RED L.E.D.

Bertram rose from the tank, hot oil flowed over his muscularly bunched body as he shook his oval head to clear his eyes. He stepped smoothly .out, and attendance droids busied about him, drying his bronzed skin with loving care. He felt a charge run through his body as he flexed his arms and the inner coating of oil pulsed like a membrane of warm blood. He dismissed the droids with a contemptuous sweep of his broad, powerful hand and turned to face the entrance in front of him.

He loved this moment, he always had. The roar of the crowd as he stepped into the arena, the screaming, the shouting, the adulation. Bertram was their champion, he had been since he had started competing. He was the best and he knew it. He paused at the end of the short tunnel and limbered his lithe body. His arms swung in wide circles and his legs jerked in smooth, mechanical perfection. A light came into his eyes as he composed himself and started to walk the final twelve yards towards the arena. A grim smile played tentatively at the corner of his lips as he strode out into the warm sunshine and a banquet of appreciation. His name sounded from every lip in the arena and the noise was tremendous. Spectator after spectator stood on their seat, stamped their feet and roared his name. Bertram raised his arms in acknowledgement and turned to the three sides of the auditorium, before kneeling and bowing low to the Controller.

The auditorium was shaped like an ancient Greek theatre, with the audience facing the play matrix and the huge video wall that stood behind it. Layed out on the ground was the intricate pattern of transportation points from which the Controller selected the play area. Bertram joined the other two hopeful players who stood in front of the matrix. He smiled inwardly, he knew the controller would not choose one of them, not when the great Bertram was in the field. He

was the undisputed champion, the grand master and the crowd wanted him. He turned with the other two and once again faced the controller who was raised on a platform apart from the audience.

The controller stood and silence fell like a snowfall in winter, the crowd waited with pregnant anticipation as he paused before giving his choice. It was Bertram and once again the crowd went wild with approval.

Bertram moved with the animal grace of a jungle cat and stood on the point indicated on the matrix, from here he would be teleported to the play area on a distant world. The Controller had many worlds and many landscapes to choose from and even Bertram hadn't been to them all. He felt the familiar disorientation, and the sound of the crowd and his image on the video wall dissolved into a sparkling dust of multi-coloured notes dancing in a place beyond time and beyond matter. When his vision cleared again it was to see a harsh and rugged landscape before him.

Back in the arena the gigantic image of Bertram was replaced with a graphic representation of the landscape that he was looking on. The image of Bertram himself was replaced with a picture of a bright silver sphere. Before it lay a maze of geometric pathways and pitfalls, an analogue representation of the route needed to navigate successfully on the alien world.

The game itself was a relic from the days of the galactic mining companies. When the enormous quantities of previously rare minerals and metals were discovered on other planets, hitherto relatively ordinary minerals such as marble became a great deal more valuable. Diamonds and gold became debased to almost worthless value. Marble itself, found in relative profusion on earth, was very rare in the galactic worlds and was only to be found in the most dangerous and inaccessible of planets. The mining corporations had developed remote controlled mining droid systems to garner the rare minerals. The visual image

received by these droids was interpreted by computer and presented as a geometric picture for the human operators. They could then control the droids more easily and lose fewer of the valuable units. When the international monetary system became nullified by the religious ban on all trade in 2087 minerals such as marble became worthless. It was, after all, of little use for such purposes as jewelry. The existing remote mining stations then became converted for the purposes of entertainment and thus the game was born. It became enormously successful, a top rate controller earned more than practially any other professional in the solar system.

Back on the planet surface Bertram waited stoically for his movement instructions. He was determined this time to make a complete run. This was unheard of on an unknown surface, but Bertram knew he could do it. The first impulse beamed into his orientation computer and gears whirled noiselessly deep in his mechanical frame. This was it, he would claim the four target objects and successfully navigate the course to make a perfect run or burn out his servo motor in the attempt . . .

"Bertie!"

"Bertie, come here immediately!" The sharp voice of Mrs. Angelica Bleasedale rang out with all the charm and welcome of a dentists probe. In the kitchen a light came on in the visual units of a swerving droid and a loud clanking propelled him through to the lounge area.

"Bertie there you are at last, really I sometimes wonder what goes on in that dilapidated printed ciruit board you use for a brain. Now fetch us some tea immediately."

"Yes madam." Wheezed the rusty voice of the serving droid as he turned and wheeled noisily back to the kitchen.

"I'm going to have to scrap it you know." Followed the voice of Mrs. Bleasdale as the sorry robot exited.

GAMEPLAY

Your task is to form a left-to-right link, using your three battle-droids, across each of the interlace grids each of which gives access to the battle terrain of a separate world. Select your grid-hexagon, select your droid, let battle commence. On each landscape your task is to collect all of the energy pods and reach the exit. The energy pod to be found will be displayed in the right-hand window of your on-board display together with the number remaining.

After collecting all of the pods the exit will be activated (indicated by arrows flashing) and you may leave the landscape and register your conquest on the grid. Collect letters for the word 'BONUS' for the bonus play.
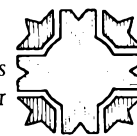
BATTLE-DROIDS

You are provided with three multi-purpose ZMX battle-droids, each with its own abilities and strengths. Choice of battle-droid may well affect your performance on an individual terrain.

Bonus battle-droid awarded every 100,000 points. Bonus time for each completed cosmi-interface-grid.

ICE-SWITCHES

These snowflake-like objects, when collected, freeze the acid-lakes enabling you to walk over them. Keep an eye on your temperature gauge. Outside of the bonus phase, acid is deadly.

TELEPORT PADS

On many landscapes a teleport network is installed which only the battle-droids are cleared to access. Stand on a tele-pad and press fire for sequential teleport.

TIME

You have one hour to complete your mission but can find time-distort capsules during battle. Positive (clockwise) ones will increase your time, negative (anti-clockwise) ones will decrease your time. Falling from the landscape will cost you one minute of re-orientation time as will trying to enter an unactivated exit.
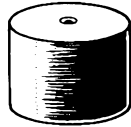
BONUS FEATURE

Each 10,000 points will cause a segment of the bonus-warp generator to appear on the landscape (indicated by a letter of the word 'BONUS') complete the word and the grid control will allow you to replay the previous landscape as a race to the exit with full terrain-immunity. This will fully enervate your currently selected droid and secure valuable time and points.

ENEMY DROID GENERATORS

Droid generators require a large number of hits to be destroyed. Kill them all and no more enemy droids will appear. Naturally, any remaining ones will not be pleased!

SMART-BOMB

Collect a bomb and your on-console display will animate while you carry it. Next press of fire will activate it destroying all enemy droids and any droid-generators in your immediate vicinity.

DROID-FREEZE

Droid freeze devices can be found on the landscape. They emit a stunning frequency to all enemy droids which are unable to move until they have calculated the blocking frequency.
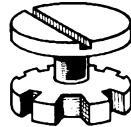
INTERLACE GRID

Displays the current state of your fortunes. A strobing hexagon indicates a victory and is a vital segment of your linking on the grid. A white hexagon is forever lost to you. Returning a live battle-droid to the grid will replenish some of its energy – even from an aborted landscape.

The current status of each battle-droid is represented by the brightness of the colour bar beneath its station: white for full strength, black for destroyed. Your battle-droid currently selected will be displayed in strobing colours.

ENERGY/SHIELD STRENGTH

Displayed by the bar-meters on your battle-console. Energy is gained for collecting any object and from anything you destroy. Energy is lost from collision with enemy droids and enemy droid generators. Avoid contact with the acid lakes at all possible costs. Also see BONUS FEATURE.

PAUSE MODE

Pressing SPACE enables access to Pause Mode. From here F1* displays an overhead map and F7* cedes victory on the landscape but at least your battle-droid will survive.

*Definable on Amstrad & Spectrum.

KEYBOARD CONTROLS

C64	AMSTRAD	SPECTRUM
A – up	A – up	Q – up
Z – down	Z – down	A – down
> – left	/ – left	O – left
? – right	V – right	P – right
RIGHT HAND	SHIFT – fire	N – fire
SHIFT – fire	SPACE – pause	SPACE – pause
SPACE – pause		

TO LOAD: SEE LABEL INSTRUCTION

ENERGY

SCORE

TIME REMAINING

NEXT BONUS LETTER

OBJECT TO COLLECT

SMART BOMB INDICATOR (S)

TEMPERATURE GAUGE

NUMBER OF OBJECTS TO FIND
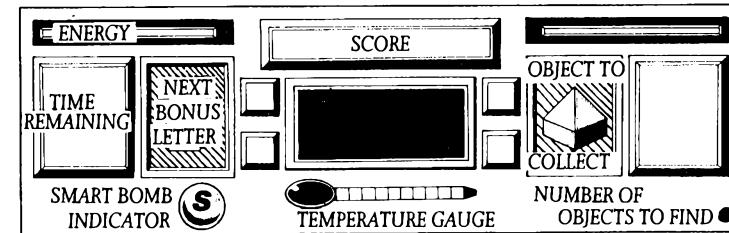
NAME	DATE	HI-SCORE/LEVEL

RED L.E.D.

FROM

STARLIGHT SOFTWARE

BY

SEAN SCARFF & 'TIM'

commodore 64/128
amstrad 464/664/6128
spectrum 48/128

p.n. 00812