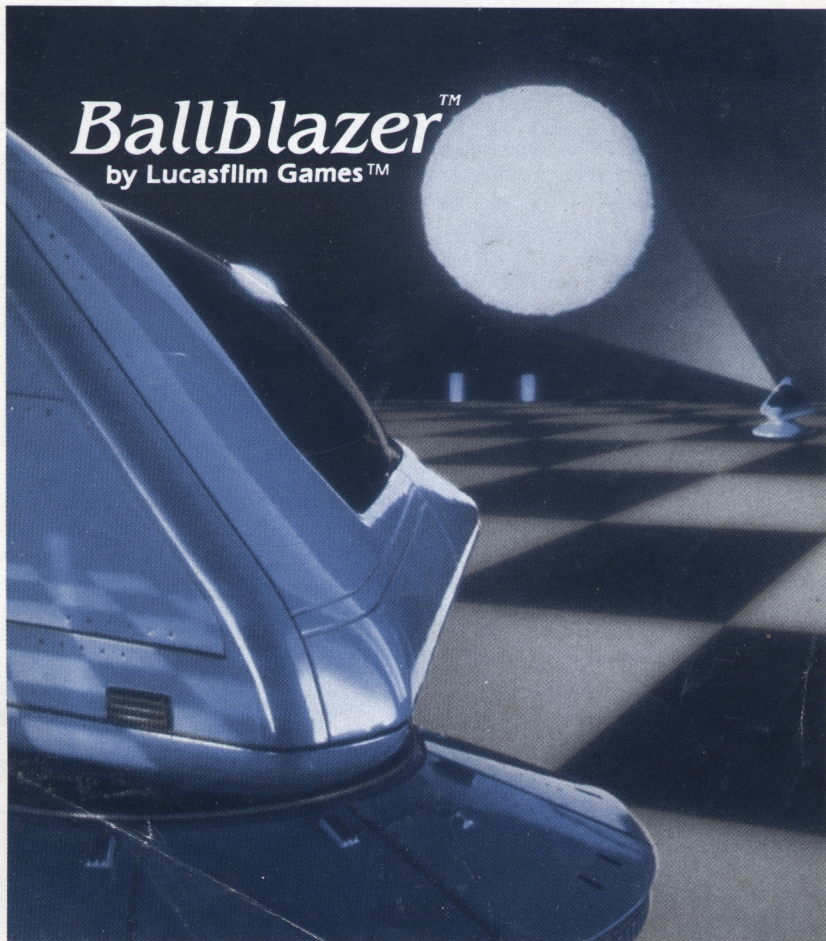


ATARI[®] XE VIDEO
GAME
CARTRIDGE[™]

Game Manual

Ballblazer[™]
by Lucasfilm Games[™]



Ballblazer: the simplest, fastest, and most competitive sport in the known universe. It grew from dark roots in ancient space wars to become king of all games among every lifeform within range of Interstellar Ethercast™. In exactly three minutes, Ballblazer can make you a hero—or destroy a lifetime of dreams.

The year is 3097, and the place is a null-gravity nexus mid-space in the binary star system of Kalaxon™ and Kalamar™. Minutes from now, on the luminous surface of an artificial asteroid, the final round of the Interstellar Ballblazer Championship™—the greatest tournament of all time and space—will begin, and history will be made. For the first time a creature from the planet Earth has battled through the countless qualifying rounds and eliminations, enduring and then triumphing, across vast parsecs, to win the right to compete for Earth's honor and the ultimate title any being can possess: Masterblazer™.

The final round is about to begin and the competitor from Earth is YOU.

System Requirements

The following is the regulation equipment you need to compete in the Interstellar Ballblazer Championship:

- Atari XE game system console, or XE or XL™ computer
- Color TV or color monitor
- One or two joysticks

Getting Started

As a young tyro, you were required to master the Ballblazer prep procedure before you were allowed to go into competition. You perform this procedure now, readying your equipment, setting the game length, and sizing up your opponent.

1. Connect your controls. With your XE game console turned off, plug in a joystick for each player. The player using the joystick plugged into controller port 1 plays the upper screen. The player using the joystick in controller port 2 plays the lower screen.

Three Minutes, Two

2. Ready the Rotofoil™. Insert the Ballblazer cartridge into the cartridge slot.
3. Turn on all systems. Switch on your TV or monitor, then press the **[Power]** key to turn on the system.
4. Select the game length. When the play screen appears, press **[Option]** to flash the game timer and **[Select]** to select the length of the Championship game (1 to 9 minutes). (If you don't select a game time, games are automatically 3 minutes long.)
5. Select the players. In a one-player game you are a human up against a Droid™. Press **[Option]** to flash the player you want to change. Press **[Select]** to select the player.

Select one human player and one Droid player. Droid1 is the easiest; Droid9 is the most difficult. For a two-player game, select two human players. If you'd rather be a spectator than a player, run a demo game by pitting two Droids against each other.

6. Start the game by pressing **[Start]**.

If you're in a hurry to get out there on the Grid™ and start playing, you can skip the introductory screens and go right to the game screen by pressing **[Start]**.

7. Your time-out control, if you need it, is the **[Select]** key. Press it to pause the game, press it again to resume play.

Players, One Victor!

Playing the Game

Before boarding your Rotofoil, you take a moment to look over one of the most beautiful and exciting sights in the universe: the Grid (the Ballblazer playing field). Ah, the Grid—1155 squares surrounded by an Electroboundary™ that keeps players and ball within bounds. Soon it'll be you out there racing after the Plas-morb™, Ethercast for all the universe to see. Right now the pairs of Goalbeams™ at the ends of the Grid look like an easy shot, but when the game starts they begin moving at 5 meters per second and the distance between them shrinks.

You tense for action as the "Song of the Grid™" plays through the headphones in your helmet. This song, created from the musical contributions of Masterblazers of old, sets the pace for the game by capturing the urgency and thrill of the action. Meditating on it sharpens your competitive edge and excites the fans to a frenzy.

As you strap yourself into your Rotofoil you recite to yourself the basic rules of the game as you learned them from the official *Interstellar Ballblazer Competition Handbook*:

1. Each player must compete in a regulation Rotofoil. These Rotofoils, designed after cruisers used in ancient deep space dogfights, travel at a speed of 50 meters per second. Each Rotofoil must be outfitted with the following:
 - A joystick control for navigating the Grid and blasting the Plas-morb. To navigate, the player moves the joystick handle in the direction of intended travel. If in possession of the Plas-morb, the player presses the fire button to activate the Push-field™ and launch the Plas-morb.

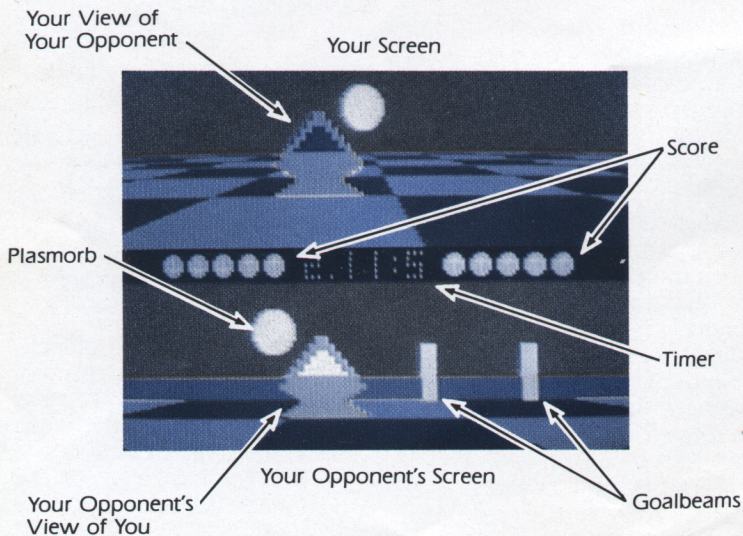
- A Rotosnap™ computer that automatically rotates (or Rotosnaps) the Rotofoil 90 degrees to face the Plasmorb (or the Goalbeams if the player already has the Plasmorb).
 - A forcefield that completely surrounds the Rotofoil. When traveling without the Plasmorb the forcefield is a Bumpfield™ that withstands collisions with other objects. When a player is within a few meters of the Plasmorb, the forcefield becomes a Pullfield™ that automatically captures the ball and centers it towards the goal. When a player in possession of the Plasmorb presses the fire button, the forcefield becomes a Pushfield that launches the ball.
2. The game officially begins when the timer starts.
 3. Players begin each game by moving downfield until they locate the Plasmorb and attempt to capture it.
 4. Players score points each time they blast the Plasmorb between the Goalbeams.
 5. To score maximum points, players blast the Plasmorb between Goalbeams that have disappeared over the horizon on the opposite end of the Grid. This is called an Over-the-Horizon (OTH) Shot™.
 6. A player may attempt to steal the Plasmorb by rushing up beside the opponent, blasting the Plasmorb away, and going after it.

Viewing Game Action

New fans sometimes ask for pointers on viewing the action. The Interstellar Ballblazer Competition Program includes the following information on viewing the game:

"In the following illustration, two players in Rotofoils are facing each other. On the top screen, you are looking out of the cockpit window at your opponent's Rotofoil and the ball.

On the bottom screen, your opponent is looking out at your Rotofoil, the Plasmorb, and the Goalbeams. Your opponent has the ball and is heading towards the goal, but you are blocking the line of fire. Your opponent has three points, and you have seven. There are two minutes and 11.5 seconds left in the game."



Strategy

As you moved up through the elimination games you caught the attention of the famous Masterblazer Arboster Kipling™. Arboster was so impressed with your steady nerves, timing, and devotion to the game he decided to personally supervise your advanced training. In the last training session before the Championship he gave you his most valuable tips:

"Listen kid, you're pretty good for a human. You've got a real shot at the title if you keep in mind a few little tricks.

"First, try to make your goals early in the game before the distance between the Goalbeams begins to shrink.

"Your OTH Shots will be more successful if you take aim and blast the ball just before the Goalbeams disappear over the horizon.

"Oh yeah. Sometimes you might find yourself too close to the Electroboundary for a high-scoring OTH Shot. If you do, just blast yourself backwards and catch the ball on the rebound.

"To shake off an opponent who's tailing you closely for the ball, make sure the opponent's Rotofoil is directly behind you, then blast the Plasmorb. The force will send your opponent backwards and the ball ahead so you can get to it first.

"Here's a real classic—the block. Simply position yourself between the Plasmorb and the Goalbeams. This will block all but the trickiest angle shots.

"I guess you're thanking me now for all the practice I put you through. Of course, you got the most out of every practice session by shooting at the Electroboundary just outside the Goalbeams. That way you got in a lot of shots without going through the whole goal-scoring sequence.

"And all those Droid demo games I made you watch gave you a chance to study technique, especially Plasmorb stealing. You've got it down now, getting in real close until the buzz of your opponent's Rotofoil is loudest and you have the power to blast the Plasmorb as far as possible. Us pros call it 'maxing the buzz.'

"Oh, and don't let the Roto-snaps disorient you. Listen for the snap when you rotate so you can keep your sense of direction.

"Let's see. Anything else? Oh yeah. Nobody ever scored any points by sitting still. Keep moving!

"Well, I guess that's it. When it's all over I hope it's the other guy's Rotofoil I see spinning out in defeat. Go get 'em, kid."

Scoring

The official Interstellar Ballblazer Competition Handbook states the following about scoring:

"A player scores by blasting the Plasmorb between the Goalbeams. Goals made when the Goalbeams have disappeared behind the horizon (OTH Shots) score 3 points. Goals made closer to the Goalbeams score 2 points. Close-in goals score 1 point.

"A player scoring 10 consecutive points wins the game in a shut-out. Otherwise, the player with the most points (score circles filled in with a player's color) at the end of the game period wins. In the event of a tie the game goes into overtime and the next player to score wins.

"When all score circles are filled, a player can steal points by scoring more goals. For example, if Droid5 scores the first 9 points and the human scores the next 6 points, the human wins 6 to 4.

"The total score (the combined points of both players) cannot exceed 10 points for each game."

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Ballblazer was created by the Lucasfilm Games Division: David Levine (Project Leader), concept, design, and programming; Peter Langston (Games Group Leader), design and programming; David Riordan and Garry Hare of Search and Design, design. Contributions and support by Charlie Kellner, Gary Winnick, and David Fox. Special thanks to George Lucas.

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