SUPER RETRISS PRO
1.0

Not Just Another TETRIS <tm> Game

Manual of Operations

Document Revision 2

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2. **INTRODUCTION**

2.1 *Yet Another Tetris Clone?*

Super Retriss Pro could be defined as what people use to call a *Tetris clone*. However this definition is quite ugly and inaccurate. Since **Tetris** was created by a Russian student, and commercialized by Spectrum Holobyte, hundreds of *clones* appeared in the Shareware and public domain market. Why? Well, the programming knowledge required to write a *Tetris-like* game is rather basic, and almost any 'average' student of computer science should be able to write his own version of this popular game. Most of the different versions of the game you find out there are just that: a poorly written version of the game, for the solely purpose of writing *their* own Tetris, and without a serious commitment of delivering a quality program.

In the beginning, I started collecting as many Tetris clones as I could, to evaluate and compare them. However, soon I found out that only one out of ten was worth. Now I would only try out a Tetris clone if I have already heard good comments from others about it.

Then, what makes **Super Retriss Pro** to be so special? Well, first of all, the rules of the game are slightly different from the original Tetris and, as far as I know, no other PC Tetris clone has implemented the idea of the zones and the flickering block so far. In **Super Retriss Pro**, the user is not hunting for just another cute background picture. It's the area where you play what changes!

Second, **Super Retriss** (ancestor of Super Retriss Pro) has always used a 256 colors VGA mode, even <u>before</u> the <u>first</u> commercial Tetris game using VGA (**Super Tetris** by *Spectrum Holobyte*) was out. I would bet that **Super Retriss** was the first VGA Tetris game ever, so in a sense, it is a pioneer in its field. Third, **Super Retriss Pro** is not just a Tetris player: You can design your own zones and play them later, and the game is fully customizable. Fourth, you don't play all the time with the same boring-looking blocks: In **Super Retriss Pro** you play with square blocks, rounded blocks, tiny square blocks, balls, stars... Up to nineteen different block textures. Also a *bomb* and a *spaceship* features have been added. And finally **Super Retriss Pro** includes full Sound Blaster support.

All these features (and others that you will soon discover) make of **Super Retriss Pro** a different game, with appealing colors, sounds and music, far from the regular Tetris clones we are used to see everywhere. And that is why the name of the game is not just Retriss but SUPER Retriss. New features, hundreds of bug fixes and a general fine tuning of the game make it a PRO.

2.2 *What do you need to run Super Retriss Pro?*

The basic system you need to run **Super Retriss Pro** is a PC compatible computer (80286 and up), using **MS DOS 5.0** or above, with at least **1Mb** of **RAM** and a **VGA** card. You don't need a mouse (or trackball) to play **Super Retriss Pro**, but if you don't have one, the Zone Designer will not work. Read **Chapter** 2.3 What if I don't have a mouse? for limitations when a mouse is not present.

Also, if you have a **Sound Blaster** card, you should have a **386DX** or faster computer in order to listen the music tones and sound effects. You will also need a copy of one of the Sound Blaster sound drivers (**CT-VOICE.DRV**) included in the software that comes with your sound card. Read **Chapter** 6. SOUND BASTER SUPPORT for information on how to setup the game to use Sound Blaster.

2.3 *What if I don't have a mouse?*

If you don't have a mouse, you will still be able to **play** the game, view the **High Scores** table, **load** different zone files, change the **options**... As mentioned above, the **ZONE DESIGNER** requires a mouse in order to work. From the main menu, keys 1 to 5 select the different options (read **Chapter** 5. MAIN MENU OPTIONS). Following there is a list of the things that work and don't work, when the mouse driver is missing:

- PLAY GAME: Full working. Press 1 from the main menu, then 1, 2 or 3 to select the piece set, and play as usual.

- HIGH SCORES: You can view the table and scroll it up/down, but you cannot view the additional information (**Chapter** 5.2 HIGH SCORES)

- OPTIONS: Full working. You can enter the menu, view the current setup, and change any option.

- ZONE DESIGNER: It doesn't work at all and, it will simply not let you enter the designer.

- LOAD ZONE: Full working. You can enter the menu and scroll through the list of file names using the UP/DOWN arrow keys, and ENTER to select and load a particular file.

3. **GETTING STARTED**

3.1   *Quick start*

The game is very easy to play and the best way to learn the basic rules is by playing it. First, you must copy all the files to a single directory, and then just type **SRP** from the **DOS** prompt and follow the menus and prompts. If you feel lost, you can come back to the manual anytime for specific information.

If you want to use the Sound Blaster capabilities, read below for a quick setup, and **Chapter** 6. SOUND BASTER SUPPORT for more detailed information.

3.2   *Configuration*

By default, the game is configured to use the *PC speaker*. To configure **Super Retriss Pro** to use the *Sound Blaster* sound capabilities, run **SETUP** before running **SRP**. You will be asked to enter the following information:

◆ *Sound device:* Options are the **PC speaker** and a **Sound Blaster** card. No other sound devices are available.

◆ *I/O PortAddress used by your Sound Blaster card:*. This is a hexadecimal number generally between **200** and **2A0** (usually **220** or **240**, but this may vary from system to system).

◆ *IRQ used by your SoundBlaster card:* This is a number between **1** and **10** (generally **5** or **7**).

Once you run **SETUP**, the information will be permanently saved on a file in the current directory (which should be the directory where Super Retriss Pro was installed). You can run **SETUP** anytime later to change the configuration to something else.

NOTE: SETUP does not verify the information you enter. If this is not correct (i.e., you   entered a wrong IRQ number), it is more than possible that the game will crash   seconds after being executed.

4. **BASIC RULES OF THE GAME**

4.1   *What to do*

What you have to do is very simple. Every zone (or screen) will show **one** flickering block. You must **eliminate** the row where that block is located, by filling all the empty spaces using the pieces that fall from the top of the screen. When you're done, you will receive bonus depending on how many seconds it took you to finish and how many empty lines are from the top of the board to the highest brick found. Then you will go to another zone and so on... The game is over when you have accumulated so many pieces that these reach the top of the screen.

4.2   *Details and Score*

A few things keep changing as you play. Things such as speed, zones being played, the pattern of the blocks... Of course the score changes too, but I am assuming you know that.

- **Speed**: The speed of the falling blocks is indicated by the LEVEL where you are. You will go to a faster level every time you finish 5 (five) lines. When you pass level eighteen (the fastest one), you will go back to level zero (the slowest level), and so on.

- **Zones**: It is obvious. When you finish one zone, you go to the next zone. When you finish the last zone since different sets can have a different number of zones, the last zone is not a fixed number) of the current set, you will go back to the first zone again.

- **Blocks**: The pattern of the blocks changes as you go to a higher level. That is, every time you finish 5 lines, a new block pattern will be used. This also helps you to know when you entered on a faster level (not zone!).

- **Score/Bonus:** Your score is increased according to the following rules:

  - For every piece you place in the board, you get **10** points.

  - For every finished line you get **100** points.

  - **BONUS**: Bonuses are given every time you finish one zone. The points you receive are calculated using the following formula:

    (100 - seconds) * number of empty lines

    seconds is how many seconds it took you to finish the zone. If you needed more than 100 seconds, NO BONUSES ARE GIVEN. The

number of empty lines is how many empty lines are from the top of the screen to the highest block found (the empty lines will be filled up with red blocks). For instance, if you finished a zone in 45 seconds and there are 7 empty lines, you will receive:

$$(100-45) * 7 = \underline{385 \text{ points}}$$

- **Bombs**: Every time you finish one line, the next piece will be a bomb. (you can also choose not to play with bombs, read **Chapter** 5.3.7 Bombs). You can move the bomb just like a piece (you cannot rotate it, though). When the bomb hits one block, the block will disappear and you will be awarded 100 more points.

- **Spaceship**: The spaceship appears every ***20,000*** points, and it will remain active for ***10*** seconds. during this time you can shoot at the blocks and, for each block destroyed, you will be awarded **100** points. This can be a load of points!

- **SPECIAL BONUS**: When you have used all the different pieces 20 times (the little colored bars on the bottom left of the screen help you to keep track of this), you will get special bonus, and go to the next zone automatically. You do get a lot of points when this happens, but the amount is variable depending on several things.

4.3 *The Game Screen*

This section describes the different windows you see when playing, and what information they indicate. To identify the different areas of the screen, you can look at figure 4.1, where each window has been assigned a call-out number, explained in the next page.:
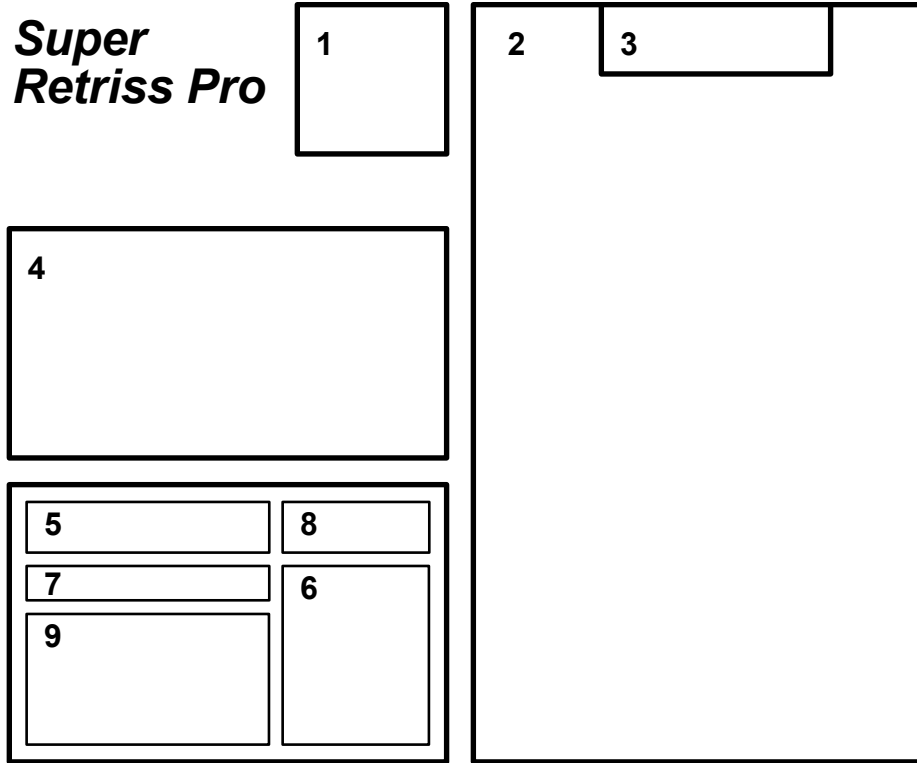
Super Retriss Pro

1

2 3

4

5 8

7 6

9

FIGURE 4.1

1) Shows next piece

2) The board where you play

3) Indicates the time (in seconds) you have been playing the current zone.

4) As labeled:

- POINTS Current score.
- LINES Total number of lines eliminated
- BLOCKS Total number of pieces used
- ZONE Current zone number
- LEVEL Current speed level

5) Gauge bar indicating the current speed in real time. Range goes from one move every 800 milliseconds to eight moves during the same time (or in other words, one move every 100 ms). The red area indicates a speed of 1 move every 350 ms or less.

6) Shows the next zone, so you know what to expect.

7) Percentage of zones explored. When all zones in the current set have been completed, and you start over again, this bar is also reset to zero.

8) Indicates your current position in the High Scores table. Interesting feature for small competitions and such.

9) Every time a piece falls, a small bar of the same color grows in height in this window. When all these bars reach the top of this window, the player receives extra bonuses and other goodies. The number of bars will depend on the piece set you chose (7, 12 or 15), and it requires 20 pieces of the same color to complete one bar.

4.4   *Control Keys*

The keys used to move the piece around can be customized to anything you want from the OPTIONS menu (read **Chapter** 5.3.2 Redefine Keys). By default, the keys are configured as follows:

Move Right	: *RIGHT Arrow Key*
Move Left	: *LEFT Arrow Key*
Move Down	: *DOWN Arrow Key*
Rotate Piece	: *UP Arrow Key, Space Bar and the Enter key*
Pause game	: *P and Alt-P*
Toggle Sound	: *S and Alt-S*
Quit Game	: *ESC Key*

When the spaceship appears, the only keys available are:

Move Right	: *RIGHT Arrow Key*
Move Left	: *LEFT Arrow Key*

Shoot   : *DOWN Arrow Key*

5. **MAIN MENU OPTIONS**

The options available in the main menu, and their function are :

        1.- PLAY   > Go play!!
        2.- HIGH SCORES   > See the high score's table
        3.- OPTIONS   > Game setup, keys, toggle bombs and sound on/off,
etc.
        4.- ZONE DESIGNER   > Design your own zones
        5.- LOAD ZONES   > Load new set of zones

You can select any option by entering the option number (i.e. type '**1**' to play, '**2**' to see the high scores...) or by pointing and clicking the left button of the mouse on the desired option. To quit the game and go back to DOS, press ESC or the '**6**' key.

5.1   *PLAY*

You will see a new menu with three options to select the set of pieces you want to play with. In the right of the screen you can see the (rotating) pieces that belong to each set.

 1) It contains the typical pieces found in every Tetris-like game (7 different pieces, each using 4 blocks).
 2) This set adds three more pieces.
 3) The set #3 uses the pieces from sets 1 and 2 plus a few more, with a total of 15 different pieces.

The set #3 may contain some pieces difficult to play with, but there are also some pieces very helpful, not present in the other sets. I always play using the set #3. One of the pieces in set #3 (the big brown piece) has some special capabilities. **THIS IS NOT A BUG!!!** What capabilities? To make it more interesting, I let you figure it out by yourself.

If you decide not to play, the ESC key will bring you back to the main menu. The game itself and the rules are explained in **Chapter** 4. BASIC RULES OF THE GAME and all over this file.

5.2   *HIGH SCORES*

All entries in the table coming with this program have been reset to **10,000**. Although this data file only comes with only 10 entries, the program can store up to **99**. I've always hated games that only have a few entries in the High Scores table

(sometimes just one), basically because I always finish filling up all the entries, and my friends become disappointed and give up playing against me (just kidding).

To scroll the table entries up or down, you can use the arrow keys UP/DOWN (one line at a time) or PgUp/PgDn (one page at a time). You can also click the left mouse button in the gray arrows to scroll the table up and down.

If you click on an entry in the table, a window will pop up with additional information. This information will remain in the screen until you move the mouse out of the entry name. Non-mouse users cannot access this window.

ESC will bring you back to the Main Menu, as well as clicking the right mouse button anywhere in the screen.

5.3   *OPTIONS*

This (and the LOAD ZONE) menu has the most significant changes from Beta releases of Super Retriss Pro and this final release.

The window in the right shows the current setup, so you can view the changes as you modify the different options. The tiny buttons at the bottom of this screen show the currently selected keys. If you see several dots after a key description (like "S...") it means that it is using the default keys, so more than one key can be used for that purpose (for sound: S and ALT-S; for pause: P and ALT-P; for rotating a piece: SPACE, ENTER and UP ARROW).

To change an option, move the mice to the option you want and click the left button to select. In any case, the ESC key or clicking the right mouse button anywhere will bring you back to the main menu, keeping the latest options you entered. There is **no way** to abort a whole OPTIONS session. If you want the option setup as it was in the beginning, you have to change the options back manually.

For non-mouse users, use the arrow keys UP/DOWN to move from one option to another, and press the SPACE BAR or ENTER to select.

5.3.1   **Game Speed**

The colors of the window are terrible, but, again, as far as they do the job...   This is for different skills, nothing to do with fixing the speed for your computer. Note that the EASY mode does get very difficult when in high levels. I would try the HARD mode only after many hours of practice in the EASY mode.

5.3.2   **Redefine Keys**

This routine was coded long time ago (wonder why it looks so ugly?). Despite its appearance, it does the job, so allow me not to write a *nicer* one.

In order to make life much easier, after selecting the keys you want to use, you will be asked whether you want to save that configuration as permanent, so you don't need to redefine the keys every time you run the game. However, notice that after you save them, you will not be able to play with the default keys anymore. You may say "Well, I just need to redefine them again as they were before". But notice that the

default set uses multiple keys for the same function (i.e.: SPACE BAR, ENTER and UP ARROW to rotate a piece), while redefining the keys allows only one key for each function.

The function keys cannot be selected, and the program will not do anything if you try to select them. Keys such PrtScr, Shift, Alt... will also not be accepted. Just use your common sense when selecting the keys...

You can press ESC anytime to abort the key selection and go back to the main menu.

5.3.3 **Music**

Enables/disables music in menus and while playing.

5.3.4 **Sound F/X**

Enables/disables sound fx while playing.

5.3.5 **First Level**

Select initial speed level. Levels available are from 0 to 18. Default is 0.

5.3.6 **First Zone**

Select first zone to play. Valid zone numbers will be 1 to the total number of zones available in the current set.

5.3.7 **Bombs**

Enables/disables bombs while playing.

5.3.8 **Help**

Shows a **Table of Scores** screen. This one was made in a hurry. If you are reading these DOCs, then you don't need to take a look at that screen :-)

5.3.9 **Quit**

Brings you back to the main menu, saving the changes you entered.

5.4   *ZONE DESIGNER*

5.4.1 **Entering the Designer**

If you don't have a mouse or a trackball (and the corresponding driver is installed), you will not be able to use the designer. If you're a "lucky" one, when you select this option, before entering the designer screen, the program will ask you :

<div align="center">

DO YOU WANT TO MODIFY THE CURRENT SET OR

START WITH A NEW ONE (C/N) ?

</div>

If you enter **C**, you'll be able to edit and change the current set. However a new name will be asked for it before you save it. So, no matter what you do, you will never lose the current set, unless you save it with the same name (overwriting the old file).

If you type **N**, a new, clean, empty set will be ready for you to create whatever you like. It will have only one (empty) zone for you to start working. Later I shall explain how to add more zones.

You can also use the mouse and click on the **C** or **N** using the left button. The right button will quit, going back to the main menu. To go back to the main menu, you can also press ESC.

5.4.2   **How to design**

5.4.2.1   *Identifying the areas*

For a clear explanation and to avoid repeating screen locations, we'll assign intuitive names to each of the different areas on the screen :

* BLOCK AREA: Located on the left side of the screen, you will see some small squares with all the available block colors.

* REFERENCE AREA: On the top of the middle of the screen, you'll see three windows showing a reduced drawing of the zone being edited, and the two adjacent zones (previous and next).

* INFORMATION AREA: Under the reference area you'll see a window showing the number of the area being edited, and a big block used to indicate the current color being used by the editor.

* EDITING AREA: Under the information area, there is a big gray grid.

* MENU AREA: Located on the right side of the screen, there is a menu with several options.

* SELECTION AREA: Under the menu area there are two buttons with a left and right arrows, and an EXIT button.

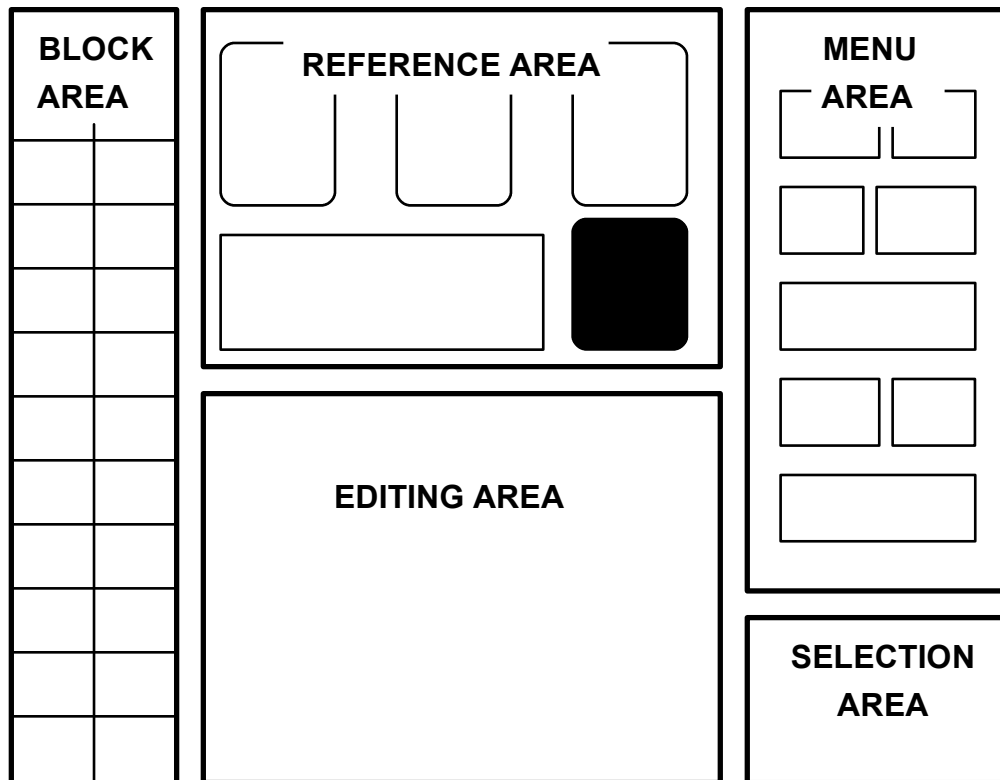| BLOCK AREA	REFERENCE AREA	MENU AREA
	EDITING AREA	
		SELECTION AREA

FIGURE 5.1

5.4.2.2 *Block Area*

Use it to select the color you want to use. Just point & click on the square with the block color desired. The big block in the information area will change to that color. Then, anything you draw on the editing area will be of that color.

5.4.2.3 *Reference & Selection Areas*

To move from one zone to another you can use the arrow keys LEFT & RIGHT, or point & click on the left/right arrow key buttons in the selection area. The editing area will show the new zone to be edited, and the reference area will also be updated.

IMPORTANT: When you move to a different zone, you will lose the changes in the last   zone, UNLESS you COPY it to the file (the COPY button can be found in   the menu area).

5.4.2.4 *Editing Area*

The usage of the mouse for drawing a new zone (or make changes) on the grid is very intuitive. All gray small squares indicate the available locations for single blocks.

The left and right buttons of the mouse have different functions :

Left Mouse Button : When you click this button pointing inside one of the gray squares in the grid, a block in that location will be placed with the current block color. If there was already a block OF THE SAME COLOR, instead of redraw it, it will delete it. You just need to click again to put the block back.

Right Mouse Button : This button is used to delete blocks. Whenever you want to delete some particular blocks, use this button. If you want to start over, select the option 5 (CLEAR) from the menu.

5.4.2.5   *Menu Area*

There are ten working options available from the menu. Select anyone by pointing and clicking on it, very much like in Windows.

1.- COPY: It updates the changes to memory.   The zone being edited will not be saved in memory until you select this option. For example, if you have been working on the zone 1, and now you want to save it and start with the number 2, you must select *COPY* in order to save this zone before you go to the zone 2. On the other hand, if you try to modify a particular zone, but you don't like what you did, you can retrieve the original by leaving that zone and going back to it.

Notice that when you draw on the editing area, the reference area does not show the modifications. The reference area shows the zones *AS IN MEMORY*. Remember, the zone will not be saved until you press *COPY* and see it updated in the reference area.

2.- DEL: It eliminates the current zone from the set. No undo option is available. However, it will ask you if you really want to delete it. Just press **Y** or **N**, (or use the mouse). You can't use delete if there is only one zone in the set. In other words, you cannot have a set with 0 (zero) zones.

3.- GRID: It toggles the gray grid on/off.

4.- ADD: It will insert an empty zone right **before** the current zone. If you *ADD* while in the last zone, the new zone will be added as the **last** zone. So far, a maximum of 99 (ninety nine) zones are allowed. If you already have 99 zones, this option will do nothing.

5.- CLEAR: It will delete all blocks currently in the editing area, clearing the current zone. Again, updates will be reflected in memory only after you select *COPY*.

6.- FLIP: It flips (mirrors) the current zone design. The first time you click on this option, a vertical flip will take effect. The second time it will do a horizontal flip, then another vertical one and so on...

7.- ROTATE: I don't know if this option is actually useful. It will rotate (clockwise) the current design. Since the editing area is not a perfect square (it's 10x15), only a portion of the area will be rotated (corner points are: 3,1 to 12,10, a 10x10 area). This fact is probably what makes this option rather useless but in any case and for whatever is worth, here it is.

8.- COLORIZE: It will apply random colors to the blocks in the current design.

9.- MOVE: Moves the current zone to a new location. This new location must be a valid one (a number between 1 and the total number of zones). The zone that was in

the new location will **not** be deleted but rather displaced to the next available zone, pretty much like if you were adding a new zone.

10.- LOAD To select a different zone set (ZNE file). Same as the *LOAD ZONE* option in the main menu. Refer to **Chapter** 5.5 LOAD ZONES for more information. Remember than when you load a new set, the current one will be lost, unless you previously saved it.

11.- SAVE: Save the current zone set in the disk. Read next section.

5.4.2.6 *Saving Zones to Disk*

If you want to save the zones to disk or simply use them, select SAVE or press ESC while in the design screen (or click in the EXIT button).

The program will ask you if you want to save the set on the disk.

- **If you answer N**, you are still able to play with the new zones, and, if you like them, you can go back to the designer, add more or save them. If you don't save a custom set and you load/create a new one, or exit the game, the new set will be lost forever!
- **If you answer Y**, it will ask you for a file name. DO NOT INCLUDE EXTENSION, nor invalid characters for DOS filenames such * : ? and spaces between words... If the name is not valid or DOS reports any error, your data file will not be saved, probably the program will exit to DOS with an error, and you will likely end up rebooting your machine. So make sure you give valid DOS names and have some free space in your disk. The best thing to do is to use letters and numbers only.

  For this game, it would not make sense to have a zone containing no blocks at all. Every single zone needs to have at least **one** block on it (so it can find a place for the flickering block). If you try to ESC the **Zone Designer** when there is at least **one** empty zone, the program will inform you of that fact, and it will bring you back to the editor with the first empty zone found as the current zone to edit (so you know which zone is empty).

  If you create a set of zones that you didn't save, but after playing it, you decide you want to save it, you have to select ZONE DESIGNER again, then select **C**ontinue editing current set, click with the mouse on the COPY option (this is important), then click in SAVE. If you don't click on COPY at least once, the program will assume that you didn't make any changes and it will not ask you whether you want to save it or not.

5.5 *LOAD ZONES*

This option is accessible from the main menu and also while in the zone designer, and it allows you to load different sets of zones from the disk that you previously created or obtained from other sources.

There are some restrictions :

- You can only load **one** set of zones (ZNE file) at a time. This means that if you create a file by using the ZONE DESIGNER, and you create four zones, when you exit the zone designer and go to play the game, you will play only those four zones, until you exit the game and run it again, or until you load a different set. Every time you run the program, the default set will be loaded. This set does not exist as a ZNE file, and you cannot select a different *default* set, although you can edit it and save it under any name. New zones you create with the Zone Designer will be saved using the file extension ZNE. If you, later (from DOS) rename these extensions to something different, the program will not be able to recognize them, so please, never get rid of the ZNE extension.

- In order to load a new file of zones, such file **must** be in the same directory as the game, so Super Retriss Pro can find it. Another limitation is that the program will display only the first **66** files found (with extension *.ZNE). This doesn't mean that you are limited to 66 zone files (that is you can create a subdirectory and move the old zone files to it), but you are to do the job. However, I don't quite see anyone creating more than 66 ZNE files anyway. I mean, is the game *that* much worth?

You can only see seven filenames at a time. Click on the UP/DOWN arrow buttons to scroll the list up and down. You can also use the UP/DOWN arrow keys to scroll the list one file at a time, and the PgUp/PgDn keys to scroll one page at a time.

To select a file, point & click with the left mouse button on the file name. Its color will change, and on the right of the screen you will see a preview of the first twenty zones included in that file. If you want to select a different one, just point & click on the new name.

To load the selected zone, point & click on the *LOAD* button. Double-clicking in the file name will **not** work. If you click on the *LOAD* button before selecting any file, you will leave the menu with the current set of zones unchanged. To exit without loading any zone set, click in the *EXIT* button. As usual, you can also press the ESC key or click the right mouse button anywhere in the screen.

5.6 *EXIT*

The easiest part of the game. It will quit **Super Retriss Pro** and exit to **DOS**. You can exit by entering '6', 'Q', pressing ESC or by clicking on the *EXIT* title.

6. SOUND BASTER SUPPORT

With **Super Retriss 3.0**, Sound Blaster support was added to the game. In **Super Retriss Pro**, sound is one of the major features of the game, but only if you have a Sound Blaster or 100% compatible sound card.

6.1 *Installing the drivers and/or setting up the environment variable*

Releases of the Sound Blaster (v1.5 and up) have included an option to set up an environment variable to locate the **CT-VOICE.DRV** file (the only sound driver required by Super Retriss Pro) so that it would not have to be copied all over one's hard drive in all the directories where different programs required it. To set up the environment variable, include in your AUTOEXEC.BAT a line that would look something like this:

<p align="center">SET SOUND=C:\SB</p>

Where "C:\SB" is the directory where you have the Sound Blaster software installed (change it according to your setup). Using the environment variable, the need for extra copies is not necessary. If you are having trouble setting up the environment variable (or for some reason, it doesn't seem to work), just copy the driver (CT-VOICE.DRV) to the directory where Super Retriss Pro was installed.

If you are still having problems to have the Sound Blaster work, make sure you don't have SBFMDRV.COM loaded to use your particular Sound Blaster driver.

6.2 *What can I hear if I have a Sound Blaster?*

To configure Super Retriss Pro to use the SoundBlaster capabilities, you must run **SETUP.EXE** first. Read **Chapter** 3.2 Configurationfor more details.

There are three different sound techniques used in the game:

1. Plain digitized sound effects.
2. Module songs, using digitized samples of real instruments.
3. FM songs (used in most games and similar to midi songs but with low-quality, pre-"recorded" samples).

- The sound effects can be heard while playing. They are the explosions and similar sounds you hear from time to time. The driver **CT-VOICE.DRV** is required because of these sound effects.
- The module songs can be heard in the MAIN MENU, the HALL OF FAME, the SELECT PIECE SET menu and when you enter a New Record. The four themes, in this order, are:

- ◆ **"Hash Rock"**   Composed and written by me.
- ◆ **"Barco a Venus"** Song composed by MECANO. Module written by me.
- ◆ **"Spanish Beat"**   Composed and written by me.
- ◆ **"Mucho Bass"**   Composed and written by me.

These are the routines that require you to specify the address port and IRQ number of your sound card (given when you run **SETUP**).

- The FM songs are those you hear while playing. There are more than 70 different songs. I have **not** composed nor written any of these songs. They all were obtained from local bulletin boards and anonymous Internet FTP sites. They were composed by unknown authors and released as freeware. Since **Super Retriss Pro** is also freeware, my conscience is clear I am not using somebody else's work for my own benefit. The songs were obtained in ROL (Adlib) format, and converted to a customized format that Super Retriss Pro can understand.

Thanks to Joel Lucsy for the help with the VOC routines, as well as Mark J. Cox for the MODOBJ code. Without them, Super Retriss Pro might still be limited to the poor PC speaker sound capabilities. Here I give credits to these two programmers for their very helpful routines. Also, the code used to play the module songs is copyright of Mark J. Cox.

6.3   *What about other sound cards?*

To those users who have a sound card not 100% compatible with **Sound Blaster**, all I can say is that adding Sound Blaster support to the game was a major overload of work (human and CPU wise). In order to support other cards, this load would be duplicated (if not CPU wise, at least for me). Besides, all I have is a Sound Blaster Pro. If I had another card, I might as well, just support that card. And if I had five cards I might even try to support them all. In any case, the bottom line is:

I support the cards that I know about and the cards I can test. If you want me to support your card, how about sending me one? :-)

In any case, sorry you have to miss all the marvelous songs and sounds, but such is life... I don't know what would be the case by the time you read this document, but at this time, Sound Blaster (indeed an old technology) is the standard (I hate that word) in the PC sound market. I can't help it.

6.4   *Why my sound card, 100% SB compatible, doesn't work?*

I don't know why. The easy answer would be "Well, then it is not 100% compatible", but then, "Right! So how come it works with other games and applications? Huh?"...

The problem may have to do with several things. As pointed out in 5.2, Super Retriss Pro uses three different sound techniques. Either one may be causing the problem. You can disable any of these by using some command line parameters, as described below in **Chapter** 7.2 Sound selection switches.

7. **COMMAND LINE PARAMETERS**

7.1 *General purpose switches*

The executable **SRP.EXE** accepts a number of parameters that will do certain things. These are:

/n   Gets rid of the nag screen at the beginning. You can, indeed, create a batch file that would call SRP.EXE with the **/n** switch. The nag text is there so I can make sure everyone reads it at least once, and nobody is cheated without their knowledge. It is NOT meant to annoy the users (that is why this switch is included).

I think that everyone (even pirates!) are against people who SELL freeware, so please, don't be a jerk and don't try to crack this little thing (it sure is not a big deal to do so, anyway), or re-zip the program with a batch file with the **/n** switch. Just add the switch to your *installed* copy and have fun!

/doc   Extracts a copy of the DOC and README files. This is to ensure that the documentation will always accompany the program, even if someone (accidentally) deletes the DOC files. Of course, you have to read this to know, but in any case, the docs will be there. Besides, you DO know now :-)

/q1   Fixes some problems found with **QEMM 7.04**, when Sound Blaster sound is selected. If you are using this version of QEMM and are having problems (screwed music, no control, etc.), this switch may fix it. If that is not the case, you shouldn't use this switch.

/???   This switch does something. The bad thing is that I forgot what the switch name was (hence the question marks) and what was it for... Ahh...

7.2 *Sound selection switches*

The following switches were added to completely disable any of the three different sound techniques used in the game (read **Chapter** 6.2 What can I hear if I have a Sound Blaster?). If your sound card is not either a Sound Blaster or SB/Pro but just a "compatible" card and you are having problems to get the sound (or the game) to work, you may try using these switches:

/fm0   Disables FM music (the music you hear while playing)

/md0   Disables MODule music (music in menus)

/dg0   Disables sound effects (VOCs)

For instance, your card may not understand very well the FM routines, so by using **/fm0**, you will still be able to listen the sound effects and MOD songs.

SRP.EXE is flexible in the way you use the switches. You can use as many switches as you desire, in any order. You can use '**-**' instead of '/', or if you prefer, do not use any of them, and call the switches by their names only. These are valid ways to call SRP.EXE:

SRP -n   **SRP md0 dg0**
SRP /n -fm0 q1   **SRP n /q1**

8. **LAST COMMENTS**

8.1 *Contacting the author*

In the SHARDIST.DOC file I give two addresses where I may be reached at.

These are, again:

Rogelio Bernal	Rogelio Bernal Andreo
75 St. Alphonsus St. #1903	Alfonso X, Edf. Wellington, 2ºA
Boston MA 02120, USA	Murcia 30.008, SPAIN

Anything sent to the address in Boston will get to me, with a delay of three-five days once the letter arrives. However, this address will be history after May of 1995, as I will be leaving the area, and don't know where will I end up (Alaska, Taiwan, U.K., Disneyland...). Anything sent to the address in Spain will definitely get to me, but it may take several weeks (after arriving) before I can read it.

I can also be contacted in the Internet at **bernal@fas.harvard.edu** and **bernal@wit.edu**. My Harvard account may be canceled anytime from today, although it could last for a year more or so. The account at WIT will last until the end of 1995 approximately. My suggestion is to use the Harvard address first, and if your message is bounced back to you, try the address at WIT. Once these two "academic" accounts are expired, I will be obtaining a new one, but I sure cannot specify what would it be or where. If you are really interested, send me snail-mail and I will gladly let you know of my new e-mail address.

Any comments regarding program features, documentation, presentation, are always appreciated.

8.2 *Next Releases of Super Retriss Pro*

Should you happen to run across one of those little "bugs" (even a minor one), or are you having problems using this program, please be sure to notify me so that it can be fixed in the next revision of **Super Retriss Pro**.

There will be **NO new version!!!** Eventually, revisions (r1, r2...) and updates (a, b, c...) may appear, but no SRP 1.1, 2.0 or else. This is it. No new features, just some bug fixes (mostly oriented toward sound capabilities), if reported. As anyone else, I have to move on some other, more serious things.

APPENDIX A: ERROR MESSAGES AND TROUBLE-   SHOOTING

GLOBAL ERRORS

Module	Meaning	Solution
A01, B01, B02, D01, D03, D05, D05, E**, F**, H02, H03	**SRP-DATA.000** is corrupt.	Delete the corrupted SRP-DATA.000, and copy a good one from the SRP10.ZIP file.
A02	**SRP-DATA.101** (High Scores file) is missing.	Copy SRP-DATA.101 from the SRP10.ZIP file.
A03	**SRP-DATA.101** (High Scores file) is corrupt.	Replace the corrupted SRP-DATA.101 with a good one from the SRP10.ZIP file.
A04, D02, D04, D06, H01	Problems writing to drive.	The drive is probably full.Free up some space.
C01, H02	**ZNE** file couldn't be opened.	Reselect the same ZNE file. If problem remains,
D07	**SRP-DATA.102** (keys config) is missing	Copy SRP-DATA.102 from the SRP10.ZIP file.
D08	**SRP-DATA.102** (keys config) is corrupt.	Replace the corrupted SRP-DATA.102 with a good one from the SRP10.ZIP file.
G01	**SRP-DATA.000** couldn't be opened.	Make sure the file SRP-DATA.000 exists. If not, get it from the SRP10.ZIP file.
M**	Global memory allocation error	Reset the computer and run the game again.
MDTM	Module memory allocation error	Reset the computer and run the game again.

OTHER ERRORS

- ***ERROR loading SOUND driver***
  Something went wrong trying to find the **CT-VOICE.DRV** file. Check that either the **SOUND** environment variable is set correctly, or that the file CT-VOICE.DRV is in the same directory as **Super Retriss Pro**. If problem persists, disable digitized effects with the **/dg0** switch.

- ***ERROR installing SOUND driver***
  The file **CT-VOICE.DRV** was found, but for some reason, **Super Retriss Pro** cannot understand it. Make sure the CT-VOICE.DRV file you are using is the correct one for your sound card.

- ***ERROR loading SRP-DATA.20* file***
  A file of the form **SRP-DATA.20*** is missing. The file **SRP10.ZIP** includes all required files for the game.

- ***ERROR loading music module file***
  Module SRP-DATA.00*
  Something went wrong while loading a **SRP-DATA.00*** file. Best bet would be to reset the computer and try again. If the problem remains, try a different configuration.

APPENDIX B: THE README.NOW FILE

SETUP FIRST!!

Type **SETUP** from the **MS-DOS** prompt to select either **PC Speaker** or **Sound Blaster** sound. If you select Sound Blaster, copy **ST-VOICE.DRV** (that should come with your sound card's software) to the Super Retriss Pro directory ,or set the **SOUND** environment variable as your Sound Blaster manual explains. If you use the environment variable, make sure it is configured correctly, or **Super Retriss Pro** will likely hang and force you to reboot your computer.

PART 1: WHAT YOU MUST KNOW

MEMORY / MEMORY MANAGERS / OPERATING SYSTEMS

Super Retriss Pro needs **a lot** of base memory. If you are using a Sound Blaster/Pro card or compatible, and have less than 610k free (624,640 bytes), the program will refuse to run (with PC speaker sound, a minimum of 400k is recommended). In the first case, your best bet is to load DOS high using HIMEM.SYS or whatever memory manager you want. I have tested the program under **QEMM 7.5**, **386MAX**, **EMM386** and **HIMEM.SYS** alone with no problems, although this does not guarantee it will run under *any* different configurations of these. I have detected problems with **QEMM 7.04** in a few systems when Sound Blaster sound is being used. If you are using this version of QEMM, use Sound Blaster sound and are experiencing problems, run the program with the **/q1** switch (**SRP.EXE /q1**). Since Super Retriss Pro does not mess up with extended or expanded memory, this seems more to be a problem with QEMM 7.04 rather than with Super Retriss Pro. Chances are that, as far as there is enough free base memory, everything should run fine.

While memory managers such those mentioned in the previous paragraph help you free a lot of base memory, and will **not** affect the performance of the game, they also slow down the system a bit, and things like the scrolling text in the main menu would run slower than if you just use HIMEM.SYS.

Unfortunately, when using Sound Blaster sound, Super Retriss Pro is way too hungry for base memory, and in most cases, users are likely *forced* to use a memory manager. The most consistent AUTOEXEC.BAT/CONFIG.SYS configurations I ran into were:

- Always get rid of all drivers for CD-ROM, scanners, and other devices not used by the game.

- Load HIMEM.SYS, DOS in high memory, and the MOUSE driver (also in high memory). Couldn't find room for SMARTDRV.

- To the previous configuration, add EMM386 (set to NOEMS) and SMARTDRV.

- QEMM 7.5 replacing EMM386.

If you cannot figure a valid configuration, try using the sound selection switches, and probably you will find a combination that will work (read **Chapter** 7.2 Sound selection switches). In the worst case, I hope you can live with the shameful sound I added for the PC Speaker.

If the program suddenly exits with a "Not enough memory" message or another (very unlikely but not impossible), reboot the machine and make sure again there is enough memory (as specified above). If there WAS enough memory available, do not worry too much. Just make sure you ALWAYS reboot the computer after getting any of these messages, or when the program suddenly exits or go nuts in the middle of it. All these events are, again, UNLIKELY, but I've seen it happens a few times.

 If you are using the SoundBlaster setup, do not attempt to run the program under any multitasking environment, such as Desqview or Windows. With only PC speaker sound selected, the program has been tested on the following multitasking systems:

SYSTEM	HARDWARE	RESULTS
Desqview	486/50Mhz	Fine
Desqview/X	486/50Mhz	Slow but Ok
Windows 3.1	486/33Mhz	Fine. Slow but faster than expected
OS/2	486/50Mhz	Fine
SoftWindows	PPC-6100	Very slow, but fine (Amazing!)

If you have **DOS 5.0** or higher available, don't do nasty things, and run the game from there. Nothing can compare to running the game in DOS native mode (5.0 or higher).

DISK USAGE AND DISK CACHE

Super Retriss Pro uses much more data than previous versions. Most of this data is stored in the file **SRP-DATA.000** and it takes up about one megabyte and a half. Since the program has to manage all this data within the 610k limit, different portions are loaded from the disk at runtime whenever they're needed. The sound effects and MOD songs are also loaded/unloaded as required by the program. While it's not a big deal of time, the use of a disk cache program will speed up actions such as going from one menu to another, etc... The speed of the game is unaffected in any case.

PART 2: WHAT YOU MAY WANT TO KNOW

MOUSE / NO MOUSE

The only thing non-mouse users will be missing is the **Zone Designer**. Anything else is fully working, and in most cases, the mouse is replaced by either the arrow keys or an option number.

From the **Main Menu**, you can use the numbers (1,2,3,4,5,6) to select the options (although you don't see any numbers in the screen). Same thing goes for the **Select Piece Set** menu (1,2 and 3, in this case). In the **Options** and **Load Zone** menus, move with the up/down arrow keys. As mentioned above, the **Zone Designer** is the only thing that doesn't work without a mice.

SOUND BLASTER / PC SPEAKER

If you don't have a **Sound Blaster** or 100% compatible sound card, you will be missing quite a lot. Not only because you won't be able to listen to the songs and digitized sounds effects, but also because my PC speaker hasn't been working since 1992, and therefore I stopped supporting this *device* in my programs since then. In other words, the sounds for the PC speaker are very limited, poor, and were *added* years ago, when the game was in its prehistoric phase. New features such bombs and the like are simply *soundless* if you don't have a **Sound Blaster** card.

If you don't want to spend hundreds of dollars in a good sound card, you can always find a used **Sound Blaster Pro** for less than $50 bucks (not to mention an old Sound Blaster). So go and get a sound card! They're really cheap and will make your computer happier! Trust me.

On the other hand, the programs seems to be incredibly stable in a quite reasonable number of systems (see table 30-40 lines above) when the **PC Speaker** is selected. Is this the same as saying that the Sound Blaster routines are the cause of most problems, whenever they occur? Well... yes, it is. Particularly, the MOD routines have been found to be, in one way or another, the only reason of crashing the program. However I cannot complain, as these are not *my* routines, but rather Mark J.Cox's, and I do not have the time to research and write my own set (I am the one to blame in any case). Cox's routines nowadays are rather old, but they were great when released, several years ago. I have to thank him for releasing the library for free, so now everyone can listen, and hopefully enjoy these boosting tones in **Super Retriss Pro**.

The sound effects are actually plain VOC files, and that is why the **ST-VOICE.DRV** driver is required. Sorry folks. Blame me for being lazy again, but since everyone who owns a **Sound Blaster** has this file, and it makes my life a whole lot easier to use the driver rather than writing my own routines, I just opted for the most time-saving option. Besides, I am not trying to show off :-) As far as you enjoy the game, I am happy.

And last, but not least (or was it the other way?) FM music is played, one song for each zone. All the songs, with no exception, were obtained from local Bulletin Boards (thanks to Tan for getting some for me), and the Internet via anonymous FTP, all in ROL (Adlib/FM) format. They all are considered freeware. I have no

information whatsoever of who are the original writers of the songs, and doubt anybody would. Somehow, these songs play an important role in the game: they create a certain atmosphere, keeping the player entertained and adding some rhythm and variation to the game. Since I have not written any of these songs (not to mention composing, as most of them are quite popular), I do not deserve any credits for them. If I had decided to release this game as Shareware, I would feel rather uncomfortable by releasing the game with all those songs, since they are not mine. Since that is not the case, and I am making no profit whatsoever from this game, I hope I can be forgiven.

GAME SPEED

Previous versions of **Super Retriss** ran at different speeds in different computers, and in **Super Retriss 3.0** I included an option to set up the speed of the game, based on estimations and other obscure procedures.

Super Retriss Pro now uses the internal timer to set up the pace while playing. It should have been like this since the beginning, but well... It's ok now!

There are still a few things going on with the speed, although they don't concern the game speed, but rather the main menu, depending on whether SoundBlaster sound was selected.

Since the sound routines for the MOD songs (themes for the MAIN MENU, SELECT PIECE SET menu, HIGH SCORES screens...) take up around 30% of the CPU time, I let the other code run as fast as possible, without checking on the timer. This results in a faster program, when executed in faster machines, and affects the text scroller and the rotating balls. You will get optimum performance with a **486/33Mhz** or faster machine. Less than a **386/25Mhz** could result in a rather annoying slowness. As mentioned before, the use of a memory manager such QEMM, 386MAX and so on, will also affect the speed of these things IN THE MENUS ONLY.

With a **PC Speaker** configuration (a relief of around 30% of CPU time), the speed of these events is timed, but there could be a still noticeable difference in performance from a **286/10Mhz** to a **386/25Mhz** or higher. All these speed dilemmas don't really matter much, as the game itself always runs at the same *timed* speed, whether in a **Pentium** or a **286**. I am only referring to the scrolling text and rotating balls of the menus. I thought this info might be of some interest for you. If you don't know or do not care, just like I said, it doesn't matter, as the game itself is unaffected.

APPENDIX **C**: THE SHARDIST.DOC FILE

> **This section is for PD/Shareware distributors ONLY**

SHAREWARE DISTRIBUTORS

Anyone wishing to charge people a fee for giving them a copy of Super Retriss Pro must have the written authorization of the author, without which, the distributor is guilty of copyright violation. To receive such authorization, send a letter requesting it (format described below), including name of the organization, your name and address, along with a copy of your software library's order form to:

Rogelio Bernal
75 St.Alphonsus St. #1903
Boston, MA 02120
USA

After May, 1995, the address will be:

Rogelio Bernal Andreo
Av. Alfonso X, Edf. Wellington, 2ºA
Murcia 30008, SPAIN

Allow 1-3 weeks for response from the Boston address, and 1-2 months from Spain. I will answer as soon as possible, but in any case, the letter still has to travel once it gets to any of those addresses, before I can read it.

Along with the requirements specified above, adjunct two copies of the document in next page.

TERMS OF DISTRIBUTION OF SUPER RETRISS PRO

1) The fee charged may not exceed a reasonable amount, to cover costs for postage, diskette and other small charges. A net profit of 25% or more from sales of this software is NOT considered reasonable.

2) The distributor's catalog or listing must CLEARLY state that this program is FREE and the user is only paying for the service provided of sending it to them, and NOT for the software itself.

3) The author is not responsible of answering to problems or complaints. This software is free, and the author do not compromise to provide technical support of any kind for resolution. This does not mean that the author will NOT provide such support, but that support is not granted.

4) The distributor is free to make as many copies of the software as he or she wants, for as long as they estimate the software is worth having, except as explained in clause 5 of this contract.

5) The author reserves the rights to ask the distributor to stop including the game in the distributor's library and catalog, if the author considers any of the clauses in this contract is not being respected by the distributor.

6) The distributor understands that the author owns the copyright of the software and that all rights are reserved.

In return for the right to charge a fee for the distribution of the program Super Retriss Pro, I agree to comply with all the terms of distribution and I am paying a fee of $40 US, as the author requests.

_____   _____
Your Signature/Date   Author signature

Sign both copies and include $40 to cover the cost of processing the application and as a small symbolic amount, enough to *invite* me a pizza and not much more. You will be mailed back one of the copies of the contract, as confirmation that the application has been processed and the agreement made.

If you find this procedure rather annoying, I apologize but only those applications that adhere to the format specified here will be considered legal. If you don't agree with these terms, DO NOT include Super Retriss Pro in your catalog.

WHY DO SHAREWARE DISTRIBUTORS HAVE TO PAY, IF THIS IS FREEWARE?

For me, the true freeware is meant to the users, who do not have to pay for the software. I release thousands of hours of my work for free TO THE USERS, so they can enjoy this game, without having to pay a penny for it.

I understand that Shareware distributors do a great job spreading Shareware, and believe that Shareware authors should not charge (nor pay) to these fair companies (I exclude those companies who try to sell *cheap* software).

Both (authors and distributors) benefit from what the other does, and everyone is happy. However, freeware is free. Some distributors can (and in fact, do) price the freeware and earn good money from it. I think it is more than fair to ask Shareware distributors a small ridiculous (and rather symbolic) fee, if they are going to make something out of those hundreds of hours I spent developing the game.

If you, Shareware distributor, care about your customers, you should consider including this fine program in your catalog, as your customers will also benefit from the joy of knowing there is still good quality FREE software out there, and that it is available to them.

If, on the other hand, you decide not to include it because you refuse to pay such a ridiculous fee, I really don't lose anything, but your customers will.

APPENDIX **D**: THE QUICKREF.DOC FILE

QUICK REFERENCE

Don't want to waste time reading endless docs? Here it is a quick reference for you, lazy people...

MAIN MENU

Move the mouse and select with left button. Or use the keys:

    1 - Start Game

    2 - High Scores

    3 - Options

    4 - Zone Designer

    5 - Load Zones

    6 - Exit

1.- START GAME (SELECT PIECE SET)

Move the mouse and select with left button, or use the keys 1,2 or 3. ESC brings you back to the main menu.

2.- HIGH SCORES

Click on the two gray boxes with arrows to scroll up or down the score table. You can also use the UP/DOWN and PgUP/PgDOWN keys. If you click (left button) on a record of the score table, you will see a window with the complete info about that particular record. To exit, press the right button or ESC.

3.- OPTIONS

Point & click (left button) on the desired option. Updates are reflected on the window to the right of the screen. For non-mouse users, use the UP/DOWN arrow keys and ENTER to select. Selecting QUIT, pressing ESC or clicking the right mouse button will bring you back to the main menu, SAVING the latest options selection.

3.1 - GAME SPEED

This is for different skills, nothing to do with fixing the speed for your computer. EASY is the default speed, and when you get to high levels, it is not *that* easy.

3.2 - REDEFINE KEYS

Function keys and Alt, Shift, Ctrl keys cannot be selected. ESC will abort the operation.

3.3 - MUSIC

Enables/disables music in menus and while playing.

3.4 - SOUND F/X

Enables/disables sound fx while playing.

3.5 - FIRST LEVEL

Select initial speed level (levels available are from 0 to 18).

3.6 - FIRST ZONE

Select first zone to play.

3.7 - BOMBS

Enables/disables bombs while playing.

3.8 - HELP

Shows a "Table of Scores" and Help screen.

4.- ZONE DESIGNER

GRID	Toggle grid on/off.
CLEAR	Clear current zone.
DEL	Delete zone from current zone set.
ROTATE	Rotate a portion of the design. It's kind of useless.
ADD	Insert new zone.
COPY	Update zone in memory. If you don't *copy* a zone, it will not be saved.
FLIP	Flip horizontally and vertically the zone.
COLORIZE	Change the colors of current zone randomly.
MOVE	Moves a zone from one location to another.
LOAD	Will bring you to the LOAD MENU, to load a zone set from disk.
SAVE	Will save current zone on disk.
← / →	Go to previous/next zone. Arrow keys LEFT/RIGHT do same thing.
EXIT	Go back to MAIN MENU. The ESC key does the same thing.

5.- LOAD ZONE

Select the zone you want to load (if any), and click in the LOAD button. To exit without loading any zone, you can either press the ESC key, click the right mouse button anywhere or click in the EXIT button. For non-mouse users, use the UP/DOWN arrow keys and ENTER to load, or ESC to quit.

6.- EXIT

Goes back to DOS. You can press either ESC, 6, Q or click in the EXIT area.

THE GAME

You should know... Now every time you eliminate one line, you get a bomb (unless you disable BOMBS in the OPTIONS menu), and every 20,000 points, a little spaceship appears that allows you to shoot at the blocks for 10 seconds. The keyboard handling for the spaceship is terrible, simply because I'm using **Int16h**. I wrote the whole spaceship routine in less than half hour. Don't blame me! :-)

Also, a few other things will give you extra bonuses and such.

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