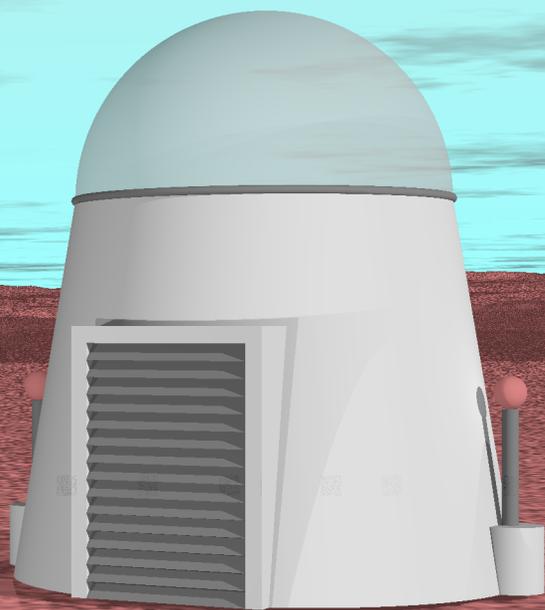


BARREN



PLANET



# Barren Planet

Manual



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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Dapra is a barren planet at the edge of settled space, surveyed only recently. The climate over most of the planet is arid and unpleasant. There is apparently no life on this world today, although ruins of a past civilisation remain.

But Dapra has a high concentration of valuable minerals that have attracted the attention of interstellar mining corporations. Two corporations in particular, Nuvutech and Avuscorp, are in a good position to move in and exploit the newly discovered resources.

Nuvutech is an old company, mired in bureaucracy but with considerable financial power. They can afford to invest heavily both in mining infrastructure and in the military forces to preserve their investments. A mining colony on Dapra would be a profitable addition to their assets.

Avuscorp is a newer corporation, more energetic and more unscrupulous. Their methods are not always civilised nor, as many suspect, always legal. There have been violent run-ins between Avuscorp and other corporations over lucrative resources, and it looks like another one is brewing between them and Nuvutech over Dapra.

It remains to be seen which of these corporations will gain control over this planet and its resources.

*Barren Planet* is a *turn-based strategy* game. Players take on the

role of a strategist, controlling a number of units that move around on a battle map, attacking their enemies in an attempt to control strategic locations or to wipe their opponents out altogether. A series of battles is linked together to form the full campaign, with the outcome of one battle determining what battle is fought next.

The game can be played by one player or two. A single player can choose which corporation to work for, with the computer taking control of the opposing side. Two players can play in "hotseat" mode, taking turns at the same computer, or in "PBM" (play-by-mail) mode, sending game turns to one another using disks or electronic mail.

## 1.1 Installing the Game

The game runs on an IBM PC or compatible computer. It requires an 8088 processor or better, so it should run on anything from the original IBM PC to its faster clones. It supports CGA graphics and looks best when connected to an RGB colour or composite monochrome monitor. It requires 512k of memory.

Before playing the game you must install it either to another floppy disk or to a hard disk. This is because the program saves your progress, and the original disk is write-protected so your games could not be saved there.

To create a floppy disk to play the game from, have a formatted disk ready. Put the original game disk in your floppy disk drive (it is assumed your drive is drive **a:**) and type the following command:

```
A> diskcopy a: a:
```

DOS will copy all the files from the original disk to your destination disk, prompting you to swap disks as and when necessary. If you want to copy the game to your hard disk drive, you should insert the original game disk into your floppy disk drive as before, but issue the following commands instead:

```
C> mkdir \barren
```

```
C> copy a:\*.* \barren
```

Once installed, you can put the original disk away in a safe place and run the game.

## 1.2 Starting the Game

If you installed your game to a floppy disk, insert the disk into your disk drive (assumed in this example to be **a:**), and type the following command:

```
A> barren
```

If you installed the game to your hard disk, then you need to use the following commands instead (this example assumes that you installed to **c:\barren** as above):

```
C> cd \barren
C> barren
```

You will then see the *Cyningstan* logo and the game will start.

*Barren Planet* chooses what is hoped to be an attractive colour palette for the graphics. Some monitors might not display this palette as well as intended. If this is the case with your monitor, then you have two options. Firstly, you can play with the standard CGA palette of black, cyan, magenta and white by running the game with the **-p** option as follows:

```
A> barren -p
```

Alternatively, you can run the game in monochrome mode. This is obviously a good idea if you have a monochrome display, and can be done with the **-m** option as follows:

```
A> barren -m
```

*Barren Planet* plays music when it starts, and plays sound effects throughout the game. If these offend you, or you are playing in an environment where sound would be unwelcome, then you can use the **-q** option as follows:

```
A> barren -q
```

This option can be combined with **-p** or **-m** as described above. To get the maximum enjoyment out of the game, though, it is recommended to run it without any of these options and experience the game as it was intended.

# Chapter 2

## Starting Off

This and the next three chapters form a tutorial to get you started in your first game. This will be a game where you take on the computer in the supplied campaign *First Landing*. If you want to know how to do other things like play against a friend or play another campaign then the later chapters will help you. But for your first game it is recommended you play against the computer as described in these tutorial chapters.

### 2.1 The Controls

On loading *Barren Planet* for the first time, you will see the *Set up Game* screen. The window at the top left is where the game settings are shown. The window at the top right contains brief instructions. The small window at the bottom left is where a menu will appear when needed.

Before navigating your way around this screen you will need to know the game's controls. The game can be controlled entirely with the cursor movement keys (← → ↑ ↓) and the *fire* key, which is your choice of *Ctrl*, *Space* or *Enter*.

On the *Set up Game* screen, the ↑ and ↓ controls move the highlighted



Figure 2.1: The Set up Game screen.

bar that you can see in the top left window, allowing you access to the different settings. The ← and → controls will cycle through the available options for the current setting.

The *fire* control brings up the menu, which will appear in the bottom left window. You need to hold this down while navigating the menu using the ↑ and ↓ controls, and release it when the option you want to use is highlighted.

Every menu starts with a *Cancel menu* option that does nothing; it's there for those occasions when you bring up the menu by mistake. All menus also have an *Exit game* option that allows you to quit to DOS at any point. Your current state is saved, including any game in progress, and the program will return to this exact point when you run it again. All menus other than the one on the *Set up Game* screen have a *New Game* option which saves your current game and brings you to this screen.

The program tries to be intelligent when it brings up the menu, high-

lighting the choice that it thinks you will want at this point. This allows you to choose the most common option by just tapping *fire*. On the *Set up Game* screen the default option is *Start Game*, so on this screen you can just tap *fire* to accept the options shown and start your game.

## 2.2 Choosing a Side

In a single-player game like the one you are about to start, you can choose to play either side. When you first run *Barren Planet*, the sides are set up so that *Nuvutech* is played by a human and *Avuscorp* is played by the computer.

If you want to play as *Avuscorp* instead, use the controls described already to highlight *Avuscorp* and change its option to *Human*. Then move up to *Nuvutech* and change its option to *Computer (Easy)*. For the purposes of this tutorial you can play either side, but make sure that the other one is set to *Computer (Easy)*. Note that the controls will make sure that at least one of the players is *Human*; computer-vs-computer demonstration games are not supported.

In the *First Landing* campaign, both sides are about equal. They have different preferences for unit types, although when you get to building your own units, you are not restricted by their preferences. *Nuvutech* briefings tend to be professional and use excessively managerial language, while *Avuscorp* briefings have a more informal and lawless flavour to them.

## 2.3 On to Play

When you are happy with your choice of corporation to play, start the game by selecting the default *Start Game* option from the menu. As mentioned already, just tapping *fire* will do this.

The order of play is random, so you might see the computer play first. If this happens, you just need to wait for the computer to take its turn, and then you will be able to take yours as described here.

At the start of your first turn, you will see the *Mission Briefing* screen. In the top left window a map will appear. The battlefield is bigger than this window; you can use the movement controls to scroll around it and examine the terrain and the initial deployment of the units. In the top right is the briefing text. You are advised to read through it, at least on your first playthrough, as it tells you the objective of the forthcoming battle—which at least for the initial battle is not simply to destroy all enemy units.

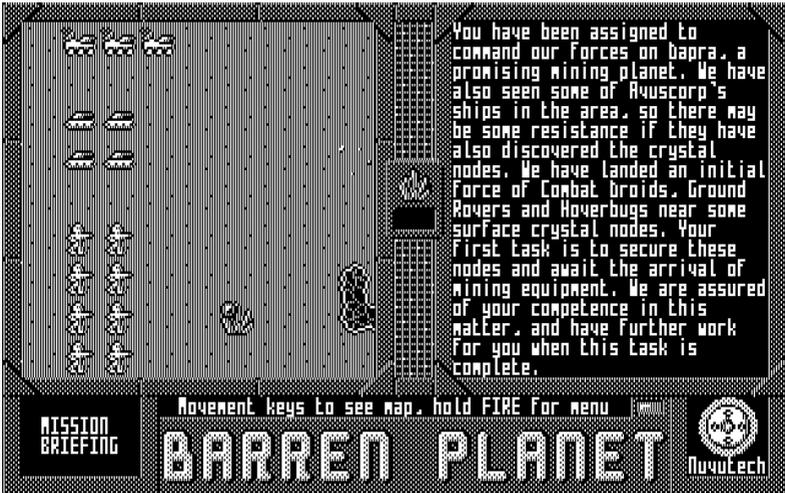


Figure 2.2: The Mission Briefing screen.

When you've taken in all that the *Mission Briefing* screen has to tell you, tap *fire* to bring up the menu and select the default option, which is *Proceed*. This will take you to the *Player Turn* screen, where you can start to give orders to your forces.

## Chapter 3

# Taking Your Turn

The top left of the *Player Turn* screen contains the battle map, just like in the *Mission Briefing* screen. The top right window is split in two. At the top there is a stats panel that shows information on units and terrain. At the bottom is a text window, currently mostly empty, onto which status messages will scroll. Currently it tells you there are no resources. Resources are not used in the first battle, so we can ignore that. We can also ignore the small pop-out in the middle of the screen that shows us our current resource level more prominently; that will stay at zero for the whole battle.

There is a difference between this map and the one on the *Briefing Screen*: this one has a square cursor, which should start in the middle of the map display. The movement keys allow you to move this cursor around the battlefield, highlighting particular units and terrain. Moving the cursor past the edge will scroll the display, if there is any more battlefield to show in that direction. As with other screens, holding *fire* brings up the menu in the bottom left.

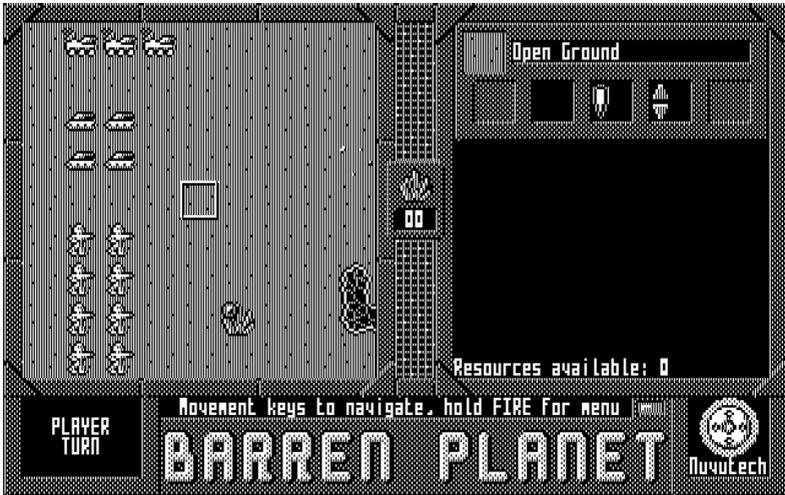


Figure 3.1: The Player Turn screen

### 3.1 Getting Information

It's a good idea to start your turn by inspecting the individual units on the battlefield. The cursor is initially placed near your own units, so start with one of those. One of the humanoid figures, the Combat Droids, would be a good start. Move the cursor over to it and tap the *fire* button; this will call up the *Select* menu option which is the default option when pointing at one of your own units.

The stats panel will change to illustrate the unit you just selected. You will see its icon in the panel, and its name, *Combat Droid*. The five square fields tell you of the unit statistics, which are these:

- *Hit Points*, next to the heart symbol, show you the condition of your unit. The upper figure is the current number of hit points, which will be reduced when the unit is damaged in battle. The lower figure is the maximum number of hit points that the unit



Figure 3.2: Stats for the Combat Droid shown at the top right.

started out with.

- *Attack Power*, next to the sword symbol, is the amount of damage that this unit can cause to an enemy unit in a single turn. When you attack an enemy, you will cause a random amount of damage between zero and this number, which will be deducted from the enemy's current hit points.
- *Attack Range*, next to the target symbol, is the number of squares over which this unit can fire: 1 indicates it can only attack units in the next square, higher values indicate a longer range.
- *Armour*, next to the shield symbol, is the number of points of damage that this unit can absorb from an enemy attack without affecting its hit points. When this unit is attacked, a random amount between 0 and this figure is deducted from the damage caused, before reducing the current hit point figure.

- *Movement Points*, next to the arrow symbols, is the maximum number of squares over which a unit can move in a turn. The upper figure is the current number of movement points left, the lower figure is the number of movement points the unit will have at the start of every turn. Note that some terrain takes more than 1 movement point to traverse, and some terrain cannot be traversed at all by some units.

You can obtain similar information about enemy units. Move the cursor across the map to point at one of the enemy units, but be careful. The default menu option when pointing at an enemy unit is *Attack* and not *Select*, so you need to hold the *fire* control and move the menu cursor over to *Select* before releasing *fire*. The other difference between the friendly and enemy unit display is that you are not shown the current *Hit Points* or *Movement Points*, only the maximum for that type.

Information on terrain is also available. Select one of your own units again. Then move up to the ridge terrain at the top of the map. Hold *fire* and choose the *Select* option. Again you need to be careful, as *Select* is not the default option when pointing at empty terrain. The icon and name of the terrain will be shown in the stats panel. The three fields underneath tell you about the effect of that terrain on the currently selected unit.

- The first field contains the icon of your currently selected friendly unit, as a reminder of which unit type the other fields refer to.
- The *Defence* figure, next to the shield symbol, shows how much the terrain protects that particular unit. This defence acts like extra armour; a number between 0 and this figure is deducted from the damage taken when this unit is attacked while sitting in this terrain. A dash means that the terrain doesn't protect this unit at all.
- The *Movement Cost* figure, next to the arrow symbols, shows how many movement points it costs for the unit to move into this terrain. A dash means that the unit can't move into this terrain at all.



Figure 3.3: Stats for Ridge terrain shown at the top right.

When encountering a unit type on the battlefield for the first time, it is helpful to select it, and then get information on the various different types of terrain on the battlefield to get an idea of where that unit can most easily move and where it can dig in for maximum defence.

## 3.2 Moving Units

Now that you've examined the battlefield and the units in detail, it's time to get moving. You might have done this by accident already when examining terrain: that's all part of the learning process!

The first step to giving a unit its movement orders is to select it: move the cursor over to it and tap *fire* to select it. You'll see the stats panel indicate that this is your currently selected unit.

Then move the cursor to the empty spot where you want this unit to move. This will generally be in the direction of the enemy. You needn't

stay within the range indicated by the unit's movement points, you can give orders to move towards a remote square even if your unit couldn't reach it this turn. Tap *fire* to select the *Move* option, which is the default when pointing at an empty square. The unit will move towards the destination.

Units will use intelligent *pathfinding* to work out the best route to their destination, moving around difficult or impassable terrain in the way. The computer will always find the most efficient path for your unit.

On slower computers, this pathfinding might involve a noticeable delay before the unit begins to move. If you find this annoying, you can pick out the path yourself by moving to adjacent squares one at a time along your desired route. This may make the process more fluid when the unit is only moving one or two squares per turn.

Another problem occasionally arises when moving long distances: you may choose a destination that your unit cannot currently find a path to, because there are units in the way. In this case you will have to either pick a square along the route that the unit can get to, or single-step your moves as just described.

Once you've moved the first unit, move the others towards the enemy. You may wish to use some of your units to occupy the crystal node squares as instructed in the mission briefing; Combat Droids are good units for holding these positions.

### 3.3 Ending Your Turn

Once you have moved all the units, there is nothing more to do this turn. Your units will not yet be in firing range of the enemy, so combat will have to wait till future turns. So it's time to end your turn.

You do this by holding *fire* and selecting the *End Turn* option from the menu. The computer will then take its turn while you wait. Once the computer is done, you will be presented with the *Turn Report*.

## 3.4 The Turn Report

While the computer was making its move, you will have seen a blank map window and a message asking you to wait. The computer's move is not shown to you in real time, so you will not know what the computer has been doing. This is what the *Turn Report* screen is for.



Figure 3.4: The Turn Report screen shows what happens during the enemy's turn.

Every turn after an opponent has moved, assuming that the opponent did move, you begin with the *Turn Report* screen. Here you can see a replay of everything the opponent did: every move, every attack, and all the repairs and new unit construction that took place.

Tap *fire* to select the default *Replay* option from the *Turn Report* menu. This will briskly go through all the computer's actions. The map window will show the units moving around, and the scrolling text window on the right will give information about interesting events like attacks, repair and new unit construction.

Once the report is done, you can tap *fire* to select the default option *Proceed* to continue to the *Player Turn* screen to take your turn. Alternatively, if you want to see the report again, hold *fire* and select the *Replay* option which will show you all the computer's moves from the beginning of the turn.

## 3.5 Attacking the Enemy

After a number of turns, your units will come into firing range of the enemy. For most units in the first battle this means occupying the adjacent square, but Air Fighters can fire at units two squares away. Once within range, it is time to attack!

Start by selecting one of your units that is ready to fire at the enemy, by moving the cursor over it and tapping *fire* to choose the default option *Select*. Then move the cursor to the enemy unit you want to attack, and tap *fire* again to choose *Attack*, which is the default option when pointing at an enemy.

Assuming the enemy really is in firing range, you will see a brief flash of fire from your unit and an explosion on the enemy. If this attack destroys the enemy, it will then disappear, otherwise it will remain on the battlefield but may have taken damage from your attack. A report in the text window will confirm the attack.

If you are within the enemy unit's firing range, and if the enemy has movement points left, it may return fire, in which case you will see a flash of fire over the enemy and an explosion on your unit. If your unit is weak or the enemy is powerful, it is possible that your own unit could be destroyed in the attack. If this happens, your unit will disappear from the map and a report in the text window will confirm what happened.

When your unit attacks, the rest of its movement points are used up, so it can only fire once per turn. This also means that it will be unable to return fire if attacked during the enemy's next turn. If you want your unit to be able to return fire on the enemy you need to refrain from using it to attack this turn, and leave it with at least one movement point remaining at the end of your turn.



Figure 3.5: A Ground Rover has just attacked a Combat Droid.

Once the attack is done, the stats panel is updated to show the current status of your unit: its movement points will be zero, and its hit points may be reduced if the enemy returned fire and caused any damage.

Once all units have moved and attacked, you will want to end your turn as before. Continue attacking the enemy turn after turn, and also try to occupy the crystal nodes with your own units, and eventually, one way or another, the battle will come to an end.

## 3.6 Stopping and Resuming Play

A battle can take a long time to play through, and therefore a full campaign will take many times longer. It is very likely you will have to stop play at some point before the campaign is won. Almost every menu in the game has an *Exit Game* option at the bottom. Selecting this

will save the current game and drop back to DOS. When you next run *Barren Planet*, you will return to the point where you left off.

At some point, you might want to leave off one game and start another. Along with the *Exit Game* option, most menus have a *New Game* option too. This will save the current game, so that you can return to it later, and take you to the *New Game* screen.

You can have multiple games in progress at once. To resume a previously saved game at the *New Game* screen, move the highlight bar up to *Game:* and use the ← and → controls to cycle through the saved games. Each is identified by the date and time the game was started. Cycling ← all the way will bring you back to *New Game*. Note that when you have a saved game selected, you cannot change the other options (*Campaign*, *Nuvutech* and *Avuscorp*) for that game. Once the game has started, these are fixed.

## Chapter 4

# Winning the Battle

There are two ways to win a battle. One is to occupy all of the *Victory Points* on the map. The other is complete annihilation of the enemy forces.

*Victory Points* are positions on the map that must be occupied to secure victory. They are indicated by small circles in the top left of their squares. A red circle is an unoccupied victory point. Victory points occupied by Nuvutech turn white, while those occupied by Avuscorp turn blue.

If there are such victory points on the map, and if you occupy them all, then you instantly win the battle. You do not need to destroy all the enemy units; seizing all of the important victory points is enough to secure victory.

If there are no victory points on the map, or if your forces are too few to occupy them all, then the only other way to win the battle is complete annihilation of the enemy. You could also do this for fun, and ignore the victory points even if you have enough units to occupy them. But such a war of attrition will take much longer than occupying the victory positions so it is best avoided if possible.



Figure 4.1: Three victory points are visible on the map. The one on the left is occupied by Nuvutech. The upper right one is occupied by Avuscorp. The lower right one is unoccupied.

## 4.1 The Mission Debriefing

If you win a battle, you will be taken straight to the *Mission Debriefing* screen. The text in the top right window will describe how you did, and what effect your victory will have upon the campaign. The map in the top left window shows the final battle positions.

The Mission Debriefing works much like the briefing: you can scroll around the map with the movement controls to reveal the full battlefield. The *fire* control, as always, brings up the menu.

To acknowledge the debriefing and continue the campaign, tap *fire* which brings up the menu and chooses the default option *Acknowledge*. You will then proceed to the next battle or, if you have won the campaign, to the *New Game* screen.

If you have lost the battle, which would usually occur in your oppo-



Figure 4.2: The Mission Debriefing: Nuvotech has won the battle by occupying all the victory points.

ment's turn, then you will first be taken to the *Turn Report* screen so that you can see what happened. Once you have watched the report, then you will see the Mission Debriefing as described already.

## 4.2 The Next Battle

A campaign is a series of interlinked battles. It isn't a fixed linear sequence, though. The outcome of each battle will determine which battle is fought next. This means that both sides have a chance to influence events on the strategic level, and the game becomes interesting for both players. It also means that you might encounter different battles in each play through of the campaign.

In the *First Landing* campaign, winning a battle is likely to take the victorious player to a scenario where their capabilities are increased.

For instance, the winner of the first battle will proceed to a mission in which they have established a mining base and are able to start repairing their units. Winning later battles may introduce new units to the victor, or the ability to build units at will.

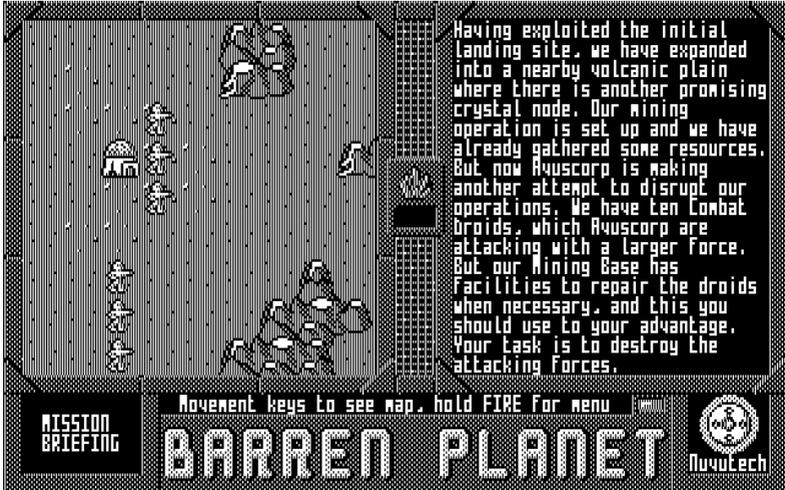


Figure 4.3: In the next battle, the victorious player finally establishes a Mining Base.

As the campaign draws to its close, battles will be encountered where victory for one player will give them victory for the entire campaign. Once a player wins such a battle, the debriefing will award outright victory and the game will end. But it will take many battles before this happens.

# Chapter 5

## Repair and Construction

The first battle in *First Landing* is a simple one where the units initially deployed are all you get, during the battle. But in subsequent battles, *Barren Planet* introduces some interesting abilities: the abilities to repair and build units on the battlefield.

### 5.1 Resources

Repair and building require *resources*. At the start of each battle, each side is allocated a certain amount of resources for building and repair. In some battles this is all you get, and you will have to carefully eke out these resources to last until the battle is won.

In other battles the resources can be gathered turn by turn. Resources are generated by the *Crystal Nodes* when occupied by a *Mining Base*. Each Mining Base occupying a Crystal Node gains 2 resource points per turn for its side. If the opponent destroys a Mining Base, the income from that Crystal Node is cut off for the rest of the battle. So it is a valid tactic to target the enemy's Mining Bases early, in order to starve them of resources for future repair and construction.

Your current resources are shown in a small pop-out window in the



Figure 5.1: Now is the time to start paying attention to the messages about resources, and the display in the centre of the screen.

centre of the screen, nestled between the map window and the report message window: look for the crystal node symbol. The report messages will also update you on available resources at the start of your turn, and every time you spend resources in building and construction.

## 5.2 Repairing Damaged Units

As well as gathering resources, the *Mining Base* can also be used to repair damaged units. If there are resources enough, a Mining Base can repair up to two adjacent friendly units each turn. The repair cost of a unit is half its build cost, as listed in the Appendix.

When repair comes into play, damaged units are no longer regarded as lame ducks to be used as sacrifices or decoys. Now there is a purpose to retreat: you can draw damaged units back to your Min-



Figure 5.2: Repairing a damaged unit.

ing Bases where they can be repaired and sent back into battle at full strength.

The quickest way to gain access to the repair ability is to win the first battle of *First Landing*. So if you played that battle and lost, start a new game and try again. And again if necessary, until you come out victorious. Your second battle will then begin with a Mining Base deployed. Now you can send your units into battle with renewed confidence, despite the fact that you are outnumbered.

Continue the fight until one of your Combat Droids has its hit points reduced by at least half. Now it is time to withdraw: while the other Combat Droids continue the fight, move the damaged Combat Droid back each turn till it is adjacent to the Mining Base. Once that's done, you are ready to repair it.

With the Combat Droid adjacent, move the cursor to the Mining Base and tap *fire* to select it. Move the cursor back to the damaged Combat Droid and tap *fire* again. This won't select the Combat Droid

as you'd expect. If your current unit is a Mining Base, and you point at an adjacent friendly unit, the default menu option becomes *Repair* instead. You should see a spanner briefly appear over the Combat Droid, and then a report message will confirm that the Combat Droid has been repaired. Your resources will be reduced by the appropriate amount.

To select the Combat Droid to verify it is at full strength, you will need to hold *fire* and choose the *Select* option to select it. If it has movement points remaining, it can immediately move back towards the battle front.

It is important to keep an eye on your units' hit points and not allow them to be needlessly destroyed. This is especially true in this second battle, where you are outnumbered by the enemy. If you don't keep your units in good repair then you will be easily overcome. It might be a good idea in this scenario to keep your Combat Droids close to the Mining Base and let the enemy come to you. That way your units will not have a long journey when they need to retreat for repair.

### 5.3 Building New Units

Part way through the campaign, your Mining Bases will gain the ability to build new units during the battle. Then you'll not be limited to the units that are initially deployed, but you can add your to your forces other units that you find useful. The rest of this section assumes you have arrived at such a battle.

To build a new unit, move the cursor to a Mining Base and tap *fire* to select it. Then move the cursor to an adjacent empty square and tap *fire* again to choose the *Build* option from the menu. When a Mining Base is selected, the default option when pointing at an adjacent empty square becomes *Build*, rather than *Move* as it would be for other units.

The stats panel will change to a format you've not seen before. This is the *Unit Selection*. The upper text box shows the unit type selected, while all the unit types are shown in the icon boxes beneath. Beneath each unit icon is the resource cost to build it. There is a cursor in one

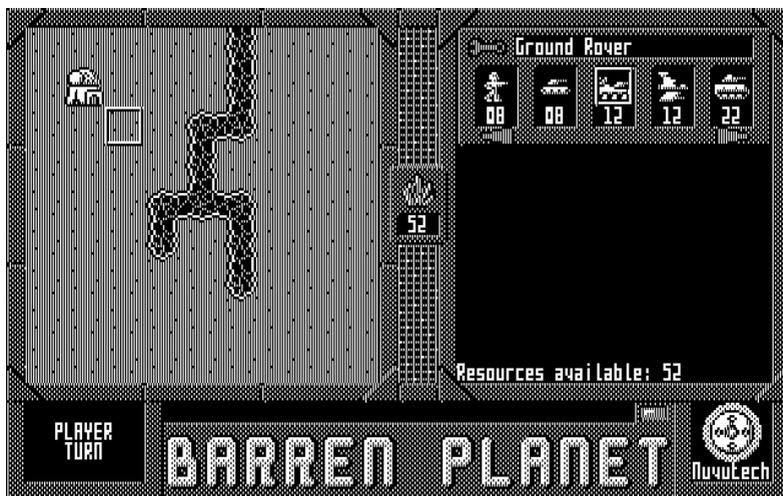


Figure 5.3: The Unit Selection presented when you Build.

of the boxes, and as you move that cursor with the ← and → controls, the upper text box will change to the name of the highlighted unit. If there are more than five units that you can build, you can scroll past the fifth unit to see more of them.

When you have highlighted the unit you want to build, tap *fire* to choose the default *Build* option from the Build Menu. If you have changed your mind about building, you can instead hold *fire* and choose the *Cancel* option instead.

Once you have selected a unit and chosen *Build*, a spanner symbol will appear briefly on the map, and then the unit will be built. The new unit will start off with no movement points, so it will not be able to move this turn, nor will it be able to return fire if it is attacked before its next turn. So take care to protect your new unit unless it is itself exceptionally robust.

## 5.4 Restrictions on Building

Mining Bases are able to build and repair any of the mobile units: Combat Droids, Hoverbugs, Ground Rovers, Air Figthers, Laser Tanks and Laser Cannon. They cannot build or repair Gun Platforms or other Mining Bases. So you must take care to defend your static units.

In some early battles, the Mining Bases lack the facility to build new units, and in other battles the Mining Bases may be limited on which other units they can build. But they can always repair any of the mobile units.

## Chapter 6

# Playing With Better Opponents

So far you have played against the computer on its easiest setting. If you want the computer to be more of a challenge, there are harder computer opponents available. As well as *Computer (Easy)*, there are player settings for *Computer (Fair)* and *Computer (Hard)*. These are all available on the *Set up Game* screen.

Beating up a computer opponent can be fun, but the most satisfying victories are those against human opponents. So once you have won a game or two against the computer, it's time to invite a friend to play. There are two ways to do this: Hotseat Play and Play-by-Mail.

### 6.1 Hotseat Play

Hotseat Play is where two people take turns at the same computer, one vacating the seat when it's the other person's turn to play. It is the simplest kind of two-player game to set up.

On the *New Game* screen, make sure *Game:* is set to *New Game*.

Then set both Nuvutech and Avuscorp to *Human*. Then you can tap *fire* to choose the *Start game* menu option. It is up to the players to agree who is playing which side.

Instead of going straight to the *Mission Briefing* screen, you will be presented first with what's termed the *Security Screen*. This shows the emblem of the player whose turn it is. The other player should find something to look at other than the screen, and the player whose turn it is can tap *fire* to choose the *Proceed* option. After this, the Mission Briefing and other play screens appear as normal.

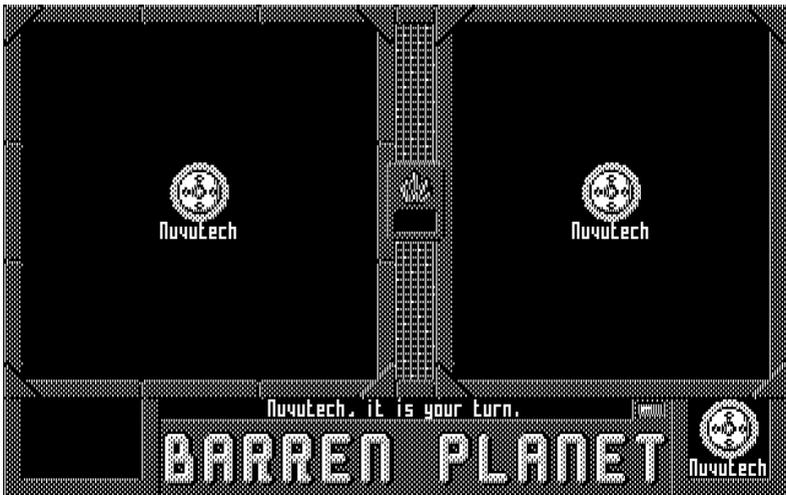


Figure 6.1: The "Security" screen

Although called the *Security Screen*, this initial screen offers no real security. Its real purpose is to let players know whose turn it is, and to prevent one player accidentally trying to play when it is not their turn. It appears every time control passes from one player to the other.

## 6.2 Play-by-Mail

Sometimes it's not practical for two players to get together in the same place at the same time. For those occasions, *Barren Planet* offers a *Play-by-Mail* feature. This allows each player to sit at their own computer and take their turn at a time that's convenient. After each player has taken their turn, a *Turn File* is generated that can be delivered to their opponent for them to take their turn.

First the players need to agree who is playing which side, and who will set the game up. For the purpose of this description, let's assume that you are setting up the game. From the *New Game* screen, set *Game:* to *New Game*, mark your own side as *Human*, and your opponent's side as *PBM*. Then tap *fire* to choose *Start Game* from the menu.



Figure 6.2: Setting up a new PBM game

If you are randomly allotted the first turn, then you will get to play it as normal, going through the Mission Briefing and Player Turn screens.

Once you have ended your turn, or if the game has decided your opponent takes the first turn, control will pass to the *Remote Player* screen. The Turn File will be generated, and a message will tell you its file name.



Figure 6.3: The turn is ready to send to the Nuvutech player

It's then up to you to get the turn file to your opponent with whatever means necessary. You can copy it to a floppy disk and post it to your opponent, or hand deliver it if your opponent is someone you meet regularly. Or you can send it as an attachment using electronic mail.

If you're the recipient of the Turn File, you must copy it to your *Barren Planet* disk or directory before starting the program. A brief message on the *New Game* screen will confirm that the turn file has been read, and which game it applies to. The turn file will then be deleted. You can then start the game and take your turn. Once you end your turn, the program will generate another turn file for you to return to your opponent.



Figure 6.4: The turn has been received from the Avuscorp player



## Chapter 7

# Other Campaigns

*Barren Planet* is supplied with a single campaign, *First Landing*, which tells the story of the two corporations' first arrival at Dapra. But the game supports future expansion and allows for the creation of more campaigns.

When future campaigns are released, they will be supplied as single files with a *.cam* extension. These files need to be copied to the *Barren Planet* disk or directory. When the game is next started, there will be a new option available for the *Campaign* setting on the *New Game* screen.

New campaign expansions will feature new sets of battles. These might further tell the story of Nuvutech and Avuscorp in their battle to control Dapra, or they could instead tell of different corporations, states and empires in a different setting.

Unit types are part of the campaign, so future campaigns might also vary the units available. Battle mechs, mega tanks, mobile construction or mining vehicles, self-replicating aliens are all possibilities that the game engine allows.

The terrain can also be varied in a new campaign. Perhaps Dapra has ice caps or crystal caves that can be explored in future expansions. Maybe the conflict will expand to airless moons or waterworlds in the

system. The *Barren Planet* game engine could even handle battles in space itself.

The game supports single-player campaigns too. Instead of having the result of one battle dictate which battle is played next, a single-player campaign will have a series of battles in which the human player will only progress when they win a battle. If the human player loses, they re-fight the same battle again. In such a campaign, the side that the human will take is fixed by the campaign's designer.

Only time will tell on what adventures this game can take you. So keep an eye out in Cynningstan's future catalogues for any *Barren Planet* expansions.

# Chapter 8

## Reference

### 8.1 Unit Types

There are up to eight unit types in a *Barren Planet* campaign. *First Landing* uses all eight, and they are as follows.

#### Combat Droid

	Unit: Combat Droid	Build cost: 8
	Hit points: 4	Repair cost: 4
	Attack power: 2	Attack range: 1
	Armour: 0	Movement points: 2

The *Combat Droid* is the backbone of your army. One of the cheapest units to produce, it can take a reasonable amount of damage, and its versatility allows it to take advantage of the protection provided by many types of terrain. This protection offsets its lack of armour. While the *Combat Droid* can traverse most types of terrain, it moves slowly.

## Hoverbug

	Unit:	Hoverbug	Build cost:	8
	Hit points:	3	Repair cost:	4
	Attack power:	2	Attack range:	1
	Armour:	1	Movement points:	3

The *Hoverbug* is a small anti-gravity fighting vehicle carrying a turret-mounted gun. Its ability to hover allows it to travel over most terrain with ease, although its top speed is not fast. Being a small vehicle, it cannot absorb much damage in battle, although it is lightly armoured.

## Air Fighter

	Unit:	Air Fighter	Build cost:	8
	Hit points:	2	Repair cost:	4
	Attack power:	2	Attack range:	2
	Armour:	0	Movement points:	6

The *Air Fighter* is a medium altitude flying unit suitable for attacking both air and ground units. As a flying unit it is the fastest unit available. The Air Fighter mounts a medium range laser allowing it to attack enemies at range. However, it is unarmoured and can take little damage, making it vulnerable if it allows enemy units to approach too closely.

## Ground Rover

	Unit:	Ground Rover	Build cost:	16
	Hit points:	4	Repair cost:	8
	Attack power:	2	Attack range:	1
	Armour:	2	Movement points:	4

The principal scouting vehicle is the *Ground Rover*. It is wheeled and can travel fast over open, flat terrain. It mounts a gun, and is heavily armoured, making it a good combat vehicle to take on other light units. Its combination of attack power and speed makes the Ground Rover an ideal choice for chasing down damaged retreating enemy units.

## Laser Tank

	Unit:	Laser Tank	Build cost:	22
	Hit points:	6	Repair cost:	11
	Attack power:	4	Attack range:	2
	Armour:	2	Movement points:	4

The *Laser Tank* is a heavy tracked combat unit. It mounts a turret bearing a powerful laser cannon, that can fire at medium range. Its bulk can take a lot of damage, and it is heavily armoured for extra protection. It can move rapidly across the battlefield.

## Laser Cannon

	Unit:	Laser Cannon	Build cost:	28
	Hit points:	4	Repair cost:	14
	Attack power:	6	Attack range:	3
	Armour:	1	Movement points:	4

The *Laser Cannon* is a mobile gun platform. It mounts a fixed high-power laser gun that can cause a lot of damage to units at medium range. It can take a moderate amount of damage and is lightly armoured, making it somewhat vulnerable to attack. This unit is best deployed in protective terrain where it can attack approaching enemies in relative safety.

## Gun Platform

	Unit:	Gun Platform	Build cost:	-
	Hit points:	3	Repair cost:	-
	Attack power:	8	Attack range:	4
	Armour:	0	Movement points:	1

A static unit, the *Gun Platform* is usually deployed in strategic positions to block access through narrow passes or to protect a nearby Mining Base. Its huge laser gun can target units at a very long range and

causes an immense amount of damage; it can take out light units and occasionally even heavy units with a single hit. It is unarmoured and delicate, though, meaning that it is easily destroyed by any enemy that it allows to approach too closely. The Gun Platform is too sophisticated to be built or repaired on the battlefield.

## Mining Base

	Unit:	Mining Base	Build cost:	-
	Hit points:	8	Repair cost:	-
	Attack power:	2	Attack range:	2
	Armour:	2	Movement points:	2

The *Mining Base* is the most important unit in the game. It is a static unit, a fixed armoured building of significant bulk. This makes it difficult to destroy. It has very limited medium-range defensive power provided by a small laser gun mount. The armour and defensive power is insufficient to hold out against heavy combat units, so if the enemy threatens a Mining Base then it should be defended by other combat units.

The use of the Mining Base is threefold. When built on a Crystal Node, it will generate 2 resource points per turn for its owner. With these resources it can repair damaged units that are adjacent. And finally, it can have the capability to use these resources to build new units on the battlefield. Resources gathered by multiple Mining Bases are pooled and can be spent at any Mining Base. Therefore Mining Bases deployed in places other than Crystal Nodes will not collect resources, but can still build and repair units if resources are stockpiled.

## 8.2 Terrain Types

A campaign can use up to eight terrain types, and *First Landing* uses all eight of them. You will only see a handful of these in any one battle, as each map has its own character.

## Open Ground

		<b>Open Ground</b>		
		<i>Unit</i>	<i>Movement cost</i>	<i>Defence</i>
	Combat Droid		1	-
	Hoverbug		1	-
	Ground Rover		1	-
	Air Fighter		1	-
	Laser Tank		1	-
	Laser Cannon		1	-
	Gun Platform		-	-
	Mining Base		-	-

The majority of each map is taken up by Open Ground as, with the exception of air battles, this is the most practical type of terrain on which to deploy and move scouts and combat forces. Being open, it provides no protection to any kind of combat unit.

## Rocks

		<b>Rocks</b>		
		<i>Unit</i>	<i>Movement cost</i>	<i>Defence</i>
	Combat Droid		1	2
	Hoverbug		1	1
	Ground Rover		2	1
	Air Fighter		1	-
	Laser Tank		2	1
	Laser Cannon		2	1
	Gun Platform		-	1
	Mining Base		-	-

Some open ground on Dapra is strewn with large boulders. These can provide an obstacle for movement for larger units, but they can also provide protection from enemy fire. Combat Droids are especially adept at hiding behind the rocks.

## Ridge

<b>Ridge</b>		
<i>Unit</i>	<i>Movement cost</i>	<i>Defence</i>
Combat Droid	2	2
Hoverbug	1	1
Ground Rover	2	1
 Air Fighter	1	-
Laser Tank	2	1
Laser Cannon	4	1
Gun Platform	-	2
Mining Base	-	-

The surface of Dapra is pockmarked by craters from falling meteorites. It also has many hills formed by tectonic activity. Both of these terrain types fall under the description of *Ridges*. Their steep approach is difficult to navigate for many units, only anti-grav and air units traversing them with ease. They offer varying amounts of protection to units that occupy them, being excellent places to deploy Combat Droids and Gun Platforms.

## Cliff Face

<b>Cliff Face</b>		
<i>Unit</i>	<i>Movement cost</i>	<i>Defence</i>
Combat Droid	-	-
Hoverbug	2	-
Ground Rover	-	-
 Air Fighter	1	-
Laser Tank	-	-
Laser Cannon	-	-
Gun Platform	-	-
Mining Base	-	-

The same tectonic forces that created Ridges can also rupture the planet surface enough to form a *Cliff Face*, a rise so steep and high

that only air and anti-grav units can navigate it. Units flying over the Cliff Face have no protection, and are therefore vulnerable. But sometimes they provide a route for these units to outflank the enemy.

## Magma Flow

<b>Magma Flow</b>			
	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Movement cost</i>	<i>Defence</i>
	Combat Droid	-	-
	Hoverbug	1	-
	Ground Rover	-	-
	Air Fighter	1	-
	Laser Tank	-	-
	Laser Cannon	-	-
	Gun Platform	-	-
	Mining Base	-	-

Dapra has very little surface water, most if not all of which is locked up in ice caps. Instead its “rivers” are formed of flowing magma. These *Magma Flows* ooze out from volcanic fissures, and are impassable to all units except anti-grav and air units. Like the Cliff Face, a Magma Flow can provide a route for these units to outflank the enemy.

## Volcano

<b>Volcano</b>			
	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Movement cost</i>	<i>Defence</i>
	Combat Droid	-	-
	Hoverbug	-	-
	Ground Rover	-	-
	Air Fighter	-	-
	Laser Tank	-	-
	Laser Cannon	-	-
	Gun Platform	-	-
	Mining Base	-	-

The most dramatic manifestations of volcanic activity on Dapra are the *Volcanoes* themselves. These are active, spewing out fountains of lava and ash into the air. Not even air units can safely pass over them, so they form an impenetrable barrier to all units best admired from afar.

## Crystal Node

<b>Crystal Node</b>			
<i>Unit</i>	<i>Movement cost</i>	<i>Defence</i>	
Combat Droid	1	1	
Hoverbug	1	-	
Ground Rover	2	-	
Air Fighter	1	-	
Laser Tank	4	-	
Laser Cannon	4	-	
Gun Platform	-	-	
Mining Base	-	-	



The *Crystal Nodes* are those places where the lucrative resources of Dapra pierce the planet surface, and become visible to surface and air units. The shard-like structures can only be exploited using the sophisticated equipment present in a Mining Base, but are large enough to provide moderate protection for Combat Droids that can hide in them. Like Rocks, the Crystal Nodes can be easily traversed by Combat Droids and anti-grav and air units, but are difficult of access for heavier units. Laser Tanks and Laser Cannon must move especially slowly not to have their tracks damaged by the hard and sharp features poking up from the ground.

## Alien Ruin

		Alien Ruin		
		<i>Unit</i>	<i>Movement cost</i>	<i>Defence</i>
	Combat Droid	1	1	3
	Hoverbug	2	2	1
	Ground Rover	4	4	1
	Air Fighter	1	1	-
	Laser Tank	-	-	-
	Laser Cannon	-	-	-
	Gun Platform	-	-	-
	Mining Base	-	-	1

Humans are not the first species to roam the surface of Dapra. During the course of their exploration, Nuvutech and Avuscorp come across structures which are obviously not natural. The nature of these structures has not yet been studied, and nothing is known about the alien race that built them. Were they once occupants of a more hospitable Dapra? Or were they visitors like the present ones, here to avail themselves of the planet's mineral riches?

You won't get to find out any time soon. Because for the present, these structures are being used as protected terrain in the fighting between the two corporations. Perhaps the ultimate victor will invite researchers down to the planet, once the strife is over, to study them. Or what's left of them after these present battles have taken their toll.



# Chapter 9

## Acknowledgements

### 9.1 Beta Testers

*Barren Planet* and its manual reached its release thanks to the help of the following beta testers:

- Michael Klamerus
- Epona
- Rumorsmatrix
- BikerRick
- Andreu Retro
- LadyVivianne
- Tondagossa
- Doctorcdcs
- Sonneveld

## **9.2 Assets**

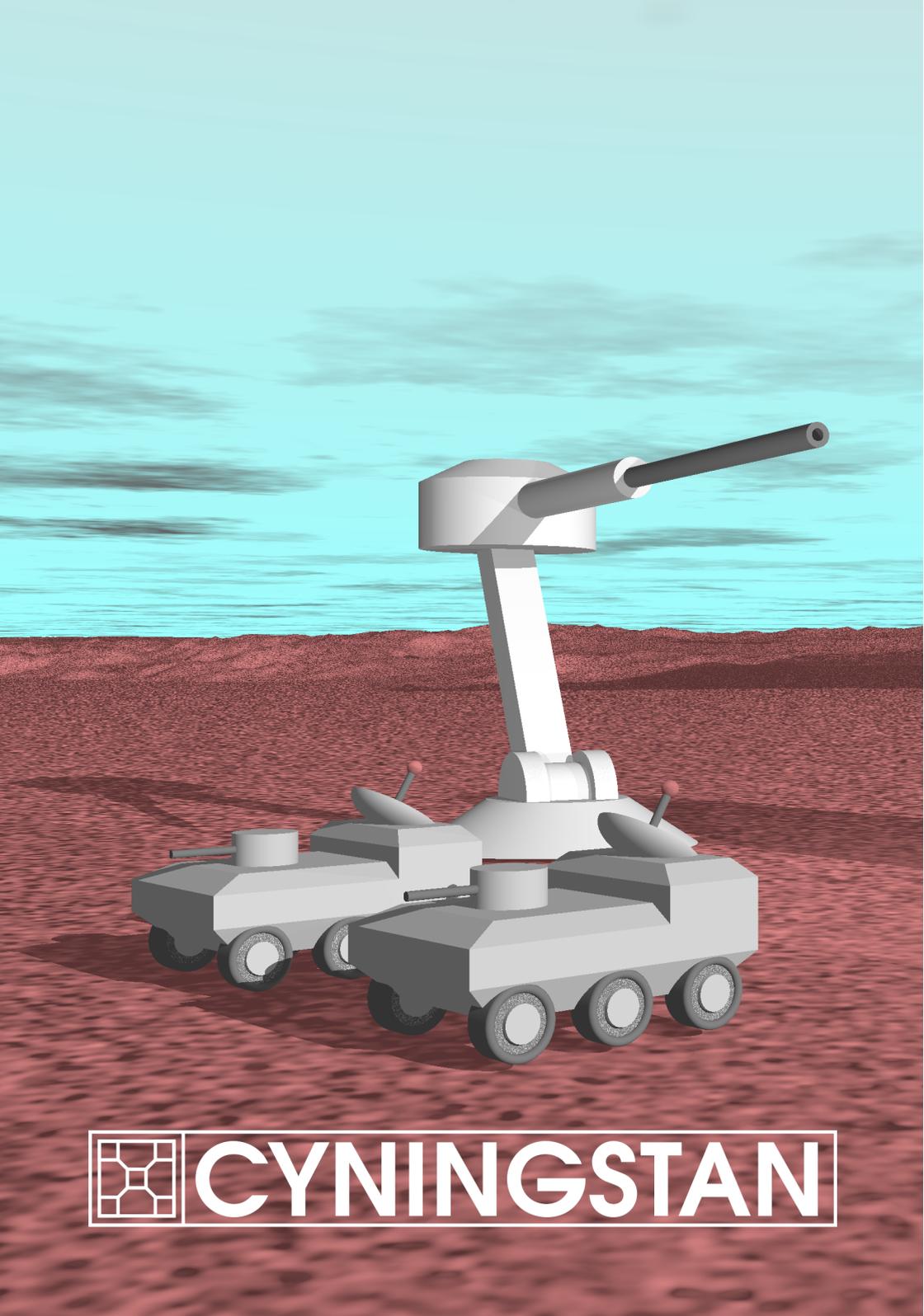
The music in the game is Pedal Exercitum, BWV 598, by J. S. Bach and/or C. P. E. Bach. All other sound effects and all graphical assets are by Damian Gareth Walker.

## **9.3 Tools Used**

The following tools were used in the production of the game and this manual:

- OpenWatcom C and associated compiler tools.
- LaTeX for the manual.
- The GIMP for pixel art assets.
- PovRay for the title screen scene.





**CYNINGSTAN**