BACKFIRE™
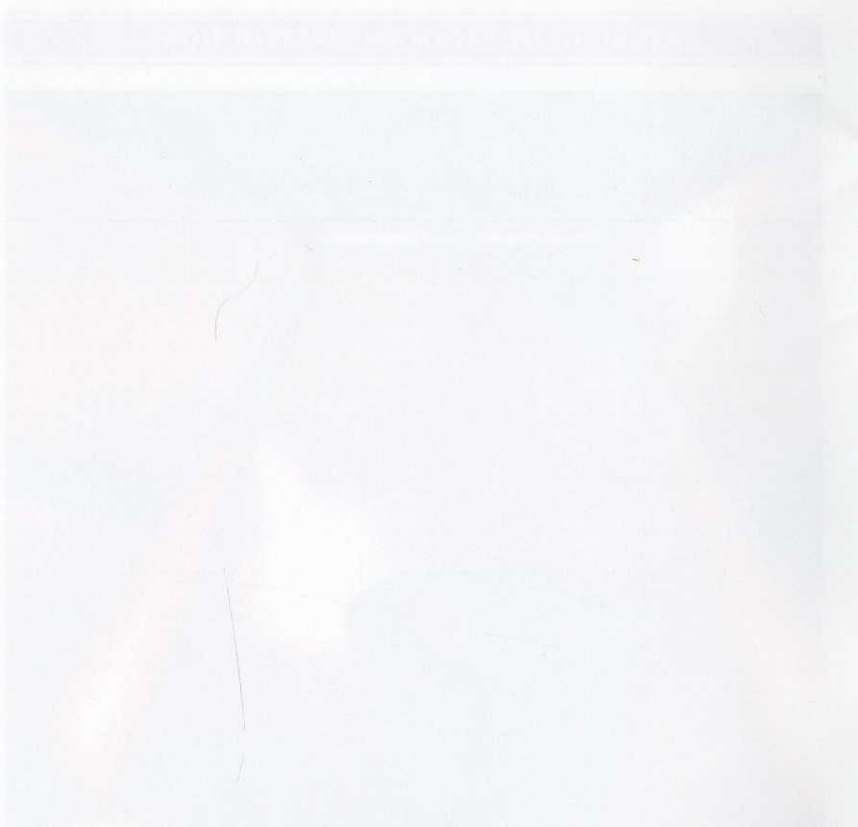
AtariAge

INCOMING FIRE
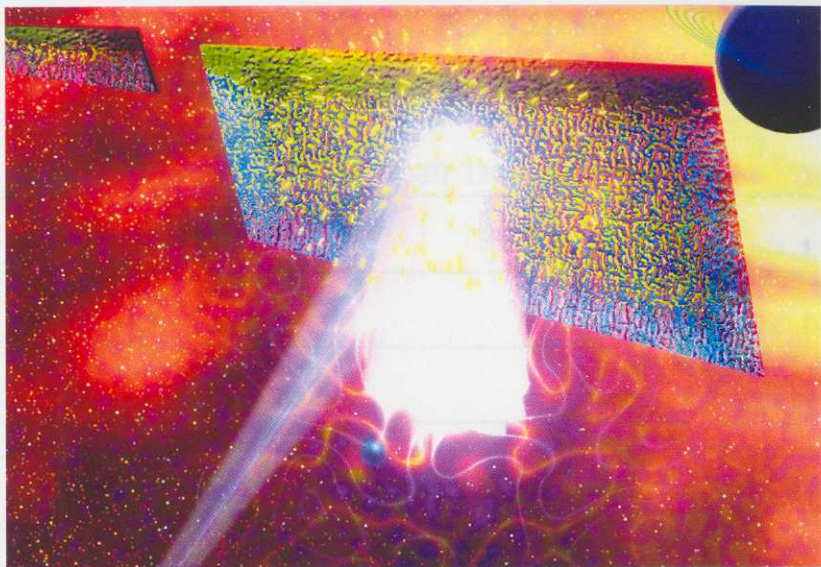
COMPLETE GAME
PLAY INSTRUCTIONS

ONE PLAYER GAME

NOTE: Always turn the console POWER switch OFF when inserting or removing an ATARI® Game Program™ cartridge. This will protect the electronic components and prolong the life of your ATARI Video Computer System™ game.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. STORY

The year is 2947. Earth is being invaded by the evil K'caj clan from the Yenrut galaxy. You are Galactic Commander Frank Drexor. The United States Space Guard has commissioned you with the task of defending the most important sector of the galaxy from the invaders. K'caj technology is much more advanced than the technology of Earth. Some of the ships have tractor beams. Others are equipped with subspace energy disrupters. These disrupters create energy barriers that will actually cause the shots from your cannons to reflect back at you! If your mission is a failure, the K'caj will gain control of this vital sector of space, allowing them to maneuver their troops and equipment much more efficiently and gain a larger foothold in the battle for the planet. This would certainly spell disaster for the citizens of Earth. Their fate is in your hands!

1

2. CONTROLLER/CONSOLE USE

Select Cannon

Move Left ← ○ → Move Right

Select Cannon
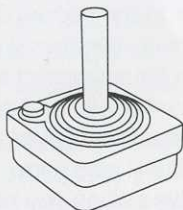
Use your Joystick controller with this game. Be sure the controller cable is firmly plugged into the **LEFT CONTROLLER** jack at the back of your ATARI Video Computer System. Hold the joystick with the red button to your upper left, toward the television.
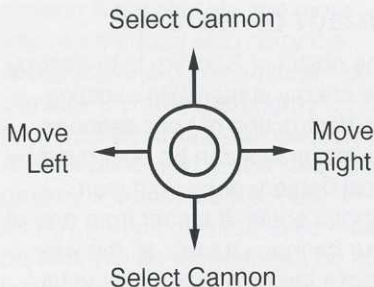
CONSOLE SWITCHES

Backfire does not use the following console switches: **TV TYPE, GAME SELECT, LEFT DIFFICULTY, RIGHT DIFFICULTY**

JOYSTICK CONTROLLER

Press the red button on your joystick to start the game. Move the joystick up or down to select the cannon that you wish to control. When you select a cannon, it becomes lighter in color. Press the joystick left or right to move the selected cannon. Press the red button on your joystick to fire the cannon.

When the game has ended, press the **GAME RESET** switch to return to the title screen. To start another game, press the red button on your joystick.

NOTE: Backfire is a one player game only and does not make use of the second joystick port.

3. GAME PLAY

OBJECT OF THE GAME

The object of Backfire is to destroy the enemy ships while avoiding the destruction of your cannons. Your cannons can be destroyed by K'caj fighters or by your own cannon shots. If a shot from one of your cannons travels all the way across the screen and hits your other cannon, you will lose a life. Your cannon can also be destroyed by a shot that is reflected off of the energy barriers, so if you shoot at an enemy and miss, look out!

SCREEN LAYOUT
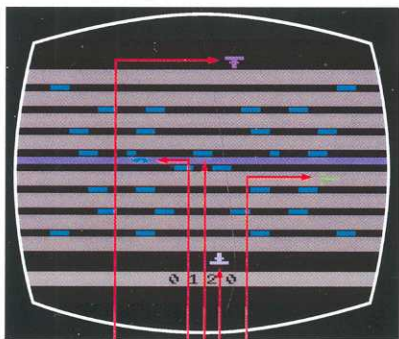
Top Gun ⌐
Command Ship ⌐
              └ Bottom Gun
              └ K'caj Fighter

Energy Barriers

The counter at the bottom of the screen normally displays your score. Each time you start a new level the counter will temporarily display the number of lives remaining. It will also show remaining lives when you either gain or lose a life. When you lose your last life, the game is over. The score will remain on the screen until you press the **RESET GAME** switch.

TYPES OF ENEMIES

While playing Backfire you will encounter four types of K'caj ships; fighters, transport ships, supply ships, and command ships.

K'caj Fighter

Fighters are the most common. K'caj fighters have one mission; to destroy your cannons. When a fighter reaches one side of the screen, it will reappear on the other side of the screen, one step closer to one of your cannons. Your cannons are destroyed if a fighter manages to reach the edge of the screen on a line that is adjacent to one of your cannons. At first glance it appears that it would be easy to destroy a fighter

at such short range, but K'caj fighters are equipped with a tractor beam that causes your cannon to rumble back and forth. Fortunately, these tractor beams are only effective at close range.

All ships, other than fighters, appear periodically in the blue stripe in the center of the screen. They always move left to right. When they reach the right edge of the screen they immediately reappear on the left edge of the screen. Transport ships, supply ships, and command ships all look the same except for their color.
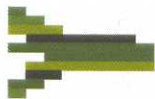
K'caj Transport Ship

Transport ships (red) carry additional troops and equipment to increase the size of the K'caj army on Earth. For every transport ship that you destroy you will receive 100 points

K'caj Supply Ship

Supply ships (blue) must be destroyed in order to keep the K'caj from resupplying their troops that have already landed on Earth. Each time you destroy a supply ship, you will receive an extra life.

K'caj Command Ship

Command ships (green) carry high ranking K'caj officials, but more importantly, they also carry the subspace energy disrupters. The disrupters create the energy barriers that reflect your cannon shots back at you. Each time you destroy a command ship, all energy barriers are removed. The barriers will be regenerated on the next level, but they will be in a simpler pattern that will have more openings for your cannon shots. You must continually destroy command ships, otherwise the K'caj will accumulate enough disrupters to almost completely eliminate your ability to effectively use your cannons.

K'caj Fighter

K'caj Transport Ship

K'caj Supply Ship

K'caj Command Ship

4. SCORING

SCORE CHART:

ACTIVITY	SCORE
Fighter destroyed on either of two center paths	10 points
Fighter destroyed on either of two outer paths	0 points
Fighter destroyed on any other path	5 points
Transport Ship (red)	100 points
Supply Ship (blue)	0 points*
Command Ship (green)	0 points*

* see ship description in section three for complete details

5. HELPFUL HINTS

Backfire is a fast paced game that takes skill and practice to master. Keep the following tips in mind as you play:

• Be careful not to leave your cannons lined up with each other. A stray shot could destroy the cannon on the other side of the screen. Also, when you fire a shot, it is usually a good idea to move your cannon so that if you miss, the reflected shot will not hit you.

• The key to the game is to get good at hitting the transport, supply, and command ships. This is very difficult at first, but keep in mind that the fighters are the only ships in the game that increase in speed as you move to higher levels. Since the other ships always move at the same speed, you can learn to time your shots with a little practice.

• Try to shoot the fighters when they are on the center paths. If you do so, they are worth ten points instead of just five. Fighters don't always start on a center path. Sometimes they start higher or lower. If this is the case, don't shoot them right away. Let them move off of the screen and see where they reappear. Many times they will end up moving through the center paths even if they don't start out there.

• If you happen to be on a level that has a clear shot to the center line, don't be in a hurry to destroy the fighters. Delay shooting the fighters for as long as you can to give yourself an opportunity to shoot some transport, supply, and command ships. When you destroy three fighters you will go to the next level which may not have such a clear path for your cannons to use.

6. MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAMMER

I hope that you enjoy playing Backfire as much as I have enjoyed writing it. This is the first Atari 2600 game that I have written. It's been so much fun that I'm sure it will not be my last. I would love to hear from you. Please feel free to email me with any comments or suggestions for future projects. I am also curious to see who will be the first person to beat my high score of 5,125 (I'm sure that some of you will).

My email address is: chad_lare@yahoo.com. I also visit the message boards at AtariAge.com, user name Chadivision.
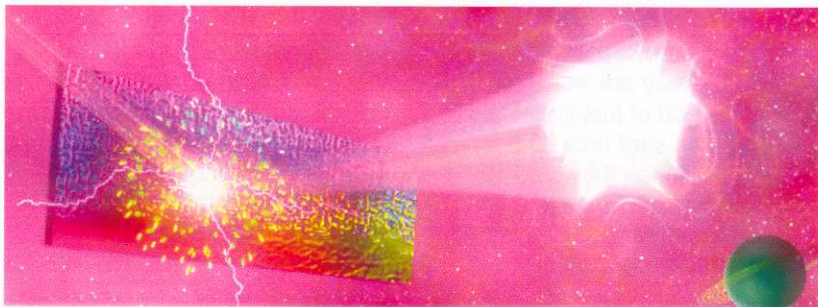
I want to thank my wife Rachel for being cool enough to get me an arcade machine for Christmas and also for understanding my obsession with a game console that's almost as old as I am. Also, thank you to everyone who submitted artwork for the label contest. You made it VERY difficult to choose. Congratulations to Earl Green for winning the label contest, and thank you for creating artwork that truly captures the spirit of the game. Thank you to Alex and Albert at AtariAge.com, for creating the best Atari site on the internet. Last, but not least, thank YOU for playing Backfire.

Now that I'm done writing code for a while, I think I'll get back to one of my favorite hobbies. Playing Atari!

Have Fun,

Chad Lare

BACKFIRE™ GAME PROGRAM™
CARTRIDGE INSTRUCTION MANUAL

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