

Gunstar Heroes Timeron's Challenge FAQ

by benjamin

Updated to v1.2 on Mar 16, 2006

Gunstar Heroes' TIMERON'S CHALLENGE

A brief, ASCII art free document containing information relating to the second encounter with Timeron in the Sega Genesis shooter classic, Gunstar Heroes.

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INTRODUCTION

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This guide is born from a "code" a GameFAQs user, SaviourV, submitted to the GameFAQs site. The code stated that there is a "hidden" message at the end of the Timeron challenge as well as telling of other attack waves. I was fascinated enough by this to check it out and was surprised and bored by the results.

The document is a rewriting of an e-mail I had sent to the authors of the Gunstar Heroes' FAQs asking that they add this new information to their guides. Both neglected to respond or do so, so I took it upon myself to convert that e-mail into a mini-FAQ.

This is neither a code or an Easter egg; the game specifically challenges the player to survive the encounter. It's just that no one has bothered to do it since Gunstar Heroes is not really a good scoring game nor is the challenge worthwhile or particularly fun. The fact that it takes a full 20 minutes before the attack changes doesn't really encourage anyone to play further. I know I never bothered, and, after playing through it, it's really not worth the effort. :/

I survived Timeron's second encounter as played on my Japanese MegaDrive copy of Gunstar Heroes on normal difficulty. There doesn't appear to be any significant changes among all regions of the game, so the tips and information within this document should be applicable using any version of the game.

Guide history: -- Timeron's Challenge 1.0 guide released
April 11, 2002.
-- Updated to version 1.1 April 6, 2004 to
include Hugo Resende's contribution regarding

- 64'00"00 -- Timeron attacks with small orange homing and spread shots.
- 70'00"00 -- Timeron attacks with small orange spread shots; homing attack disappears.
- 75'00"00 -- Timeron attacks with small orange homing shots; spread attack disappears.
- 80'00"00 -- The small orange homing shots disappear; Timeron begins attacking with the bouncing blue shots; glowing orb appears and tracks ship
- 90'00"00 -- The large blue shots vanish; Timeron finishes attack wave with spread shots.

At 100 minutes, the challenge ends. If the player can survive the entire Timeron encounter, a message is displayed about opening "The Satori Mind" (see same named section below). The player is awarded 930,410 points as a "soul bonus."

†=†
 † Tips For Survival †
 †=†

The challenge tests the player's endurance more than anything. It is possible and recommended to pause the game if one's hand becomes tired or the challenge becomes too boring.

The bullets track the spaceship's position, so it helps to remain in one location until all bullets are heading toward the ship, then shifting position to another spot on the screen. A clockwise motion around the screen works best. The ship is too large too really weave through most of the shots, so this should be the primary method used to avoid the bullets.

The spaceship is equipped with a speed booster, and it helps to use this to maximize the number of bullets tracking the ship's last position. Since the ship can quickly dart out the way, the player can avoid having to initiate a position change until the bullets are just about to strike. Also use the boost for those times when the ship must move between a number of incoming bullets if the gap large enough for the ship to pass through will close at its normal speed.

The only time the player will not be able to lead the bullets is during the bouncing bullet waves. Thankfully, there are not quite as many shots to track, and the paths are easy enough to predict. Just keep looking for spots on the screen where the bullets are expanding and clearing space.

The slow tracking orb is easy to avoid, and the player should be able to avoid it just by focusing on avoiding the other bullets flooding the screen. Be sure to never strike the glowing orb that tracks the player, however.

Finally, remember that the spaceship can absorb some hits if needed. If it is impossible to avoid getting hit, it is better to strike the smallest bullets as they do the least damage. Try to move into a better position if contact is unavoidable, though, to prevent more damage.

†=†
† The Satori Mind †
†=†

Upon completion the following messages are displayed one after the other:

GIVE UP !!

YOU OPENED THE
- SATORI MIND -

REPROGRAMMED BY
1993-NAMI

SOUL BONUS 00930410

It can be assumed that Nami is claiming credit here for programming this second Timeron encounter. I can't say for certain, though, nor do I know what the "Satori Mind" is supposed to mean.

It is not known why it takes so long for Timeron to switch attack patterns or why this challenge is set to 100 minutes (which is longer than the actual game can be played through).

Hidden messages or references in point totals have appeared in a few other shooters including Treasure's own Radiant Silvergun. Unfortunately, I don't know what the soul bonus may or may not indicate.

[begin April 6, 2004 update]

Hugo Resende sent in this bit of information I decided to include regarding the meaning of "satori" in the above:

I don't know if you already know this or if you REALLY want to know this, but... "Satori" is a state (or a moment) of enlightenment, comprehension of all the things (it's like when a guy says "Eureka").It's a Buddhist term related to that "Nirvana" stuffs. I still had no patience to try the "Satori mind" challenge...but i'll try it someday.

Kind of odd that it says "GIVE UP !!" once "enlightenment" is reached. I still don't know the meaning of the soul bonus score.

[end April 6, 2004 update]

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CREDITS

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SaviourV [saviourv AT hotmail DOT com]

"No one" would know this whole thing exists without SaviourV's posting of this Gunstar Heroes' "code." It amazes me that someone can find something new about a game a decade old.

Benjamin Paul Galway [bpgalway AT netscape DOT net]

I get credit for expanding upon SaviourV's initial description of Timeron's attack patterns, providing some advice to help players survive the encounter, and writing this document.

Hugo Resende [subaro AT bhamc DOT zzn DOT com]

Information on the meaning of the "satori mind."

If anyone else has something to contribute, by all means let us know.

End of Document

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