

The Clash Of Kings
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Program by Bryan Schappel and Barry Kolbe (from ANALOG #40, pg 44)

Welcome, one and all. Welcome to the 48th Intergalactic Clash of Kings. Today, we have with us the champions, humanoids from the planet Zorn, of the Ribos system. Their worthy opponents have just arrived from planet Mechtron, of the Aldeberon system. (Mechtron is inhabited only by a race of robots.) As is well known, the challengers have their choice in the form of combat to be used. This year, the game will be Terri-wars (terrain wars, for those with no imagination). The champions will return to their home planet with the Trophy of Kings.

I can see in the distance that the teams (each team is composed of nine players) are taking their positions on the field now.

Allow me to quickly explain the rules of Terri-wars, for those of you who are attending for the first time. Turn up your interpreters and listen. The goal is to destroy the opponent's king. Simple?

As the game begins, players are positioned on a maplike field. The players move alternately, one square at a time. Diagonal moves are not permitted, and if an illegal move is attempted the team is alerted either by a tone or a verbal explanation. Combat is initiated by moving on an opponent. The two players involved are then whisked away to their Heli-Battle Globes (HBGs). At this point, the viewing monitor shifts to the Terri-wars battlefield.

The HBGs are equipped with Plasmaton Disruptors (also known as highly high-tech, extremely dangerous, very nasty Zappo-guns). These are traditionally used to ionize your opponent in some way. But this year, when an HBG is hit, the instant before impact a supremely intelligent super-computer teleports the lucky occupant to safety, or so the theory goes. You see, this year the teleportation systems were provided by Defectron, whose slogan is: "If it doesn't work it needed fixing, anyway."

Each player begins with a certain number of strength points, displayed as a bar graph at the bottom of your viewing screen. Each hit an HBG receives reduces the player's strength by one. When a player's strength reaches zero, that person is removed from play. (This is actually quite true. The teleportation systems have one minor flaw: each time someone is teleported, some body mass is lost, and the player's strength is decreased. When the points reach zero, the remainder of the player is collected and transported to the hospital for the severely impaired.)

The players, board positions, names and strength points are given below.

Board positions.

+-----+									
	5							E	
	6	2						B F	
	7	3	1				A C G		
	8	4					D H		

9		I
+-----+		
Humanoid -- Planet: Zorn.		
+-----+		
Player#	Name	Points
+-----+		
1	King	9
2,4	Vipers	7
3	Canine	4
6,8	Bipeds	3
5,7,9	Scorpions	5
+-----+		
Robots -- Planet: Mechtron.		
+-----+		
Player#	Name	Points
+-----+		
A	Cyborg	9
C,E	Serv Droids	7
B	Land Rover	4
F,H	Warbots	3
D,G,I	Avions	5
+-----+		

This year, to make Terri-wars more challenging, the battlefield has a randomly changing maze of pylon stars. Players aren't allowed to move through these, but bumping into them doesn't damage the battle globe.

The field also has randomly generated terrain features at the beginning of each game. There's at least one path through the terrain composed of rocks, trees and mountains. Players aren't allowed to move over these terrain features.

Notes on the program.

The impressive introduction screen for Clash of Kings was achieved by a Display List Interrupt (DLI) and a little fine vertical scrolling. The DLI will shade any object that's 16 scan lines high (equal to a graphics 2 character in height) in all the shades of one color. This makes the text look as if it were cut from a polished metal bar.

The terrain board border was accomplished by using a character that was defined with every other bit turned on. This technique was also used to create the multi-colored terrain features. The players' pieces are composed of four redefined characters, forming a 2x2 grid. The cursor was done with player 0 in double width.

The battlefield was done in graphics mode 2, and the HBGs are players 0 and 1, while the missiles are players 2 and 3. The battlefield portion runs almost completely in the vertical blank. Explosion sound effects were borrowed from Tom Hudson and Kyle Peacock's game, Fire Bug (Analog #23).

Playing the game.

The Clash of Kings is a two-player game that requires two joysticks plugged into ports 1 and 2. The joystick in port 1 controls the player on the left, and stick 2 controls the player on the right. To move a player on the terrain board, move the cursor over the player you want and press the fire button. A short tone is given when a player is chosen.

Once you choose a player, it must be moved; illegal moves are not permitted, so choose with caution and skill. If you choose a player which can't be moved, you'll be told, and you may choose another piece. Move the cursor in one of the four cardinal directions and press the FIRE button again to make the choice final.

The cursor is on a rubber band. If you try to move it more than once in one direction, it snaps back to its original position for another choice. Clash of Kings will wait one-half second before snapping back the cursor. During this time, you may press the trigger to select a piece destination. Move onto a square held by your opponent to do battle. You're not permitted to move onto your own pieces.

On the battlefield, control the Battle Globes by moving your stick in the four cardinal directions. To fire a Plasmaton Disruptor, press the stick button and move the stick in the direction you want to fire. You can only fire one shot at a time, and you can't fire again until your Disruptor hits an object.

Pressing RESET at any time will return you to the title screen, ready to play again.

Well, that's all. We hope you enjoy winning the Trophy of Kings and taking it back to your home planet. Now, let the games begin.