

Carnage Heart

Title: Carnage Heart

Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment of America (SCEA)

Developer: Artdink

Release Date: January 31, 1997 (US), Also released in Japan (December 8, 1995) and Europe (May 5, 1997)

Game Type: Strategy

Price: Lowest about \$20 used
\$39.99 MSRP

ESRB Rating: K-A (Kids to Adults) – Equivalent to today's E rating

Hardware Requirements:

- Any Playstation model up to PSOne. Full compatibility with Playstation 2 unknown.
- 1 Standard Controller
- Color TV

Actual Hardware Requirements:

- Memory Card with at least 5 blocks free for each savefile. The game cannot realistically be finished in one sitting. Note that while I do not have the original packaging, information I've found indicates the game is listed to require only 3 blocks, which is not true (Possibly a last minute design change).

Demonstration Machine:

Pentium 4 3.2Ghz HT, 512 MB RAM, Geforce Go! 5200 64MB VRAM using ePSXe 1.6 Playstation emulation software and Pete's OpenGL 1.76 GPU plugin.

Overview:

Carnage Heart is a strategy game like no other. You control groups of 'Mech' style robots on a map, similar to many other turn-based strategy games. You build your units, and defend your bases, like many other turn-based strategy games. However, you also get to research parts for and design your robotic armies. This is as much detail as the blurb on the packaging gives. What it doesn't tell you is that by 'design', it means to choose parts, as expected, but also allows you to *program the AI* of your robots.

Manual Excerpt: By 2073, war has evolved. The battle for domination is now a game fought on the moons of Jupiter by warrior mechs armed with deadly firepower. You control an army of cyber gladiators. More importantly, you design them, deal for parts,

set up assembly lines and devise battle plans. When the game begins, whoever has created the most diabolical strategies and deadliest mechs wins!

Storyline:

Manual Excerpt: In 2031, the remaining governments of the world looked to the stars for the answer. Led by the United States, several countries opted for expanding into space to gather the much needed resources that could end the worldwide crisis. The U.S. Space Mining division began operations on the moon and soon many other countries joined suit.

With so many interests intensified on the lunar surface, misunderstandings were inevitable. In June of 2032, a mining dispute between France and Brazil arose over an area of the moon known as Oceanus Procellarum (Ocean of Storms). This dispute led to a small-scale skirmish that quickly developed into a full-blown war. It looked as if the war would last for many years until France unleashed, for the first time ever, a "heavy armor unmanned robot," (now known as an Over Kill Engine or OKE). This new type of weapon proved to be highly effective and soon after it was deployed, Brazil surrendered.

The World Federation, a reformed United Nations, monitored the situation closely and quickly created a new bureau, the Space Mining Resource Probe Association (SMRPA). Peace was regained by assuring all countries involved that mining operations would be regulated to be safe and fair. With this agreement, a new order came to the world.

Twenty-Eight years later, in 2059, the human race, which had already exhausted the resources of the moon and Mars, was forced to locate new sources of minerals. Feedback from mining probes sent to Jupiter showed that three of its moons, Callisto, Europa and Ganymede offered abundant mining opportunities.

The super-powers of the world stepped up their espionage activities in order to obtain mining rights first. Upon increased SMRPA surveillance of these activities, they discovered several unscrupulous acts being carried out were not those of a nation, but of a single corporate group. The object of the SMRPA's scrutiny is the Drakken Group, the leading force of the capitalist sector. The Drakken Group is a huge conglomerate comprised of a few hundred of the world's largest corporations. Its net assets exceed \$8.9 trillion. The Drakken group has contributed greatly over the years to space resource development, capital, and research. In return, they now demand their fair share of new contracts from the SMRPA.

Without the proper constraints, an inevitable event occurred. In trying to enforce the Mining Rights Policy, a World Federation ship fired upon a Drakken-owned space cargo ship. Although this action was necessary to prevent Drakken from gaining an unfair advantage in the market, the incident was deemed unnecessarily harsh by the public. Fanning the flames of the issue were the Drakken-based media teams using a controversial photograph of the incident provided by NASA.

To the average citizen, the photo represented proof of the overbearing nature of the SMRPA tactics. It was also a troubling glimpse of future events. The dispatch of a multinational force by the World Federation to Jupiter was made public by Drakken journalists. The situation degenerated further.

In September of 2073, in accordance with the Treaty of Belmia, the World Federation found their only remaining course of resolution was to officially declare war on the Drakken Group. The Drakken conglomerate acknowledged this declaration and a war the

likes of which had never been seen before broke out between the super-power nations of the World Federation and the enormous corporate conglomerate Drakken.

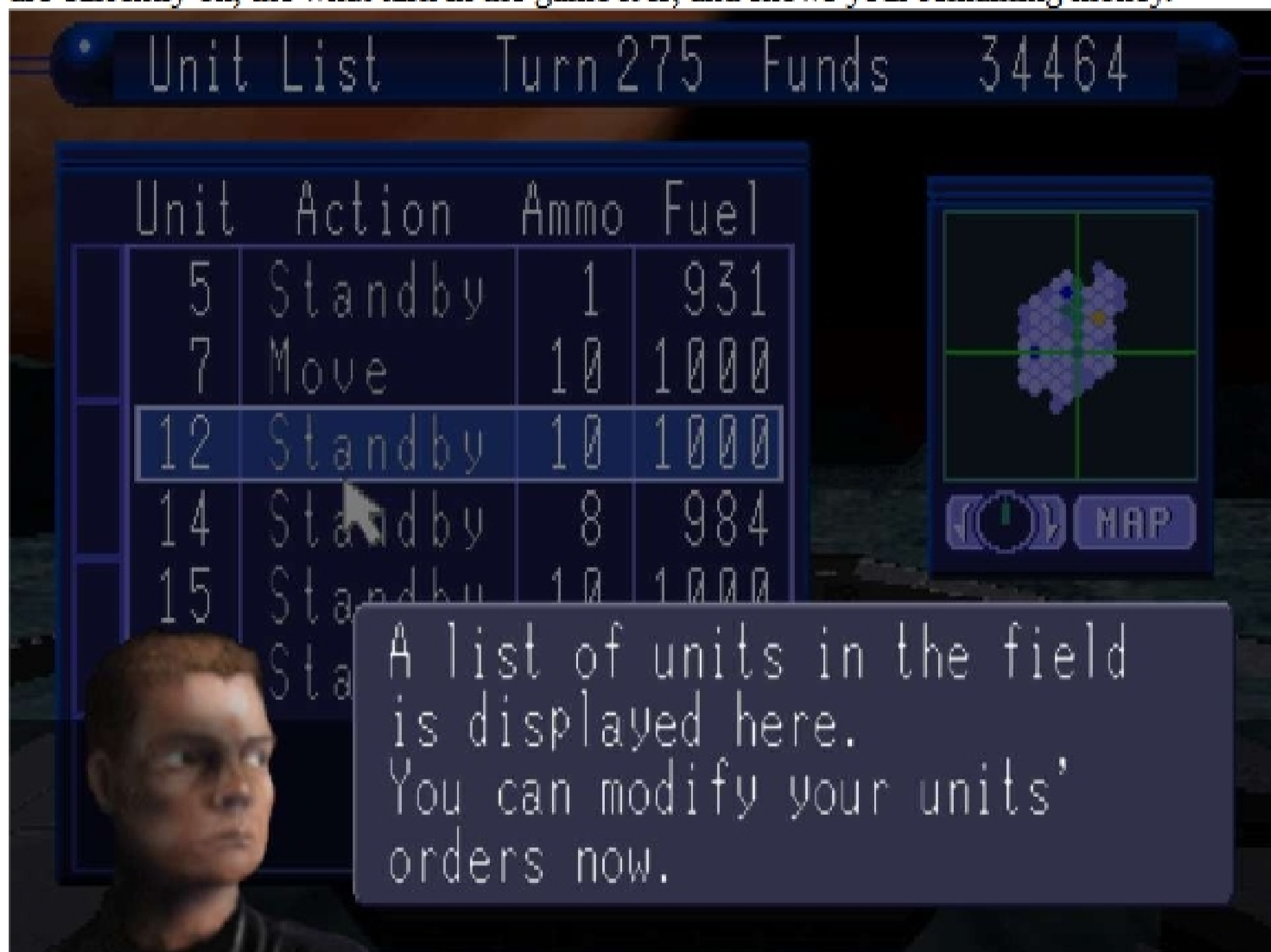
Player's Role:

The player serves as the commander of World Federation armies on a battle map. He also researches and designs new OKE's and their AI. He does not have any control over combat. There is also a Vs. Mode, where two player's saves are loaded. Once the player chooses OKE designs to compete, there is no user interaction. The mode finishes when only one OKE or team is standing.

User Interface:

Through most of the game, the player performs actions through menus. This is the unit command menu (see picture). On screen currently is an adviser giving you a quick idea as to what the current screen is for. Also on screen is a list of units and their status. The map on the right shows their current position on the battlefield. In the background is a 3D representation of the strategy map, though it is not free roamable.

Also notice the top bar, which is present on every menu. It shows what menu you are currently on, the what turn in the game it is, and shows your remaining money.



The only live action in this game is during combat sequences. While the player does not control OKE's during combat (unless a cheat code was entered), there is information on the battle screen. During testing mode (before finalizing your design for production), more information is displayed, such as a map of your software/CPU design. On it, the path of current execution is highlighted to show how your OKE is reacting.