

LANCE HAFFNER GAMES

Retro Releases for Modern OS

Still the fastest...still the most fun!

Welcome to the revival of Lance Haffner Games! Are you ready to “drop the Box?” With such a dedicated community keeping these games alive for decades, it seemed fitting that you - his closest fans - should be able to enjoy the games without extra programs or custom configurations.

It is my pleasure then to provide you these original games, as last released to the public, compiled for modern systems using original BASIC sources. Lance’s original “empire” of games was cross-platform, after all - not just for DOS.

Some modifications were needed to get code to 21st century standards, which improves the ability to read / follow the code. But I also took the liberty of updating a few minor things - like removing disk prompts (*when did you last use a floppy?*) and improving menu navigation and appearance (you can use ESC more). However, *no functional elements of the games were modified*. These games still look and feel like the classics.

Of course, this is just the start of something new with the games. My plans are radical and should break some good ground in the sports sim industry. But until that day comes - enjoy the liberty of playing these games quicker and easier than before!

How do I get started?

1. Extract the zip file for the game you downloaded to any folder on your computer.
2. Copy in any folders with team / stat files you may have from DOS copies of the game (if you would like to carry them over).
3. Double-click to run the "HELLO" program
4. Double-check that folders for Teams / Stats / etc. match your setup.
 - a. By default, the games look for files in the same folder.
 - b. You will either need to adopt this, or update the paths.

For any other questions on how to use the games, read the manuals. Trust me on this. Not only have I read them and found them useful, but I will be updating them regularly in the future with helpful tips and tricks.

Important Notes

1. The [QB64 compiler](#) was used for compilation
 - o Sending screens to a printer uses the default USB printer. From my experience, this works with wifi printers also.
 - o Code is optimized for modern systems, leading to *several improvements*. For example:
 - i. Speed is greatly improved (team selection, stats, etc.)
 - ii. Random number generation will be more...random (*this helps the accuracy of the games*)
2. I've tested every function available in every game. There should be no *obvious* bugs if features are used right.
 - o This is not to say the games are without bugs. I've spent over 600 hours "refactoring" code.
 - o If you suspect a bug or miscalculation, please let me know!
3. Please let me know about *any* issues you find. I will note them all and track them as I work on the games.
 - o They've not been updated in 20 years, so several areas need improvement.
 - o **At this time**, however, I am prioritizing issues as I see fit and reserving several for future releases.

FAQ

1. How did you get the source code?

The source code was obtained directly from Lance, with his permission, and he is in contact with me about the work regularly. He was befriended by myself and Philip Lupi, who helped him understand our motives for obtaining the code. He is excited about seeing the games continue to get new life after so long.

2. Can I obtain the source code?

For now, the source code is in a private GitHub repository. This is simply because I want things to be clean and working well first. In the very near future, public releases will happen under the Affero GPL license. At that time, all code will be available.

3. Can I help you with the code?

If you believe you can contribute in some way, contact me at jleonard2099@gmail.com

4. Can I help you in some other way?

Of course! Until I formally port the games, to compile them for a variety of Mac and Linux systems, I need a spare system to run and test them on. Virtualization and containers help, but I only have one aging laptop to use. The system doesn't need to be great, but should be reliable. I know enough about Mac and Linux to do the rest. I don't even need physical access if I have access over the internet.

5. Where is Hat Trick Hockey? Rampage Wrestling? etc.

The primary programmers for these games was not Lance; he simply helped distribute the games through his successful methods. It is not known what condition their sources are in, but I'd be glad to review them if available. These 4 games have kept me busy, however, and to improve them I need to narrow my focus.

6. Does this change anything with the files I have?

No intentional changes were made to how the code operates. All data will be read / stored in the same format, so any files you have from existing versions will work. If utilities for reading and managing stats experience errors, this generally indicates a malformed stat file.

7. When will you add feature x or update for modern rules?

I have a structured plan for updating the games to add several features. That work will be done in the near future, but exact timing will depend on the time and complexity of the work. I am committed to seeing these games reach their full potential, but it takes time.

8. Can you share your future plans for the games?

I'd be glad to, but only in brief. I plan simpler menus, expanded PBP, modern rules and more accurate simulation. Efforts to drive the game data from database files will be a huge part of the games achieving this potential in the future.

9. Do you at least have a timeline for your work?

Given that I've had the source code for several months before releasing even these simple versions - that's a fair question. This work is done outside my daily job (*which requires me to keep certifications fresh*) and duties as a husband, father and active church member.

My tentative goals are as follows:

- By January 2024, releases should be ready that will have improved AI and/or added features for gameplay.
- By January 2025, I hope to have ported versions available. But I will be tackling several new frontiers, so this could take longer.
- *I don't expect significant changes to the supported utilities.*

10. Are you asking for money for this? I want to pay you!

Freely you have received; freely give. [Matt 10:8]

At this time, I am not providing information to receive donations or payment, but I am considering several different options to support future research.

I received the source code from Lance for these files without cost or burden attached. I have no plans in the near future to turn these games into something for profit either. Lance had time to do that and was very successful. The work I'm doing now is for the fans, and is still very much his work.

It is difficult to ignore the sacrifice this work has been for me, and will continue to be in the near future. This is a significant amount of time apart from my family. Resources for taking the games public will cost money and research for improving them could be costly.

My Background

Aside from sharing Lance's religious beliefs, I also share his goals of making the games fast and accurate. I know what fans enjoy about the games and plan to keep that spirit as the driving force behind decisions. These won't be the most extensive, feature-bloated games like competitors. They'll be fast, fun and accurate for game playability.

I learned BASIC at age 8 for modifying / making simple games and apps. In college, I had a strong reputation for knowing programming concepts (*amongst my computer science major friends*). I picked up several new computer languages along the way. Although not a developer by trade, my professional identity is marked by being the IT guy who automates everything with code.

Building on that work experience, I have several years experience building and querying databases in ERP, and previously developed PowerShell code for grabbing data online. I also have working knowledge of C++ (needed for cross-platform work). These are all skills that will help build out new features for the games in the future.

Aside from all that knowledge, I have the most important skill yet - I know when to ask for help and how to get it.