press the space bar on the keyboard. The game may be resumed by pressing any key. At any time, you may press 'QUIT' to return to the master title screen; 'BEGIN' to return to the game title screen; 'BACK' to go to the option screen; or 'REDO' to restart the game with the same options.

Object of the Game

In each round, a number of robots materialize around the perimeter of the play field. After they appear, they begin searching for a pod to steal. The object of the game is to destroy the robots before they are able to pick up a pod and escape from the screen. A robot never leaves the screen unless it has a pod in its possession.

The robots may be destroyed by a direct hit from a Guardian's photon weapon. But be careful. Any contact between a Guardian and a robot results in the destruction of both. In addition, a Guardian may be destroyed if it is hit by a photon generator (in two player mode). If a Guardian is destroyed, it will be regenerated as long as there is at least one pod remaining on the screen. It will reappear (after a brief delay) on the side of the screen where it appeared at the beginning of the round.

When a robot picks up a pod, an alarm sounds, and the robot turns white. It then tries to escape from the screen. If it reaches the boundry of the play field, it vanishes and the pod is lost. If the robot is destroyed before it escapes, the pod remains where the robot was destroyed.

The round continues until all the robots have been destroyed or have escaped with pods. At this point, the remaining pods are moved back to the center of the play field and the next round begins.

As the game progresses, the robots become more numerous, faster, and more intelligent. In the higher rounds, special 'assassin' robots begin to appear. These robots are primarily interested in eliminating the Guardians so that the other robots can carry off the pods.

Scoring

You are awarded points for each robot you destroy. Each different robot type is worth a different number of points (between 20 and 100) depending on how difficult it is to destroy (you may also score points by destroying the other player in two player mode). In addition, a bonus is added at the end of each round. The bonus is equal to the number of points scored in the round times the number of pods remaining on the screen.

For each 20,000 points you score (20,000 team points in two player mode), you are awarded a bonus energy pod. These pods are used to replace ones that have

been removed by the robots. When the pods are being placed on the screen at the beginning of a round, a higher pitched tone indicates that a bonus pod is being used.

End of the Game

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The game is over when no energy pods remain on the screen. To play another game with the same option (difficulty and number of players), press 'REDO'. To select a different option, press 'BACK' and the option screen will appear. 'QUIT' will return you to the master title screen, and 'BEGIN' will return you to the game's title screen.