



TEST

# SPACE PATROL

RayXambeR

ReVival #37 - summer 2008

## Left Turn Only presents

Here it is at last! Announced a long time ago and finished since several months (since June 2007 precisely), we were longing to receive the new homebrew game on this machine.

Behind the game, we find again the people without whom homebrew on Intellivision wouldn't exist. Joe Zbiciak, main programmer (graphics and sound effects, too), helped in his task by David Harley (already behind all homebrew games commercialized this far on Intellivision) for the level design and Arnauld Chevallier, for whom introduction isn't necessary anymore, for music. This three persons joined forces to create LTO, meaning *Left Turn Only*.

The packaging is excellent. The box is really close to the feel of the original ones, while the previous homebrew games (*Minehunter*, *Stonix*, etc.) offered a little less thick carton, but laminated. Overlays are superb (even if they are nearly useless here) but one can see they have been cut manually. Their width have also been badly adjusted, because it is very difficult to insert the overlay into the joystick. In addition, it is too flexible to apply force. It wasn't the case of the IntelligentVision productions. But the worst is reusing existing Intellivision cartridges, all the more so since the one used for our copy wasn't a first-born! This tarnishes



the picture a bit, and requires sacrificing an existing game (let's hope they weren't copies of *Spiker!*). On the other hand, the artwork and leaflet are superb, and each box is serialized. Currently, 202 copies were made. In the end, we should get close to the record man on this subject, *Stonix* and its 250 copies.

Straightly, *Space Patrol* largely deserves its success. It's the worthy successor of *Moon Patrol*, an Irem's arcade game (licensed to Williams Electronics for the United States).

The player drives a lunar car (buggy) having to move despite the obstacles (craters, mines, rocks) by jumping above them, or destroying them when it's possible. And while keeping an eye on the enemies coming from the sky. The buggy is





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equipped with two guns, actioned simultaneously: a horizontal and a vertical one. The game requires good reactions and being very precise, but also the ability to memorize the course.

The production is impressive, beyond what we have been able to see so far on this machine (until *Rick Dangerous?*). The graphical aspect, sprites as well as the scenery, is exceptional. The animation doesn't lag behind: it's fast and smooth, and differential scrolling on several planes, giving the impression of perspective (as in the arcade game) only reinforce our opinion. The sound atmosphere is really a success, and completely fits the game atmosphere. The game is also a marvel of playability, with a perfect handling. A masterwork.



Is then *Space Patrol* a perfect "bare" reproduction of the original? Nay, since it is much more complete than its model, which all the more increases its game life and its interest. While *Moon Patrol* offered a single course in 26 stages (as many letters as in the alphabet), *Space Patrol* goes farther, since other planets were added to the Moon: Mars, Pluto and Mercury! And each level can be run as a beginner or a champion.

A course is split into several checkpoints (from A to E, then F-J, K-O, etc.) at the end of which points are given according to the time spent. It's classical, but it adds even more spice to the action, as an incentive to run as fast as possible.

The buggy also comes with a radar that, depending on the color, indicates from where the danger comes. Notably when it comes from the left, from the back! Well, a simple rear-view mirror would have been enough, but we're on the Moon, one must thus justify some technological gear! On the drawbacks, there are really none, except the scores are not saved when the console is switched off.



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It is thus a new hit for the Intellivision, so close to perfection that it narrowly missed the maximal note. Will it be for the next game?

<b>Title</b>	Space Patrol
<b>Plate-forme</b>	Intellivision
<b>Developer</b>	LTO
<b>Year</b>	2008
<b>Genre</b>	Moon Patrol-like
<b>Media</b>	cartridge
<b>Players</b>	1
<b>Save</b>	no
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Note</b>	10

The design of the animation engine allowing differential scrolling goes back to 2000, and is Joe's work. That's from that that the *Space Patrol* game was eventually considered.

If you're playing *Space Patrol* with the ECS module (*Entertainment Computer System*) - the Intellivision's computing extension - it adds a strongly reinforced sound environment, because with six voices. Indeed, there is at the same time a rhythm sound in addition to the melody, you hear the flying enemies come, and the other sound effects have more depths (notably the buggy jump). A

real plus and a true good idea that, we hope, we'll be used again for the coming games.

*Space Patrol*, initially, was named *Lunar MP* by its author. And it's nearly 8 years since the development of the game began.

As often, the game barely being commercialized, someone already offers it for (re)sale on Ebay, at a price "only" 4 times above the buying price! Totally absurd, all the more so since Joe Zbiciak says on his site that he still has some packaging left. And that, according to demand, he is willing to make new PCBs and to assemble new complete games. Short URL to the Ebay auction: <http://tinyurl.com/28j4kq>

## NEW! \* SPACE PATROL \* INTELLIVISION GAME BOXED

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