BARBARIANS

Copyright (C) Damian Walker 2010
Artwork courtesy of Phillip Martin - www.phillipmartin.info

Civilisation in the ancient world was always under threat from outsiders who. though primitive, coveted the riches that their more advanced neighbours amassed. Disorganised tribesmen were usually no match for the heavily-defended cities and their shrewd generals, but, on rare occasions, a gifted individual would unite the warriors and rouse them to a common purpose. Then, the kings, the patriarchs, the farmers and the merchants would have cause to tremble before the approach of the *Barbarians!*

Barbarians is a game of strategy for one player, running on almost any Psion pocket computer. You take the lead of a civilised league of twelve cities at the very time the barbarians are entering the land.

Your task is to raise armies and send them against the advancing hordes, and you will not rest until every last one is wiped out. While this is going on, you have to manage your empire's economy.

Every game is different. A map is generated at random, and your empire might be inland, on the coast, an isthmus or a peninsula, or it might instead be on an island. You may rule over flat, featureless plains, or mountainous or heavily wooded areas. The terrain of your country will dictate the availability of resources and the economics of your campaign. You'll need to trade for resources that your empire lacks.

INSTALLATION AND SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Barbarians will run on the Psion Organiser II, on the Series 3 range, the Siena, the Workabout, and on the Series 5 and all other EPOC32 computers. As these machines all have different ways of installing software, more detailed instructions are left to the *ReadMe.txt* file distributed with each different version of the game.

Game play is the same across all machines. The interface, however, is not. Major differences will be discussed in their place, but in general users of the Organiser II should press *On/Clear* where *Escape* is mentioned, press the *Mode* key where the *Menu* key is mentioned, and the *Exe* key where the *Enter* key is mentioned.

PLAYING THE GAME

To launch the game, select the appropriate *Barbarians* option from the system screen or the Extras bar. The introduction screen will be shown, and you'll be asked to wait a moment while *Barbarians* sets up a new game. If you have a game in progress, that will be loaded at this point instead.

When the game is ready, you'll be shown the view of your empire. On the Organiser II the map will occupy the whole screen. On other machines you will also see two panels. One contains the stats of your empire, and the other contains information about the location on which the map cursor sits. There is also a small map showing which part of your empire is in view.

You can move and scroll around the map using the cursor keys. You will see cities on the plain. You might see forests and mountains. Water may bound some edges of the map. And if you look carefully, you'll see a little warrior icon somewhere around the edge of your domain. This is the spearhead of the coming invasion.

The game's options are available from a set of menus, accessible by pressing the *Menu* key. As with other Psion applications, the menu shows you shortcut keys for the options. Other shortcuts are *Enter* for *View Location*, *SPACE* for *Move* and *Esc* for *End turn*.

The options on the *File* menu (not on the Organiser II) allow you to load and save games at will.
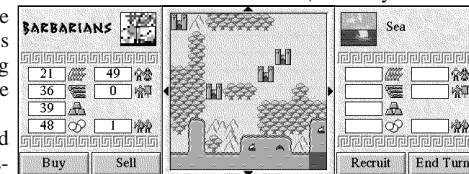
Game screen showing empire statistics on the left, the map in the middle and the current location on the right. (Series 5 version).

These act like documents in other EPOC applications, like Word, and are listed under the *Barbarians* icon on the system screen. Your current game is automatically saved when you select *Exit*.
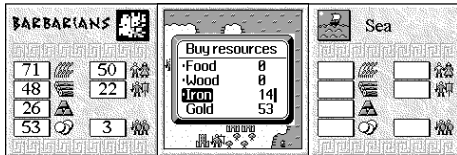

TRADING COMMODITIES

Buying a little iron to keep the reserves topped up (Series 3a version).

Unless your empire is unusually blessed with an abundance of all commodities, there will be occasions when you need to trade with outside powers for resources that you lack. And if your empire is enjoying an era of plenty, you might want to sell off excess production to finance more armies. These things are done using the *Buy* and *Sell* options from the menu.
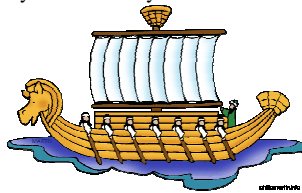
To sell resources, select the *Sell* option. You will be asked to specify how much of each resource you would like to sell. Every two resources sold, of any type, fetch 1 gold. If the total sales would take your treasury over 239 gold, then a brief message tells you the treasury is full, and no sales are made. The

Organiser II sells commodities in batches of 10.

To buy resources, use the *Buy* option. A dialog box appears asking you how much of each resource to buy. Each resource costs 2 gold. If the total you enter cannot be afforded, a brief message appears and no purchases are made. The Organiser II buys in batches of 5.

Note that the maximum amount of any commodity that can be stored is 239 units. Buying and selling that would take any commodity (including gold) over this value is not possible.

Trading in commodities, as you may have noticed, is not a lucrative business in this game. Sellers overcharge and buyers are miserly. It is advisable to make the best use of the resources your empire produces, before resorting to buying from outside.

THE BARBARIANS ADVANCE

After doing all the arming, moving and trading that you can in your turn, it is time to give the barbarians their chance by selecting the *End Turn* (just *Turn* on the Organiser II).

During the barbarians' turn, their numbers will swell, and each square they occupy will become more crowded with warriors. In addition to this, the barbarians will start to spread. Sometimes they will spread to unoccupied land, while at other times they will turn and attack your cities and your armies.

Barbarian attacks work just like army attacks and garrison sorties: the barbarians inflict losses on your troops and your troops inflict losses on them. One or other side might be completely destroyed. If the barbarians attack one of your cities and destroy its garrison—or if there was no garrison to defend

it—then the city will fall into ruin. A ruined city will no longer contribute its resources to your empire. It cannot be entered by either side, nor can it be rebuilt during the course of the game. So you need to look after your cities.

Before you get to play your next turn, the game will calculate production and consumption of resources. Cities will contribute their produce to the empire, population and garrisons will eat the food, and troops in and out of cities will take their pay. If there is not enough food, populations will wither. If there is not enough gold, troops will desert the garrisons and the armies. Keep an eye on your food store and the population of your cities. If a city's population dwindles away due to lack of food, then the city falls into ruin—and stays that way for the rest of the game.
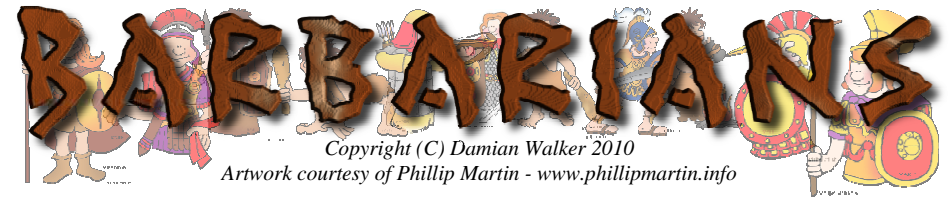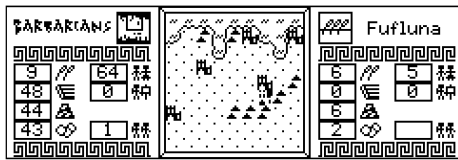
VICTORY AND DEFEAT

You win the game when every last barbarian unit is wiped off the map. You will lose the game if all of your cities have fallen and you have no armies left in the field.

Before starting the next game, you might want to look at the *Preferences* option (not on the Organis-

er II). One of the settings decides how difficult your next game will be. You might want to tweak this before choosing *New game* from the *File* menu. Changing it does not affect games in progress. The Organiser II instead asks about difficulty at the start of each game.

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR EMPIRE

Before making informed choices about what to do, you will want to know the state of your empire. You can get information about what is in a particular map square, and information about your empire as a whole.

To get information about a map square, navigate to the square and select the *Location* option (*Info* on the Organiser II; and not necessary on EPOC32 - see later). Information about the current map square will be shown on the screen. Information will be different depending on whether you're viewing empty terrain, barbarians, a city or one of your armies. You will always see the name of the city, or of the general commanding an army. For a city, the information shows the population and the size of the garrison. On the Series 3 and later machines it also shows the

amount of food, wood, iron and gold the city generates per turn. For an army, the troop numbers alone are shown, and for the barbarians their numbers likewise. When viewing empty terrain all the details are blank.

To call up general economic information about your empire, select the *Economy* option (not necessary on EPOC32). The information on the display will be updated accordingly. This gives total amounts of food, wood, iron and gold you have stored, your total population, total troop numbers and the number of barbarians in your domain.

The way this information is presented varies from machine to machine. The Organiser II shows a brief pop-up at the bottom of the display. EPOC16 computers will update the information on the display panels, with an option in the *Preferences* dialog to do this automatically instead of having to use the *Location* and *Economy* options. EPOC32 will always update the display as you play, and there are therefore no *Location* or *Economy* options on the menu.

On the left is the state of your empire at the beginning of the game. The right hand side shows the city of Fufluna, which generates 6 food and 6 iron each turn, and currently has 5 population (Series 3 "classic" version).

A LITTLE ABOUT RESOURCES

Resources are what keep your population growing and your armies fighting. Resources are gathered from the squares adjacent to cities, and each resource has a specific purpose in the game.

Food is farmed on plains, and is used to feed the population. Each population unit needs one unit of food, as does each troop unit in a city. Troops out in the field find their own food. When a surplus of food is stored, the population can grow. When the food is gone, the population starts to decline again.

Wood is cut from the forests. It is used to build the baggage carts, furnish arrows, and generally equip an army that is moving out of the city into the field. You need 1 wood for each troop unit that sets out from a city.

Iron is mined in the mountains. It is used to make the weapons which arm citizens ready for military duty. One

unit of iron is used for each citizen armed.

Gold is made in trade across the sea, and comes into the empire through its coastal cities. It is also gathered in taxes from all cities, the more populous cities paying more tax. It is used to pay the troops, both in the garrisons and out on the march. Extra gold can be made by selling surplus resources, and can be used to buy commodities your empire lacks. When the money runs out, the troops begin to desert, and your armies and garrisons shrink.

To calculate your income, look at the squares adjacent to your cities (diagonals do not count). Each square generates 3 resources of the appropriate type. Each city adds 1 gold, plus another gold per 5 population. Your initial riches are calculated in inverse proportion to your income, to make sure you get a fair start.

ARMING CITIZENS

Citizens are armed using the *Arm* or *Recruit* option on the menu. To do this you must first navigate to one of your cities, and that city must have at least 2 population, You are asked how many troops you want to arm. The maximum number will be indicated, though there are sometimes reasons you won't want to arm this many. Selecting 0 or pressing *Esc* cancels the operation.

The number of citizens you can arm is limited

by a number factors: the amount of iron available to arm them, and the population of your city. The Organiser II version only lets you arm 9 citizens at a time, though you can select *Arm* again to arm more. Once you have pressed *Enter*, the requested number of population will be armed as troops, ready to guard the city or march out on campaign. If lack of population or iron prevents recruitment, a brief message will be shown instead.

Arming citizens for battle(Organiser II LZ version).

SENDING TROOPS ON THE MARCH

Once you have troops in a city, you can send them out into the field using the *Move* option from the menu. To do this, you need to navigate to the city that has the troops in it, and select *Move*. Assuming there are troops to move, you will be asked *Direction?* and you can press one of the cursor keys to indicate which direction the troops should go. All troops in the city will then be assigned a general, and will move out. You have twelve competent generals in your empire.

Once armies are in the field, they can be moved in the same way, by navigating to them, selecting *Move* and pressing a direction. An army may move

only once per turn (including its initial move out of a city). One army can join another, but in doing so both armies use up their movement for that turn. And troops may enter a city, but on welcoming its heroes a city may not send them out again that turn.

Terrain affects movement. Armies may move freely over plains. On entering a forest an army has 50% chance of being delayed by undergrowth, in which case it will not move. Mountains are even more difficult to negotiate, with only a 25% chance of managing the climb in a given turn. When setting out from a city, however, troops can always move into any land square. Troops cannot enter the sea.
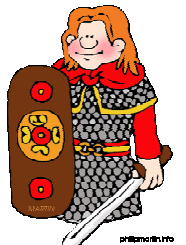
ATTACKING THE BARBARIANS

Giving battle to the barbarians also uses the *Move* option. This is done by selecting an army or city that is adjacent to a barbarian unit, and using the *Move* option in that direction as if moving into an empty square. The army or garrison then attacks the barbarians, who will fight back. Each side will kill a number of the other between 1 and its own numbers, e.g. a city with 5 troop units will kill between 1 and 5 barbarians, at random.

One of four outcomes is possible. Both sides remain, depleted in number, after the battle; the attacking army or garrison is entirely victorious and the barbarian unit is wiped from the map; the attacking army fails and is completely destroyed; or both sides are destroyed in the battle. Note that a victorious army will return to its camp or city, rather than occupying the square which it attacked.

Food	*Wood*	*Iron*	*Gold*	*Population Count*
Plain	*Forest*	*Mountain*	*Sea*	*Troop count*
City	*Ruin*	*Army*	*Barbarian unit*	*Barbarian count*