

HELL GATE

PROLOGUE

TIME: The distant future

PLACE: Somewhere out near the orbit of Pluto...

...I floated, suspended motionless in the airless void. Ahead, the multitudinous infinity of stars which can only truly be appreciated from outside the atmosphere...and something else, something man-made framing the diamond — bright stars. The Hell Gate. I could still remember what the technician (from "Zappo — Specialists in Mega Powerful Destructive Ultrakill Laser Systems and Painless Dentistry") had told me about the Hell Gate. Apparently subspatial stress monitors had indicated a large hostile fleet of Zyxian droids in transit through hyperspace, due to emerge near Pluto in readiness for (surprise, surprise) an attack on Earth. Our scientists predicted the time and place of appearance of their Planar Warp Field through which they would materialise from subspace. The men from Zappo built the Hell Gate around the re-entry point, and it's up to me to blast the little suckers before they can get anywhere.

The Gate itself consists of four physical tracks arranged in a square, upon which are generated the Laser Heads. These are pure force but look solid, but have a tendency to destabilise into so much incandescence at the slightest provocation. Apparently, if I am hit by a 'droid, they can momentarily disperse the laserheads and ZAP the little blighters with a nasty radiation field. All in the Gate will cop it but — you guessed it — only a limited number of discharges. And to cap it all, the laserheads are in some kind of metodynamic equilibrium — what it means is, if one gets the finger they all go up. Ah well... 2 minutes to arrival. Better thumb the firing stud to check the weaponry. Zzzzap! Wow! I've never seen so many bullets — they won't stand a chance.

Suddenly I hear a thin, eerie screech getting louder. Time seems to slow down and suddenly something flies together into the Gate. Wierd — sort of like a negative explosion — and there are four bright yellow 'droids spinning in the Gate.

ZzzzzzzAPI take THAT, creepos! Easy! Like fish in a barrel...wait, what's this...UUURGH (these time distortions really turn my stomach) more nasties! I'll just zap...AAGH! MORE! How's a man expected to do a good job of zapping when they don't wait 'till I've cleaned up the last lot? Why is that little gauge on my control panel showing red? What do I do about the ones attacking my guns? Why did that green one just split into TWO yellow ones? Why is there a goat in the Gate? Why have all my lasers just blown up? When can I go home???

Can YOU answer his questions? Can YOU single handedly defend the Universe against hostile swarms of enemy droids...again? If you think you've got what it takes to be a Galactic Hero, then read on for instruction on becoming a

GUARDIAN OF THE GATE

(not to mention the Goat).

LOADING HELL GATE

Holding down SHIFT, press RUN/STOP. When you see
PRESS PLAY ON TAPE,

do so. Loading is automatic until you see the title screen.

The program is recorded on both sides of the tape. Side 1 is in TURBO mode; if your machine cannot handle this very high-speed system, please use the normal-speed copy on side 2.

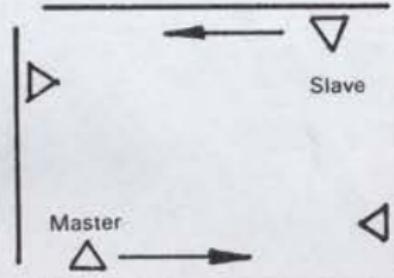
STARTING THE GAME AND PLAY OPTIONS

Plug a joystick into the REAR joystick port no. 2. If the game is in Self-Play or Title Screen mode, pressing FIRE on the Joystick will bring up the High Score/Option Page. With this page on screen, the following options are available:

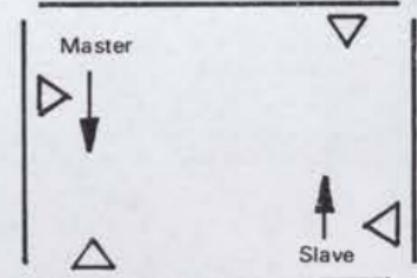
- 1) Press F1: increases Start Level (possible 1 to 8)
- 2) Press F3: switch between One and Two Player modes.
- 3) Press FIRE: start game with displayed options.

CONTROLLING THE LASER CANNONS

When the laser cannons materialise onto the tracks, you have control of them. You control the YELLOW cannons on the bottom and left hand tracks



JOYSTICK RIGHT



JOYSTICK DOWN

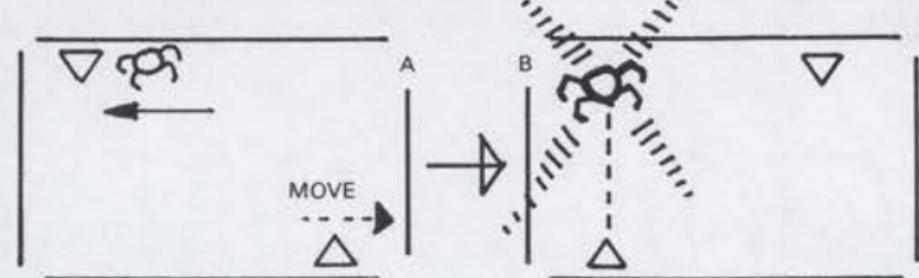
The opposite ships are SLAVE ships which perform REFLECTIONS of your motion. Thus if you move the base cannon right, the top cannon will move to the left (see diagrams above). The action is similar with the left-mounted cannon: Move it down, and the right-hand cannon moves up. Seems tough at first, but soon it comes naturally and it allows you to cover the entire Gate efficiently. Pressing FIRE will unleash a hail of bullets.

LASER CANNON OVERHEAT

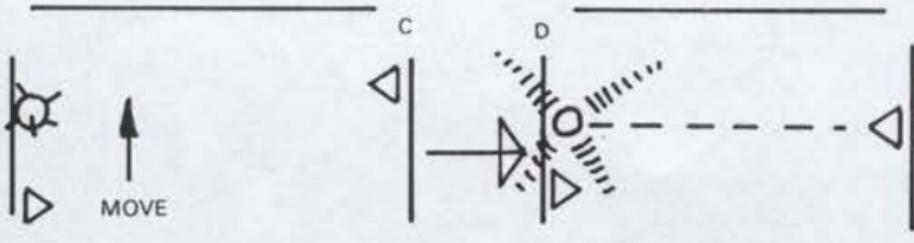
If you fire from a non-moving cannon, it will start to heat up. Heat status is shown on the scale at base of screen. If this goes red, allow cannon to cool down or it will destabilise. To cool a cannon, you can either stop firing or start moving. The easiest and best way is simply to keep all cannons moving nearly all the time — you never have to stop firing. There are exceptions to this rule — see below.

SPECIAL STRATEGY

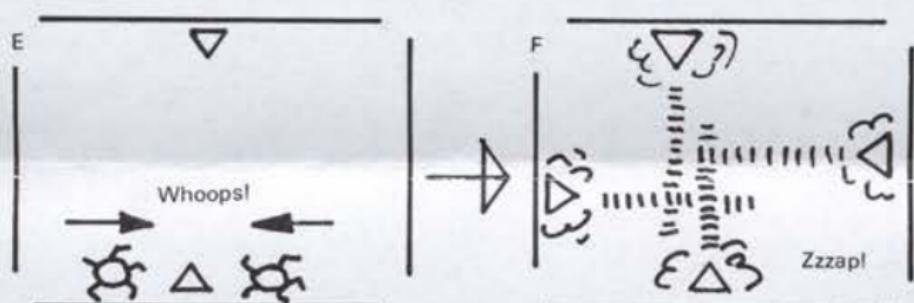
What do I do if a droid is on my track and moving toward my cannon? Some typical situations and solutions are described below.



A droid is moving towards the top ship in the situation at A above. The situation: move the base ship RIGHT (NOT left as instinct might dictate!). It will move off the right-hand end of its track and re-appear ('wrap round') on the left-hand end. Simultaneously, the top ship moves left, out of danger, and wraps round to the extreme right of its track. Fire — and your Base cannon's bullets should catch the creepy 'droid.'



At C above, the player has a choice. He can keep up a stream of fire and wait to intercept the droid as it moves into his fire. Better play, however less prone to overheating, is to move the left-hand cannon UP, towards the droid but not hitting it, whilst maintaining fire. The right-hand cannon comes down, on-line with the droid, and despatches it.



RELAX AND ENJOY THE EXPLOSION.

SMART BOMBS

Hell Gate takes the Smart Bomb to its logical evolutionary peak. Consider — on any game when do you trigger a smart bomb? Answer — at the last moment, when you can't avoid being hit. Hell Gate Plasma zaps are triggered by the act of an enemy hitting your ship. As long as you have Plasmas left, getting hit results in the destruction of all on screen. Don't get complacent, though — play skilfully and save up Plasmo zaps. They are essential for survival on later waves.

ZAPPERS

Zappers appear as the waves get more difficult. They cannot be shot, and pulsate through colour changes. Beware them as they get brighter — when they are WHITE they unleash a laser bolt which is lethal to any laserhead caught in it — Plasmo zaps regardless. Be aware of their possible zap lines and the periodicity of their zapping.

MULTIPLYING ALIENS

Shooting some aliens causes more aliens to materialise in the same place. Be aware of which aliens cause this type of split, and be ready to deal with the consequences.

END OF WAVE

The end of a wave occurs when all the aliens (except Zappers) have been destroyed. It is signalled by the de-resolution of all laserheads and your bonus (based on how many Plasmo zaps are in storage and the wave number) is awarded. Two extra Plasmo zaps (up to a maximum of 9) are awarded and play begins on a higher level.

WHAT ABOUT THESE GOATS THEN?

Oh yes, the goats. These poor Meta Goats occasionally accidentally materialise at the left-hand edge of your Gate. The poor frightened beasts will run across the Zone in an attempt to reach the other side. For any which make it without getting lasered or Plasma zapped, you get bonus of 5000 points. Goats are nice. Be kind to them. Don't blast them into little pieces. They're not Droids.

END OF GAME

This occurs when all your Laserheads in reserve (shown on indicator at bottom-right of screen) are used up. If you have a high-score, change initials by Joystick Left/Right, enter by Fire. The game remembers the High Score signature of the last player for convenience of use when playing on your own.

YOU'RE NOT KIDDING ABOUT THE GOATS THEN?

No, honestly. Play the game. Don't shoot them. You'll get lots of points.

ARE THERE ANY INVISIBLE DROIDS?

Yup.

HOW MANY LEVELS ARE THERE?

Twenty. Level Twenty goes on forever, but doesn't throw any zappers at you. I'm not a sadist.

SO I CAN'T MAX OUT, THEN?

No. Some of the aliens on Level 20 can only be completely destroyed with a Plasmo zap. Level 20 is infinite. Just hold them off as long as you can. Good players will still get the high scores. And don't shoot goats.

STRATEGIES

- 1) CONSTANTLY strafe the centre of the Gate. This is where all aliens materialise.
- 2) Line up on aliens simultaneously with all 4 guns. It can be done and will get you out of many tight spots.
- 3) Use wraparound tactics to cover the track of opposite guns.
- 4) Keep moving with both guns. Don't allow heat to build up.
- 5) Learn when to expect goats — And DON'T SHOOT THEM!!!

EPILOGUE

Space was strained by the searing antispaces metapulses blazing from my laserhead. All seemed horribly normal — wave after wave of devious Droids materialising — and my awesome firepower blowing them away. Usually. Then, suddenly the eerie scream of rez-up... and nothing. Blackness — moments later shattered as a reserve Plasmo Zap flooded the gate with lethal red radiation. Silhouetted against the angry glow I saw the black silhouettes of 'droids... droids coated in Zero-albedo paintwork. No reflected light of any kind. Black as space — in space... to all intents, invisible droids.

Cursing in 100 different languages at the devious tricks of our attackers, I hammered the firing stud mercilessly — only to cease abruptly as six Meta Goats materialised in the Gate. I wasn't a member of the G.S.P.C.A. for nothing....

THE END

CBM 64