

MiniSport Laptop Hacker (TM) - Vol. #29. April 1999

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ADMIN

I've collected enough stuff during the past three and a half years that I finally wanted to do another issue of the MiniSport Laptop Hacker. If you want to acquire a compendium of all issues, check one of the internet search engines for mlhack28.zip (the previous release) or mlhack29.zip (includes this file). If you're only ftp capable, check:

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ftp.cs.buffalo.edu (128.205.32.53) /pub/ham-radio  
oak.oakland.edu (198.111.3.158) /pub/simtelnet/msdos/info
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Login with the name "anonymous" and use your email address as the password. My primary drop point is the SimTel collection, directly accessible at their website <http://www.simtelnet.com>.

DELETING THE HARDWARE PASSWORD

During the CMOS setup screen, there is an option of installing a boot-up hardware password on the Minisports. If you do this, and you forget your password, it's been nigh impossible to ever get access to your machine again. Or at least that's been true until I got a letter from William and Joe. Here's what Joe wrote:

"Remove the modem cover and the back of the unit. Locate a 14- or 8-pin IC labeled 93C46. If you are looking at the back of the machine with the modem in the upper right quadrant, you should see two square notches at the bottom of the board. If you look approximately one inch in from the right top corner of the right notch, you should find the chip. (Mine was a 14-pin chip labeled U36). For a 14 pin chip, connect a jumper from pin-5 to pin-9. The board is not labeled so you need to count from the indentation which marks pin 1. If it is an 8-pin chip, connect a jumper from pin-3 to pin-9 [William's notes indicate pin-3 and pin-5; I would check the spec sheets for the device and find which makes sense]. Then turn the unit over on an insulated surfaced and turn it on. Go into setup, go to modify password, and when you receive an error, cut the jumper and press enter 4 times."

That's the text book answer. Here's what actually succeeded for Joe: "I connected the jumper as instructed, turned the machine on, and went into setup (something I could not do without the jumper). The 'modify password' option had two choices: password and no change. I selected PASSWORD and pressed enter. This took me to password verification. After some experimentation, it appears that this is the key. With the jumper in place, I could get through the verification field without having the original password. The next field was for entering and confirming a new password. I entered a new password, confirmed it, then cut the jumper before pressing enter to write it into the CMOS. If I didn't cut the jumper, I received an error that it could not write to CMOS and the original password remained intact. It would appear that the jumper can be cut anytime after you pass through the password verification."

SCANNED IMAGES

Concurrent with the release of MLH #29, I'm submitting mlhschem.zip and mlhremrk.zip to the distribution sites. Both include only scanned .tif images. Mlhschem has schematics and notes for the MiniSport power supply, and mlhremrk has scanned images of the front pages of three articles that

came out in Remark Magazine in 1989 and 1991. I have been unable to contact Remark Magazine about distributing the copyrighted text, so the best I can do is make them available one at a time to individuals wanting them for scholarly research.

AN ERA PASSING - AND CONTINUING



For the die-hard MLH readers, you'll remember at the end of the last issue I was moving to Colorado to attend Space Tactics School, and begin a position as Assistant Professor at the Air Force Academy. As I write this, I've finished that assignment, and am in a temporary location while looking for more opportunities. I'm again active in the astronaut selection cycle while I fly for the Air Force Reserves.

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73, Brian * <http://www.qsl.net/ka9snf>