The operating system that Starcrystal is based on currently runs on the Apple IIe, IIc and II+. Development has already started on translating the operating system to the IBM pc family of computers. The first week in September is scheduled for product shipment. A translation to 68000 based computers is in progress and is tenatively scheduled for completion on September 30th. Further translations possible include the Atari 800 and above series computers, providing the user has a 1050 series disk drive, and the Commodore-64 computer.

One of the attractive features of the system is that once a translation is completed all games based on the operating system are translated, being machine transparent. Actually, any computer system with 42K of RAM and 140K of disk storage is capable of running the operating system. Disk I/O is standard on all machines during the operating systems runtime. Starcrystal is designed for solitare play by choice, but because of the I/O standardization it could be developed as a multi-player, modem or RS232 linked, system. Another advantage of the standardized disk I/O is that it allows the transfer of objects and characters between adventures and the Character Generator Program. Screen I/O is developed along two separate display methods, for 68000 based systems and for all other systems. The operating systems display hooks will be identical in both cases, only the actual screen display will be different.

The Starcrystal story line was concieved over a period of eight months and written in twelve months. Starcrystal is set in the Traveller role playing universe. Sixteen hundred pages of published background provide the story line with a logical consistency that has not been achieved to date in the market place. Traveller products have sold in excess of one million items and it is the second most popular role playing game today, trailing only D&D. Traveller materials have the major advantage of offering a popular non-occult based game lacking the stigma of bad press. Traveller portrays a stable benevolent government spanning 10,000 inhabited worlds and surrounded by five, only slightly smaller, star spanning governments. Several hunderd minor governments fill the seams between the giants.

Starcrystal is set in a very small, but highly detailed, part of the Traveller universe known as the Spinward Marches. During the last days of the Terran Empire, known as the Second Imperium, a group of terran traders made contact, in the Spinward Marches, with a race of primitive humaniods known as the Darrians. The Darrians' contact with star travelers sparked a scientific interest of outstanding ability; and as the Second Imperium fell into civil war and barbarism the Darrians developed a stellar community of unrivaled technology. A sub-nova flare struck the Darrian home world and destroyed the Darrian civilization. Several hundred years passed before the Darrian colonies were able to regain the technology to build star-faring ships. When the newly formed Third Imperium encountered them they were a small confederation of worlds. The Imperium respected their sovereignty bypassing them in their expansion.

Another star spanning empire encountered the Darrians and the Imperium, the Zhodani Consulate. A border war broke out, the Darrians sided with the Imperium. The Imperium was unprepared for the war and was forced to withdraw from sixty worlds flanking the Darrians before the armistice was signed. Several hundred years passed with each side consolidating their position. When the Second Frontier War began the Darrians attempted to remain neutral, but the Zhodani began mustering units to cross Querion Subsector and invade Darrian space. The Darrians arranged a meeting of government officials at an unihabited star system in Querion Subsector to discuss terms of surrender. The Darrians offered to allow the Zhodani to surrender, the terms to include the continued neutrality of the Darrian Confederation and Querion to remain a DMZ, to show there sincerity they induced a sub-nova flare in the star before leaving. The Zhodani happily agreed.

The Darrians were far from safe yet. Zhodani espionage operations almost succeeded in getting the research information on two separate occasions. The research scientist, Sisera Barak, decided to destroy all of the development notes and test records except for one copy which he stored on a mnemonic memory crystal. He entrusted the crystal with a lifelong friend, Wadi di Edkos. Wadi hid the Starcrystal as the center of a primitive religion on his home world of Mertactor and secured himself in a stasis chamber with plans to return in thriteen generations. You, the player character, step into this saga ignorant of the inexplicable value and danger of possessing the Starcrystal, just after the Fifth Frontier War, and on the eve of treason, revolution and invasion.

Files on reverse of program disk.
Save Game File-0.
    Location 40: Airlock of the shelter.
    Props: Sign- Clue to close both doors before opening a closed door.
        Panel- Must be repaired and enabled for shelter power.
        Switch- For lights after shelter power is on.

    Location 47: Equipment Room.
    Props: Electronics tool kit- Must possess this to repair panel.

    Location 43: Office.
    Props: Computer- Must remain undamaged for CAT HAT to function.
        CAT HAT- Needed to gain information necessary to win the game.
        Key- Fits lock on the side of the computer. Turns on CAT HAT.
        Lock- Placing key in it turns on CAT HAT.

    Other Locations and Props.
        Various articles in the shelter contain information that will   aid you in
    unlocking the computer files and solving the episode.

Save Game File-1.
    Location 43: Office
    Props: Various weapons.

    Instructions- Do an I or an Inventory to find out what weapons are
    available. There is a GAUSS PISTOL in your holster and a BLADE
        in your scabbard. READY or DRAW the desired weapon and standby
        combat. If you survive you can get your current condition by
        STATUS.

Save Game File-2.
    Location 6: Courtyard

    Instructions- Investigate all locations in the Sephir Temple and any   objects found in it. The ROD in your pocket is a key that can
        open the secret door in Location 36.

Save Game File-3.
    Location 68: Sanctuary
    Props: Diadem- This is the Starcrystal.

    Instructions- Wear the Starcrystal and explore 67, 68, 69, 71, 72, 73   and 74, and examine the articles in these areas.

Save Game File-4.
    Location 83: Cavern Entrance

    Instructions- Explore the underground. Key pieces of information will be exposed in the search. Location 87 can only be entered after typing JOURNAL at some point in the adventure. This was installed to allow a replaying of the game with different goals. The precepts for the second game will be supplied to the player in the Journal of the Traveller Aid Society published by GDW.

    It is worth noting that the Sword Worlds are a small coalition of worlds adjacent to the Darrians and have a relationship to the Zhodani similar to that of modern Russia and East Germany.