BATTLECARS

By the year 2080 automobile accidents were non-existent. One-way traffic on the revolutionary Autoslot roads in electric cars built with computerised destination control, automatic pilot and speed regulators had long since put an end to collisions. Car travel had become totally safe, but there were those who longed for the thrill and danger of high-speed driving; freedom behind the steering wheel.

It was later that year that a few individuals started to search old barns and garages for 20th century sports cars. They would then spend months restoring these machines to their former power and beauty. At secret places in the dead of night, the silence would be broken by the roar of a '57 Chevy or '77 Corvette coming back for the life. But just listening to the noise of a V8 engine was not enough for their owners—they wanted to drive their cars. Searches were started across the country for disused roads that had not been fitted with Autoslot. A few were found and meetings were quickly arranged. The first meetings were attended by only the drivers and a few friends, and cars were run up and down small strips of road. But that soon became boring. In early 2081 the first race between cars was organised, and this attracted some spectators who yelled and cheered with excitement. More races were organised, but it wasn't until 9.23 pm on 23rd

September 2081 that something terrible happened for the first time that century. Jerry Tomasko died in a car crash. The news spread, and the attendance at the next

race doubled. A safe and passive society thrilled at the prospect of seeing a real car crash, and over the next months they weren't disappointed. Cars were now built with machine guns, crash bars, and other defensive and offensive modifications. The crowd loved it, and by 2083 the cars were more prepared for war than for racing. The Battlecar had been born, and brave were those who drove them. By now the object had become the destruction of the other drivers' cars rather than racing against them.

The sport became known as Battlecars . . .

INTRODUCTION

Battlecars is a game of a arcade skill and strategic cunning that can be played in many different ways. There are three different arenas for battle: a racing circuit, a town centre, and the Autodrome—an empty stadium where your weapon skills will be tested to the full. As a solo player, you can build up your manoeuvring skills by racing against the computer-controlled car on the circuit, and test yourself in combat against the computer in the Autodrome. But the ultimate test of your skill as a Battlecar driver comes when you engage another real player in a fight to the death on any of the battlegrounds. In Battlecars you can design your own cars and fill them with the weapons of your choice. First, though, you can get straight into a game by loading up side 1 (LOAD "") and selecting CIRCUIT when the menu comes up. You will still need some basic information about the game, so read section No. 1 of this handbook before you start!

Contents

1. THE BASICS

A. The Keyboard Layout

Each Battlecar has six steering functions, four 'fire' functions, throttle and brakes

The Steering keys work this way:

Q and U: 90° turn to the left
1 and 7:45° turn to the left
2 and 8: drift to the left
3 and 9: drift to the right
4 and 0:45° turn to the right
R and P: 90° turn to the right

Each car has four 'fire' buttons—one for 'missile' weapons—submachine guns, shells, missiles, flames and lasers, and three for the 'passive' weapons—oil, spikes, mines and smoke. The three 'passive' weapon buttons control the left, right and rear pods:

A and J: left weapon pod
S and K: right weapon pod
Z and M: rear weapon pod

The 'missile' weapon button is marked 'FIRE' and controls the forward firing pods in all cars, and the rear firing pods in large-chassis cars:

W and I: missile pods

'Missile' weapons will fire towards the enemy car providing it is in 'front' of your own—you will find that 'in front' means anywhere in a 180° field in front of the driver. If the enemy car is behind you, you will not be able to fire at it unless you have rear missile pods (only large chassis cars have them) in which case the missile weapons will fire backwards towards the enemy car.

FRONT   **BACK**
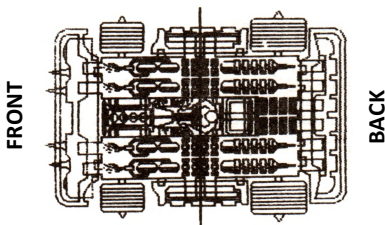
Each car has a throttle and a brake:
E and O: throttle

D and L: brake
These are the main control keys.

In addition, each time you start a game you will be given a 'READY' signal. To indicate that you are at ^STEADY', press C for the left hand car and B for the right hand car. You will then be given a GO signal. If you press your throttle before the GO signal comes up, you will have a start again, by pressing your 'STEADY' key.

In the bottom corners of the screen are the DAMAGE DISPLAYS (DDs). When you are playing the game, the DD will change to a WEAPON DISPLAY (WD) and back again, each time you fire or are hit. You can manually change it to the other display by pressing X (left car) or N (right car).

CAPS SHIFT & 6 (together) stops a game. C restarts it with the same cars. Any other key takes you back to the menu.

B. Speed and Cornering
Driving is just like driving in life. Next to your DD you have a fuel guage, stopwatch, and speedometer. The speedometer reads from 0-80 mph, and as you travel faster your screen display will change colour as a general indication of your speed. These colours are: Yellow (0-50 mph), White (50-80 mph) and Blue (80 mph and over).

As you race you will find it harder to manoeuvre at speed. Safe cornering speeds are:
45° turns: on roads—60 mph
          on grass—50 mph

90° turns: on roads—40 mph
          on grass—30 mph

Every tyre damaged reduces your safe cornering speed by 10 mph (and your max speed by 20 mph).   5

You can drift to either side at any speed. Oil will make you skid!
If your car has auto-steer its safe cornering speed is increased by 10mph.

C. Weapons and Damage
Each weapon pod can only take one type of weapon, but can carry a certain number of rounds.
'Missile' weapon pods carrying machine guns (MGs) can take up to 16 rounds.
Shells can take up to 8 rounds.
Missiles can take up to 4 rounds.
Flame Throwers can take up to 4 rounds.
Lasers can take up to 4 rounds.

Passive weapon pods can take up to 8 rounds of any weapon.

Although the more powerful weapons have fewer shots, they have a greater range and inflict much more damage—the choice is up to you!

Accuracy of Shots:
Although each shot is automatically aimed at the enemy car, it does not always hit—the target is at the centre of a 15° field of fire, and the shot can go anywhere within that angle. This means that the longer the range, the more likely you are to miss. If you have a GUNNERY COMPUTER in your car, the field of fire is reduced to about 10°—greatly increasing your chance of hitting the target, particularly at long range. Lasers cannot fire through smoke.
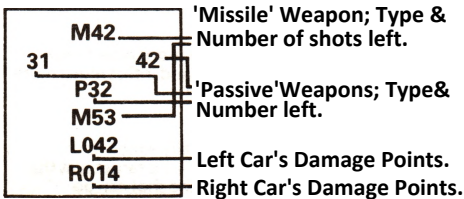
Taking Damage:
Your Battlecar is made up of a grid of 35 sections with your driver in the middle. Each section of the car has a strength value, which depends on the size and strength

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of the components in that section: for example, large wheels are stronger than small wheels. As you are hit, or you crash, damage works its way in from the outside of the car.

A powerful weapon such as a laser might burn its way through to your engine with a single shot if it got a direct hit. Your Damage Display shows the state of your car—as damage increases, it is shown first as a white area, then solid red, then flashing red and yellow.

Weapon Display:
The WD tells you how many shots and passive weapons you have left, and how much damage both cars have taken.

'Missile' Weapon; Type & Number of shots left.

'Passive'Weapons; Type & Number left.

Left Car's Damage Points.

Right Car's Damage Points.

Weapon types are indicated on the WD by these numbers:

Missile weapons	Passive weapons
1 = SMG	1 = Oil
2= Shells	2= Spikes
3= Missiles	3= Mines
4= Flamethrowers	4= Smoke
5 = Lasers	

The car above, for example, has, in its right-hand passive weapon pod, 2 smoke bombs; and in its rear missile pod, 3 laser shots.

Damage points are incurred each time you are hit or crash, and take away strength points; although each car has over 100 strength points, by the time you have taken about 50 damage points you will probably be immobilised—because all your tyres are blown.

D. Repairs and Fuel
In the Circuit and the Town, there are pitstops where you can get your car repaired and refuelled. All you have to do is pull up alongside the gas tanks or mechanics and they will do the work for you. But you will have to find the pitstops first!

2. PLAYING SOLO
A. Racing
Load side 1 of the tape (LOAD'"')
.When loaded, the main menu will appear:

1 CIRCUIT	3 TOWN
2 AUTODROME	4 DESIGNER
	5 CAR DATA

Press 1
You will be given another menu:
1 TIME TRIAL
2 RACE

Press 1
The computer will display the existing lap record. Then it will display a grid or cars, and ask you to select one. They are numbered 1 to 8 like this
1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8 For Time Trials, you will probably want a big engine and a Turbocharger—cars 4 and 5 are best. Select your car.
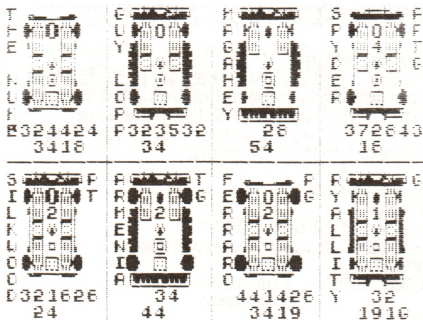
CRASH DAMAGE?
You will be asked: (answer Yes or No)

Then press a key to go into the circuit, press B and C when you are ready, and your throttle when Go is displayed. **8**

Press 2

You will then be shown a grid of cars

and asked to SELECT LEFT CAR. As you are racing
against the computer, there are no weapons involved,
so the most important factor in the cars is the engine
size. The engine is two squares in front of the driver,
and comes in 3 sizes: cars 3,6 and 8 (Magahey,
Armenia, and Ryallity) have a small engine, 2,4 and 7
(Guy Lopp, Spyder, and Ferraro) have medium engines;
cars 1 and 5 (me Nuke and Silkwood) have large
engines. When you start playing, give the computer a
car with a small engine! (the bigger the engine the
faster it goes). Immediately in front of the driver is the
controls compartment. The number here indicates how
many controls the car has and the letters on the right of
the car tell you what the controls are:

A = Autosteer
P = Power Brakes
T = Turbocharger
G= Gunnery Computer

When you start playing do not give the computer a car with any controls—it is a very good driver even without them! Also, watch the size of the fuel tank—that is immediately behind the driver.

The best starting combination is to give the computer car no. 8 and take no. 1 yourself.

So: Press 8
You will be asked-COMPUTER CAR?
Press Y (for Yes)
SELECT RIGHT CAR

Press 1
COMPUTER CAR?
Press N (for No)
(If you ask for both to be computer cars, you will get a demonstration race.)
CRASH DAMAGE?
(Y or N)

NUMBER OF LAPS?
(Enter desired number. 1 will be enough when you are starting.)

The race is now ready to start; you are the right hand car, so remember to use the right hand set of keyboard controls. Your car appears in the centre of the right hand window; in the centre of the lower part of the screen is an overall map of the circuit.

Press B and C when you are ready, and your throttle when you get to GO signal. If you get badly stuck, remember you can end the game with CAPS SHIFT/5, and restart with the same cars by pressing C.

B. Solo Combat
When you've mastered driving your Battlecar, you will want to try some combat—select from the main menu:

2. Autodrome
Then fast forward the tape to the end of side 1, turn it over, and press play. The AUTODROME data files are in the middle of side 2, so the first section of the tape will not load. If your cassette player has a counter in it make a note of the location of the Autodrome data on the tape, as you can save a lot of time by starting the tape in the right place. When the Autodrome data has loaded, stop the tape; if you want to play on the circuit after the Autodrome, you will have to reload the Circuit data, which is on side 2 of the tape immediately after the Autodrome data (the Circuit is also contained in the main program). The Autodrome data is contained in the same code block as the Town, so when it is loading you will be given the message LOADING SLUG CITY.

As in the circuit, you will be shown a grid of cars and asked to select the ones you want, This time, though, your decision must be made on the basis of the cars' strength, and their weapons. You can tell the cars' strengths by the size of their armour, wheels, and chassis (only large chassis cars have rear missile pods). Their weapons are given by the numbers underneath each car. For example, Car 1 (The Nuke) has these numbers:

14   34   22
   24   18

These represent:

Passive Weapon Pods		
left	back	right

missile pods	
front	back
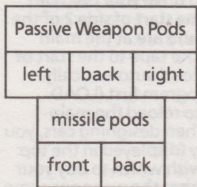
Each Pod shows the weapon type and number left, as detailed in section 1C. Select the cars, press a key, and press B and C when you are ready.

C. Winning

All games of Battlecars end when you press CAPS SHIFT/6. The winner will be whoever has suffered the least damage points. If, in the course of a game, a driver is killed, or a car's engine or tyres are destroyed, then that car will stop moving and will usually have lost, although you will still need to officially end the game. You can tell when a part of the car (including the driver) is destroyed because it will be flashing red and yellow.

2. The 2-Player Game

When you have mastered the basic skills of Battlecars, you can move on to playing against a *real* opponent! You each take one side of the keyboard (see section 1 A) and the loading and selection procedures are exactly the same, except that when the computer asks 'COMPUTER CAR'? you press 'N'. You can also play in full combat on the circuit, and you can now play on the TOWN (select 3 on the main menu, and load from side 2 of the tape).

4. Designing Your Own Cars

In Battlecars, you can design and drive your own car! The DESIGNER PROGRAM is at the start of side 2 of the tape; if you have been playing, and are at the main menu, you can select 4, rewind the tape to the start of side 2, start the tape, and it will load automatically. Otherwise load the Designer program first (LOAD "DESIGNER"), as you will have to reload the main program afterwards anyway. When designing cars, you have a certain amount of money (displayed in the top left hand corner of the screen) with which to buy your parts and weapons—but remember the weapons come last, so save some money for them! You can design all 8 cars; when you load the main program, these will take the place of the computers' cars. You also have an option to save the cars you have designed; you can load these into the main program by selecting option 5 from the main menu.

Broken Programs: To restart programs if broken RUN the main program or GOTO 1 in the Designer program.