

Piracy II (1986) – Anschuetz/Weisgerber/Anschuetz

Game Play

Piracy II is a multi-screen epic battle over the high seas. The object of the game is to confront a pirate ship at sea by sailing through the ocean and finding ships that are protecting treasure located on any of many nearby islands. Once a pirate ship has been encountered, a mini-game is launched where you control the pirate ship at the bottom of the screen and you must shoot a pirate guarding his ship. The ship at the player's control must dodge a constant bombardment of cannon balls aimed your way.

After the pirate on the ship has been defeated in the mini-game, the player is returned to the open seas. At this point, the player may land the boat on the island the ship had been protecting, and another mini-game is launched. This mini-game forces the player to navigate through a moving maze of pirates as he makes his way to the treasure chest located on the far side of the island. The key to this mini-game is observing the pattern of movement by the pirates on the island. If the treasure chest is successfully reached, the player is returned once again to the open seas to seek out additional treasure by confronting other ships guarding other islands.

Recollections

Piracy II is a sequel to the original Piracy game that was written several years before Piracy II. Piracy II was written by Eric and Robert Anschuetz. The game of Piracy II is a multi-stage game, which is very rare for BASIC games in the 1980's. The game uses fine vertical and horizontal scrolling, which is a nearly impossible using Atari BASIC. The fine scrolling was made possible with Assembly Language routines written by Eric Anschuetz, and called using the BASIC USR command. Even so, there was occasionally a flicker when the scrolling became too much for the processor. Eric and Robert did not have an Assembler cartridge, so all of the assembly language was "hand assembled" by Eric. This is the only primarily BASIC game (with Assembly added for scrolling) that they know of that has a smooth scrolling horizontal and vertical multi-screen display.

The ship is a Player/Missile graphic, but most of the other graphics are based on redefined characters. The pirate ship mini-game scene is very reminiscent of the ship-battle scene in the Pirates of the Caribbean ride at Disney World, and was probably influenced by it. In fact, the whole entire game was probably influenced by that ride since the A/W/A Team had just gone to Disney World a couple years before the game was written.