

HIGH FLYER

HFL 6440

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HIGH FLYER

INTRODUCTION

HIGH FLYER is an extended business management game for use with the Commodore 64 computer. It is designed to be both entertaining and educational to use, and should be suitable for people of any age who enjoy a mental challenge.

The player is cast as the owner of a commercial airline, starting business immediately after World War II. Given sufficient business acumen, he or she may survive through forty years of running the airline and end up as 'The HIGH FLYER'. Decisions such as which aircraft to buy or sell, what price per mile to charge, what proportion of passengers to cargo should be carried are under the player's control. Other factors may be under the player's indirect control, such as airline popularity. Further items, including the current exchange rates, may apparently be completely independent of the player.

Because this is a games environment, you are only given direct control over a limited number of factors. (For example you may only purchase one aircraft per quarter.) The challenge is to determine a means of success within the constraints of the game.

The best way to play this game is in a number of sessions using the 'Game Save' (see the Publish Fares display notes) system built into the program. This enables you to stop at the end of a year, saving the parameters on a separate disk to be restored when you wish to resume. HIGH FLYER can be completed in one sitting but this method of play is not recommended.

To obtain maximum enjoyment it is helpful to understand the parameters within which HIGH FLYER was designed.

1. To simulate the building and running of a small airline after World War II.
2. To include all aspects of the above without becoming submerged in detail.
3. To re-create the possible events governing this part of airline history without becoming totally predictable.
4. To provide a challenging game based on facts and to present it in a graphically pleasing format.

The colours have been chosen to enable the game to be played successfully on a monochrome display, but for maximum enjoyment a colour television or monitor is recommended. A 1541 disk unit is essential.

LOADING HIGH FLYER

Insert the program diskette in your 1541 and type:

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LOAD"HIGH FLYER",8,1
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and press the RETURN key.

Now type:

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RUN
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and again press RETURN.

You will see the screen colour change from the standard blue and the words "HIGH FLYER" will appear in large letters. The word "LOADING ..." also appears. Since HIGH FLYER is a fairly large program, it will take several minutes to load into your 64's memory.

BEGINNING TO PLAY HIGH FLYER

Work through the following short game. In the course of the example you will learn how to play HIGH FLYER and become familiar with the concepts of the game. You must be accurate when pressing keys as this activates a 'management decision'. The instructions implied in the pressing of that key will be acted upon immediately. As in all businesses, management must be decisive and there is no room for errors.

When the program has finished loading, it will ask you whether you are continuing a previous game. Since you are playing HIGH FLYER for the first time, press the **N** key (which means 'no'). After a few seconds the first game display appears—PURCHASE OF AIRCRAFT. You will notice that your bank account stands at £300, and that you own no aircraft. The first aircraft to be offered to you is a DC3, costing £250. Since you can afford this, and you obviously need at least one aircraft to play the game, it would seem a good move to buy it! Press **Y** (for 'yes') to do this.

The next screen (AIRLINE REPORT) shows your purchase, and your adjusted bank balance. Press **C** to move on to the next display, which is a partial map of the world. You will see various numbers dotted around the map, indicating the position (and value) of various airports. Your DC3 is sitting at Heathrow Airport, London.

At the bottom left of the screen is a small display showing information about this flight, which is Flight number 1. You will notice that the DC3 has a maximum of 11 moves and is carrying its maximum cargo of 1 unit, and no passengers. The game is designed to start you off carrying 100% cargo, which is the safest venture with which to begin.

At the top left of the screen is another small display, offering you four options: T = Takeoff, R = Refuel, A = Auto and F = Finish. These options are explained fully later, so for the time being press **A**. Both the top and bottom displays now change. The lower display is offering you a choice of seven different airports as your destination, whilst the upper instructs you to either select a destination by its code (1 to 7), look at the next seven destinations by pressing 8, or cancel by pressing 9. For the first attempt, we recommend you press **8** twice, then select Marseilles (by pressing **6**). Try not to accidentally select another airport, since if you run out of fuel you will make a loss on the flight!

By now you should have landed at Marseilles. Now press **F** to finish and a report on your flight appears in the lower window. You will have made £130 profit! Now press **C**, as the upper window directs.

The airline report for this turn (which is a 3 month period) is displayed next, showing a breakdown of your income and expenses, your profit, the average flying time per aircraft and your airline popularity. When you have digested this information (which you will need to remember to some extent), press **C** again.

You are now offered the opportunity of improving one of four different areas. For this first turn, press **2** to update servicing. The next screen shows you the cost of this action, and your current bank balance.

Other than advising you that borrowing money is a good idea in the early years, and that the Americans tend to be more generous than their British counterparts, we will now leave you to your own devices. Each display is explained in more detail on the following pages of this manual and it is recommended that you give at least some study to the effects of your actions. Failure to do this can result in a bankrupt airline!

PLAYER'S NOTES

The following are some general points to keep in mind as you play HIGH FLYER.

THE TIME SCALE

The game has been divided into years consisting of four 91 day periods. The shortest game is one period (or 91 days) and during this the player has to make many decisions.

THE REAL WORLD

On a number of occasions the player is faced with a Yes/No decision or the choice of selecting only one item from a number of options. There are no second chances. This limitation on the player's decision making is built into the game to simulate the real world where delays either in completing a deal or contacting colleagues can be disastrous, even if inevitable.

FLIGHT PLANNING

When you move an aircraft across the map you are planning the routes that aircraft will use during the current 91 day period. On pressing **F** you declare the flight plan final and this is then the route flown by that aircraft. Landing the aircraft denotes the end of flying for that day although you may refuel and fly on the following day. The program works out how many of the 91 days that route is flown by your aircraft and in addition all expenses incurred in flight. Wages and administration costs are calculated, however, for the full period.

If your aircraft runs out of fuel or fails to complete a flight for any reason during the planning stage it is taken out of use for the current period. This simulates mechanical failure, bad weather or just bad management. Your aircraft does not take the shortest route to an airport but only moves horizontally or vertically along the screen. This simulates adverse weather conditions or airport holding patterns. Any aircraft that disappear from your screen are only temporarily out of service even if they have run out of fuel—they will be available for the next period of play.

MANAGEMENT TIPS

In your quest for profit and success you need to adjust to changing market conditions. Buy the appropriate aircraft for the distance and usage you envisage. Take care at the beginning of the year when conditions are unpredictable and with astute use of the improvement options consolidate your position. Always be competitive with the pricing of your fares. In a business like this success goes to the decisive but adventurous.

SCREEN DISPLAYS

The following paragraphs outline each section within HIGH FLYER.

PURCHASE OF AIRCRAFT

You may only purchase one aircraft per turn, and you must have sufficient money in your bank account to cover the cost of the aircraft. Aircraft manufactured in the U.S.A. are priced in dollars, converted to sterling at the prevailing exchange rate. 'Range' indicates the maximum distance the aircraft can fly before landing, either to refuel or to finish the flight. 'Moves' shows the equivalent number of character positions on the map relevant to the aircraft's range. 'Cargo' indicates the maximum cargo carrying capacity. 'Pax' indicates the maximum passenger carrying capacity. 'Fuel' shows the amount of fuel (hence cost) per move.

AIRLINE REPORT

The airline report shows a number of different pieces of information relating to your airline, usually of a financial nature.

THE MAP

The map, drawn roughly to a scale of 150 square miles to one character square, is a partial map of the world, with airports indicated by single digit numbers. These numbers correspond to the quality of services offered at the various airports, and may be increased by the player investing money (from the Airline Improvements Menu) and/or by external factors generated by the game program. Whilst carrying 100% cargo, low value airports should be favoured, the reverse being true for 100% passenger flights.

The Control Window on the map at the top left corner shows the current control keys available to the player, whilst the Data Window (bottom left) shows the current state of the flight, or the airport names list. All operations and options are shown in the windows, and in all cases are either number keys or the first letter of the command as displayed.

All flights start at Heathrow Airport, London.

It is always necessary to land at an airport to finish a flight or to refuel. This is achieved by pressing **L** whilst flying manually, but is automatic when flying automatically! Automatic flights are not possible unless you know the name of the destination airport, however a manual flight to any airport will show you the name of that airport for future use.

AIRLINE IMPROVEMENTS MENU

You may choose to upgrade any one particular service from this menu, or none at all. Improving certain services will tend to improve either the airline popularity or the airport values. Factors such as the cargo to passenger ratio can be affected by your selection of improvements.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial report shows your balance sheet for the quarter. Each turn of the game represents a quarter of a financial year, hence there are four turns per year. This screen also offers you the opportunity of visiting a bank.

BANK VISIT MENU

There are two banks, each of which will lend your airline money. However, only one loan offer per period may be accepted and you cannot borrow and repay money in the same period. Both banks only lend money based on the current value of your assets (aircraft) and monitor this value continuously. Either or both banks may foreclose on you if the current value of your assets falls below any loans you may have taken out. When applying for a loan whilst there is an outstanding loan to your company, either bank may increase your loan or if your assets are judged to be too low may refuse a loan. They also may demand immediate repayment of the existing loan. As in real life, money generates money.

AIRCRAFT SALES

Largely the opposite of the Aircraft Purchase display, this screen allows you to sell one (and only one) aircraft per period. You will notice that the selling price of any given aircraft may not be as high as the purchase price. Obviously, wear and tear and inflation will take their toll!

NEW YEAR

At the end of each year (after two periods in 1945, otherwise after four periods), a New Year screen is displayed, showing the current exchange rates, basic fuel price and from time to time the latest news flashes that are relevant to airlines.

PUBLISH FARES

At the start of each new year, you are invited to set your price per mile, taking into account inflation (and other factors!). Pressing **0** (zero) at this stage will cause the game to be saved (use a separate diskette) in its current state. This will allow you to continue playing from the same point at another occasion by specifying on the initial screen that you are continuing a game. Any other number key will select a new price per mile from the selection offered.

TRADE POLICY

Following the Publish Fares page, you are invited to set your trade policy for the ensuing year. This determines the ratio of passengers to cargo that your fleet will carry, and may be selected by a key from the options offered.

OTHER DISPLAYS

There are several other screens displayed during the course of the game, but it may spoil your enjoyment if we give all the secrets away!

HINTS FOR SUCCESS

The following factors are keys to a successful game.

1. High airline popularity is important to passenger services.
2. Borrowing from the bank should be on a short term basis only.
3. An up-to-date fleet is usually better than an out-dated one.

COMMON REASONS FOR FAILING

1. Popularity too low.
2. Fares too low.
3. Popularity high enough, but servicing level too low.
4. Too few passengers flying too far.

Achieve the perfect balance between all these factors and you may be tempted to change your career!

OTHER DECISION GAMES

HIGH FLYER is part of a series of decision making games. For details of other games in this series consult your COMMODORE dealer or contact the COMMODORE Information centre at Slough (0753 79292).

