

review: **Rescue 1.6**

by Draeger Martinez

Type:

Arcade / Strategy

Publisher: Tom Spreen, 1567 Brodick Cres., Victoria, BC, CANADA V8N 1N3

Shareware Fee: \$10 U.S. or Canadian

Requires: Mac Plus or better, System 7.x

Protection: None

A Trek by any other name.... Chances are good that, even though you can probably find Rescue 1.6 on your BBS or online service of choice, you may not feel any big rush to do so. "'Rescue'? Never heard of it. What's it about, firefighters?" has been a typical reaction, and that's too bad. Why? Because Rescue 1.6 is a really satisfying strategy and action game that's loads of fun. Oh yeah; the game is named after your efforts to rescue desperate colonists from certain death at the hands of the Romulan Empire. That's right...you command the Galaxy class starship USS Enterprise!

There are quite a number of Trek simulation games around for the Mac, ranging from network tag-team fights to trivia quizzes. But Rescue differs from these others by combining thought and strategy with hair-raising battles, as well as working within the Next Generation milieu.

[On Main Viewer, Mr. Data.](#) Using a fairly straightforward combination of menu commands and a few keyboard or mouse taps, you can direct all actions and functions of the Enterprise. Everything from the long-range scan that shows your entire sector, to raising and lowering shields, running on impulse or warp engines, or using phasers, photon torpedoes or the transporter decks.

Much like other galaxy games such as Spaceward Ho! or Pax Imperia, Rescue plays out on several game windows at once. The main window shows the familiar bulbous saucer section and twin warp nacelles of the Enterprise, along with whatever else the ship can interact with at that moment: enemy ships, outposts, Starbases, even wormholes in space. Another window, the Command Console, provides information about warp factor and

heading, shield and phaser strength and whether you're firing the photon torpedoes one at a time or in salvos. You also have the long-range scan window, a status report window showing your regular energy, phaser energy and systems damage status, as well as a text window for listing some of the goings on around the quadrant.

o Boldly Go. In the sector with you are Federation outposts, up to nine of them depending on which difficulty setting you choose. Your object is to go to each of these outposts, beam up their colonists and escort them to the safety of a Starbase. In itself, this is no big chore: have the ship computer find the location of the nearest outpost, travel there using your warp engines, then beam down an Away team to direct the evacuation.

Of course, the Romulans are out in droves trying to destroy the colonies before you can evacuate them. Remember that it's all on your shoulders; the Starbases are armed but stationary, and your lone ship is facing up to 40 heavily armed enemies by itself. While you're saving one colony, three others may be under attack, and you might lose some or all of them. While you're beaming colonists, your shields have to be down, and rescuing via transporter is more time-consuming than you might like. You'll always have an eye on the long range scan, trying to estimate if the Romulans will arrive at your current planet before you're done and in what numbers.

Romulan Warship Decloaking! Fire Photons, Full Spread! It goes almost without saying that good sounds are half the way to a good game. Any game sporting a Star Trek motif will feature nifty sounds for the warp engines and weapons. Rescue's trademark, however, is perfect for this game genre: as you float near a planet with your shields off, when a Romulan comes close to weapons range, this panicked-sounding young officer (perhaps meant to be Wesley Crusher?) yelps shrilly, "SHIELDS!" And a split second later, a couple (or often a whole bunch of) Romulans fly in with guns blazing. Hope you raised shields, Captain.

You have to click on the enemy ship's icons to lock in your weapons, then click the Command Console or tap the keyboard equivalents to fire. Photon torpedoes hit hard, but often the Romulan can evade the torpedo's vector before impact. Also, you only have ten torpedoes, until you get replenished at a Starbase. Phasers always hit (assuming you're locked on), but they hit less fiercely, and the further away the Romulan, the less damage

done. Of course, the Romulans aren't shy about their weapons either; the first few times you play, you'll be surprised at their speed. Each hit you take reduces your energy and shield strength; if you were caught with your shields down at first, raise them quickly or even a single Warbird will cripple your systems with great dispatch.

[ngineeeering Here, Sirrr. I Canna Give Ya No More Powerrrr.](#) When a system is damaged, you can't do that function for x number of "hours," each game hour being about 5-10 seconds in realtime. Losing even one system can be a real pain, like having to wait for transporters to come back on-line to finish an evacuation as swarms of Romulans draw near. Lose several in rapid succession, say warp drive and both weapons, and instantly you go from "probable winner of the battle at Epsilon 5" to "sitting duck." There are two ways to get your energy back and repair damaged systems. There's the fast way, by docking with a Starbase, though after a couple dockings or lots of enemy attacks on the Base, the Base can no longer tend to your needs. If they're up to the job, the Base can repair all damage instantly, bring you back up to 10 torpedoes, and give you more energy, a full replenishment

if you're lucky. And then there's the slow way, which consists of limping to some remote corner of the sector and waiting with your shields off. Waiting as report after report come on screen that another colony has been obliterated, maybe one of your away teams as well. Waiting and hoping there's not a huge Romulan SuperHawk nearby who can decloak and finish you off before you could react (heh heh heh).

Captain's Log. Final Entry. While this sounds like a lot to take in, Rescue 1.6 is a cinch to learn and has an online help directory that covers anything and everything. There's even a "What now?" command that lays out what options can most help the mission, factoring in whether you have colonists on board, what damage you've taken, and your energy status.

I'll leave some things for you to discover for yourself, like "Why'd we fly through a wormhole?" and "How'd a Romulan saboteur get onboard!" The bottom line: if plain vanilla shoot-em-ups are holding you captive, maybe the answer lies in a Rescue!

Pros

- Easy to learn yet challenging
- Real-time strategy
- Comprehensive online help
- Customizable regarding sound, window position, skill level
- Playable on practically every Mac, in color or b/w
- Rather addictive
- Great, appropriate sounds

Cons

- Needs mucho RAM for optimal performance
- Occasional sound bug (usually does not crash)