

For the...

Atari ST
Amiga
CBM 64/128
Spectrum
Amstrad

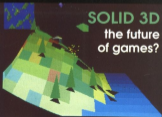
ACE

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CONTENTS

2

INTERFACE

37.....**News**
What's gain' on? Stop here to find out.

17.....**Letters**
An innovation this month - real letters; you, the readers, sound off about the state of the world and the state of ACE.

106.....**The Bitter End**
News of next month's ACE items, plus succulent morsels to round off the rag.

SPECIALS

40.....**Wimp or Winner?**
Our probing, intimate questionnaire reveals your secret games-playing potential.

25.....**Stick sense**
It's not enough to have a good stick - you've got to have the right stick for the right game. Take our advice and raise your score potential.

28.....**Solid 3D - the future of games?**
Solid 3D's all the rage; we take an in-depth look at the games and techniques at the cutting edge of computer entertainment.

33.....**Music**
Check out our guide to MIDI interfaces for your machine, plus news of Creative's new keyboards.

76.....**Budget Gold**
We select 30 budget titles you really ought to have - half of them are full-price games.

GAMEPLAY

45.....**Screen Test**
Reviews of all the latest releases, including budget cracker Flexat, spinning wonder Red L.E.D., ST superclone Skulltagger and much, much more.



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36.....Arcade Ace
Hot coin-op action with *Road Blaster* and *Time Scanner*.



67.....Adventures
Baffled by Babal fish? The *Pilgrim's Playing Guide to* *Witchblades* *Guide* will sort you out. Plus news of Level 9's solo release *Gnome Ranger* and all the tips that make *The Pilgrim* the winningest adventure around.



96.....Tricks 'n' Tactics
Five pages of the tricks, tactics and pokes that can get you further up the high-score table. Including step-by-step guide to playing *SDR*, and a veritable bonanza of pokes.

BUY LINES

104.....Special Offers
ACE mail order offers you amazing bargains – up to 54 discount on some games. Don't miss out.

102.....Subscription Offer
Knock another 10 quid off these mail order bargains when you subscribe to ACE. Don't be a chump: get on to it NOW!

COMPETITION

14.....Two Grand Slams!
Win FREE software for a YEAR from the Telecom Soft range – and that means *Rainbird*, *Firebird* and *Firebird Silver*. It could be worth over £500 each to four lucky readers. Don't miss out!

Dear ACE,

I give up. Issue 1 was bad enough – how you managed to get two free complete games on the cover is totally beyond me. And now you go and shove a playable demo of *Bubble Bobble* on the cover of issue 2! What am I supposed to do? Start a laundrette? Take a slow boat to China? Are you trying to put me out of business?

What really makes me sick, though, is the stuff you actually print. Just because those *Carsons*, *Cookes* and *Wiffers* have been around since day one of computer entertainment, does that give you the right to exploit them so mercilessly in filling your pages with such hostile authoritative reviews? With such scabrously brilliant tips? With such (deliberately) insightful features?

And that's not even counting that sportingly staid look of sold-to games, or the astonishing *Pilgrim's* guide to *Witchblades*, or...

I've had enough. Please send me the next twelve copies of ACE and give me a special 10% subscriber discount off my copy of *Mutant Transporter: Go Ape On Bomba Mountain*.

Yours sincerely,
Adele Hightail,
Publisher of Yesterday's Computer Entertainment

Since this is a serious magazine, we will be doing our best to give all our readers what they want. Including *Jet Hightail*. We draw the line, however, at including games like *Mutant Transporter* in our special offers section.

The Editor

20.....Cover cassette
Full instructions on loading and playing these five fabulous screens from *Bubble Bobble*.



RED L.E.D.



REAL ARCADE ACTION AT ITS BEST!

This year in 2076, Earth's vast resources are finally running out (again). You must bridge the gap to the much needed outer supplies, using three dual synergistic battle-boards to tick up the wild space interface grid.

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ACE NEWS



Charlie Chaplin in City Lights can be long on an image!



White Chapel, awaiting its last days on the ST.

US GOLD'S CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

Xmas is coming, and US Gold plan to be ready for it. They've got some heavyweight licensing deals, a couple of big sequels and a stackful of coin-op conversions, all due out between now and you-know-when.

With Gauntlet's forthcoming appearance on US Gold's block-busting Sins compilation *Sinful Gold*, it'll be replaced as a full-price title by the potentially even bigger *Gauntlet 2* - based on the coin-op sequel it'll have a host of extra features to attract the cash and grab crowd. The similarly compiled *Initiator 2* will be replaced by *Initiator 3* - *The Next Day*, which features three more missions for the heroic *Witchblade*. The good news here is that *Initiator 3* (and *Sinful Gold* buyers for that matter) can get the extra missions alone at a very reasonable £5.95. Seems they couldn't do a similar upgrade for *Gauntlet*, really.

The real heavy hitters in Gold's Xmas line-up should be their new coin-op licenses. They've got *Indiana Jones* and the *Temple of Doom* for all you bulleting fanatics out there, and the really rather nice *Hydra* should also be surfacing across all major formats very soon. Rather than Sins we can expect the smash hit skate-boarder-up *120 Degrees* - though how they'll manage without those special controllers isn't too clear - and the monstrously successful road-race game *Out Run*. *Amstrad* and *64* demos of the latter look promising, but it's still too early to tell whether the 64 demo will be up to a decent *Out Run* conversion.

Last, but by no means least, US Gold have pulled out all the stops in their bid for the "third-*act* Learning *Deal*" award by tying up games agreements on no less than three deal people. Not such obvious winners as



Gauntlet 2: the ST character selection screen.



Out Run: an impressive Amstrad motor game for the moment!

lots of coin-ops you might think, but US Gold reckon that for deal people in question - Charlie Chaplin, Marilyn Monroe and James Dean - should be worth a look or two for them. First in line for "transformation" is Charlie Chaplin, but Gold have confounded industry cynics by coming up

with a relevant and even laudable game.

Rather than the *Jet Set* Charlie the Chaplin license immediately suggests to most people, the first game to come from the deal will be a film industry arcade adventure.

The player must finance, produce and direct some of Chaplin's best known pictures, starting with the classic *City Lights*. ST screen shots look very impressive, and the monochrome films should lend itself nicely even to the Spectrum. Looks like realistic stuff - but bear in mind the fact that US Gold haven't definitively ruled out some kind of platform game.

FIRING UP THE AMIGA

Intel have some good news for Amiga owners with the planned launch of their classic game *Samurai*. Now it can be in progress on this, their first Amiga product. The ST version of this game was very fast indeed, so the Amiga ought to be a real treat. It's good to see Intel putting some committed behind things as well as the ST.

EYE EYE

Ivery much for what seems like the past few months "board" have been pointing it to the ACE offices, all of them bearing images of an eye. The PR source of these rumours refused to say what it was all about. Now, at last, it can be revealed. Eye is the computer game of Eye, the brand new board game - whose creators expect it to be the next *Mastermind* or *Trivial Pursuit*.

Eye, its creators claim, can be played by anyone from 7 years onwards; yet, they say, it can be more complex than chess. The



board game consists of concentric circles changing patterns as they rotate. The colours of the players' counters correspond to some of the colours on the board and the aim is to control your own colour. Sounds pretty baffling. *Eye* is available from various sources including real soon from Endeavour Games.

COMMODORE GET THE BLUES



The side line up with the blunder blunder, you'd think they could have pulled their socks up.

Come on you blues!" is likely to be the rallying cry of anyone working for Commodore UK following a £2.25 million sponsorship deal signed with Chelsea FC. For three years the Chelsea team will wear the Commodore name and logo on their shirts. That's going to be pretty good for Commodore if

Chelsea win lots of matches, as well as the FA Cup and get themselves on the telly a lot. But who'd want to be the man who put pen to cheque if Chelsea manage to get relegated to the Third Division in successive seasons? Soccer can be a funny old game, Brian.

Soccer sponsorship is not

ing new to the Amiga boys; Commodore Germany already sponsor Bayern Munich and - pretty weird, this - Bayern Klee, as their forays into western parts, till Atari follow suit? Are Rockslide set for the soccer sponsorship deal of the century? Probably not, but watch this 'sponsorship space' anyway.

TELLY GAMES

Domarc's new label TV Games is set to bombard you with the prog of the prog. Launching off the PCW (Close is Treasure Hunt, based on the Amiga Race helicopter-out show. This is to be followed by Knight Factor, a reconstruction of the superbly programmed. Domarc are also releasing *Ballzay* and *Countdown*, two more quiz game programs that were originally released by the now defunct Marston. We are informed that these last two are being upgraded.

VIRGIN'S DOLL

In another game of the ball, *Following Mask*, *Demons*, *Masters of the Universe*, *Karastorm* and *Goats*, Virgin are finally getting in on the act with *Action Force*, a game based on the franchise by

Programmed by the Gang of Five, *Action Force* takes place on the island of *Blakelake* (jolly name, that is), where the enemy *COMRA* (really name, that is) have mounted a surprise attack on allied forces. The *Action Force* team have to rescue a hard disc left behind in the ensuing panic. The game should be available some time in October for Spectrum and C64.

DRILLER UPDATE

Latest *Driller* screenshots from *Incentive* show just how close the first *Freemove*-game is getting to solid, playable reality.

BERMUDA PROJECT

It is a hot title hobby in the sun. Instead Microsoft ship you right in the middle of the Bermuda Triangle that mysterious portion of the Atlantic that has spawned more 'amazing' mystery books than the *Question*. You play a reporter - lucky old you - dropped an island which is made up of numerous 'time pockets'. You have to use your skills to travel around and, presumably, get back to the year 1951. £29.95 on ST, out mid-October.



CENSORED!

German computer users may have fun hacking their way into NATO databases, but they won't get quite as far hacking people's heads off from now on. Palace Software's shoot-'em-up *Batavian* has just taken foul of West Germany's Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährdende Schriften – the federal organisation responsible for testing youth-endangering publications – and cannot now be sold there in anyone under 18.

The Bundesprüfstelle previously let the way for banning the *MenProse* submarine simulation *Glenn Jensen* – too militant, it seems – but it was the violence in *Batavian* that they took issue with.

Palace's response to the banning was surprisingly low on outrage as well as the company over *MenProse*'s scanty dead presence on the map. It seems that any publicity is good publicity.

The same goes for CRL, it seems with their latest 3D States adventure *Jack the Ripper*. Unusually for 3D States the game should be taking a serious view of its grisly subject matter, which should make it gruesome stuff indeed. The signs are that CRL will submit the game for certification as a tame video, repeating the publicity stunt of their *Discus* launch. Whether they'll get another 15 minutes for their 150 (or remains-to-be seen, but they're

bound to get some publicity mileage out of it – they're already claiming that *Discus* was so horrific that it had to be censored!



ANTI-HERO

Wish of being Mr. Nice Guy? Mr. Ronald's King of *Disage* - CD-ROM on the Amiga - will give you the opportunity to rook AI

Capone from his perch as boss of the sandy city's mobsters. Now you indulge your nasty nature after that round.



Let's hope that time don't move so fast.

MIRRORSOFT'S MEAN STREAK

It's worth not saying they're a miserable bunch of bastards, just informing you that they're producing a game called *Mean Streak*, featuring inter lines and a lot of mayhem. The games due out first October on Spectrum and C64, ST by Amiga and Amiga shortly after. Mirrorsoft will be running a competition on the game giving you the chance to win a mountainbike.



Look out for that hole in the road ahead!

UP'N'COMING

T-Minus 10 and counting...

Origin systems look set to send you to the stars around Christmas time with the release of a space strategy game called *2001 4.2*. This is as yet unknown as is the exact release date but according to Colin Bantaba - Mirrorsoft's new marketing manager - the game is "well advanced and looking good". Mirrorsoft themselves are also planning to release a space simulation game at about the same time but, again, details have not yet been disclosed. The fun doesn't stop here though because Origin are also planning to release a historical simulation game called *Henry Court* in the run up to Christmas.

Getting offensive down under

FSB, the strategy and wargame simulation people, are planning to release a number of games from the Australian Strategic Studies Group. The titles will include *Battle in Normandy*, which will be a wargame set in Europe in the second world war. *Russia* - The great war in the east will be in a similar vein, but a different location. *Battle Front* is another WW2 wargame and *Europe 1944* is a wargame based upon aerial operations. *Center of War* is another wargame, this time set on board an aircraft carrier 'somewhere in the pacific' and finally *Peace for the Seas* is an inter-shiper simulation game. All titles will be released on the C64 (also with a probable port of £24.95).

Hewson's Plus for Plus 3

While the future of the Spectrum -d still looks a little shaky, some companies are taking the lead and just to reassure titles on sale for the machine. One such company is Hewson who are hoping to please a lot of people this December with the release of a powerful compilation of best selling games such as *Exotic Zings*, *Manana* and *Jordan*. *Plus Three* cost £9.95 for Spectrum tapes and £10.95 for the -3 disk. C64 and Amstrad versions will cost £9.95 and £14.95 on cassette and disk respectively.

If this isn't war for December then Hewson also plan to release a shoot 'em up called *Redoubt* which promises to be a "fantastic playing game" in November. Prices are fixed at £7.95 for the Spectrum cassette with a £8 disk version possible but not yet decided. C64 users can expect to pay £9.95 for a cassette and £12.95 for a disk version of the game.

TIDDLE THAT WINK

Spector's Compendium will offer a wacky arcade adventure game based on three classes of the board games and Ladders, Ludo and Tabletoples. Your host for this unusual entertainment are the EyWink - pop Toody and mom Maria. You take the role of one of the four WINK kids, the Wink baby or the Wink dog. Compendium should be around towards the end of November on Spectrum, Amstrad and C64.

AUTUMN ALL SPORTS



In his autumn term a volume for completions - a volume that Ocean are not to be left out of. They're bringing you (and we quote) 'a bumper sporting compilation pack of 10 games.' This will feature over 20 sporting events and will have the imaginative title of *Game, Set & Match*.

For the C64/128, spectrum, and Amstrad the pack gives you such sporting classics as HyperSports, Benny McQuiggin's Boxing, Ping Pong, Jonah Barrington's Soccer, and Super Soccer among others. All this for a price of £12.95 (exclusive of £11.95 tax).

Strip on your goggles and it's another wrap, strap! The evergreen World Flight simulator *Spitfire '66* is coming out for the ST, courtesy of Wicks-Supermarine Ltd, Marescot. You'll now be able to defend South-East England from Nazi bombers in 16 glowing colours - the cockpit interiors in particular look very impressive - so wouldn't Douglas fluffers now start polishing their tin legs right away.

If all this talk of snicking the Hun's tails strikes you as poor foreign relations on an international machine like the ST, just wait till you get hold of P-10 *Strike Eagle*. Now you can bomb, strafе and dogfight your way across the Middle East on your ST, thanks to Major Bill Beasley's very own MicroProse. The game offers seven different missions over Libya, Iran, North Vietnam and a few other places Major Bill doesn't like very much. There's a positive embarrassment of weaponry on offer, plus the realistic controls and complex instrumentation we've come to expect from the sim specialists.



Taking an altitude-banded fighter over the Gulf will do to your trusty P-10.



Spitfire '66 is heading towards another wrap.



Alternative Games compilation, looking best in July.

ALTERNATIVE GAMES

Six is a team of all those sports programs? Looking for something just that original offering? Ocean's 'athletic sports quest' *Alternative Games* may just provide the answer.

The traditional events include sack racing, foot throwing, pole climbing and turning up walls. Each

one takes place in a different landscape - in Italy, for some reason or other. Players are guided through the games by a bawling parrot. Will a parrot when you lose, like the proverbially sick one beloved of footballers? Find out on Spectrum, Amstrad and C64/128.

EYEBALL Q-BALL

Sit for a while on the lounge in mid-Corbyn in Double Software's *Q-Ball*. It's not good, it's not snazzy and it's not unusual, but it is a ball game with the same basic concept, ball placed inside a cube which has its gravity, eight pockets and the ability to be rotated in stunning 3D. So how you can line up your shots in this perspective. With digital music and real sound effects (the quacking noises in the background perhaps?) it promises to be an absorbing game. Despite the improbable name of the author, a M - wait for it - Billyday. Price for *Q-Ball* is fixed at C64.95 and 128.

PIRATES! CHASE FAME & FORTUNE ON THE HIGH SEAS

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ACE LETTERS

ACE readers sound off about the state of the world and the state of ACE

Who?

Could you please give me someone to write to? I think your new magazine is brilliant. However, I do find that there are changes that you should make.

Firstly, who am I writing to? I think that the person answering letters such as this should have a name or names so that people like the would know how to send letters like this.

David Soper
North

Will you please send letters to Pete Connor. But please try to make them a lot more interesting than this one.

What Toff!

As I subscribe to my local magazine to get a paper, I received your mag - well, the game really. So I produced your mag, fought it and went out of the shop reading your mag. Now! Toff! Mega names of computers mag! So I've got an idea of my magazine for your 10th issue! Oh yes, I own a ZX Spectrum - but I'm swapping my journal together for an ST but I really wouldn't be with that! Anyway, One mag and keep up the good work!

David Sparrow
Eastleigh

What, what all the an-ST, wouldn't we? Well, you might get lucky in the competition.

Standards

I am starting to get my views on the standard of software available. Software companies seem to be going through a phase of converting every single coin-up they can lay their hands on. And then they expect us to buy it because on the cover of the game it says "Official Licensed Computer". Why must we put up with pedantically childish games such as *The Astonishing Adventures of Mr. Beans And The Sea Vampire?* Prizes must be desperate for ideas.

Why can't we have some original ideas instead of the usual bludge the deadly-wildies and then beat the hypergator?

What a relief to get some genuine letters on these pages. They're proof that you do really exist. And a very mixed bunch you are; the oldest authenticated reader is 63, while the youngest is 9. Whatever the age you seem to have liked - on the whole - our first issue. Let us know what you think of the second one; we reckon it's a whole lot better. Get in touch with us on anything you feel strongly about, by writing to ACE Letters, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1EJ

dimensional thinking and then do it all over again. If software companies were to buy their games they must at least try and produce something a lot more interesting.

Andrew Russell
Carlisle, Cumbria

The simple answer is that too many people are prepared to put up with pedantically childish games, rather than advanced computer entertainment. We'll be going in to see the latter first.

Sad Amazed!

I must congratulate yourself and the rest of the team at ACE for producing a really 'good' mag. I especially enjoyed reading Pete Connor's comments on *Flukes*. However, sadly, I'm an Amstrad owner and was a bit frustrated at the limited offers for Amstrad owners compared to the obviously more favourable treatment offered to owners of Spectrums or Commodores. Please try to improve your service to Amstrad owners.

John Wood
Greenwich

Frustrated? While the owner cassette deal didn't offer Amstrad owners a tin (CN - it offered them nothing), you were given the opportunity to get a pretty stunning 68 of some very good games - which Commodore and Spectrum owners didn't get. And the bargains were on in the Mail Order pages. So I don't really think you were badly dealt by.

Overindulged

I have just purchased your first issue, and will be purchasing many more to come. I recently bought the game *Smiler Dash* 1 and had it reasonably easy up to level 1. Then I find it impossible to do. Have you any tips or hints?

G. Brown
Covevery

We've got stacks of tips for that sinister game - and, in fact, we were going to print them in this issue. But pressure on space meant we had to leave them out. Help will be at hand in the next issue of ACE.

Checky buggar

In your first issue of ACE, you made three mistakes. They are:

- (1) Page 88 Code Computers Road Runner (Road Runner)
- (2) Page 74, game Loads of Money missed out price list.
- (3) Page 73, game The Best of 3D missed out price for Amstrad.

Do I get a price for spotting these mistakes?

David Birt
Newport Gwent

No. The minimum number of mistakes you need to spot in order to be eligible for a prize is 473. There were quite a few typographical errors in ACE 1 - but they had many.

Looks it

After reading your first issue of ACE I was thoroughly surprised with the

colour reviews and the PC is a brilliant idea. Your Mail Order software is fantastic. I own a Commodore 64 (4 years old y'know?) and love to see the graphics and reviews of the Amiga and Atari ST.

Stephen Mutton
Worthing Hants

Adding ROM

I read somewhere that the Atari ST had 128K ROM but could be expanded to 512K by adding extra ROM packs. If that is correct how are they added? I.e. plugged on back or placed inside the computer. I am probably thinking about buying an ST.

B. Bradburn
Wells

Yes, you can expand the ST's ROM. There's a slot on the left side of the computer where you can plug in up to 128K of extra ROM. A widespread use for the extra ROM is a better version of BASIC.

Sound query

Could you please answer my questions?

- (1) I have heard that the Atari ST has the same soundchip as the Spectrum. Does this mean the sound is just going to be a bit better than the ST?
- (2) I am working and I was in doubt on whether to buy a Mega, Atari ST or Amiga. Is it really worth the long wait for an ST or Amiga?

Keep up the good work chaps.

Craig Stewart
North Sussex

A *Stuffs* writer: Yes, the ST does have the same soundchip as the Spectrum Plus 2. But sound quality depends not only on the chip used but also on the power of the processor driving it - in this case the speed of 69666. Clever programmers can get some nice noises out of the ST - much better than you've ever likely to hear out of a Spectrum.

ST or Amiga?

Having been a television & hi-fi technician for some 8 years now

I have decided to move on up to a 10-MHz machine but which one? The Mac IIx or the Commodore Amiga?

Being a CBM64 user I am inclined towards the Amiga but before deciding let's compare the two. I want to know more details.

How about a search field on the test sheeting at the pros and cons for each machine as well as your views upon which one is likely to be better software based?

David Hamby
Burgess, Gloucestershire

It's a tricky problem, and one that needs a lot more space than we can give it here. Which is why we're doing a comparison of the two machines in our next issue.

Missing MSX

I looked at your new magazine on a local book shelf this week, and see that you found it very easy to pretend that MSX has not been invented as yet. Why is it that magazines are not sent to MSX when it is now a fair more people in the UK use MSX than CBMs and BBCs, yet maps like yours seem to be so rarely about it?

You are losing over 80,000 Mac readers in UK, and over 2 mil in Europe.

You cannot have that amount with Mac/BBC/CBM's put together. We lost the Mac Computing Mag by Haymarket Publications, not because of lack of readers but lack of Ad.

I then look forward with many others to buying ACE when you start printing about 1989.

D. Webb
Spartan

I understand your dilemma - and in future we'll be trying to make more mention of the MSX machines. At the very least we'll be including them in the Release Box that every review contains. The problem though is that software just isn't developed on MSX these days when a game is new it appears somewhere else. Finally, I think you've exaggerated just a little the "weight" of the importance of MSX relative to other computers.

Higher price Crown

I am a 250 K word 40 and 400K hard copy typed, double of the Crown and you have my daily signature on the dotted line to prove it. So what do you think of that?

Nicholas Burns
Widowath

I think it's pretty impressive.

120 games

I have really saved enough money from a summer job to buy a new Commodore 128 and 1271 disk drive. Please could you tell me of software specifically designed for this the main software houses tend to do a good?

R. Jabit
Hayes Middle

Well, we've talked our party brains and we can't come up with any new-written specifically for the 128. The point is that there aren't more like than 128s, so software houses naturally write for the larger user base and that means that software runs on the higher spec machine - generally, in all media.

PC perfect

Well done on your first issue. I'm glad that you haven't resorted to making your magazine look like a comic without adverts anywhere. The colour pictures are great, the news section is good and the new review system is excellent. I hate the other reviews such as 3-stars, or 10 out of 10. Your reviews give lots of information and the PC is really clear.

Patrick Walsh
Stough

Pre-pubescent

I simply wanted to congratulate you on the quality of the excellent first issue of ACE.

The magazine has begun at a fairly high standard and will, hopefully stay there. Too many of today's publications cater to "schooling humour" so it was pleasantly surprising to see that there was no silly address to write to on the Amiga Computer, neither was there a "fun of 68", "smash, tear" or other such expressions edited by pre-pubescent schoolgirls. Keep up the good work.

Steve Caple
Crown

There was heated debate on the subject of schoolgirls when we began ACE, but this is not the place to go in to it.

Is he crawling?

The more good computer games magazines there are, the better it is for the dedicated game player. ACE certainly ranks highly amongst my favourite magazines. No, I'm not crawling. I do mean it. Wouldn't have been easy to jump into the

magazine and see games in the way we all know and love it. Instead ACE came up with a totally novel approach, including a graph that told you roughly how your level of interest would fluctuate over one year. You must admit that's pretty useful, especially if you're in a similar situation to mine and have to spend your pennies wisely.

Rahul Joshi
London

Are you sure you're not crawling?

1989/90

Excellent, excellent, excellent! Oh Boy! It's long last, can I believe my eyes! Am I dreaming? I have I actually just found and read an almost 16-bit based, NON-COMPUTER COMMERCIALITY entertainment based magazine? A magazine without pages of "pedis" and "Peds" or whatever they're called? A magazine full of down to earth and reasonably sensible games reviews, graphics, adventure and music sections written in everyday average English in the street speak?

I wanted to rush out, buy and play most items covered in the reviews. Shame I haven't got a computer! Then again, I could have a go at the easy to enter competition. None of that "finish the following sentence" crap, no. I hope this letter doesn't exclude me from winning.

As this is too much for me... I'd have to go and sit down in a sheltered room until October 1st, sooner, better.

Yours suffering from high blood pressure

Mike Caswell
Derry

Same stable

Having just bought ACE I figured I should write and congratulate you on a brilliant first issue.

When I said my Amstrad the one thing I missed was Amstrad Action. The impression I got is that ACE is from the same stable, if not it is very similar with its light-hearted approach and whatever the case I like your style. I buy a wide variety of mags, some specialist BT mags and some general computer mags. From what I've read your mag seems well to compete with CWD and I doesn't take a lot of intelligence to figure that you will win. ACE is light hearted and simple yet it doesn't become a rag for 3 year olds. Obviously your rag has still to develop but in time it will be a success.

By the way I've two pointers,

One your font, one not. Firstly I object to paying 50p a issue. Looking for PCW's low layout (keeping the ad-board close up the front pages - only kidding). Secondly, I think game scores out of 100 is a bit OTT if you continued. Finally, your good letters page was brilliant.

M. Knight
Warwick

Impressed

I was most impressed with the magazine - particularly the new style reviews. It is a good idea to include the "Predicted Interest Curve" since when buying a game it is often difficult to predict how long into the future you will be playing it. The "REACTOR" is also a good idea as even a dedicated "Gaffer" has to have something to think about in a game.

One problem with the review system is the ACE rating which I find a little confusing due to it being out of 1000. Wouldn't a mark out of 10 be sufficient?

I think the idea of giving away free games is good. However, it could be better to give away playable levels of new releases since this would be better for the public in that they would be able to actually spend time playing part of a game instead of simply buying it outright - which is often a real these days at £15 a time.

Andrew Gaunt
Warwick

A mark out of 10 wouldn't really do since the ACE Rating is already related to the area under the PC; we need the 1000 to show up the variations. Your suggestion about the cassette is a good idea - so great that when doing it on the very issue, with the five playable Bubble Bubble screens.

Big

May I say thanks for such a fine magazine. When I saw it I bought it straight off and when I saw it was by the ex-PCW team I was thrilled - it's just how PCW used to be, except better!

When you write you have started my own computer forums for Commodore, Spectrum and Amstrad Called Computer Line. It costs 5p and issue 11 is available now! This issue contains a nice Macintosh Computer and news, reviews, tips, tips, jokes, reviews, exclusive new games in depth etc.

Anyway, all the best for the future of ACE. I sure hope it finds a long life!

Anyone ordering Computer

low please enclose a SASE, plus cheque/PC for 50p or cheque/PC for 45p with no SASE, payable to Jonathan Meese.

Jonathan Meese
187 Penryfield Road,
Chatham
Kent ME8 6FL

We shouldn't really be publishing mail bags, but since you've been so nice about us... And only you should write to date your mag after a long-defunct computer beats me.

I never before published
I have been writing to Popular Computing Weekly (especially Ken Garrett) for years. Never once have I had a reply or a letter published (perhaps they write their own as well)

Mark Marshall
Newbury

Will this do?

I. The shape of things to come

I'm kind of fix'd between the eyes and I'm also blushing 'thru' the usual computer mags. C&EG, Crash, Smiler User, Your Smiler, that kind of stuff.

In the shape of things to come, I expect myself. On you at ACE means on hanging-out features of the time? Well ACE has already after a few months into the dashed realms of obscure obscurity? A look-out.

I found the Graphics Books article really interesting, as I'm considering the purchase of a 520 ST. I was wondering if there was any game creator software for the ST in the pipeline, as I'm well into arcade-quality animation & action. I was wondering if there was the slightest chance of something like PWB being adapted to suit the ST range as I'm well into adventures and Tolkien, saving for masters, hobbies, smex, white-haired wizards, eg. Gandalf, putting an end to totally evil machines such as Sauron releasing dragons at their fronted fortresses and the odd white Wolf Beast.

Oh well, must get going to making a way out of the dungeon. Good Luck to you at ACE with further issues, finally going where no other magazine has bothered going before...

The Jesus
Ashford

ACE will not fade away into obscurity. Unfortunately we don't

know of any game creator software or of any plans to produce the adventure creators for the ST.

II Rubber duff? Is it
I thank you for your freedom game withdrawal '1 of ACE, but I feel that your feature on another state-of-the-art mag called -- nothing changed, games games and nothing but games? I know you HAVE to cover games to suit the mag, but could you try to include a listing or two for the people who ARE buying them, it, ESPECIALLY SPECTRUM (because of budget), the latter duh!

I imagine on ADVENTURES, especially the older ones, with less details and helpful advice, would be a guideline for the readers among who you cannot solve them? Please don't forget the B&T machines. There are millions of us out here with no job so we can't buy a new 16-bit job. Sorry about that!

It's hard to believe, but there are still 'beginners' who have no idea as to what goes on inside their machines, and it's only too easy to be tempted to play games instead of learning to program to make how simple the program may be. How many mindless millions simply rag anything on the screen without caring a toss about who wrote it, or what effort was made to attain the knowledge to write games in machine code. Letters over here! I do hope that the PWB game tape will be a regular thing in the future since you are charging £1.50 for the rag every WAG! Or maybe you could charge a quid like everybody else and forgo the trade.

Whatever the situation, I for one will be eagerly awaiting the paper stages for the next issue.

John Hammond
Huywood, Luton

After all these nasty things you've said about us I'm surprised that I'm even bothering to type a polished reply. But there's the wind of sociology that I sit. We need certainly rethink the carrying type or listings -- not even for that rubber duff or paint. Listings are, frankly, a bore and only a tiny minority of people get anything out of them. ACE is an entertainment, not punishment.

The Piglet carries loads of hints and tips for adventures -- and a helpful service may well be on the way.

III Drib and boring

You mag's more organised than, say, Computer and Video Games, but it really put computer heads away from their own-machine magazines you going to have to

1. Change the cover. It's drab and boring. Have a nice cover each week (only monthly). The present cover is hardly eye-catching. Perhaps use a picture of the latest bit game. Anything as long as the word ACE is in 3D and the colour equals that of a realisation! (I'll leave the texture of the back cover... keep it).

2. Contents. You must put a lot more colour inside too, otherwise people will just feel the sections that really interest them. If another magazine's reviews are better than yours, maybe make my section huge. Shows really, but you can prevent it. Colour really will make people stop and look. I would say reviews are read more so by incorporating some amusing remarks like "What was the B&T? Why Computer mags are doing this so by it? Dribble games into different categories (Strategy, Simulation, Arcade and Adventure). You shouldn't have based your Adventure section on the Star/ST and the Commodore Amiga because only a minority of readers will have those models. The rating system is the best I've ever seen. Next idea. Read-judging in Compas every month. Like the ST camp. It would also be a good idea if you brought in a new feature every month or every two months.

P.B. Townsend
Devon

Comments like 'What was the B&T?' are actually 'I WAG are you trying to edit?'

IV Competition cuts

My own self admit with your excellent new magazine and has read it from cover to cover. The only regret was in finding that to enter for your competition had to cut part of an article be wanted to keep. Would it be possible to place competition entries on the reverse side of advertisements rather than articles?

Mrs J.G. Britton
Bristol

Lots of letters and Reader Surveys have complained about the positioning of the competition entry form. Please clarify. It won't happen again, we hope. If entering a competition should mean cutting pages you want to keep, then feel free to send a photocopy instead.

V Awareness

Just a short note to say how much I enjoyed your first issue of the great magazine. The new style games being system works really

well. It shows at a glance how good or bad a game is, so is much better than percentages. The Predicted Interest Curve is the best idea in games reviewing yet. Also the section on MDK is fabulous as I, and many others, are interested in multi-user computers. The subscription offer is awesome and will be subscribing immediately.

Andrew Bign
Birmingham

Preferences please!

To help us provide the kind of magazine you want to read, please give a rating to each section of ACE, on a scale of 1 (liked least) to 10 (liked most). When you write to ACE Letters, please enclose the coupon - or a photocopy of it.

NEWS

ADVENTURES

COMPETITION

TRICKS & TACTICS

LETTERS

SPECIAL OFFERS

STICK SENSE

BLITTER END

3D GAMES

MUSIC

QUESTIONNAIRE

ARCADES

SCREEN TEST

BUDGET GAMES

Bubble Bobble

How to load and play your FREE demo copy

Check out your free cover cassette featuring Firebird's amazing Bubble Bobble - and see why it got an ACE rating of a massive 958 last month!

You control Bub, a cute little dinosaur who keeps from platform to platform, spraying bubbles - for the bad guys who fall onto the start of each screen and attack. Push left or right on your joystick to move to either side, push up to jump and press fire to blow a bubble.



Bubbles are the key to handling those nasty enemies. Blow a bubble at a bully and he floats or tugged inside. If you now jump up on or inside the bubble, that tugged bully flies off across the screen and turns into a piece of fruit for Bub to collect. You'll have to be quick about it, because the bully will break out of the bubble after a while and he'll be very angry indeed!



You'll find you get plenty of bonuses and all manner of strange side-effects from picking up the various types of food and other strange objects around the screens. You can also stop your score up by bumping several 'leaver' bubbles at once, turning them into exotic items worth lots of points.



An even better way of ridding up the points is to use the various special bubbles against the bulles. These float down from the top of the screen on higher levels, and when they can smash all sorts of powerful forces. The only ones you'll encounter on the demo screens are water bubbles - burst these to wash the bulles clean away, and then make lots of points picking up the pieces they turn into - but the full game has a whole arsenal of other bubble-weapons.

Time is of the essence - bonuses disappear if left too long, trapped bulles escape after a while and the whole game can get decidedly nasty if you spend too long on any one screen. If you see the combo option, Bub's got player two's direction left to give him a hand,

Load and Run!

SIDE A: COMMODORE 64

Loading

C64: Rewind tape, hold down SHIFT and press the RUN/STOP key.

C150: Switch to C64 mode, and then load as above.

Controls

Uses one or two joysticks: for single player, use a joystick in port 2. Player two can join in at any time on the C64 version just by pressing the joystick 1 fire button.

The Screens

C64 users get five screens selected from the first 20.

SIDE B: SPECTRUM

Loading

48k Spectrum: To load type LOAD*, hit the ENTER key and press PLAY on the tape deck.
128k Spectrum: select 'tape loader', hit the ENTER key and press PLAY on the tape deck.

Controls

Once the demo has loaded you can select the format type of joystick or define keys for each player. This is a one-off selection, so make sure you get it right first time!

The Screens

Spectrum users get the first five screens of the game.

so that overall time limits each less of a problem. It's also got some hungry competitors for all that nice fruit though, with a bit of a mixed blessing!



BUBBLE BOBBLE

TM



From Taito, the masters of arcade entertainment
'BUBBLE BOBBLE'



Blow and bounce and bob your way into oblivion in this incredible conversion of the greatest arcade game of the year...

Bubble Bobble will blast your brains and bruise your senses...

Defeat yourself... buy Bubble Bobble

Spectrum £7.95 Commodore & Amstrad cassette

£8.95 Commodore disc £12.95 Amstrad disc

£14.95, and for the Atari ST £19.95



firebird

Firebird Software, First Floor, 64-78 New Oxford St., London WC1A 1PS.
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Spectrum
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Screenshots from available versions

Amstrad

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A GIANT CONTEST OF SKILL STRENGTH & STAMINA

GAME SET AND MATCH

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10
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FEATURING
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Commodore version
includes Tracker and
Mighty Hand in place of
Friday Thompson's
Test.

The days are long gone when you could do without a joystick. Now it's more a question of having a stick for your shoot 'em ups, another for games requiring 90 degree turns and, possibly, another one for stirring your tea.

But how do you make your decision? How do you choose the right stick for the right job out of the millions that pour in and out of the world's injection mouldings every year? Fear not - we're naming the best sticks for the games you play, and giving you the lowdown on all that confusing joystick jargon.

STICK SENSE

SHOOT 'EM UP STICKS

In the action games where you're constantly dodging and shooting you need a stick that feels **responsive**.

It's got to be **snappy** - it's no balls barred in the kind of game.

It's got to be **ergonomic** - when you move really fast out of the way of those pesky aliens, it's all directional.

It's got to have a **decent grippable shaft** - you're going to be doing a lot of whisking in the thing, so you don't want some flimsy little thing the size of a toothpick.

It helps if it has **auto-fire** - that old trigger finger can get very tired indeed.

It's nice, for the same reasons, to have a **choice of fire buttons** - the thumb or fingers.

It's a boon if you can **position it on a surface** - that's especially useful when your stick stops in one place.

Finally though, not all that luxury stuff is the bill, too many lack vital elements, particularly a decent shaft and the necessary responsiveness.

First Choice Suncom TAC 5 £13.99

This is the latest in the range TAC (Tactical Action Controller) joystick. It really does the business on those shoot-em-ups. The mechanisms give excellent 8-way movement - it's particularly good on diagonals. The base has four rubber pads which give a reasonable hold on flat surfaces. They're not suckers but they'll keep as you're over plane. There's a fire button, on the top of the shaft, with two slots on the base - strong you going to choose when the heading takes its toll on your digits. While the TAC 5 is not the most solid joystick we've ever seen - it's pretty light - it's so responsive that once you've used it you won't find yourself giving it as much thought as other sticks require. All that's lacking is an auto-fire button.

Honourable mentions Competition Pro Extra \$16.49

The Pro comes in two versions, one of them with a steady state joystick base. It's got a good positive feel and a pretty responsive. Only problem with this stick is the fact it's a stick for leaders.

Quickshot 2 Turbo \$14.95

Needs a bit more welly than the other two systems in the sector. Very stylish and cool stick design, too tactile everywhere you need them. Auto-fire also suckers on the base to give you a good steady platform. The shaft needs a pretty generous grip band to make the most of it.

Suncom TAC 5: lots of positive tactile and auto firehead.



Quickshot 2 Turbo: you get the best of the best, but the real trick makes it very steady indeed.



PIXEL PERFEC STICKS

You know the kind of thing: one false pixel and you're a gamer, as in *Neat! Over Meats* or *Spiralizer*. These games need a stick that gives you that kind of minute control. Reliability isn't so much of a problem, and neither is the position of the fire buttons.



Best Choice

Konix Speeding \$12.99

This original stick has well, well, well made its name. Its simplicity of a joystick design, and doesn't perform well on all kinds of games - but for precision movement it's the top.

Honorable mentions

Competition Pro 5000

This good old-fashioned stick performs pretty nicely when precision testing conditions.

Depositor: The Best - the better, the better. 87%
87% of the time.

90 DEGREES

Some games - *Boulderdash* and *Skulligerry* immediately spring to mind - require very swift changes of direction from the horizontal to the vertical. When you're racing down the screen with a boulder or a skull close behind, you have to have the confidence that your stick will get you left, right, up or down very quickly indeed. Many sticks that are good in other respects just won't do this for you; our shoot-em-up choice, the TAC II, performed miserably on *Skulligerry* because the shaft needs too much movement to get the required effect.

Best Choice

Konix Speeding

The Konix was not open - it is a very sleek stick, as well as being a very precise one.

Honorable Mention

Again, the *Competition* has some high marks. It's not quite as sleek as the Speeding, but it superseded everything else.

Konix Speeding - a stick to end all sticks.



NON-STICK TECHNOLOGY

In the Museum of Stick Archeology you'll find an awful lot of bizarre game controllers that never quite caught on - usually for the simple reason that they didn't work very well. There's a storage case about an exotic stick that attracts gamers and wins enormous publicity, even when someone says it's a fakery.

Mercury Switching

In a mercury switch, the circuit is made up of tiny amounts of liquid mercury flowing around inside. Depending on the angle you hold the switch, the mercury flows to or to bridge the gap between the two contacts (on or off etc). Put one of these switches in a joystick handle and you won't need a base for it at all - you'll get left, right or whatever simply depending on which way the joystick tipped.

Mercury sticks did have a few months in

the limelight, largely because of the rather good advertising them, but the novelty of a joystick with no base couldn't disguise the enormous underlying problem: if a stick got no base, how do you know whether you're holding it upright or not? Like well-known of these gizmos were to stick - a scabbily rubber thing of French origin, and the only named Nintendo, it reminds you have need to gently tilt in the direction you wished to move. Neither of these wacky sticks are the word on this.



A recent curiosity is this joystick (jystick, unpleasantly named *The Terminator*). You don't like the job - barely wiggles the stick and press the steel strip to fire. Simply for such a joystick it performs reasonably well. It weighs in at an explosion of 4.6 lb.

Biophysics

The human body's electrical capacitance might not sound like a great basis for a game controller, but that didn't stop us from using touch-sensitive devices, popping up. These ranged from a commercial stick with a capacitance-operated fire button - the latest result of a fingertip vibration-a-writing ball of fire - to a totally touch-operated controller. Simply your finger over a switch panel to generate the different directions may sound interesting, but it practices the look of hell and each denotes the same way to measure sticks.

Thought Control

Even older than biophysics were the telebook devices which, we were assured all these years ago, would soon have the games playing public attaching electrodes to their fingers and temples. The electrodes were supposed to pick up changes in the body's electrical characteristics and turn them into joystick impulses. These changes are normally quite unobtrusive but, the theory ran, after a while you'd learn how to make your spine (or whatever) do what you want, effectively giving you thought control over your games. In practice it didn't work at all for most people, and never really got off the ground.

Analogue Control

Not a sliver of oil, this one, but it works. It doesn't really test the limit for industry support. The Atari joystick standard we all refer to is based on switches that can either be on or off. There's no middle way between center and up or center and left unless a direction is selected at it all.

Analogue joysticks are based not on switches, but on variable resistors (also known as potentiometers or pots). They don't just tell the computer which way you're moved the stick, they also tell it how big the movement was. This makes them ideal for tight situations, and opens up a lot of con-

trol possibilities for other games, but with a very low impedance - down, for example, and the now defunct Dragon - home computer manufacturers have opted for the joystick standard instead.

Ironically enough, Atari themselves offered two other types of analogue con-

trollers - joysticks and trackballs - with their 8-bit moves, but these weren't too well supported by software houses and aren't available for the 16. The closest thing to analogue game control nowadays is the mouse - and that's another story altogether.

Info need

How about a joystick you don't have to plug into your main? No more tangled cables - that's the promise of an infrared joystick. You just play your game by remote control, like you'd change channels on a TV. Unfortunately, as with a TV remote, you have to keep the stick pointed at the receiver all the time or the infrared control beam won't be pointed up. You're bound to forget the all-relevant moments and lose control of the game, making the whole exercise rather pointless.

Stick Sticks

Here's one you won't find outside the hell-level circles of CAD (Computer Aided Design). Though the stick looks quite normal at a glance, it is in fact completely solid: the stick and base form a single piece of metal, with no hinges or joints of any kind. The handle doesn't actually move, rather when you push it, but tiny strain gauges detect the pressure and relay it to the computer. Good stuff to techno-heads of course, but the level of technology is a bit pricey for games use of the moment.

STICK SWITCHES

The switches in a joystick make a big difference to the way it feels and performs. There are four main types of switch commonly used in modern sticks:

Master Switch

One contact is a small metal stud and the other is a shallow, flexible dome acted over it. When the stick or button presses down on the switch, the metal dome pops in and makes contact with the stud. Release the pressure again and the dome pops back out, breaking the contact. A very primitive kind of switch found in older sticks like the *SpaceWar!* If the Master has an ugly feel to it and is rather unresponsive, you need sometimes for the buttons.

Leaf Switch

Again, one contact is a small metal stud. The other one's a strip of metal clamped at one end. The stick leans against the top end of this strip and bends it to make contact with the stud. Leaf switches are very robust and have a smooth action, but don't give the positive click to those that players tend to expect nowadays.

Direct Contact

The stick is pivoted where it enters the base, and at its lower end has a metal contact. Being the stick is the right, the metal contact on the other end swings left and bears against a metal plate, one of four surrounding the contact. This completes the circuit directly, with no need for switches. In a sense, the whole stick is one big switch. The principle has a few drawbacks - in particular the completely dead action to it - but sticks based on it make contact reliably and are great for holding these diagonals.

Microswitch

The major word in joystick ads today, and with some reason. A microswitch is a small plastic box with a tiny, robust switch sealed inside it. You can't get at the switch contacts themselves, instead there's a small plastic stud projecting from one end of the unit. Press the stud in to make contact, and release it to break the circuit again.

Microswitches are responsive, reliable, they've got a good positive action and are a must for most games. Disadvantages? Well, diagonals can be very difficult to fit with a microswitch stick. The most reliable method for getting, say, top left is to push the stick up and then slide it left so as to make contact on both switches.

The rise of 16-bit micros is causing a revolution in games graphics, and solid 3D programs are in the forefront of it. Andy 'I'm no boffin - pass me that slide-rule' Wilton explains how the extra power of an ST, an Amiga or even a boring old PC clone can be used to fill in shapes which 8-bit machines would have to leave as 'wire frames'.

SOLID STUFF

16-bit versions of *Duke*... that wire frame greedily of them all... vary in speed and use of memory, but for the most part you would really mistake any one format for any other. On the rare PC version due we learn from Robert however, you can choose between wire frame and hidden graphics. Choose hidden, even on a humble Amstrad PC, and the resulting ship, asteroid and space station moves as smoothly as you could wish for - but they're solid.

PC *Duke* is the first 16-bit version to have programming house fixed. This is fine that specialises in 3D graphics. It was David Stern 3D Graphics 2 that started the hidden-graphics ball rolling some two years ago on the Spectrum and later the Amstrad. Neither of these machines really had enough power for all that wire frame, and the results - though very impressive to look at - were only just fast enough for the game to be playable.

Both Stern 2 and the later Stern were impressive enough to show that solid

3D was worth pursuing, if only some way could be found around the problem of speed. Stern's desired effect was one - draw - a game format where movement is kept to a minimum - but increasingly software houses are taking to the extra power of the 16-bit Amiga as the way forward. Generation 1D

(later reviewed) has taken a lead in this. It is the forthcoming *Robotix*, a game from Microvory - publisher Norwag.

There also is a lot of activity on the old yet sleeker 16-bit Acorn Archimedes, with Superbit about to launch the new shoot-em-up *Scorch*. The games creating graphics themselves costing quite a bit, but there's nothing new for author David Graham - he was one of the programmers responsible for the original BBC

Elite. Expect another solid 3D game from Superbit later in this year. It's time based on that machine. There's to be for a yet, but it's said to be impressive stuff.

Choice of low-costed machines will just have to stand over the speed and consistency of Stern's graphics for the time being, but 16

bit Amiga versions are already under development at Argonaut - the programming team headed by John Lee, creator of *Robobots* wire frame classic. Singlebit Argonaut are also working on a solid Stern-like sequel due out early next year, though the pricing is fixed it won't be called *Singlebit 2*.

All of this is in sharp contrast to the current new solid 3D-Thompson system, which is firmly aimed at the 8-bit



Duke demonstrates high-contrast colour with the ground (middle) in spite of its just one-bit palette and limited field of vision (left).



Duke demonstrates how the green walls in the middle of the screen take shape and floating hard, but wireframe makes the wireframe you see (right) transparent.



Duke demonstrates how Superbit has a much finer resolution than Elite, but still 1-bit. The red planet here is just making a couple of your own.

mechanics. The emphasis in Perspective games - such as the forthcoming *Duke* - will be on exploration and pushing stuff that blocks everything in sight. The graphics shows how the new game programs, and it's still not clear just how far the finished games will run.

Wire Frame and Solid 3D

As home computer games like *Scrapdick* or *Mechanics* can trace their origins back to a first wireless game called *Ballistics*. The inventor's concept used a vector display to centre in light, slanty-angled line-graphics.

Vector displays are specifically designed to produce straight lines, and are normally built only as part of purpose-built graphics systems. On your normal TV set, the image is produced by a small beam of light that scans the screen line by line, starting at the top-left hand corner of the display and working down, increasing the raster speed fifty times a second. With a vector display, however, the beam's line to sweep is only deflected so if the program wants to create a line between any two points, the beam will do precisely that. There was a time when you could pick up a small vector display inside machines called the *Vector*, to avoid shock - a bargain despite the look of software to the machine.

Home computers on the other hand normally use the raster displays of TVs or monitors. These displays are made up of points - tiny dots of colour - so the lines tend to be rather jagged often. That didn't, however, stop programmers imitating *Ballistics*'s graphics on home micros. Almost all two-perspective 3D games since then have used straight line graphics, despite the poor use they make of the raster displays' real strong point - solid colour or colour. Quite simply, it's much quicker to draw the outlines of shapes than it is to fill them in.

Then - with the rise of the ST and Amiga, came inability to see vector graphics display past overnight. For one thing, large complex line graphics like classic games scenes on one different machine simultaneously had three latest power. *Comet Command*, will almost certainly not be converted to the ST - the ageing Commodore simply doesn't have the power it would need.

There are also arguments in favour of straight line graphics even on machines which are powerful enough for solid 3D. The time saved by sticking with wire frame techniques could be used to give vehicles and scenery more detail - a trade-off that might prove popular once the initial demand for fixed graphics is satisfied.

Archimedes who?

If you've got a spare 68000 floating around, you could buy a machine with no joystick port and only one commercially available game. For that way, the Acorn Archimedes doesn't sound an attractive proposition for computer entertainment - so why are top programmers like David Braben and Ian Bell putting so much effort into writing games for it?

The answer is simple. The 68020 ARM chip at the heart of the Archimedes offers

3D Game ST from Comdex. 10.66 more going on 3D wire-frame game has still to test.



Vector display from Aqueduct Spectrum and Amiga versions, either by Red Tide, were sold 30 - the 68k conversion made.



3D graphics showing from finished that time's best solid 3D game, either by Red Tide, were sold 30 - the 68k conversion made.

abundant of power to move quickly, fill areas, draw lines or do any of the other heavy duty tasks a games machine has to handle - very, very quickly. It's faster than the Amiga's better chip, even of tasks the latter was specifically designed for, and it loses the ST's speedly 80000 bit data.

If Acorn are planning a cheap ARM-based home machine they're keeping it a closely guarded secret, but don't worry - with ST and Amiga conversions of *Dark* already under way, we can expect plenty of nice spin-offs from all that Archimedes effort.

Solid power

68k: The poor old 68k is fairly underpowered compared to the other main home micros. On most games its wretched scrolling and sprite capabilities more than make up for this, but they're no help for solid 3D. Even vectors are quite slow on the 68k, so its likely to end up either out-of-favour.

Atari ST: With 16 colour screens and bags of power to animate them, the ST can manage far better solid 3D than any of the 8-bit machines. Take a look at the 3D Game reader in our Screen Test pages for a taste of the graphics it can do.

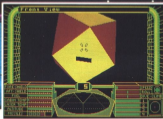
Spectrum: Colour limitations make Spectrum solid 3D mostly a matter of shading patterns, but there's enough power to animate these quite nicely.

Amstrad: The CPC's colour capabilities make for some terrific screens, but there's a lot more work for the program to do to animate them. Probably the best-looking of all the 8-bit machines as far as solid 3D goes, but the Spectrum has the edge on speed and smoothness.

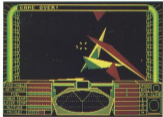
Amiga: The Amiga's better has the drawing and shading facilities which make it astonishingly powerful for solid 3D work. The ST can't come near to matching it here, even with its own better - nor can it handle 32 colour screens, of course. If you don't have an Amiga, you will might catch a piece of the solid action on one of the Amiga-based 68k-02s coming soon from Bell or Amiga.



Archimedes 3D from Spectrum, made by Red Tide, was sold for the 68k conversion to Amiga.



The Atari 400 game 'Freelink' approaching a space station - isn't it cool?



The Atari 400 'Space Invaders' - it's almost worth getting killed just to see what they're doing to your screen.

Freescapc Manoeuvres

Incentive's Freescapc system is very impressive to watch. You can move around a solid 3D landscape and look in all directions, including up and down. This sequence of shots shows you approaching the ACE logo.



The ACE logo from a distance - both forward and side on views look good.



We're getting there. And on the way we were impressed by the speed with which the background in this Atari-based screen rotates around behind objects. Would be a bonus in the 'final' graphics. Let's hope the game is as good as the graphics system!



Once implemented in a game, you could climb up inside that egg (I) and look up to see a rotating floor above you. The sort of interaction with the landscape opens up more than just visual descriptions - the 3D system demands the thinking that some lovely games and graphics can do. There could be the fun, but some subtle subtlety of the objects you look up at of the setting.

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MIDI MADE SIMPLE

Part 2 of our course takes you one step closer to making music for yourself...

MIDI, as we described in the last issue, allows information to be exchanged (byte-by-byte in total) between different instruments. Data flows out of a unit called MIDI OUT port and in to the unit through the MIDI IN port (a 5-pin DIN port). Some units have a MIDI THRU port provided as well, which simply outputs a copy of the information received at the IN port — thereby providing a means of daisy-chaining instruments together (see illustration opposite).

But what sort of information is being transmitted? And how do buttons, keys, faders, etc. do it? The initial part is that we are dealing with analogue-based musical information, not non-volatile asynchronous preprogrammed drives (sequencers, disks). We're talking about notes, start/stop commands, volume and so on. In fact every your General MIDI Logic program, hence a type of input, and every so...

Basic Information

You may remember from last month that MIDI data falls into two main categories:

STATUS info and the DATA that may follow it. All status information is recognised by looking at its seventh bit set, so it follows that status bytes fall in the range 128-255. Not all of these are actually used, however, but you'll find a complete list of MIDI status messages in Table 2 over the page. The general rule to remember is that status bytes tell the receiving instrument that it is going to have got its act together and actually DO something, and data bytes simply fill in the picture, as in status byte NOTE ON, followed by note type MIDDLE C.

If you look at Table 2, you can see that just about every kind of info about musical performance is MIDIable.

The only thing you may find puzzling about the contents of the table, however, are the Channel Mode messages, since we haven't discussed these before. There are five channel modes to MIDI operation, and the significance of these modes depends on whether you're talking about a receiving or transmitting instrument. Check out Table 1 below for more details.

Next month we'll look at MIDI control messages, but really there's precious little else to tell you about MIDI theory. The only problems you're likely to encounter from now on are those of jargon and therefore we'll do our best to help you on both counts by

Polyglotted?

To understand MIDI modes, you'll also need to have a clear idea of what is meant by monophonic, polyphonic, and multi-voiced instruments. Easy...

Imagine your synthesiser as a small box with a tiny musician cranking inside it. He can only play one instrument, and one note at a time, and you tell him which note to play by depressing one of the keys on the keyboard.

This is a monophonic synthesiser and the man is the system's "voice". However many keys you depress, you'll only get one note out of him, and one sound pattern (or "instrument") at a time.

In a polyphonic system, the mythical part is joined by some of his equally mythical companions. There may be ten, eight — even sixteen — of them in there, but each "voice" can still only play one note and what's more, they'll all be playing the same sound pattern. You can't have one be drums, one an guitar, and the other four beating away on the bells.

That, however, is exactly what you can do with a multivoiced instrument. First, you get more than one voice, and — best of all — you can assign each voice a different instrument. Using MIDI to control a multivoiced synth (especially if Model B) can be very exciting — check out our review next month of Roland's MT32.

explaining where music speaks at every opportunity, and by reviewing products that fit your purse. Obviously when you come to putting it into practice with your own equipment there may be minor problems, and that's why we're setting up the ACE MIDI Panel of Experts. You'll find details of this in the box elsewhere in this section. Further information about MIDI possibilities can also be found in the notes accompanying our illustration of a typical MIDI system-oriental.

MIDI Channel Modes	Receiving Instrument	Transmitting Instrument
Mode 1: Omni On/Poly (sometimes called 'Omni mode')	Receives information on all channels and assigns it to each note in turn until they have all been assigned a more definite destination. It is then granted to the next-most open (or vice versa) 12 keys to connecting instruments that have been requested to transfer to receive-on-or-channel only — Mode 1 ensures that the two instruments will talk to each other. Look up your info about channel separator between two units.	Sends all information over a single channel, which is then assigned or left to channel 1.
Mode 2: Omni On/Mono	Receives information on all channels but assigns it to one note and if the notes that the receiving instrument is being told to play more than one note at a time, it will choose some that represent the music in the best note allowed, depending on the programming in the music software.	Sends voice messages to one voice over to each channel.
Mode 3: Omni Off/Poly (sometimes called 'Poly mode')	Looks for info on one channel only and assigns the data to its voice mode — Mode 1.	Send information for all notes over to each channel.
Mode 4: Omni Off/Mono	Each note needs a channel to be sent, and the channel needs to be used with care — you can't give channel 100.	Assigns a channel to each note and sends info to that voice down to each channel.

Putting it all together

Computer with MIDI interface



MIDI Thru box with one IN port and three OUT ports

MIDI KEYBOARD

MIDI KEYBOARD
Casio's 200 is the popular programmable unit that comes free to users with MIDI.



Sampler
The idea originally involving real life sound-to-reproduction ratios per key, because guitar strings, it takes practical reality. Check out our new budget sampling real world.

MIDI Controller Keyboard

A master keyboard serves a useful way of controlling different instruments. Casio's 2000 is a popular programmable unit that comes free to users with MIDI.

Expander

Also called 'sound modules' expanders are simply the sound-generating circuitry of ordinary synths, minus the keyboard. Controlled via MIDI software, it's another application. They often feature more voices and other features than synths costing twice as much.

Downfall

For those who don't have substantial MIDI budgets, the solution may be King Populators, Casio's new MIDI digital synth module will set you back only £199.



MIDI status messages

1. General messages - data with a channel number in the range 0-15 allowing you the broadcast-network with a 0 base.

Byte format No. of data bytes following/description

- 10000000 1 **Mute off**
This code shuts off a playing note, the number of which is indicated by the top of the following data byte, and the velocity of release (how quickly you let your finger off the key) by the second.
- 00010000 1 **Mute on**
Turn-on a note, the code number indicating the first octaves and the velocity (eg. how quickly you depress a key) by the second. Note that you can use the code with a velocity and a velocity Note ON.
- 00000000 1 **Poly key pressure (Aftertouch)**
Indicates the pressure applied to a key. Key movement, as an initial cut-off rate for the note, the expression pedal, but can represent a slow release time.
- 00100000 1 **Control change**
Start a new MIDI message with a new MIDI number. For the moment, suffice it to say that the code contains information relating to a controller, modulation wheel, and so on.
- 00100000 1 **Channel mode message**
Changes the MIDI operation mode - see notes of mode variations on page 20. These are distinguished from Control Change messages above by having the top data byte set to a value between 04 and 07.

- 10000000 1 **Program change**
You're starting a new piece on your synth with the control panel sound. Middle Eastern string. Many Yamaha full of the 'Piano' which the manufacturer calls 'Piano for the Piano' and you can't change it. Note that the 'Piano' is a different code key, which may be changed independently.
- 10000000 1 **Channel pressure (Aftertouch)**
Channel pressure applied to the keyboard, as opposed to the per-key pressure indicated under the per-key pressure feature.
- 11000000 2 **Pitch wheel change**
Many modern electronic instruments incorporate a pitch bend feature - jiggles a note, but the frequency of the note rises or falls. The rate of the deviation in the pitch is measured in centimetre, multiplied by the sixth by the two digitised frequency deviation.

2. System messages

- 11110000 1 **System message 0-127 System exclusive**
The data byte sets the instrument that it is used to receive a manufacturer's exclusive message, and the first data byte contains the manufacturer's ID code (see list under 'Manufacturer'). The original definition is contained in a

note data byte. You can, however, transmit a System message with a first data byte set to 0 (the code is generally designed to interpret data - see below), otherwise the system will ignore the data message and then return to normal operation mode, including any data. If you're feeling really unhappy, you can send an 024 control system exclusive code - see page 20.

- 11100000 1 **Song position pointer**
The MIDI controller includes an internal register (usually called) that holds the number of MIDI notes processed since the start of a song. This message sets the contents of that register, allowing you to jump to any position in the song. The first data bytes can contain any value between 0 and 127, giving you 1024 (2⁷ - 1) different positions.
- 11100011 1 **Song select**
The data byte contains the number of the song you wish to select, numbered from 0.
- 11100100 1 **Tune request**
You want something to be done, normally, to the MIDI controller for Auto Tuning. You can command to another synthesizer to tune their instrument. You know it makes sense.
- 11100111 0 **End of System Exclusive**
Has really nothing to do with manufacturers, but has some data bytes to separate the end of one System exclusive. Probably best to use a cut-off.

3. System real time messages. Those of you who were privileged to read last month's column will remember that these little 'Baudot' can interrupt any flow of data or status bytes, tell the synth to adjust its clock or one of the other operations outlined below and then let it get on with what it was doing before the interruption.

- 11110000 1 **Timing clock**
Keeps everything in step, by sending 04 pulses for every eighth (or quarter note) note (1/8th or 1/4th).
- 11110010 0 **Start**
Off you make, get on.
- 11110011 0 **Continue**
Go on, go on.
- 11110100 0 **Stop**
...and so on.
- 11110110 0 **Active sensing**
Sends regular pulses to the analogue being asked, for when needed, for some systems all systems to make it and if they don't get one or three or less than three 010s, they will send 010s for one second and return to normal operation.
- 11110111 0 **System reset**
Resets the system, a 1/8th note duration - 1 sec.



The diagrams on the left show a two-channel MIDI system. Of course you don't HAVE to have all that gear - you can spend a lifetime exploring the possibilities of a single instrument connected to your computer - but let's leave it "virtual" in the spirit of sound. So what's going on here?

The MIDI signal from the computer goes out to a MIDI thru box, which simply splits the signal and outputs it along its two available separate lines to these different instruments. These go to the master keyboard, the expander, and the drum unit. Note the use of the TRIG ports on the drum unit and the sampler in (data-chains) these together with the second keyboard.

Both the expander and the drum unit have their own sound output lines, which you can put through your amp or into a system. And of course most portable systems have their own inbuilt loudspeakers, as here.

This system would enable you to enter notes and other playing parameters from the master keyboard into the computer's sequence software, or to compose directly on the computer using a suitable program. The data could then be output to the expander, drum machine and other MIDI units to generate the sound. Not very satisfactory really - since what you really want to do is control the expander from the mas-

ter keyboard directly. If the computer MIDI interface had a TRIG port, you could run the output from that to the expander - or you could connect the master keyboard to the expander directly - or

The point here is that actually writing up MIDI equipment takes a little thought and depends very much on what you actually want the system to do. Do you want to use your computer and software as a digital multi-track tape recorder? Or as a composing tool? Or can you simply amuse in playing several instruments simultaneously to that SATISFIED sound?

There are basically two rules in operation here, which you will encounter again and again. They are:

- 1) That to solve every MIDI problem there should be a simple solution - and
- 2) That to solve every MIDI solution, there should be a thousand MIDI sockets.

Which is why in future issues we shall look at gadgets that will make hooking up your system that much easier. In the meantime, why not get a paper and pencil and sketch out your tentative MIDI set-up. A small token goes to the reader it says who submits one amusing enough to be printed on these pages.

Making the right connections...

There are dozens of suitable software packages to enable you to make recording use of your music. We shall be reviewing these in future issues at M&S, but in the meantime it's enough to say that they all have one thing in common - the need for a MIDI interface to data transmission. Most computers, unfortunately, do not have MIDI built-in, which means of course that you have to look around to find a suitable for your needs.

One exception - at least, the ONLY exception - is the Atari ST range (300, 340, and Mega), all of which have the necessary facilities built every sound the board. The ST has a dedicated five-pin DIN MIDI IN and the normal MIDI TRIG socket is combined with the MIDI OUT by using a couple of spare pins. This means that you might have to do a bit of cable hanky-panky if you don't have a MIDI switch box (of which more later).

The convenience of the ST's built-in MIDI socket has made it by far the most popular music to serious musicians, there are dozens of MIDI software packages available from Muzak Arts, Steinberg, Servis, C-Lab, Mainline, D-T and others. Some of the more expensive, such as the \$500+ SMP/Track from Hybrid Arts, also allow you to use SMP/E, a standard for synchronising music and video. **Synthetic Music** carries a wide range of ST hardware and software and a consequently willing to demonstrate it at

With its built-in disk drive, XMP interface, and huge memory the ST is certainly the choice of the professionals, but what about the rest of us? Help is at hand in the form of a range of fully independent hardware-software packages from a variety of UK and US manufacturers.

SPECTRUM

There are two main contenders for the Spectrum owner - the **MIDI** and **Cheerful** interfaces. While the Spectrum Plus 2 has a built-in MIDI built-in, it's incorporated into the two-core-type IS-250 socket and a MIDI OUT only, as its primary function. Effectively leaving a MIDI OUT only means that you would never be able to feed recorded data from your keyboard into the computer - even suggesting you were able to overcome the existing MIDI software-compatibility problems.

We wish listeners, however, apply to the **Cheerful** MIDI interface. It's an undistinguished-looking black box which plugs into the Spectrum's user port. It features separate sockets for MIDI IN, OUT, and TRIG and comes with a good tape-based software package that allows you to record eight tracks of music, either in real-time as you play or in 'step' feed, note by note on the screen.

The resulting data can be designed to any of the sixteen available MIDI channels,

This means you!

If you're entering the world of electronic music, there's nothing more helpful than having someone by your side to give you good, down-to-earth practical advice. We're looking for people who can do just that.

If you wish to earn yourself a reputation, same as the parents, and the chance of previewing some of the newest kit - and reckon you've the knowledge and experience to answer other readers' problems, why not apply to join our MIDI Panel of Experts? You don't have to be Shakespeare, but you should be able to spell confidently, correctly and have experience of using home keyboards, synths, and other MIDI kit. It's free from you - Write to Steve Coote, ACE, 1 Queen Street, BATH, BA1 1EL with details of yourself and your interests - and hurry! We want you to issue it!

and playback can be synchronized to an external source such as a drum machine. At £40.95 the unit is an excellent test rig for Spectrum owners.

ACE's Micron MIDI interface is also based at £49.95. But it has a better specification,

MIDI IN, OUT, TRIG and sync IN and OUT. The sync line follows a standard established by Roland and operates on a basis of 24 pulses per quarter note. There's an extensive range of software available for the 202 software - including 200 stepwise sequences, Class C2 and Yamaha C2, mixer program editor, and a MIDI database which stores patches in binary MIDI syntax.

The range-up to the point that software designed to use MIDI interfaces will not necessarily work on another MIDI rig by a standard, but its implementation on home digital depends very much on the status of the software designer. So make sure that you purchase and software get along together before buying.

As an alternative to the above two packages is the **IBM Music Interface**, which includes a MIDI interface, sound sampler and sequencer all in one package for £49.95. Inevitably it demands all these functions into the vast main secondary storage.

COMMODORE 44

Apart from the MIDI 2T, the second best means to standard purposes is the Commodore 44. Its standard data drive, relatively high memory and inclusion of interface ports make it a great budget system. Most 64-MIDI interfaces plug into the cartridge port and include 20 C2T and 200 C2T notes.

The cheapest is the **Datal**, or 6244, which supports most software from Jellinghaus, Bell, and C-Data, as well as the useful Roland Advanced Music Systems. The Datal features the three MIDI sockets, plus a sound card, an mixing level.

One excellent option is the **C-Data** interface with built-in Sequencer software. Just plug in and music needs to go. Of course you will need a disk drive to store your music files.

A huge range of Commodore 64 MIDI packages is available from the American company **Passport International**, to use their you need the 4118 Passport interface nothing else will work. This is a pity since it's the most complete than the Datal, and since the software packages themselves aren't cheap, the whole deal works out fairly expensively.

Also available at around £99 from many music shops, though critically discontinued, is the **bell** interface. This is a large box with a cartridge port connector on a ribbon cable. It has the usual MIDI IN, TRIG and sync but actually it features three MIDI C2T's. Obviously that is handy if you have several MIDI synths and don't have a MIDI switch box as shown in our *Hardware* on page 24.

ANTRAD

There are two choices of interface for the Amstrad CPC range. Many Amstrad owners will have seen the notorious Miles Fletcher or **ElectroMusic Sequence** - demonstratingTM his wiles at the PCP and Amstrad stores. DMI produces a whole series of units and software covering the Amstrad CPC, MSX, BBC Spectra and other 8-bit machines. They also provide a wide selection of software, both sequencers and patch editors. Well be con-

tinued in this article in more detail in a future issue.

Alternatives for the Amstrad CPC and PCP include an interface from **DMC**, whose range includes interfaces for both machines, sequencers, and patch editors for continuous synths like the **Conto C2T** as well as less common ones like the **Orga DVI** series.

ALART 8-BIT

Apart from the 20, eight bit machines such as the 400, 800, and 82 series aren't left out either. There's an excellent system available from **TwoBit** for the MIDI market, comprising a connecting cable interface and a wide range of disk software - including eight track sequencer and sound editors for the **Class C2** and **Parade C2** synths.

BBC

Well known for the BBC is the **BM** series, a very professional set-up starting with the 20, or used by performers such as **Billboard** and **Frank Clarke**. A cheaper version, the 20, has not come out at around £175. This includes software on EPROMS, and the hardware including MIDI IN, two C2T's, sync IN/OUT, sync OUT, and start/stop between sockets.

DM also do a BBC interface, quite a bit cheaper than the BM system but with less facilities.

PC / MACINTOSH / AMIGA

Just bet for PC compatible owners a **Passport** once again - high speed but high prices to go with them. An interface for your PC-compatible will cost you £200 and a software package such as **Media Tracks PC interface** £299. Usually a bargain when you could try it while Alan is in the.

There is a similar position if you own a Macintosh. **Smart MacPro** has two 20, ac OUT, TRIG and data transmission LEDs and

Next month...

...we check out Budget Sampling...can Peter's algorithm work put into four? And can you afford to feed flowers after you've bought the kit? A full featured article on what sampling is, how to do it, what it produces, and how much it costs...

PLUS...

...Peter's AT32 sound module - L.A. Syn. Needs for under £100

...we start a long-term exploration of the techniques behind sound creation. Discover the hidden meaning of FM synthesis, attack, RMS, and other mysterious terms, all explained so clearly that even a cow-bell could understand them.

starts with software from OpCode, Most of the Shavers, and Intelligent Music packages - as well as Peter's own, of course. UK prices have yet to be announced, but expect them to reflect the cost of the Mac this side of the pond.

Among others you can pick up interfaces for as little as £49.95. **Superstar** is distributing the **Shaver Electric** from interface at just five pounds featuring 20, two C2T's and one TRIG socket. Big, however, that there's no detail manual/software for the Amiga set up.

It does take that previously empty name on the UK market for a matching MIDI interface which allows it to become part of a music system that five years ago would have cost less of thousands of pounds. Actually producing great music is down to you and your own pastimes... watch this space.

Mark Jenkins



Master Keyboard - Mini Price

Discover the really shocking technology and of the MIDI market this autumn with a whole range of equipment, essential which was produced at this year's British Music Fair. Showcases is the **DMC** MIDI master keyboard which features 61 full size keys, fully programmable operation, patch-based wheel, 20 patch memory, volume control and other goodies for only £199.95. The product is still in prototype form, but is expected to be of the production line as you read this. Well be covering this unit and sampling it with others in a future issue.

Preview The Future!

PROJECT: STEALTH FIGHTER



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No.

ARCADE ACE

High-speed motorway madness and time-travelling pinball are what's happening down in the arcades. Cub reporter Andy Smith reports from the coin-ops, where he's been zapping road-hogs out of his way in *Road Disaster* and bashing his flippers like a manic penguin in the video pinball game *Time Scanner*.

TIME SCANNER

Sega
30p per game

What really makes a game of pinball is its the ability to nudge the table at an attempt to keep your ball in play. You need timing to play pinball. Video pinball, unfortunately, isn't managed to convey that important physical aspect of the game and consequently isn't you feeling it.

All that has now changed with the arrival of Sega's *Time Scanner*, a video pinball game that allows you to manoeuvre the machine as an attempt to keep your ball sitting. Flipper controls are attached either side of a central control bar - looks a little like a jerry shaw bar - and it's this you bang into as if it were the bottom of the pin table. By shifting the bar (left) or up/down you effectively move the whole screen, display respectively from the ball. For example, on normal pin tables if the ball manages to get stuck behind something then nudging the machine will send the ball slowly tilting to one side before it continues its descent down

the table. The same effect is possible with *Time Scanner* by shifting the bar - and likewise the screen - a trapped ball will slowly roll to one side before travelling toward your flippers.



The image control bar which you use to tilt the screen. Flipper buttons are on the side.

The game provides you with various stages, each of which is like a separate pin table. First is the volcano stage which - like all the others - is divided into two screen-sized sections. You tilt your ball up the side track and using the flippers try to arrest at exact points as possible before you inevitably let the ball slip between your flippers. As the ball disappears off the bottom, the screen scrolls upwards to reveal a different arrangement of bumpers and lanes. By



The top section of the volcano stage. The two screens are arranged one to another stage if you can get your ball in time.

sending your ball down the correct chute the letters of the word **MOCCARO** light up. Get all the letters and you'll have completed that stage of the game, but use your ball here and it's not so good.



The bottom of the volcano stage. The ball has just slipped through the trap flippers and is headed for the end.



Having just emerged from the time tunnel, you're now on the top section of the volcano stage.



Once more it's out of the time tunnel and it's on its way out of the volcano stage. The 'ball in play' looks to which you can to once you've completed the stage.

But you don't necessarily have to complete the stage to move onto another; if your ball lands in a time tunnel you will be presented with one of the other stages - either the 'next' stage or the Egyptian 'topped' stage. Your mission is to complete each stage, but each one must be completed dif-

ferently. If you manage to complete the three stages you're presented with the top-coll stage.

Sega have managed to bring to life the feel of several pin titles in one upright cabinet (and doubtably filled machines) and the graphics and especially sound are superb. There's

nothing like the crack of a metal pinball hitting the glass table top of a pinball machine, but Sega have managed to come extremely close. If you're a pinball fan who thinks that arcade games never last long enough to get your money's worth then play this machine and think again.

ROAD BLASTER

Atari

50p for 2 games

Blusted is a huge wedge-topped cabinet, the sit-downs shoot-up-up past yours at your feet and death at your fingertips. Once you're clustered into the cabinet you'll see it is to drive a car through several stages of scolding roads in a style somewhat semi-similar to Out Run.

Your controls consist of an accelerator pedal and a steering wheel. Two fire buttons can be situated on the back of the wheel and two on the top. Using the buttons you must shoot all the other road users with your front-facing cannons. Sometimes a green or red ball will appear from an exploding car and continue to race along the road, catch it and you get extra fuel. As you only have a limited amount of fuel - including your reserve tank - grabbing these balls is essential. But out of fuel and you run out of gas.

Of course there are loads of other cars that get in your way: the game does have some resemblance to Road Blaster and it's no wonder to shoot these fast roadsters. Motorbikes also make an appearance later in the game and again your cannon is the best way to dispatch them. Some cars are harder to destroy, particularly the purple armour-plated roadsters that drop up over and under.

Hitting these with your cannon results in a flaming bang. But nothing else - the only way to dispatch this type of car is to grab some extra weapons. Some way into the

stage it is best over the roadway and release an on-stro weapon, when you use properly and the weapons will land on your road. The extra weapons vary and include a Witness Guide Buster which sends you on hunting of a blasted side through the stage in true Mad Max fashion (if the car fuel-range did look like the impression of speed is inevitable). Other extra weapons include a U.I. cannon which fires at a much increased rate, and several bombs which will launch themselves ahead of you and explode in the distance, when you reach the explosion any surrounding cars are hit glowing shadows that pose no problems at all.



Level Two - Having narrowly avoided the mine you're hit in front and have lost fuel.

Available obstacles vary from lamposts to gun emplacements that keep up a barrage of more fire through which you must pass unscathed. Crash or get shot and you restart on the road from the same position, but with a little less fuel. Survive to the end of the stage and you start on the next and slightly harder one.

Road Blaster sports stunning graphics with the backgrounds changing six each



Level One - The Boston City is on the horizon but it's game like a lot of driving will and bigger work to go done.



Level Three - The other cars are just a blur as you have managed to catch the special weapon that the car above is just about to drop.

stage. Desert scenery gives way to forest which in turn gives way to cityscapes etc. Sound is equally impressive for a cabinet of this size as you pull every one you can think of at the start to lighteningly results, do use the machine gun effects and explosions.

For slow speed and exhilarating action Road Blaster is a winner; it makes Death Race 2000 look positively tameless.



Level Eight - Surviving away from the start you've still got a lot of still and driving way to go.



Level Eight - That U.I. cannon on top will blow the other cars away with the greatest of ease.

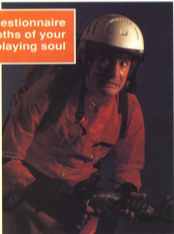
Winner or

The ACE Questionnaire probes the depths of your games-playing soul

What sets the games champions apart from the also-rans? How can you tell if you're a winner or a loser in the great game of life? Easy - just complete ACE's probing questionnaire and you'll get a profile of your game playing status and potential.

How to do it

Just select the answer you think is correct from each question and write them down on a piece of paper. On the last page of this questionnaire you'll find the right answers, along with the scores. A rating is given for each section, as well as an overall assessment.



Games Trivia

You've got to be involved in the whole culture of games to get anywhere at all. This section checks out your background knowledge, savoir-laire and style.



1. Which of these photos shows the right way to hold a joystick?

Wimp?

1. Which of these bald gentlemen would like you all to buy a 16-bit computer?



2. Wandering programmer Tony Conwyler has **not** worked for which of the following software houses?



4. Bouncing ball games are very rarely a dime a dozen these days – and most of them seem to be by Geminis. But which of the following is **not** a Gemini game?



Personality Profile

If you haven't got the right stuff you're going to find it real hard to live with the games go-getters. This psycho-profile will reveal whether you have the dedication, stamina and motivation you'll need to make it to the top.

1. You're just about to clock up a personal best on *Asteroid* when you're told a policeman is at the door to ask you about the £150,000 missing from the firm's Christmas Club (of which you are secretary). Do you

- a) Pull the plugs and leave the music?
- b) Calmly finish the game
- c) Press line and shout 'Come in and get me, copper?'

2. It's Friday afternoon and you've got just £1.99 in your pocket. Do you

- a) Buy 1/3 of a share in BP?
- b) Buy a bottle of brown ale and 10 Woodlarks
- c) Get the latest budget hit

3. It's 2 a.m. in the morning and you see on the bank of sooting to the best time: The Flashbacks duce to the Galaxy. Your nearest and

dearest shouts in your ear 'It's time to go to bed, mate! Do you reply

- a) Yes, mate! and demand one. I'll put the cat out and be right up.
- b) You must be joking.
- c) Nothing

4. On a Cascade night in New York the pilot, copilot and navigator, needless and that man who was obviously an off-duty fire all collapse at the same time. Do you

- a) Stand up and calmly announce 'I'll take over – I've played *Flight Simulator*'?
- b) Stand up and calmly announce 'I'll take over – I've played *Scargator*'?
- c) Panic

5. When you meet an alien do you

- a) Bap first and ask questions later?
- b) Take it to your leader
- c) Read the instructions

6. Encountering a new machine in the arcade do you

- a) Hang around for a few minutes and see what the punters make of it?
- b) Instantly convert all your cash into 10p pieces and feed the machine?
- c) Decide to have a nice quiet game of *Popper* instead

5. Shaggy programmer Art Martin has featured a veritable swaggers in his games over the years. Which of the following creatures has he **not** given starring role to?



6. Here are two photographs of a games player, one of them taken **before** and one of them **after** he started reading ACE. Which one is before?



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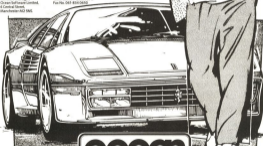
And talking about freelance, we're always looking for freelance software to market successfully and we can translate original programs into very advanced retail format. Another user we are one of the biggest, are companies by payments - or otherwise use your retail, outright purchase that fees, royalties, percentage advance - if you're good enough, the sky's the limit - remember we make evaluation both full and field environments - warehouse - so no project is too large for us to make the opportunity yours.

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SCREEN TEST

SCREEN TEST INDEX

- 45 AMARANTH Snake II
- 47 HOW TO BE A COMPLETE BARBARD Virgin
- 50 MACHES Microprose
- 52 RED L.I.E.
- 54 SUPER SPINME Activision
- 56 CHUCK YEAGER Electronic Arts
- 58 ACE! Cascade
- 57 CHAMPIONSHIP WATER-BRINGING Infogrames
- 58 3D GALAXI Gremlin
- 59 OUF RUN Sega
- 61 FLEXAS Mastertronic
- 62 SKULLDIGGERY Neusa
- 66 HYSTERIA Software Projects
- 66 WATER POLO Gremlin
- 66 COMICS Accolade/Inf. Games
- 67 ON THE BUSH Freepaid
- 67 BLAZER Neusa
- 68 DEATHWIRE II Talent
- 68 T.B. Activision
- 69 MACHINERY Microsoft
- 70 REVENGE 2 Mastertronic
- 73 SHERIFF Rock II
- 74 VERSION UPDATES
- 76 BARD RITE (Macintosh)
- 76 DRAUGHTS GENRES Rock II
- 76 OCEAN CONQUEROR Rock II

The PIC chart explained

A new system takes a lot of getting used to, so we've cooked up some ratings for a featured game. (Among them: Scoring! Give Us Conversion to help you along. You know the kind of thing: good scoring, fast and easy reflex, picking up extra weapons. Now check out the ACE because the game gets

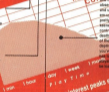
VISUAL EFFECTS ■■■■■
Nice scrolling and the sprites are great

AUDIO ■■■■■
The tune's good but the FX are dull

IQ FACTOR ■■■■■
Shoot first, think later

FUN FACTOR ■■■■■
Lovely controls, but sudden deaths are frustrating

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Frustration means your interest peaks early

ACE RATING 780

VISUAL: What does the game look like? Most of these squares that have lower values. The higher the game's visual score, the more it requires more jerky animation, floating sprites, color changes or a busy color palette.

AUDIO: How does the game sound? Are the in-game effects highly dramatic and piercing screams, or just jolly blips? Do you hear an LP of the title music, or merely you prefer a pair of harpists? Does the sound effect play "Mistle laurel" or is it a more low "Spiral" laugh?

IQ FACTOR: How much thought does the game demand? Is it an act of mindless plinking, or a mindless shoot-through-it-if-you-keep-hitting-it game? Is it a fast-paced but don't expect it to tax your game wits or much.

FUN FACTOR: Is the game instantly playable? Can you just load it and reach up half an hour's enthralling play, or does it require some commitment to get anything out of it? Expect a high fun-factor for pure entertainment in coin-up conversions and a low one for games based on theology books.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE: Of course, our book will give an instant idea of the game's interest. The higher the curve, the more your attention the game holds at any given time. The top of the line means total interest, while the bottom means complete and utter boredom. In our horizontal perspective, the top graphics mean you'll be pretty interested after a minute. You're even better than that, thanks to those nice controls. In proportion of those sudden deaths, however, the edge off the top by the end of the first day, and then a steep fall of depth in starting to slow so well. By a week you're completely bored. Everything the game does at all is well worth a new challenge, but the possibility and great graphics mean you'll still be finding it up occasionally in a year's time.

For more information on a game's ACE and its predicted interest curve, underneath the Predicted Interest Curve. Obviously, the higher the score - the better the game. Games which are ACE Rated over 900 are really hot stuff - see Skulduggery or RED L.I.E. for examples.

ANARCHY

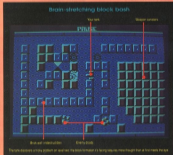
Block bashing gets a new twist from **BACK IT**

REBELS have taken over the world. They are raising the helmsmen planet of Sentinel Four through here of area. It's your mission to break into their security complex and destroy their entire supply of weapons and explosives.

Despite the dubious story *Anarchy* is one

out to be shot and doing so will turn them for at least a short time to, is an indestructible block which can be moved away from your tank. It is straight line by repeated shooting.

You have two minutes to complete each level, after which time the lightning security system will detect you and you will lose



These features are a pattern of what the basic version is being replaced with for a free beta test.

of the best budget titles to appear in a long while. In play you must guide an A.C.E. MK2 Interceptor (obviously similar to a tank) around a horizontally scrolling complex made up of blocks, some destructible, some not. Destructible blocks represent areas

RELEASE BOX

Com 131 \$19.95 \$19.95
 Spectrum \$19.95 OCT 81

containing fuel to complete a level; you have to destroy all of these (indestructible blocks are, for the most part, there just to get in the way).

Wandering around the tank complex are numerous security guards. These aren't very fast-moving but do tend to head in the direction of your tank, though very indirectly. Contact with a dead is fatal - but they

are of your free lives. But if you manage to destroy all the weapon containers in time an exit will appear and you may escape to the next complex. Contact is advised here because as soon as you shoot the last block your weapon becomes inoperative - so make sure your route to the exit is clear too.

All this may sound very easy until you discover that your tank can only shoot blocks that are one or more blocks wide. Shoot it, so you can't stand beside you're right up against. Things now become very tricky indeed. The arrangement of walls and weapon containers on each level is such that you are given very little room to manoeuvre and you have destroyed some blocks - but in places you'll find you can't destroy any tanks because you haven't any room to manoeuvre.

However, one or more tanks can always be destroyed and shooting these will provide the key to destroying all the other



Being alerted by one tank you'll quickly find out that it's a tank and remember, I will have your EXACT lives.

tanks. The problem, of course, is in finding which tanks these are, and where you have to be to shoot them, and even when you're found and destroyed there are not always obvious where your next targets are.

On every fifth level things get hectic - here is where the helmsmen keep their loaded weapons and the complex is guarded by a special shield that follows you and causes these shields are tricky customers, but the key to avoiding them is the fact that they WILL follow you EXACT course.

All these features make this a game that requires as much thought as firing, you even have to be careful where you shoot as every dead on a busy block your only escape route. *Anarchy* is an auspicious start for Back It's budget label Disk II, and it will worth anyone's £2.95.

Andy Smith

VISUAL EFFECTS ■■■■■■

Eye-catching or better

AUDIO ■■■■■■

Good and often subtle sound effects

IQ FACTOR ■■■■■■

As most thinking or copying required

FUN FACTOR ■■■■■■

How absorbing and instantly pleasing



Instant satisfaction - but smooth should never be lost

ACE RATING 815

HOW TO BE A COMPLETE BASTARD

Virgin's illegitimate arcade romp

SEXY Add Edmondson (as he likes to call himself) plays level eight in the Spectrum version of the game based on the back of the same name. With tips from the great man, towards your mission is to invade a Yuppie party and ensure your place in the Backed-Up of Fame by making the party cool (spoiling the guests so much that they all leave).

for a while. The object is to get your one-foot status up in lights and achieve complete restoration.

Lots of things can spoil a yuppie like robes in a lady's underwear, for a start - that will upset her for a while, but not enough to make her leave a party - whereas making cut-throat gas and glittering tee-dees with them would have her out the door in no time and so permanently by light one of the ladies. The men aren't all that keen on having perfume sprayed on their wives, which might give you the idea that the game is ever so tightly set. You'd probably be right.

In addition to lighting up the ladies you're also got to score on heavy bastards points as possible by doing generally disgusting things like talking a load of people on drinking walking-up liquid. Four notes displayed around the screen increase each thing-as you do them - which increases as you drink more of the "Mistake Get Power Fast" liquid - and a



The screen bastards' patronised the yuppie party and "homoerotic" gives you the chance to view the action from all possible angles. I wonder what could be looking in the pictures of these ones?

With each yuppie that leaves the party a letter from the words COMPLETE BASTARD displayed across the bottom of the screen lights up permanently. If you truly really want a yuppie then the letters only light up

A roughly novel scenario.

Walland comes in all shapes and sizes but rarely is your computer screen capable what you might call these aliens who manage to talk you of a high score which makes what could have been an average arcade adventure a lot more interesting and enjoyable to play. It's a pity, though, that you don't actually SEE yourself performing bizarre actions. The lack of subtlety and messages for on-screen action (as in Star Wars, for example) is all very well but when are we going to see some real action?

RELEASE BOX

Spectrum	£7.95	£14.95
Amstrad	£9.95	£14.95
CM/OSI	£9.95	£14.95



in the bathroom, where a trainee bastards can feel lots of love for a while. The heavy is your aim of making the bastards a woman that continuously do only get a hell-response to your requests.

"homoerotic" which also increases as you drink various liquids found around the house.

As you wander around, the homoerotic-light status gives you two separate views of the same location and both these views can be rotated independently, enabling you to see everything in any location. This is very confusing to deal with but, after a little prac-

VISUAL EFFECTS ■■■■■
Detailed and well-rendered

AUDIO ■■■■■
Good tone but otherwise specific only

IQ FACTOR ■■■■■
Demanding for who is to win the class

FUN FACTOR ■■■■■
A silly romp - while funny

PERFORMANCE ■■■■■
Performance levels lasting hours

ACE RATING 792

version, it becomes a lot easier to handle and eventually adds to the game.

Controlled your character is done via a menu that appears in the bottom window whenever you press the button. Different options become available depending upon your location within the house or the team.

The graphics are nicely detailed and the soundtrack is smart, though it's a shame you never get to watch any of the bastards' deeds that you've perpetrated your character to do - merely a list description of what the consequences of your actions were. Sound is limited to a play the tune and the collected dirty scenes etc.

Being a complete bastard is a lot of fun and requires quite a bit of reading. The idea's original (although the game format isn't) and the gameplay improves with familiarity. All in all it's a superior product to the Young Chees game that was released some while ago.

Andy Smith

Amstrad version

Even better playable on the Spectrum version reviewed here, with the same control method and game concept. More detailed graphics and a slightly longer standard but, that said, it's very similar and certainly as much fun.

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CHAMPIONSHIP WATER-SKIING

Sunny ski-ing simulation from Infogrames.

BY the time you read this, we should know if Porsche Mania, 23-year-old World Champion water-skier, has retained his title. The championships were held in London, soon the 17th to 20th of September. Infogrames' program gives you the chance to take Porsch's part in the three major water-skiing events: slalom, jump and freestyle.

Slalom is the fast, and hottest, of the events. Toed behind a speedboat you have to weave around the buoys to left and right. To begin with it's necessarily frustrating: the computer will punish you for mistakes you suspect that the event is just impossible. However, perseverance brings you the knowledge that the key to the event is lightening or shortening the tow-rope, and that the key to doing this is all in the timing. Puncturing through the slalom is, it does have a reasonable amount of timing interest.

Freestyle means doing as many tricks as you can in the 30-second run. Being upright or heels you can do spins and steps. Again, the problem is staying upright and - again - the solution lies in the timing.

The jump is the most spectacular event and the one you're most likely to get instant results from. You pick up speed and try to hit the take-off board at the right moment. Then maintain a good posture in the air and the chances are you'll go for a jump over a goal jump should be in excess of 50 metres.

RELEASE BOX

Analogue	£19.99/£14.99
Cassette	£19.99/£14.99
Atari ST	£19.99/£14.99

The program looks the business, with beautifully blue seas, sun-drenched palm trees and a presumably French beach beauty - Porsch's sister? - idly reclining in a hammock. The graphics, though, really jells: only the slalom poses any lasting challenge. Once you've acquired the skills to get on the high score table your only goal is to topple a certain legend's box to perch on the top.

Peter Coombe



VISUAL EFFECTS

Blue seas, palm trees, beautiful women. Nice.

AUDIO

Not bad, but not much more.

IQ FACTOR

Not particularly demanding.

FUN FACTOR

Season's ready - but with the others, just the 10.



More obstacles you can't really see.

ACE RATING 692

MOEBIUS

Role-playing high-kicking quest from **ORIGIN SYSTEMS**

KAIKEN has stolen the Orb of Harmony from your master Moebius the Watchdog and you must find all the four elemental spheres in search of the dimensional object that binds the very forces

mentioned so valiantly but with a spot of sword-play thrown in, is the great nucleus. Devotion is simply a quick reaction test in which you must step in 'Yes/No' against them, turning out if it's a small square.

The quest itself begins outside the house of Moebius, where you start off with a limited supply of food and water. The western displays a trap-like section of the land as the four spheres **STARTED** with your divinity offer the rings in the circle. Movement in any one of eight directions opens the screen to look around you, revealing new features.

The land is composed of large character blocks one which you load and other people you may load more one block at a time. Most of the screen is covered with forest

and treasure chests.

On your way you'll encounter peasants, guards, clerics and other mental types. Communication with them is limited either to waving or to commands like **STAY HERE** and **FOLLOW ME** but there is also a **HELP** command which can induce other choices to reveal past and sub-quests within the game.

You must also cleanse the temples of Moebius of the influence of the evil forces. Do this for all the temples, as a single action and Moebius will transport you to the next. Moebius can laugh and eat only will they use magic against you but they can also **VERY** skilled fighters, so before heading out be sure you energy and strength status (see screenshot) is up to it.

VISUAL EFFECTS ■■■■■■■■■■
Provides full immersion

AUDIO ■■■■■■■■■■
Very little sound

MG FACTOR ■■■■■■■■■■
Keeps the fun rolling out

FUN FACTOR ■■■■■■■■■■
Keeps you up and then flourishing

PROGRESSIVE MOVING CURVE

Responsibility and time generally depend on this

ACE RATING 628

of nature together. Fall and Kaiken will use the orb to do (un)expectedly horrible things to your future claims at Rhodanus.

You start the game with an initial training period and your character's two main attributes of **BODY** and **MIND** are defined by how well you perform in a series of contests and in duels. Combat is at the usual

and in order to be able to fight through the you must step in paths with you sword. You will also encounter enemies of rank which you need a hammer to break through. Such features make movement very frustrating and, combined with the topology with which your food and water will run out, can reduce the thrill of exploration to

When exploring the strange landscape on our home in the temple of Moebius, watch your step, these pits are mean little traps, you can die and learn again, you just might die with your flying and jumping the best.

Read and describe of your hero who, "You're on the map...and away!"

The temple will...then moving.

Attack... (not to effect)

This map shows... (not to effect)

These pits are... (not to effect)

Your vital statistics... (not to effect)

Deadly encounters in Rhodanus.

The other designs fight the power quest during training. In this game you have to use hand and feet against your opponents sword... (not to effect)

W. TRAINING ARENA

The Hero's Energy

Enemy's Energy

Energy expenditure is marked by this bar - the longer it gets the more your putting out the light and the weaker your hero becomes. Energy can be recovered by sitting.

Your strength rating, which is determined by how well you perform during training - (not to effect) and how you step the down towards (not to effect) and early game.

You start the game with a limited spell and by practicing prayer, meditation, and taking other (a)dangerous business you can increase your magical power. Invisibility, teleportation and other spells will make life a lot easier.

Complete the quest and a life of education at the house of Moebius will be yours. But you'll need luck and a bit of patience (ready with the **54** disk drive - the game is on two disks) to win it. The idea of combining martial arts action with role playing could make for an excellent game but Moebius, really, is more of an old load than a new kick-around.

Steve Parker

RELEASE BOX

54 128 128 MB 499,95

104 128 128 MB 499,95

RED L.E.D.

ACE
910
RATED

A great little roll-around from REAKTOR.

3D landscape Marble Madness done like a new twist in Reaktor's latest offering Red L.E.D.

You deal with a grid of interconnected hexagons, each of which represents a Marble Madness-style battle arena. You enter a hexagon and send your battle droid into the terrain to do battle with the resident alien and collect four energy pods before making its escape. Complete a row, left to right across the screen, or three rows and you've won the game (after like a certain TV quiz show... have the an A piece, too?). All the action is a race-against-the-clock. You have

30 minutes to complete your chosen series of terrain or its variants.

Red L.E.D. has 37 different landscapes or "Wastelands," each of which is large and extremely well-drawn with excellent use of color making the 3D effect very convincing. These landscapes scroll very smoothly around you dead-looking (in a red graphic level and probably the best of its type).

As well as selecting different landscapes, you can also select one of five different droids, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. This is reported because the main challenge of each Wasteland series lies

VISUAL EFFECTS ██████████

Probably the best graphics for the age of game

AUDIO ██████████

Too much but good sound effects

IQ FACTOR ██████████

Does you're required to think about it's all day

FUN FACTOR ██████████

Easy to get into - you'll spend a couple getting out



Graphics and gameplay combine to bring overall

ACE RATING 910

feedback to landscapes and overall droid selection is essential to survival. Some levels are a maze of this, twisting slopes and, as falling off of the landscape will cost you a minute off the clock, precise control is of special importance. The longest and enthralling Red L.E.D. does comes into his own here since he is by far the most controllable

Where does the marble go now

Run'n'roll type games have loomed large on the shelves since Marble Madness. Red L.E.D. is the first to vary the basic recipe by giving your marble alien-busting potential. There have been similar variations on other popular themes - Mobius adding role-play to hang-'n, Rastaman putting magic into Gauntlet. How about a marble with jumping, flying, and spell-casting abilities - that should really go places! Let's have your suggestions and maybe the software houses will follow suit.

Beat the battle zones to beat that grid.



The grid you choose. Selecting a hexagon sends you all into one of Red L.E.D.'s 37 wastelands - 300 pods will come the grid-casting with weapons in your hand and the game. Use your droid to beat the alien. However, you'll have to think about it's all day. You'll spend a couple getting out.

of the table and - most weird - can cling to a ledge without slipping.

Sometimes a level is filled with acid mines that will eat away your energy if touched. In this case you'll need the usual energy-shopped shield, mine-resistant than the others though one is more difficult to control. Finally the bullet-shaped bottle-droid can withstand impervious mines - so take him along if it's swarms of minous tables who'll be giving you most trouble.

Items range from shopless shields to spiky mine on wheels but all attack in the same way: by pushing off you in a circular motion (or, energy shield generators are the source of all your attacks and these can be deployed with multiple shots - but by the time you're found and destroyed them all

to slow, nevertheless to clear the whole screen) to be collected, energy shield breakers, and rotating mine obstacles that can grab extra time - it takes a while if rotating in the wrong direction.

Teleport pads are another interesting feature of the game - they are usually a number of these distributed around each level and they are often the easy way of reaching otherwise inaccessible locations.

All these features combined with a new level map option make the game stand head-and-shoulders above the opposition. Challenging at times, frustratingly so at times, particularly when you're trying to remember which landscape requires which shield, but highly addictive. **Score: 8/10**

RELEASE BOX

Call 100	011 771 0710	Amstrad	011 771 0710
Amstrad	011 771 0710	Spectrum	011 771 0710

there will probably be enough items around to keep you balancing until you're either been killed or run out of time.

Expansive will reveal more than just energy pods, enemy shields and generators - there are ice switches which will freeze the acid mines for a short time making their sale



Energy shield and mine-resistant. Both have an energy cost but systems that also eat your score fast. Finding an ice switch is the only way to get extra time to get back before the acid mine gets you!



The mine-shield shield is ideal for coping with acid mines. There is also an ice switch which will stop generators - with the shield the level is more fun because from the time-saving benefits of shields, it's not the place the ground will drain the generator!

See 1.00 looking for the energy pods. On this level looking backwards any other shield would be useless - but with items looking power you have a good chance of success.



See 1.00 finds an energy pod and the acid mine. Only three more pods to find before the sun starts to melt - but looking back may help to find the spot to get to first.



Minus 100
Energy pods left to collect
Counting the seconds

CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER

AGE
912
RATED

ELECTRONIC ARTS (and Chuck) want to get you airborne

CHUCK Yeager, the first man to break the sound barrier in all directions, has lent his name to this latest release from the Electronic Arts stable. Bloody speaking it's a very enjoyable flight simulator — but then by no means the whole story.

The game is split into four sections: you can choose to either test fly five planes of your own batch or, in real-time, flying and capturing enemy. You'll probably be better off, though, starting with the flight instructor, which teaches you how to perform complex manoeuvres, as does role playing.



Being a pilot, your mission is flying through several bridges, and completing one of the many courses before you die.

Menu Mania

The game options are controlled by means of pull-down menus that can be called up at any time. For example, if you're flying in basic training mode you can set up to decelerate left or right turns, landings and take-offs by hitting the Commodore key; a menu appears with the options, allowing you to choose between a training session or an attempt at doing the manoeuvre solo. The instructor mode is so simple to use that it doesn't take long before even a hard-core pilot feels confident enough to try some of the more complex stunts.

The teaching method is simple but effective. Your screen is represented split with the top half as your visual view of the surrounding countryside and the bottom half filled with all your necessary flight instruments. In the centre of the top half

RELEASE BOX		
CM/DB	£14.95	£19.95
IBM PC	£14.95	£19.95
In other versions priced		

there is a small compass that fits in a small yellow square, which is your means of controlling your plane. The farther away from the cross the square is, the further the turn, drive or climb will be.

COIN-OP Being games are all the rage at the moment, but this one could even put Old Bill in the shade. With its distinctive level-based style, car racing options and multiple stories, Super Sprint has been a huge success hit. Is how close the next version, Super Sprint II?

The most striking feature of the strategy is the way up to four people can play at once — and sadly, there's no way that can easily access to a Spectrum. Berlin Dreams have only been able to do single and two-player modes so far, with 'dinner' — computer-controlled cars — making up the numbers.

RELEASE BOX		
Spectrum	£14.95	£19.95
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Each time you play you can select any one of the games eight tracks to start on. The default track is the easiest by other way, followed from above it's a total very simple indeed, a few bends, good long straight



The Indianapolis Five is — compared to that it really accident.

and a starting grid run. Finishing line, actually getting round the a simple but simple, and it's a few more before you've got the layout of your car or of.

It's not that there's a whole lot of outside to watch with, in fact you're only

When you're in training mode a large track square is also inside, moving around at its own accord. You follow the track square with your yellow square and to exclude the score. Getting to know the moves is essential when it comes for you in by the game loaded. Crash your plane and the required picture of proof of Chuck appears resulting such encouraging perspective 'you're no band of hand'.

IBM PC Version

Despite the fact that it only has four colours, the IBM PC version is only similar to the CM version — but it does have a few enhancements. If you're keen flying you have the option to perform several stunts in succession and watch your achievements played back to you. As much fun and involvement on the PC as on the CM.

SUPER SPRINT

ACE
907
RATED

ELECTRIC DREAMS' new race-em-up

get left, right and accelerate, but using them liberally means lots of practice. Take it easier the first, easy on that and you'll reach the better roads in time.

For the better a glancing blow and you'll bounce or spin, but the more control. It's not something that will scare you and truly stuck, wheels spinning. To get back in the race you need to be able to control the acceleration, but your car is able directly out into the back road then just start. Does it you manage the car you're able to survive as you come towards ending you straight into the lanes opposite if you aren't very careful.

The boxes don't show any, but that is the water track, but they leave crash. They also don't seem to be affected by oil patches which send you spinning in the general wrongwards direction will leave you in a loop. The water - it's a bonus - driving

is quite enough to beat you follow if you keep reaching, so good steering and crash recovery techniques are essential. If you aren't there all over four laps, they'll get better on the last lap - did those that



on a new track, you've got some sailing to do.

You do have one trick up your sleeve though, and that's tuning. As well as oil slicks, whitewash and 100 percent bonuses, you'll often come across little yellow

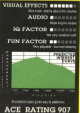
spots on the track. Collect three of these and you'll get a chance to tune your car before the next race. In any one season you can boost your machine's aerodynamics, acceleration or top speed.

Crashes, suspensions and gears all add to Super Sprint's considerable visual appeal, and give up the gameplay too. The music telescope is also nicely done - though it only shows up after very bad crashes on the Spectrum version - and the landscape scenery looks good.

But there's a big visual problem on the Spectrum - attribute clash. When the cars are crunched up together their colours inevitably merge, and it can be very tough to spot your own vehicle. To make matters worse, Super Sprint can never collide with each other so it's quite possible for two of them to occupy the same space.

Confusing as that then, and very frustrating at times too. What puts the game through as well is its unusually addictive gameplay, the challenge of new tracks and the excitement of tuning your car to perfection.

Andy White



The graphics are stunning, by pressing the appropriate key any one of ten views can be displayed, including a view of your plane as seen from the control tower. All gaudy features and other planes, as seen in fixed 3D, fixed is limited to the detail of your engine or the view of your propeller, depending on which perspective plane you happen to be flying.

Chuck Yeager is unfortunately distanced from jet standard flight into the training element means that it's somewhat as difficult to get off the ground. Once you've reached your wings, though, you can go wild and experience a much

higher level of security. There is so much in this game that it will take many hours of intensive play to experience and master all the available options.

Andy Smith



Training mode puts a brown object on the screen that you attempt to follow. It's a little yellow object. This training element simply tests your eye-hand coordination, but you can get 10,000 score points at any time.

ACE 2

Aerobatic combat from **CASCADE**

FOLLOWING the success of their well-known flight simulator ACE for Amiga Commodore Emulation, Cascade Games have released the sequel - ACE 2 - which sets out to give you more cascade action than simulation in the range of an advanced jet fighter.

This time, however, you're not alone. In ACE2 you must battle it out with either your CMI or a friend in one of two possible scenarios - day light or full-ecode combat.

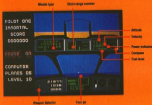
Daylight means just that - you fly your

jet and attempt to shoot down your opponent before he shoots you. Skill levels are incorporated by means of allowing the player to choose the number of jets each side has at their disposal - from 1 to 20 - so the more aircraft each side has, the longer the game will last. Additionally you can choose just how many missile hits each jet must receive before it comes down. If you're the one player mode you can also choose the computer's skill level (from 1 to 20) which may or may not help you win.

Leave the use of on-to-ground missiles, which like the other-guided missiles must be fired and guided in this target by keeping the object in your sights until the missile strikes home. Beyond the simulation plus the realism of the scenery's craft and you'll win the game.

You'll find no vector graphics in ACE 2 because it's all tiled, but finally the scenery fails to impress and the severe lack of ground detail means you can spot the distinctions from several miles out. Sound, however, is a

Bandit at 6 o'clock!



The split-screen view of the action in ACE2 puts your own jet high on top and your opponent's underneath. As you can see the ground detail is very sparse, so don't rely on it to help you orientate. You can see yourself shooting at the other jet even in small white dot from the bottom of the structures.



How do you look to go into the alternate. The enemy jet is in your sights and it's time to fire at it or miss and get it.

jets and throughout the game the on-screen action is divided into two areas with each pilot leaving their own sector, displaying all the necessary information about altitude, velocity and number of missiles etc. Assessments include on-terrain views, head-on-view on-to-00 missiles, missile-guided on-to-air missiles and air-to-ground missiles.

Full auto-control is rather a good idea but what it is effect only slightly different from the daylight. You have one ground indicator to display depending upon which side you're on, this will be either a red or station or a spy ship. To help you, you

RELEASE NOW

Com 128	128K	240K	480K
Spectrum 66	64K	128K	256K
Spectrum 128	128K	256K	512K
Amiga 500	128K	256K	512K
Amiga 600	128K	256K	512K

new feature of the program with a limited title have used some good effects within the game.

ACE 2 tries to combine the traditional flight simulator with a top slice of action - but with the emphasis heavily on the action side. If you like your flight sims to have loads of detail like realistic controls, undercontrol control, steps control and so on then you could well be disappointed. Unfortunately the action still doesn't live up to expectations - a limited cockpit view and only two jet mode opponents at any one time doesn't make things quite what you'd expect from a dogfight. To compensate for the absence of on-to-air options you'd get from a simulator.

Andy Smith

VISUAL EFFECTS ■■■■ (4 of 5)

Basic graphics - can't fire light simulator

AUDIO ■■■■ (4 of 5)

Only one tone and pitch effect

IQ FACTOR ■■■■ (4 of 5)

Easy controls - nothing extra to check or fiddle

FUN FACTOR ■■■■ (4 of 5)

Good simulation realism

Best featured Amiga 500 & 600

ACE RATING 590

SIDEWIZ



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3D GALAX

Gremlin's Galaxians get the solid 3D treatment

GALAXIANS have played up courage to return to the screen, presumably because this time they have been granted solid 3D status.

In 3D Galaxians the new form your cockpit reveals different formations of the four alien types swooping toward your ship, obviously substantiated, in the hope of impacting and turning you into space dust. Your ship has rotating turrets at the ready, chattering from time to time in bursts of detail — but you still

get one shot at a time as the sale of your ship before pressing the button.

RELEASE BOX

Atari ST Amiga Windows
to other versions please

At the start of each wave a new fleet of enemies leads down from above to level

menacingly in front of your ship, moving gently from side to side in the same manner as their two-dimensional, coin-op ancestors. Then, slow by slow, they dive in for the kill with any surviving stragglers returning to the back of the formation ready to strike again.

In complete earnest, after their initial posturing the aliens will swoop in from various attitudes, approaching from above and below. Pushing the joystick forward sends your ship diving through space,



US built's home computer version of the racing hit are all, some very handy, but you may get into the driving seat right now if you've got a Sega Master System.

In Out Run you take the wheel of an open-topped Ferrari in a race against the clock, weaving through the traffic along sweeping multi-lane highways. It's a rally business, but other vehicles aren't just too good to go into a spin, but crash into one of the many portable obstacles and your car will tumble and over-rod.

RELEASE BOX

Sega Amiga Windows
CDi and other versions all best SWS !!

From a viewpoint behind your car you have to steer left and right, change gear, accelerate and brake. To keep things simple you can only have two gears, low for speeds up to 170 kph or so, and high from there up to a maximum of just under 300 kph. To complete matters, you have to steer gears by moving the joystick up or down. Logical enough, you might think, but with the standard Sega controller it's very easy to

accidentally change gear while cornering.

There's a controller button worth an accessories card aside, though you won't find too much out for the other. For the most part Out Run demands a sense of keeping the accelerator hard down and steering round the curve in top gear — when you need changing the bottle, that is.

Since it's a lead race, you're at least to come across Volkswagen beetles or Ferraris. The differential is largely cosmetic, since all the other cars behave in pretty much the same way — sliding in their lanes for the most part, at a steady 180 or so.

On the game's occasional stretches of one-lane highway overtaking is fairly simple, but on the more common two-lane stuff there can get very tricky indeed. Some cars and S-bends are approached in advance, and they need to be — or top speed you can find out at three lanes quite easily — but a good race position isn't enough if there's one hole in your way.

There's 20,000 points in it for you every time you overtake other cars

OUT RUN

SEGA serve up a red-hot racing coin-op conversion

but fails not the real importance of getting your feet. Out Run's a series of stages through different kinds of tracks, and there's a time check at the end of each one. The choice of route is yours — the game has two separate finishing lines, and positions at the end of each stage offer many different routes to them — but whether you go for the long hard cross-country slog or prefer the riding, tree-lined roads and turns of Cloudy Mountain, you'll need every word you can



pulling back takes you into a class. Then a small galactic map at the bottom of the screen to show your position relative to any class.

Every four waves you have to navigate the asteroid field. That is undoubtedly one of the game's best graphical sequences with lots of beautifully shaded asteroids spinning rapidly toward your ship as you dodge your way through. You can use missiles to blast any that get too close - these grenades are used only in the asteroid field and resemble mini-missiles identically in-mission (but have the same effect as the nukes).

The aliens change their attack formation every four waves. There are 26 formations and in some you need to be very careful of ships passing by you, otherwise you can swiftly dodge past an alien only to crash into the one you didn't notice above it.

Attack in JD Galaxy is head-on only, so there's no shooting the enemy from the side

get. Instead, time wastes away to the next stage, so you'll get an eye on the way stages.

Building up time means keeping your best level down, but it also means creating collisions. There are no lives to lose - you can hit other vehicles or pieces of the road as often as you like - but the time you waste getting back up to speed can stop you reaching the next checkpoint.

When Star Wars graphics are good, they are very good indeed. You get a bright and well-defined, and the sweeping curves of the road can be very impressive at high speed. But the console has problems coping with large, textured features smoothly and space stations after space stations aren't uncommon. The display can get confusing too, when the road dies it gets tricky to tell which direction the road is curving in.

Overall the Star Wars is a pleasure to play, but it is a very playable shell. The variety of routes and increasing feeling of speed really outweigh the graphic rough edges. **Andy Wilson**

VISUAL EFFECTS ■■■■■

Very fast but rough edges

AUDIO ■■■■■

Music and sound effects

DG FACTOR ■■■■■

Very good but to get

FUN FACTOR ■■■■■

Really good but it



Effectiveness factor for being slowed

ACE RATING 852

3D thrills?



It may miss from a straight enemy. The screen at the bottom of the screen shows the enemy's direction and attack formation. Screen resolution and speed drop-off may mean you can't get anything, but broken graphics aren't necessarily that a problem. A sporty 3D scene, but only for hours.

or from behind like there is to life. It's a limiting, but doesn't spoil the 3D-visual effect and is more in tune with the Galaxian theme. The game also scores well at the sound department with a catchy and very competent tune playing throughout. Another good touch is the desperate digital wails of your pilot as the alien craft crash into you and you lose one of your three lives. You get an extra life every 10000 points - not too difficult to reach.

All these features SHOULD make JD Galaxy a very good game indeed, but in practice it is really lacking in excitement. It's only after four waves that the enemy attack formation changes and even then, it's still very much in case of most of the scene. What's more, they never shoot back. Add to this the fact that when firing your cube ceases to wear off-course when you move and things-are-looking-gone indeed.

With a little more thought and a lot more action that could have been a winner. As it is, it doesn't look as if the latest onslaught of the Galaxian tube is going to claim many victims. **Steve Procter**

VISUAL EFFECTS ■■■■■

Some extremely attractive 3D graphics

AUDIO ■■■■■

Catchy tune and good FX

DG FACTOR ■■■■■

Strained and too bright

FUN FACTOR ■■■■■

Not enough action or variety



The graphics put you first, the graphics don't you off

ACE RATING 692

Manipulating the control ball. Probably the best graphics, since the shaded and spinning cubes still toward your ship - but don't fire, but miss it, speed.



THE PATHWAY TO FEAR.



WESLEY VICTORY ROAD

*the name
of the game*

SPECTRUM £7.95 COMMODORE £8.95 AMSTRAD £8.95
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SNK
THE COMPANY OF HEROES

PLEXAR is the name of the planet on which this game is set, and the natives are loud, bouncy, and extremely vulnerable.

As a peppy young Plexarian you have been selected by your fellows to venture forth along the planet's crystal roads. These consist of a network of highways, connecting the various continents (which, incidentally, do not appear in the game constructed by an ancient and now-defunct race of Machine Engineers). The primitive Plexarians regard these highways with religious awe and usually select one of these numbers to follow the yellow brick road to oblivion. This year it's your turn.

The object of the game is to travel all 16 connecting roads that span the planet, each of which is connected to the next by a 'warp-bridge' - effectively a stretch of landscape viewed from above. The geography on the roads themselves can be divided into two parts, the first of which has you bouncing along a continuously scrolling highway. It

PLEXAR

MASTERTRONIC (ADDED DIMENSION)
bounce you down the road to oblivion.

have a limited amount of energy and must travel the length of the road using as little of this as possible.

The crystal roads in this phase are made up of different rectangles that affect you in various ways. Black squares suck energy whereas others will boost you sideways, bounce you forward five places in hexadecimal and generally make you stupid. In practice, however, you don't have much control over the ball in this section. The road scrolls constantly towards you without much variation in the obstacles and all you can do is cope with the effects of the different squares as best you can. Gameplay isn't a strong point here, but luckily the port doesn't

properties. Some switch you back and forth to another, others grab hold of you and whisk you from side to side, all which point you back closer of which point to bounce off constantly and quickly. Bouncing out of road leaves you one of five lives, random, moving out of time (but with the added opportunity of sending you back to the beginning).

The warp-bridge phase is viewed directly from above as you move over a landscape that scrolls from top to bottom, crossing roads (except from black holes) diagonally, but only for a treatment of a level to fairly flying objects overhead that deplete your energy on contact. Again, you're up against the clock, and at various points you have to choose your route carefully as the wrong one could leave you up a blind alley.

The graphics are good, though the rectangles tend to stain your eyes after a while and colour is used simply but effectively. The atmosphere of Plexar is obviously an suitable to sound transmission, other than the occasional beep, but the doesn't detract from the game. Gameplay is simple enough and it's easy to get involved, but a little dull and hard work are needed if you wish to do well. A thought-provoking game that should provide quite a few hours of fun and frustration.

Andy Smith

RELEASE BOX

Spectrum £14.95 £14.95
C4, V28 - other formats £10.00

Realtime style. Initially you're given a choice of how roadways and you can choose which one you'd like to start on. You

Roads to ruin



The energy will go on to the next road.



The energy of the bridge will decrease if any energy is spent being a rectangle.



The energy remaining.



Stepping between roads is essential in this part of the game as the highway doesn't exist the long or the short, the normal of all roads. It's a jump into the dark, with what you face in the end.

There are six - although almost all you'll

Boils on top

Plexar brings a new dimension to bouncing ball games with the addition of the overhead roadway - a road built lower down all the rollers on it is effectively upside down. Good hand-eye co-ordination are a must when the going gets tough, and the discrimination on the overhead highway can trick you into bumpy forward when you mean to jump back - a topy-turvy experience that often ends in oblivion.

and long.

The second phase of highway boing gives you complete control over the ball's progress and the roadways are varied in both format and challenge. You may find yourself in a stage-square-rich highway or having to choose between two different roads that may lead to different obstacles, wrapping from side to the other. You may also find yourself bouncing happily along the rails, only to find that you've reached a dead-end and must bounce off the very back. There's a time limit, a set of practice and recall memory a essential too.

Again there are a number of different rectangles in the phase with varying

VISUAL EFFECTS [Progress bar]

Scoring a smooth and satisfying soundtrack.

AUDIO [Progress bar]

Offers an effect and sound.

IQ FACTOR [Progress bar]

The increasing level your brain in your mind of the way.

FUN FACTOR [Progress bar]

Entertaining Entertainment.

ACE RATING 857

Getting to know the roadways the overhead highway.

ACE
919
RATE!

SKULLDIGGERY

Booty Boulderdash clone, courtesy of NEXUS.

CLONES are all the rage these days, especially clones of already classic games. SkulldiggerY weighs in as a heavy-duty Boulderdash clone and one that — on the ST — has evolved far beyond its origin. You get 100 different puzzle screens to keep you hooked in the most interesting way as you dig to diamonds in the deep-sea-trench background.

You control a ritual cave rat! who likes nothing better than gobbling up diamonds. In order to locate 30 caverns you have to eat the required number of diamonds within a time limit — on certain screens, time

is very tight indeed. Of course it's not just as simple as gobbling away like crazy; the screens include numerous hazards and a multitude of puzzles.

Skull dig is the most widespread problem. They are basically what in a certain other game would have been boulders, take care they don't drop on you. As you progress in the game and the screens become increasingly complicated, skulls also have to be pushed around to stack walls and destroy various obstacles.

Crystal Balls and Crazy Ghosts are the principal opponents. The latter are Pre-Mon-

ster entities who incorporate in large numbers within their compounds. Since they release clusters of sparkling diamonds when they explode they can often be the key to solving a screen. Crazy Ghouls move like lightning through tunnels; they too explode when hit by other objects and can in certain screens be breaking through walls to get at the diamonds within.

SkulldiggerY starts off with some very gentle screens to get you going. Very quickly, though, the puzzles get tougher and your reflexes and grey matter are called upon to give everything they're got. You can also elect to start your game at any one of five different screens up to 30. Even when you've cracked a problem there's no guarantee you'll solve the screen every time you play it; there's always the danger of a false move and death by a falling skull or diamond, while the words of time are always running out.

The game may well be a dramatic imitation of Boulderdash — but it's an excellent one both extremely addictive and won't be solved in a hurry. What's more, it has a very interesting two-player option (see level) which really adds to the fun. **Peter Connor**

2 Player Capers

This kind of dig and gobble game doesn't sound like the kind of candidate for two-player action, yet SkulldiggerY's combo option is one of the most entertaining two-player jobs we've seen for the ST — largely because you can either co-operate or compete (or start off co-operating and then do the dirty on your partner).

Player 1 controls the writing original character while Player 2 gets "The Masked Avenger", a creature which bears more than a passing resemblance to a wise old owl.

The screen splits in two so that you can both work away on different sections of the same cavern. This can lead to bad eyes, since the game's scrolling is a little on the jerky side at the best of times, but it's perfectly playable — especially when one player starts fighting dirty and trying to drop skulls on the other.

A bonus in two-player mode is that you when you choose to start at a screen other than the first you get different ones than in the single player game.

Rumour has it that The Masked Avenger is due to star in his very own game later this year.

the Ratings

VISUAL EFFECTS [Progress bar]

Great design and colour — some good bit of animation

AUDIO [Progress bar]

Good effects and you can change it when you like

IQ FACTOR [Progress bar]

Very puzzling problems

FUN FACTOR [Progress bar]

Heavily playable with very little addictive power

Remember — you have to playing in a pair's mode

ACE RATING 919

Number of diamonds is not lost, but where are they?

The time limit is sufficient enough given. You'll be too busy to waste the minutes losing to things.

You score...



HOW TO DO IT...

SCREEN 14 FEED THE WEEB

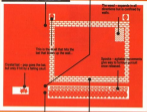
This weeb is completely inaccessible and you need to get the ghosts to it to turn it into diamonds. You've got to collect 7000 diamonds and three (or four) lives.



1. The loop-like hole in the sky is creating super-ghosts and releasing them and then high-jack it and towards the south (since you're just the right side a cheap shot and I can't get over the bar, the bar will explode, the walls will expand...)

2. In your way to dig away the walls so that the ghost can get out there with the expanding wall.

3. Now release those nasty super-ghosts. Have them feed the weeb.



4. Run up along the bottom releasing the ghosts from their captivity and it to the weeb. That's at the right-hand side of the screen and - if you're there (use your property - you should be able to collect a cheap 10 diamonds).



5. Collecting the diamonds is best done by digging along the underside of the walls so that the diamonds drop out at the base that should have been revealed. You then run an up-right and even until you've got your 10 diamonds (though that's falling diamonds is so cheap a 10000000).

Friends and Foes



The cheery chubby you control doesn't appear to have a name - he's merely described as a 'bouncy robot/saw mill' with an insatiable appetite for diamonds. Well, that's accurate enough. He moves in 90 degree verticals or horizontally and you can control him with joy-stick or keys. Note that you can dig walls or guide diamonds one space away by holding the fire button and moving the stick in the required direction.



The **BANNED AVENGER** is the player 2 figure. He operates in just the same way as the 'bouncy robot/saw mill'.



SKILLS are pretty deadly, and have exactly the same properties as rocks in Boulderdash; you can dig underneath and run away - if you're quick - but if the skulls catch up you'll be crushed.



DIAMONDS - what you have to eat first, but if they drop on you they have the same effect as skulls.



DIAMOND CLUSTERS - get you multiple diamonds at one go.



CRYSTAL BALLS - whizz through tunnels and do for you if you get too close. Drop an object on them and they explode, so use them to get through solid walls.



CRAZY GHOSTS - you'll often find masses of these things fluttering around in their compounds. Once released, you can crush them with falling skulls or lure them towards the wire for explosion effects and nice diamonds for each crushed space.



CREEPING VINE - expands all over the place. Detonates into an instant and turns ghosts into diamonds. When it runs out of growing space the vine itself turns into diamonds, but be careful - as it grows too big it'll turn into skulls instead.



GUP CAKE - very tasty and gives you an extra life.

RELEASE BOX

April 17

1191 Price: RRP\$49.95

With a further volume planned

HYSTERIA

Go down in history with **Software Projects**

ANTIQUITY looks in this test game from Ocean update-group Speare FX Semmes maddening with the classic genre, steering history to suit their own ends. You'll have to go back to time-and-again the concept before the present day is disrupted.

Weapons & conventional-looking weapons are your scoring game. You run along left or

looking you with laser eyes-eyes.

Drive with the extra equipment, make plan in re-look and feel that you're bound to take some hits. Collisions with monsters or their projectiles send down your life-energy - a depleting point of your character represents the passes on screen. You have a shield to protect yourself when things really hot up, but this too has limited energy, and you can't use it while your moving. There are no lives, run-out of life-energy and its game over.

The members can pour in on you as they and feel that running to face the monster at the levels end is more a matter of suit than skill. Though the levels do get tougher, you could probably take all three after a couple of hours play if you get lucky. Specially you might not be able to consistently complete the last level after weeks of practice.

Myself certainly an attractive game on the C64, and the members very strong indeed. It's regular staff as well, but the gameplay's rather too tough for skill to outweigh luck. That and the game's limited see

right, collecting objects and zapping enemies. At 6000 of the game's three levels, you can't do it called the games of a space and finally look out an enormous monster. Do the same, level in and you out the next level, somewhere else in history.

You start off armed only with laser eyes, the number of the weapon types and outside only at very short range. As you run past the classical ruins which form the level's backdrop, you'll come under fire from skeletons and ghouls above you. Leap up, shoot the skeletons with your eyes and they'll turn into useful objects for you to collect, either levers, of which more is a must, or three power pieces you need to look out the big monster.

While laser eyes are OK for knocking out the skeletons, they aren't really enough against the game's many mobile monsters. They'll deal with skeletons, the most numerous enemies, but you'll need something rather more powerful against ninjas, knights or orcs, and the like. Extra weapons are available, but you'll need to see them - which is where those levers come in.

Along the bottom of the screen, one is one of five icons, each representing a weapon or piece of equipment. An arrow above the icons points to the weapon you're currently armed to select, every time you collect a lever, the arrow moves along one icon, allowing you something that is more powerful.

Up in grade here are laser eyes, the default weapon, laser discs, long range bows with good hitting power, guardian lions, a small ball of energy that rolls and protects you, jet pack, which gives you sustained flight instead of just leaps, and the handy electric balls, a series of energy bolts allowing you take very quick turns. You can see some of the weapons together but the more powerful ones run out after a while,

Getting Hysterical



The monster wanted, here and fire for all your wealth, and you can't through to the last level.

- three levels and then you're back on the first one with more ladder levels - make it an interesting challenge rather than an essential buy.

Andy Wright

RELEASE DATE		
C64/CE	18 Nov 1988	1988
Speccum	17 Nov	1988

No other version planned

VISUAL EFFECTS ■■■■■■
Smooth graphics and some subtle colouring

AUDIO ■■■■■■
Very limited but very average effects

IQ FACTOR ■■■■■■
Very little game matter required

FUN FACTOR ■■■■■■
Excitement rarely more than occasional

With only three levels, the system's just about fair

ACE RATING 698

Speccum version

Lovey graphics looking here, and a monochrome option is level colour changes. Plays like the C64 version, with the addition of items popping out of the ground, these are the levers. You can catch them!



COMICS

Cartoon capers from Accolade.

JUMP onto the pages of a computer comic and become Steve Basso, the hero of a comic strip in the 30 quad three-disk romp. Use your skill and judgement to decide the fate of Steve, and guide him toward solving the crimes of the cunning Professor and the reprobate Joe Sordani.

Comics could best be described as a graphic adventure, in that the screen is composed of comic book style frames each with a small panel of characters. Steve's screen size after the title. Click the screen to



Shipping for pleasure.

The desktop comic book strip. The cover is made up of several animated frames appearing in sequence.

RELEASE BOX
C64/128 100% 80%
to other systems pending

click then it is closed diagonally from bottom right to top left - simulating the turning of a page - before starting again. At key points in the adventure the player has the opportunity to enter the plot by selecting either an action or a piece of dialogue when prompted. For example, near the beginning of the Professor case Steve Basso stands outside the prof's lab in Venice while an arrow on screen flashes between the door and the window. By moving the joystick or keys until the arrow points to either the door or window you can decide Steve's method of entry. The frames that follow then show us our hero to live with your choice was - much like the role-playing paperbacks that are becoming more and more popular in which you decide upon an action and turn to the appropriate page to read the rest.

Should you strike a bull decide that Steve ends up in one of eight arcade games

either like Frankie Goes to Hollywood (which he has to complete to continue). Sadly, these arcade sequences add little to the game.

Comics has a lot of humour and a very atmospheric feel, it's very easy to get the impression that you're actually reading a comic. But as an interactive genre it's very limited, your choices are few and far between, and do not demand anything like enough thought to make it a real challenge.

Andy Smith



WATER POLO

Splash around the pool with **Gremlins**

FORGET about getting left downed in pursuit of fish for the ball and then, when you have it, the opposing team's goal. Now thanks to Gremlins, you can play water polo without ever getting wet. Unfortunately, this slicker version has problems of its own.

You are first presented with an options screen enabling you to choose between one or two players and, if you're playing solo against the computer, the skill level of the opposition. There is also an option to play in the championship where you control one of four teams fighting for the cup.

In play the game displays a cross-section of the pool in which the action is taking place. Into the messiness of each team represented by the above-water halves of stick-like figures. These quad coloured caps to show which team they belong to. When the ball moves up or down the play area the



Drowning in despair

The computer getting in team a position to score with the player's team looking increasingly in favour given up in the bottom ring left.

screen smoothly scrolls to show the new section of pool while the game enters - a white circular figure - runs along the side to keep up.

Control of a whole team is obviously impossible with only one joystick so water polo where this by giving you control of the team member closest the ball.

Or so the instruction claims. In fact, the fact needed the ball control is the most annoying feature of the game and should be awarded the 'most who was of one team close to the ball but has never seen it control

off in to the distance' control. If two teams maintain one-to-one to the ball the control will also annoyingly swing back and forth between them rendering them both practically useless. Couple of these teams together with responsive movement and a system to throwing the ball that usually leaves you flinging it in quite the wrong direction can things can look bad.

If you want to play water polo go to your local swimming pool and talk to your local water polo club.

Steve Parker



RELEASE BOX
C64/128 100% 100%
to other systems pending

BLAZER

Yet more hideous aliens from **NEXUS**

MAZEL! That evil race of bloodthirsty aliens, Space Developers the ultimate Space fighter, Blazer. You people have only one chance: you must fly over the Blazer construction site, and then Blazer before it is used to annihilate your entire race.

Blazer is the latest wondrous shoot-em-up from Mazel and is very similar to their last game, Maze Nebula. The tone though, is instead of getting extra weapon systems to increase your fire-power, you actually need very strict steps you pass over. These are fixed on icons (such as you send your very best the class, knowledge with guns blowing while different iterations of attacking and shoot down from the top of the screen annihilating everything they've got at you.

There are six types of ship that you may control ranging from the Vector fighter through the ship, Rotary cut, Shield ship and Blazer itself. Each one with its own weaponry and abilities.

Whatever ship you choose, with the possible exception of Blazer, surviving for any great length of time is a very tough task.

Ship Stealing



When approaching your ship for stealing, be cautious as it will soon detect you and then, but don't let up against the enemy.

Some enemy craft speed very fast indeed and often you're simply not given enough time to react before being blasted into a ball of flames. Surviving over the test level is a

RELEASE BOX
 C64/128 £19.95 £24.95 £29.95
 In other versions priced

good test of your dexterity and, for the most part, luck.

Graphically Blazer is good with many detailed backgrounds and well defined sprites. Sound too is good, it's a little run of the mill, but despite that there is little to recommend it above other Mazels.

Dave Parker

VISUAL EFFECTS ██████████
 Fully 3D sprites and scrolling, and attractive background

AUDIO ██████████
 Fully 3D sound effects, music, and crisp FX

IQ FACTOR ██████████
 Don't think - shoot!

FUN FACTOR ██████████
 Fun, funny, and frustrating



ACE RATING 708

ON THE TILES

ODIN/FIREBIRD present the first ever cat-em-up

LIFE is tough for a cat on the tiles. If you're not being pursued by the evil City-birds, it's the blood-sucking flea and mouse hedgehogs who will drain you to very slim and bleed carefully. If you need all of your skills to survive the night.

This is the full over set resolution to hit the streets, and a very tough game. It's too the street. On The Tiles is a logic control of all the features in your neighbourhood and to do this you must collect all the cat-bones in the street you are governing. Complete a street and it's on to the next to show of the same.

Each street starts successfully point to your cat call, walks and jumps gracefully along walls, window sills, over roof tops and along the pavement in its home town. Once you have completed a street its cat always obvious where to go to find the next but it's you who think it's a little tedious you'll see whenever that rapping through cat signs gets in a hole in the fence provides the answer.

On The Tiles is a cat call the streets and tiles; a horde of night prowling creatures are out to make things pretty miserable for you. Fleas and frog-like things on the lighting with

Roof top ramble



City-birds always get the pursued by the flea and mouse hedgehogs for extra money, and only at the pavement - there's nothing wrong.

when cats - but you can gain that back by grabbing more cat spots. Mashed opponents are hedgehogs and City-birds, whose

RELEASE BOX
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 In other versions priced

house is lost.

For all - for every one get a great death-defying experience to disappear for free, though the City-birds can also appear on the screen and kill you before you have time to react. The on-going point aside On The Tiles is an enjoyable game with some very slick controls.

Dave Parker

VISUAL EFFECTS ██████████
 Fantastic game motion and graphics/background

AUDIO ██████████
 Classic 8-bit sound effects - but not good

IQ FACTOR ██████████
 Remember where you're going and you'll be OK

FUN FACTOR ██████████
 Lots of interesting and amusing features



ACE RATING 784

Wandering and shooting enemies of kind you help

DEATHSTRIKE

Talented Scramble derivative?

SCRAMBLE of course, is that old chestnut in which you score through a series of tantalizing scrolling columns containing and liberating everything the CRT can throw at you. As you go your fuel diminishes, but liberating a Bump will replenish your supply.

All the levels and enemies are here, including the flying saucers, missiles, missiles and if you ever get to do the space command base, blast this into you get to do the whole thing all over again.



Graphically the version is a worthwhile score scramble game standard. The colors used are drab and the scrolling is slightly jerky, sooty grey ground placements look rather



Zapping the saucers



blurred. Sound too, seems something to be desired - though the spot effects are reasonable. DeathStrike has one of the worst, most repetitive, and most annoying tunes yet heard on the CRT. Fortunately, it can be switched off.

In terms of gameplay it's just about up to scratch, with all the basic zapping and bombing of the original. But these days we expect more from the CRT than a version of a very old game which can't even better that produced for the BBC four years ago.

Bone Racker

X-15

ALPHA MISSION

Activision help you combat terrorism

TERRORISTS are holding America to ransom and you're been assigned to put a stop to their diabolical plans. At the controls of the X-15 space-plane, you must fly through a total of six stages and destroy the rotating space station which the terrorists are using as a hideout.

Swinging on a star



Your view of the play area is through a centrally placed square around which your instruments display information about alti-

tude, speed, fuel remaining and other flight parameters. Each level of the game puts you up against two different enemies (all done using vector graphics). The first level has you fighting to survive against both helicopters and cruise missiles, and the second has you dodging different types of jets.

A third grid is visible to the left of the view window, and this shows how close you are to your destination. Once you've reached a certain point in the game a scrolling message across the top of the screen tells you to stand by the next level. Should you survive it



All stars use of the money then, your storage indicator rises by a certain percentage (that rises according to what actually to you and) at 99%, you're failed.

Control of your plane involves leaving a track that's right around the screen. Movement is limited to left, right, up and down. This is also your sight for firing missiles, so aiming of your missiles means you're also altering your course to fly straight at them.

The graphics are well done in the vector style and well animated too. Sound effects include the constant roar of your engines and explosions.

X-15 is certainly as playable enough, site shoots up and is good fun while it lasts, but it's too easy to provide a long term challenge.

Andy Smith



MOON STRIKE

Shoot the moon with **MIRROSOFT'S** mono masterpiece

IF you thought New Zealand was a land of sheep rather than shoot-em-ups, the recent action film *102 Years Every Tomorrow* just might change your mind. The story is set amid scientist Humphrey Bogart's cloned oil rigs hovering the digital foggy-land surrounding the Moon, now two gangs to destroy the Earth. Unless, that is, you view time through the pitch-lane television and beam the Tachyon, those were weapons.

If you're leading the 1986 version, you'd have to read the relay for that, but *102 Years* can catch it as *MoonLoad* - an illustrated story which unfolds on the game board. Control staff has, and why too - but then on the game itself.

At first glance, *Moon Strike* is nothing new. You fly up a strip of terrain, hit a screen, while shooting carbon-based and landing after gun-emplacements. Occasionally a fixed obstacle in front of you can act as bomb sight, like flares up as a ground target, pull back on the stick while pressing the **CR** key - view off to one side -



Tough opposition

It moves, shoots, it doesn't stop, does it?

writing window is all in mono admirably, but the detail and visual loss of the screen are very striking. If the wacky humour of it attracts you at crucial moments, well then, all part of the fun.

But don't get the impression that *Moon Strike* at graphics and controls these points of being complete too, even if it is not so immediately obvious. The action is quite slow if you're watching one screenful shoulder, but once you're in the game, you'll find it plenty fast enough, while *102 Years* has really about twice as much about tearing through systems of enemy bases, using the kind of gaps in her patterns to escape certain death - and this can get very busy indeed.

Though the firing hazards don't appear in very particular formation, the layout of the ground targets is constant. Looking at the game helps your progress a good deal, but the earlier stages don't do double-duty, when you know them well. The bits at the end of each level means a nasty problem, and only split-second timing will get you past them most.

RELEASE BOX

Spectrum 486 £19.95 495940
Spectrum 128 £19.95 495945

No other version planned



Reaching an end of our territory, get a better sight in the centre, or **CR** advance you with facility and accuracy, too.

shoot everything on the ground, see of you, or flying in a straight line is unhealthy. Fight your way through a whole level of the plus a very scary lot of the end, and you're into the next one.

In the *102 Years*, you might think, but surprisingly the game is full of surprises. You can leave the Moon Law, dodge the fire from heavily-mounted and blast the maximum light bulbs for all your work. The

There is perhaps element of the game that you couldn't find elsewhere - graphics and being responsive to one side - but *Moon Strike* does combine those features with set-up components exceptionally well. Very addictive, witty and nicely judged too.

Andy Wilson

VISUAL EFFECTS

Excellent - but 128-bit screen and only

AUDIO

Range of 48, present tone at 128

IQ FACTOR

Checks your brains, but you know

FUN FACTOR

Implying that, but might last



Probably the best!

ACE RATING 89.5



PIRANHA

YOGI BEAR

Hey Hey Hoy!
 Are you smarter than
 the average bear? You'll
 need to be to get out of this
 one. Boo-Boos been bear-rapped
 and must be rescued before
 hibernation time. Hunters, mooses,
 vultures, bees, caverms, geytars as well
 as good old Ranger Smith are
 determined to stop you!

Spectrum Commodore Amstrad
 Cassette £9.95 Discs £14.95

TRAP DOOR

Bark is back!
 Now you can actually
 explore the dark and nasty
 regions for yourself as you try
 to rescue your friend Bark,
 trapped in the murky depths.
 Along the way all sorts of creepy
 critters will try to spoil your exciting
 arcade action!

Spectrum Commodore Amstrad
 Cassette £9.95 Discs £14.95

FLUNKY

The Royal
 Family as they have
 never been seen before!
 This is your chance to work at
 Buck House — as a miffed
 manservant. Your job is to cater to
 the residents every whim, but you'll
 need cunning, strong nerves and quick
 reactions if you are going to avoid a
 nasty end.

Spectrum Commodore Amstrad
 Cassette £9.95 Discs £14.95
 Coming soon for
 the Atari ST.



ATTACK!



ROY OF THE ROVERS

Manchester Rovers is under threat of closure from greedy property developers. On the eve of a special charity match organised to save the club, Roy's team mysteriously disappears. Unless he rescues them he may end up facing the opposition alone!

Spectrum Commodore Amstrad
Cassettes £9.95 Discs £14.95

JUDGE DEATH

Megatrix is being tormented by the City Judges — Death, Rent and his cronies Fear, Fire and Mortis. They are dedicated to putting an end to his life! As Judge Anderson you stand alone. Only your psychic powers and blazing gun can save Megatrix!

Spectrum Commodore Amstrad
Cassettes £9.95 Discs £14.95

GUNBOAT

Powerful, manoeuvrable and deadly, the Gunboat under your command carries the most lethal waterborne weaponry so far. Deep in the complex maze of locks and canal systems are your targets — huge submarine pens, your mission — to seek and destroy!

Spectrum Commodore Amstrad
Cassettes £9.95 Discs £13.95

For release schedules, please contact Helen Holland at the address below. Piranha games are available from all good stockists or, in case of difficulty, direct from Helen Holland, Piranha, 4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3PL, Tel: 01-836 6633.



The Ultimate Maze Challenge

There are no random events in **XOR**'s labyrinthine palace and there is no premium on hand-eye coordination. You have all the time in the world to work out the precise nature of the hazards you encounter. Logical thinking, strategy and tactical problem solving are all part of the **XOR** experience. And **XOR** is not simply about finding solutions. If you can solve the entire puzzle (15 levels plus an unscripted assignment), you qualify to be a member of the **OHHEED** of **XOR**, with a certificate and a badge to prove it.

"...this is one of the most compulsive, cunning and attractive programs I've seen for some time! ... the game is superb - a very classy original twist on the basic maze theme" **A+B Computing** (as reviewed in **BYTE** magazine)

XOR's Features

- 15 graded mindbending mazes
- Each maze approximately 36 screens
- Super smooth high speed scrolling
- High resolution quality graphics
- High speed or step-by-step replay
- Intriguing logical problems
- Interactively dynamic puzzles



XOR - Now available on:

Commodore-64	Disk	£12.95
	Cassette	£9.95
Spectrum	Cassette	£7.95
Amstrad	Disk	£14.95
	Cassette	£9.95
BBC	Disk	£12.95
	Cassette	£9.95

Coming Soon to **AMPC** and compatibles

XOR Designer - Available for BBC and Commodore computers.

Logotron Guarantee:
All orders dispatched within 3 days of receipt of order.
Faulty software will be replaced immediately.
Postage and Packaging Free.



REVENGE II

Mastertronics' **MAD** range gives birth to mutant corneils.

LLAMA-LOVING Legend Jeff Miller turned the game inside out by now people see a few year box with games like *Attack of the Mutant Corneils*, *Sheep in Space*, and *Mania Giver New*. Just when you thought it was safe to go the look into the dangerous, here he's back - at budget price.

Back too is the evil Snapper of *Byas* and peeing-loving Earthlings here only one hope - the RR till, but also a few-headed, low-potting, obnoxious *Madu Corneils* of who-pend legend.

Revenge II follows the original quite closely as its game play but has a number of new features thrown in and, of course, 100 new attack waves to shatter your defenses as they ooze all over right along a sensationally scrolling landscape boasting a whole lot of strange and often disgusting looking crits. You shall survive the onslaught and



Your Attacks!

The thing about *corneil* does seem to help you with the multi-colored regulars - but there's still the problem to go before you can win. There's a game get tip in the program that enables you to move your ship through the different attack waves.

you have controlled the series kilometers to the end of the wave and, though for only 50% as a late level, in an small look when you have large groups of formation jumping that attempting to become your corneil to a pup.

If you do make it to the end of a wave with any strength left, your corneil is granted

a number of credits (the more strength left, the more credits you get). Overall, we used to buy our magazines, because it was an extra benefit, the law of supply and demand applies, however - each time you buy our issue, its price increases, so be careful how often you make use of different coverage.

When weapons you select and how you approach each wave is very important and often requires considerable thought, making an interesting angle to the scrolling theme. \$2.99 for a size of battery, even in re-wrapped box, is going to be very difficult to resist.

Bob Foster



SUNBURST

HEWSON'S sunny shoot-em-up

SOLAR systems are big things you know, it's when they start taking all over the galaxy that someone notices. When they start functioning the existence of OUR solar system than someone gets out a stop to them, and that's where you come in.

In your space ship (which has been altered by our alien rock formations) and gather enough energy to destroy the large sun that is at each level. Gathering energy involves shooting the aliens that come floating out of the black holes scattered around the solar formations. Shooting the corneil when results in a small energy bubble being left behind that its quality and decreases in ten seconds, by over the bubble and a small group of the tone of the screen rate toward the positive sign. When enough energy has been collected the



Getting hot and bothered.

Aliens are a great help, some are to be avoided at all costs when others are justifiably helpful. Gain enough energy from the correct alien type and it's time to head for the sun.

Energy changes and you can fly into the sun, to complete the level.

Other aliens are not as helpful, some will help you around the level, whereas others will complicate matters by pushing your stored energy. A certain alien type will render you unmovable for a short space of time - and so you must fly and bump into them instead of shooting them.

Gameplay is tough to start with - you

ship is continually moving as you steer it around the screen, and the aliens are little getting used to the program are very easy, with the backgrounds playing in each level and the stars well illustrated. A title tune plays at the start and the effects are good, it's time square. Overall, *Sunburst* is a neat game that is fun to play once you've mastered the control technique.

Andy Smith





If you're on the look-out for conversions for YOUR machine, look no further. The ACE Updates Pages give you an up-to-the-minute report on which games are coming on-line for your micro, together with brief details of the quality of the conversion process and ratings for the game. Check it out here before you dig into your purse...

SPECTRUM

SOLOMON'S KEY

U.S.Gold® \$9.99 cs

An enjoyable arcade strategy game that was great fun on the Amstrad. The Spectrum version is just as enjoyable and every bit as addictive. Not quite as colorful as the Amstrad version, but still an interesting game.

● ACE RATING 755

RENEGADE

Imagine® \$7.95 cs

Amstrad version reviewed/Issue 1 - ACE Rating 847

The 2D-action conversion has retained popularity to the Amstrad - and that means it's pretty hot stuff. Graphics are very good and the action is very well used. Easy to learn, it is a bit on the slow side, but gives no major problems. If you liked the look of the Amstrad version, then you should be happy with the Spectrum conversion - as long as you can cope with the violence.

● ACE RATING 845

TAJ-PAN

Oricon® \$7.95 cs

27 version reviewed/Issue 1 - ACE Rating 877

You can't expect 27 graphics on the Spectrum, but you can expect good game play - and that's just what you get with this version of Taj-Pan. The graphics aren't too bad, while some have taken out scoring points to a very enjoyable strategy game.

● ACE RATING 755

C64/128

RENEGADE

Imagine® \$8.95 cs, \$14.95 db

Amstrad version reviewed/Issue 1 - ACE Rating 847

Renegade on the C64 is not as exciting or as polished as on other machines. Only scoring four points on the screen, it may not seem like you lose the same fast-paced fighting against huge odds. The graphics themselves are poor - and what is a good game on other machines becomes very average on the C64.



● ACE RATING 500

SOLOMON'S KEY

US Gold \$9.99 ea, £14.99 cb

Someone they haven't lost anything in the conversion, to 48. The game plays slightly better though the graphics aren't quite up to the Amstrad's standard. A good old must own game.

ARMAGGEDDON MAN

Mortech £12.95 ea, \$13.95 cb

Spectrum version reviewed issue 1 - ACE Rating 790

The C64 version of Mortech strategy game is an improvement on other versions, largely because it plays like new from throughout the game. The graphics, too, have been enhanced.

● ACE RATING 810

AMSTRAD

ARMAGGEDDON MAN

Mortech £12.95 ea, \$13.95 cb

Spectrum version reviewed issue 1 - ACE Rating 790

Identical in gameplay to the Spectrum version. A little more colorful on the Amstrad but not especially so. The second Amstrad version will ensure the struggle to stop the world blowing up, the obstacle in strategy games would do better to look else.

● ACE RATING 793

XOR

Logotron \$9.95 ea, £14.95 cb

Spectrum version reviewed issue 1 - ACE Rating 921

A good demonstration on the Spectrum and the Amstrad version is just the same. The game plays identically on the Amstrad - the picture-on-line is better.

● ACE RATING 927

SURVIVOR

U.S. Gold \$9.99 ea, £14.95 cb

Spectrum version reviewed issue 1 - ACE Rating 904

Not very pretty to look at, the graphics are colorful but the screen looks very messy.



Animation is also poor. Gameplay is the same as for the Spectrum being just re-rendering what it comes to collect post-popping the jumping etc. But Survivor doesn't get any better on the Amstrad.

● ACE RATING 570

AMIGA

KARATE KID 2

Microdeal \$24.95 ea

The second conversion of an old ST game but the new things have been added to a greater extent. There are lots more backdrops and the on-screen bonus screen crops up a lot more often. Otherwise it's the same choppy, kick action against pretty back-grounds.

● ACE RATING 720



GOLDRUNNER

Microdeal \$24.95 ea

The ST shows-up really like the Amstrad Amstrad control too, for some unknown reason, been dropped so its mouse only. But other than that the two versions are almost identical, though speech card units have been slightly improved. Still a very demand- ing boss with excellent graphics - where it sends you back to the start of the stage every time you die.

● ACE RATING 720

ATARI ST

BARBARIAN

Palace Software £14.99 ea

A disappointing conversion of the cheap and dinky Amstrad with graphics little improved from the Amstrad and C64 versions. Some very good detailed sound-effects have been included but the animation looks busy and not really what we expect it to do. Game.

● ACE RATING 640



RAPID FIRE

Blow 'em away with MASTERBOOM!

Rapid Fire is played using joystick only over six levels of increasing difficulty. The background scrolls from left to right with your character staying center-screen as you move through a wilderness dealing death and taking the flesh-eating enemies of a bunch of computer-nerds-mode - captured by lightning (instead) computers at the end of each level and the terminal power electrode at the end of the game. You have five lives, a machine gun, and a endless



supply of ammunition to expend in the restoration of life and order.

Smooth animation and scrolling do not compensate for overly clean sprites and plain backgrounds, though the sound makes it more enjoyable to take the game out of the ordinary with good effects and a lively tone. A reasonable budget game, but don't expect much in the setting or story lines.

Andy Smith

Release Box
 Spectrum 1 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1
 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1

Spectrum Version
 Few graphics were graphics, details make this a big name.

VISUAL EFFECTS ●●●●●●
AUDIO ●●●●●●
PG FACTOR ●●●●●●
PGM FACTOR ●●●●●●



ACE RATING 543

DRAUGHTS GENIUS

Newcomer gets into the board-game RACK-IT

If draughts is your game then give Draughts Genius a go. You face Albert Genius online, the old chessboard board and if he starts to win he gets very smug indeed.

Genius gives good strong opposition on its higher levels though it's by no means unbeatable. The chessing precision still

is the player, but what? Albert more of a chess fan?

Steve Barber

Release Box
 Spectrum 1 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1
 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1

Visual Effects ●●●●●●
AUDIO ●●●●●●
PG FACTOR ●●●●●●
PGM FACTOR ●●●●●●



ACE RATING 493

Albert's Game

It's like he's taking an interesting game but what about your chess like King and Queen? It's chess.



OCEAN CONQUEROR

Aquatic conflicts from NEWTON

Set onboard a submarine and armed with diving masks and torpedoes you must destroy a number of enemy barges and destroyers within a time limit.

Your vision is divided horizontally with the bottom half containing all your necessary instruments and the top half taken up with your periscope view of the surrounding ocean. This top view can be panned to a map of the game field at any time. Should you submerge - then just to a depth of one foot - then your periscope view disappears and is replaced by the map until you resurface. This is



probably the most annoying part of the whole game because it's hard to make an effective shot against an enemy vessel you need to be on the surface - which takes away the whole advantage of being in a submarine, i.e. the ability to attack invisibly.

The screen is well designed and colourful and the majority of the nice little graphics can be set. As for graphics, graphics are there, but it's a pity about the periscope problem.

Andy Smith

Release Box
 Spectrum 1 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1
 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1 Amstrad 1

Visual Effects ●●●●●●
AUDIO ●●●●●●
PG FACTOR ●●●●●●
PGM FACTOR ●●●●●●



ACE RATING 387

SHEKHANA COMPUTER SERVICES

ORDER BY ACCESS - VISA CARD PAYMENT - 24 HOURS (24 HOURS)

••••• COMMERCIAL •••••

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SHEKHANA COMPUTER SERVICES

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30 top games from then and now

BUDGET GOLD

The budget market's a jungle; wander in there and your pocket can get torn to pieces by games that don't deliver anything but a bill. But if you hunt in the right way you can pick up some real prizes, especially games that once were full-price Kings of the Jungle, but can now be bagged for bargain budget prices.

Decathlon, *Boulderdash*, *Dropzone*; at less than three quid can you afford not to sniff them out? To guide you through the thick undergrowth of budget ACE brings you the lowdown on 30 top games – half of them programs you'd once have paid a small fortune for.

AMAUBOTE

(InterAction)

Spectrum	£2.99cc
CGA	£2.99 cc
Amstrad	£2.99 cc



As an officer in the Royal Army of Amaubote it's your job to rid the city of the insect-based invasion. Climb into your *Amaubote* and stomp around the 25 sectors of the city destroying the queen and any remaining insects it might spawn. The stunning graphics and smooth animation combine to make *Amaubote* a landmark-looking game that is also addictive and a joy to play.

AZTEC CHALLENGE

(Top Fun)

CGA	£1.99
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The prospect of being the next human sacrifice to the Aztec sun gods is not very appealing, which explains why you're constantly on



the run in the 7-space Commodore classic. Dodge spears, limiting boulders and instantaneous falling objects as you try to escape a grisly death. Although it does take a little time to get the gameplay to roll pretty compelling and there's also an excellent *Brudley* soundtrack.

BMX SIMULATOR

(Codemasters)

Spectrum	£1.99 cc
CGA	£1.99 cc
Amstrad	£1.99 cc

BMX Simulator puts you on the saddle in a race against either the computer or a friend. You both ride simultaneously and must complete a set number of laps within the time limit. All the bumps and turns affect your take realistically and there are seven different tracks to



race over making this an addictive and enjoyable game that is great fun to play.

BOULDERDASH

(Piran Game Corporation)

Spectrum	£2.99 cc
CGA	£2.99 cc
Amstrad	£2.99 cc

A game that has everything – instant addiction, long-term challenge, frantic excitement as the clock ticks down and extremely tricky puzzles. You have to collect gems buried in caverns, dodge

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away boulders and earth-to-get at them. Boulders can stop and cause you serious damage, while the pits are often hidden by seemingly impenetrable walls. Complex, yet great fun, Boulderbrawl is a classic you can't afford to miss out on in its budget incarnation. **▼**

DECATHLON

Version 2

Spectrum	£1.99 vs.
CDi	£1.99 vs.
Amstrad	£1.99 vs.

Run, jump and throw your way to gold in the more version of the Track & Field test. An aerial look of wiggling is involved and its

Your task is to get past jumping squamatoe to to rescue the poor humanoids from the unwelcome attention of alien invaders and then leave at your Droptone. Fast and furious action.

FEUD

Masteronic

CDi	£1.99 vs.
Amstrad	£1.99 vs.
Spectrum	£1.99 vs.

Two great warriors clash in a battle of wits. You play Leano while the computer assumes the shape of Leano's, your brother and rival in magic. Rush around the land collecting herbs to brew spells then try off to find Leano's and beat him with everything you've got. Careful though - he's got much the same thing in mind. **▼**

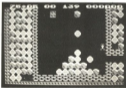
and placed inside a small helicopter so that you can admire the computer's charms. This arcade adventure has brilliant graphics, plenty of puzzles and even a Commodore-style sub-game built in for good measure. It's another colourful computer complex until you find all you need to blow it all sky high with the Nitrobox.

FORBIDDEN FOREST

Tap Tap

CDi £1.99 vs.

Atmospheric and exciting, Forbidden Forest takes you on a quest to destroy the evil Demogorgon in a dark and menacing lair. Armed only with a bow and arrow you have to take **▼**



CLASSIC MUNCHER

Bookle Bug

Spectrum	£1.99 vs.
Amstrad	£1.99 vs.

Not much to say about this except that it's an excellent Pac-Man clone. **▼**

probably worth wearing a track suit if you're into some serious competition. Make sure you've got a tough joystick too, haggling takes an awful lot out of them.

DROPTONE

U2 Gold America

CDi £1.99 vs.

The ultimate Defender clone accompanied by graphics as smooth and sweet as they're flat.

FLYSKY

Masteronic

Amstrad £1.99 vs.

An evil genius has built a super computer and is using it to dose down large sections of the national power grid. You have been struck **▼**



on giant spiders, enormous bumble bees, fat frogs and a host of other nasties until you get to the Demogorgon. Day turns to night as your journey goes on, accompanied by a brilliant musical score. Gameplay and graphics may seem a little ancient these days but the game is about four years old but its still one of the most atmospheric pieces of software around.



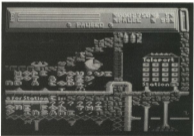
and not many games have matched that for excitement and addictiveness.

CRAZY COMETS

Masteronic

CDi £1.99 vs.

That old arcade classic Mad Planets hits the CD in style with Crazy Comets, originally released at full price by Mantic. The universe is going mad, new planets are forming then spinning out of control through the comets. They must be destroyed - guides when they've been given the task. It's all frantic action as you race around the screen blasting the huge planets and fiery comets off to the accompaniment of one of the best ever Rob Hubbard sound tracks.



GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR

Code Masters

Spectrum £1.99 us
Amstrad £1.99 us

This is a car racing game where the entire track is seen from overhead. You are a hired race against the computer's pros or avoiding oil



patches and grabbing the bonus tokens that appear on the track as you skirt round the bends at break-neck speed! They feel very competitive and great value. Will be interesting to see how the more sophisticated of the Atari can up Super Sprint compares.

HARVEY HEADBANGER

Firstsoft

Amstrad £1.99 us
C64 £1.99 us
Spectrum £1.99 us

Steer the cute spherical Harvey around the playing area, bumping



hard over hard as he paints the background blue. Surround the opposing Homer with blue paint to defeat him, or just surround an area of the colour just to make obstacles. Drink up, smash the Homer and surround him while he's still dizzy - before he does the same to you! You'll need to think like a grandmaster and drink like a fish to beat the computer's five graded Hammers, and there's a two-player option as well.

I, BALL

Firstsoft

Spectrum £1.99 us
C64 £1.99 us

A verbally smacking shoot-em-up in which your mission is to rescue your pals who have been kidnapped by



the totally evil Tony Ball. As a ball yourself, armed with a small rocket firing gun, rescuing your buddies could prove tough but there are loads of extra missions, you can pick up on-the-way to help such as smart bombs, or the awesome Rainbow Poppy laser, which on every good ball-kick is not to be sniffed at.

KIKSBART

Masterdisk

C64 £1.99 us

You've seen the TV program - now play the game. In this motor-bike simulation you must balance and jump your way over a whole host of obstacles including barriers, telephone boxes, ramps, logs and bushes in a race against the clock.



Kiksbart has eight different levels and split-screen scrolling action. A great test of skill, precision and timing for those who like to get on a bike and get that engine revving.



LAZER FORCE

Code Masters

C64 £1.99 us

A brilliant scrolling arcade shoot-em-up. With elements taken from such great arcade games as Asteroids, Centipede and Missle Crotch this game has enough fast blasting to keep any ardent game player happy. Lazer Force has 32



different levels each containing four sections including a docking procedure, a missile shot, a race against the clock through a twisting corridor and the main scrolling/blast em-up section which even the dullest attacks you.

MISSION GENOCIDE

Firstsoft

Amstrad £1.99 us

Some of the unashamed vertical scrolling you'll ever see on the Amstrad. Mission Genocide has all the elements of the recent shoot-em-up including extra weapons and shields collection and a host of different aliens. With twelve levels



of colourful clipping and bombing action to work your way through this is a game that will keep your finger on the trigger for a long time to come.

MAGIC KNIGHT TRILOGY

(Spellbound, Knight Time, Storm Bringer)

Masterdisk

Amstrad £2.99 us each
Spectrum £2.99 us each
C64 £2.99 us
(Spellbound only)

The trilogy is a series of non-linear arcade adventures, which, as well as combining all the running around and jumping you'd expect, have a complex system of interaction between characters. In Spellbound you must rescue Commander Arcant from the nefarious Cuddy of Karm, in

Knight Time you must find a way back through time after being catapulted in to the 20th century while in the final part, Storm Bringer, we discover that the Magic Knight has been split in two on his travels - one part is good, the other evil. You can't kill yourself, so the only solution is to merge the two. But how? Lots of action, plenty of thought and excellent graphics make all three winners.



MOTOS

MasterVision

Spectrum	£2.99 vs
CDi	£2.99 vs
Amstrad	£2.99 vs

Wires are trailing our starbuck and the only way of getting rid of them is to use your small craft to knock them off the edge. But be careful - they don't like being pushed around and if you make one lose more it will be you who's cart tumbling off in to deep space. Grab



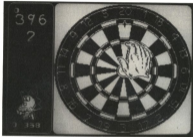
energy packs for extra turbo-power and wings to let you jump any gaps on the checkered surface and get behind those wires.

180

MasterVision

CDi	£2.99 vs
Amstrad	£2.99 vs
Spectrum	£2.99 vs

The definitive computer darts game. If you trust play across on your floor then this is the one to get. 180 plays against an assortment of bots or against a friend in the championship game you begin in the quarter-finals and fight to beat low computer-controlled players before facing Jimmy Jim the world champion who you'll need all your skill to defeat. If you get bored playing the computer or found that you can't by the side around the board against the dark option. Hit each number from 1 to 20 in sequence before your time reaches zero to win. Raise your o/d and get your belly on the side.



REBELSTAR

Pixelated

Spectrum	£1.99 vs
CDi	£1.99 vs
Amstrad	£1.99 vs

Originally released by Red Shift under the title Rebelstar Masters. Pixelated brought the game and improved it in several ways before releasing it as Rebelstar. A superb welcome for one or two players that

proteges and wipes out your records at every opportunity. Break into Moorbad (lots) and attempt to destroy the basic computer which is at the heart of the complex.

DEFENSE OF THE MUTANT CAMELS

MasterVision

CDi	£1.99 vs
-----	----------

It's then again, those huge hairy

hulking beasts on their crawling crusade to put an end to the evil Empire of Zaxos for ever. Beat the hordes of bery aliens through 55 waves of non-stop action as you camel walk and bounce his way along each ten stretch of inter-mathness. The game still seems very wacky indeed, even after all these years. See also our review of Revenge 2 in the next issue.



is incredibly easy to play and extremely difficult to win. The computer opponent takes no

BASTERSCAN

MasterVision

Spectrum	£1.99 vs
CDi	£1.99 vs
Amstrad	£1.99 vs

Amstrad is set on board a computer spaceship and you control it through three sets of occupied memory. You must turn the ship and repair the broken fuel pipe

before re-starting the engines and steering the ship away from the site to avoid its landing. Some wonderful optical graphics and use of logical puzzles make this an enjoyable game that is very tough to solve.



RUN FOR GOLD

Adventure

Amstrad	£1.99 vs
Com	£1.99 vs
Spectrum	£1.99 vs

Excellent non-slagging racing game in which you can have a run of 400, 800, or 1,600 metres races. The graphics are unusually clear and a fair amount of skill is needed to do well - especially since the runners are very high class, sporting almost household names such as J. Elmore. That as you make it from track to track to track adds to the toughness of the track and - possibly - world-record holder.



THINK I
Fictional

Spectrum	£1.99 vs
Com	£1.99 vs
Amstrad	£1.99 vs

Amstrad's originaly-released Think I is full price but it is now available from Fictional as a function of the gold. Think I is a horridly addictive game that is played on a 6 x 6 grid



in which you play against the computer in a 3x3rd and attempt to connect four counters, either horizontally, vertically or diagonally. A compelling puzzle that incorporates many additional features and skill levels.

WARHAWK

Fictional

Com	£1.99 vs
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Ships vertically scrolling shoot-em-up in which you fly through the Asteroid belt destroying enemy bases while landing on the assault of hordes of alien spacecraft. As the metallic-looking alien base scrolls before you slow flight holes in its surface with rapid firing lasers while under attack from all manner of

ships coming down from the top of the screen.

WARLORD

Management Software

Spectrum	£1.99 vs
Com	£1.99 vs
Amstrad	£1.99 vs

A graphics and text adventure that first appeared at full price and is now a bargain as a budget game. You are a Roman soldier who



transported back in time and you must race against time in an attempt to return to your own time. Warlord boasts some wonderful graphics and plenty of atmosphere and all the puzzles can be worked out logically. An adventure game that is suitable for beginners and experts alike.

WIZARD'S LAIR

Adventure

Com	£1.99 vs
Spectrum	£1.99 vs
Amstrad	£1.99 vs

Machine - 100-room - locate adventure with much mayhem and

many objects to collect. It may be a bit too hectic for some, but if you like a big puzzle with lots of action this one-time full-price game is well worth a ponder.



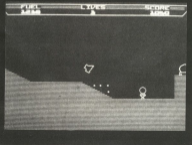
THRUST

Fictional

Com	£1.99 vs
Amstrad	£1.99 vs
Spectrum	£1.99 vs

Send your small spaceship into the careenous depths of the unpopulated storage planets to steal their Krypton pearls. You must exercise precise control to avoid the effects of inertia and gravity if you're to even reach the goal. But when you

pass it on your 100 day flight, beware! The goal is nearer than your ship and one false move will have it swinging out of control. Touch the walls and you're dead. AVOID all the other obstacles and you've got me half of a game.



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256k cards! And Sega has 1 megabyte and huge 2 megabyte cartridges to take the 40 new titles coming your way later this year including smash hits Out Run, Space Harrier and many more. **SEGA GIVES YOU ALL THIS FOR JUST £99.95!**



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Get more out of your game - More force, more action and more amazing 3-D realism!

SEGA
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MOEBIUS

A adventure through a complex and colorful Oriental world of magic, mysticism and intrigue. Moebius - Kicker (hero) of The Island Kingdom of Khentus - has returned you, his disciple, to reclaim the stolen Orb of Celestial Harmony from the renegade warlord.

Featuring superbly animated martial arts and sword-fighting combat, Moebius is far better than other Far Eastern adventures. Strategically and tactically more challenging, this odyssey takes you through the realms of Earth, Wind, Air and Fire. The dynamic, play-fied challenges constantly as you travel across 20 set air types, encountering earthquakes, rockslides, lava flows and heat waves. Graphics are top-notch and enemies (or friends) are with all the finesse you'd expect. There are 20 distinct magic systems, varied combat modes and a fiendish array of enemies.

Strategy planning and quick thinking are essential to reach the final confrontation in this engaging and unique fantasy.

Moebius fits both sides of two disks and is available for the IBM PC, Amiga, Macintosh and Apple. Price from \$39.99.



The Black Belt
Of Martial Arts Games

ORIGIN
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5

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MANIAC MANSION

Multi-character action graphics from Activision.

LAST month we checked out a game from Sierra On-Line that tried to give us that "see-it-yourself" approach which adventures are rumored to be trying out for.

Games like *Samurai* on the Magna have been enormously popular, and even more. Perhaps the idea of having both animated scenes and text-entry (or text-based) programming and player skills. *Maniac Mansion* offers you a large graphics screen, five customized character classes, by you from a cast of several, and beneath it a selection of seven different scenarios that are selected by points.

Young Sandy has been plucked from the local college (literally by the Indes De Fied) and is being held prisoner in *Maniac Mansion*, a well-drawn set of master locations with a surprising number of objects to find and use. There are also other characters in the game who will interact with you, ranging from *Man-Eaters* (who is apparently also kidnapped) and *Dead Cousin Ted*. True, the characterization throughout the game is hideously American teen-fantasy, but somehow it helps give the game an atmosphere slightly reminiscent of those numerous cult movies that always seem to involve campus life and psychopaths. The movie link is borne out during the game when you find items like the *Chastity*, slapping it on a hook in the kitchen and surrounded by heavy *Maniacs*.

At the start of the game you select which

RELEASE BOX

IBM PC	1 write	4 write
Apple II	1 write	0 write
to the version joined		

team-member you wish to play with. You have to have some dummy's keyboard, but must choose two others according to five individual skills, which range from photographic to physics. All the traditional computer characters are there from the spiky scientist type to the blond haired beach boy. Some choice.

You then find yourself outside *Maniac Mansion* with your three characters. The spaces are very large and well-drawn, and speak to each other (and to you) during the game, with a rather dull delivery of the lips. The movement doesn't seem to best any relationship to what they're saying but it is nevertheless quite a nice touch.

You move them about by using the system to shift a cursor across the screen and clicking the keyboard, whereupon the default command **WALK TO** will be completed by, for example, the word **FRONT DOOR** if the cursor is positioned on that particular object.

You can control any one character at a time - this is the best bit of the program, because it enables you to plan strategy and explore different locations simultaneously. You change now by selecting **NEW** (or from the menu, and then clicking on one of the rooms displayed). You'll find co-operation between the characters essential as some get imprisoned or otherwise defeated without hope of rescue unless another one can come up with a rescue.

The range of commands is very limited, but you expect that in the rest of game, and the limitations is to some extent made up for by the intelligence of the program and the

actions that the independent characters such as *Man-Eaters* get up to. Best of all, the on-screen animation is swift and smooth as you don't have to wait around for space for the sprites to get lined out together. In fact, for this sort of game, the program plays very smoothly and the controls stick to the enjoyment.

All usual, traditional adventures would get much out of the rest of them, but the *Maniac Mansion* really enjoyed the game. The multi-character element makes a lot of difference and although there isn't much text there is



quite enough to see and do to keep you engaged. Activision are bringing out more stuff from *Maniacs* - it is as good as the item I for one can looking forward to.

SYSTEM

Multi-characters and smooth game play

ENCOUNTERS

Only one-way routes of no-penalty return when

CHALLENGE

Really only very hardy and

LANDSCAPE

Imagery is better - and attractive as

VERDICT 820

One of the best you'll find in the market

KARYSSIA

GAC's three-partner from Incentive.

INCENTIVE

As you can also see on the test page, have always lived up to their word when it comes to supporting GAC users. There has been a long string of releases from the company featuring games written by users and one or two of them have been quite effective.

Remember, by the most part these games have been really quite simple often from

RELEASE BOX

IBM PC	0 write	0 write
to the version joined		

the programming part of view - the GAC is rather limiting to be sure, but as for *Maniacs* will tell you there is still quite a lot you can do with it.

Karyssia is a three-part game with simple control routines that depend on your skill and experience levels, very rudimentary speech routines, and an effective character set. The graphics have that classic *Maniac* look as far as layout is concerned but are otherwise rather devoid of detail - a pity because the rest of the game is nicely put together.

You talk a lot to some of the *Royal Guards*, some it, and all *Karyssia* who a managing the economy of resources (conspicuously causing text-orientation and encouraging text-based tendencies).

This is certainly one of the better GAC games released by Incentive. The puzzles are quite tough in places, but one to a certain extent spoilt by the frequent "You can't do that" messages that even greet the simple

word **LOOK** (you have to use **RESCUE**). But we certainly the program comes up with a new title for it in relation that comparable to these techniques. My only real complaint is about the frequent available details, so **GAC** after.

SYSTEM

Good use of GAC, despite the system's limitations

ENCOUNTERS

Simple encounters, but not too

CHALLENGE

Only a few really hardy - one point to reach

LANDSCAPE

Not too convincing GAC relations

VERDICT 695

Worth to look, but it's not too good

Pat's Patch

Combat routines using GAC

Setting up a fight using GAC is simple. All you need is to set aside a group of numbers to store the various fighting attributes of the player and his opponent, then manipulate those during combat to generate a result. For this example I have set up three different types of attribute for each combatant:

1) SKILL ... This is set at the start of the game and does not change although you could add the adjustment of parrying and dodging to the player's experience.

2) STAMINA ... This is also set initially, but is reduced during unassisted combat (again, you could vary it with eating, potions, etc.)

3) DICE ... A vital element of any fight, the rolls with every round of combat being randomly generated each time.

Each attribute is set up for both the player and opponent, then stored in counters. When a fight sequence is entered, both for the round is generated, then the three attributes are totalled for each combatant. The total is then compared, the combatant with the lower total has his stamina reduced, and a message is printed to say who has been hit. If both the total is the same, neither combatant's stamina is reduced, and again a message is printed to say what has happened.

The player has three iterations of further fighting or retreat. If he chooses to fight, the sequence is repeated with the new stamina levels and freshly generated DICE rolls. If either the player or the opponent reach zero stamina they are classified as dead.

In the code box below, numbers are allocated as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Player's skill | 5. Opponent's skill |
| 2. Player's stamina | 6. Opponent's stamina |
| 3. Player's luck | 7. Opponent's luck |
| 4. Player's total | 8. Opponent's total |

Combat code in GAC

INITIALISE

```
RAND 5 DSET 1 RAND 6 DSET 1 RAND 10 DSET 2 RAND 14 DSET 3 END
```

START SEQUENCE

```
P 1: HIT# opponent (P#SE 10 MISS 'light or not' W#AF 2ND)
P 1: MISS on 1: generate random location ... etc
P 1: MISS light 3 SET 5 END
```

GENERATE DICE

```
P 1: DRT 10) RAND 5 DSET 1 RAND 6 DSET 1 END
```

TOTAL ATTRIBUTES

```
P 1: DRT 14) DRT 1 + CTR 5 DSET 4 CTR 6 + CTR 6 + CTR 7 DSET 8 END
```

COMPARE TOTALS

```
1) P 1: CTR 4 + CTR 8 AND DRT 10 ) DRT 6 MISS 'you hit him' END
2) P 1: CTR 4 + CTR 8 AND DRT 10 ) DRT 6 MISS 'he hit you' END
3) P 1: CTR 4 + CTR 8 AND DRT 10 ) MISS 'you dodged and he dodged - no hit' END
4) P 1: CTR 4 + 0 AND DRT 10 ) MISS 'you're dead' DRT 5 END
5) P 1: CTR 6 + 0 AND DRT 10 ) MISS 'he's dead' (P#SE 10 W#AF 2ND)
```

Double again from incentive...

GAC software house Incentive have maintained a policy of supporting games produced using the system. Recently the company have been releasing two games on a single cassette under the title Double Gold at £7.99 and the latest cassette is Move Mounted House written by Jeff Pipe and Jason Teagay respectively.

Move is set in a wretched space station, Pat, therefore a familiar



already original scenario, but despite this it manages to generate enough interest to keep the player at the keyboard and has one or two very attractive plots. One thing that the Play found particularly effective was the use of shading to give a futuristic metallic sheen to some of the locations. Mounted House is a bit more novel-themed and the graphics aren't as good either. Furthermore, both games will have some other rough edges - spelling mistakes, poorly formatted text and so on - which is sad to see on a commercial release. Still, it's good to see Incentive supporting us GAC programmers. Stand by for news of the Automate tool using GAC products aimed at allowing us to future tense.

and Pat's Post...

Dear Pat,

I would like to inform you of a bug which I have found in Incentives GAC (in the Spectrum). It's not the old dos/breaker bug of which I can assure you have heard, it's something far more dead weight, destroy your whole adventure-as I did mine. The bug occurs when today's time has been in the simplest form of all (set-up GAC and then the GACstart file, enter room number one-on to proceed) or anything you like, enter a rough procedure (something like P 1: AT 1) DRT 5END, go back to the main menu and press ENTER to start the game. You should now find that the program has indeed died in a loop and it is impossible to get back to the main menu.

Apart from these bugs I have managed to get on well with GAC. At the start I just looked about on a writing simple adventures, but I did manage to write a good one called Alan Complex. I sent it to Incentive and received a reply in a couple of

months. They said the game was nicely presented but there were few tough problems and the scenario wasn't that original. I then sent it to Playco and at the bottom the waiting for a reply. I've started up a few others now called Deadly Sided up in three different patterns. It's going to have three multi-loads, each requiring a certain password. In thinking of sending it to GAC, but I haven't a clue what this address is and I would be very grateful if you could point it. Yours sincerely,

David Swales, Proliferator

As for as the famous 'ish Brander' bug is concerned, I'm fairly not been involved by it so far, but yes, I've heard of it. Doesn't it crash the machine and print up the name on screen or something? It is intended to hear from other readers about this and other 'features' of adventure writing utilities.

As for as your own 'bug' is concerned, it's not apparent the computer is hanging up! You're obviously hitting off the power or soon as to where location 1 is and then cycling back to the beginning of the game. I doubt if you'll ever get the 'Miss user' prompt. How problem is with the word DRT, which is processed almost immediately, kills the program and sends you back to square one. Believe that and your problem is solved. CN's address is Unit 10, Kings Park, (Seymour Road) London E11.

Dear Pat,

I was writing a Christian game and want to do an unusual power routine.

I want to have a message such as 'Miss any key to a noisy speaker', this combination make the computer beep - i.e. completely wipe the memory. This would have a reward and put a stop to any fast language speed etc's.

How do I do it?

John Pittwood, Preston

Interesting problem, John, and it's back to me for next month. There were a few commercial games around that pulled this sort of trick - the common one simply displayed the beep-up screen, making you THINK the computer had read, then waited for a key-press to return the player to the game. Of course some did read the computer - and not always when finally silent!

Letter from the SHADE...

Sappho the Witch keeps readers informed on the latest developments in SHADES, a multi-user game run under MIRCron that allows you to log on with your modem and frolic around an imaginary land in the company of other real-life adventurers. Naturally, everyone plays under an assumed name - considering the sort of thing you can do to your fellow players, this anonymity isn't just convenient - it's essential!

Dark space fighting isn't the SHADES head-line. Killing has always been a part of MIRCron, but in SHADES fighting has taken on a new angle with the growth of a subculture of players: the high-level psychopaths.

These fighters (darkcasters, level and above) test it out daily. It's relatively easy to be a killer in MIRCron. The points required to get to that level can be obtained within a single game, leaving 300 plus, however, takes several weeks, skill, and determination. That they have to work to lose it they do.

High-level killers can not cut corners here, except back to the arena of SHADES history. Corobok was the first killer to achieve notoriety and respect with his name Necromancer. In those days, if you weren't tight there was way and time to do with Corobok around - 0001.

Blade and more killers now climb to 0 status level. As their level grows, skill steadily improves, along with small increases in stamina and base-level strength. All this

quite a difference is always on fight.

Recently high level duels were caught the imagination of many Shades. The duels are big events to play and many points if they are with highly publicized events. The stakes are very high - and only one can walk away.

Three high-level duels have been highlighted recently, these were all between a particularly well-known killer known as Winesap the Longwood killer. Winesap, a veteran Shade, and the best killer to follow Corobok, in Necromancer status, will duel daily papers of reader level.

Fogey the Warlock was the first to challenge Winesap to a duel to the death. At a level where a petty 500 points were needed to obtain immortality, the sanity of the challenge was frequently questioned, but the Fogey's potential glory of taking Winesap to gain immortality was too much. Despite his high level advantage, Fogey lost, stepped it back, he left the game points-less - a nice score.

Blade and Lowwood soon followed suit. Winesap has challenged his place.

Is the game over? Can such high-level killers die? The answer - yes! Just a few days ago at the time of writing, Winesap's Warlock was spotted at one the City by Dora the Goodnight. Was Winesap low on stamina? No! Was he weakened? No! He was to busy attacking even a SHADES top-tiered but he didn't notice a longwood being snatched around his head!

Below I go, the museum of Goddie the Wizard being noticed by Winesap one minute, Goddie was in 002, a victim of the Winesap. But if these Wizards will stand on having such deadly (MIRCron) means, then they will have to expect the odd occupied position for a time.

Did the previous Mr except for you, too, casting?

The Pigrim's Wayer's Guide to Hiltchikien...

HIGGITS is a fairly lengthy experience, and Pigrim has been well aware that he is always short of space. We've decided to run the Pigrim's Guide to the game over three issues. In this issue,

you make it to the heart of Gald, and month you'll deal with the various problems of the old and alternative areas, bringing up in the Christmas issue with the intricate steering gear problem and the end of the game.

Hiltchikien was Douglas Adams' first adventure with Infocom, and it shows. First, the game is very linear at the beginning, which means that in several instances all you have to do is **RAAT!** repeatedly - so type **I** instead of **RAAT!** to save time here and throughout the game.

Another slightly annoying feature (though some of you might love it) is that you have to solve a lot of problems in advance, so it is here. Typical examples of this are the yapping dog, who must be fed a chicken and with help in the pit and the Pigrim pass which provides the password to get the Atomic Factor Printer. In the latter case, however, it isn't just you get told what you need by pressing the switch near the glass case in the Pigrim hall.

Other puzzles are more straightforward - you can just use **holdfire** if it's causing a problem (it will) without bothering to look before it fires at it. When Fogey turns up, just **I** will be okay for the level - but don't take a Kean Ding until you get up (when you do automatically) than Follow Burt until you reach the pit, where you should use your thinking to a reasonable amount. The reason for the way, have brought absolutely everything with you from your home, including the junk mail.

Once you're in the Pigrim hall, and have received congratulations, you'll need to get the **Ballfish** from the dispenser as quickly as possible. Remove your gear and hang it on the rack (you should have worn it from the start, but in Fogt has saved and then get the level and the switch). The level goes over the glass and the switch again the door. The junk mail (you did remember that, didn't you?) goes on top of the switch.

If you don't enjoy **pointy** you won't have the pleasure of hearing the second Pigrim poem, which contains the password needed to get the Atomic Factor Printer. Once you've got the password, you may still have difficulty - you need to **TYPE "password"** to open the case. Then make sure you get everything before you get thrown into the abyss.

It's really at this point that the adventure begins. Let's face it, up till now you haven't really had to do much exploring, have you? Well, now we'll make our way through various corridors, examine the use of the thing and the importance of the next question ball.



A word of introduction...

Welcome to the return after the outage, the involved, the Shade's to be, and the Shade's that were. You can check up on the latest going both a word where anything can - and does - happen, and where the players are not computer controlled creatures, but real people.

Let me introduce myself. It's Sappho the Witch, an old character who has been "Shading" since the game first opened at MIRCron just over a year ago. Since then I've played at lots of games, but SHADES remains my favorite. Like other Multi-User Games (MUGs), it is a place where several adventures can play at the same time or place. SHADES, for example, has sixteen games (down at least) at any one time, so there is plenty of room for everyone.

Blade MUGs involve around reaching the rank of Wizard at starting immortality. To get to the city of Wizard in Winesap you need to gather 200000 points. This is no mean feat!

SHADES is therefore a place where every single can become made for men, existing events, fighting and slaying. Or perhaps they feel the need to act as Gallians, preserving the women, or to slay the Shade of other magic possession. Winesap can play as attractive female, always leaving some leave here who will come along and save them from the horrors of a land of violence and danger. Or there are people and family member who become business associates, just to see much fighting they way through an impenetrable land, facing all evil and victory.

SHADES is also a place where men, women, boys girls, the young and the old, can even change their sex - and often do!

Meanwhile, if you've got any queries for the column, just leave a note for me at MIRC 20000 1400 or BT. Good luck!

No Problem!

Let's face it, things are looking tough. That *Baloo* up ahead has got a hungry look, the oil in your lamp is running low, your sword has been magically turned into an orange lolly, your foot is stuck in the unrelenting grip of a giant clam, and there's a large bulldozer — driven by a rabid hobbit — about to flatten you. Do you light a *Wamsei* cigar? No, you just tap *BARBARIS* with a rhapsodic air, and turn with a sigh of supreme contentment to the *Pig's No Problem's* column. Let's face it, this column is what seemingly insoluble problems were made for!

Modern's Quest

You'll need the steed, torch, and transport before leaving the house next. The key of the castle (your castle) is broken. Break it again into small pieces to get back inside the castle again. *Crucifera* has left. *Crucifera* has left. You'll need a bit of gold to get the piggy.

Barilo

At the time, being alone. *Barilo* (the name) is the name of the horse and when he is taken to a hill. *Barilo* (the name) is the name of the horse and when he is taken to a hill.

Barilo's Quest

Barilo has left the cave with the piggy. *Barilo* (the name) is the name of the horse and when he is taken to a hill. *Barilo* (the name) is the name of the horse and when he is taken to a hill.

The Piggy

Buy out of the living room until the clock face is broken. Use your knowledge of the collector to solve the problem.

You're through the door. Check out the hidden treasure.

Barilo's Quest

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You can help...

If you're still alive... if you've triumphed over the... if you've fought the great light, and are still breathing... wherever you are, wherever you're journeying it, we need your help. There are thousands of our souls, trapped in locations from which there seems to be no escape, controlled by apparitions who simply will NOT spare their prey lives, who are crying out for someone's problems that YOU can give them.

So, if you've created a tough game, if you've got a map that can show us where to go, even if you've just got a few tips for better play, send them in to the *Pig's No Problem* page. By doing so you not only get to see your name in print, but also have the satisfaction of knowing that someone, somewhere, owes their survival to that game to you.

Write to *No Problem*, c/o *The Pig*, 4 Queen Street, BATH, BA1 1EU. Let's hear from you now... before it's too late!

Contacting the Pig

The *Pig* welcomes correspondence on all aspects of adventuring. You can contact him either by writing to ACE at 4 Queen Street, BATH, BA1 1EU, or by modem on BT Gold 05-JUL-951. Messages for the *White Wizard* will be passed on if clearly marked for his attention.

Pilgrim's Post

Plotting Bug

I have been playing *Quest of Tharnis* on my Atari 520 STM and believe there is a bug in the game. I have noticed the first room but find that I can get back again by typing *WALK* (the name) is the name of the horse and when he is taken to a hill. *Barilo* (the name) is the name of the horse and when he is taken to a hill.

I would be interested to learn if you have come across this — is it a bug?
David Powell, Leining

Yes, it does look suspiciously like a minor bug. As you point out elsewhere in your letter, there is in fact another way to return across the hot river (see last month) — you

need to have a knowledge of succulents. This latter method is obviously the solution the programmer's intended you to use. However, the feature you mention is also in my version, so there seems little point in trying your hand at fixing it if you can simply find back again.

Boring...

Could you please tell me why there is no access level for adventure reviews. It is a great idea and adventures are sometimes boring or well or good. Keep up the good work.
J Hill, Westbridge

There's no point in having a PC save for adventures because the curve would plummet to zero as soon as you finished the game. The time this takes depends for most on individual skill than it does with arcade games. What really counts in adventures is the atmosphere, the parsing system, and

possibilities of interaction — hence the ratings used by the *Pig*. It do however always welcome suggestions on how these ratings can be improved.

Jocifbird

I score a brilliant adventure game called *Scots of Sherwood*, but don't know how to get out of it at the beginning of the game. Can you show me how you did it?
S. Teedale, York

Since the jail location is actually the first location, follow *Pig*. I'm touched by your letter in the game being a "billion" one — you can't have seen much of it yet! You get out of the jail by climbing on the shoulders of your fellow prisoners, grabbing the guards ankles, and then strangling him. Rather a violent beginning to a game, the *Pig* thought what he had played it. Actually, of all Adventure's products, this one was one of the better ones.

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TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

EXPLORE XOR

Chicken Supreme

Mainly straightforward stuff, *Chicken* has left and left fall down, or carry left too. One point worth noting carefully is what happens when you take a stack which has both a chicken and a fat pushing against it.

On this *Chicken Supreme* screen, you'll find it's quite safe to take the top stack and then shove down. The chicken runs across in front of the fat and blocks it, thus saving you from a noisy "Whoa!", why does

The Big Boffin himself, Andy Wilton, gives a little needful advice to players of XOR, the maniacal puzzler from Logotron, playing now on AMSTRAD, SPECTRUM and C64. XOR rated maximum IQ Factor in our first issue; you'll need all the help you can get.



the chicken beat the fat to it? All chickens simply *hate!*

Well, no they don't. In the *Dolly* House screen, here, it's the other way round: the fat beats the chicken to it, saving your neck once again. How come? The answer seems to be that where you have to take a choice on one object following another, the rat always pays off.

Explosive Mixture

The early stages of *Explosive Mixture* seem to favour a simple bomb behaviour. Here are the boxes, plus a few of the free points.

A V-bomb destroys anything above or below it, plus whatever you need to detonate it if that case is from the side. V-bombs behave like chickens: they slide to the left whenever possible, and can be pushed up or down. They can slide or be pushed through faceless protection, blowings and will dete-

Dolly's Revenge

Not getting your stacks out of their starting rooms will let you learn enough here, but that's nothing compared to the problems that follow. The entrance set piece solved here - 17 stacks, one stack and so on again to

area - is particularly noisy.

Getting that stack in the middle is pretty easy, but there's not enough, you've also got to push off four eggs at the side through the narrow lower door of the room, and onto the

screen below. You're bound to push one dot into a corner and shove another across, impossible but getting the most, so do, but one of the *Housewife* will have to go. Can't be done!



Getting the milk

- 1 Push into wall
- 2 Push into wall
- 3 Up
- 4 Left
- 5 Hit milk, and then push down

Getting your dolly

- 1 Push the dolly left and then down
- 2 Down, left and down again
- 3 Left, down, left and down
- 4 Right, down and then up to 1

Finishing touches

- 1 Hit and down
- 2 Right and down
- 3 Left and down
- 4 Up, right and down

note any other bombs they slide into.

Bombs are so fish on Woombs can't destroy them; they fall down whenever possible, and can be pushed left or right. They destroy whatever's on their immediate left and right, plus the object you detonated them with.

You can only get bombs off using things that move in one one direction: fish, sliders and boards. In other words, if you use one bomb to detonate another, only the bomb that gets hit - the lower or left-hand one - actually explodes. The other one gets destroyed, but not detonated.

Enlightenment

The following tricks are actually switches, but set up and the room backgrounds get lit black, collect another and the lights come



on again. Switches don't count as part of the main goal, and don't show up on the map.

Often you'll find switches blocking your path so that you have to pick them up. You'll also find them sometimes in the back areas of boards, with much the same end result: hitting a switch up has the same effect as collecting it. One useful trick when you meet the kind of set-up is to find a switch with your other shield. You can then collect, sweep shields and collect again, leaving the lights-on afterwards.

The Doll's House

Dolls don't move of their own accord, but you can push them around using your shield. Once a doll starts moving, it keeps going until it hits an obstacle. Dolls can't detonate bombs or pass through obstacles, and want more easy objects than they eat. You can safely push a doll so that it hits your other shield, and collect many of the Doll's House problems rely on shuffling dolls back and forth between your shields.

The Challenge

This one starts off tough and doesn't let up at all. Here's one of the best problems on the level, and although it's made up of simple elements - characters, fish, bombs and fireworks - it really is tricky. You

must get all the bombs, you can't get your other shield in to help, and you'll stop yourself if you push any chickens off the left edge. The solution here comes on the top of Richard Adams' *Red Wagon*.



Fixing the fish

- Push through fireworks and the bomb.
- Push fish on top of fish and fire.
- Remove the fireworks, or extinguish them.



The bombs

- Take the two bombs.
- Take bottom two bombs.
- Remove the fireworks.



The crucial part

- Push left-hand shield up to fish.
- Collect, extinguish fireworks, fire fish and the rest of the fish.

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DEATHWISH 3

Spectrum version



Type in the listing (but NOT what's in the brackets, which is for information only) and **RUN** it. Then start the game tape from the beginning and you should be blessed with infinite ammunition and 99,999.99-increased cash amounts of money.

```
10 REM DEATHWISH 3 POWERS
20 REM BY C. WILD & S. HANSEN
30 REM ACE - NOV 87
40 CLEAR 2550
50 LOAD""CODE
60 LET A00=20117
70 READ R
80 IF N=999 THEN GOTO 110
90 POKE A00+N,LET A00+A00+1
100 GOTO 30
```

```
110 RANDOMIZE USR 20768
120 DATA 200,80,5,62,183
130 DATA 50,22,151,50,185,183 (for infinite ammo)
140 DATA 50,37,188 (for infinite injury)
150 DATA 201,87,70,50,899
```

If you have a Multiface 1 or similar device then these poles will produce the same effects.

```
POKE 2876,100 POKE 2875,100 (for infinite ammo)
POKE 4020,100 (for infinite injury)
```

CHRIS WILD, Shaw, Lancashire

PAPER-BOY

We promised some cheats for Paperboy in last issue so here goes.

For unlimited lives on the C64 type in and **RUN** the listing then load as normal.

```
10 FOR A=0 TO 20 READ B:POKE
20100+A,B:NEXT A
30 DATA 168,4,141,48,8,185,148,76,153,57
40 DATA 4,128,258,247,76,13,8,169,96,141
50 DATA 166,41,141,121,48,76,82,5,2
```

BOZ and ROBERT, London

If you want to be invincible on the Spectrum version type and run the then start the tape.

```
10 CLEAR 65535
20 LOAD""CODE
30 FOR A=20000 TO 32004 READ B:POKE
A,B:NEXT A
40 DATA
50 DATA 258,258,24,86,254,255,33,1,8,125
60 DATA 209,110,3,257,178,195,250,285
80 DATA 50,151,187,195,88,5
70 RANDOMIZE USR 32880
```

T.L. BENSAN, Haleswood

For all you Atarisoft users out there here's a cheat program for *W*, *W* papers and invisibility. Just type in and run before loading the game.

```
10 OPENOUT"0"
20 MEMORY 6277
30 LOAD "waw",6300
40 POKE 8376,608:CALL 8308
50 POKE 81A1+4,63:POKE 8180,3
70 CALL 8870
```

TONY MCVEIL, B. Arrol

LEADER BOARD

Course 1

```
10 LET L=1:R=16:PT 0:30:PT 0:30:PT
4:16:3:PT 5:20:11:PT 6:5:PT 7:4:PT
8:16:3:PT 9:16:3:PT 10:16:3:PT
11:9:PT 12:16:3:PT 13:16:3:PT
14:16:3:PT 15:16:3:PT 16:3:PT
17:16:3:PT 18:16:3:PT
```

Course 2

```
10 LET L=1:R=3:PT 2:5:PT 3:5:16:PT
4:8:3:PT 5:16:3:PT 6:3:PT 7:16:3:PT
8:16:3:PT 9:16:3:PT 10:5:5:PT 11:9:PT
12:16:3:PT 13:5:5:PT 14:16:3:PT
15:16:3:PT 16:16:3:PT 17:16:3:PT
18:5:16:3:PT
```

Course 3

```
10 LET L=1:R=3:PT 2:16:3:PT 3:8,16:PT
4:16:3:PT 5:2:3:PT 6:16:PT 7:2:3:PT
8:16:3:PT 9:16:3:PT 10:16:3:PT
11:16:3:PT 12:16:3:PT 13:16:3:PT
14:3:3:PT 15:3:PT 16:16:3:PT
```

17:16:3:PT 18:16:3:PT

Course 4

```
10 LET L=2:16:PT 2:5:PT 3:5:3:PT
4:16:3:PT 5:5:3:PT 6:16:3:PT 7:16:3:PT
8:16:3:PT 9:5:PT 10:16:3:PT
11:16:3:PT 12:16:3:PT 13:16:3:PT
14:16:3:PT 15:5:3:PT 16:3:PT
17:16:3:PT 18:16:3:PT
```

That's it so get going.

DAVID BARRIE, Edinburgh

HADES NEBULA

Do you want infinite lives on *ST Hades Nebula 7*? Then get to the high score table, type in your name as "MONITOR" and there you have it.

RICHARD WAINLEIGHORPE, Colmely

DRILLER
IN
THE NEW
DIMENSION

MOTOS

Spectrum version

10 REM MOTOS.POK
20 REM BY C WILD & S HUNTER
30 REM AGE, HOY ET
40 INC @PAPER@
50 CLEAR@2407
60 LOAD"SCHEFF"
70 PRINT AT 0,0
80 LOAD"COOR"
90 POK@-4341,0
100 RANDOMISE USR 32768

You should now be greeted with infinite lives (MUTATE 1 screen should be POKING 4324,1)

CHRIS WILD, Shaw, Lancashire

EXOLON

Spectrum version

10 REM EXOLON.POK
20 REM BY C WILD & S HUNTER
30 REM AGE, HOY ET
40 CLEAR@2500
50 LOAD"SCHE"
60 AT ADD@-4300@
70 READ@
80 IF @-999 THEN GOTO 110
90 POK@ ADD @L@T ADD@ADD@,1
100 GOTO 70
110 RANDOMISE USR 32768
120 DATA 50,125,50,75,250
130 DATA 700,5,200,50,15,50
140 DATA 88,284,100,50,254,170
150 DATA 50,115,137 (outside arena)
160 DATA 50,80,140 (outside graves)
170 DATA 50,50,157 (outside fence)
180 DATA 60,501
190 DATA 50,170,100 (WARRIOR@)
200 DATA 180,50,100,87,73,90,999

Further Test should be POK@ 2000,0 (997) AT@ ADD@ POK@ 2100,0 (997) @2100,0 (997)@ POK@ 4324,1 (997)@1,0 (997)@ POK@ 48110,0 (997)@100,0 (997)

CHRIS WILD, Shaw, Lancashire

AMIGA KARATE

To obtain each computer opponent, simply move your character to the right hand side of the screen. Turn so your character now faces the left and go into a crouch. If you position your character so that only his leg is visible when he does a leg sweep, your opponents will just stand still and take the blows. It won't take long to defeat them this way. Don't worry about the stars but you'll have to smash those 'and get on the lighter lev-els

ALEXANDER EDMONDS, London

IN THE ARCADES ROLLING THUNDER

1. Only go through doors which have a symbol of a bullet next to them.
2. Go through the very first bullet door to replenish your handgun ammunition.
3. A machine gun can be found through one of the 'bullet' doors so you should try each one.
4. Fire frugally with the machine gun as you'll waste your ammo.
5. If you should run out of ammo then let loose with knives.
6. Keep jumping on and off the balcony to avoid being shot.
7. Purple headed badies only need one shot to kill them whereas Blue and Gold headed badies need two.
8. When you arrive at the steps that lead down, you should fall down the first step and shoot once at the man opposite you. Jump off the steps and you will fall down to the bottom section of the game.
9. Get past the broken doors by shooting as soon as they open, then crouch and shoot to kill the blue headed man thinking knives at you.
10. In the tyre section there is a man who is hiding in the third or fourth stack of tyres. Jump forward in between shots until you get used to feel that when he goes up, jump him first.
11. Keep moving along the tyre until you are nailed by two men, crouch and fire four times to dispatch them.
12. Crouch and shoot to kill the badie that runs free at you from behind the sandbags, then immediately jump or walk backwards to shoot the shop that throwing incendiary bombs at you.
13. The first badie is a doobie. He's a good character so he'll take two shots. Simply shoot him once and then fire into the air above his head. The last will jump and try to catch the bullet, getting himself killed in the process. All that remains is to walk through the exit at the end of the scolding screen and you'll have completed the first level.

Peter Walsh, New Mexico

HANG-ON

Never use the brake to slow down, simply release the throttle and you'll slow down just as effectively without stalling.

Richard Hawkins, Reading

SLAP FIGHT

As soon as the game starts, move your ship to the top left corner of the screen and allow yourself to be shot. When you re-start you will be greeted with a full set of power wings and guided missiles which should make your task a shade easier.

Scott Peitch, Harrogate and Brian Goldsmith, Bealix

PAPERBOY

Select 'Easy way' and try to survive the first two days. On the Wednesday, when you come to the training course, head past the middle lane at full gas. As soon as the finish line comes into view you should make a touch to your right. Quickly change course and head for the fourth slot at full speed and continue toward the fence that is to the right of the finish line. Doing this takes you straight onto another training course where you should take the middle course again. Once you reach the end of the course you will find you can cycle straight through the spectator stand and onto your first training course. Follow the middle lane again and this time come to a halt at the operator stand. You now have a score of over a BILLION plus unlimited men for the rest of the game.

Jeremy Nils, Bude

HOT TIPS...HOT PRIZES!!

Every month we give away £200-worth of software to readers who send in the best playing tips, jokes, maps... and hi-score tables...

Tip of the month - gets you six top-rated games for your machine specially selected by the ACE team completely free.

Just in case you're in any doubt about what that could mean, this month **Chris Wild** walks away with free copies of **SuperSprint**, **Pinax**, **Mean Strike**, **How to Be a Complete Asshead**, **Allegiance**, **Jet Plan**

That's worth a real-hot £44.76 for Mr Wild...America's dying of postbox?!! Better make sure it's WOD next time!

Five runners-up each receive a top-rated game for their machine specially selected by the ACE team.

Alexander Edwards who will soon be drooling over his free copy of **Karate Kid II**

T.L. Moxah who'll be racing off with a copy of **SuperSprint** (as soon as it's released)

David Mark who will soon be tearing his hair out over **SDR**

Edz and **Robert** who get **Chuck Roper's Advanced Flight Trainer**

Richard Mablethorpe who wins **Skullgiggy**.

...next month it could be **YOU!**

So get down to it! Send your tips to: **Tricks'n'Tactics, Advanced Computer Entertainment, 4 Queen Street, BATH, BA1 1EJ**

Don't forget to include your name and address (clearly written in block capitals) and the name of your computer - so we can pick the right prize!

...and don't forget **ARCADE TIPS** for those coin-hungry high-street mechanoids. With every Arcade Tip you send in, include the title of the game of your choice and specify your computer - if you're chosen as **Tip of the month** your chosen game will wing it's way to you absolutely free. This month, **Peter Walsh** is the lucky winner, next month...?



ACE

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- ⇒ Large, colour reviews of SDR, Bubble Bottle, Quindex, Impact, Barbarian, Mask and more.

- ⇒ Which Console? A detailed comparison of the Nintendo, Sega and Atari machines and the software available for them.

- ⇒ Music: Intro to MIDI and a review of Casio's MIDI Guitar.
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WIZBALL

Ocean

Use the combined powers of the bouncing Wizard and Catalyst to collect magic water drops. Original and addictive.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	7.95	9.95	A11910
IBM 64 case	9.95	9.95	A11910
IBM 64 disk	10.95	10.95	A11910
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A11910
Amstrad disk	14.95	11.95	A11910



S.D.J.

Microsoft

Strategic Defence Initiative action plus strategy.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Amstrad case	29.95	24.95	A11557
Amiga disk	29.95	24.95	A11558

TOP GUN

Ocean

You've seen the movie, now play your own dogfights. One and two-player action.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	7.95	9.95	A11490
Amstrad case	9.95	9.95	A11490
Amstrad disk	14.95	11.95	A11490
IBM compatible	19.95	19.95	A11490
Amstrad disk	19.95	19.95	A11490



XOR

Logotron

Impassioned maze game, packed with mind-bending puzzles. Original and very competitive. See Rated 101.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	7.95	9.95	A11500
IBM 64 case	9.95	7.95	A11500
IBM 64 disk	12.95	9.95	A11500
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A11500
Amstrad disk	14.95	11.95	A11500

WORLD GAMES

US Gold/Eye

Eight great sports: cliff diving, log spring, bull-fighting, weight-lifting, slalom skiing, turbo wrestling, barrel jumping and other testing!

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	9.95	9.95	A11930
IBM 64 case	9.95	7.95	A11930
IBM 64 disk	14.95	11.95	A11930
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A11930
Amstrad disk	14.95	11.95	A11930
Amstrad disk	24.95	19.95	A11930
Amiga disk	24.95	19.95	A11930
IBM compatible	24.95	19.95	A11930

DEATH WISH 3

Granite

Clean up the streets in spectacularly violent style with your bazooka, machine-gun, pistols, etc.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	7.95	9.95	A12000
IBM 64 case	9.95	7.95	A12000
IBM 64 disk	14.95	11.95	A12000
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A12000
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EPYX EPICS

US Gold/Eye

Collection of four stunning classics: Summer Games, Impossible Mission, Breakdown, Phrog II.

Year	MS	Other	Other
IBM 64 case	9.95	7.95	A12000
IBM 64 disk	14.95	11.95	A12000

TAIPAN

Ocean

Advanced strategy game based on the James Clavell novel.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	7.95	9.95	A11557
Amstrad disk	19.95	19.95	A11557



BALANCE OF POWER

Microsoft

A demanding game of strategy.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Amstrad case	29.95	24.95	A11567
Amiga disk	29.95	24.95	A11568

STRIKE FORCE HARRIER

Microsoft

All action flight simulator and shoot-'em-up.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	9.95	7.95	A11500
IBM 64 case	9.95	7.95	A11500
IBM 64 disk	14.95	11.95	A11500
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A11500
Amstrad disk	14.95	11.95	A11500
Amstrad disk	24.95	19.95	A11500



LEADERBOARD

US Gold/Access

The gold simulation bar none.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	9.95	9.95	A11910
IBM 64 case	9.95	7.95	A11910
IBM 64 disk	14.95	11.95	A11910
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A11910
Amstrad disk	14.95	11.95	A11910
Amiga disk	24.95	19.95	A11910

MASK

Granite

Addictive gameplay based on the TV cartoon.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	7.95	9.95	A12100
IBM 64 case	9.95	7.95	A12100
IBM 64 disk	14.95	11.95	A12100
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A12100
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GAUNTLET

US Gold/Talis

The arcade smash hit featuring maze-teaming with speedy enemies.

Year	MS	Other	Other
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IBM 64 disk	14.95	11.95	A11930
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A11930
Amstrad disk	14.95	11.95	A11930
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GAME OVER

Imagine

Exciting shoot-'em-up featuring huge, evil guardians at the end of each level.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	7.95	9.95	A11930
IBM 64 case	9.95	9.95	A11930
IBM 64 disk	12.95	10.95	A11930
Amstrad case	7.95	9.95	A11930
Amstrad disk	14.95	11.95	A11930



SOLOMON'S KEY

US Gold

Wizard coin-op game packed with puzzles and invention.

Year	MS	Other	Other
Spectrum case	9.95	9.95	A11930
IBM 64 case	9.95	7.95	A11930
IBM 64 disk	14.95	11.95	A11930
Amstrad case	9.95	7.95	A11930
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HEAD OVER HEELS

Games

Signal the different abilities of two characters in a brain-bending exploration of a stunningly depicted 3D world.

Item	RP	MSRP	Star
Standard case	7.99	8.29	A117CC
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CEM 64 disk	12.99	10.99	A117CC
Amstrad case	9.99	9.99	A117AC
Amstrad disk	14.99	11.99	A117AC



DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

Adventure/Mindboge

Struggle and combat locked by genius you would not believe!

Item	RP	MSRP	Star
CEM 64 case	14.99	11.99	A1166C
Amiga disk	20.99	14.99	A1166C

ARKANOID

Games

Really enjoyable Breakout clone with 32 levels.

Item	RP	MSRP	Star
Standard case	7.99	8.29	A1129C
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CEM 64 disk	12.99	9.99	A1129C
Amstrad case	9.99	9.99	A1129C
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Games

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THE BLITTER END...

Cull

Major "Wile" Bill Swaby of Microprose cuts the cake to celebrate Microprose's first birthday in the UK. You'll notice, however, that the large bottle-of-champagne has not been opened, despite the plethora of full glasses on the table top. We suspect Major Swaby of keeping a firm hold on

company expenses, which no doubt explains why the anxious chap on the right is quietly trying to get a taste of the wine on his tongue before the cake is whisked away and the hard tack brought out.



Left Out

An apology is due to Brian Lakeman, author of the *Dropout Soccer* feature in our last issue, his name doesn't quite make it on to the page alongside his immortal phrase. Sorry about that. Brian's not too upset what's been forgotten by computer graphics, for some time - he'll be writing for us regularly in forthcoming issues.

An apology is also due to *Autogenic*: their excellent game *Impact* got the treatment in *ACE* 1 but the *ACE* *Rating* seemed a little odd. Again, something was left out - the number 6. The *ACE* *Rating* for the game should have been a resounding 807.

Bubble Bobble Bonus...

You may rarely see lucky winners! If you own a Spectrum, that is. The two levels of *Bubble Bobble* on this month's cover (cassette was since the full game). Confusion about which master were where and to whom, meant that the duplicators came within a hair's breadth of turning off thousands of full games, which would then have been generously given away to customers to forestall a grateful punter. But our resident botch, Andy Wilson, saved the day.

Bubbling and bobbling away on the 'blower' late one night he noticed that he didn't seem to be stopping at Level 5. Or 4. Or 3...Panic phone calls real, starting around approximately 10.15, being on show. But it was a damn close run thing, Alpo.

More balls

Next issue we hope to carry a match report on this exciting event, at which 'Changemaker Alan' Aburton will be in attendance. *ACE* reporters will be covering every inch of the park, giving 110% and displaying their silky skills, etc., etc. but can a match between the

press and a software house really be a 'friendly'? Certainly the crowd aren't going to be too happy - it looks as if 12000 people have been given the same seat number!

We look forward to further events of this nature. There is of course absolutely no true truth in the rumour that Alan Sugar

Next month...

ACE is getting finer and finer. Our next bumper issue - on sale November 20th - will have:

- An in-depth and very unusual report on the PCjr. Three alternatives, including starting details of the software and peripherals that really matter
- Update *Anguish* - how to take the pain out of moving up from 640 to 1024 computer entertainment
- *Games of Year* - or *Did we really play them?* We look at the games that *ACE* has made our boxes tremble, have they still got what it takes?
- *Strategy Games* - *Quest*'s Guide to the best in movement
- *Graphics* - face-to-face review of *King's Quest* *Deanna* and *Deanna Part 2*
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