

STERCORE XD

A C64 conversion from C64CD for the RGCD Cartridge Competition 2019

Originally developed and released on the Sinclair ZX Spectrum for the CSSCGC 2018

The Epic Space Opera So Far

It's the year 2304 and, after centuries of diplomacy and peace unexpectedly collapse, an intergalactic war has broken out; outlying worlds of the Galactic Federation have already found themselves coming under fire from the Repugnant Swarm who have laid waste to cities and farmland alike simply because the Galactic Federation's Right Honourable Representative For Earth And Her Colonies made a flippant comment about the livery of the Federation's spacecraft being "a prettier shade of green" than what the Swarm were using.

The next target of the Repugnant Swarm's ire on their way to the centre of our galactic hub and the source of that insult is Stercore 64, an artificial "world" constructed in deep space that was installed as a refuelling point for those slow moving but important cargo craft which deliver supplies to the federation's outlying colonies. It also unofficially acts as a trading post for some of the nearby communities which is how your garbage scow the Theresa May comes to be connected to the docking harness of bay 42, automatically loading up on trash for dumping whilst you complete the delivery of several thousand inflatable bananas because everybody needs to make a little cash on the side these days and those things don't deliver themselves.

Like all other deep space outposts, Stercore 64 isn't completely lawless but can offer various entertainments of questionable legality to its visitors, although you've chosen to spend a relatively quiet hour occupying a corner booth in one of the seedier dockside pubs, nursing what the bar staff are generously calling "a beer" and waiting for the Theresa May to finish taking on cargo. That seems to be going swimmingly until your quiet contemplation, the strains of whatever bland dross is playing on the battered sub ether radio above the bar and a spirited discussion nearby about the merits of various brands of quantum flux star drive are simultaneously interrupted by a cacophony of klaxons, triggered by the arrival of a fleet of green Repugnant Swarm fighters as they unexpectedly translate into existence nearby and manoeuvre into their attack formation.

Everybody else makes for their allotted docking bays to get the heck out of Dodge – many are hauling the kind of cargo that can explode unexpectedly, really shouldn't be there in the first place or most likely both – but your intentions are different. The Theresa May might be a bulky, rusted piece of pretty much obsolete space junk that most people wouldn't dare have dealings with given even half a chance - rather like her namesake - but, due to some healthy paranoia on your part, she's also armed to the metaphorical teeth and capable of surviving at least a couple of mid-space collisions without being reduced to scrap.

So with that in mind and the bay set to automated unlatch, you fire up the Theresa May's systems and sling her skywards, aiming directly for the ridiculously stupid enemies that need to be destroyed

for... well, reasons? Look, this is a scrolling shoot 'em up and nobody reads the instructions for these things unless it's to kill time during loading. I'm surprised you're still paying any attention at this point since I stopped around the start of the third paragraph!

The Game In More Detail

Stercore XD is a scrolling shoot 'em up for C64 and can be played with a joystick plugged into port 2. The action takes place flying at speed in the Theresa May over Stercore 64 and, because the scrolling is moving at an extremely brisk pace, there aren't any landscape features that can be collided with. The player's craft and enemies do pass behind some of the background elements however, so make sure to keep an eye out for sneaky Repugnant Horde craft concealing themselves in this manner.

The objective is to travel the entire length of Stercore 64, destroying as many enemies as possible along the way in the hope that your efforts will leave a more manageable number of targets for the Galactic Federation's forces to deal with when they arrive to clear things up. *Good luck, captain!*

Credit Where Credit Is Due

All "game design", programming, graphics, "music", general data wrangling, manual writing and hot beverage making by Jason. The source code for **Stercore XD** is available from the C64CD Github account along with some of the work files.

Source code for this game was edited using **Crimson Editor** and assembled with the **ACME** cross assembler. File compression for the final build was dealt with by **Exomizer**.

The character sets, tiles and map data were created with **Char Pad 2** - anything that needed converting or reformatting was juggled by bespoke tools written in **BlitzMax** - and sprite designs were edited using a combination of **ProMotion 6.5** and **Sprite Pad**.

Stercore XD's music was originally "composed" automagically by a Python script called **Autotracker**, with the results picked apart in **OpenMPT** before whatever survived that process then being manually shovelled into **Goatracker**.

The Superfluous And Dubious Legal Disclaimer

This program and its associated source code are provided "as is" with no warranties from the developer, implied or otherwise. Playing **Stercore XD** for extended periods of time can cause constant itching, mild to severe vomiting, epileptic seizures, heart palpitations or a vague feeling of ennui that the sufferer can't quite put their finger on the cause of. The physical media for this game is not fit for human consumption, please do not eat.

Stercore XD is 100% machine washable (apart from the bits that aren't, which is pretty much all of it really) and fully compatible with the C64DTV2 and TheC64 Mini. Probably?