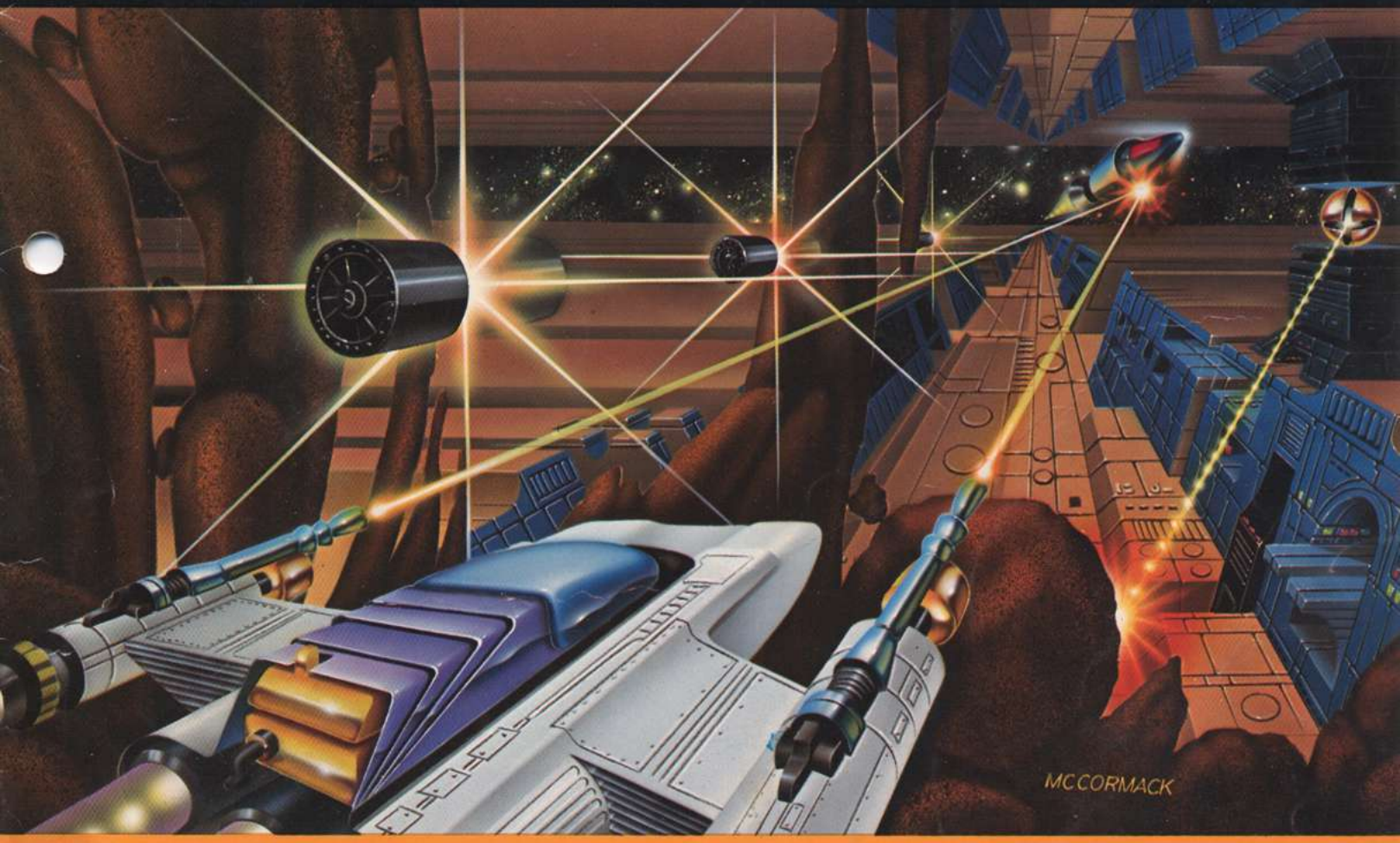
ATARI® 400/800™

ATARI® CAVERNS OF MARS™

USER'S GUIDE



ATARI®

A Warner Communications Company

Model CX8130
Use with
ATARI® 400™ or ATARI 800™
HOME COMPUTER SYSTEMS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
SETTING UP FOR ACTION	1
USING THE JOYSTICK CONTROLLER	2
PRELIMINARY BRIEFING	3
Martian Defense System	3
Refueling	4
The Base Level	4
SELECTING A SKILL LEVEL	5
TO BEGIN PLAY	5
SCORING	6
Points for Objects Destroyed	6
Points for Distance Travele	6
TO PAUSE OR RESET A GAME	7
Pause Option	7
Reset	7
GAME TIPS	7
Cavern Maneuvers	7
Launching the Laser Torpedoes	7
Surviving the Laser Gates	7
Surviving the Space Mines	7
Maximum Points	7
Alternate Keys	7

INTRODUCTION

MARS HAS DECLARED WAR ON TERRA IV! Martian galactic fleets surround the planet and are demanding its surrender! Luckily, one space fighter has escaped to challenge Mars.

The Terra IV High Command knows that your fighter, the HELICON VII, is the only space fighter equipped to invade the Martian Headquarters deep within the **Caverns of Mars™**. You have therefore been assigned the dangerous mission of sabotaging the Martian defense system by activating their deadly fusion bomb. This bomb, once activated, will level Martian Headquarters within a matter of seconds. Unless you have reached the surface before time runs out, you will be destroyed with their headquarters.

Your orders: ACTIVATE THE FUSION BOMB IN THE MARTIAN HEADQUARTERS AND GET OUT!

SETTING UP FOR ACTION

1. Connect your **ATARI® 400™** or **800™** Home Computer to a television set and to a wall outlet as instructed in your operators manual.

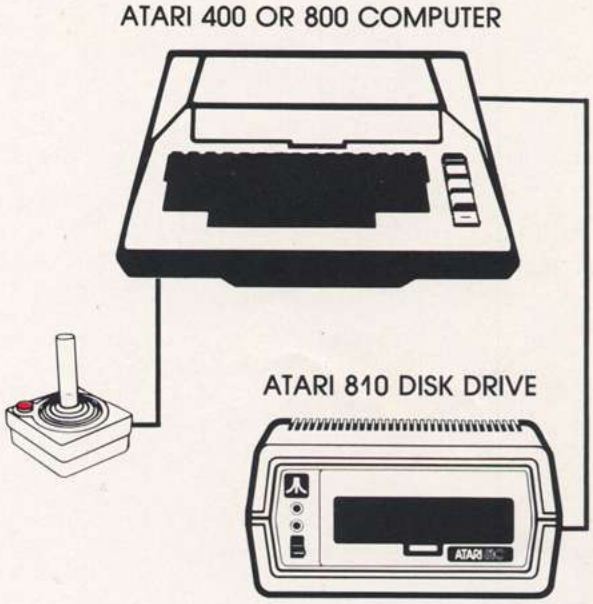


Figure 1 Installation Diagram

Note: Make sure you have at least 16K of RAM installed in your ATARI Computer. See the operators manual for your **ATARI Memory Module™** loading instructions.

2. Connect your **ATARI 810™ Disk Drive** to the computer and to a wall outlet as instructed in the **ATARI 810 Disk Drive Operators Manual** Verify that the disk drive is set to DRIVE CODE 1 as instructed in the operators manual.

3. Turn on your television set.

4. Turn the disk drive POWER (PWR) switch to ON. Two red lights (the BUSY light and the PWR ON light) will come on.

5. When the BUSY light goes out, open the disk drive door by pressing the door handle release lever.

6. Hold the **Caverns of Mars** program diskette with the label in the lower right corner and the arrow pointing toward the disk drive. Insert the **Caverns of Mars** diskette into the disk drive and close the disk drive door.

7. Switch the POWER (PWR) switch on the computer to ON.

8. When the program has finished loading into the computer, you will see the following display on your television screen.

Figure 2 **Caverns of Mars** Title Screen

USING THE JOYSTICK CONTROLLER

Use one Joystick Controller with this game. Plug the controller cable firmly into the number **1** jack on the front of your ATARI 400 or ATARI 800 Computer.

Hold the Joystick Controller so that the red button is at top left. Most people keep their left thumb on the button and move the Joystick with their right hand.

Note: You may have more directional control if you place your right thumb on the tip of the Joystick.

Use the Joystick to move your spaceship through the caverns. Joystick moves are shown in Figure 3. Press the red button (the fire button) to launch your laser torpedoes.

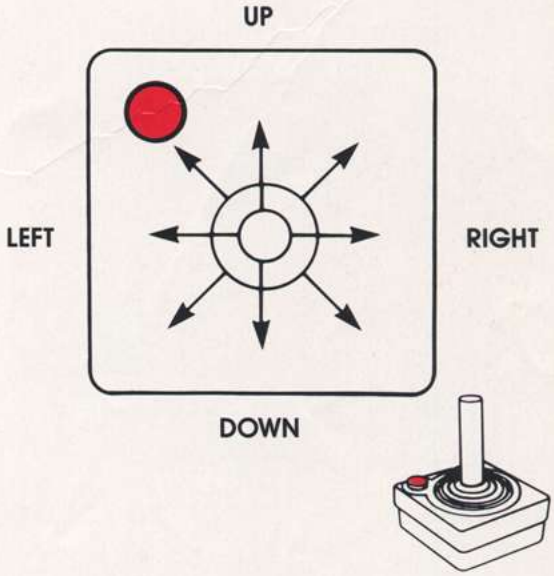


Figure 3 Joystick Moves

PRELIMINARY BRIEFING

MARTIAN DEFENSE SYSTEM

Before starting your mission, you need to know about the Martian cavern defense system. According to interplanetary intelligence, it is extremely difficult to reach Martian Headquarters. You must get through different levels, each with its own obstacles. Scouts have spotted the following defenses that you may have to destroy.

Fuel Tanks. Stationary tanks designed to hold precious rocket fuel. You must take time to destroy them to refuel your ship.

Transmitters. Stationary objects that signal Martian Headquarters of intruders.

Creon Rockets. High-speed rockets designed for cavern defense.

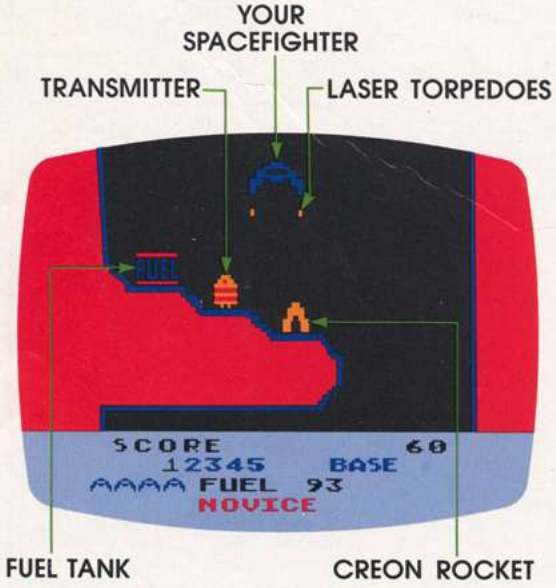


Figure 4 Fuel Tanks, Transmitters, and Creon Rockets

Pyxias Rockets. Fuel tankers designed to refuel Creon rockets.

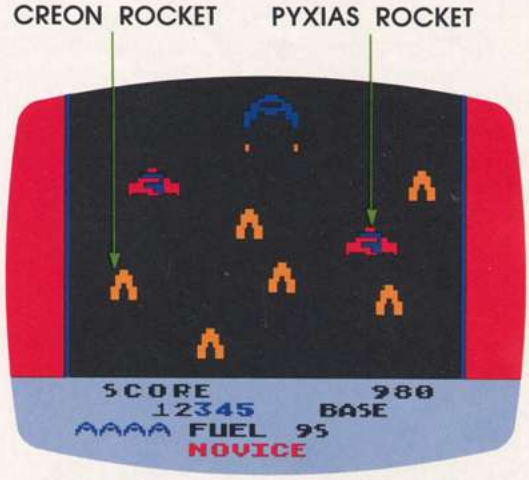


Figure 5 Creon and Pyxias Rockets

Laser Gates. Energy gates designed to prevent your further descent. Your laser torpedoes have no effect on them at all and any contact will instantly disintegrate your fighter. Intelligence reports indicate that some are predictable, but others open and close at random.

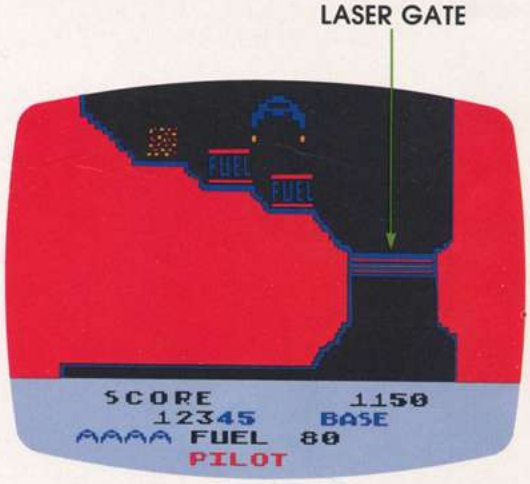


Figure 6 Laser Gates

Space Mines. Groups of deadly mines that criss-cross the narrow cavern passageways. Their movements are unpredictable and you must destroy or dodge them. Any contact with a space mine destroys your fighter.

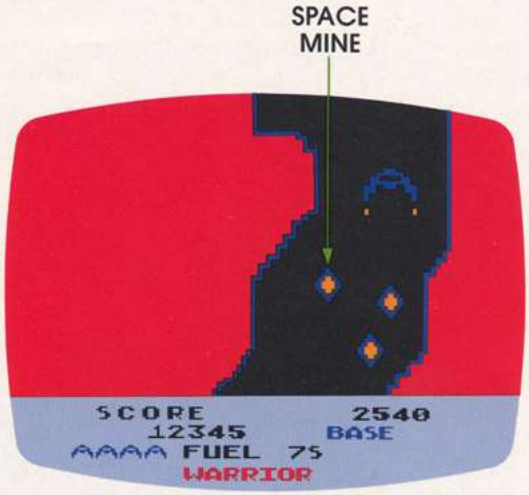


Figure 7 Space Mines

Fusion Bomb. The ultimate Martian weapon hidden deep within the caverns. You will be able to land on it to arm it without being destroyed. Its timer, once set, cannot be deactivated.

Figure 8 Fusion Bomb

REFUELING

Caverns 1 Through 5

At the beginning of each life, you are given 99 units of fuel. Your fuel amount is shown at the bottom of the television screen. As you travel through the caverns, you use up units of fuel. If you run out of fuel, you lose one life.

Your ship is equipped to absorb the dissipated fuel from any Martian fuel tank or Pyxias rocket you destroy. As you are cut off from any friendly bases, this is the only way you can get fuel.

Note: The maximum fuel load your spaceship can carry is 99 units.

THE BASE LEVEL

There are no objects to destroy in the Base level. Depending on your skill level, you are allocated a certain amount of fuel for your escape. You will use one unit of fuel every second during your escape with no way to accumulate more.

Skill Level	Fuel Allocation for Escape
Novice	30 units
Pilot	55 units
Warrior	75 units
Commander	98 units

SELECTING A SKILL LEVEL

Before beginning a game, choose a skill level. Press the OPTION key one or more times until the desired skill level is displayed at the bottom of the screen (Figure 2).

There are four skill levels from which to choose: NOVICE, PILOT, WARRIOR, and COMMANDER. Each successive level increases in difficulty by adding a new cavern:

NOVICE	Caverns 1,2, Base
PILOT	Caverns 1,2,3, Base
WARRIOR	Caverns 1,2,3,4, Base
COMMANDER	Caverns 1,2,3,4,5, Base

Begin with the NOVICE level to acquaint yourself with the game and get used to maneuvering your spaceship. Once you have mastered the NOVICE level, go on to the more difficult levels.

On successive escapes, the cavern display moves faster making it more difficult for you to maneuver your space fighter. This is true at all skill levels.

TO BEGIN PLAY

To start the game, press the OPTION key to choose your skill level and the START key to begin play.

Your spaceship is positioned at the cavern entrance near the top of the screen. The score counter, cavern level, fuel counter, and the number of remaining lives are displayed across the bottom of the screen.

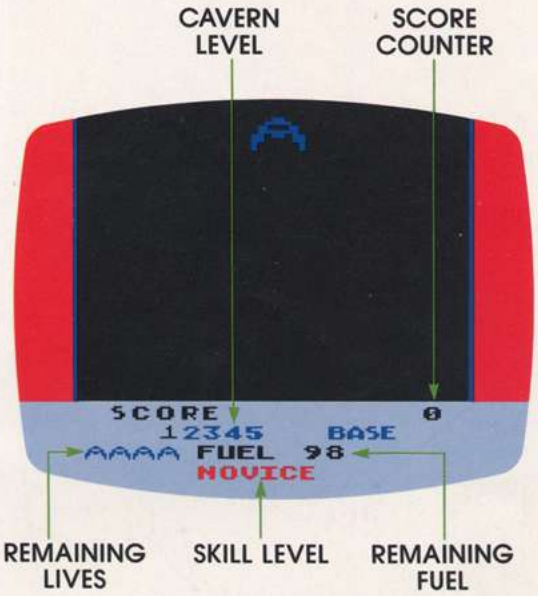


Figure 9 Start of Game

SCORE counts points during an invasion. (See "Scoring".)

1 2 3 4 5 BASE shows the different cavern levels. The rightmost black number designates the current cavern level.

represents the number of lives left in the game.

FUEL shows the amount of fuel left to complete your mission. You are allocated 99 units of fuel at the beginning of each life.

There are from two to five caverns to invade before reaching the Martian Headquarters. The number of caverns depends upon the skill level at which you are playing. Once you reach headquarters (also called the Base), you must activate the fusion bomb and retrace your path to the surface. If you reach the surface before the bomb explodes, you are placed at the cavern entrance to begin another invasion. You can invade the headquarters and escape to the surface a maximum of five times. However, if the bomb explodes before you reach the top of the caverns, your mission is over.

Your mission is not as easy as it may look; there are limits imposed on your spaceship. You are given a limited amount of fuel for each life. You lose one life whenever your fuel supply runs out. Crashing into a cavern wall or a Martian object will also cost you one life. If you are invading a cavern when you lose a life, your spaceship is placed at the beginning of the cavern where you lost that life. If, on your descent, you lose all your lives, the GAME OVER display (Figure 10) appears on the screen.

Figure 10 End of Game

SCORING

You score points for every Martian object destroyed and for the distance you travel through each cavern. At the end of the game both your score and the high score are shown.

POINTS FOR OBJECTS DESTROYED

The Martian objects in Caverns 1 through 5 are divided into two color groups: red and white. Each color group has a different value as shown below:

White Objects Worth 200 Points	**Red Objects Worth 150 Points**
Creon Rocket	Fuel Tank
Radar Transmitter	Pyxias Rocket
Space Mine	

POINTS FOR DISTANCE TRAVELED

You also score points for the distance you travel through each cavern. The deeper the cavern, the more points you score. Listed below are the points earned for traveling through each cavern in a single life:

Cavern 1	1280 points
Cavern 2	4000 points
Cavern 3	3840 points
Cavern 4	5120 points
Cavern 5	6400 points

You don't score points for flying in or out of the Base level.

Once you leave the Base level on your escape to the surface, you begin scoring points again.

Note: The scores for each skill level will differ greatly because the number of caverns differs for each skill level.

TO PAUSE OR RESET A GAME

PAUSE OPTION

Press the SELECT key to freeze the display and stop play temporarily. However, if you are escaping from the caverns, the bomb timer does not stop. Press the SELECT key again to continue playing.

RESET

Press the SYSTEM RESET key to stop the game and return **Caverns of Mars** to the title display (Figure 2).

GAME TIPS

CAVERN MANEUVERS

When invading the caverns, stay as close to the bottom of the screen as possible. This gives you more time to slow down or stop your spaceship while the display continues moving. When escaping the caverns, stay as close to the top of the screen as possible to allow time for your maneuvers.

LAUNCHING THE LASER TORPEDOES

To launch repeated shots at your enemy hold down the fire button on the Joystick Controller without releasing it.

SURVIVING THE LASER GATES

When approaching the laser gates in Cavern 3, stay at the bottom of the screen. Stop immediately in front of the laser gate and wait for it to complete its cycle. When it blinks off temporarily, continue through the gate. If you encounter groups of laser gates, proceed through the gates one at a time in the manner just described. Do not try to go through multiple gates without stopping between the first two gates.

SURVIVING THE SPACE MINES

The best way to survive the space mines is to destroy them with your laser torpedoes. To do that, you must keep your spaceship close to the bottom of the screen to give yourself enough time to destroy the entire group. Not all space mines move the same way. Some move at random, while others blink on and off.

MAXIMUM POINTS

You can earn the most points by using up all five lives, because each new life starts you at the beginning of a cavern. Then you earn more points for the distance you travel and the objects you destroy. Going through Cavern 5 as many times as possible allows you to earn the most points.

Figure 11 Cavern 5

ALTERNATE KEYS

You can substitute the following keyboard keys for the system keys.

Use	Instead of
S	START
H	SELECT
O	OPTION

ABOUT THE PROGRAMMER

Caverns of Mars was submitted to the Atari Software Acquisition Program (ASAP) by a young programmer from Anaheim, California named Greg Christensen. Greg's game was well-received and subsequently became an ATARI Computer product.

Discovering the world of the ATARI Home Computer was a natural extension for this 17-year-old Fullerton College freshman. Greg has been building his own electronics equipment since he was eight. Some of his completed projects have included sound generators and amplifiers, radio frequency modulators, and even a computer that he built from a kit. While investigating the microcomputer market, he became intrigued with the ATARI Computer's graphics capabilities, and so in late 1980 he bought an ATARI 800™ Home Computer with 16K of RAM, an ATARI 410™ Program Recorder, and the ATARI BASIC Computing Language cartridge. After toying with some simple programming applications and making additions to his system, he wrote his first "serious" program in assembly language — CAVERNS OF MARS — in little more than a month and a half. The game is a showcase of his skill in using the ATARI Computer's graphics features!

IMPORTANT WARRANTY INFORMATION

LIMITED 90-DAY WARRANTY ON ATARI® COMPUTER CASSETTES, CARTRIDGES, OR DISKETTES

ATARI, INC ("ATARI") warrants to the original consumer purchaser that this ATARI Computer Cassette, Cartridge, or Diskette ("Computer Media"), not including computer programs, shall be free from any defects in material or workmanship for a period of 90 days from the date of purchase. If any such defect is discovered within the warranty period, ATARI, at its option, will repair or replace the defective Computer Media. Computer Media returned for in-warranty repair/replacement must have the ATARI label still intact, must be accompanied by proof of date of purchase satisfactory to ATARI, and must be delivered or mailed, postage prepaid, to:

ATARI, INC.
Customer Service Department
1340 Bordeaux Drive
Sunnyvale, CA 94086

This warranty shall not apply if the Computer Media (i) has been misused or shows signs of excessive wear, (ii) has been damaged by being used with any products not supplied by ATARI, or (iii) has been damaged by being serviced or modified by anyone other than the ATARI Customer Service Department.

ANY APPLICABLE IMPLIED WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, ARE HEREBY LIMITED TO NINETY DAYS FROM THE DATE OF PURCHASE. CONSEQUENTIAL OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES RESULTING FROM A BREACH OF ANY APPLICABLE EXPRESS OR IMPLIED WARRANTIES ARE HEREBY EXCLUDED.

The provisions of the foregoing warranty are valid in the United States only and are subject to the laws of the State in which the Computer Media is purchased. Such laws may broaden the warranty protection available to the consumer purchaser of the Computer Media.

REPAIR SERVICE: If your ATARI Computer Media requires repair other than under the 90-day Limited Warranty, please contact the ATARI Customer Service Department for repair/replacement information. From California call (800) 662-6297, outside California (800) 538-7037 or (800) 538-7602 in Hawaii or Alaska.

IMPORTANT: If you ship your ATARI Computer Media, package it securely and ship, charges prepaid and insured, by parcel post or United Parcel Service. ATARI assumes no liability for losses incurred during shipment.

DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY ON ATARI COMPUTER PROGRAMS:

All ATARI computer programs are distributed on an "as is" basis without warranty of any kind. The entire risk as to the quality and performance of such programs is with the purchaser. Should the programs prove defective following their purchase, the purchaser and not the manufacturer, distributor, or retailer assumes the entire cost of all necessary servicing or repair.

ATARI shall have no liability or responsibility to a purchaser, customer, or any other person directly or indirectly, by computer programs sold by ATARI. This includes, but is not limited to any interruption of service, loss of business or anticipatory profits, or consequential damages resulting from the use or operation of such computer programs.

PRINTED IN U.S.A. **CO16083-30 REV. 1**