

RUN "TAIPAN"



GALACTIC

TAIPAN

You've just sunk every cent you own into your own space ship. You're convinced you are as good a trader as any of those you have worked for these last few years. Now you're going to get the chance to prove it. As you come in for a landing, your first as captain of your very own ship, you reflect on the obstacles, both natural and man made, facing you: Space Storms. There are many conflicting theories why these disturbances seem to occur just at the transition from hyperspace to normal space, but no one can say for sure, only that they do. Space Storms can be deadly, damaging both ship and cargo. About all the good that can be said for them is that they are somewhat predictable, and standard information services supply such predictions.

Most of the remaining problems are do to your fellow man. Space Pirates will try to hit you just as you break out of hyperspace, often as you are still skaking from a Space Storm. Pirates aim to damage your ship just enough to slow you down; not enough to destroy your cargo. You can either run or fight depending on how heavily armed your ship is and how lucky you feel. There is a substantial bounty for destroying a pirate ship -- sometimes enough to repair your ship. Therein lies another problem. Real repair requires a rather advanced technology on a rather advanced planet. Most danger from Space Pirates seems to be present at less advanced places.

After you land your troubles aren't over. Planetary governments seem to take pleasure in harassing free traders. Harassment can range from taxes on everything you sell to departure taxes to outright confiscations. Even after all this you still might not make a profit. Besides other free traders, major competition comes from the Star Line and the Blue Line, shipping lines plying regular routes through the galaxy. For weeks after they arrive at a planet, selling prices fall through the floor. Not buying prices, though both selling and buying prices are affected by economic forces such as inflation, (good profit times), recession (buy those bargains), war or plague. Each has its own effect on prices for all the classes of goods which you normally carry. Even though the information package you can buy about a planet will have whatever information is available, (they always err on the conservative side -- if they don't report it, it won't usually happen), in the last analysis 'you carries your merchandise and you takes your chances'.

CLOAD from either side and RUN. Pick the long or short game, then decide on your universe.

MAIN DISPLAY SCREEN

Upper left number specifies the date as year, month, week. The month ranges from 1 to 13 and the week from 1 to 4. EX: 250.09.4 is immediately followed by 250.10.1. This is only important if you worry about when the Star or Blue Line will arrive at a planet. To the right of the date is the name of the planet you are on. In the upper right corner is your money amount.

Down the left hand edge of the screen is a column of 3-letter abbreviations over a number. The number signifies amounts of each:

CAP ship capacity CGO cargo aboard SPD speed (1-5) ARM armament (10-40)
DMG damage 100 (no damage) to 0 (complete destruction) FOD food (50 max)
FUL-fuel

To the right is the starmap. Each block of color represents a planetary system. The distance between systems is roughly proportional to the flight time between them. Each color represents a particular technological (tech) level. One system is twice as big as the others. That is where you are.

The rightmost portion of the screen contains the main menu. Type the number of the option you choose -- only the final one costs you money without allowing the option of refusing.

MENU Options: (Type <X> to get out of option)

<1> Lists cargo and cost of each item.

<2> Brings you to the market place. A list of things you may buy or sell, costs and amounts follows. The bottom line identifies the portion of the selling price that the planetary government will take in taxes. Type to buy or <S> to sell, then answer the questions posed. Up to the final handshake, you may cancel with <X>.

<3> Financial Services (as long as the planet is not too primitive.) You can trade in your old ship on a new one, have it repaired, or borrow money. Be aware that the interest rate is a weekly rate. You may only take out one loan at a time. To pay some or all of it back, or increase the amount borrowed, you must be on the planet from where you borrowed it originally.

<4> Planetary travel timetables. Type <S> and direct the flashing cursor with the arrow keys to atop a star system. That system will then flash while its name appears at the screen bottom. A <C> regains cursor control. As always, of course, an <X> exits the routine. A <T> provides travel times. Answer the prompts by naming the two systems you want the distance between.

<5> Travel, fast or slow. Fast uses more fuel but reduces travel time by half. (And food consumption). Answer "DO YOU WANT TO LIFT?" with a <Y> and off you go... oh, there's a departure tax - from 350 to 800 CR. Don't forget to save enough or you'll have to sell something, probably at a loss.

After you get to your destination, you'll learn what is going on there and be asked if you want to land.

Answering 'no' requires you give another destination: no departure tax, however.

< > A blank option? Almost. The final option requires you merely enter the 1st letter of the planet name. 200 CR will immediately drop from your bankroll -- the price of information. Most is self explanatory; the top few lines aren't. These show the most recent and the next arrival dates for the Star and Blue lines. Remember, these lines are very, very big and can buy and sell you a hundred times over.

<Q> Quit. You can always turn the computer off; but entering <Q> gives you a final rating.

GOODS

Electronic -- high tech products, presumably computers, components, control circuitry, etc.

Weapons -- there is always a market for weapons. Neither earth nor the planets have learned.

Medicinals -- ranging from natural products to sophisticated products of genetic engineering.

Spices -- spices, exotic foodstuffs, wines and liquors.

Art -- not only traditional paintings but also handicrafts and jewelry.

As can be well imagined, producers and consumers for these items will vary depending upon tech level. For instance, primitive planets (tech level 1) won't produce electronics. Tech level 2 -- agricultural-based economies -- are good places to buy food but bad places to buy rocket fuel. More advanced planets like Tech level 3 and 4 consume the good things in life like Spices and Art. Remember also that the state of the economy can have a major impact on prices so vary your strategy accordingly. Another difference between types of products is their vulnerability to damage while in transit. The latter three classes are much more sensitive than are the first two.

GOOD LUCK and MANY PROFIT\$\$\$

GRAND = 1
Red = 4
Yellow = 2
Blue = 3

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SIRIUS
PROYX
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EBONY



F4
L4 D1
C1 T2
E3
S2
P3