GALACTIC TRADER

To load on a 32K Atari 400 or 800, type "CLOAD". Duplicate program is recroded on reverse side. For disk users (requires OK) after loading type SAVE"GTRADER.BAS.

A. If the tape does not seem to load, try repeating the whole procedure using the other side of the tape. You may also try cleaning the head of the tape player using a Q-tip and standard rubbing alcohol.

B. If you get a ERROR within a minute or so of loading, then try positioning the tape (using a regular cassette player). Play the tape until you hear the first long tone, then put the tape into the Atari cassette player and repeat the whole procedure.

Peace has finally come to the war-torn central Galectic system, united into a single federation by the imperial forces of Balactica (see "Galactic Empire" – from Adventure International, P.O. Box 3435, Longwood, FL 32750). The end to the fighting has cost you your job as commander of Galactica's imperial forces, but it has simultaneously opened up new opportunities in trade for the person with the vision and ambition to exploit them.

You once commanded a fleet of hundreds of ships. Today you have only one. You led armies of millions a short year ago. Now you pilot your single ship alone, aided only by two loyal comrades who remember what you were and have faith in what you may become. Navigator Kirman of your old starship refused an opportunity to join Galaco, the interplanetary rocket fuels cartel, and elected to come with you . Even more surprising, Computer Central, the heart of your starship, stuck by you. Perhaps its judgement has been clouded by emotions after all, as Major Bayliss alleged.

The principles of trade are not difficult. The farther a product is from its world of origin, the greater its value. All one has to do is buy or trade for cargo, take them farther from their home world, and trade them for other commodities. In practice, it is not that simple, of course. You don't know the place of origin of the products, at least at first, nor is anyone likely to tell you. Until you develop experience on each plant, you don't know the rates of barter there, and the locals will try to exploit your ignorance by fleecing you if they can. All your experience can be worthless too if you are so incautious as to ply one route too often, for the largest trading firms keep their ears open, and they have the economic muscle to deal you out of any route that appears too attractive.

There are other problems as well. You will find that no trader will accept the coin of the Realm except on Galactica. On every other planet, barter is the medium of exchange. Your credits are only good at the fuel depot, and even the cartel will barter for commodities if you are short of cash (they are particularly extortionate when they feel they have you over a barrel, however, so it is generally better to buy fuel with cash). Local rates of barter can be hard to discern too. If a local trader thinks you are asking too much

for part of your cargo, he may refuse to discuss barter of that item any further. That can be expensive, when one considers the cost of bringing those goods to his doorstep.

Your most important cost consideration is fuel. The ship is powered by microscopic fusion modules, sold across the galaxy at the fixed price of 2 credits per millit. The amount of fuel you need for a journey depends both upon the total mass of ship and cargo and upon the distance to be travelled. Fortunately, Computer Central is an old hand at these calculations and can be relied upon to do much of the brain work. The formula, for those interested in the precise details is a follows:

(Lift Off Thrust + Distance/2) X (Cargo Mass + Ship Mass)

Lift off from most systems requires 3 millits/MKG, from Galactica 5 millits/MKG. The ship weighs 10 MKG and each item on the cargo manifest weighs 1 MKG. (As mentioned before, Computer Central will make these computations for you. For more details, see the Ship's Manual below.)

Your goal, as always, is power. In time of peace power is more easily gained through personal wealth, which enables you to buy the sevices of men whose abilities you can no longer demand as servant of the Imperial Purple. In your darker moments, you believe that in the near future you may need a personal army. The Emperor is a young man, full of passion and spite, and you are understandably uneasy over the future of the empire you worked so devotedly to create. He does not like or trust you either. You were too popular, in his mind, too renowned for your military powers. It would not be unheard of for a ruler to mask his own incompetence by claims of treason which, coincidentally, eliminated those most qualified to succeed him.

So you are a trader. It gives you the freedom of outer space, whether to flee an emperor's assassin or to maintain contacts throughout the galaxy. Without a power base of your own, however, the contacts will mean nothing – except another job under another ambitious person, perhaps no more competent than the present one. You want more than that. Ten billion credits will buy you the power you need. (Both TRS-80 & Atari versions require you to amass 10 B, not 1.)

For those unfamiliar with Galactic Empire, the following manual will guide you through the capabilities of your vessel. Read it carefully. You have many useful tools at your disposal. Your ability to use them to their fullest advantage will greatly improve your success at this new venture. Because space travel severely stretch the average life span, you will have 1000 stardates to ply the skies with your wares. During this time you will age no more that 8 physical years. By the end of that time, developments on Galactica will certainly have progressed to the critical point. Your part in the inevitable Galactic revolution may depend upon your success during the next few years.

Good luck bwana. May you find your new profession an enriching and eye-opening experience.

SHIP'S MANUAL

I. THE COMMAND CONSOLE:

A) Viewport
- in upper left portion of console
- permits visual orientation in space
- displays name of current location

B) Status
- in upper right portion of console
- displays current stardate, credits & fuel

C) CRTs
- in lower left side of console
- displays messages from computer central, traders, fuel cartel

D) Cargo
- on right side of console
- displays all goods in the hold

II. CONTROLS

A) =C= Computer Central

When called, Computer Central will offer a choice of the following options:

+ A= Galaxy Map
=B= Range Finder
=C= Trading Records
=D= Fuel Use Computations

The purpose and function of each is as follows:

Galaxy Map: Displays a view of the inhabited portion of the galaxy, viewed from above. (The galaxy is 3 dimentional, of course, although it is only about half as deep as it is wide). You will see a blinking control bit near the center of the screen. There are 2 ways to identify star systems. First, if you know the name of the system, simply type in the first letter of the name. The full name of the systems, its co-ordinates, and its distance from Galactica will be displayed, and the appropriate star on the map will flash repeatedly. A second method is to use the arrow keys to move the linking dot until it is superimposed upon a star on the screen. The system is then identified at the bottom of the screen.

Range Finder: To use the range finder, just enter the first initials of 2 systems. Computer Central will then calculate the distance between them.

Trading Records: Computer Central keeps track of all your trade dealings on systems throughout the galaxy, as well as a lift of current prices on Galactica. Simply type first initial of the system you'd like the records of (or G for Galactica's prices).

Fuel use computations: Computer Central will calculate the fuel requirements for any trip you plan. You enter your destination when requested and the cargo weight. CC shows you the entire computation and then allows you to try various alternatives by varying the

destination and cargo weight figures.

B) + E= Embark

This command calls navigator Kirman to the bridge. He will take your order as to destination and immediately execute it. It is vital that you insure that you have enough fuel for the trip, or you will end up lost in space! Note that computer Central's sub-mode D only give **approximate** fuel usage, and you should always keep some fuel in reserve.

If you make a mistake, or change your mind about your destination, **immediately** press and **hold down** and R key. If you have done this before the ship starts moving you should see the CRT return to the command option list.

You can also remain where you are by answering R to Navigator Kirman's query of your destination.

C) =T= Invitation To Trade

This command is generated automatically when you first land on any planet (and at the beginning of your trading career). Your negotiations with local traders can be accomplished with single letter responses (such as + Y= for yes, =N= for no or nothing, or the first letter of a cargo type i.e. +V+ for Vhiolans) with the exception of questions asking for a quantity (such as "How many do you want to trade"). This type of question requires that you enter the amount then press the (RETURN) key. This type of response is covered more fully under "Types of Input". At any time during your negotiations, you may call for assistance from Computer Central by pressing =C=, or entering 0.5 in response to a quantity question. In this manner you may negotiate while being able to access the current Galactica prices, or past negotiations with traders in this or any other system. To leave the Computer Central mode, see instructions under "exiting Computer sub-modes A-D".

After you have returned from the Computer mode, the question asked you will no longer be visible, but you will see a question mark to remind you of it.

Note: The traders of a system will only let you negotiate on a particular cargo type **once** per visit to a system, so it is not a good idea to turn down their final offer unless you are **sure** you want to keep that cargo type. (What is meant by cargo type is simply one the the different types of trade goods: Dopae, Tenibles, Vhiolans, etc.).

D) =F= Fuel Cartel Offices

You may buy fuel at the prices of 2 credits per millit. If you do not have enough money to cover the size of your order, you will be sold as many millits as you can afford, and asked if you wish any more. If you don't have enough money to buy the amount you want, answer "N" (no) to the question "Will you pay cash?". Unlike the traders, the Fuel Cartel will allow you to trade them portions of a particular cargo type as often as you wish. Note however, that the cartel will only give you about 50% of the local value on cargo that you trade.

E) =Q= Quit (& Save Game)

This command will display your current asset value, and your current score (which is based upon your current value divided by the time it took to acquire it). After this information has been displayed, you will be asked if you wish to save the game to be continued at a later time. You can save the game to cassette or disk. Note that you can only same one game in progress to disk; additional saves will replace the old saved game, destroying it.

After this, you will be asked if you want to continue the game. If you answer N (no), you will be asked if you want to start a new game. If you answer N (no), "READY" will appear.

F) Types of Input:

In this game, there are 2 types of input.

First, option or answer inputs. These are the answers that you give to questions like "Do you accept?", and the command that you pick from the command option list. Answer these by pressing the first letter of your response (Y for yes, N for no, V for Vhiolans, C for Computer Central). You do **not** have to press the (RETURN) key.

Second, quantity inputs. These are the answers that you give to questions like "How many millits of fuel?" or "How many Dopae do you have to sell?" Answer by typing in the number, then press (RETURN). Note that to prevent accidental clearing of the screen, the editing keys (backspace, delete, insert, etc.) have been disabled. If you make a mistake while typing in a number, add a M (or any other letter A-Z) to the end of your number. This will cause the computer to reject that number and ask you for a new one of goods and credits which you have accumulated.

III. STRAGEGY & TACTICS

If you do not make a profit on your first few trade runs, you will almost certainly end up out of money, farming fungibles on some backworld system. It is vitally important, therefore, to get off on the right foot. Take a look at the commodities for sale on Galactica and purchase a variety of low cost items. Do not buy as many as you can afford, because you won't be able to pay the cost to transporting them any great distance – thirty or forty itmes are probably sufficient. Then turn to the galaxy map in Computer Central. Find Galactica and then find a region of the galaxy twenty or twenty-five light years away. Record the names of systems of varying distances from your current location and then turn to the fuel use program in the computer banks. Determine which system is near enough to enable you to reach it with the fuel and money you have (and to return) and far enough away to make the items you have purchased rare and valuable. (Do not cut your fuel needs too close, by the way. CC's computaticns are only approximate, and it is terrible thing to be lost in the void of space, drifting helplessly, out of fuel.)

When you reach the system you have selected, keep CC's chart of Galactica's prices before you and try to obtain the most valuable commodities in exchange for your wares.

Often tremendous bargains are available which you will not be able to take advantage of because of the limitations of your fuel supply. You have to dump much of your cargo at the fuel cartel offices, merely because you haven't the fuel to carry it all.

Use your trading experience on various worlds to figure out which regions the eight commodities come from. Remember, the closer you are to its home world, the cheaper each will be.

Two Final Caveats: Be careful to vary your routes to an area. Any route travelled more than once, in either direction, is likely to be taken away by one of the large trading firms. And finally, once you have a little money to work with, stay away from Galactica as much as you possibly can. Galactica is the emperor's stronghold – even if he does not order you liquidated, there are many on that planet eager to ingratiate themselves with him, as it is well known there that he dislikes and fears you.

IV. A NOTE ON TRADING RECORD STORAGE

Because of memory limitations, this program can only store 90 trading records at a time. After the 90th, the computer starts back at the beginning, and replaces the oldest records with the newest. If you have either 40K with cassette only, or 40K and DOS II versions, you can modify this program to allow more record storage. The variable REC determines how much memory is set aside for Trading Record storage. By altering the value that REC is defined as, you can increase the storage space. This line defines REC:

120 REC = 90: DIM EX(REC),CTO(REC),CTT(REC),CQO(REC),CQT(REC). If you have 40K and cassette (no disk), change line 120 to:
120 REC = 375:DIM EX(REC),CTO(REC),CTT(REC),CQO(REC),CQT(REC) (Be sure to save program on a different cassette than the one that it came on)

If you have 40K and DOS II version 2s, then change 120 to:
120 REC = 200:DIM EX(REC),CTO(REC),CTT(REC),CQO(REC),CQT(REC), (and save to a different disk).