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Macintosh IIfx: StarController Incompatibility, Workaround

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TOPIC -----

This article describes workarounds for the StarController compatibility problem with the Macintosh IIfx.

DISCUSSION -----

The Macintosh IIfx, with its new high speed serial ports, has some problems with the "Black Beauty" StarController™ hub (PN207). If you set the serial ports on the Macintosh IIfx to "Compatible Mode" everything works fine. But in "High Speed Mode," network performance actually drops if you are going through a StarController.

The problem involves the StarController timing PAL (a socketed programmable analog logic chip) and the way AppleTalk is implemented on the Macintosh IIfx. By replacing the PAL with a GAL (gate array logic chip), you can restore StarController and Macintosh IIfx communication.

The StarController Series 300 hub, which replaces Black Beauty, works fine with the Macintosh IIfx in "High Speed Mode." If you have a Black Beauty StarController and want the PALs replaced by GALs, you can get an upgrade kit, available to the general public (U.S. ONLY).

The address and phone number for Farallon is in a separate article in the Tech Info Library.

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