Introduction

For many years, this part of the world had enjoyed peace and tranquility. A succession of kings had ruled wisely, and wizards and magic had preserved the kingdom from invasion. Recently, however, the kings had grown weak and the wizards more ambitious to take their place. A dark cloud gathered over the land as the wizards grew ever more powerful and arrogant. Divisions arose amongst them, and at last their differences lead to open war. In *Battle of the Mages*, you take the part of one of these wizards in a struggle for overall supremacy.

You can play against the computer or against a friend, or even watch two computer players battle it out. As the wizards battle each other in a series of engagements they can summon creatures to augment their forces, and they can heal the injuries their forces receive during the battle. In addition to all this, the computer player will vary the emphasis of its strategy from one game to the next, so each game you play will need a different approach.

Battle of the Mages also gives you the opportunity to create your own campaign. You can draw your own maps and populate them with your own choice of units, allowing you to recreate campaigns from your favourite fantasy novel or to let your imagination run riot with an original creation.

System Requirements

You need a Psion pocket computer running EPOC to play the game. This includes the Revo and Revo Plus, the Series 5 and 5mx, the Netpad, and compatible machines like the Diamond Mako and Ericsson MC218. With a little extra effort the game will run on EPOC computers with larger screens like the Geofox One and the Series 7 and Netbook. Being written wholly in OPL, *Battle of the Mages* will also run on the Windows-based EPOC emulator, though you will need to select one of the supported screen sizes of 640×240 or 480×160.

Installation

Battle of the Mages is supplied as a SIS file so installation is easy. The SIS file is supplied in the compressed form of a ZIP archive, so once you have downloaded this you need to unpack it before you continue. WinZip will do this on the PC, and RMRZip will do the job if you have downloaded the ZIP file directly to the Psion.

To install a SIS file directly from a PC with PsiWin installed, connect the Psion to the PC, and double click on the icon for the SIS file. PsiWin will take care of copying the software to the Psion and installing it. Alternatively you can copy the SIS file to the Psion and install it from there. Installing a SIS file using the Psion itself is just as easy: tap twice on the SIS file's icon and the standard install program will do its work. *Battle of the Mages* will install happily on any drive.

If you have a Geofox One, a Series 7 or a Netbook, another step is required. Look in the \System\Apps\Mages directory and you will see a file called *640x240.opo*. Make a copy of this file: call it *640x320.opo* on the Geofox one, or *640x480.opo* on the Series 7 and Netbook. *Battle of the Mages* will be ready to run. Note that whatever the
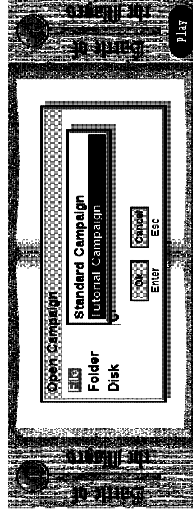
If the wins are evenly distributed between players 1 and 2, the scenario can be said to be balanced, that is, it favours neither one player nor the other. A result 6/4 or 7/3 in favour of one player is usually good enough, as a noticeable imbalance in the scenario usually skews the result closer to 10/0 towards the favoured player.

When you're happy with scenario #0 you should go on to test scenarios 1 and 2 in the same way. In the example campaign, the scenarios are deliberately skewed. In each case one player can win the whole campaign by winning that scenario, and so things are made slightly more difficult for that player.

Tutorial I: Playing the Game

Battle of the Mages is supplied with a tutorial campaign to help you get used to the controls. This section of the manual will take you through the tutorial campaign map by map. There are three maps, and each one introduces you to a different aspect of game play.

Campaigns: Loading the Tutorial Campaign

Campaigns are collections of maps, complete with unit positions and other information, upon which you will play a whole game. There are two campaigns supplied with *Battle of the Mages*. One is the *Standard Campaign*, a complete and playable game where two wizards battle for supremacy in their small corner of the world. The other is the *Tutorial Campaign*, a set of easy maps for illustrating the examples in this tutorial.
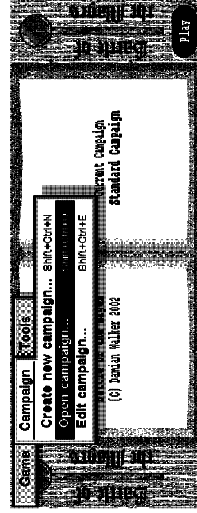
When you load *Battle of the Mages* for the first time, the *Standard Campaign* is currently selected. We want to play the *Tutorial Campaign*, so we need to load this before starting play. Tap the menu icon on the silk-screen, and select *Open Campaign* from the *Campaign* menu.

Tap on the filename next to *File* in the dialog that appears, and a short list of the two supplied campaigns will appear. Click on *Tutorial Campaign*, and then click on the *OK* button at the bottom of the dialog. When the title screen returns, the right-hand page should show *Tutorial Campaign* as the current campaign.
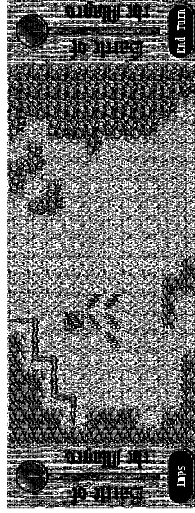
Starting a Game

Once the map is drawn, and the units are placed, tap the *Detail* button, then move on to scenario #2 using the right arrow on the scenario button to the bottom left. Like scenario #1 with its allied wizards, scenario #2 uses an uneven distribution of forces to make it more difficult for the better player. Faust's best hope is to be able to summon more forces by the time the armies meet, in order that the battle is a bit more finely balanced.
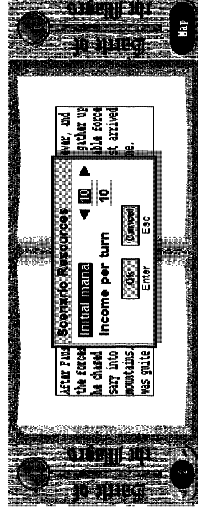
The resources in this scenario are rather generous, to give Faust a chance of building up an army. Of course, this allows Merlin to build up his forces as well.
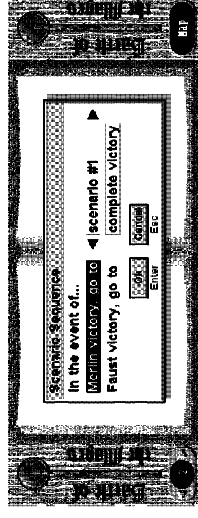
With the odds stacked against Faust we need to give him some recompense. It is this: the fact that victory of this scenario gives Faust victory for the entire game, whereas if the battle goes the other way, Merlin has one more battle to fight, scenario #1. Notice that it is possible for play to pass back and forth between scenarios 1 and 2 indefinitely, until one or other player wins two scenarios in a row. Be careful when designing campaigns that this is exactly what you want, and also that it is not too impossible to break the cycle.
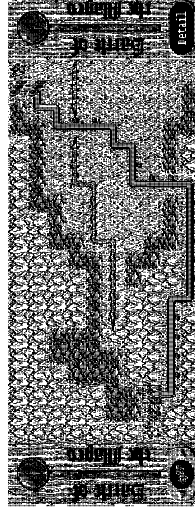
This map introduces dwarves, who are at home in the mountains. There is nothing new about this map apart from the use of mountains and hills, which like trees impede movement but provide protection from attack.

Testing the Campaign

There are many ways you can test the campaign to make sure that it is balanced and playable. One of them will be described here.

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happens, the computer's forces will have moved up right against your own, as shown above. In order to bring what you see in line with this tutorial, we will now do something a little unusual. *If the computer has not moved*, press the *End Turn* button at the bottom of the screen. This will allow the computer to take its turn, after which the positions should be what you see above.

Now it is time to move your first unit. In the map above, one of your units is highlighted in black, and surrounded by a small square. This indicates that it is the *current unit*, the one to which any orders you issue will apply. It is of little use tucked behind the front line, so we will bring it forward to the square diagonally up and to the right (or north-east, if thinking in compass terms).

Just tap on the square above and to the right of the current unit, and you will see it move. It is now ready to attack the enemy nearby. Most units can be moved more than one square at a time. But in doing so, they sometimes encounter obstacles like other units or impassable terrain. In our current position, the single unit at the back could attack the enemy two squares to its right, if it wasn't for its colleague in the way. With the first unit we moved, we side-stepped the problem by directing the unit diagonally around the obstacle. But there is a neater way.


Before moving the other unit from the back, first let us digress and look at one of the game preferences, which affects the movement of units. Tap on the menu icon on the silk-screen, and select *Preferences* from the *Tools* menu. You will see the preferences dialogue appear.
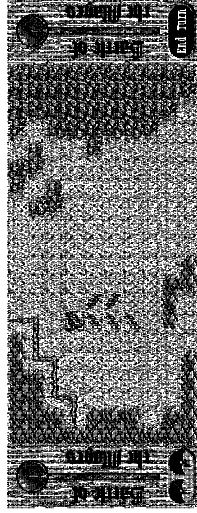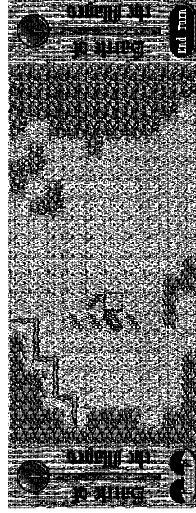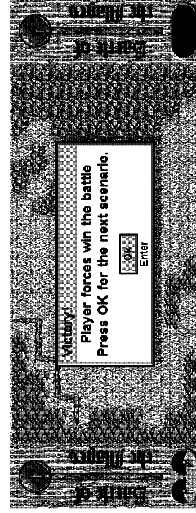

The second option in this dialogue box is *Path Finding*. There are two settings for

You can have up to sixteen scenarios to a campaign. Revisit your campaign by choosing the *Edit Campaign* option from the *Campaign* menu on the title screen. The introduction to your one and only scenario will appear. At the bottom left of the screen is a button not yet discussed, with arrows on either side and a zero in the middle. The zero is the *scenario number*. Scenarios in a campaign are numbered from 0 to 15, and the arrows on this button allow you to page through the scenarios.
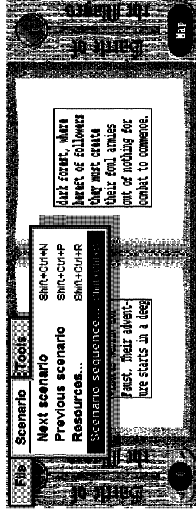
Before editing the next scenario, you need to make a small change to the current one. The order of scenarios is not fixed, as in other games. In *Battle of the Mages* you can have a more complex structure to your campaign. Specifically, each scenario can have two outcomes, one of which is chosen according to who wins that particular scenario. An outcome can be outright victory of the campaign, or it can be progression to another scenario. To alter this, select the *Scenario Sequence...* option from the *Scenario* menu.
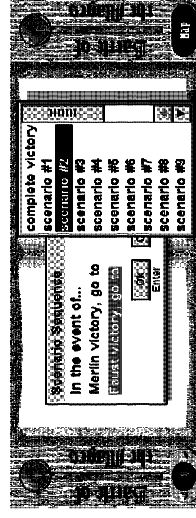
When you first look at this window, the settings are *complete victory* for both outcomes. Tap on the *complete victory* entry for Merlin and, when the list appears, tap on *scenario #1*. Similarly, change the outcome for Faust's victory to *scenario #2*. When this is done, tap on *Ok*. The effect of this is obvious: if Merlin wins, play will pass to scenario #1, while if Faust wins, play will pass to scenario #2.
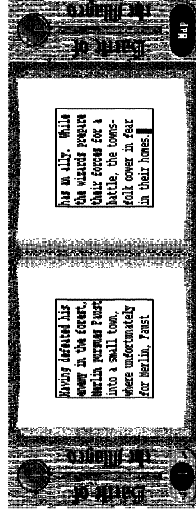
To edit scenario #1, tap the right arrow on the scenario button at the bottom left of the screen. The pages will clear, ready for you to type in a new introduction for the scenario. Type in the one above. The "ally" described in the text gives us an excuse to give one of the sides an extra wizard, which gives the game an interesting twist. Next,

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The computer will most probably retaliate. When control is returned to you, you may see that some of your units are no longer at full strength. The display above shows that the top unit in the group has been attacked, and is slightly injured. From now on it will fight at proportionally reduced strength. If the hit points are reduced to nothing, the unit will die and disappear from the map. Hopefully this will happen to the enemy units first, and as you outnumber the enemy twofold, you have plenty of room for optimism. Now you can attack the enemy again, just like last turn; there is no need to move as the enemy is right in front of you.

By the end of this turn it is probable that you have killed one or both of the enemy units. The screen above shows that the lower enemy unit has just been killed by your unit to the left. To win this scenario, just continue to attack the enemy turn after turn until both of his units are gone.
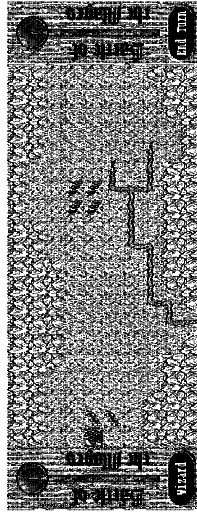
When the computer units are gone and you have ended your final turn, a dialog box will appear informing you of your victory. In the unlikely event that you have lost the battle, the text would read *Computer forces win the battle*, and you would have to start the tutorial again. But if you have won, just tap *Ok* to progress to the next scenario.

Saving the Game

As in the previous scenario, it is quite possible that the computer moves first, in which case your initial display will look something like the map above. In any case, the wizard is highlighted as the current unit, and we can use him to summon up a new creature.
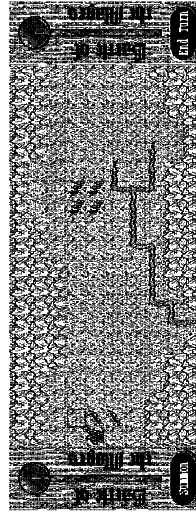
First, tap *once* on the empty square adjacent to the wizard, above and to the right. Notice that the wizard does not move. Instead, the button at the bottom left changes to show the word *Summon*. You can now summon up a creature which will appear in this square: just tap the *Summon* button.
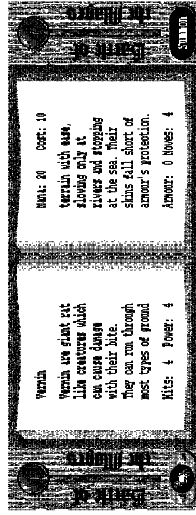
After tapping the button your spell book will appear. The first page shows *Imps*. But you have been playing with imps for some time now, so you might want to try something different. At the bottom left of the screen is a new button flanked by arrows pointing left and right, and between them is a picture of the creature described on the pages. Tap on the right arrow to page through the spell book and see what other creatures are available. The left arrow will page backwards towards the start of the book.

At the top, on the right-hand page, are two numbers: *Mana* and *Cost*. Mana is the measure of your wizard's power, and the *Mana* figure shows how much your wizard currently has. This will vary from one scenario to another, and in some scenarios your wizard will gain mana from turn to turn. *Cost* is the cost of the creature on the current page. In the current scenario your wizard has 20 mana. This is enough for a single dragon, or two vermin. Select the vermin and tap on the *Summon* button at the bottom right.
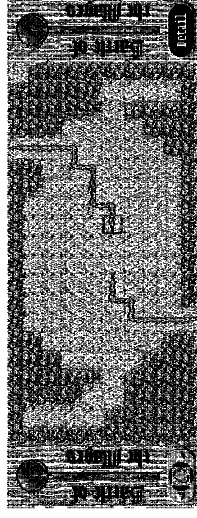
As forest is a bit dense for most creatures to fight in, a forest clearing would be an appropriate place to hold our battle. In the example above, a stream has been drawn through the clearing to add interest to the map. The stream passes briefly underground in the middle of the map. This is done with a purpose: most creatures have difficulty crossing streams, and some find it impossible, so this gap ensures that, whatever creatures the player or computer decides to summon, the forces will not be isolated from each other. Such a stalemate would not create an interesting game. There are also a couple of tracks cut into the forest. These are to be the starting places for the wizards.

If this all seems a bit symmetrical for you, feel free to vary the map. When designing your own maps, do not feel obliged to use all the different terrain types. You can have up to sixteen scenarios in a campaign, and restricting each map to a few terrain types helps give a different character to each scenario. Once the terrain is drawn, the units can be deployed.
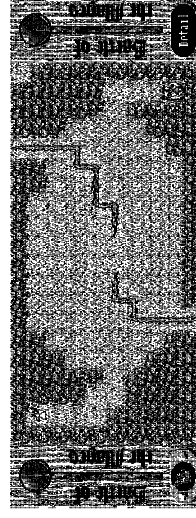
Tap on the right arrow of the button at the bottom left of the screen, until the white wizard appears. This is the Merlin, the wizard for player one. Drawing units is similar to drawing terrain, except that you cannot "drag" the stylus to draw units: each unit must be placed with a distinct tap of the stylus. Place Merlin at the top of the track on the left of the screen. Tapping on the right arrow of the button at the bottom left of the screen again will show the grey wizard, Faust. Place Faust at the end of the track at the right of the screen.

The scenario introduction suggests that both of the wizards are starting from the beginning, so you should perhaps leave things at that for the first scenario. Large armies of magical creatures can come later. It is even possible to have more than one wizard per side, in which case the scenario introduction should give an explanation of where the extra wizard came from.

**Giving the Wizards their Power**
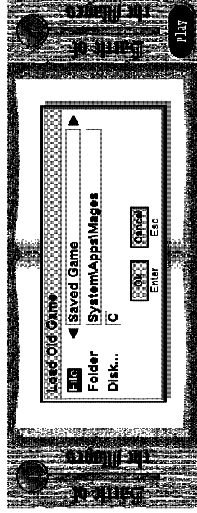
When the *Load Old Game* dialogue box appears, your *Saved Game* should already be selected. If not, you can tap on the filename and select your game from the list that appears. This should take you to the introduction screen for the second scenario, ready for you to try again.

Tutorial Map 3: Healing Units
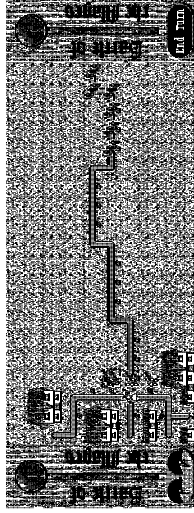
When you have won the second scenario, you will reach the third and final scenario in the tutorial campaign. You may want to save the game again before you hit the *Play* button. The map represents the edge of a town. On the left are the town houses and streets, with a road stretching away to the east. Your forces, a wizard and three imps, stand at the edge of the town. The computer's forces, six imps, are on the far right of the map, ready to march on the town. You start the scenario with no mana, and you only gain a small amount of mana per turn; not enough to summon an army to resist the computer before his forces are already at the town. But, as has been mentioned before, the wizard has the ability to heal units, an ability which can be used to keep your units in good health under the attacks of the enemy. The object of this scenario, then, is to kill off the enemy forces without summoning any more of your own.
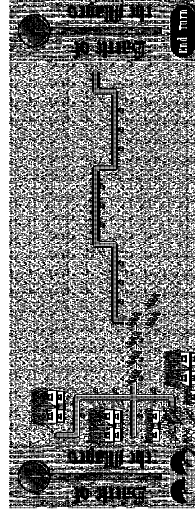
Houses have a special property: only wizards can enter them. Elves do not like to be closed in, dwarves distrust buildings above ground, and other creatures have not the intelligence to find their way in. You can use the houses to your advantage, then. In the map above, the wizard has retreated into the small house at the bottom left of the map, and your imps surround him. This stops the enemy imps from attacking the wizard directly, for if the wizard were lost at this stage of the game you would be outnumbered. Put yourself in the defensive posture illustrated above, and await the
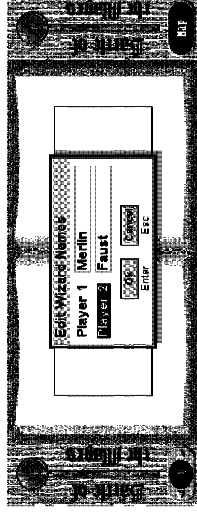
The *Edit Wizard Names* dialogue is easy enough to understand. The names for this example are *Merlin* and *Faust*, so type them in to the fields of the dialogue box and tap *Ok* to accept them. When a new game is started with this campaign, the user will be asked which of these wizards are to be controlled by the computer by name, as shown here.
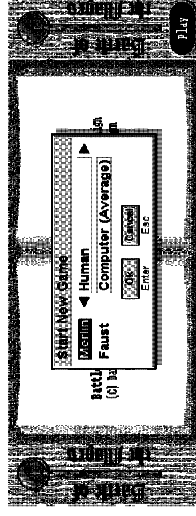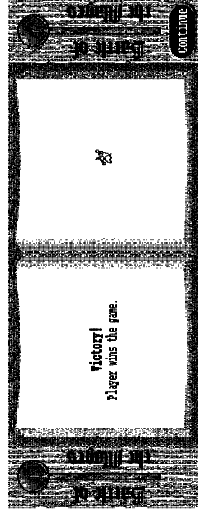
Now the wizards have been named, you can progress to your first scenario. The logical place to begin is at the scenario introduction.
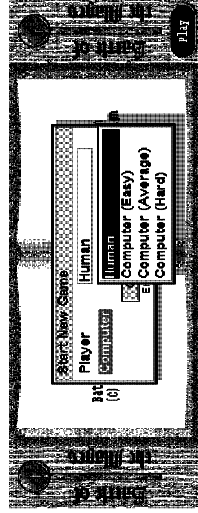
Writing the Scenario Introduction
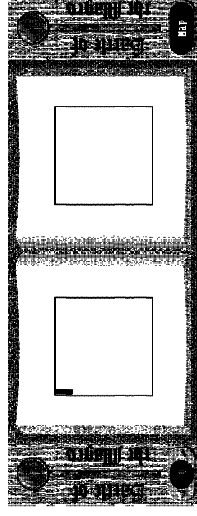
When you create your campaign, you are given literally a blank page on which to start. The scenario introductions in the tutorial campaign are not very imaginative. Let us remedy that here. What you see before you now is a very simple text editor. You can type your text, which will appear where the black rectangle cursor is. This is not a full-fledged word processor by any means, so there is no word wrap or paragraph reformatting. You can move the cursor with the cursor keys (moving off the bottom of the left page takes you to the top of the right), or you can put the cursor in a particular location by tapping on the page with the stylus. The editor is in overwrite mode, meaning that text you type will overwrite what was there before.
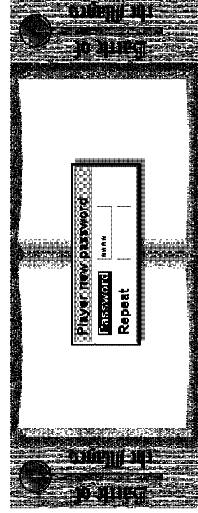
On subsequent turns you only need to enter your password once to continue with your turn.

Because you are not watching the screen during your opponent's turn, you will not see if any units of yours are destroyed, except by noting their absence on your next turn. To save your having to keep track of all your units, there is a *Battle Report* to tell you of any casualties. If you have lost any units during your opponent's turn, you will see the dialogue box above when your next turn starts.
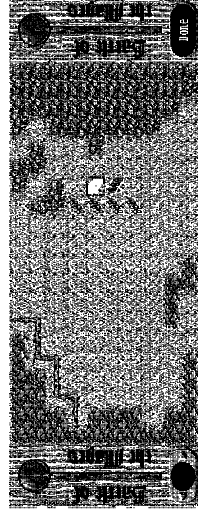
On answering *Yes*, the battle report will begin. The display above shows a unit on the map ghosted out in white. This was a unit of imps, destroyed during the opponent's turn. The arrows on the button at the bottom left of the screen allow you to view the locations of other units destroyed in that turn. Press the *Done* button when you are finished, to continue with your turn.

If you manage to keep your imps in good health, and continue to attack the computer's imps, you should eventually hack your way through them and win the battle. As this is the last battle in the game, you will see the victory screen. Congratulations! You have won your first campaign.
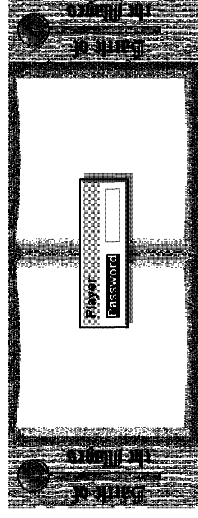
Playing a Two-player Game

Before you leave the tutorial, there is one aspect to *Battle of the Mages* which you have not yet seen: the two-player game. In most respects this resembles the one-player game, except that on ending your turn the computer is passed to your opponent to play. There are other differences, though.
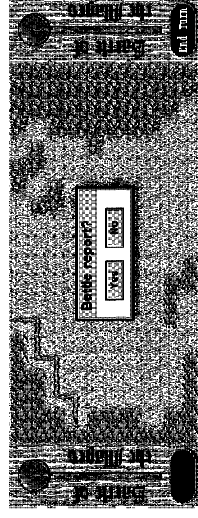
To start a two-player game, you need to set both players as *Human* in the *Start New Game* dialogue box. There is nothing to stop you from setting both players up as computer players. This will allow you to watch a demonstration game. The first thing you will see when you start a two-player game is the scenario introduction, just as you would in a one-player game. Press *Play* when you are ready.

Passwords are used to protect the game from the less sporting opponents. Without passwords it would be very easy for an opponent to play your turn for you, looking at your unit strengths or causing you to miss a turn. The use of passwords means that when it is your turn, you and you alone have control of the computer. On your first turn you are asked for a new password. This is obscured by asterisks as you type, so you need to enter it twice to avoid typing errors. Type it once, press the down cursor key and enter it again. Now you can take your first turn as normal.