NOVAGEN

MERCENARY

by Paul Woakes

Escape From Targ

CASSETTE LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

Switch on computer. (128K users select 48K BASIC)
Insert the cassette in the recorder with the label facing up.
Ensure that tape is fully re-wound.
LOAD "" (Type J followed by SYMBOL SHIFT P twice)
Press **ENTER** and press **PLAY** on recorder.

The cassette has a duplicate programme copy recorded on
the reverse side of the tape.

JOYSTICK / KEYBOARD OPTIONS

On completion of the load, you are asked to select one of the
following:
1. Keyboard or Cursor Control
2. Sinclair Joystick
3. Kempston Joystick

Please Note: You are not able to change this selection once
the game is commenced.
Press the required number to begin the game.

Note: The fine graphics of Mercenary may benefit from a
reduced T.V. colour intensity.

GAME DESCRIPTION

The action focuses mainly on the Planet Targ's major areas of habitation — the beautiful and mysterious cities and subterranean complexes conceived by the great architect, Walton. These are virtually deserted now following many years of war between the usurper Mechanoids, an alien race of robots, and Targ's original occupants, the peace-loving Palyars. You will most likely become embroiled in this continuing conflict.

Your challenge is to escape the planet, having first discovered the means to do so. This can be achieved in differing ways, depending on the various approaches to the game that a player may take. As you gain experience in beating the system, you will wish to optimise your spoils of war. How and when you escape is entirely in your own hands.

For assistance, you can rely only on Benson, your in-helmet 9th generation PC. Benson displays your guidance systems and provides an interpretation for your view of events in stunning three-dimensional vectorgraphics. You are permitted an insight into the physical form of things that are beyond all prior human experience. In addition, Benson is able to take into your possession a number of the objects that can be found and can identify some. Many of these will be useful to your eventual escape.

High in orbit above Targ, you will find the Palyar Colony Craft, where the vestiges of this once proud and peaceful race plot their revenge against the Mechanoid occupation.

How then to escape? You lack the communication range to call for help from your friends. And, in your business, friends cost money. You don't have much at the moment. Maybe your achievements for one side or the other could gain you a suitable intergalactic craft through their gratitude. There must be such a craft here somewhere. But where......?

And so you begin.

CONTROLS

Benson's Panel

ELEV (ELEVATION) — Registers in flight your up-down attitude to the horizontal at 0°, with 90° being vertically up and -90° being vertically down.

COMP (COMPASS) — Registers at all times your upright horizontal direction. The rotating dial colours indicate direction as follows:

Red = North, **Yellow/Red** = West, **Yellow** = South, **Red/Yellow** = East

ALTITUDE — Your in-flight height in Metres.

SPEED — Your speed of motion on board any vehicle.

LOCATION — Whilst on or above the surface, Benson receives local LOCREF service providing your co-ordinate positioning relative to the nearest city — expressed in black figures as 00-99 (West to East) x 00-99 (North to South). Red figures indicate a negative co-ordinate and ** is out of range.

Benson provides information and relays incoming messages on the communications panel. There are also two status indicators which respond to various conditions.
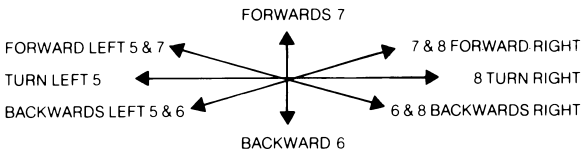
Communication

With Benson in communication mode, you may be asked to respond — indicated by a question mark (?) following text.
Press **'Y'** to respond YES, otherwise 'no' is assumed.

Walking

Walking is initiated by use of the joystick or keyboard as shown:

```
                            FORWARDS 7

FORWARD LEFT 5 & 7                          7 & 8 FORWARD RIGHT

TURN LEFT 5                                          8 TURN RIGHT

BACKWARDS LEFT 5 & 6                        6 & 8 BACKWARDS RIGHT

                           BACKWARD 6
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Transport

There are two types of ground based vehicles (GBV's) and four types of flight craft — each with varying capabilities. There is also one intergalactic craft.
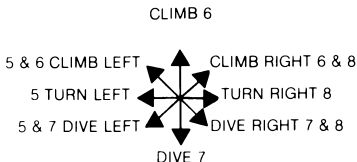
To BOARD a vehicle or craft — walk to its centre & press **'B'**

To LEAVE parked transport (to walk away) — press **'L'**

GBV's travel under power selected as below. Brakes are applied by pressing the <**SPACE KEY**>. Steering is by the joystick:

```
        5 TURN LEFT  ◄────────►  TURN RIGHT 8
```
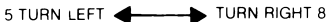
FLIGHT CRAFT need sufficient speed to take off. Landing too heavily will result in a crash. On the ground, they behave as GBV's but are controlled for direction in flight as shown:

CLIMB 6

5 & 6 CLIMB LEFT   CLIMB RIGHT 6 & 8

5 TURN LEFT   TURN RIGHT 8

5 & 7 DIVE LEFT   DIVE RIGHT 7 & 8

DIVE 7

POWER forward is selected by pressing a number key from **1** (low) through **4** = maximum thrust. Reverse thrust is achieved by pressing **<SYMBOL SHIFT>** and a number simultaneously. Fine adjustment to the power level is achieved by pressing **'+' (K)** key to increase and **'-' (J)** key to decrease. For zero forward thrust, which permits hover on certain craft, press **<SPACE KEY>**.

ELEVATORS: Underground Complexes are accessible from the surface. Locate a three-sided cage and position yourself, or your craft, on the surface within the cage. Press **'E'** to operate the ELEVATOR. There is also an elevator entrance on the top surface of the 'sky city' Colony Craft. Position yourself on the square pad adjacent to the landing strip and press **'E'** to gain entrance to the hangar below.

Combat

In any vehicle (outside of a hangar), depress the joystick 'fire' button (∅ key) to launch your missile. To destroy ground installations, fire at their base. If you are under attack, this is relentless. Unless you can knock out the enemy ship, it will ultimately find you and will home in for the kill.

Objects

A number of objects can be picked up and carried under Benson's control. Not all of these are useful. You can carry up to ten objects at any one time. Press **'T'** to TAKE (pick-up)—**'D'** to DROP. Objects are dropped in reverse order; i.e. the last taken is the first dropped.

Quit Situation

Mercenary could possibly play for ever. You will never be 'killed', although there are penalties if your craft is hit by a missile. This, and other conditions, can leave you in a position of having to walk, possibly for hours, to regain a vehicle or reach an underground complex. And there can be other irretrievable conditions. Mercenary is full of surprises. But you can opt out of a situation; just press **<CAPS SHIFT>** and **'Q'** simultaneously to be transferred back to a city location in possession of a new craft. BUT there is a penalty...Any objects that you hold will be scattered around.

MERCENARY — GAME SAVE

You can save out a current gameplay to pick up later from where you left off
Remove your copy of Mercenary before proceeding further and use a separate
data cassette that is write-enabled.

Press <**CAPS SHIFT**> and **'S'** simultaneously to save.
Benson response: SAVE NO. 1-4
Enter a number in this range to identify the saved file
Benson response: PRESS ENTER WHEN READY
Check that tape is correctly positioned
Press **'PLAY'** and **'RECORD'** together on cassette recorder.
Press <**ENTER**> to save gameplay (any other key to abort).
Your current game can now be continued

TO RE-LOAD GAMESAVE

At any point in the game (following completion of the opening 'crash' sequence),
to reload a previously saved gameplay:

Press <**CAPS SHIFT**> and **'L'** simultaneously.
Benson response: LOAD NUMBER 1-4?
Press required file number
Benson response: PRESS ENTER WHEN READY
Check that the tape is correctly positioned
Press **'PLAY'** on cassette recorder and press <**ENTER**> to load

Note: To abort a load failing to find the required file, press<SPACE KEY>

Mercenary II

If you succeed in escaping from 'Escape From Targ', Benson suggests that you
save your gameplay status. It is projected that these 'winning' saves will provide
an interesting load into the planned sequel — 'Damocles'

The Second City

Just to keep you busy until DAMOCLES is published, there's an additional
Dataset for Mercenary (Release Date January 1988, price £5.95). Load in this
Dataset and you're in The Second City. Every trick in the book has been used to
hinder your escape in this really tough challenge!

KEYBOARD SUMMARY

B	Board Vehicle
L	Leave Vehicle
E	Operate Elevator
T	Take Object
D	Drop Object

1-4	Forward Power Level
<SYMBOL SHIFT>1-4	Reverse Power Level
+ (K)	Increase Power
− (J)	Decrease Power
<SPACE KEY>	Stop
<CAPS SHIFT> Q	Quit