

# Tomcat Alley FAQ/Walkthrough

by MS3FGX

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Tomcat Alley Guide Version 1.1

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= 1. Introduction & Overview =  
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After writing my X-Files Game Guide, I was sure that I had reached the lowest point I could get to in terms of readership. But here I am, writing a Guide for a game even less popular and played then the completely obscure X-Files FMV game, and look, this one is an FMV game as well! Hm, there seems to be a pattern emerging here.

At any rate, in the extremely unlikely event that you find yourself playing Tomcat Alley on the Sega CD, I hope that this Guide will aid you through your mind numbing adventure of button mashing and horrendous video quality.

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- 1.1 Tomcat Alley -  
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Tomcat Alley was one of the first games I purchased for the Sega CD. In fact,

I believe it was the only game I brought home with me the day I got my Sega CD, beyond the Sewer Shark pack-in.

This game is actually very similar to Sewer Shark if you have played that (most people who bought the Sega CD probably have). It is an FMV based game that consists mainly of shooting at onscreen enemies to trigger scripted events, and various tasks that require quick reflexes, as that was about all that you could do in FMV games.

The difference here is that instead of flying a bizarre sewer combat/cleaning aircraft, you fly the most recognizable military aircraft ever flown, the F-14 Tomcat.

Perhaps you are wondering how exactly you can fly a complex aircraft like the F-14 within the constraints of a FMV game. Well it just so happens that the developers themselves were wondering that, and in the end never actually figured it out.

Yes, as strange as it may seem, you never have direct control over the F-14 in this game. You operate as the aircraft's gunner, who's job is to simply select the next waypoint to travel to and handle locking on and deploying the F-14's armament.

I can only imagine how many people bought this game, only to slump in their chair with disappointment when they realized that you will never be able to actually fly the F-14 so brazenly displayed on the front cover. Although, to be fair, it does state quite clearly that Tomcat Alley is a "Full-Screen Interactive Movie", a term which most Sega CD owners had likely become all too accustomed to.

Beyond the slightly misleading packaging, most other players were likely put off by the fact that this game is easily one of the corniest things ever pressed onto a CD-ROM. From the Tomcat screeching in your face during the intro to the very organization you work for (N.A.S.T.I - Naval Air Station Tomcat Intercepts, yes I am serious), this game is full in your face ludicrous; as only the mid-nineties gaming industry could bring us.

Get ready to strap into the rear seat of this mean machine while the guy sitting in front of you gets all the glory and all the women.

This is...TOMCAT ALLEY!

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- 1.2 About This Guide -  
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Another day, another waste of time, isn't that how the saying goes?

Nothing new to report here. Just another Guide that I am working on while I have several other more pressing and desired projects languishing on the back burner of my attention span.

As for why I decided to write this particular Guide, I just always had a soft spot for this game. Possibly because it was the first game that I ever played with live actors and full motion video; a glimpse (even if it turned out to be completely inaccurate) of the technology to come.

Besides, I've run through this game a number of times over the years, and figured that put me in a rather unique position in the global community. Might as well document the things I learned so that future generations never make

the same mistakes Sega did.

One would think it goes without saying at this point, but naturally this Guide is written entirely in Vim, and was spell checked with Aspell. I manually maintain an 80 character width with carriage returns, and as always, it has been big fun.

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## = 2. How to Play =

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The following Sections will give you the basic information required to play Tomcat Alley. Not that this game is particularly hard to grasp...

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### - 2.1 Controls -

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The term "Controls" may be overly generous for this game. You really just move a cursor over the screen, and press a single button to activate whatever the cursor is hovering over. That, and you can pause.

Default Controls:

D-Pad - The D-Pad moves the aiming reticle around the screen. You will use the reticle for everything in Tomcat Alley, from locking on to target aircraft to answering a radio call from your wingman.

Start - Pauses the game, and will skip the mission-briefing FMVs.

A - Fires the selected weapon at the locked target. Yo do this a lot.

B - This selects items on the HUD when the reticle is over them. Used to do everything other than fire weapons, like selecting waypoints, using countermeasures, etc.

C - Toggles the HUD on or off. I have no idea why you would want to do this, but I guess they didn't want to leave the C button without a use.

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### - 2.2 HUD -

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The HUD, or Heads Up Display, is the primary interface between the aircraft's systems and the gunner. The HUD displays everything from the current weapon and countermeasure stocks to incoming radio transmissions.

Everything you do in Tomcat Alley is through the HUD, so you would do well to memorize it's layout and functions.

The following Sections will give a brief description of each main feature of the HUD, in addition to a basic diagram showing where it is located on the screen (if applicable).

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#### - 2.2.1 Aiming Reticle -

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Location:

Mobile

Function:

The Aiming Reticle is the only thing you have direct control over in Tomcat Alley. Beyond simply being a means to select objects on the screen, the Aiming Reticle also conveys information to the user based on it's color and shape.

The shape of the Aiming Reticle gives you a quick display of which weapon is currently armed. As you play the game you will become accustomed to the various shapes the Aiming Reticle takes, and will be able to quickly identify which weapon you have loaded at a glance.

When you have placed the Aiming Reticle over an enemy aircraft's target signature, the Aiming Reticle will change from green to bright red. Fire your weapon with the A button as soon as the color changes.

For non-weaponry related functions, simply move the Aiming Reticle over the desired object and press the B button.

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- 2.2.2 Waypoints -  
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Location:

Variable

Function:

Waypoints are predefined courses that you and your pilot are to take to complete the mission, represented as colored circles dotted around the HUD, each with a corresponding number next to it. When the pilot tells you, select the next Waypoint in correct numerical order.

If you select them out of order you will face tougher enemy defenses. If you fail to select a Waypoint when the pilot requests one, you will have 3 seconds before he aborts the mission.

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- 2.2.3 Radio -  
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Location:

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| |  
| |  
|[ ] [X]|  
|[ ] [ ]|  
[ ] [ ]

Function:

The Radio allows you to communicate with your wingman and exchange information while in flight. Once the Radio icon starts flashing, make sure you select it quickly. You only have a few seconds before the pilot will abort the mission due to the failed communication attempt.

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- 2.2.4 Air Targets -  
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Location:

Variable

Function:

The Air Targets are red triangles that represent enemy aircraft detected by the F-14's radar system.

By selecting an Air Target on the HUD, you tell your pilot which way to fly so that you can attempt to engage the enemy aircraft. This can also be used as an evasive maneuver. Selecting another Air Target (if one is available) while a missile is locked onto your F-14 gives you a 50/50 change of evading the incoming weapon. If you are low on countermeasures, it may be your best bet.

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- 2.2.5 Air/Ground Selector -

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Location:

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|           |  
|[ ]       [ ]|  
|[ ]       [ ]|  
|[X]       [ ]|  
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```

Function:

This toggles the weapons systems between Air to Air and Air to Ground modes. When you select this icon you will see the available weapons change depending on which mode you have selected. Always be sure this mode is properly set before engaging the enemy, as you will not be able to fire on the intended target if it is set to the wrong mode.

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- 2.2.6 Weapons -

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Location:

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|           |  
|           |  
|           |  
|[X]       [ ]|  
|[X]       [ ]|  
|[ ]       [ ]|  
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```

Function:

These indicate the currently available Weapons, and the remaining stock for each. Each mode (Air to Air and Air to Ground) has two available Weapons, which will be displayed one on top of the other. Each Weapon icon will also have a corresponding number, which indicates how many of that particular Weapon you still have.

The currently selected Weapon will also flash to indicate which Weapon will be fired on the next shot.

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- 2.2.7 Flare/Chaff Launcher -

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Location:

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|                |  
|[ ]            [ ]|  
|[ ]            [ ]|  
|[ ]            [X]|  
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Function:

Chaff and Flares are used to confuse the guidance computers of incoming missiles. Deploying them quickly will allow you to evade the missile.

These often mean the difference between life and death, so try and preserve them as much as possible. The F-14's systems will automatically select which countermeasure to use when you select the icon, but you do need to keep track of how many are available, indicated by the number on the right side of the icon.

Also keep in mind that you will have only a few seconds to deploy your countermeasures after the F-14's systems detect a missile lock on. Don't waste time, act fast.

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- 2.2.8 Recon Cam -  
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Location:

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|                |  
|[ ]            [ ]|  
|[ ]            [X]|  
|[ ]            [ ]|  
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```

Function:

The Recon Cam is used to take aerial photographs while you fly over the target. Simply place the Aiming Reticle over the Recon Cam icon, and press the B button when the target is visible on the screen.

During your mission briefing you will be given instructions on when to use the Recon Cam if it is required for that mission.

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- 2.2.9 Threat Warning System -  
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Location:

N/A

Function:

The Threat Warning System activates when a missile lock on has been detected, either from an enemy aircraft or a SAM site. You will see the word "WARNING" in large red letters flash in the middle of the HUD, along with an audible alarm. It is very hard to miss.

Once the Threat Warning System has activated, you will only have a few seconds to make a decision. Either attack the SAM site that is locking into your F-14, evade the incoming missile by selecting another Air Target, or launch countermeasures. Whatever you do, don't just sit there.

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### - 2.3 Gameplay -

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The gameplay in Tomcat Alley is very simple.

After listening to your mission briefing, you will take off with your pilot. Select the correct Waypoint when he asks for it, and then prepare to engage the enemy.

The enemy might start attacking without warning, or you may need to select an Air Target from the HUD.

Once you are within firing range of the enemy aircraft, you will see a large green box around the target. You must place the Aiming Reticule over the green target box until the Aiming Reticule turns red. Once it has turned red, quickly press the A button to fire your selected weapon. The enemy cannot avoid your missile, as long as you had a proper lock before firing, you will destroy the target. Some targets will require you to use a specific weapon on them; in which case you must listen closely to any information given to you during the mission briefing, or told to you by your pilot and wing man.

If the Threat Warning System indicates a lock on situation, quickly asses the situation and make a decision. If you are low on countermeasures, try and evade the missile. If you see a SAM site on the ground ahead of you, you can either attempt to lock onto it and destroy it before it launches it's missile, or just deploy countermeasures. To succeed in this game you will need to make these decisions in an instant.

Make sure to always answer your Radio, stay alert for any changes in the mission, and always be ready for an enemy attack.

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### = 3. Missions =

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The following Sections will detail each mission in Tomcat Alley. I will start with a brief synopsis of the mission briefing, and then follow that with an actual walkthrough of that mission.

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### - 3.1 Mission 1 -

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Mission Briefing:

15 minutes ago, radar detected a Russian TU-22 bomber attempting to enter US airspace. It is believed that this bomber is holding a powerful new chemical weapon, enough to threaten the entire western hemisphere. You are to intercept the bomber and take it out at all costs.

Walkthrough:

After takeoff, your wingman will radio you in to report she is in position.

You must respond to her radio communication or the mission will be aborted.

After you have spoken to your wingman, Dakota (your pilot) will ask you to select the first Waypoint. As there is only one Waypoint available for you to select, this shouldn't be a problem.

Upon reaching your first Waypoint, your wingman will radio in again. He reports that radar is detecting multiple unknown aircraft approaching. Your pilot decides to go ahead and investigate.

There will now be three Air Targets on the HUD, destroy them in any order you wish.

After destroying the final enemy aircraft, you will get a visual on the TU-22 bomber and it's fighter escorts. Your wingman will draw off the fighters, you simply need to lock onto the bomber.

However, the bomber is too far away for Sidewinders you have been using so far. Select the Phoenix missile (bottom weapon) and lock onto the bomber. Once you have tone, fire your missile to complete the mission.

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- 3.2 Mission 2 -  
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#### Mission Briefing:

Today you and your wingman will be flying air patrol. Your navigation systems will be programmed with the Waypoints, all you need to do is fly through them all and clear the air of any enemy forces.

There is also some suspicious ground activity in the area, and you are to take some recon photos in the area of Waypoint 2.

#### Walkthrough:

Immediately after takeoff, Dakota will ask for the first Waypoint. Make sure to select "1" (it will have a green circle rather than a red one) as doing this out of order will make it much harder.

Once you arrive at Waypoint 1, you should see 4 Air Targets on the HUD. Destroy them all to proceed. Once the last fighter is destroyed, Dakota will ask for the second Waypoint.

Your wingman will radio in with a report of multiple inbound targets. Answer his radio call, then proceed with destroying the next 3 Air Targets.

Once the third has been destroyed, your wingman will report that they are in trouble. Select the last remaining Air Target to go to the aid of your wingman. You will need to use the Phoenix to lock onto the fighter that is on their tail.

After helping your wingman, you will be in the area where you need to take the recon photos. Simply select the "Recon Cam" icon on the HUD while it is flashing to take the pictures.

As soon as they have been taken, you will be fired upon by a SAM site in the area, be ready to use your countermeasures.

Assuming you successfully avoided the SAM attack, the mission will now be

complete.

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- 3.3 Mission 3 -

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Mission Briefing:

Your recon photos uncovered a rail bridge that is being used by the enemy to transport various chemicals used in their weapons program. It is vitally important that these materials not reach their destination, so the rail bridge must be destroyed.

Walkthrough:

Dakota requests the first Waypoint as soon as you take off, so select Waypoint 1. You will immediately get radar contact on three Air Targets. Destroy them all, then select Waypoint 2 when Dakota requests it.

Waypoint 2 is the beginning of the bombing run. As you will be attacking ground targets, you need to use the Air/Ground Selector to toggle into Ground Mode. You will only have a few seconds to change the firing mode, so do it quickly.

As soon as you switch to Ground Mode, a SAM site will fire on you. Quickly select your countermeasures to avoid the incoming missile.

You will now have to make your way down the canyon, facing multiple SAM sites. There are two ways to handle the SAMs. You could either use your Chaff and Flares each time, which will give you a 100% success rate, or you can try to use your Maverick missiles to destroy the SAM site as you approach. This saves your countermeasures, but if you miss any of the SAM sites, you will be destroyed. Decide which way you want to proceed, and continue on through the 4 SAM sites ahead.

Once you make it through the SAMs, Dakota will ask for the next Waypoint. Select Waypoint 3 to attack the rail bridge directly.

You need to use the Bombs on the bridge, as you cannot lock onto it with any of your guided weapons. Quickly select the Bombs as you approach the target. You will come up on it fast, so make sure you are ready. Place the Aiming Reticule directly over either the left or right side of the bridge, and release. If you have trouble hitting it, try aiming a little higher.

If you don't hit the rail bridge, you will have to start the mission over again. If you hit it, then the mission is complete.

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- 3.4 Mission 4 -

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Mission Briefing:

While running a reconnaissance mission over the enemy's base, two F-14s were attacked by multiple enemy aircraft. While one was able to make it back to base safely, the other F-14 was badly damaged and had to attempt an emergency landing. They couldn't eject as it would mean losing the valuable recon photos they had taken.

Unfortunately, the second F-14 does not land, and is lost before it reaches the base. That means you will have to return to the area and take another set of

recon photos.

#### Walkthrough:

Select Waypoint 1 after takeoff when Dakota asks you for it. Respond to your wingman when he reports multiple targets showing up on radar. Three Air Targets will show up on the HUD.

After destroying all three, two more Air Targets should come up on the HUD. Once you destroy the first target, your wingman will report the second is on their tail. As before, select the last Air Target, and use a Phoenix missile to take out the enemy aircraft before it fires on your wingman. If you allow your wingmen to get shot down here, there is about a 50/50 chance of triggering the game's seventh mission, where you provide air cover for the rescue operation to save Ratchet and Buzz.

After saving your wingman, Dakota will ask for Waypoint 2. Once you arrive, four Air Targets will be on the HUD. After you destroy the third Air Target, the fourth will again be on your wingman's tail. Assist your wingman the same way you did before.

After saving your wingman the second time, you will arrive at the recon point. Get ready to activate the "Recon Cam" as soon as the base comes into view.

As soon as you have taken the pictures, enemy fighters will open fire on you. Quickly activate the countermeasures. Two Air Targets will now be on the HUD, destroy the first one, and then save your wingman (yes, again) to complete the mission.

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#### - 3.4.1 Rescue Mission -

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#### Mission Briefing:

After Ratchet and Buzz are shot down during Mission 4, a rescue operation is put into motion. After some debate, Dakota gets clearance to provide air cover for the Blackhawk extraction team below.

#### Walkthrough:

After the introduction, select Waypoint 1 from your HUD. Here you will encounter 4 Air Targets that need to be dealt with.

Once all 4 Air Targets are destroyed, Dakota will ask for Waypoint 2. Three more Air Targets will now show up on your radar. After you destroy the first enemy aircraft, another one will take it's place, bringing the total enemies at Waypoint 2 to 4.

Once the fourth enemy is destroyed, you will receive a radio message from the Blackhawk extraction team. Quickly respond to this message and the following one. Wouldn't want to fail after getting this far because you didn't respond.

Unfortunately, as soon as Ratchet and Buzz get off the ground with the extraction team, more enemy aircraft appear. You will now be presented with the final 4 Air Targets for this mission. After you splash them all, the mission will be complete and your wingmen will be safe.

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#### - 3.5 Mission 5 -

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Mission Briefing:

The enemy has threatened to begin bombing US cities if your aggression towards them does not stop. You only have one hour to the deadline, the chemical weapons plant identified in your last reconnaissance mission must be destroyed.

Walkthrough:

After takeoff, three Air Targets will show up on the HUD. Destroy them all to proceed. Select Waypoint 1 when Dakota asks.

When you arrive at Waypoint 1, respond to the radio communication from your wingman. Three more Air Targets will appear on the HUD, destroy them all.

After taking out the last enemy aircraft, Dakota will ask for Waypoint 2. Upon arrival Dakota will suggest switching to Maverick missiles in case you run into any SAM sites. That might not be a bad idea, since as soon as he says that, SAMs will begin firing at you. As before, there will be 4 SAM sites that you can either destroy with missiles, or simply use your countermeasures to evade.

Once you are past the SAM sites, Dakota will ask for Waypoint 3. As soon as you arrive, quickly switch to your Bombs and drop them directly onto the refinery below. You should aim towards the smoke stacks and tanks on the right side of the complex. Destroying the refinery can be a bit tricky, as the hit detection is not very forgiving.

If you miss, you will have to go around again for another run. Unfortunately, you will have to take out 4 enemy fighters before you will be able to try it again.

Once the refinery is destroyed, three more Air Targets will show up on your HUD. Destroy them to continue on to the Bunker area.

Quickly switch back to your Bombs and drop them on the group of three hangers on the lower right of the area; aim for the hangars themselves, not the area in front of them. This one is very tricky, as the game sometimes just refuses to acknowledge the hit.

Don't worry about it too much though, as you won't fail the mission by missing them.

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- 3.6 Mission 6 -

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Mission Briefing:

While you destroyed the refinery and avoided an attack on the US, the enemy is still a force to be reckoned with. Infuriated by your destruction of their weapons facility, they have launched a direct attack on N.A.S.T.I HQ.

You must quickly get airborne and defend the base from the hostile forces. Your F-14 was the only one that is able to be launched, so it's up to you to defend Tomcat Alley.

Walkthrough:

As soon as you are airborne, you will need to take out two of the three Air Targets that are shown on the HUD. After the second has been destroyed, two more will then show up.

After you have destroyed the last of that wave, another four Air Targets will appear. You will run out of Sidewinders sometime during this next wave, so make sure you switch to Phoenix missiles when you run out. Expect two more Air Targets to appear during this wave as well. Destroy this second wave to complete the mission, and the game.

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= 4. Misc =  
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- 4.1 The Missing Mission 7 -  
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Even though I have now covered all 7 missions in the game, I am still keeping this Section of the Guide as a special thanks to those who sent me information regarding this obscure little gem of gaming history. I honestly never expected to get a resolution to the missing seventh mission (especially when the developers of the game themselves were unsure as to how it was accessed) but with the help of a few readers out there, I was able to eventually get it documented. Never underestimate the power of the Internet, or of people with too much time on their hands.

I would like to thank Cynthia K. for sending me the initial clues as to the conditions required to trigger the seventh mission, as well as the general synopsis of what occurs. She got me interested in the hunt again after I had pretty much written it off as "just one of those things".

But I must extend my most humble gratitude to Dave W.; without him I would still have a blank space in this Guide. He took on the crushing task of recording himself playing through Tomcat Alley, during the course of which he finally confirmed the method by which you can trigger the game's fabled seventh mission.

To all of those who helped me on this quest of discovery, thank you very much. Without your assistance, I would have never known the joys of those extra few repetitive enemy encounters.

I wish you all the best of luck in your endeavors, and may your Chaff launchers always be full.

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- 4.2 Credits -  
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Thanks to:

My Wife, for always being my wingman. Ugh, did I really just write that?

Sega, for bravely introducing the Sega CD, even if it was an utter failure.

The Code Monkeys, for developing the game and responding to my emails about it.

Cynthia K., for giving me my best and only lead as to triggering Mission 7.

Dave W., for the video of mission 7. If only I could have willed you more chaff

Everyone I don't hate.

# EOF

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