

ACE

■ ST ■ AMIGA ■ C64 ■
 ■ CPC ■ SPECTRUM ■ PC
 ■ NINTENDO ■ SEGA ■

**THE
 ULTIMATE
 GAMES
 MAGAZINE**

ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

**1991
 New Year
 Holiday Special!**



EXCLUSIVE

GO TO HELL!

Incredible 16bit/CD visit to Hades

Corks!

Where's your FREE and EXCLUSIVE guide to Advanced Cartridge Entertainment? Ask the chap behind the counter.



GO TO MARS!

With Origin's latest

multiplatform

GO TO THE ZOO

and puzzle over 800

GO BACK IN TIME!

With our list of ACE classics

PLUS!

Over 20 pages of New-Year bargains in the Plaza



GO TO THE BARBERS!

Japan's 'Virtual Reality' Laster interviewed

PLUS Epi, Ocean's Wing Commander rivalry; ECO Phantoms; Toyote Celica; Battle Command...

POWER

SCHWARZENEGGER TOTAL RECALL



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ROBOCOP 2!



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Then there's the gas pushing traffic job - a good question, either hanging on the side, or a remote looking piece in the hand and feet. The boss you really will be told down from level, leaving you cleaning up!



It's all that... you'll go a-zoozy! In fact you go a-zoozy, then... your machine, some heavy metal weapons and other parts that matter. Any other about the king of... (I) say he was Mr. Big!

MR BIG!

AMSTRAD . COMMODORE . SPECTRUM
ATARI ST . CBM AMIGA



The ACE Team: Digital Image Design, headed up by Steve Koenig, covers print and online to the masses. From the cover of ACE magazine's 100th issue to the magazine's 100th anniversary, we'll be celebrating our 100th anniversary. Best magazine and best editor.

NEW ERA ACE gets a new editor next month as Jim Douglas takes over the reins from Steve Cooke and Britain's top entertainment technology magazine strikes into the '90s. Steve's been with the magazine (with one short break) ever since it started and is now leaving to pursue new areas of advanced computer entertainment. Best assured that he'll still be contributing to the magazine on a regular basis. To celebrate his departure, we've reviewed all those games which should have been finished in time for the Christmas issue, including *Robozone 2*, *Chase HQ 2* and *Line of Fire*. Plus an exclusive look at Gremfin's stunning CD game; Dorian's answer to *Wing Commander*, *EPIC*; state-of-the-art *Marscon* sims; a painstakingly crafted Guide to the Greatest Games ever, and a horrible story on how you can actually eat Tetris...

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KISSING THE PINK

As a quick glance at our PINK will note all your interactive games and needs. And it's packed with bargains too!

← *Wings of Fury* is the only Amiga, A1 and Macintosh, and a Saturn/PlayStation of interactive games to date.



COVER STORY

ACE, in its ever-expanding quest for hot stories from around the world visits every battlefield to report on *Line of Fire*, *Gremlin Douglas' CD Dungen* game which boasts some of the hottest graphics yet to come. In *Robozone 2* game, programmers have already put in a year's work on the project and there's a further nine months to go. The game demonstrates the best's passage through the flaming corridors of battle, with dramatic, fast-moving scenarios and beautiful scenery. Turn to page 99 for the full story.

ACE

FEBRUARY 1991

GAMEPLAY

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Amazing gameplay as *Robozone* leaps into his *Psycho Cellar* and heads at *Sight Speed* into the *Madlands* on *King's Quest 4*... Full reviews listing on opposite page
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New format conversions hit the streets.
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Oh, and that's what you reckon is it? And, Heaven help us, we printed it...
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Machine specific columns, buyer's guides, July mail-order ads, adventure tips...and more.

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GG4

NEWS

Your first Sony

Sony, the leading Japanese electronics company, has produced a new series of great gadgets for preteen kids.

My First Sony creative products are split into three fun-filled games. The graphic computer costs \$2999 yet (around \$200) and plugs into a normal television set. Children can draw any kind of picture by simply pressing the appropriate shape and colour keys and manipulate these on-screen images using the built-in joystick. This device can be thought of as the electronic equivalent of a child's painting book.

The other two Sony gadgets are sound machines for creating special sound effects (S48) and electronically changing a child's voice (S26).

There's no reason why these My First Sony products couldn't be distributed outside Japan (with some minor modifications needed to be made to the computer). They may be on show during the British Toy Fair later this month at London's ExCeL Centre.



My First Sony creative products are split into three fun-filled games.

Carrier Airwing

Bring-games-based US Gold is set to commence work converting Capcom's latest ups-up only home computer format Carrier Airwing, another game in the US Goldborne style of scrolling shoot-em-ups, is currently proving popular in arcade halls across the country.

In the game you have to battle through 10 death-defying missions to destroy the ultimate weapon. Along the way you attack the enemy's arsenal and a giant fort, and by a diagonal ascent from low altitude down to a highway and then vertically down into a valley.

Carrier Airwing also incorporates breathtaking air-to-air combat over cities, valleys, deserts and oceans. Fortunately, you have the choice of flying three fighters.

Rich food from New York City the F-04 Tom Cat, food was placed first in his class at the Navy's Top Gun fighter combat school and is undoubtedly in air-to-air combat. The SA-99A Hornet is flown by Louisiana-born James Ray, a member of the U.S. Navy Blue Angels acrobatic team. Ray's expert handling of his plane gives him an advantage against both air and ground foes. Stealthy Mark Olson takes to the skies in a A-54, in tandem, a former U.S. Navy topnotch leader, Olson is known for being able to drop a bomb anywhere under any conditions.

Carrier Airwing should be available on a screen near you before the end of '91. US Gold has yet to decide on the best people to convert the game.

It's a cracker

Saburo Imai (Ibama) in America has introduced a new snack cracker based around the Soviet Union's popular pasta game. Could this be the natural food for a perfect Boris Krasov?

Terks Crackers, a light buttery bite-size snack, come in five Terks pasta shapes. These new crackers contain no artificial flavours, no preservatives and are low in sodium, oil, fat.

Saburo also sells Super Mario Bros. 3 chocolate cookies inspired by the cult Nintendo arcade platform game.

Japanese taking over the leisure biz

Co-Video in London, USA has filed a formal writ with lawsuit seeking to block the recent merger between the American entertainment company MCA and the giant Japanese electronics firm, Matsushita. MCA, and its giant Japanese electronics firm, Matsushita, MCA, is not named in the action.

MCA has interests in Universal Studios and Tomorrow's National Park in California, and Matsushita's second-largest unit (also where the consumer electronics with computers like Panasonic, VCR and Technics on its extensive list).

Last year, Sony merged with CBS Records and has now renamed the New York-based company to Sony Music Corporation. Sony already owns Columbia Pictures.

These Japanese takeover bids may not be good news for American business-people but they could pave the way for an exciting new range of audio-visual entertainment devices like CD-i and revolutionary portable video and musical playback devices. For Japanese companies like Sony and Matsushita own the hardware and software of the world's major music and music biz. Only Walt Disney is left in American hands - are there any Tokyo takes? We wait for the Oracle for with better board!

Smashed and Grabbed

Williams' Smash PC where contestants simultaneously kill each other to the applause of a Modularity audience, was voted the most innovative videogame of the recent MICA vote-up competition in New Orleans.

Scrum has grabbed the computer rights with Probe (Oxford Ave) handling the conversions due in September.



Smash PC is a game where contestants simultaneously kill each other to the applause of a Modularity audience.



Smash PC is a game where contestants simultaneously kill each other to the applause of a Modularity audience.



Right in another episode of Mighty Bontjack II, the character's determination ignites from already being dead.

Would you rather Jack?

Amiga's Commodore has developed a huge, new interactive platform that includes the games you wish to provide their games and savings to consumers. The developer's hard-ware based arcade board games using a 3D flexibility feature, now get access with specific interactivity changes.

It's not to release a follow-up to Bontjack, its highly successful coin version of Tomy's platform arcade game. The appropriately titled *Mighty Bontjack II* has 17 levels with some 200 screens of action.

"Our first Bontjack title, released way back in 1989, and our sequel Bontjack II in 1991, were both introduced with the number one selling chart position for several weeks and with the release of *Mighty Bontjack* we are confident that we can make this a hit title for Tomy and us," says a confident ENE.

So it's over to Amiga, SE, PC and CD-i gamers to prove ENE right (or wrong) when *Mighty Bontjack II* releases later this month.

Laserdisks Games are Back

In a surprising move, the American Laser Company has released a new laserdisc arcade game called *Mad Dog McDrive*.

Laserdisc technology dates back to the late '70s when Pioneer in the States produced the first optical video disc system for the consumer. Other companies soon followed with their own systems - like Philips' LaserVision - and digital video was born.

The final generation of laserdisc video games, such as Ken Scharf's *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace*, were released in the early eighties. Unfortunately, though they were initially very popular their primitive technology made them very unreliable and they quickly faded from the sale-up scene. The American Laser Company hopes it can overcome these reliability problems by employing state-of-the-art technology in its new laserdisc game.

Mad Dog McDrive is a Western adventure featuring shoot-outs at the county court, action bar and Sheriff's office. You play the latest gunslinger in town. For the best effects, *Mad Dog McDrive* can be played on a massive 70" monitor.

Atari Games' (producer of *Paperboy*, *Mad Drive*) and S.T.A.N. Runner - has signed up the European rights to the *Mad Dog McDrive* sale-up. The company has obtained the home computer or console conversion rights yet.



Mad Dog's take on the home war fighter played on the PC.

Retaliator lands on PC

The award-winning flight-sim from Digital Image Design and Owen is due to be launched on the PC before the spring, and make no mistake this baby is fast... and better too!

"We've got a 288K+ IBMPC and it's running at 30-40 frames a second," offers Martin Kenwright of Digital Image Design. "The slower it'll go down to in 30 frames that's what you're flying over a complex city with over half a dozen fighters chasing after you." Amazingly *F-29 Retaliator* runs at the same speed on a standard Amated PC as it does on the Amiga.

Digital Image Design has a rather unfortunate problem with the PC version... it's running too fast and they've got to slow it down. "It really does fly," laughs Kenwright.

PC gamers will also get more for their hard-earned cash in this version of acknowledged flight simulation than other gameplayers have, as the world has been filled in from their Amiga and SE versions. "We've created a more environment with more rivers, trees, etc," explains Kenwright. The PC version of *F-29 Retaliator* has been programmed by team leader, who previously worked with more machines, Dave Wintaker. "It's the last major project and he's handled it really well."

You'll be able to link-up two PCs together and play head-to-head *Retaliator* with a friend - or the best "Comms" is the big one," believes Kenwright. "It's the first ever time a frame compressed network has been implemented." Basically this allows for play between gameplays with different classes of PC. People with 8088+ machines won't be blown out of the sky by 386 turbo-motors - unless the 386 context is a better pilot! "This has been a nightmare to build, but it's wicked. Two machines on a cable is absolutely fabulous."

Digital Image Design is promoting a buy-one-give-one deal. "It's the best *Retaliator* of them all. Everything has been released - from random to weapon systems," says Kenwright. "You'll be able to find out for yourself where *F-29 Retaliator* is ready to release in the spring."



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Apparently, it's not
enough to
play in small-screen
and computers have
blown their minds.
These releases
give the classic
experience with
modern style
models to share
about the best
available, security
system. Some of
the best offerings
in cheap form with
easy-to-use
your best yet.



Imageworks' *Predator 2* is the first of a new breed of computer games: an "action 3D strategy" (read: shoot 'em up) that combines the action and horror of films to create its own action-adventure.

Predator is meaner than ever

It was the test of your body. It smelt the test of your feet. It hunts for sport. It kills for pleasure. It's the Predator.

The infamous Predator alien is back in an exciting sci-fi thriller film from 20th Century Fox with Imageworks providing a game across all major macro formats.

Following on from its blockbuster predecessor starring European muscle-man Arnold Schwarzenegger, the movie is set about five years from now in Los Angeles. Like *Robocop*, it's a tough LA cop played by Danny Glover (Neil Gibson's partner in the *Urban Night* movies), is investigating a series of mysterious murders while an intense street-war rages between Jamaican and Colombian drug barons.

In the Imageworks title, you play *Robocop* in an Operations Wall-to-wall pop-up and shoot 'em game. You have the choice of four weapons, such as a pump-action shotgun or grenade launcher, with the full back of a Magnum pistol. This four-level shoot 'em up is based around scenes in the movie such as a railway massacre and the violent confrontation between *Robocop* and the Predator in a downtown slaughterhouse.

"*Predator 2* is packed with fast and furious action and the most stunning FX ever seen on the big screen, so we determined to capture the action and excitement of this new low film hit," says Imageworks. The game and movie are due in April. The game will be available on the Amiga, Spectrum, PC, CD, AT and CPC.

Wholly-owned Am Developments (Penguin World) is coding the game and Stephen Hopkins (Mightyman on *The Street* II) is directing the motion picture.

The original *Predator* film was turned into a game by Activision and Orion. Three books in *W. Eam* of the *Predator* vs. *Alien* comics should be pleased to hear Activision is turning this successful series into a Nintendo video-game. There are also rumors of a *Predator* vs. *Alien* movie.

ACE in Japan

• More frustrated gamers of gamepayers have appeared outside Japanese shores since the recent launch of Nintendo's Super Famicom console. Orders for this much sought-after 16-bit machine have exceeded two million units.

Regrettably, it seems Nintendo can only produce 200,000 units per month until March. The Super Famicom is scheduled for an American launch at the beginning of September; the British version should come soon after that.

• There is only one tactic left. It will require all 7 T's attack tonight. Do not touch it! I will reap your orders: "Capture the Russian flag. This is the only way to avoid being sunk. This order is final." So begin! Notably, the new "Intelligence

action game" from Takara in Japan. The game is set in 1957 aboard a passenger steam-ship crossing the North Atlantic. *Montage* is filled with intrigue and puzzles in color. Available for the MSX802, it costs 12,800 yen (around £47) and comes complete with a screen-writing audio CD. Who knows the secret of the pink rose?

• Populous fans in Japan can now buy a compact disc filled with the music and sound effects from the game. Unfortunately, Belling, the creator of *Populous* and *Powermancer*, will not see a penny in royalties because of unfair copyright and licensing laws.

• Espoom, the Japanese coin-op company behind *Commando*, *Shoots*



'V' Scoble and Strider, has been featured on the Tokyo stock exchange.

• Images of Andrew Pochter, Martin Goss and Alan White from hard synth *Beastler* band, *Depeche Mode*, are appearing in a dream like CD-ROM adventure game for the aging Japanese PC-98001 computer. Mirrors also incorporates personalities from *Duran Duran* and *Max Headroom*. The game costs 2800 yen (approximately £48). Mirrors is currently being transferred to the FM Towns.

• Home Data has converted the world's most difficult video up into the Fujitsu FM Towns computer. *Marble Madness* is regarded by many players as Atari Games' best ever arcade game. It's also available on the Sharp X68000 and PC-9800.

• Work has just begun on the Super Famicom version of the ACE-rated *Powermancer*. Top Japanese games house, Imaginext, is handling the tough job of converting Belling's superlative strategy game. Imaginext previously converted *Populous* onto the Super Famicom and *Master*! Sim City onto the Sega MegaDrive.

• Special thanks to our friends at ASCII Corporation for their help.





3DCK is the 3D in an impressive advancement for an IBM PC/AT.

DIY WORLDS

Soon you'll be able to build your own 3D animated universe with Domark/Incentive's new 3D Construction Kit...

There's no doubt about it, this could be the most impressive game creation utility ever released. Not only does it allow you to create runtime modules complete with animation, shoot-em-up capability, puzzle solving, and maze exploration -- but it enables you to do it all in solid 3D, using a system that's even better than *Flourescope*!

Incentive have already brought out two well-known game construction utilities: *3AM* and *3TAC*. *3AM* was notable for being the first fully-integrated graphics adventure creator and *3TAC* did the same thing, but with more features, on the Atari ST. However, both these games had one big drawback: they could only create adventures, and in that respect they fell out seriously in products like Wanderer's *3MUD* and Palace's *Shoot-Em-Up Construction Kit* which could be used by you.

programmer to produce more conventional game types. So such games with *3D Construction Kit*. When Incentive first launched their *Flourescope* solid 3D system in the form of *3TAC*, and followed it up with the very successful *Castle Master*, the company demonstrated a convincing lead in the creation of 3D world environments. Now, they've got all their resources into *3DCK*, giving everybody the chance to build their own 3D universes -- in a standard even higher than before. What's more it'll be available for Amiga, ST, PC and S-Mit formats as well.

LEAD FOR GAMEMAKERS

You can create, edit, and manipulate 3D solid polygonal shapes into a user-friendly control panel. Triangles, cubes, hexagons, and pentagons can be generated and combined to form more complex or irregular shapes, each having its own position and status in your 3D environment. What's more, all objects can have conditions and animations associated with them, enabling you to build up a complete game.

Above the control panel is a window onto the world you're building. You can move about this world during the editing process, often examining what you've done in editing/loading other objects. For example, you can add a cube which will then appear in front of you. Then you can rotate, stretch and otherwise change its shape until it's just the way you want it. You then place it in exactly the right position, give it a name (makes editing easier later), and perhaps stick a triangle on top and some rectangles on the side to make it look like a house. Although you're limited to regular polygons, you can in fact combine picture elements and use a 'transparent' option to create some very complex game elements.

3DCK is a very powerful system and allows you to create environments that are actually a lot more detailed and complex than those in, say, *CastleMaster*. One other big point in *3DCK*'s favour is that it is very memory efficient. Objects take up only a few bytes and even a



From the developer's website, a screenshot of the 3D Construction Kit software. The person is sitting at a desk with a computer monitor and keyboard, looking at the screen.

THE FUTURE STARTS HERE!

ACE astrologer Rik Haynes with your stars for the coming year...



CAPRICORN
December 22-January 20

Creative edges lead the bubble of mediocrity surrounding your life. The idea of a game construction kit will be more appealing than ever before. Think it through before you start your project, does the guardian spirit at the end of level two take too many shots to kill?



AQUARIUS
January 20-February 19

You're restless and probably more susceptible to new gaming/tech gadgets. You'll receive some warnings from an older player. You yearn to fall of cerebral introductions. You won't find a better time than April to get something off

your chest by writing into *Ticks 'n' Ticks*.



PISCES
February 19-March 20

Also in Wanderland by the middle of February before the lion comes onto a new sign. It's likely that you can do best by being optimistic. You deserve something better than your collection of *Magistrate*, *Scrolls* games, perhaps you should try something a little more adventurous?



ARIES
March 21-April 20

Don't get too emotional when playing another platform game, remember to be careful when making a jump. Either a slow summer that the Moon will be in a fellow Earth sign by the beginning of September. You'll be at your wit's end by the end of the year.



TAURUS
April 20-May 20

A romantic, fun, available you is ahead of you... but that modern man. Though you must stop hogging all the multiples in horizontal, in-scrolling shoot-'em-ups. Wait and think it through before purchasing that joystick with revolutionary micro-switches which caught your eye in the January sales. Will it be compatible with your own console?



GEMINI
May 21-June 20

This is no time to relax. Consult an expert at your local arcade for support and guidance in these troubled times. Stay clear of low-scoring coin-ups. You really can't judge your entire life around visits to the arcade. Stay clear of joystick machines and dodgy-looking characters in dirty games. A pale face reveals your hidden layer of shooting games.



and is combining a set of tags that allow users to rate various games, all games, computer hardware and other stuff. The 32K video processor is one of the few multi-media options and effectively allows users to handle low-end video chips.

really complex world - a house complete with rooms and furniture, for example - could be represented into under 1MB. 320K games can be really BIG.

VIRTUAL ACTION

Now you've defined your world and set up all the game conditions, you can then use the program's other features to generate a proper runtime mode. Incentive will not be changing any routines on games produced using the system, so there's no reason why we shouldn't see some superb 3D home brew environments on the market.

Games created using the system can be even more impressive thanks to 320K's ability to import image files (e.g. *Before Paint* or *Real-Draw* pictures) which can be used to create a border around the window onto your world. Even better, 320K can create dynamic displays such as score tables and usage graphs and you can configure parts of your border as control buttons for the player to use to move around the environment, pick up objects, and so on. You could even use 320K to create a (rather slow, admittedly) solid 3D flight sim game!

When it comes to sound, the program allows you to load in your own samples, as well as providing a range of default sound effects. Again, a sound can be associated with an object or an action so that, for example, shooting an object would not only generate an animated explosion sequence but also call up the appropriate sample.

Speed is not 320K's strong point and the more complex the worlds you create, the slower the program runs, but having said that it is still just as fast as many commercial 3D world games on the market. In addition, there are ways to ensure that the frame rate stays as high as possible - reducing some forms of objects as transparent, for example, so that the rendering process is speeded up.

320K is due for release in April. Prices will be £49.99 for the Amiga and PC formats, £39.99 for the ST, and £24.99 for G44, G10 and Spectrum. All 8-bit formats will be available on cassette and disk.



The founders of the company that has 320K on its name: program designer Steve Foster and Steve Grogan and graphics designer Stephen Bennett. Incentive will be in development this year from the original author William Eastwood. If the authors get married, that'll be the final target.



The Amiga version of 320K costs a hefty £49.99 (the game features have a spin on the quadrants computer for use if you play on the ST). This version may take time for the masses of hardware designed by the group's members. You can £24.99 for the G44 and G10 models.



CANCER

June 23-July 20

Don't be nervous or over-anxious or you'll never get a compatible partner for your favourite simultaneous two-player game. Business matters will go well in between visits to computer stores. Short-run-ups are your lot in October. You should start by being pleased with yourself.



TAURUS

April 20-September 19

A special birthday treat is in store and you could become the star of the show. Keep your diary clear from 8th to 18th September. This is the best time to travel to Fawkers Court in London. The chance for excitement and intrigue, the time to meet new friends and major celebrities.



SCORPIO

October 23-November 20

A time for the age-old Super Famosos? You could even be looking after an elderly friend, possibly a Cat or Spectrum. Maybe it's easy-cats, easy-go. Someone who often beats your top-score can trigger a stretch of good luck for you. Patience can be the price without loss.



LEO

July 21-August 23

Watch the way drivers away to racing games and be ready to overtake them at a moment's notice. You have to choose whether to accept a very big opportunity. Will you miss that favour on the hand-out of your last remaining a little better. You're tied to the toilet 7, even if the six stars had coped to that way.



LIBRA

September 23-October 23

The new Moon in May leads to a calmer period is due in the middle of the year. You need to struggle against speed time with your favourite console or computer game. Don't let those quiet times drag you down. A collectible pool can take a lot of dark disappointments out of your life.



SAGITTARIUS

November 23-December 20

Here's is in your own sign so it's a good time to start a new party in your favourite role-playing game. Asgard makes the most of a more honest approach, but you really find that exact level in Super Mario World? The 8th of December holds particular interest for you, it's the last '94 hour of A.C.T.

about the 10th of November is being considered over to the Super Famosos, including Entertainment, Sun, Day After Tomorrow and Magazine credits.

THE BUTTON HAS BEEN

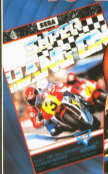


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Letters

Midwinter scorned; Midwinter praised; grey Megadrives; the colour Game Boy rumour - ACE readers prove that the pen is mightier than the laser

IREVOLUTIONARY RPG THEORY

I have watched with interest the increasing number of people writing in to express their concerns about the current state of computer RPGs. I wholeheartedly agree with Tony Park's views on this subject. A computer game will never be a suitable replacement for a Dungeons & Dragons

I have this theory on what current (and foreseeable) computer RPGs are. They are... shoot-em-ups in disguise! Think for a moment what you do when you play a shoot-em-up. There are basically two things that you aim for: (1) keep playing until you have the skills necessary to complete the game and (2) amass weapons to help utilize the skills you have gained.

If you think about it, computer RPGs are practically the same! You must gain skills and attain weapons to help destroy the bad guys.

No computer game currently on the market is able to boast that it is an RPG. This, in reality, is false advertising and I think the industry should do something about it. I won't deny that I haven't played these games, I have, and I have found them enjoyable (especially those fair-IT - good one, interesting) but there are absolutely NO elements of role-playing in them.

Justin Hawkins, South Australia

For the last time, I don't think anyone is claiming that CRPGs are the same as RPGs. But CRPGs have borrowed a terminology and, to some extent, a structure from RPGs -

they allow the user to create a persona with which to identify and they confer certain statistical attributes upon that character. Furthermore, during adventures and exploration, the player has (restrictive, I agree) freedom of choice as to tactics and direction. All this is a very limited borrowing, but it has to be acknowledged. A more accurate label might be 'RPG-influenced', but it's a bit of a mouthful and, frankly, CRPGs deserve to be considered in their own right and not constantly subjected to meaningless and derogatory comparisons - you yourself rather than BTB in a "good game". After all, nobody (thank God!) complains that shoot-em-ups are not real-life experiences of killing other beings is entirely different. No more CRPGs vs. real RPGs letters, please...

INTERFOUL

What's happened to InterFOUL, the subscribers' newsletter? In issue 30 you promised that the newsletter was almost ready and there would be issues online to make up for the delay. Let us know! Robert Phillips-Williams, *Ibiza*

We've looked, and we're sorry. Pre-Christmas deadlines simply made it impossible for us to complete the issues in time. They will be sent out in early January. Those whose subscriptions have expired in the last six months will also receive them as a special New Year present. InterFOUL will then be a regular quarterly event for all subscribers.

GREY MEGADRIVES

I am writing with regard to the Shogakukan article in issue 30 to express surprise that you actually considered it fair to accuse, let alone print it. Mr Longhorn's simple view is as tactful as that himself being business to all the so-called 'grey' importers of Megadrives. What on earth has he said? "Think long-term: forget the imported machines?" Both official and 'grey' hardware have got equally healthy futures, the latter perhaps even more so because it will have immediate access to all the latest Japanese releases which are unlikely to hit our shores for at least 6 months if not longer and there are bound to be games released in Japan that won't see the light of day in this country EVER.

It's very naive minded to say that an imported machine will have all the software support of a UK Spectrum. What about the fifty or so imported games that are currently available (and the list is getting longer every month)? Sega's intended release schedule of 2 games a month will put the official machines way behind the imported ones. And even if forthcoming official releases won't work on the imported machines (which is very petty on Sega's part) there are still such things as adapters to get around that problem. It's also wrong to say that you can expect to pay more for imported games - in reality (apart from the large data games like Snider and Phantom) Sam is all them same in at little more than £30.00 apiece.

Please, give it a little more thought before you agree to print articles containing this kind of subject matter. If things go on in this fashion, the general public will just say "Right! That's it! I'm not going to buy any consoles from anyone" which really

COLOUR BOY

There's a rumour going round my school to the effect that next summer the Game Boy will come out in colour. Is this true? And if so, what price will it be?
Ralph Burton, Switzerland

Despite official denials by Nintendo, industry gossip does suggest that there is a colour Game Boy either in existence or under development. Even if this is true, it is highly unlikely that it will be released before 1992 because of the continued success of the monochrome version. If such a unit were to be launched, it would probably cost less than £100.

will be laid out for everybody concerned.

Julian Hoehn, Altrincham
 First, as regards Dirk's article, his views are his own and not necessarily those of the Editorial team - this should have been made clear at the end of his article (it was in the original copy) but was left out by mistake. We agree that, when official distribution policy results in a leaving of choice for the consumer, as it often does, then there's something seriously wrong. Furthermore, there is absolutely no confirmation of the rumour (quoted by Dirk Longford) that future official Megadrive software will be purpose-written for all machines and therefore incompatible with grey-imported models. Finally, who is selling these grey imports anyway? Lots of stores. More or less, to our knowledge, manufacturers Megadrives are sold there on the cheap in Japan, those which enter-prise consumers are perfectly at liberty to buy them if they so choose.

DOUBLE DISK DEALING

A plea to all software producers writing for double-sided STs: check it works on single-sided machines with a second double-sided drive! The list of offenders is long and includes companies who ought to know better (Rainbow Arts, Laserfilms, I could go on...). Please remember that 2nd drives DO NOT BURN. Same withold

(Please note that withholding names sometimes means that we will not publish your letter. If you've got a point of view, have the courage to put your name to it.)

THICK CITY

Yes, I think a lot of games are thick. The new game features I would like to see in future games are:

1. More intelligent installation procedures. On installation, most games should be able to diagnose what type of PC you're installing it on and what options, eg VGA or EGA file screens, hard disk drives etc. It has available to pick from. These installation programs should be much more friendly and idiot proof.
2. This copy protection method of needing the original disc in your drive to install the game is very bad programming, design, and PR. Most games should have an individual number (and maybe buyer's name put in during installation) to make each copy unique and hence a easier to track software pirates.
3. Games should allow you to print out information (like character status in RPG games) to make interaction with other players more fun. Players could also interact with the game makers by faxing status reports to get help or win prizes.
4. More games should have built-in help options. These would give you on-line help which could be



SAVE OUR SCORES

I would like to know why some games have a saveable high score table and others don't? A saveable high score increases long term interest - even games like Double Dragon, which are easy to complete and therefore short on life expectancy, pull you back for just one more go to see if you can better your score.
 Alexander Munn, Edinburgh

PC ENGINES, PLEASE

With regard to Douglas Jones' letter last month concerning the Mega Megadrive, I do not share his pessimism on the future of the machine, but I do disagree with ACE in choosing it as the best console to buy.

As we all know, Japan leads the way in the console market and it is therefore interesting to see that the most popular machine in Japan is not the Megadrive but the PC Engine. Of course this machine has been around longer and has consequently generated more software than the Mega, but the main reason for the poor demand for the Megadrive is that it is not seen as a vast improvement over the Engine and so far there have been far too many mediocre releases for it. Another reason is that all Japanese games freaks are eagerly awaiting the release of the Nintendo Super Famicom which should clear up, if Game Boy's success is anything to go by.

You may say to what? And who cares about what is popular in Japan? But if a machine doesn't succeed there then it is unlikely to get progressive development from the top developers and software won't vastly improve. I personally think the Megadrive is a great machine, but it

is overpriced by virgin/legs (it sells at around £100 in Japan and you can get them from

Hong Kong for around £85). Of course, what you get is a guaranteed, properly configured machine and, well for it... a machine that isn't compatible with grey imports! It seems wise to stick to the grey market and get all the latest software from Japan directly and often cheaper than Virgin plan to sell them for anyway. I do realise that many purchasers will want an official machine with English instructions with the games, but don't brainwash everyone by over-buying a machine which, to date, only has a couple of really playable fun games.

I advise people looking for a console to check out the PC Engine simply because it has better developers, better licenses, and better software (exactly what the Game Boy has over the Lynx). Take a look at recent releases such as Devil Crash, White, Formation Soccer (best multiplayer soccer game) and Don Doko Don. And then all the red such as Ultimate Tiger, Steady Wall, and the superlative Thrax (I must say, however, forget Gunbird - it's ridiculously overrated).

Incidentally, one problem PC Engines and Megadrives have is the perennial PAL/SCART configuration of grey imports.

PC, machines run slower than SCART and have a boxed-in display on screen, it is always worth getting SCART provided you've got a SCART monitor or TV - and watch out for SCART machines rating at PAL speed - or old PC Engines). Unfortunately, the SCART PC Engine usually needs a separate colour booster because the colours are very dark. If you're trying to start the dreaded rivalry that haunts the ST and Amiga - I just think that your portrayal of the console scene is one-sided and ignorant. Jason Brookes, Cheshire

PS This would have been typed but I sold my Amiga to buy an Engine and CD-ROM drive - you're right, you DO need both a console and a computer!

ACE's coverage of the PC Engine has recently been increased with the addition of the monthly PC Engine column in the *Power* Pages. We'll also be increasing our coverage of new PC titles in the new Year. At the end of the day we still support the Megadrive - but we support individual choice even more. The Megadrive was our individual choice because the official launch and vast UK publicity spend over the next few months should ensure a good user base for the machine and the larger the user base, the more active the market becomes.

bought for points.

5. Game packaging should be more inventive. Instead of cardboard boxes why not sell games in nice leather-bound books? Other ideas would be to include mapping sheets and note paper with the game logs on it or game tickets etc.

6. Game upgrades. Certain games need to be upgraded every so often - games like *FTL Death-Fighters* for instance, which needs a new scenario upgrade for the Invasion of Runwell! When games come out, the makers should support them more, listen to user feedback, and then re-release them with all the new features. To get the upgrades at reduced cost, all people should have to do is send in the original master disc to prove previous purchase.

7. Networks. Why are games not coming out in network versions? Moved and numerous other networking systems are becoming so common and some games would be ideal on a network. A Dungeons and Dragons game with numerous opponents, or a war or flight simulator with human opponents would greatly add to the diversity and fun.
Michael Byrne, Cork

Absolutely, although some of your points are more applicable to PCs. As you and other letters this month demonstrate, it's often the little touches in programming that matter.

New Year, New Rating

ACE is taking a new initiative. With a completely new award for our readers' games. In your issue, we've been awarding ACE Award nominations to 1000 games that the early ACE, but over time decided to create a special award to make it clear better than game reviewers' approval ACE Award. A 1000+ game is being set standards for advanced computer users. Because the new award is the ACE Award, for games that take you into new dimensions of gameplay.



MIDWINTER RIGHTLY RATED...

I would like to publicly congratulate Mike Singleton and Malcolm on producing one of the best games I have ever played. I would recommend *Midwinter* to anyone with an ST or Amiga, even though a friend and I did manage to complete it quite quickly. We chose the easiest method of completion by not making a large team. However, we still return to the game just to watch the graphics sequences especially the cable car entering a station.
Paul Garrick

INSTANT SUNSHINE

Defeating General Masters is simple. Hang-glide. The only person you need is Mark and the only equipment you require is a box of dynamite.

Start the game (preferably as far South as possible), then take Mark to the nearest weapons dump and collect some dynamite. Then take him to a cable car station that goes up a high mountain. When at the top, get off on the hang glider along the mountain ridges. Use the map screen to plan your route and simply travel along the ridges towards the corner of the island where Masters has his base.

It's quite easy (quite a nice touch) to hang glide all the way to the base even with enemy planes and marines. If you crash or are shot down, just sit to a new cable car station and carry on. All that remains for you is to plant the dynamite and blow Masters sky high.
William Anghelino, Buxham

USE THAT RAM

I own an Amiga A380 and some months ago purchased an A201 RAM pack. For practical purposes, the additional memory allows me greater freedom and range, but it is hardly ever taken advantage of by the vast majority of software titles that I own. For example, in *Xenon II*, a reload is required whenever you enter the shop, and the soundtrack playing has fewer complex foot just because one channel is used for sound effects. Similarly, *Shadow of the Beast* is interrupted at intervals for additional data to be loaded.

Anthony Knook, Southampton

Reminds me of cracking loads of Midnight by taking Mark on his own up the Eastern side of the map - but that was rather more difficult. I admit it's pretty easy to crack *Midwinter* once you know how, but how long did it take you to work this out? Or did you stumble on this solution by luck?

MIDWINTER WRONGLY

I am enclosing the start of a long needed campaign...to get all companies that supply us with games, serious programs, or whatever, to put the bloody labels the correct way up!

As all mentally competent people will tell you, a label is the right way up if you can read it with the sliding protective cover downwards. Anything else simply isn't kosher.

That's because when you sit it up down in your nice little disk box, and then return later to give the little Midgey some exercise, you don't know who is where it is, because all the labels are upside down.

And well, a complaint. How can *Midwinter* possibly deserve 100% if it deserves no more than 80%.

The strategy in *Midwinter* amounts to no more than deciding whether to get Gary Hot, an 11 year old simply first, still at school (or at least he should be) or, AL 40000, the equivalent of the Himalayas armed only with a set of six and a peanut butter sandwich...

MB for a game that lets you see snow through 10 people's eyes...

MB for a game that, after logging to get 24 people in my team

Although is any honest gamer will tell you, the maximum number of people that can be moved in any one turn, without creating fire, is 10 and finally defeating the enemy, I managed to win the game with Mark on his own in a matter of a few turns.

MB for a game where the residents - all 33 of them - are as thick as Paul Knook. I had one character stay in a settlement to protect the peasants, as so many units were nearby, and while going from the garage to the house to get some food, he totally failed to notice 30 enemy vehicles attack and capture the settlement.

I will admit that the game tried to be a dog in the right direction, but *Midwinter* must have led it to the left side of a member of the military for silly stuff. Come on ACE, pull your finger out. Let's not get impressed with all the type and backslashes, let's be objective about rating - you're giving far too many games ACE RATED status.

But most importantly, let's continue this campaign to get all the labels put the right way up!
Paul Garrick, Swanton

The ACE award status is now changing over to ACE Trailblazer (see elsewhere on these pages) and one result of this will be that games will have to be even better to win this new coveted award.



Yes, you'll get these more games with the Xbox version. Rasmus and the team included.

Last year could be thought of as the best yet for fantasy role-playing games. First there was *Ultima IX* with its improved icon interface and wonderful graphics and sound. Then came *Savage Empire*, the premier for a new series of games based around the *Ultima* role-playing system. Every titanic of *Ultima* release has its own unique story plot and character. Both games were an ACE Award step ahead of the rest.

With the *Ultima* titles and *Onyx Riders*® outstripping *Wing Commander*, Origin was on a roll. Many believe the Texan-based company to be the software house of 1996. Now Origin is working on *Martian Dreams*, the next titanic of *Ultima* games. So will 1997 be an even better time for fantasy role-playing fans?

MOVE OVER CYBERPUNK

Martian Dreams has possibly the most exciting and imaginative scenario ever devised for a game. It mixes Victorian personalities and Jules Verne technology in a fusion of fact and fiction which Origin laughingly dubs *Steampunk*.

The producer of *Martian Dreams*, Warren Spector, is in charge of almost 26 game designers, artists, musicians, sound effects specialists, testers, writers and programmers working on this ambitious project. Spector is one of the most experienced role-playing game designers and writers in America. Before joining Origin, he worked for Steve Jackson Games and TSR, the company responsible for the *Dungeons & Dragons* series of products. "The best job to seek," says Spector, "is to learn back in the most comfortable chair in the building."

Warren Spector and Jeff Grubb, *Martian Dreams* Project Leader, were still mining the crates out of the game's plot during my visit to Origin's 100,000 square foot air-conditioned building in Austin, the state capital of Texas.

HEAR OF THE WORLD'S

"You travel back in time to the 1880's and then to Mars, where you interact with real historical figures, uncover the secrets of an extinct Martian race, struggle with Victorian technology, gain cosmic powers, defeat it

MARTIAN DREAMS

Why are Grigori Rasputin, H.G Wells and Sigmund Freud going on a mission to Mars? Rik Haynes steps back in time to preview the next World of *Ultima*...



Back to the Victorian era and then on to the engineering of the game.

creatures, generated by a dream machine, and voice a 100-MHz transmitter," says Jeff George in his early design proposal for *Martin Dreams*. It seems a Mars City helps you work, rest and play with dream machine idleness!

The story so far: In 1993, Nikola Tesla—America's most brilliant eccentric genius—is instructed to build a space cannon near Chicago. The launch to Mars is scheduled to take place in conjunction with Chicago's World Exhibition to be held later that year. The show did actually take place in 1893, since the space cannon of course! But it's to the plot. While a wide variety of dignitaries from the time go on a tour of the capsule during a safe colonization, the cannon is accidentally fired and a group of scientists, captains of industry, entertainers and politicians are prematurely flung to Mars. Except the launch was no accident: The power-hungry and water-driven League of Nations arranged the arbitrary launch of the capsule with himself included.

Fortunately the only animal left on Mars can, at least in theory, construct a ship to return to Earth. After a brief period of panic, the travelers settle down to the business of exploring that new environment and establishing a settlement on Mars. Their progress is relayed to Earth via giant signaling towers.

All goes well for the first few months, with reports of many wonders found in the Martian desert. And the discovery of a Dream Machine which allows a person to enter the realm of dreams while fully awake. The machine works complete immersion of your dream experiences. But messages start to



This imaginary generalized crowd illustrates people from the early Chicago exhibition seen in 1893.

report of sickness and insanity among the humans on the planet. Finally, after six months, all communication with Mars suddenly stops. We now go to you to lead a rescue mission and save the first Mars expedition...

WORLDS UP

WORLDS UP is basically a game filled with moral dilemmas like many of the classic adventures before it. "You, like all humans, must control and control the red in yourself," explains Jeff George. "This red is represented in the game by the M-ras tunic released by the Dream Machine."

But the book doesn't stop with the id creations. "Technology went and abused

without the benefits of caution, wisdom and understanding, leading to disaster." Do I see shades of green appearing in this game? But the M creators do have a lot to answer for. "The use of the mind-altering escapade devices for empty pleasure is ultimately self-destructive," Jeff George adds. "On many levels, the *Martin Dreams* Machine is metaphoric for the successful pharmaceuticals found in our own world." Big on this, I think he means legal drugs. *Origins* will even incorporate a Jan-Jay-to-Go through in the game.

"You just don't get the level of complexity in the weird *Shogun* or do you? And I haven't even mentioned the *Paradox* creations, former scientists, program for creating in the thin Martian atmosphere. Repeat's means scheming in the Martian's plans to invade the Earth!

The imaginative story, complex gameplay, advanced character interaction, rich personalities, and extraordinary features surely make *Martin Dreams* one of the ACE team's most eagerly awaited games for 1996. The game is initially being developed on PC format, though Super Famicom, Amiga, PC, CD-ROM and CD-iV adapters are also being. *Martin Dreams* should be finished before the autumn. ACE will be bringing you more exclusive reports on the game's progress later in the coming months.

The real shipwrecker!

Steven Novak

Executive Director of Adventure

Magazine

"I've used to give people with visible muscles. You can't hear about your enemy is."

Jeff George

Executive Director of Adventure

Magazine

ORIGIN'S ORIGINS

Origins was created in 1991 by a team of four—the brothers Robert and Richard Garriott, Bob Bates and software editor Douglas Wheeler and their fellow coders RADA, advanced Owen Goodall. The company is situated at the Wild Basin Road in Marlin West Austin, Texas. *Origins* directly employs 10 people and has, in the last three years, invested over 10 million dollars in the development of new products, computer hardware, mass development systems and support equipment. This exciting adventure game developer has provided 30 titles for all the major home-computer systems including PC, DOS, Apple II, Macintosh, Amiga and CD-i. "We'll just keep. *Origins* and famous products were Richard Garriott's immensely popular series of *Ultima* fantasy role-playing games. These have now been joined by *Wings* Commander (currently the best selling game on the retail shelf), *Worlds of Ultima*. Through association with Japanese Nintendo developers and publishers, *Origins* has received access to the then-new Nintendo console. Additionally, *Origins* is their developing *Ultima* partners for the Nintendo Entertainment System and currently *Origins* is also working towards the future with exciting new games and adventures being planned for Nintendo's Super Famicom 16-bit console and various Commodore 64 retrofitted platforms. "This isn't just going when you consider that five years ago Richard Garriott was willing to bet game. Additionally, in a plastic bag with plastic-regiment instructions



Steve Novak (left) and Jeff George (right) are the authors of *Origins*, the game that's being built.



Entering the realm of the space empire...

EVERY ONE A MICRO

THE GAMES ARE GREAT THE OFFER'S A GIFT.



▼ F-19 Stealth Fighter is the 'plane they can't keep under wraps. It has soared to the top of the Gallup charts, receiving review rating after review rating above 90%.

▼ "Fast smooth and technically sophisticated. The four mission territories, told w/ conventional and limited war situations plus the selection of available options translate into a huge number of different missions - each with its own level of enemies, radar installations and alerted bases to face. Flying a successful operation draws on a variety of different skills - radar negotiation, bombing accuracy, air-to-air improvisation and plane handling skills. Presentation, right down to the expensive manual, is impeccable throughout. For strategic depth and variety of gameplay, there's very little to touch it." The One July 90

FREE T SHIRT OR MUG WITH THESE GAMES

Midwinter earned its title as "Strategy Game of the Decade" by freezing out the opposition to head the Gallup charts and by receiving accolade after accolade from the Press.

"Many games are billed as 'revolutionary', but Midwinter is probably the closest you are going to get to the title. Whilst the presentation is superb, it is the superb gameplay that sets it apart from other 'classics'. Although your task is to destroy the evil General Masters, the gameplay allows you to perform the task in whatever manner you deem appropriate. As you put together a strong team with varying skills that actually have a bearing on the game, any method can be used to kill Masters. Couple this with four modes of transport, numerous missions, and an involving storyline, you have a game that really does live up to its classification." ST Action May 90



FREE T SHIRT OR MUG WITH THESE GAMES



▲ Rick Dangerous II charts the return of everyone's favourite hero, back in a flash to fight the Fat Man and find favour with fun lovers everywhere.

▲ "By now, Rick Dangerous has earned its place in the hall of fame for classic platform games, but just when everyone was taking it for granted, along comes the sequel - and its even better than the original. The graphics have been polished up, the sound effects are funnier and the gameplay is more fluid and enjoyable. With a little thought all the puzzles can be worked out (and some of the solutions are very strange!). Even if you haven't played the original game (where have you been ?) Rick Dangerous II is well worth a generous slab of any game-player's time. But a generous slab could have you sitting in front of your computer for days without rest. You have been warned...but buy it anyway!" Amiga Format Nov 90

PROSE GOODIE...

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CLAIM YOUR FREE GIFT WHEN YOU PURCHASE F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER, MIDWINTER, OR RICK DANGEROUS II FROM ANY OF THE FOLLOWING TOP SOFTWARE STORES:



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- Andia** 16 St. Gertrude Street, Worcester
- Andia** 20 Royal Parade, Plymouth, Devon
- Andromeda** 4-11 Market Place, Kingston on Thames, Surrey
- Atta 'n' Bytes** Unit 16 Central Station, Barnhill Street, Luton, Bedford
- Atta 'n' Bytes** 112 Bridge Street, Warrington
- Atta 'n' Bytes** 47 Market Street, Junction Centre, Manchester
- Bacon Ltd.** 25-26 Longport Street, Swansea, Wales
- Castle Computers** 27 Williamstown St, London, S.W.7
- Central Trade** 88 Ley Street, Southport, Merseyside
- Crowley Computers** 62 The Boulevard, Crawley, Sussex
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- Electronicscity** 88 West Street, Farnham, Hants
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- Game** Parklands Shopping Centre, Birmingham
- Game** Unit 28 Avonlea Shopping Centre, Newcastle
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- The Model Shop** 78 Northgate Street, Gloucester
- TG Software** United City Victoria St, Douglas, Isle of Man
- Wigs** Unit 8 Westgate, Colchester, Essex
- Wigs** 64-66 Victoria St, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey

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EPIC

Look out King
Commander! DIGITAL
IMAGE DESIGN and
OCEAN are preparing
to launch a space-sim
packing 400 polygons
per second, enormous
space battles and over
70 different types of
spacecraft. Erik Hynes
walks 'round the
hangar-bay for a
preview...

Nothing ever goes as originally planned. Epic started back in February 1993 when Microcad wanted a three-dimensional version of Goldrunner. The talented trio of Martin Kinneght, Phil Atizzo and Russ Payne were eager to oblige the Cornell-based company - forming Digital Image Design to handle the job. But it's never that easy. Microcad suddenly pulled out of the games industry. Digital Image Design had the rights to the game and looked for another publisher.

The original concept was revamped. Ocean, on the look out for high-quality original product, quickly snapped it up. Goldrunner 3D became Epic. Meanwhile, Digital Image Design desperately needed cash and Ocean wanted a fighter. The award-winning F-29 Retaliator resulted. Finally, Digital Image Design had the chance to write Epic.

ENEMY GAMES IN ONE

So it begins. The human race is on the verge of extinction. Haven's going to be a superbase, the entire star system is going to be destroyed. The humans want to escape to safety in the next solar system. Unfortunately, this will be seen as an act of war by the ruling Empire. Haven must die.

Like *Defender*, *Galaxion* is a soft mode game. To succeed, the human fleet moves for the fight to survive. Only the spacecraft in Epic have been specially constructed for the trip. The busy human survivors have built two massive motherhips and a unique ship to protect the fleet called the Epic starfighter. Basically the game is a breakout of 60 million people across 60 light years of enemy territory... and you're in charge of taking Haven ball in an Epic fighter. Your fleet consists of agriculture ships, solar transports, fuel tankers, resource carriers, freighters, etc. Each ship plays a vital role in the game.



Space action, planetwide. The bulky transportation land is the land on planet Haven.

THE TRAILS OF SPACE FLIGHT

How can you fly in space was an important question for Digital Image Design. Should they go for an IBM-style nuclear-thruster craft or an F-16 in space? "We've got phenomenal energy thrusters," says Martin Kinneght. "We created a propulsion that sounds futuristic and has nice inertia, nice banks and your ship always has to get tucked back into the air you cut off an arc, space battles unfold really when we need a high-g turn - your craft can effectively spin round on the spot."

"We're trying to run a movie-inspired game," says Martin Kinneght at Digital Image Design. "We looked at the classic Star Wars films and saw their technical realization - the superb objects, effects and feeling of movement through space. We want to try and create a reality. We're trying to be the first believable fighter in space. Only it's not just space, it's five planets as well. Epic is eight separate games rolled into one."

Being the game you get the chance to visit a variety of planets with their own atmospheres and surface objects. Each planet has proper terrain with mountains, rivers, volcanoes with surface objects including moons and moonway networks, alien cities. Some objects are animated, such as the rotating gas batteries and massive bot-to tanks which move around the planets surface firing missiles and launching fighters.

BREAKING THE BARRIERS

Digital Image Design has created over 1000s of graphics data for its latest release... hardly surprising when you consider Epic is filled with movie-like animated sequences throughout the game. "We've got a big glossy intro with some nice filling screens using 3D graphics, hand-drawn screens, sprites, animated backgrounds and vector graphics overlaid on-top," Kinneght confirms. "We call these Introgams, created with our custom-made design editor. Hopefully these sequences will bring the game to life. We can take proper 3D-painted panoramas, backgrounds, scroll and fly, animate them (stars twinkling, lights turning on and off, blood doors opening and closing, moving cars or Marsoid systems, etc), add text and simultaneously show over a dozen moving 3D objects."

Digital Image Design's graphics engine has some of the fastest 3D routines ever seen in an Amiga or ST game - with an average of 400 polygons per second. A good example is your Epic fighter with approximately 120 polygons, a similar number of polygons, and on average it goes 14-16 frames a second on the Amiga-86's slightly faster on the ST's. Some preliminary benchmarks on the PC is running at an amazing 60 frames. "Our 3D is the best," proclaims Kinneght.

In addition to the usual supply of polygon triangles and rectangles, Epic has got discs, spheres and different kinds



Planet duty. An Epic starfighter (left) using from the mothership center on the left (right ship) comes from the same sophisticated 3D.



Even so, we have this about use of the generalist: the best of polygonal model is reusable - and it's for the open...

of fading effects like see-through objects. "Sprites are dead easy to do, you just draw a blob on the screen, but doing an eye complex in 3D," explains Kenwright. "Although anybody can buy a textbook and find out how to do it, the difficulty is getting it down to run as fast as possible."

This bottleneck code is the thing that's caused delays. "You can't just sit back with your 3D engine, you always have to do better in your next game - it's what people expect. Gameplayers get bored very quickly," Kenwright offers. Digital Image Design has been experimenting with texture-mapping producing some lush and water effects on the PC. "It's just a case of priorities. First, we want frontal languages to fly over like you see in Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan. It may sound ludicrous now but it's not far off." The process of writing a 3D game is unbelievably time-consuming. It takes Digital Image Design three to four days to design each three-dimensional shape used in the game. "Our shapes take three or four times longer to produce because our system is so complex - it's optimized for speed, not ease of use," Kenwright sighs.

Russ Payne, Phil Skippa and Andy Tomington are programming Epic. Martin Kenwright is in charge of concept and design. Paul Holmwood and a few other people are providing additional design. David Whitaker has developed the music and sound FX, including some sampled speeches and real voice drive spot-effects.

Epic is the first game where bitmap and polygon graphics have been so successfully combined. Kenwright is amazed none has tried this technique before. The ST and Amiga versions of Epic should be ready for release by the beginning of spring, the PC adaptation will follow later in the year. Epic is huge, incorporating nearly every type of space warfare strategy - from individual strikes to massive battles between over a thousand opponents. It takes you four hours to fly across a world - going at full speed - because Digital Image Design uses full 32-bit 3D. The game is never the same from the end of mission one. It can branch to completely opposite scenarios - with "leisurelike..." movie sequences keeping you updated on the appropriate story. With the Resistor's in full control, your race for survival could take 30 years!

TAKE THE NEWBRIGHT CHALLENGE

We're so convinced of the use of fading every game developer say they've got the fastest three-dimensional engine. It's probably not those things they've got the fastest 3D, but it's how they use it. We'll get together in a room, work out how we can bring a thousand polygons down on the table, and we'll see where the fastest... well, it's the combined Kenwright.



Kenwright graphics - big models are hard to create when you have to play and understand game.



"Don't believe" about the matter after, actually, the other one playing "Don't believe" about the matter after.

"3D games are a fine balance. If you put in too much definition the game starts chugging and it becomes unplayable. Epic is just full of action."

Martin Kenwright

But that's not the only reason why the world's best game developers are so busy. The best game developers are so busy that they have to work on their own time.



The Resistor's world is shown in your sight. Watching the world you fly through the ship around so that you can look on to the other target.

"They've got your game though you're in your cockpit and it's not too much graphics. It's a great game for people with their thousand pound machines. Epic is for the masses."

Martin Kenwright on Epic Resistor

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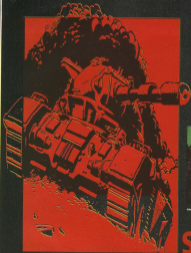
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How does it feel to be the boss? Well, I think there's a lot of it.

Sweat pours down the back of my spine as I survey the surrounding hilly terrain. Out of the shadows, three Russian T-80 main battle tanks, bulging towards me in clayey formation. Pressing hard on the right joystick fire button, I leave my first target. The commander locks-on to my unsuspecting victim. A flick of a switch and crucial laser range-finder data feeds onto my HUD display. It confirms my shot and the turret elevates, automatically taking care of the hilly terrain. A smooth feel of the trigger and away we go.

Perfect fit - a pile of weathered Russian metal stands dead in its tangled tracks. A cloud of smoke drifts up, the sign of a Soviet tank crew now free to roam the country side. The remaining T-80s break formation and start their witch hunt. Quickly swinging my turret to the left, I suddenly overheat the next T-80 tank. Precise accuracy are lost as the Russians release two rounds, scattering bewilderment at supersonic speeds.

The first falls short, bouncing the ground in front of my tank into a whetted basin of earth and metal. A nanosecond later the second rival lands. More accurate than its predecessor, it opens out a multi-million British Challenger 2 tank. Crew survival is rated at only 25%. Great Gun. My first attempt at 'playing' GEC-Marconi's new tank-gunnery simulator produced mixed results. It only if I had some multiple choice options or a smart bomb.

Tanks, Planes and Arcade Games

Get your hearts out, Battlestar fans, because GEC-Marconi is developing a tank gunnery simulator for the British Army superior to anything yet played in the

WAR GAMES

Today the British Army uses military simulations to train its tank crews, tomorrow you could be playing them in your local arcades. Rick Haynes goes on reconnaissance in GEC-Marconi's sim-labs in Scotland...

Tanks a Million

welcome to the gaming system that GEC-Marconi hopes the British Army will adopt to train its tank crews in the future. If they get the contract it will be worth in excess of 100 million. "Our Battle III0 simulator has been designed as a precision gaming training system which replicates the gamery and commander's positions of a main battle tank. However, we profile requirements in real time, automatically reproducing the real world environment," says GEC Marconi. "Battle III0 provides a high fidelity simulation of the gamery's and commander's sights, through which the 1000-line colour monitor display unit, are viewed. The external controls and targets are entirely replicated in 3D so giving total freedom of movement to your vehicle for single or three configurations."

Battle III0's technical specifications are very impressive. The system has dual 80000 8000 processor's each running at 40MHz, 16MB of main memory and a 10000 hard disk. Eight graphics processors provide gamery, gun conversion and display rate systems. The whole set-up is connected to a simulation computer and indicator station via an Ethernet link.

"All targets are fully three dimensional objects which can be viewed from any direction," continues GEC Marconi. "Weapon control subsystems allow us that comparison between types is possible at that operational range. Battle III0 gives a Moving time table for compatibility with complete freedom to move, and forward and reverse sight directions. The Battle III0 visual system provides varying levels of smoke, fog and cloud together with weapon effects. Battle III0's sound effects system enables 3D for your own vehicle engine, turret movement and vehicle motion, your own fire and all types of ammunition, commander's instructions and displayed audio feedback responses, external fire."

"Battle III0 can be developed to meet a new force for specific use chosen for the same way as a range of real tanks including realistic communication systems. Customware supplied by Marconi Simulation for Battle III0 comprises almost 1000 exercises, and is supported by an automated visual system which captures data from external video cameras, provides their progressive through Battle III0's own video camera results and allows external analysis. All this should be yours for a just million pounds."

instead. It's like comparing the five-vector graphics used in Mark II arcade game with real video footage of tank warfare. Based around Silicon Graphics' supercomputer technology, the simulator can deliver six million polygons per second, with a polygonal rate of 200 per foot per second. Peak pixel performance is what? Don't use the word counts for GEC Marconi's simulation: it's a proper tank turret, with two multi-function joysticks and a laser-like sight system.

Don't despair. GEC-Marconi is planning to join the state-of-the-art producing arcade game versions of its military simulators. Who knows, it could even go the other way - Sega, Konami and Atari might produce budget simulators of nuclear submarines... provided you don't mind the odd spite glitch as you attempt your share of irregularly no-tills.

The idea of one of the world's leading military simulators being its attention to creating video games seems a little strange at first, but the concept is fairly surprising when you discover that Dr Les Grant, the General Manager of GEC-Marconi's simulation facilities in Fife, Scotland, is a veteran gamer/player. "The first 3D series is incredible," admits Grant. "Watch our Day Div the creator of Ace 3D, you may end up writing arcade games, based around a submarine's perspective or setting a nuclear power station,



Three tanks from the Battle III0 simulation appear in the simulator.

"Commander's hand to the Outside automatically answer and back right."

For more, General Manager of GEC Marconi Simulation



both of which have already been done by GEC-Marconi for the Dutch Navy and British Nuclear Fuels, respectively.

Grant tried to get GEC-Marconi involved in the arcade games industry back in the early 80s, when Pac-Man first launched its video-cassette system. Unfortunately, he was jumped at the post by Dan Smith and his Dragon's Lair 16-bit arcade adventure. The reason behind GEC-Marconi's change of heart is the shock from the collapse of the computer/Entertainment Back circulating through NATO's military establishment. The Iraqis may have provided a stopgap, but the writing is clearly on the bunker wall - manufacturers of military kit will have to diversify their business if they're to survive into the next century.

If GEC-Marconi's new venture is successful, we could see other military contractors join the gamery train. The next generation of arcade gamery could be driving 801 Abrams tanks around Iraq's deserts, flying B2 Stealth bombers over North Korea and taking out South American drug barons in Apache helicopter gunships - using defuncted war consoles from the likes of General Dynamics, Lockheed and Hughes Aircraft. Of course you'd have to sign the Official Secrets Act as you enter the arcade - and high scoring players would be automatically drafted into the armed forces. You'd just be warned!



Dr Les Grant, General Manager of GEC Marconi Simulation, is a veteran gamer.

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Digital Integration

Everything's virtual these days. The Babbage center soon to be set up in London and first covered in ACE back in August 1999 was labeled 'virtual' in a weekly magazine, an Andrew of Incentive claims that his 3D Construction Kit enables you to construct your own 'virtual' matter, and ACE editor Steve Cooke is reported to stand in a permanent 'virtual' 1960s. Of these uses of the word, only the last one seems to have the ring of truth. What's going on?

What's going on is one of the biggest breakthroughs in recent technology and since ACE has been partly responsible for getting it going, we thought it a good idea to try and pin down exactly what we mean when we talk of virtual reality. After all, judging by some of the descriptions above, even a 3D microscope is a candidate for the virtual reality label and, as conceptual scenarios go, that one shouldn't be allowed to get off the ground.

Let's go to the horse's mouth. Dr Mason Sanger, the man who really got the VR ball rolling. We caught up with him at a conference in New York...

THE VIRTUAL PART

The VR experience has been around since 1960 when a chap called Ivan Sutherland had developed a headset that allowed a user to examine a 'virtual room'. Four years later, Sanger was laying the foundations of the virtual experience with his 'Videoplax' concept that sought to involve the user in a computer-manipulated experience.

Headset technology is very cumbersome and from the beginning my approach was completely different,' argues Sanger. 'The human isn't reaching at all and the computer is making faster than any technology in history. It's clearly the interface to the computer has got to be the human itself - any adaptation you make to the computer is going to be obsolete in a couple of years.'

Sanger's approach, therefore, is to get away from designing ever more complex user devices, like VR1, to Dataglove. One of his first setups was back in 1991, where he constructed a 'terrace floor' with a bank of monitoring devices linked to a computer. This floor formed the basis of a whole series of interactions ranging from compiling it as a manual keyboard to setting up an on-screen menu that people had to negotiate on the floor.

Sutherland's headset and Sanger's floor form the two complementary foundations of virtual reality - you could call them 'bottom' and 'top' first respectively. Sutherland's work has evolved into wearable kits for the '90s industries and (see last issue) the ACE and products from VR1 and Sense 8 in the States. Sanger's floor has inspired creations ranging from the 'Suburban' 'Terminology' 'Dinosaur Refinery' (open in prototype form at the ACE Living Rooms of the Future) and 'Vivid Effect's' Mandala system.

It seems likely that these two strands of VR research will continue on their separate



Some futurists predict virtual world reality. It even got the approval of some research projects, such as following the tracks of the golden rule of VR: to VR, it never is real.

Building new worlds

ACE continues its journey into the future with a definition of virtual reality, an interview with Jaron 'Cyberspace' Lanier, a glimpse at new developments in interactive fiction, and a trip to Virtual Egypt...

ways for quite some time. Sanger admits that the 'team first' approach of having no cumbersome hardware and allowing the user to prance about in sanitised space requires almost an almost utopian degree of technology, but it does have obvious attractions. The bottom-line brigade, however, can argue that an equally Utopian technology could produce bottom-ers that were barely discernible by the user. The most likely outcome is that the two will meet virtually halfway.

NO WONDER'S WHYLAND?

Meanwhile, Sanger has done up a big house. He's come up with a definition of 'virtual reality' that we at ACE reckon sets the boundaries for this sort of experience and makes it quite clear what is 'virtual' and what isn't.

Talking of his January Floor, he told us that 'I did it that way living sensor'

because I didn't want the computer to get input from the user. I wanted it to perceive the user. In fact, I didn't think any longer of a user, I thought of a participant in a computer experience.'



Sanger's 'terrace floor' was one of the first virtual reality experiences. It was the first of many that have since been developed. Sanger's 'terrace floor' was one of the first of many that have since been developed. Sanger's 'terrace floor' was one of the first of many that have since been developed.

OK, so it could be argued that any old 3D game is a computer experience we can all participate in, but that's wrong. The key lies in Krueger's use of the words "input and feedback," that is something the user does deliberately — you hit a button, you twist a joystick, you toggle with the mouse. When you're not doing anything, the computer isn't receiving anything. In a VR system, even when the user isn't doing anything, the computer is still being inundated with information about his/her position, pulse rate, eye movement, or whatever the system is set up to monitor. This constant perceiving, or awareness of the human being, is what makes the difference between a virtual reality system in which you can free-participate as opposed to a 3D environment which you use/observe.

OK, so let us lay down the law. Now write to us with your amendments...and stand by for a stunning ACE expose of the future of VR in the very near future.

MEET UNCLE BUDDY

Well, you won't actually become Uncle Buddy but passably away. However, he appears to have left you the contents of his final wish...

This is the contents of a recent wish

in cooperation by John Mitchell of the MIT Institute of Technology, the very kindly and in some of the files from Uncle Buddy's files, and used using various applications, together with the following notes:

"Uncle Buddy's Executive Personnel" is a program which allows to create what Uncle Buddy has called "Object Driven Files." Instead of telling "me" what things are, the database is an environment. The reader gets a letter from a law firm (like his "lawyer's letter") which tells them that a cancelled check for \$1000 will be, for some reason, left down the contents of their hard disk. Electronic checkbooks, notes, word processing documents, photo albums, projects (processed as well as some paper files and several cassette tapes with original notes.

It is up to the reader to decide what, if any connections they had with this "Uncle Buddy," and what, if any they "could" be the application of electronic documents.

Based by the above coverage of John's work in future issues.



Go to the Barbers!

Our ACE correspondent met Cyberpaz pioneer James Lanier at the Los Angeles Cyberarts Conference where the man in a datsuit with a virtual briefcase addressed the chosen few...

I was like stepping into the labyrinth world seen in Kubrick's *The Shining*, except Cyberpaz was the only guest receiving the details before he even got through the door. I was escorted by six guards, eight between 11 and 20, who definitely looked as if they were in a real barbershop. Cyberpazers form now a lot of women or a group of this Pasadena salon must have been turned down to the nightclub hotel in the middle of vacated downtown L.A. Very surreal.

After knowing around the website over-occasionally probing into critical or other items I wanted to report that I was escorted from virtually every doorway with the courage to approach a wild and scary James Lanier of VPL Research. James is a very engaging individual — looking like a 1940s-era banker in the way other visitors here described him. Let's begin about the experience. ACE? The guy's simply "who he is" and he does people business and always drive it wonderfully entertaining.

As things boiled up, in four virtual minutes, we ended up reaching the perimeter of the Los Angeles International airport, where I found

James playing it wooden but while he waited for his passport and a boarding pass for it to light: it is reminiscent of *Autant*, featuring the masses still, according to their destination, we postponed how long others were being served depending on whether and how long we would be in there so we could detail our conversation from a single virtual eye.

ACE: Joe Clark of Silver Graphics Inc. has been elected by the West Coast Journal as saying



VIRTUAL MONEY!

Bank One Revolution is a small multi-media game available from Internet Gateway Inc. via a programmer fee

Doctors, teachers, parents, librarians and librarians, even Andy Turner are turning their skills to creating complex environments. The primary objective? "see flow." To develop and deliver an experience beyond their own consciousness... this flow of their own life their development of "Virtual Edge," dedicated to presenting a vision eight years old of virtual history, but without any danger of the teacher's offending bits of the dynamic in the present. You can get a pilot view of their own experience direct from the same guy...contact Mark Day Revolution Ltd, The Management Studies, Brompton Road, London, SW3 6TF, for further details.



James Lanier of VPL Research. ACE on the spot's next highlights meet the world's leading VR researchers.

of you did your work that the boundaries around with try. Our Time Magazine has quarterly president of his computer profession to be effect that lets processing something that will never be addressed. What's your response to this negative coverage?

ACE: My belief after speaking to Joe Clark about it is that he was not speaking from a rational point of view. It did not concern a possibility for his success. First, the type he is entering is one for the 1990s and second, I've made lots of rather large amounts of money in the last year... As far as the Time Magazine statement is concerned, I think that an entrepreneur who is successfully when a failure or unimportant or so much that their failure will not be reported. After one year or so of such a position, I am interested and think it's really important, for the staff is really not concerned making these own copies.

ACE: Bruce Youner and the Backlash of Greatness, Australia etc, who are the biggest players in Virtual Reality?

ACE: Right now there are hundreds of sites around the world, there is very no-orientation what in Japan and really Japanese companies involved. Europe is slower but there are a number of European groups that are interesting in this space. I am not aware of any set-up that does it all but we see equipment possibly, and some of the... we see people showing it, people based on the video or computer. We see some major projects with Microsoft.

The Cyberarts program should also be noted in the United States there is a number of academic programs at the University of North Carolina, MIT and the University of Washington, and many programs in a number of schools including the University of California Berkeley. Personally, I would cover the most popular to be both distinguished, who is still alive and continues a great deal of work: Steve Potts of the University of North Carolina, Tom Perrowe, formerly with the US Air Force, now he's very happy to say he's a member of the University of Washington, David Letter of MIT Media Lab, and many others.

ACE: You've been spotted as processing the development of some Virtual Reality Products. Do you intend anyone that is actually starting them?

ACE: Yes, we are. We will have something out soon.

ACE: There's a rumor that ACE is actually developing in developing the experiment of Silicon Graphics computers to code that plug into the Box.

ACE: I know it about twenty companies who are attempting to do that and another twenty that I do not consider worth getting in touch with it's a great however, the cost level products being obtained by Mass don't require the same power of Silicon Graphics machines but we use they would be able to simulate the lower level of those machines.

ACE: At this point, James was spotted off through the professional management system. Our thanks to him for getting to the publisher time.

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The Money Game - All the other 1000-year-olds are out collecting money, so it's up to you to collect yours! But beware, the other 1000-year-olds are out there, too! You'll have to outwit them if you want to win!



The Money Game - A winning financial strategy is what you need to win! You'll have to outwit the other 1000-year-olds if you want to win!

GO TO THE ZOO

Electronic Zoo haven't been around for all that long, but like any respectable gaming house they've bagged a wide variety of games. The company was set up following boss Stuart Bell's departure from Microzone and has since established offices on both sides of the Atlantic.

Since then we've had the ACE-rated *Treasure Trap* - a pretty conventional but extremely playable isometric 3D game; the ambitious *Spies 8086*, (see 82); and *Eco Phantoms* (see this month's screenshot, page 82). Having offices both sides of the pond gives the Zoo two territories to score for product, so the public get to see a pretty wide variety of specimens.

But that this company have had it easy, it has to be said. Starting a software house in the current climate is hard work and, behind the scenes, Zoo haven't found it easy to locate top-selling games. One problem is the continuing weakness of the ZX and the Amiga in the States, so - as US boss Dick Field told us in a recent visit - most of the early programming talent for these machines is still to be found in Europe.

However, Zoo are already putting together a large collection of goodies for release later this year and, although the animals won't exactly be coming out two by two, this sneak preview is proof that there's enough out there to keep the cages occupied...

It's a jungle out there for software houses bent on bagging programming talent.

Here's a sneak peek at some of Electronic Zoo's forthcoming trophies - the cage doors will be opened later in 1991

BEAST BUSTER!

You are faced with an evil of sorts - a large, gnarled, scaly beast that they reckon will give *Puggernaut's* *Beast Busters* a run for its money. The game takes place in ancient Greece and has you from *RAMBLING* all manner of mythical beasts. Check out these pics for the look of the beast's operations...



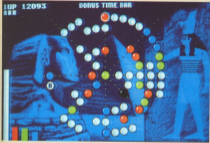
Beast Buster - The look of the beast's operations!



Beast Buster!



Beast Buster - The look of the beast's operations!



DARK SPIRE

Dark Spire is a traditional 2D-platform adventure, though without the ability to form a party. The game features a classic 1-bit cartoon graphics - enhanced interface that makes good use of jump and pointer controls. Special attributes include the ability to make your character invisible or take tactical command. Increase your accuracy just whenever you observe in your character's behavior, an "observing" attribute for detecting enemies, and the different types of loot (ranging from enhancement to protection to detection) for information. Obviously for an RPG, there's also an editor program available separately to design your own levels.



Walking around in level 2



Dark Spire features excellent graphics, with the use of transparency to make an elegant and elegant.

Dark is a highly original puzzle game, with the early stages of puzzles being well-suited to the player's abilities. The puzzles are presented in a 3D environment, but the puzzles themselves are presented in a 2D environment. The puzzles are presented in a 2D environment, but the puzzles themselves are presented in a 3D environment. The puzzles are presented in a 2D environment, but the puzzles themselves are presented in a 3D environment.

The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles.



Dark Spire is a 3D puzzle game that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles.



The game is a 3D puzzle game that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles.



Dark Spire and Dark Spire are 3D puzzle games that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles.



Dark Spire is a 3D puzzle game that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles. The ball is a 3D object that can be used to solve puzzles.

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- 2 players TEAM option against the computer or 2 other players. Hundreds of players each with a unique combination of attributes (strength, pace, etc.) and skills (passing, shooting, tackling, etc.)
- Innovative Kick Off joystick controls to dribble, pass, shoot, head or chip, the ball and also sliding tackles.
- Set pieces. FREE KICKS (including freekicks) and the ability to tip the ball or head the ball around a defensive wall.
- 8 types of corner kicks with full control of when to pass, long and short throw ins.
- Team selection from a squad of 18 with substitution and a choice of tactics.
- League and cup competitions with Extra Time, Injury Time and sudden death penalty shoot outs.
- Facility to view, edit and save the Action Replays and create a Golden Stars disc (Goal, SM & CM 84).
- Facility to load Player Manager teams and tactics for a single or league game.
- Red and yellow cards, 18 different referees, injury time and a host of features to create an atmosphere for a game which is real fun to play.

ST ACTION - The best game ever to grace the ST. Highest accolade from game.

AMIGA USER INT - The best Amiga game ever 87%

THE ONE - Ultimate recommendation 98%

THE ACE - Football King Buy 100

AMIGA FORMAT - What every game to have appeared on any machine. 94%

ST FORMAT - What a gem! One to play. 96%

THE ONE - Outstanding playing standard. 92%

GAMES MAGAZINE - Probably the best single game ever. 92%

COMMODORE EDGE - The inter-competitive can't touch it. 90%

AMIGA ACTION - Superior to other football games. 90%

POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY - Nothing short of brilliant.

NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - Computer football, great of the year.

AMIGA & ST £19.99 **EXP. AMIGA £24.99**
ISM INT & ST Turbo, EGA & VGA £24.99
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An International class player takes charge of a third division club as Player Manager. His brief is simple - **Bring Back The Glory Days.**

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- Unique facility to design and implement your own tactics.
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- A lively transfer market. Haggle for the best deal.
- 4-division league and a cup tournament with sudden death penalty shoot out.

The Player Manager brings the every day realities of a manager's life, his talents as a manager and a player, his insights and his failures into a sharp P.M.U.S.

ST ACTION - A stroke of pure genius.

THE ONE - An exceptional football management simulation. Awarding depth. Most involved, rewarding and pleasurable.

THE ACE - Successfully blends challenging soccer management with funds and transfer market action. 82%

NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - The shoe dealer's favourite. A definite management gem.

COMMODORE USER - As best a management game that requires

your management skills. 81 percent. 94%

ST FORMAT - Brilliant. 82%

AMIGA FORMAT - Entertaining and addictive. 89%

EXP - Best football management game ever written. 92%

AMIGA - ST £19.99

AN

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Raises the skills required and gameplay of KICK OFF 2 to new heights.

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Lineouts and setpieces on the pitch.

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4 new pitches - Wembley - Wj - Maddy - First League

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Sega, Nintendo, and other big-name names in the exhibit. While not the largest, Sega's booth was certainly no slouch.

Hard Goin'

Welcome to New Orleans and the biggest arcade games get-together in the States.

While the delegates' spouses were taken on tours of croc-infested swamps, the sharks cruised the Show - and ACE correspondent John Cook was one of them...



Sega's Saturn (left) and Super 32X (right) are both Sega's latest.

Every year the arcade owners of the USA get together, slap each other on the back for...um...well, being American mostly, drink large amounts of the 'fuzzy ghosts' were they call beer and lounge around in nearby hotels in nearby locations. That's Arcade Manufacturers Of America (AMOA) for you.

AMOA was certainly in need of popcorn at this time, because the games were having a hard time providing it. The world economy, so they say, is going into Recession. News readers are looking deeply depressed, the good earnings are a lot greener and the coin-up manufacturers are going back to ideas almost two years old.

Yes, the mood was decidedly downbeat, as ingenuity and technical innovation was deemed to be not and simple and machines were in. Faced with the growing challenge of home consoles and a downbeat dollar the industry might have, by and large, lacked creativity and imagination and well and truly buttered down those recent batches.

Let's start at the beginning, shall we? Alan Games, latecomer to the field, at its big fall last year, took the opportunity to launch 'Race Driver', a title that have any similarity to 'Hard Drive'? Certainly would - in fact the original track has been left in the box for you to re-live those golden moments of '80, '88, added has been a selection of cars to race, plus the new tracks, Autocross and Super Start.

Autocross is a lot better and requires bags of opposite-bank, Super Start is fairly interesting, in difficulty, with the real fun being a cube-over version of road. Challenging, yes. Now, no. Picking around in the original race code and hitting on some more silicon secrets to have

What kind? Don't know. But it's that game that's the real prize for the winners. For sure.



PICK OF THE SHOW

What do you get when you cross *Block* with Peter Dink? An occasionally wonderful game called *Blockmania*. Start's what. Lines of color stop above the screen, while you line them up the screen, entering the number you're by pointing through I.O.

It's a little up the screen, and it's one of the number, that the disappear. Keep adding the lines of color until, descending faster and faster you get overwhelmed and stopped on the fly. What makes this game, however, is that when you stop it, it's transferred to a display below the main playfield. This display holds the data over the idea is that you try to make your score blocks - or full houses, or straight, etc. out of the biggest dice.

If you do this - depending on the board you make, up to five of the descending lines disappear and you carry on as that state. Can you get overwhelmed and stopped on the fly, play it and expect it to appear as a house computer next you. **BUY BOOK**



Blockmania adds to the Block game as a computer of single screens.



Blockmania is a computerized addition to what made the game more complex than it should be. It's a computerized addition to what made the game more complex than it should be. It's a computerized addition to what made the game more complex than it should be.



It doesn't take a genius to work out where this one has its roots, does it? Three extra tracks, plus the original - one harder, one about the same and one easier. Now, I loved Final Lap and the Race Driver* more of the same can be welcome. For about 30 minutes, but it isn't going to get the punters craving on the carpet. Better is Dragon Safari, the sequel to Dragon Spirit that brings a new meaning to the word identical.

Capcom's offerings were similarly lacklustre: Super Pang - that is, Pang; Carrier Attack - horizontal scrollie sports things that play better than its cover but it, in effect, UK Squares II.

Tate's main thrust was a competent, but sterile snow-on, Space Gun - joined in that sad genre by Shoot Hunters from Sega and Steel Gunner from Namco. Tucked away on the stand, however, were more state-of-the-art creations going under the name of Master's Series. Actually, it's Space Invaders. Well that's a fine way or what I punch myself and check out the date game, for hot parts, platform shooters and based. Focus on, No, this really is 1990.

Focus on you'd notice over at Amstar - who were displaying a Streetout variant called Thunder and Lightning. Really red, red and red, state. So state the white I breakfast, then. And over at the Palace booth - is that Cabal II I see before me, based in the Wild West and called Steel's Brothers? And...Oh, look! Double Dragon III! No doubt to be closely followed up by Double Dragon IV, subtitled - No more Mr Nice Guy, Urban Fit.

Of course, there were some gems of wonderfulness among the detritus. Ecco that confirms Ecco as major league business, being the best driving game for many a year, technically exciting and vastly

playable. Polemics, a PCG puzzle game, shows that the usual guys can still deliver the goods from time to time. Also, an Orbiter variant from T. Enigma, showed that at least one of the lesser companies is prepared to take a bet on an established idea, from time to time.

But largely, the die standard of releases this year, in terms of ingenuity, may well backfire on the console industry as a whole, turning its doom and gloom predictions into a self-fulfilling prophecy. What is sad here, for the punters that are prepared to pay for Advanced Computer Entertainment in the arcade and will settle for nothing less. Ever - sorry! But look a bit like...Dear since Tetris came out in the arcade and was a mega-phenomenon, all the manufacturers have been pouring around trying to imitate that success in this newly found arcade/boarder genre.

Some were good - Block Hole for instance; some were crap. Pacing being the real vice in my opinion. Whatever, more have come close to the doing the numbers of the Russian number. So if you can't beat 'em...

That's the tape behind a couple of releases this winter, anyway. On the Pac-Man, you have Pac-Man. Well, I certainly was - largely by trying to discern the differences between it and Tetris. Then there's a PCG called Block - which has a nice twist to the Tetris format, by allowing you to alter the length/width of certain shapes as they fall down the screen.

For as it turns appear to suggest that these games are anything other than legitimate variants of an established game genre - but don't be surprised if certain copyright holders start to get very nervous indeed.



Several months ago, Ecco was a game that was a game.

increased the speed of the thing by about 1 to 20%, but in essence, *Race Driver* can simply be considered as extra tracks for the original.

They will be fun, for those of us that have already mastered the predecessor, but is unlikely to prove a lasting challenge over and about that.

On to Namco - cost innovators par excellence. What have we here? Final Lap II.

BANG

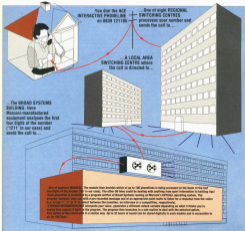


SPECTRUM
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**NO TIME FOR
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NO TIME TO SHOOT THE BREEZE!**

In fact you've hardly set your feet down in the mighty U.S.S.R. and it's all action. You sight up your latest and most formidable bubble poppin' piece...but now that bounz bomb has just multiplied!!! Tour the world in the most addictive arcade game of the year from Mitchell Cor. A quick eye and super fast reflexes will give you just half-chance of a win... the other half will come when the bounce goes your way.





When I'm calling you...

ACE explains the technology behind its INTERACTIVE PHONELINE!



Ever talked to a computer? I don't mean typing in phrases to a parser, like in an adventure game, I mean actually spoken to one! If you've even called the ACE Interactive Phoneline you know, although you probably didn't realize it. Oh, the voice on the other end of the line sounds human, but it's just a front. You're very cunning, these computers! But

hang on, you say, at certain points I speak to it and it acts according to my instructions. How can a computer do that? Read on, and all will be revealed...

The route your call takes is probably best explained by reference to the diagram opposite. When you dial the Phoneline Number, a series of SWITCHING CENTRES direct your call to BROAD SYSTEMS, a com-

OOOPS!

Apologies to all who have called the ACE Interactive Phoneline. There were some technical problems with the system. We are sorry to hear that the system is not working properly now. However, our work will continue to improve it.

pany who specializes in interactive phone-lines and take care of all the technological gobbledygook for ACE.

At Inland Systems, the call is routed to a program that plays pre-recorded scripts written by the now-fading ACE staff (I). Occasionally the program requires that the caller makes a choice for a few moments. Some systems accomplish this by asking the caller to press a button on the phone's keypad. But more advanced systems let the caller simply speak his or her choice (within a limited word range). The program then switches to various sub-routines depending on the selection, which in turn leads to either recorded messages and maybe further options and sub-routines.

Obviously this all gets pretty complex from the programmer's and engineer's point of view. However, all the effort and technology is being directed to one end—to make the ACE Interactive Phoneline as easy, fun and enjoyable to use as possible. (If it's not just a try! Plus ACE is never more than a phone call away...

SAY THAT AGAIN?

The theory behind the thickest speech recognition used in our phonelines is fairly simple. The caller's voice is broken down into a frequency profile. The words then compare this to a stored database of profiles for the various words in "understands". The closest match is then reported back and the program proceeds accordingly.

The obvious limitations on the size of the profile database mean it can't be too large. It can't be aimed at recognition of large numbers of words for an individual's unique voice (i.e., you can't really also—could you?—use computer by speaking in 600 or recognize a smaller number of words from a broad range of voice types, using the sampled voices of several thousand people from all over the US).

The phoneline actually uses the second form of database. It can recognize all the words from '0' to '9' and 'YES', 'NO', 'STOP', 'HELP' and 'CHANGE', in addition there is a "quit" mode, when the system waits for an response from the caller and then continues. Because the database is stored on EPROM it can be easily updated to other words. For example, the Reference 3 game understands special words such as "WORTH" and "START UP".

Although the theory is simple, the technology isn't so 1,1, and there are still some issues

connected to the system. If you've understood a heavily accented voice, for example, and the lack of clarity in other phone systems can also cause difficulties. However, most should have no trouble at all.

TOTAL KEYSAIL

The programs that operate the phonelines run on Inland's operating system, EPROM, which was specifically designed for the management of interactive phonelines. Each program is written by the staff at Inland Systems using the REFERENCE 3000 user, for example, support you wanted to use a multiple choice question, with three possible answers, '1', '2' and '3', the correct answer being "numbered '1'". The code would look something like this (the text in *italics* explains each line):

```
01- LIBRARY      arg1  Make variable
02- (01 (current choice) using a standard library routine)
03- FROM       arg2  Play message using the question.
04- LIBRARY      lib  Call up library routine that uses the speech recognition unit to test the caller's reply and then assign a value to variable B (the routine defaults to an incorrect answer if the caller talks more than 10 seconds to reply)
05- LIBRARY      sub  Test if A-B is 0 in the answer right() using a standard library routine. If so, then go to the next line of code. If yes, jump to the line after next.
06- BRANCH      arg3  Jump to a sub-routine for dealing with wrong answers.
07- BRANCH      arg4  Jump to a sub-routine dealing with right answers.
```

The more complex programs, particularly multiple-choice games like Reference 3, could require that the programmer take account of several hundred decision branches, many of which will loop back into each other, so you'll appreciate that they can get pretty difficult to debug!



"Where's the nearest phoneline, mate?" ACE offers you the chance of becoming the first to test this interactive phoneline game.

YOUR CALL, CRUISE?

Your patron's car's radio crashes into his "Reference 30" in progress at the gas station on 401-st and "however..." A police detective dashes on your radio to remind you of your duty—Speed the Game! Eyes opened as you spot the car around the bend towards the scene of the criminal activity.

As you approach you hear shouts and the sound of gunfire. You stop the car. "What's going on? Drive in and try to get evidence!" An attempt is made in an instant! But perhaps it would be better to drive it away, give the cops a chance to intervene. This approach is best? You get out of the car, see a crowd line the car and hear a...

Unbelievably, But what has given the police enough warning to set up a lethal ambush...? Pop, shoots light! Returns to the window of interactive phoneline technology you call Inland Systems! A detailed line manual! The game's past, based on the novel "Blindfold" of 1951, has you weaving out-and-about the end of drug houses, gambling! Make! the most addictive substance ever known, to the

down-trodden population of that Nation!

Basically the game takes the form of a multiple-choice adventure. The caller faces a set situation, soon you proceed to voice with sound effects described in. Then you are presented with several options on how to react. The plot proceeds to different situations depending on which you choose. You can walk up objects located along the way and use them on situations where you find they might be helpful. To help speed up the game take there's a GIVE option where you give a special code number that lets you continue where you left off next time you ring.

The game was written by the Photo Program Computer, a new world set up by Inland's game systems Division. It requires a game system (Dynamic) at the low-end (retail) end of the PC (before the combination of interactive play, first sound effects and your imagination makes the GIVE) use and best-selling experience. Get out for the streets!

YOU'VE READ ABOUT IT, NOW TRY IT!

The ACE Interactive Phoneline is on the air right now. Last month we offered you the opportunity to listen to the programmers of R.S.I. talking about the ACE-roid games, plus the chance to win yourself a copy of this exciting graphic adventure. The month

there's a mega-competition to win yourself a game from the top six titles will come on line on 11.00 p.m. Wednesday, January 19th.

But that's not all, the ACE games have something it can be using a game box the photos that look good but not knowing whether it is or not because the reviews haven't come out yet. For this month use the start of the ACE Newsletter, which a selection of the very latest games will be given the definitive list once more. The selection will be updated every Wednesday of 11.00 p.m., starting on January 19th. Essential listening for the discerning buyer!

And of course there's the ACE Newsletter, where you can find out all the latest software news, gossip and hot news from the very world of computer entertainment! Again, it's updated every Wednesday.

0839 121105

Don't forget that number - it's the only one you need!

MOONBASE

Lunar Colony Simulator

"...coming in fast and low from the northeastern edge of Imbrius, thelander brushed the top of the debris shield on Pad 3 West as the pilot struggled to gain minimal TDA (touchdown altitude). Polarity 2 codes allowed the crew a certain amount of added speed and flexibility, but the first had been crossed, the room for error gone."



**Gripping
stuff!**

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0800 214 214. Calls charged at 23p per
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peak times).

IBM PC & IBM compatible, 640K RAM
required. Windows, CGA, EGA, VGA
graphics supported. Some floppy drives or
hard disk required. Microsoft mouse
optional. Amiga version available January
1991.

TET MIDWINTER II

FLAMES OF FREEDOM

The Flames have been lit - A new age dawns.

Midwinter II, Flames of Freedom will be available for your Atari ST, Commodore Amiga and IBM PC compatibles in the Spring of 1991



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SCREEN TEST



Are you a non-player character, got a job, then a date? Probably, but not really. *SimCity 4* review, page 61



Ever wish you could add 10 ratings for the extra needed parameters? *The Sims 4* review, page 61

ACE RATED!

Question: Is this game really going to grab me? And for how long?
Answer: The PIC curve – the heart of the ACE Rating System.

The PIC – Predicted Interest Curve

– is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around.

We on ACE know you don't just play a game – you experience it. The Predicted Interest Curve is the only review system that takes this all important factor into account.

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's attention level after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, and one year. And this can tell you a lot more about a game than just the interest levels...

For example, a high one minute rating means that the game must look fun, fast and get you all excited from the word go. That means it's probably a good game to show off to the neighbours – who probably aren't going to pay attention for much more than a minute anyway.

The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot too. If there's a dip here, followed by a rise, you've got a game that may take a bit of getting into. Alternatively, the graph is okay.

Get you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the PIC comment for more details.

Finally, you've got the month and year ratings. The better a game holds up here the more deserving it is of your hard earned cash.



VERSION DETAILS

900

... (text partially obscured) ...

We won't rate a game unless it represents what you'll find on the shelves of a game's not finished, we won't rate it. Instead we give it an ACE Rating. We'll give you the full review if you think it's shaping up. In most cases, a full review of the finished game will follow in a later issue.



• The very best month/year prediction available

• Excellent overall interest in the item

• Got a winning review

• Gameplay in the 3D main interface screen



• Limited use of editors

• Over-representable data review

• Culture sensitive review to the book review team

ACE AWARDS

ACE always awards sets of awards for excellence in different categories. In a given year, usually the last issue of each magazine, we compile you'll see the appropriate ACE Award. Look for the medals below in every issue – in which case you'll get the ACE Award. Finally, we'll have a special you'll see the ACE Award.



Awarded to games of outstanding quality – that rise to be replaced next month with the year ACE Award. Awarded last year.



Originally meant for a lot more than just a game that looks in a game's special features. This ACE Award is awarded especially for those who...



One of the best things to grab you in a game is its graphics. Games that receive the stars of the ACE Award are the best of the year.



Awarded to the "best" game of the year – that is, the most fun to play. ACE Award is only awarded to those who...

THE LINE UP

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Megadrive **John Madden's American Football**, Super Famicom **Mario 4** and **Days of Thunder** on NES. No-jo, spinners...

ON CD page 72/73

Go to **Diapers**, **Red – In Green's** stunning **Little Devils**

SEQUEL POWER!

First came the licences. Then came the sequels. Now we have Licensed Sequels. Just how far down the road of follow-ups and tie-ins can Ocean go?

Having plenty of high speed connections to support all the features you can dream up, you also have the ability to connect to other Amiga systems. This means you can share files and applications with your other Amiga systems.

840

AMIGA

The Amiga 840 is a truly remarkable machine. It's the most powerful Amiga ever, with a new 68000 processor, 1MB of RAM, and a new operating system. It's also the most affordable Amiga ever, starting at just £199.99. It's the perfect machine for anyone who wants the power of Amiga without the price.

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STARBUCKS

The Amiga 840 is a truly remarkable machine. It's the most powerful Amiga ever, with a new 68000 processor, 1MB of RAM, and a new operating system. It's also the most affordable Amiga ever, starting at just £199.99. It's the perfect machine for anyone who wants the power of Amiga without the price.

RELEASE DETAILS		
AMIGA	£199.99	OUT NOW
AMIGA II	£199.99	OUT NOW
SPECTRUM	£199.99	OUT NOW



So far, we've seen the Special Criminal Investigation Dept. in the multi-episode saga in Longbridge.



ROBOCOP 2: Robocop 2, the movie, packed together the Auto-Power and Robo-Action the trailers so gently promised. Aside from the excellent special effects of Robocop 2, the robot, it was a largely unimproved affair.

Robocop 2, the movie, packed together the Auto-Power and Robo-Action the trailers so gently promised. Aside from the excellent special effects of Robocop 2, the robot, it was a largely unimproved affair.

Robocop 2, the computer game, suffers from the same problem. It's well programmed and full of all the requisite elements for a licensed game, but is utterly devoid of originality.

Nevertheless, Robocop 2 does deliver an extremely high body count and a very tough challenge.

Robo's mission is to track down the evil Cain and put an end to his distribution of the deadly narcotic Nuke. Eventually, Cain gets hunted into a big red hole in fun must be tracked down and destroyed.

Three game-styles are incorporated. The main is the side-on scrolling shoot, Robocop must

ripe out the bad guys, locate and confiscating cartridges of Nuke, while evading various bystanders on the way. In the ST version the bystanders are zombies, in the Amiga version, they look like truck drivers.

The level of action throughout the game is impressive. The number of bad guys to be taken out and the quality of their animations cannot fail to impress. It's a shame that on the ST version you can shoot through the bad guys' legs and they won't even flinch.

Shooting open Coke dispensers and entering the Coke inside tops up Robo's energy. It's essential to keep avoiding the Coke, as Robo's energy gets sapped at an alarming rate by steam rollers and laser beams. In between each stage is a firing range and a don't-go-back-on-your-own-footsteps course yielding an extra life if successfully completed.

Robocop 2 is a genuinely tough challenge. And



The Amiga version of the game offers a more difficult and entertaining challenge than the rest of the pack.

CHASE HQ 2

Chase HQ offered a thrilling mix of racing and crook-busting action. The sequel offers, well, the same again.

Evil villains have kidnapped the Mayor's daughter and are racing to their hideout. The Special Criminal Investigation unit has been drafted in to apprehend the villains and rescue the hijacked chick.

Information is fed to you through Harry at Chase HQ. She'll detail the type of vehicle the current crook is driving, and also brief you on special hazards/obstacles on the next stage.

Racing through the levels in your sleek red minie, you are perturbed and harassed by wacky dealers, petrol-bomb-throwing motorcyclists and the henchmen of each badbie boss.

Your aim is to race through each level in the quickest possible time and apprehend the driver of each suspect vehicle.

Apprehending the bad guys, of course, is easier said than done. Rather than simply barging into them, you must blast them into submission with rockets, flamethrowers and shoggers. A damage indicator on the left of the screen denotes how close is cooking out the target vehicle actually is.



Completed! Speedy apprehension issues from the station in your third red minie about 10000 ft.

ROBOCOP 2

Ocean reigned the charts for more than a year with the first RoboCop game. Can they pull it off again?

Ample the fact that you have to start from the beginning of your current level each time RoboCop dies, it's pretty addictive.

But as you play through the game, you may not feel yourself thinking, "Isn't the opening scene at the River Rouge complex somehow reminiscent of the warehouse level in *Mutator*, or the Acid Chemical plant in *Batman*? Isn't the deadly droplets of toxic ooze in the factory exactly the same as the deadly droplets of acid in - again - *Batman*? Aren't the guys on motorcycles strangely similar to the guys on motorcycles in *Sly Guy*?"

In short, should it really be so easy to imagine RoboCop being replaced by *Batman*, *Sly Guy*, *Acid*, *Acid*, *Acid*, or indeed any of Ocean's recent movie levels?



Representing the end of the game, *Sly Guy*, in *RoboCop 2*'s final mission shows a disconcerting overlap of ideas.



ROBO COP MUST LIVE FOR LONGER, BUT HE MUST LIVE UNDER THEM.

■ *Jim Douglas*



How often the statistics the user is able to view should not be used to judge the quality of the game.

Once you've plugged the ladder on your truck a couple of times, the SCI helicopter will emerge overhead and parachute down a rocket launcher. By driving underneath the dropper, you can collect the rocket launcher and use the six rockets to bring your foe to a more rapid end.

Finally, once each crook has been arrested, he will confess his involvement of the kidnapping and reveal as a bigger crime boss. Nancy back at HQ will then point you in the right direction to apprehend the next speeding crook.



Performance, the same strategy to be used and your partner can lead this steady motion and the possibility of being killed, or not being killed.

SCI comes on two disks, and there's a fair amount of swapping to for late robbery stages, but the music, tempo, on playing, and the momentum don't break down too badly.

The action is fast, but the game is the first round in a bit easy. With only a couple of direct attempts, you can get pretty much all the way through.

If you like your games reasonably simple, but with lots of shooting and plenty of shooting of the screen, SCI could keep you happy for some time.

■ *Jim Douglas*



How long the strategy through the road, and you must be very careful. Be careful to be careful to be careful.



Awesome: You're not a poor spaceship when controlled by the computer.

AWESOME

Pygnosis go beyond the final frontier

The plot of *Awesome* has you and the crew of the *Excalibur* arriving for a spot of trading in the Octavian system, only to find it's scheduled for colonization by the Romulans and their deceased Prometheus Cannon. In true game-play tradition, this apparently serves as a convenient excuse to destroy anything in your path while making your escape.

This isn't as easy as it sounds, because fuel is both a rare and expensive commodity. It can only be obtained by fulfilling contracts, missions and, should the opportunity arise, raising colonies.

Most sections of the game are seen from directly above and use a rotational scrolling technique like *Star Wars* but far smoother and in an almost infinite number of directions. The controls take a while to get used to and at times the action becomes just a bit too hectic, this is mainly due to the large size of your ship and could have been rectified if all the screens had been used.

Arrival at any planetary destination changes the view to a 3D perspective. Here you must eliminate a Space Juggler (before getting to a landing site). This part moves extremely fast and looks good but is rather hard to play.

Once past the viewport, you have a time limit in which you must find the landing pad. This, along with the next section, reverts to the the original

overhead view and is important because the number of minutes you destroy here affect the oxygen supply you have when finally searching for the entrance.

Inside you have the option to buy weapons (which range from basic Mining Lasers to Wide-Breaker Plasma Cannons) and sell any cargo you have acquired, demand varies so you should look for a good deal.

Once done, you can access a Newtons terminal, afterwards you are presented with a view of the solar system. Here you must decide whether to leave now (and take money as hotel bills) or wait until the orbits bring your target planet closer, a little (rain) power is required here as without careful planning you could find yourself stuck on a planet with no way to get off.

With eight planets each with its own theme, *Awesome* (later), *Mech* (dead), *Return* (Lard etc.), the game provides a long term challenge. The graphics really do impress, with a wide variety of colorful, well shaded sprites which, along with the smooth scrolling, make the game visually very attractive. The sound, on the other hand, is a little weak in comparison and although there are some good tunes, they're not as good as *Star Wars*. There aren't enough space effects either. Minor niggles aside, *Awesome* proves to be one of Pygnosis's strongest games yet, but at £25 a go it's not cheap, though the company are not putting their new definition of the word 'beer' with the bundled T-shirt.

■ Khalid Neeloo



Awesome: A 3D perspective view of a planet.

We have used beautiful graphics in the most professional manner.



The ACE rating is a quality performance index and does not mean that the game is perfect. It is a guide to help you decide whether a game is worth buying. The ACE rating is based on the following criteria: Graphics, Sound, Gameplay, and Value for Money.



ACE RATING
900
 The ACE rating is a quality performance index and does not mean that the game is perfect. It is a guide to help you decide whether a game is worth buying. The ACE rating is based on the following criteria: Graphics, Sound, Gameplay, and Value for Money.

RELEASE DETAILS
 JAMES (EAT) GUY HOW
 No other version planned

With the excellent *Elite Plus* ready for release, Microprose launch another polygon-driven space exploration game. Why?

As a result of rampant overconsumption and careless global filtering, Earth has been turned into an uninhabitable wasteland and mankind, like some billion-strong bunch of turkeys, must find a new home in space. Your mission as captain of a *Freighter* probe is to zig around the galaxy locating suitable worlds to which the massive *Copernicus* ships can deposit their cargo of humans.

Easier to say, finding a suitable planet is far from easy. Before you get the slightest whiff of a suitable organic-based oxygenated world with a decent temperature, there's a lot of business to take care of — for while humans require precise sets of conditions in which to survive, there are alien races capable of living virtually anywhere. As a result, there's no shortage of big-eyed creatures with funny names to encounter.

You begin the game in the *Freighter* in a microscript part of the universe. The *Navigation Starmap* shows your current location in your star cluster. Clicking the fire button will cycle the *Starmap's* default function device through each set of worlds in turn-offering information objects.

Having selected a world within range, you can find your way there (and game) and, assuming you don't encounter anything hostile en route, you'll pop out at your destination after only a couple of seconds.

It's likely that when you emerge from *Somewhere*, an alien craft will be present. By launching a probe, communications can be opened with the aliens via a translator in the lower half of the screen.

Different alien races have varying dispositions from the sneaky *Bioconstructors* who endeavor to mislead your help in lighting their enemies to the tightly developed *Fel*, who are cooperative and seem to enter into combat. Your alliances with alien races are extremely important to the greater success of your mission.



Here the multi-gauge displays show the status of the ship and surrounding space tracking.



LIGHTSPEED

Should a world be uninhabitable, it may be worth depositing one of your three mining colonies and claiming the planet's resources for trade or to help support a fledgling world elsewhere.

Aside from the trading and exploration side which actually work quite well, *Lightspeed* offers 3D polygon combat and storageage field sections which, frankly, are pretty dull. Also slightly around the *Freighter* flying away and you can

either blast them with your main gun or launch a more maneuverable fighter ship to fight back. While the coding is perfectly competent, this particular side of the game adds nothing to the game — there are far superior 3D space-flight games available (*Elite Plus*, for example) and this particular bit of added interest lacks real interest.

Lightspeed, I venture to suggest, would have been far more enjoyable as an ahead, trading/transportation game, completely doing away with the minimal 3D polygons and devoting most attention to the potential of the trading elements and world development.

■ An English

750

AMISA

RELEASE DETAILS

PC CD-ROM GUT 1600

the other version planned

FLUFFY DICE

Here is a fluffy ship in a fluffy universe, necessarily required for a long time of perfect. As said to the English House will reveal that there are a lot of gaps for extra components and these real them are the most basic models.

While buttons will often have required a more advanced level of technology than most. As a result, you can find the a price advanced components from your ship. Better game components will increase the rate and therefore potential of your ship. Enhanced features will increase their capabilities etc. You can also trade the best of pieces of machinery for that if you get really desperate.

BOTICS

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	\$19.99	OUT NOW
386 PC	\$19.99	OUT NOW

For other versions, please contact your local retailer.

Bot 'n' ball fun with a robotic twist from KRISALIS

It is a time of media moguls. The Satellite TV Companies dominate, and by 2005 they claim 952 channels into every home. And, as now, Sport is the viewer's favourite. But the public demand for more aggressive and danger our sports has made them inoperable for humans to play.

Fortunately, this lack of suitable fleshy participants has provided a new growth area for the Robotics industry, which was previously in a slump due to the saturation of the industrial market. Proxix, it have invested 200 million Euro Dollars perfecting the sport of BOTICS.

Each game consists of a series of matches played on a square walled court. Two 'drods' knock a metal ball back and forth trying to score in each other's goal. Each 'drod' can explode itself to power a shot towards the other player. But do this wisely - excessive will cause damage to your 'drod and it may eventu-



The square court type. But you, your opponent and a ball.



For the extra, the arena is more complex. But the game is still the same.

ally explode! Each player can exercise the option to take 'time out' during games for repairs. Later courts include walls that appear and block off your half of the court. There's a few difficulties of opponents and five ball types.

The problem with Botics is that it's a simple idea that's been over-worked. The 90 courts are great to look at but very tough to play in because it's not easy working out where to position your ball. To get proficient is going to take quite a bit of practice, and there just isn't enough in the game to encourage you make that effort.

David Spink

HILL STREET BLUES



Building your officers' skills in 24 months of crime scenes. It's not easy when you're the only cop on the street. But you can't let that stop you from being the best cop on the block. You'll have to work hard to get the job done. You'll have to work hard to get the job done. You'll have to work hard to get the job done.

Can you take the heat on KRISALIS' forthcoming tie-in with the famous cop TV show

It's refreshing to see a novel approach to licensed games. In the hands of the less imaginative, Hill Street Blues could so easily have been a cop's 'n' robbers' shoot 'em up, which would be not only lame but also inappropriate to the mood and themes of the TV show. Instead Krisalis

have gone for a resources management style to game with strong similarities to Sim City.

You take on the job of Captain Frank Pappo, with the weighty responsibility of keeping down the crime rate in the Hill Street precinct whilst trying to keep to your budget and maintaining station morale and police popularity. As crime reports come in you have to assign one of your eight officers to deal with it. For serious, you can always call in the SWAT team - but don't over-rely! Remember, the Public doesn't see being stuck in a traffic jam because the SWAT team have combined off a block while looking for a suspect but pickpocket Performance will for long enough and a promotion could be in the offing.

Proxix software have been working on the game for the last 8 months, aiming for release in Spring. Most of the time had been spent on getting the city to 'work'. There are over 500 citizens who you can watch eating and drinking around the city, going to work on the shops and generally being their best. The level of detail is very clever - cars pass at traffic lights on level crossings, for example. The game is played in accelerated real time, with the view of the city darkening as night draws in. The version we saw had quite a bit of work to be done on it yet, but so far it's looking great. We await the finished product with great interest.

David Spink



On the left, the conversion of the graphics to the computer version. On the right, the original arcade cabinet. The actual game is shown in the center.



Original arcade machine (above) and the computer version (below) of the game.

S.T.U.N. RUNNER

Living S.T.U.N. Runner in the arcade was a strange affair. The speed of the graphics and the motorbike-style cabinet were enough to keep cars falling for a couple of hours. After a little while, however, it became apparent that S.T.U.N. Runner was decidedly light on the gameplay front. The aim - to collect stars which are lying on the floor of the Speed Tunnel Underground Network - isn't really being the sort of goal which hooks you immediately.

The home conversion is reasonably well-gamed, but inevitably crippled by the sluggishness of the machines. The problem is compounded by the fact that rather than using the

speedy wireframe graphics, as an attempt to keep the game as close to the coin-op original as possible, it's re-rendered in a solid color for every frame.

The result, of course, is that the frame rate is quite awful, slipping 300g to 10g often. It looks more like a ladder's tick-tock than 3D animation. From the menu, you can opt to play in either easy, intermediate or hard levels. Controlling your Runner craft is simple. You just move it left or right, aim its boost up and down and fire. Twice during each wave finally you collect enough green stars, you can slide a Shockwave down the tunnel, which wipes out everything in its path. What you can't do (and this is really the essence of the game) is directly affect the speed of your vehicle. Use a turbo-boost gun, your Runner craft will slow down or speed up in an appropriate manner to the turbo, left and straight if necessary. So this isn't, and indeed the only way to get through each stage: time is to position your craft in the tunnel in a way that will allow it to travel at the highest speed. Stay on the outside walls of the tunnel while going through corners, maximizing the effect of the centrifugal force.

In the first stage, the green stars indicate the best route, but from there on it's your job to find your own way. Making a bad decision and taking a corner badly will cause the S.T.U.N. Runner to slow down severely. Along the way, boost pads will increase your speed but beyond its normal 500mph ceiling. These boosts only last a short time, however and they're no substitute for shrewd tunnel-driving.

The deeper into the game you go, the busier the tunnels become. Most craft can be blown up with your onboard lasers, but cars are completely indestructible. They must simply be avoided.

The level of difficulty sometimes a bit incongruous with the stage you have selected. Many of the intermediate levels seem a lot easier than the later levels on the "Easy" stage. The difficulty is unfortunately governed entirely by the time limit. No amount of boosting and crashing will cause your Runner to tank out. Instead it just scrapes along the walls.

S.T.U.N. Runner, the coin-op, was entertaining solely for the speed of its polygon graphics. How has this tricky conversion gone for Domark?

Domark's attempt at S.T.U.N. Runner, aside from the frame-rate, is a perfectly decent conversion of a rather unimpressive arcade game. If you want absolutely brilliant, see the original. It's worth a look. Otherwise, don't bother.

— Ian Douglas



Domark's attempt at S.T.U.N. Runner, aside from the frame-rate, is a perfectly decent conversion of a rather unimpressive arcade game.

KEY FEATURES



A FUTUREISTIC, COLORFUL ENVIRONMENT WITH A FAST-PACED GAMEPLAY.



THE GAME'S FAST-PACED GAMEPLAY IS COMPLEMENTED BY A FUTUREISTIC, COLORFUL ENVIRONMENT.

Release Details

Platform	MSRP	Release Date
Amiga	\$6.95	Early '91
Atari ST	\$6.95	Early '91
MS-DOS	\$6.95	Early '91



Domark's attempt at S.T.U.N. Runner, aside from the frame-rate, is a perfectly decent conversion of a rather unimpressive arcade game. If you want absolutely brilliant, see the original. It's worth a look. Otherwise, don't bother.

480

Amiga

Atari ST

MS-DOS

Platform	MSRP	Release Date
Amiga	\$6.95	Early '91
Atari ST	\$6.95	Early '91
MS-DOS	\$6.95	Early '91



Sierra's new 16-bit technology lets you see the world from a new perspective. In this case, it's a view from the ground.



For another perspective, look at the view from the air. In this case, it's a view from the sky. And when you're not in the air, you're not in the air. In this case, it's a view from the ground. (Really? Really?)

After King's Quest series is one of the most popular of Sierra's graphic adventures—and, although the games don't seem to follow any particular narrative path, this latest creation is first in the AQ tradition with astounding graphics, loads of puzzles, and a whopping great dose of American sentiment. If Roberta Williams carries on writing games like this, she's sure to earn a place in the All-time Hall of Fame...but most of that soon.

And in case you haven't sampled these games before, what you see has never been closer to what you get. The graphics practically ARE the game: beautiful fantasy locations are loaded from disk (yes, unless you've got a hard-disk) and your little animated figure prances about the screen under your direction.

In previous AQ's, this graphic presentation has been marred by the—ugh—necessity to actually type in a few words of English as in the old style adventures, but AQV has finally done away with that and replaced the typing with an icon bar across the top of the screen. Since this can't be played by default, you have to summon it with a keyboard and then toggle along the icon bar until you get the one you want.

The icons at your command are pretty basic: LOOK, TALK, and USE-type options, but these are all you'll need to steer King Graham of Daventry (yes, the job starts here) about his kingdom in search of his castle, imprisoned by the wicked magician Beldarok.

That's because, despite the 256 colour VGA graphics display, the game behind the graphics is about as trenchant as village soap. As you wander from pretty scene to pretty scene, you encounter various characters or situations that, if handled in the right way, can all save you in your quest. For the most part, the process involves finding objects and then using them in the right context. To make things easier, the program doesn't allow you to use objects in inappropriate circumstances, so you always know whether you've got it wrong. Text messages also do their best to suggest, by implication, what you should be doing. For example, when confronted at the beginning of the game by a hostile wizard, ineffective actions are greeted by a message advising

KINGS QUEST V

This latest episode of the highly popular SIERRA series features 9.7 megabytes of data. Can you handle it?

you that "That isn't going to happen. The wizard will be angry. Go back to the castle. You've got to find something to put the wizard back into the barrel."

PROS

Previous AQ's have shared a tendency to clunky cuteness in their scenarios, and AQV is not only no exception, but seems bent on taking this tendency to new extremes.

First, you've got your chief character—King Graham of Daventry. This sounds suspiciously like an attempt to parody Lord Gollum of *Rings* from the *Ultima* series, but I'm sure Sierra would never stoop so low. For those of us who know the real Daventry, however, it's a bit of a joke.

Although it's good to capture the way kids think away' for words to be correct. So, you'll find that you've got to find something to put the wizard back into the barrel.

While scenes that follow, as Graham and Coby pootle around Daventry, they are confronted by numerous passages who are in every way as bland as themselves (check out the scrollmaster of Queen Bertrava for a typical example). All this is very well, and—in our past experience—is to be expected from a game by Roberta Williams, who seems to delight in putting Coby teachers in her games (remember the irritating insuener's when Brodda let down the stairs?), but there has to be a limit. Just as game-design guru Chris Crawford argues that there is a threshold of realism in

ECO PHANTOMS

Save the Earth - again! - in **SPLINTER VISION/ ELECTRONIC ZOO's** exploration extravaganza

This is definitely NOT the homecoming you were expecting. Returning to Earth after six years in deep space you were hoping for a nice cup of tea and a chance to put your feet up, but Fate has rather different - and deadlier - plans in mind.

The Earth on your view screen is not the one you remember. Three huge domes float from its pockmarked and ravaged surface, housing machinery designed to drain its once-fertile resources. The **ECO PHANTOM** has been invaded. Having destroyed their own planetary system in a foolish nuclear war, these evil technophiles scour the Galaxy for fertile planets to plunder.

With the guest flag ship **Planet Cruiser** they collect a planet's resources and transfer them to their home worlds in an attempt to rebuild them.

As you near Earth, an alien craft intercepts you and the **ECO PHANTOM** crew board your ship. While they search, you break aboard their ship and trap the enemy on your vessel. Your task ahead is clear: you must infiltrate and shut-down the three energy domes. Only then can you attempt to destroy **Planet Cruiser**, and reverse the devastation of your planet.

• **Great Updates!**

The **ECO PHANTOM** never just sits at home waiting for reinforcements. The crew will actively defend the planet and will attack back when you're out of a combination of the two bases on earth, which you control by using the mouse. They monitor the situation in the sky in the corner. Since the incoming ships are able to drop and land, true security will be impossible - prepare the fighter!



THE VISOR VIEW shows you the planet you're heading to and the energy domes that will be draining its resources. It also shows the fuel and store building of the planet being visited. The **ECO PHANTOM** can't return until the planet has been protected.



THE AERIAL VIEW is one of the best ways of seeing that the landing is successful. Whenever you've protected the planet you can see it from space through the main view. You can also see the planet you're heading to and the energy domes that will be draining its resources.



The main view - looking down from the surface of the first dome on the planet. The planet is the **ECO PHANTOM** and the **Planet Cruiser** is the **Planet Cruiser**.



THE INTERVIEW. The alien craft will act as a computer and will monitor the situation on earth. It will also monitor the status of the planet and the status of the planet's resources.

THE VISOR VIEW. The planet you're heading to and the energy domes that will be draining its resources. It also shows the fuel and store building of the planet being visited. The **ECO PHANTOM** can't return until the planet has been protected.



The **ECO PHANTOM** will monitor the status of the planet and will act as a computer and will monitor the situation on earth. It will also monitor the status of the planet and the status of the planet's resources.

ECO PHANTOM
836



ECO PHANTOM
The **ECO PHANTOM** will monitor the status of the planet and will act as a computer and will monitor the situation on earth. It will also monitor the status of the planet and the status of the planet's resources.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

OS	MS-DOS	Macintosh
MOUSE	Yes	Yes
KEYBOARD	Yes	Yes

For further information, contact the publisher.

ECO PHANTOM is a computer game that will monitor the status of the planet and will act as a computer and will monitor the situation on earth. It will also monitor the status of the planet and the status of the planet's resources.



THE VISOR VIEW. The planet you're heading to and the energy domes that will be draining its resources. It also shows the fuel and store building of the planet being visited. The **ECO PHANTOM** can't return until the planet has been protected.



THE VISOR VIEW. The planet you're heading to and the energy domes that will be draining its resources. It also shows the fuel and store building of the planet being visited. The **ECO PHANTOM** can't return until the planet has been protected.

S P O **4D** R T S B O X I N G

... You'll be able to control your punches and footwork with the precision of a professional boxer.

... You'll be able to score 7-point punches, 10-point heavy punches, and 12-point knockout punches.

... You'll be able to control your punches and footwork with the precision of a professional boxer.

... You'll be able to control your punches and footwork with the precision of a professional boxer.



Do you want to box in the Fourth Dimension?

Mindscape and award-winning developers, DSI brought new life to your home computer with the 4D Sports series. Now the 4th Dimension is too hot, and the action is amazingly real. Modeled and simulated on real human movement, 4D Sports Boxing is the most accurate sports simulation ever written. 4D Sports Boxing lets you invade and score a coup of up to ten of your own bonuses.

You deliver from tall, low booty and how strong they are.

Next you make them and build them up into lean, powerful fighting machines.

Then it's time to enter them into their first fight.



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For more information on 4D Sports series:
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Redwood City, CA 94063
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For further information on Mindscape products
and new releases please call 1-800-3-1-1

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Redwood International System 4000
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All the programs we've mentioned here are available for use on any computer capable of running BASIC. For more information on what's available, see our buying guide, "Competition in Commodore BASIC," on page 48. For more information on what's available, see our buying guide, "Competition in Commodore BASIC," on page 48.

835
AMIGOS 4
 Features four adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features four adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features four adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features four adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide.

835
KHARI II
 Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide.

870
IBM PC
 Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide.

831
CG
 Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide.

826
AMITRAC CPC
 Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide.

830
SPECTRUM
 Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide. Features 10 adjustable tracks, 2000 feet long, 2000 feet wide.

RELEASE DATES

AMIGA	£14.99	OULT NOW
AMIB ET	£14.99	OULT NOW
AMIB SC	£14.99	OULT NOW
CG	£14.99	OULT NOW
AMIB CPC	£14.99	OULT NOW
SPECTRUM	£14.99	OULT NOW



IRONMAN—The only suit you can wear to take on the toughest track.



IRON II—The IBM update to the classic, still enough fun for someone who's willing to wait.



BADLANDS—With a superior ability compared to the classic, you'll never see it again.

IVAN 'IRONMAN' STEWART'S

SUPER OFF ROAD



BADLANDS—So the title is the wrong way to say it, we're sorry, but we're proud of it.

VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC's 'Ironman' or DOMARK's Badlands—Which is King of the Road?

Which is best? I've never heard of him (then read the file, you ignorant devil!) but if this game is an accurate representation of the sort of antics he gets up to, he can't deserve the spiffed 'Ironman'. These are not your usual high-speed gentlemen's-road events—each is a glacial struggle for control on a rugged-earth track. The tracks, hills and wastes for first place whilst plunging into gravel pits, climbing steep slopes and ploughing through water-filled valleys.

Your own (and your friends') car is first of all of the computer-controlled cars. It's a set of courses—fast and you lose one of your four lives. After each race you're awarded your points, the amount depending on where you finished. This can be used to buy various upgrades which, for once, have a noticeable effect on your car's performance.

Control is simple: rotate left/right and accelerate. Each car is equipped with a limited number of Mirs, which can be locked in at any time to give you that extra spurt of speed to take you into the lead or, if things are going badly, just back into the rearing. It's hugely satisfying using one of the last minute to blast you past your mate's car and over the finishing line!

• Solid Support

WHO IS IRONMAN?
 The only suit you can wear when you're driving on the road. The classic, still enough fun for someone who's willing to wait.

WHO IS IRONMAN?
 The only suit you can wear when you're driving on the road. The classic, still enough fun for someone who's willing to wait.

GAME SPECS

IRONMAN

Number of Tracks On Disk 4 - Up to 3-Dim Spectra and CPC also for Spectrum controller.

Number of Tracks 4 - The orange job, large and detailed tracks for lots of mileage of tracks before the different levels are cut. Gameplay always on other computer - primary play now tracks that play the first again, but starting in the opposite direction - and it's the same two before you're good enough to see them off.

Upgrades

- **Missile** - Vital for landing you in the best when lagging.
- **Fire** - Better shooting and explosive covering.
- **Shield** - Better defense and improve ground coverage.
- **Acceleration** - Better time to get to top speed.
- **Top Speed** - Increases maximum speed possible.

You can turn up to 99 Missiles and Shields. The rest of the upgrades form five possible bonus if collected. One of your two missiles has to be in an \$800,000 to buy upgrades with.

BADLANDS

Up to 99 tracks can be chosen, including.

1 - Really strange tracks, and some come up first in particular. (Special for example, track 6 is all hills, and spikes, and straight. Some tracks are released, with opening and closing down-out gates, some thing of you have been out and other gates, but you can't bring into track, and objects to make further systems like. Along with water towers to make the track dip and. The different levels are played over other systems, as it won't be long before you see all the numbers.

- **Missile** - Allow you to easily destroy other cars.
- **Shield** - Protect you from attack by other vehicles.
- **Space** - Increases maximum speed possible.
- **Pusher** - Increase rate of acceleration.
- **Fire** - Improve shot hitting when covering.
- **Shield** - Help you reduce speed when opening.

You can turn up to 99 Missiles and Shields. The rest of the upgrades form five possible bonus if collected.



Minimum requirement: An IBM compatible computer with a hard disk. Minimum system: An IBM compatible computer with a hard disk. Minimum system: An IBM compatible computer with a hard disk.

780



ARMSA

Only one upgrade level of four under ARMSA. Best and most advanced. The most to make full advantage of. The most to make full advantage of. The most to make full advantage of.

780



ARSTRAD

Only one upgrade level of four under ARSTRAD. Best and most advanced. The most to make full advantage of.

765



CPC

Only one upgrade level of four under CPC. Best and most advanced. The most to make full advantage of.

BADLANDS

From the post-Apocalypse rubble they came men and women so hard that they used bullet cars for dental fees. No more Mr. Guffy. Super Sprinter tanks for them. They announced their cars and mounted cannons on top and took to the dangerous and ruthless pastime of racing in the Badlands; the desolate ruins left after the nuclear conflict.

The core bones of the game are identical to Super Off Road. You land a friend, play on eight tracks. Finding better the computer drives. You use one of your two credits. Occasionally

god-winklers appear on the track and can be picked up by running over them. These can be used to buy upgrades between races.

Cinematics are the same as Super Off Road, except there are no films, but this is compensated for by your rail-mounted cannons. Shooting another car slows them down and also makes them drop any wrecks they may have picked up, so you can tip it there and take them for yourself that.

Best Options



ARMSA is having trouble the most track. This one can't get underneath the car and changing gate of yourself by the computer in the car.



On the city there is a 3-dimensional world to make your own. This is the top of the game.

656



ARSTRAD CPC

Only one upgrade level of four under ARSTRAD CPC. Best and most advanced. The most to make full advantage of.

689



SPECTRUM

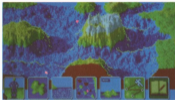
Only one upgrade level of four under SPECTRUM. Best and most advanced. The most to make full advantage of.

RELEASE DETAILS

ARMSA	\$34.99	OUT NOW!
ARSTRAD	\$34.99	OUT NOW!
ARSTRAD CPC	\$34.99	AVAILABLE!
CPC	\$19.99	OUT NOW!
ARSTRAD CPC	\$39.99	OUT NOW!
CPC/Version	\$39.99	OUT NOW!



ARMSA is having trouble the most track. This one can't get underneath the car and changing gate of yourself by the computer in the car.



FLAMES of FREEDOM

Microprose prepares to launch their assault on the New Year market with one of the biggest sequels around...

Microprose Games has been working on *Flames of Freedom* ever since the completion of *Illusionist*, and it has now reached the final straight in the development race.

Rather than simply producing a different scenario based on the *Illusionist* game's mechanics, the whole game shell has been recast to make *Flames of Freedom* a truly massive and original game. Microprose paid close attention to extensions of the original game, in order to align the game with everyone's tastes.

The most universally critical element was that the number of characters which had to be controlled was simply too large. It wasn't possible to keep tabs on all the characters at once, and the game tended to be a massive juggling act rather than a linear path to a successful conclusion.



Working from the comfort of your own, far resources on the top of the screen shows detailed and clear of effects.

In *Flames of Freedom* offers only one character to control, but the central hero can have virtually any characteristic you want. Using the character designer, you can select from a massive array of skins, eyes, noses, ears, hairstyles, and mouths, gradually piece together your ideal looking agent. A character will also be endowed with a brace of attributes which will affect their ability to interact with other people.



Chief (Microprose) can interact with the hero, from any well be willing to help your cause that which appears otherwise for?



Working from a wide selection of skins, eyes, ears, and noses, you can customize your very own protagonist.

Since you are essentially alone in your mission, it's vital to control the indigenous personnel from each island in an effective manner. When you bump into one of these people, you can opt to use your Charm, you appeal, authority, reasoning or deceptive to influence them. If you beg too much, however, you won't have much authority, if you rush around threatening everyone, no one will listen to your reasoning.

Along with the niceties of interaction, there's the more physical side of the game, rushing around from island to island, blowing up enemy installations, and clearing each island for the Free World. Since the game offers an enormous play area, it isn't desirable to have to visit all of the things. Instead, an autopilot option allows you to plot your destination, and let the computer get on with getting you there. This will only be alerted or disturbed if there's some fighting to be done.



Working from the central screen in your group, the ability area of the top of the screen shows detailed and clear of effects.

DO YOURSELF A FAVOUR SLOT THESE INTO YOUR



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MASTER SYSTEM™

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U.S. GOLD

SEGA
MASTER SYSTEM™

from *Virgin*

Wreck it Ralph's strategy with a little "steering" for extra winning is rewarded by the end.



You can use the first car that's free. You can't control it, but you can control it to win. It's not that hard.

TOYOTA CELICA GT RALLY

With Carlos Sainz recently winning the Lombard RAC and confirming Toyota's World Championship title, the timing of GREMLIN's rally simulation couldn't be much better...

But being isn't everything. And a game pitched at the simulation side of motor sport rather than taking the route of more instant appeal is a lot of work to be both accurate and accessible. Thankfully, the variety of rally stages incorporated the whole World Championship, in fact plus the co-driver briefing stage (and to boot the 3D driving sections which are, for all that, not over-impairing).

Your aim, quite simply, is to knock your Toyota Celica GT 4 through English, Mexican and Norwegian stages and win the World Championship.

It's advisable to get some driving practice before attempting the World Championship. You can test up on a typical stage from each nation to get to grips with the English rain, Mexican sand and treacherous Norwegian snow.

If you're brave, the computer will take care of all the gear changing for you. Since this is the province of coaching the car's about relies on very gear changes, and the computer inevitably has to rely on a rapid loss of speed before it will change down for you, this can be a bit of a disadvantage and is only really recommended for novice drivers.

The motivation which keeps rally drivers pushing their cars and themselves to the limit is sim-

ATARI GT

THE OFFICIAL RALLY SIMULATION OF THE ATARI 2600

RELEASE DETAILS

PRICE OF \$29.95

DATE OF 1989

MANUFACTURED BY GREMLIN

THE OFFICIAL RALLY SIMULATION OF THE ATARI 2600



The Norwegian stages are particularly tough and the rain stages are the most accessible.

ple. Since everyone starts at staggered times, you never know - until the end of the stage - how well or otherwise the other drivers are doing. Dropping a couple of seconds can mean the difference between first and tenth place. As a result there's absolutely no respite. Whenever you feel you've reached a piece of the course where you can get up some speed, the biggest concern is that the other drivers have travelled down the same stretch faster.

Once the World Championship attempt has been undertaken, the option to make co-driver's notes should always be accepted, from a top-down view of the next stage can be viewed. Using a number system from one to six, speech messages can be placed at any point, offering clipped but recognizable information about the course ahead. "Easy left", "Hard left", "Right then hard left", etc.

This part is far less painful than it sounds, and the precise location along the route when your co-driver will page out the instructions is vital to

winning the often two timed games we've mentioned this month. The full's Argyle's Masterdrive offers a close-up view of the car, but as well as a rearview mirror view in the standard of the Dollars of the screen, it also offers a host of alternative views to view.

The car's being located in space doesn't really affect the gameplay, except to serve as a believable environment in which the driver and vehicle exist.

The main menu screen is represented by Argyle and its surrounding screen. From here the player can go to play either it comes from any level or enter the Masterdrive control panel, where they play all courses on all levels in turn, with bonus stages.

Results level from a simple view to complete the progress in terms of cups, collecting extra fuel and cash items lying on the floor. If you lose the track (or crash) - either by crashing into the terrain or objects, after vehicles are being lost - your car will come out. Also of the



Another preparation is what you do to keep track in other stages of the rally (though you have to be a certain speed to do it).

your screens. Speed preparation will save you those valuable seconds which could make all the difference in the final scores. Certainly in the Mexican and Norwegian stages where there are times when you can't see a bloody thing, it's handy to be told if there's a hairpin bend coming up.

The driving itself is pretty good but you must learn to drive like a rally driver, steering the car to slide rather than trying to keep it in the middle of the road all the time. Steering is easy and precise through the bends is tricky, but can be obtained with practice.

It really becomes apparent that any mistakes can cost you dearly in the rankings. Steering too far from the track results in a 20 second penalty while crashing up your motor will add a full 2 minutes, virtually impossible to make up.

Even at Level 5 speed Turbo Challenge should be aware that this is a completely different style of game, but it's entertaining, well the best.

— Jim Douglas

JUPITER'S MASTERDRIVE

Ubisoft ride in (just) on the wave of top-down driving games. This time the action takes place in space...

with engine-tuning and turbo you've brought will be low.

Every vehicle played better than what it looks like. Even if you perform admirably in the race, you can collect some bonus coins, but only repair items in the bonus stages. Instead you choose to play from home on PC-computer. The screen will split into two. While the play area is restricted, reducing your view of the track ahead, observation use of the camera will see you through.

The graphics are smooth and compelling and the vehicle truly behaves as you would expect. They range from straight sports-cars through formula to odd style items like a motor. Most are easy to control. But the formula are truly used in a way that the whole of the forward track is decorated with dangerous damage inflicting walls and items which force you to carefully down-line. Near the driving style needs to be controlled to avoid crashing your vehicle from most of the run is provided by equipping yourself the track as far as possible. The drive seems to react the speed is set.



In order to see into a particular vehicle, you must pay the attention fee. For the introduction, this is a simple fee. (Note: your editor must be present!)

Most of the other stages offer short-cuts for better players to attempt. These, however, are often narrow and somewhat out-of-control so you can get up there unless you probably cost you dearly.

Aside from the truly futuristic level, playing Jupiter's Masterdrive is great fun. It doesn't set massive long term appeal, but will look striking from happy for a good few months.

by Douglas



Although information may appear to offer value a low PTC ratio is not necessarily a good thing. It indicates that the price is low relative to the cost, which is not necessarily a good thing. It also indicates that the price is low relative to the cost, which is not necessarily a good thing.



UNIT SALES

RELEASE DETAILS			
FRMGA	USA 99	MONITOR 97	
FRMGA	USA 99	JANUARY	

For other titles planned



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UNIT SALES

RELEASE DETAILS			
FRMGA	USA 99	MONITOR 97	
FRMGA	USA 99	JANUARY	

For other titles planned

CARTHAGE

"...Alright. So, apart from irrigation, public education, hygiene, law and order and the roads, what have the Romans ever done for us?"



Always question. Roman conquest was a struggle for glory.

Carthage was once a powerful city on the Gulf of Tunis, its empire encompassing the Phoenician colonies of North Africa and Spain. Inevitably they came into conflict with the Romans who subsequently conquered them in the three Punic wars.

Carthage is set in the third war, where our hero Droganes, receives a visit from his local God, Imlil who bestows upon him the "Power of Sight" which allows you to see your territory, cities and armies. Initially this serves as a strategic map from where most of the game is played. The ideal for being to change history and defeat the invading Romans.

This is achieved by creating armies and moving them effectively. Units available are Cavalry, Infantry, archers, catapults and elephants, which are all organized into battalions. Actual combat is triggered by zooming in on the army from the strategic map. Here you choose each battalion by clicking on it and then selecting a destination, should this be an army it will attack

or follow, depending on whose side it's on. However, your armies (being a rather necessary bit will desert if not paid, so you must sustain a sound economy. This is done by effective distribution of your nation's wealth. Gold is transported via your chariot and each journey features an 8-D arcade sequence in which you race along dodging traps. Roman seasons also feature your journey and the view changes to one from above, where you must steer your opponents wisely with your allies.

However to me it didn't really seem to have much effect on the actual game, but served more as a diversion from the rest of the wargaming aspect. The map is actually green and red and looks very impressive, a useful feature is the option to rotate and zoom in at will. The sound too is good, but there isn't really much of it, as for the game itself it can be quite engaging, but I'd only recommend it to those with a taste for wargaming.

by Keith Heston

LINE OF FIRE

It's no life for the weak-hearted in the Line of Fire, US Gold endeavour to out-gore Sam Pekingah.

Bike and foot, combat team, heroes of the free world and two-man operations, are in up to their necks in bad guys again. This time, their mission was to work deep behind enemy lines and steal the top secret Razor machine gun. They got to the gun, but before they could escape, an enemy patrol stumbled upon them and wounded the team...

You come into the game at the fatal moment when you are discovered by the enemy guerrillas and from there on in, the shooting hardly stops.

The screen is presented in 3D perspective, with the bad guys appearing just about every where. Guiding your character right around with your mouse, bullets can be fired by holding down the left button. You've got an unlimited supply of ammunition, so you might as well keep on firing. The right button launches a missile which basically clears the whole screen of

Line of Fire is featuring its get into the action, the first action war in an all-out strategy front where you can get inside the enemy control and win as well. The game is a real test of strategy. The game is a real test of strategy. The game is a real test of strategy.

820

RELEASE DETAILS

PC	CD-ROM	BUY NOW
386/486	CD-ROM	BUY NOW
386/486	CD-ROM	BUY NOW

Full version is better late than never.



Line of Fire's ultra-real graphics are available. Sam Pekingah, the main character, is in the background.



Line of Fire's ultra-real graphics are available. Sam Pekingah, the main character, is in the background.

Line of Fire's ultra-real graphics are available. Sam Pekingah, the main character, is in the background.

And still the Ultra War continues, with hopes of a diplomatic peace settlement dashed by the accidental shooting down of the South Peace Envoy's jet as it crossed our line.

We claim the Southern forces launched a heavy artillery bombardment on Northern lines. Thankfully, 99.99% of the incoming shells were eliminated by the lasers of orbiting defense satellites.

In retaliation, the Northern generals launched a massive troop offensive. Unfortunately, most were killed as soon as they entered Northern's

land by anti-personnel laser waves and all survivors were captured.

Suffice to say, no ground was taken and the lines are still drawn as they have been for the last ten years. This is Kate Arvey reporting from the Front Line for North News.

The ultra War, two massive superpowers, the North and the South, locked in a futile stalemate; their defensive systems so advanced and advanced that any major offensive are suicidal - they are instantly identified and counter-acted. The only effective way to make killing blows against the enemy is to utilize specially trained

cover troops behind the enemy's lines.

This is where you come in. You control a Master class assault tank - a highly armored, highly powerful, highly maneuverable and highly dangerous piece of hardware! At the beginning of the game you are given a checklist of three missions, with hints beside any you've completed. There's a help sheet to help you get you straight into the game and allow you to learn the basics of control. From there on things get a little more tricky. You could find yourself doing anything from rescuing hostages to scoring a copy of supply trucks to recovering a downed satellite.

You can flick through the missions, look at their briefings and maps, and see which you fancy. Once you've chosen you get the option to



A futuristic, brightly lit corridor is the starting point for the futuristic tank warfare game.

many vehicles, tanks and rockets. You begin the mission with three rockets. Later, like real strategy, can be picked up by shooting parking cars lying on the floor.

You can't be a two-player game, each player will have to look after their own half of the arena, any hits reflected on their half, either missiles, bullets or bombs will be deducted from the appropriate strength meter.

Each coming stage is indicated by a title and rated map. You begin your mission in the main camp, with the soldiers being behind of tanks and hanging down from the ceiling. Running through the corridors here is pretty easy, and having wide sweeping motions with the joystick will take out 50% of the enemy



Enemies should only be visible when you're there. They'll disappear as soon as you've gone to the next stage.

soldiers. Along the way, it's vital to collect all the fuel and leaves if you are to avoid the second stage.

Stage two takes place in the jungle, and survival will become increasingly difficult. Armoured cars, helicopters, foot soldiers and gun employment all have to be dealt with.

Heavy protection is necessary if you're going to make your way through the stage. Missiles from helicopters must be shot down first, since they inflict the most damage.

The much touted concentration routine works reasonably well, since you reach the end of a path, all the objects are moved around to give the impression of a camera panning round. This makes the game feel more believable. It works especially well on stage 3, when the prop which you ride is looking away from the enemy, and you're being down a surprising fee.

If you get killed with some credits remaining,

you have a couple of seconds' respite before you need start again. Since the screens wrap on scrolling past, you can avoid an especially tricky stage.

Use of Fire offers little for strategy fans, it simply operates on basic reaction time and hand-eye coordination. But it's well implemented, and the sheer number of enemies on screen is very high. These points, and the low scoring method will offer enough to justify its purchase to any die action addict.

Win Douglas



The end screen includes a fascinating guide to the layout of the tank. Play this 'tactics' section about the joystick.

BATTLE COMMAND

Have a 'barrel' of laughs with REALTIMEOCEAN's tank warfare game!

Why is it that any of those offensive and defence attachments to fit into the four available weapon ports, which should be picked bearing in mind the mission requirements.

Then it's into action. There's an animated graphics sequence showing the Mauler being dropped into enemy territory, then the view switches to a view out of your cockpit generated from your goggles. In the distance you can see the winding outline of your shipper. Now you're in the air view. On your travels you'll see trees, hills, buildings and installations... and tanks, jets, attack choppers and jet tank-busters!

All of the major functions of the Mauler can be accessed using the mouse. In *Aviator* mode you can move the tank by moving the mouse in the required direction and pressing the left button

will fire the currently active weapon. In *Fanclub* mode a pointer appears, and can be used to click on various icons around the cockpit. It's not normally a huge fan of the game of 3D games. Often the thought of a game lasting 30 hours or so seems more like a novel than a bonus. *Battle Command* avoids this by breaking the game up in its stages. They're going to take some time to master, and each provides a real sense of satisfaction on completion.

This isn't meant to be a rigorous future-war simulation - the game is started more towards fun and action than some sort of pseudo-realistic rig - and it succeeds admirably. It may not be *Battlezone* for the 90s, but at least it's a thinking person's *Battlezone*.

David Hopkins

This chart shows the performance of the Mauler in different environments. The Mauler is a highly advanced tank, and its performance is shown in the chart above. The chart shows the Mauler's performance in different environments, and the Mauler's performance is shown in the chart above.

\$99

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RELEASING DETAILS

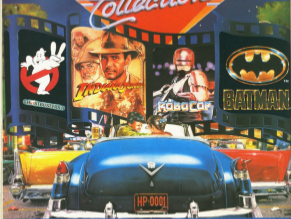
AMIGA	£24.99	CD-ROM	£24.99
ATARI ST	£24.99	CD-ROM	£24.99
IBM PC	£24.99	CD-ROM	£24.99

For other prices, consult

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The ACE guide to

THE GREATEST GAMES

of all time*



PART 1

At long last,
ACE names the games
it considers to be the
Greatest Of All Time!

ADVENTURE GAMES

■ The Hobbit

Mitbourne House (Spectrum)

The game that set graphics on the adventure map (see our interdiff), floating over 20 (pretty good) for their time illustrations! Also famous for the first appearance of supposedly "independent" characters, although it did seem to happen was Thorin kept getting down and staying about gold and Gandalf kept wandering off.

■ Ultima

Legend (Spectrum)

Probably the first (and prime) example of excessive media types. A world populated - again - by "independent" characters (which meant that they never did what you asked them to), each location was depicted graphically, with a short text description below.

■ Wonderland

Virgin (Atari/Amiga), Magenta (Amiga), PC

Employing "Magenta Windows", The Scrolls provide the adventuring look. Powerful windowing system practically banishes the typing

bugle from what is essentially a traditional MUD/graphic adventure with the usual superb illustrations (including animations). Reviewed in ACE issue 78.

■ Adventuriland

Adventure International (All formats)

The first of the Scott Adams adventure series, originally developed on the Sandy 1980s and later ported onto most (but not all) formats. Originally, these games were text only but graphics were added later. Few locations, but almost every one containing a devilish puzzle, the Scott Adams adventure series has influenced practically every traditional adventure game since.

■ The Quest

CRJ, Delta 4 (All formats)

Early game by Fergus McNeill which showed that you didn't need the Quest (but could be used to produce commercial quality adventures and that nothing in adventures - and especially not hobby - was sacred). Fergus' satirical home-levy games launched an entire industry of alternative programming that still produces adventure product today.

ARCADE ADVENTURES

■ Amos 2

Vector (Spectrum)

Especially on isometric-3D maze shoot'em-ups, the aim was to shoot five giant worms in the head and then get transport to the next level. Amazing for their time colourful loading graphics and gameplay that was both thoughtful and frenetic made this a true classic.

■ Alien 8000

Ultimate Play the Game (Spectrum)

Perpetrated Gaster by allowing you to pick whether you wanted to play a warrior, wizard or thief. Set in a huge sprawling multi-level castle, you had to explore the different rooms, looking for colour-coded keys to locked doors and avoiding the evil demons, with the ultimate aim of finding the four parts to the Key of ACO and thus escape.

B of hold your horses - don't rush through the list and, in a kind of homage to the original idea of Milton Sipkins from July '92, the ACE site email catches. We're not totally objective - indeed, who isn't? but you can rest assured these are the games chosen for inclusion and are some software into the bargain. But first, understand what the criteria for nomination are:

1) The game must have originated on a home computer - that's why games like *Fortress* stands and *Paradise* the ultimate Defender clone on the BBC are being (probably) excluded. However, games that have initially existed on console like an early *Sea*. Third, include in status *Advent* and *Lunar* (under most, accordingly used for the time to make a totally different point).

2) The game must be a landmark, in the sense that it introduced a new concept or technique into the gaming world and/or advanced the state-of-the-art in its genre.

3) The game must be enjoyable - obviously - and have lasting appeal.

We consider the games in this list to be essential to any gaming fan's collection, if not for their gameplay then simply for their place in history. Each game is described, and details provided on who manufactured it and/or who distributed the game in best form. All format editions that the game was classic on all implementations! But don't see hope to provide you with a detail of where you can get some of the older titles.

If we mentioned at the start, these lists are not just to state and write upon to generations that will find their share. If you have any suggestions, then write and tell us as an e-mail at ACE Great Games, ACE, Box 3, Peary Court, 39-43 Pimlico Lane, London WC2R 3PH, along with your (brief) opinions.

It also will be best on the March 1993 (a month after the second part, when we will show ten cards from the bag and send them a FREE piece of software, remember to add your name, address and computer format to the postcard. We have reserved three flowers of the building for the sake of real time Enigma of Chess!

* PROBABLY



ADVENTURE GAMES • The hidden garden in *Myst* features a view that is both perspective view (left) and an isometric view (right).

• Halls of Things

Crystal Quest (Amiga)

In a surreal maze game - just you, lots of locked doors and hidden keys, and literally hundreds of hungry 'things'. The maze was primitive-looking, but this was made up for by the number of things in various and interesting poses.

• Knight Quest

Ultimate Play the Game (Amiga)

Another romp around a medieval dungeon, each room was viewed from the top corner, thus affording a 3D perspective view of the action. Basically a quest to find the different ingredients to a potion that would rid you of a werewolf curse, the highly-playable and unapologetically addictive gameplay centered around trapping or procuring platforms while avoiding resident monsters. Still looks good now. Fantastic!

• Leisure Suit Larry Land III

Serra On-Line (PC)

LSL is the game that put PC entertainment on the map. Highly prurite, its premise - but failed of soft porn installed it on office desk drives throughout the nation. In fact, the game was quite able to stand on its own feet without the titillation, the main attraction being the meretricious Larry Laffer who, in lounge suit and a state of eternal enormous underwear, is constantly striking out in his search for the perfect mate. LSL2 wasn't so engaging, but LSL3, despite a slightly more disapprovable flirt with titillate figures, was another classic graphic adventure. LSL 3 was reviewed in ACE Issue 26.

PLATFORM-BASED GAMES

• Runabout

Dream (C64/Spectrum)

The first licensed coin-up conversion. Make your way across Mike Galsbol's tanglers through smother screens of gapping pits, scowling punks and finally to rescue Lamentia.

• Impossible Mission

Logic (C64/Spectrum)

Donkey hits, my body! The evil Prof. Stein Amundson is holding the world to ransom with a nuclear bomb. It's your job to infiltrate his complex, search rooms for the codes that will help you progress, while avoiding a target of deadly 'traps', and eventually defeat the fiend. But that scream when you fell into a bottomless pit...

• Jet Set Willy

Software Projects (Spectrum)

The sequel to Music Mixer (see below), but classier in its own right. Following a wild party, Music Willy has to collect every dirty disc in his misbegotten mansion, avoiding its loopy inhabitants - only then will his housekeeper, Marie, let him go to bed. Married only by the fact that it's impossible to finish the game without cheating due to a couple of bugs.

• Music Mixer

Supabyte (Spectrum)

The first great home computer platform game, written by Matthew Smith. Twenty screens of platform, collapsing walkways and wandering animals to avoid, as you try to find the keys that will open the doorway to the next screen. Ah, happy memories...

• The Mario Series

Nintendo

You must have heard of Mario. The brave little plumber first appeared in the arcade game Donkey Kong and despite a brief lapse in character as the baby in Donkey Kong Jr he has become a phenomenon on par with Mickey Mouse. Each game features lots of platforms, lots of enemies, lots of hidden levels and lots and lots of fun.

PUZZLE GAMES

• Boulderdash

First Star (C64/Spectrum)

A very simple concept - mine through boulders in search of diamonds, and avoid Boulder's falling from above. Later levels introduced insidious deformers to add to your troubles. Recently released as the Gemstone, and will be first here (see review in ACE Issue 48).

• Defender

Comidy/Morley (Amiga format)

Use mirrors, telescopic cannons and polarizing and refracting blocks to direct opponents to bend a laser beam from the generator to a missile. Or offer an 60 levels of mind-bending puzzling.

• Pipeworks

Empire International (Amiga format)

All action takes place on 10 x 7 grids. You have a certain amount of time before Floor starts leaking from an outflow pipe. Using random pipe sections you have to splice a tube for the floor to come down. If it leaks out then your game is over. Keep the floor flowing long enough and you gain access to the next, tougher, level. Reviewed in ACE Issue 31.

A READER WRITES...

Recent reviews of *Starblazer* inadvertently have a touch of psychic power because that's already said in his off-line 'top ten' issue 14, along with comments by me...

1. *Amazing Destruction* (Amiga) (Electronic Arts) - A very interesting choice.
2. *Little (Big) Adventure* - This couldn't agree more.
3. *Ultimate Car Wars* (Microstyle) - Great choice which ends...
4. *Simply Special (C64)* - Great, great game, but not really groundbreaking.
5. *Ultimate Play the Game* - Another excellent economic (in game) from Ultimate. Just Knight (also was the first).
6. *Art of War* (Johnstone Play The Game) - The choice of the professionals!
7. *King Of the Hill* - How could it not be there?
8. *Rescue the Princess* (Microstyle) - Really? Lots of lovely back to play, but little more.
9. *Millions 2.0* (Microstyle) - A very compact space strategy game, but didn't exactly do anything groundbreaking new to the genre as my *Powermaster* did.
10. *Starblazer* (Microstyle) - Good but the second game to the trademark *Starblazer*.

Good choices, Vincent, and see whether I live up to them and almost do so on two more (*Millions* and *Defender*). Your choice of the *Amazing Destruction* list is very interesting (and it's a game that's causing worry of cancellation - we'll put it to the brand of *Starblazer* unless they reveal that what we've read of you there I think is and isn't so!



PUZZLE GAMES - *The Nightmares Below* (Spectrum) Another excellent choice from the *Mario* (C64) series and *Defender* (Amiga) with a writing job shared by the two (see the Nightmares issue).

• Split Personalities

Demarc (Amiga format)

Based on the state puzzle idea. The computer throws three pieces of someone's portrait out onto a 5 x 5 grid. You had to sort them out to form the full picture. Occasional bombs also appeared which had to be moved off the screen before they exploded, losing you a life. See ACE Issue 39 for a full retrospective.

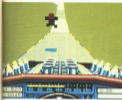
• Tetris

Acquaintance/Microsoft (Amiga format)

The first Japanese-style game to hit the big time. Randomly-shaped blocks drop into a pit and as they fall you can rotate them. The aim is to make them slot together and form complete horizontal lines, whenever they disappear, if the



ADVENTURE GAMES - Another of the things on the CD Spectrum. The here-looking graphics were constructed by the artist and number of enemy enemies when they drop things.



BLADE RUNNER - Start for three on the bridge. Polygon-based graphics were vital to creating the cyber city. It's the ultimate city game.

ticks reach the top of the pit then the game ends. As success increases so does the speed at which the blades drop... Intriguingly and end-mily addictive. See the low-cost-but-not-really-in ACE issue 5.

BOARD GAMES

● 3D Death Chase (Microgig Spectrum)

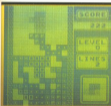
Remember the Space Invaders from Britain of the 1970s you ride one, in a small high-speed fight through a dense forest. There are no opponents to main battle, it's just a race of staying alive long enough. Technically stunning for its time.

● Indianapolis 500 (Activision: Am) (Am format)

With action's viewed in polygon-generated 3D, this allowed for highly realistic modeling of the cars, track and surrounding detail. Multiple-camera angle options let you watch the race from almost anywhere, even an overhead vantage. Reviewed in ACE issue 29.

● Full Throttle (Microgig Spectrum)

It's the party of the open road - just you, a bike... and 35 other riders. The best of the early 3D racing games. Action was fast, and coming



BLADE RUNNER - See you in the Streets. Another example of a third-party game, graphics and hardware necessary to the computer generation.

first was no mean feat, especially when one slight collision causes your speed to drop to zero, then just as you start to speed up, another bike rams into the back of you, dropping your speed to zero, then just as...

● Ultima V (Origin: PC)

A highly enjoyable text-based game for one, but get a friend to join in and the fun more than doubles. Using a novel split-screen effect recently revised for Genter's Lotus Legend Text Challenge, both players could

participate at the same time.

● Street Car Wars (Microgig: Am format)

Race against a lone opponent on 8 different polygon-generated track types. However, these are no ordinary tracks - they rise and fall and, worst of all, are peppered with gaping pits that have to be jumped at the right speed. Watch your buggy and you're out. Like fast computers for head-to-head play. This roller-coaster ride of a game was reviewed in ACE issue 24.

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

● Bard's Tale 1,2,3 (Interplay: Electronic Arts) (Am format)

The original text/adventure RPG allows you to create and save parties of characters and then put them through a series of encounters with monsters as you penetrate a complex, multi-level maze. Graphics are represented in text as Dungeon Master type style through less sophisticated and gameplay can be interminable. Massive challenge in 1, 2 and 3, though the development of gameplay techniques throughout the series. RT2 was reviewed in ACE issue 7.

● Dungeon Master (TSR: Microsoft) (Am format)

Guide a party of four level-casts through 14 levels of monsters and mazes in the search for a magic staff to slay the evil Lord Chaer. Generated an incredible amount of atmosphere and tension by the use of a 3D background graphic first-person view and towered (but ineffective) sword. Reviewed in ACE issue 8.

● Ring of Darkness (Interplay) (Am format)

Ancient game using similar presentation to early Ultima and was the UK's only contribution to this genre-style. Also set new standards in Britain for RPG immersion graphics advancement, though you only had one character and the graphics borrowed from above with the animated figures were extremely primitive.

● Ultima V (Origin: Microgig) (Am format)

Origin: Microgig (Am format) except VGA PC. Although the Ultima series was well established in the UK from the very first release, it wasn't until Ultima V that Origin really began to attract attention in the

UK. Set in the mythical land of Britannia, Ultima V represented a quantum leap in graphic representation from previous episodes, with a vast, complex map and literally hundreds of chaotic levels to encounter. A tremendous game and well worth getting over if you've got Ultima II. Reviewed in ACE issue 12.

● Ultima VI (Origin: Microgig) (Am format)

First Ultima game to depart from the traditional small-scale overhead view display and use a target 3D scrolling map throughout the game. You also get separate figures for every member of your party, who follow you around faithfully as you explore Britannia. Unparalleled graphic detail for a game of this size - and the best in its genre. Reviewed in ACE issue 22.



THE BARD'S TALE - Adventure in the fantasy. The best in the new category and supporting other titles.

THE GREATEST GAMES

NEXT MONTH IN PART 2

More adventures next month in Part 2 of the ACE Guide to the Greatest Games of All Time, where the categories will be:

- **Original Games** - These titles that you just can't pigeonhole!
- **Shoot-'Em-Ups** - Which ones do you think give you the sweet trigger finger?
- **Simulations** - The games that are more real than real life!
- **Sports Simulations** - Become a million Games with your computer!
- **Writing Games** - Games so good they'd give Napoleon another reason to say "Not enough, Napoleon!"

...and the category without which no guide would be complete...

- **Reviews** - These games you think to forget, but couldn't!

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Twenty-eight, forty-four, twenty-eight, hurt! ELECTRONIC ARTS goes for a Megadrive touchdown

Fix it off the line, offense before the snap, call an audible... if you don't know what the hell is going on about then this game probably won't appeal to you. This would be a great shame as John Madden is the best American football simulation to ever make a play on silicon.

You start the game by selecting the home/visitor team (33 teams plus the All-Madden kick-out team) and player (one or two home players plus console-controlled - also All-Madden himself), game length (six or 14 terminated) and season mode (regular, full on-death or playoffs). Since, rain and wind weather conditions are possible in the play offs. If you want to get straight down to it, you can try the default settings of playing San Francisco at home against the Madden-coined Denver team in a regular season game with five minute quarters. Phew!

Next, you check-out the scouting reports with strength evaluations like "great pass coverage" and weakness highlights such as "weak line in the secondary". The visiting team then kicks-off. During the game, your control pad changes into a multi-action-controller whose function changes depending on the current state of play - if you're kicking, passing, play, drive before the snap, etc. The player currently in your control stands on a four-arrow symbol for easy recognition.

Overall management of the game is as neat as cherry pie. For example, when you're in-offense the Play Calling Screen (which appears above the field) along with the scoreboard asks for a unit, while the defense Play Calling Screen asks for a formation. A set to fit welcome for the group of players who will be your play. There are six sets to choose from, each representing a different group of offensive players (Stenoys). A formation such as pro-line, far and near tells your player set how to line up before the snap. Once you've chosen a play, the only way to change it is by calling an audible or time-out.



John Madden American Football

JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL



John Madden American Football comes complete with a comprehensive manual to explain all the intricacies of playing the game in full detail. If you want a taste of the 'real thing' before you've got the hang of things, you can witness a brutal exhibition game between San Francisco and Denver. You should then be ready to go for your first touch-down. What's more, if you're good enough you could end up providing commentary on a Channel Four American Football programme.

• E.A. Games

KICKING OFF

John Madden American Football was developed by the Park Place Production team in Encinitas, California. John Madden designed the game himself with help of Scott Fox and Richard Williams. Don Williams was the programmer with graphics provided by Steve Quinn. Art White and Bruce O'Brien. Bob Hubbard created the sounds and music. The North English Hubbert originally went to fame with his excellent Lucas Arts CD-games like the classic Group Games, Commander. Things are a Spring, Arabian and Delta.



It's that kick to get you started!



More than one, here, it's time to huddle...

SHADOW DANCER

One man and his dog go to mow a Megadrive

AD. 1997. New York City. Having vanquished the evil crime empire, Neo Deed, Shindo was not heard from again. His combat kung-fu skills were not needed in a peace-filled world. But a new threat arose in reptilian form that based on vicious extinct animals. The colossal monster roared slowly and quietly, and its attack was relentless. The locals were brave enough to face become "testagers." Mass panic swept the streets.



Shadow Dancer's first screen is a doghouse parody.



Don't confuse dog control.



The subtle face of the old 16-bit era.

"It remained only for Shindo to take action, the Mega of the Shadow. His weapons were strength and quickness of attack. He only offers when facing over-whelming force. Relying on many weapons and magic, Shindo fought on, assisted by his faithful dog. This is the story of their defiance..."

Shadow Dancer, the Secret of Shindo, is the latest Mega concept to be converted over to the Megadrive. You control a simple maze on a fantastic multi-stage journey through the streets of the big apple. You're on a rescue mission to save the poor footagers from this mysterious criminal empire. Along the way you meet mystical war-

riors armed with knives and spears, giant touting security guards and long-haired bouncers armed with two deadly shindis.

Shindo can crawl, jump, attack with sword or shuriken, and cast a special Fengshu magic spell to wipe out whoever's on screen. If you keep the attack button pressed down, the magic dog gets angry enough to charge and attack your nearest enemy. This tactic is particularly useful in dodging your rivals from their secure hideouts. One nice touch is that your dog doesn't die from weapon-inflicted wounds, it just thinks them to a harmless puppy.



Megadrive Secret of Shindo

After killing everything on screen (and from the footagers, you get a quick burst of a silly bonus game and a crack at an end-of-level).

Good monster. I've just one question to ask the developers of these exciting bootlegging arcade games: why are they all set in 1997?

New York! Perhaps there are a tribute to John Carpenter's cult movie, Escape from New York.

By Ed Hoopes



Megadrive Secret of Shindo

INNERPRISE INITIATIVE

Electronic Arts has converted two enhanced Amiga games from their own software company to Sony's new Mega Megadrive.

Secret of Hudson is a hard-core kung-fu game with characteristically large sprites. You play Shindo or Shindo, riding waves of the legendary Yang Tzu, in a quest to save the southern King Shindo from the grip of the evil wizard Kung. Your path is lined with traps, blocked by towering monsters and obscuring with large. Many puzzles can be found to give you extra lives, floating swords, shields and other magical powers. Secret of Hudson levels provide the off-beat challenge, ranging from the bridge of Hudson to the Death Canyon. "Secret of Hudson features realistic hand-drawn artwork and features of gaming bliss," says EA.

Meanwhile, if you prefer a shoot-'em-up,

look no further than Shindu Kungshu. This conversion of the much hit Amiga game features two player simultaneous beam ping-pong-style graphics and a wide variety of enemies ranging from mysterious dinosaurs able to capture Cyphers and their Minions." EA offers,

Your mission should you accept it is to wipe out the alien ground and air forces based on the planet Gamma and rescue fellow flight commander, Shingo and Shingo-Minions can be equipped or changed when you capture giant-robot monsters from destroyed alien bases. You can also use force to send Shindo to the top level, power, bonus and continue games to give you the Shindo!

For more Megadrive games, visit the Mega Megadrive and Secret of Hudson have just been released on the Megadrive at £29.99 each, look out for full releases in the next issue of EW.



Special thanks to PC Engine (Japan) (0753 712716) for supplying the cart.

R DAYS OF THUNDER

Who needs Tom Cruise when you're around *Days of Thunder*? It's based around last summer's movie, a kind of Top-Gun-with-race-cars. You take the role of rookie driver Cole Trickle in a race to win the prestigious Daytona event in Florida.

The game is played in an eight-race series, up with you up against 15 other drivers, making the more skillful talents of Randy Fenwick and Russ Whelan (two of the characters from the original film). The races take place at seven different tracks - you even get the chance to have a go at Daytona Beach in a one-lap to the final race.

Each track varies in length and shape with a preceding four-lap qualifying run to determine your starting position. These twisting, turning bits give the feeling of racing around a hairpin's wall of death - which frequently they are if you're not doing just well, your sponsor could even ask you to run a time trial - but this test and you can lose that sponsor money quickly.

Fortunately you don't have to come first in every race to win. The driver who has most points at the end of the eight-race series wins the cup. For instance, you get bonus points if you lead in any lap. The racing season winds back around America, from Phoenix to Atlanta.

For a slightly overhead view of the track - and behind your own car - during the racing, instrument panels situated around the track keep you updated on your car's fuel, speedometer, tachometer and damage status. You also get additional lap information. The tachometer tells you how fast your engine is working. Your car is capable of speeds up to



Tom Cruise and Michael Keaton fight over oil money in the *Days of Thunder* movie... as Tom Cruise stars in the NES game *Days of Thunder* in 1990.

200 miles per hour in a long straight way, though you can't handle curves at this speed. You must make sure you level off enough to keep under control as the rear- and engine-damage can dramatically affect your speed. If you blow the tires, you'll only be able to coast into the pits and a completely flat engine will put you out of the race.

TASTY NASCAR TACTICS

Multi-lap racing - splitting off other cars and bringing them back with one lap-to-lap tactics in the game. Just mind you don't crash or cause too much rear- and front-end damage too.

The Paper Trail - Comes up the track and plunges down into the inside of the track to give you a real-time graphical sense of speed, while avoiding other drivers doing exactly the same manoeuvres.

Damage Control - Never feel by shifting gears behind a fast-moving opponent, you'll be straggled along in the middle. You never get tunnel vision along in the middle when you move out of this algorithm. Never have been seen or lost because of this tactic.

You saw the movie, you heard the soundtrack, now play the NES game from MINDSCAPE...



From the track and game when you're hot.

200 where pit stops become essential, though you don't have to make that many of them during a race. During a pit stop you can change size to four tires, perform engine repairs and refuel - but each second spent in the pit costs you a precious second on the track.

It leaves the final words to actor and would-be race driver Tom Cruise... "Having run that circuit from racing, it challenges you physically and mentally. You can't go in and get your foot to the floor and expect to win. You have to think it out."

By Mike Hayes

DAY OF THUNDER

678

NEC

15A

198A

198A



Don't think you can't win by outgunning an opponent... it's all about strategy.



MARIO 4

Mario haters will be digging their own graves soon...Rik Haynes checks out the awful truths behind the forthcoming release of Mario 4....

O K, who wears dungarees, stars in his own TV cartoon series and makes 200 million dollars a year? Top...you guessed right...

Mario is now officially more popular than Mickey Mouse. Mario's 'O' rating, which measures a celebrity's popularity among American children and adults, ranks him ahead of that Disney's encroaching robot. In less than 10 years, Mario has rapidly transcended video game hero status to become a cultural phenomenon in both North America and Japan.

Mario began his rise to fame with his initial appearance in the classic coin-op, Donkey Kong. However it was Nintendo, the giant Japanese console manufacturer, that turned this cute character into an international cultural icon.

Super Mario Bros., on the Nintendo Entertainment System, has sold more than 18.5 million copies since its introduction in 1985. The game is a simple but highly addictive arcade platform adventure. Super Mario Bros. 2 became a top-selling sequel to the original game, and, nearly a year ago, the third Super

Mario Bros. games cartridge was released. Super Mario Bros. 3 was Nintendo's first three-megabit cartridge giving its developers the spare memory for additional game-play scenarios. It is believed Nintendo, the world's No. 1 games company, sold over 7.6 million copies of Super Mario Bros. 3 by the end of 1990. No wonder Nintendo makes almost as much profit as the most widely known Japanese corporation, Sony.

Now the stuffy company from Kyoto in Japan has released Super Mario World Super Mario Bros. 4 onto its new Super Famicom 32-bit console taping dedicated Mario fans will flock to the shops buying both the game cartridge and console. But it had more, eh?

The Mario craze doesn't end with the release of the fourth game either. The huge appeal of Mario has allowed him to go far beyond the world of video games, entering movies, television, books, magazines and an enormously wide range of merchandise. More than 300 licensed products display Mario's likeness, representing some \$200 million in annual retail sales in the USA, items ranging from Mario sleeping bags to cake decorations, are available at more than 6000 New 1st at Nintendo retail outlets throughout North America.

The Super Mario Bros. Super Show is a produced comedy adventure series airing on 135 television stations across America, and Super Mario Bros. 3 is a half-animated TV programme based on the blockbuster game which features the weekly adventures of Mario and Luigi. Plus, there's Captain N - The Game Master cartoon series based around other popular Nintendo video game characters. There's even shows like a one hour block of Nintendo television programmes on NBC Saturday Mornings in the States. Insiders even suggest that Hollywood actor Robin Williams owns the movie rights to the Super Mario Bros. games!

Since its launch in 1985, Super Mario Bros. and its sequels have sold more than 20 million copies in America alone. "Mario's popularity transcends age and gender," says Peter Main, part of Nintendo's marketing engine in the States. "Mario may not be the fastest or strongest, but his character embodies a certain kind of spirit which appeals to the underlying in all of us," adds Main. A review of Super Mario World on the Super Famicom will appear in the next issue, since everybody on ACE has had a chance to play the game properly.



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PLAY THESE SPOTS!

Look out for the SUPER MARIO Bros. 4 in what you're playing after 4 pm.

TV's Mario in the 1990s has reached a new level with the Super Mario Bros. 4 which is set to be a 20th-anniversary celebration.

Super Mario Bros. 4 is a half-animated TV programme based on the blockbuster game which features the weekly adventures of Mario and Luigi.

Super Mario Bros. 4 is a half-animated TV programme based on the blockbuster game which features the weekly adventures of Mario and Luigi.

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The checkered floor just opens on the floor to a special puzzle. You have to solve the puzzle to get the key to the door.



The floor of Hell is a special puzzle. You have to solve the puzzle to get the key to the door.

Go to Hell!

Super-cute characters, breath-taking animation and amazing puzzles. Jim Douglas finds Hell isn't so bad after all.





© 1998 EA GAMES



EA's new 3D hit takes to the skies, and master-voiced with a twist.

HOW IT WORKS

Programmers used 3D virtual artwork and not necessarily finished three-pot-the-game-together using an Amiga 6000. Virtually everything seen on screen is a 3D-animated file. The only code which will be resident in the game during play is a driver program, pulling the illustrations off the CD as required and handling game logic.

IS HE HOT OR

Basically, yes. EA's version of *Lionel Lincoln* will feature full-motion graphics and music. As a result, the programmers are unsure what elements of the game itself will have to be sacrificed. On one side of this, of course is that CD games will finally have a game really written specifically for their medium, rather than a jacked-up version of an existing product.

FORMATS: AMIGA, AMIGA CD, SE PC, PC CD, CONSOLE CD

RELEASE DATE: AUTUMN '91

PRICE: UNDECIDED

Game's *Lionel Lincoln* has been under development for nearly a year now, and to say the company has been keeping its existence under its feet would be an understatement. Indeed, the game isn't even slated to see the light of day until late next year. So, if it's only half-finished, why does everything look so good?

The storylines centres on Mel and his adventures through Hell. Mel's goal is to straighten things out, solving puzzles along the way and in doing so, prove to his father he's not enough cheap reality and greed to be allowed back into heaven.

Hell is broken down into an aerial set of floating corridors (displayed in perspective 3D) with rooms leading off. Gameplay, it's broken into two stages. As you race along the tunnels, he will face arcade-style problems such as collapsing floors, deadly spikes etc. Magic spells and useful items can also be found in the levels. Once in the rooms, though, Mel encounters more puzzle-orientated problems.

Deans of the Dragon's Lair games will no doubt eye the screenshots with suspicion, worrying they've seen this style of graphic-led game before, and found it badly lacking in playability. It's important to point out, then, that no resident memory is required on the pictures. Graphics are very sharp but they must deliver equally on both counts.

Look forward to a full playtest and review in a future issue, but in the mean time, we'll let the pictures do the talking.



EA's new 3D hit takes to the skies, and master-voiced with a twist.



EA's new 3D hit takes to the skies, and master-voiced with a twist.



EA's new 3D hit takes to the skies, and master-voiced with a twist.



EA's new 3D hit takes to the skies, and master-voiced with a twist.



EA's new 3D hit takes to the skies, and master-voiced with a twist.



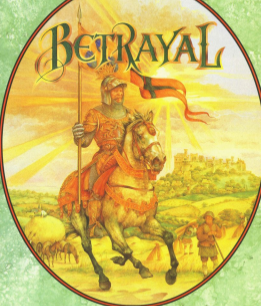
EA's new 3D hit takes to the skies, and master-voiced with a twist.



EA's new 3D hit takes to the skies, and master-voiced with a twist.



BETRAYAL



A WEB OF INTRICATE POSSIBILITIES - BUT FAIR PLAY ISN'T
ONE OF THEM

MASTERS OF STRATEGY

A WEB OF INTRICATE POSSIBILITIES - BUT FAIR PLAY
ISN'T ONE OF THEM

BETRAYAL



The White Monks live in a corrupt land ruled by immoral leaders. You are one of four knights with a love for justice. And in the pursuit of justice, the end justifies the means.



The bloodless tyrants paid the prince's debts. Strategically control your domain, reduce your rival's resources, and replace your stronghold on the possession of the land.



The arena provides your power base. Manage them successfully and harness the wealth needed to buy skills and fight for ultimate power.

Betrayal involves a long, hard, ruthless struggle, starting with the economic management of your crown and culminating in the formation of your military strategy and execution of political subterfuge.



Develop a mastery of political subterfuge, getting places for your Courtesans at the palace of the King and Bishop, ready for the coup which will make you the master of Betrayal.

BETRAYAL A HELL OF A GOD GAME

It was hard of you "Whale" she had just been breached. The royal palace's smoky dining hall resounded to sherry voices. To one side of the top table a chaplain and a minister were struggling to be heard above the commotion caused by two dogs snarling over a bone in a corner.

Tasting slowly, I darted forward to catch the breathless whimper of a royal knight.

"They come in at a run, baying like wolves. Fear will split barbarians ready to eat, gorge, pulverize and kill anything that moves."

That news was indeed music to my ears. My friend's attack on his wealthiest town had met with success. Financially weakened, militarily broken, and politically bankrupt, he could no longer hold influence at Court.

So long as no evidence of my wrong doing remained. So long as the Gods blessed the crops of my harvest. So long as the remains of the captives of my brother were true. (He thought was mine.)

I've cheated, lied, spied and slaughtered. The fruits of Betrayal are mine.



From the programmers of Silkstorm, the shoot 'em up of the eighties, comes SWIV, the shoot 'em up of the nineties.



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ORIGIN
DYNAMIC
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Computer aided weapons systems on-line communications, replacement operational. System check complete, prepare for combat as a member of your nation's elite combat team - SWIV. Two different worlds of devastation, destructive power, fighting together in one sea.

Player Driven: Deeplog strategy control system. Successive Objective: Interdict/Invasion. The destruction by stealth/sphere (Full Storm) and

SWIV - No one knows what it means but everyone will know it when it arrives. Coming soon.

"Destined to be THE Shoot 'Em Up of the year." Amiga Computing November '90
"Superbative Shoot 'Em Up Storm." Zero November '90

AmigaSoft's Storm is from the Amiga system.

AmigaSoft's Storm is from the Amiga system.

Two extra missions disks and a host of recent conversions. This month's updates are brought to you on the PC, ST and Amiga.

UPDATES

PC



Lost Patrol on the Amiga.

LOST PATROL

Ocean £24.99 | Amiga version reviewed issue 30; ACE rating deferred

Lost Patrol was extensively previewed in issue 30, but since it was deferred no rating was wanted.

The game is a Vietnam War graphic adventure with arcade sequences. You have to command a platoon of selected American GIs, making their way through VC-occupied territory on their way back to base.

The PC version, on three 3.5 inch disks, has some excellent semi-animated VGA graphics, colorful map screens, with on-screen command functions, atmospheric patterns of the grunts slugging their way through the jungle

and muddy fields and the Vietnamese they encounter, and various status screens and explanatory diagrams of the equipment and their use.

The follow-on is the arcade sequences, where the GI's encounter VC leaders, machinegun nests and so on. Priority-based and offering little challenge, they deliver! From the strategic elements rather than adding any arcade excitement. Sound is basic, with no add-on sound cards supported.

PC RATING: 6/10

INTERPHASE

Image Works £24.99 | Atari ST/Amiga version reviewed issue 27; ACE rating 6/10

This very impressive 3D vector graphic arcade adventure has converted well to the PC. The action takes place inside the memory of a computer security system, with different sections manifesting themselves as colorful, smoothly-animated geometrical shapes, tunnels and open spaces which you can explore freely. There are also 3-D loading tapestries to examine in strategic form, screens to monitor, messages to decode, puzzles to solve and defenses to avoid.

Graphics are very colorful, smoothly animated and fluid, moving - if anything, better animated than those of the Amiga and ST. The PC version comes on a single 3.5 or 5.25 inch disk, and supports all colour graphics modes. It also supports the AdLib sound board.

A top-class conversion of a classic 80 arcade adventure.

PC RATING: 9/10

ATP II

Digital Integration £24.99 | Atari ST/Amiga version reviewed issue 40; ACE rating 10/10/10/10

ATP (Advanced Tactical Fighter) II is a halfway between being a flight simulator and an arcade game; it has more handling, set-up and option screens than you would expect of a flight 'em-up, but less detail than you would expect from a true simulator. In that sense it falls between two camps and may satisfy neither arcade or simu-

lation fans. The PC version has most of the features of the Amiga and ST versions: colorful graphics and control panels, and background checkerboard backgrounds with the minimum of animation and background detail.

CGA graphics are comparable in colour and style to those of the Amiga, while CGA and Tandy low colour are no more than adequate. Sound is basic, and add-on sound cards are not supported. The manual doesn't properly explain all the PC keyboard controls, and the mouse functions don't always seem to work, which is no help. Not the best imaginable PC conversion, inheriting the basic faults of the other versions.

PC RATING: 6/10



Interphase on the IBM PC.



Dragon Breed on the Amiga



AMIGA

DRAGON BREED

Activision £24.99 / AtariST Version
revised issue 40; AGE rating 7/00

Like the ST version, the Amiga version of Irem's second-and-sequel version of *Dragon Breed* is notoriously difficult, which can be a good or bad point depending on your inclination. Gameplay is noticeably smoother, plating your fire-breathing dragon through the skies, you wipe out endless demons with the help of your crossbow, dragonbreath and other magical weapons. In the Amiga version it's definitely



easier to get the dragon's tail into its mouth. The other differences in the Amiga version are slightly improved sound, although the strange roaring coming from destroyed demons rapidly becomes irritating; and an unfortunate pause for disk access before each end-of-level demon appears. Scrolling and sprite movement are fine, but not much has been done to take full advantage of the Amiga's superior graphics.

AMIGA RATING: 7/00

EXTRA DISKS EXTRA!

This month the postman's bulging sack yielded two extra missions disks for rather good games and so, in the spirit of the flexible magazine ACE endeavours to be, here's Extras Update.



FIGHTER BOMBER

Advanced Missions Disk £29.99, ST
Activision

Fighter Bomber's advanced missions disk offers a stunning 15 new missions to undertake. On top of this, some efforts have gone into enhancing the graphics from the original game, with the addition of extra landmarks like radar towers and trucks to liven up the landscape. Loading is relatively simple with the programmers, Vector Graphics, managing to pack

all the missions onto one disk.

There's even a mission design option allowing you to create your own landscapes with specific targets to either spot or destroy. It had to be said, though that at about £30, you should be sure that you're thoroughly satisfied in Fighter Bomber's concept before purchase.

AGE RATING: 8/00

SAMCOLES MISSIONS DISK

Novagen £29.99

Owners of the highly acclaimed Democles now have five extra missions to explore thanks to original author Paul Woates. The missions offer a variety of game styles from handy races against the clock through an adventure featuring another mercenary who's always one step ahead to a paranoid nightmare where, just when you thought you'd completed the game, you find the rug comprehensively pulled from under your feet.

On loading, a breakdown of each mission appears along with a step-by-step explanation and even a solution if you need it. From within the main game, each mission is loaded through

the Save Game option.

Rather than simply being more of the same, the variety of pace in the missions means that you can play whichever style of game you want. Mission 1 is a ten-minute dash.

Familiarity with Democles obviously means that you're more at home with the controls, but beginners, when presented with both the game and the extra missions should experience little difficulty getting started.

AGE RATING: 8/00



Samcoles Missions Disk on the Amiga

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"TOYOTA really is an excellent game...
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"3 D speed truly impressive ... superb fast polygons
 graphics ... Realist Races" RSE Jim Douglas.



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Drakken

Adam Morely continues from the end of level 3...

Level 4

This stage requires you to enter the frozen wastes of the north, and travel to Prince Nakhshim's Ice Palace, if you have not entered the dungeon area in Stage Three you will be unable to enter this palace. When you reach the palace go straight in. You will find that it too has been attacked and that only one servant remains. He tells you to make your way to Princess Sakhshim's palace in the west.

Level 5

The best way to reach this palace is to follow the road westward from Prince Nakhshim's palace. Go over the cross-road and keep heading directly west. After quite a while you'll reach Nakhshim's palace. Go over the cross-road and keep heading directly west. After quite a while you'll reach Nakhshim's little den of inquiry.

Enter the palace and operate the symbol to the right of the doorway. Send your warrior through the opening and wait until he or she has defeated the dragon knight. Then send the other characters through. From here you should attack the dragon with a spell and go right, into the armory. Equip your characters, if necessary and then send your warrior and scout into the main hall, followed by your protected-magic users. (Level 7).

After defeating the enemies here, enter the first door along with your scout - inside if possible - ignore the Death Lord there and enter the room below this one. You'll probably find another Death Lord here, ignore him too. Cast an attack spell or use a pop on the door in the left-hand wall and then return to the altar. Then take your warrior and scout, make them invisible (level 3) and lead them both past the Death Lords until you reach the door your scout opened last. Send the warrior through and remove combat mode. Then you need to follow the palace map until you reach the red room right at the bottom. Here you will find Princess Sakhshim. Make sure you switch on attack mode when you enter this room.

Once you've freed her it's time to leave. Remove your status, join up with your scout and priest and then leave.

Level 6

When you finish, head south until you reach the marshy tides, then follow the map until you come to Princess Haagshim's magical style palace. Enter and then quickly operate the symbol to the right of the doorway to shut off the frozen-ice. Go through into the next rooms and then send one of your characters, preferably your warrior, into the room ahead.

Follow the palace map until you reach the hall before the next room. Switch off your combat mode and make sure that you have room for another item in your den's list. Even if it means that you should not yourself of an important piece of equipment, then enter.

Inside you'll find Princess Haagshim. If you question her she will give you a list of instructions and a special weapon (+2 Drags). Once you have the weapon you should leave, return to the

Tricks 'n' Tactics

Welcome, game fiends, to another T'n'T. Over the page, you'll find an in-depth analysis of last month's topper, Prince of Persia, a further burst of Xenomorph information and a batch of mini-tips to help get you started on a host of games. But now...

others and then leave the castle.

To stay invisible, wait to get hold of another powerful weapon and some armor. To do this you should send one or two of your characters to the bottom rooms of the palace map. In the room before the dragon you will find four rectangles, set them to the numbers shown by using the operator and examine containers and then enter the dragon's lair. Be careful not to get incarcerated and go through the door in the lofts of

the room. You will now be inside a dark cave containing another Dragg, a suit of armor, a ring and a hat!

Level 7

Follow the map until you are back at Prince Nakhshim's palace again, enter it and make your way towards his chamber. Make sure your warrior is using the special Dragg weapon and make him or her invisible. Then send them into the Princess chamber and tell her.

Using this new weapon should make this relatively easy. If you fall through, simply reload from your saved position before entering the palace and have another go.

Level 8

When Nakhshim is no longer in the land of the living, leave his palace and go back to Haagshim's little mansion. Send your warrior to see her again and she will congratulate you and give you the next part of your mission.

By now this month, you'll have to fend for yourself for another 28 days, Chatters.



Shadow of the Beast 2

Now, from where we we left off last time, Daniel Vernon picks up the story...

You should now be in jail. After the guard the desk, now break out and tell the guard. Collect the key he drops. Climb up the light and jump off at the first ledge on the left. Use the key to release the prisoner. Walk right back onto the chain. Climb on the top and jump left. Now kill the guard, and pick up the ring. Run right and jump to where the prisoner is trying to escape. Use the key and then run to the right. Go out as the steps where you came in.

Go right until you reach a bridge. He should fall through it. Now run right and after the ring to the old man. Then give him the parchment. Collect the weapon and walk left. Fall down the hole into the river. After you have been through the whirlpool, run right. Drop down, run right, get onto the rope and jump onto the other side. Collect the horn. Jump back onto the rope and climb down.

Go right to the oval and ask about Galathea. Answer 'Yes' to both his questions. Now run right and kill the two creatures. Keep on going right, drop off the ledge and go right past the creature coming out of the tree stump. Use the horn, climb onto the creature's back and you'll travel to the other side of the water. Now run right into a window, down some steps and keep going until you find Sabel. Kill him with the new weapon and you'll have completed the game. Well done!

Prince of Persia Special!



For all you Princes stuck in the Sultan's dungeons, we've worked long and hard and cracked the game. So here's a step by step guide to the first four slashtin' levels.



Walk right, fall down and then walk right. Don't fall with the slab, but instead hang onto the ledge and lower your self down. Exit on the left. Run to the left, jump the chasm and land on the slightly elevated slab. They will open the portcullis. Exit through the portcullis. Run left, drop from the ledge and run right, treading on the elevated slab. Jump left over the chasm. Be careful of the falling slab. Exit through the portcullis.

Run left over the falling slab, drop down and exit left. Tread on the elevated slab to open the portcullis. Take a run up and use the falling slab over the chasm to jump over the portcullis closing slab. (See picture 2) Exit left. Jump the chasm, stand on the falling slab and fall down. Exit left. Drop down and pick up the sword. Exit right.

Remember your steps back to the second screen (before you landed after lowering your self down). Exit right. Fight the swordman. (See swordfighting tip) Exit right. Hang from the ledge to open the door. Exit through the door. (See picture 2)



Exit left carefully. Run left and fight swordman. (See picture 2) Exit left. Run left until you reach the falling slab. Take the potion if you need it, tpace through the spikes and exit left. (See picture 4) Climb onto the second level, then take a running jump at the chasm. Tap to the edge of the edge and turn left. Jump up and exit top. Climb up and exit left. Fight swordman and tread on elevated slab. Exit through open portcullis.

Run left. Jump over portcullis-closing slab and exit left. Walk left and drop down. Fight swordman. Exit left. Run left through open portcullis. Don't drink grey potion. Climb ledge and exit left. Leap over chasm and fight swordman.

Exit left. Run and exit left. Run left but slow down to get through the spikes. Jump over the chasm and exit left. Run around and jump back. Exit right. Climb onto the ledge, fight the swordman and exit left. Run past the door and exit left. Jump over the chasm and land on the elevated slab to open the door. Jump back over the chasm and exit right. Exit through the door. (See picture 5)





Picture 12



PITS AND CHASMS

When you find yourself dropping down a pit, hold down the run button and try to cling onto a passing ledge. In later levels, this sort of finesse is absolutely necessary.



Get right. Climb up twice, turn around and jump over to the right. Walk to the right ledge, turn around and climb up. Exit top.

Climb up twice, turn around and jump off the screen to the right. (See picture 10) Walk to the right and jump across the chasm. Jump across the second chasm, coming a portcullis off screen. Turn around and jump back across both chasms. (See picture 11) **START RUNNING!** Jump off the left of the screen. Run and exit left.

Run left and jump chasm. Continue to run left. Run left, jump over the chasm and go to the edge of the other side. Fall yourself off and exit left. Give yourself a 60. Climb poles if you need it. Hit left. Run left and drop down. Climb up (leaving the portcullis) and exit left. Run left, stop before the stepping blades and run through them. Drop down twice and exit bottom.

Run right, tread on the panel opening the door. Turn around and run back left. Climb up and exit top. Climb up again, and go through the blades. Get right, walk to the edge of the ledge, turn around and lower yourself down. Walk right, fight the skeleton and gradually (See picture 10) walk far right off the edge. Climb down and exit bottom. Fight the skeleton again, working far further left, to be able through the door. Exit left. Exit through the door. (See picture 13)



Picture 17



Picture 18

Walk right, tread on the elevated panel, turn around and exit left through the portcullis. Walk left, drop down, land on the elevated panel.

Open portcullis climb up and exit left. Stop on the elevated panel, jump over the next panel and exit left through the portcullis. Walk left, causing both sides to fall and climb up through open portcullis.

Exit left. Run through the teeth and drink the potion (and exit right). Jump over holes and exit to walking right. Run and exit right. Walk right and climb down. Walk right and exit. Walk right, drop down and drink the potion if you need it. Climb up and exit right. Walk right, drop down, climb up on the right, walk through the teeth and fight the swordsmen. (See picture 12)

Exit right. Walk right and climb up. Exit top. Climb up and jump right over chasms. Exit right. Run right and walk through the spikes and exit right. Fight the swordsmen and exit right. Walk right, go and collect the potion if you need it.

Exit right. Walk right, climb up and exit right. Walk right, climb down, walk through the teeth, exit left. Stop on the elevated platform and exit right. Walk back through the teeth. Climb up and exit left. Run left and jump through the gap. (See picture 13) Run left, jump over the hole and exit left. Exit through the door. (See picture 13)

Congratulations! You have now completed four levels of *The Prince*.

SPINES 'N' TEETH

Spines are found generally at the bottoms of pits. If you fall down a pit because its some spikes, you're dead. If there are spikes on the floor, however, walking through them at normal speed will, too you through. Invading the teeth is simply a matter of timing.



Picture 8



Picture 14



Picture 15



Picture 16

SWORDSMEN

In general, the swordsmen don't offer a particularly stiff challenge. They level, indeed, in combat you're in tricky positions, forcing you backwards-off ledges and onto spikes etc. The only really tough swordsmen is found at the end of level 5. The best policy to adopt is crawl-or-cauter. Wait for the guard to make his move and then strike. After a successful hit, advance and strike again immediately. Don't stand around twinging your sore unnecessarily.



Operation Stealth

From where we left off last time:

The Final Stretch

You will see her in a men's toilet. Operate toilet door, take ammo boxes, examine the floor & you will find levers. Use the levers on the soldier. Take the napkin. Use the napkin on soldier. Take clothes. Examine sink and take the glass. Exit the room, go left and down, enter the room in the center. Operate all doors & examine them. You will find a clock stamp and some more faces.

Use lock on John. Exit room, go right. Now enter the room in the middle. Examine clothes. Take invisible instructions. Use glass on fountain, operate the garbage dump. You'll now find a Metroid. Exit room, go right and up. This will now be asked to fetch a glass of water. Go up the screen and left until you come to the room in which you feed up the soldier. Enter the room on the right.

When you get into this room, there will be an officer. If you look carefully you will see a stamp on his desk. Stand next to it. Use the glass on officer: when his back is turned, take the stamp on his desk and exit the room. Now go to the room where you found the Metroid & mission instructions. Now examine around the area until you find an inked.

Use stamp on inked. Now use inked as invisible instructions. Operate cigarette case. Now examine all cigarettes in the case. Now operate the blue orb. You will be put left with the super. Now use cog paper on glass. You will now get a fingerprint. Now exit the room and go up to the point where you were asked to fetch a glass of water. Use fingerprint in fingerprint B. The door will open when you walk in front of it.

Now go right through the door. On the next screen use the authorized mission on the mailbox. The electric barrier will now go. Go through the door. Go through the door. Go to the trash can. Use the electric cable on the electric lock it. Operate the video.

Use the razor on the busman. At the post examine the cigarettes and make sure you know which one is the real one. Go through the door.

Prepare yourselves for the final installment next time.



Xenomorph

Level 12

This is the last dark corridor that you'll come across. That is why the aliens are so sad, silly. Get the rocket launcher. Don't use it yet, as you need all its firepower on the next level's super alien. Go to L and go up.

Level 11

The alien here are amusing. On your scanner you see lots of them. On screen, nothing is visible. That is a trap and kill them when they come. Find the tank (L-R). Look at (R), bullets and then your lasers, and then pick up the alien until the space tank guarded.

You're now on your way home.

Level 12

Go up with Q

Level 10

Go up using Q

Level 9

Recharge your weapons. Get your cards. Find the

Console Corner

Over the last month we've been inundated with tips and cheats for console systems and so, we proudly tug back the velvetene curtains, tap our gavel, ring our bell and comb our hair in order to declare Console Corner well and truly, "open"!

NINTENDO GAMEBOY

Castlevania Adventure

Level 1:

Collect a powered-up whip. Now shoot the torch with the fireball and the creep will fall to the ground.

Level 2:

Run and jump across all three moving platforms, while avoiding the temptation of using your whip while you're in the air.

Level 3:

Wait for the ceiling to fall then hit the lower four times, make sure the last hit is very late.

animometer unit. Take the animometer. Go up using H.

Level 8

Go up using M. Don't forget your chips.

Level 7

Go up with L.

Level 5

Get a piece of animometer and go up using L.

Level 3

Get a piece of animometer and go up using Q.

Level 2

If there is an alien left, by your large lasers will setting three...

Level 1

You're back. Get rid on the animometers. Put all the chips on their respective cards. Insert the cards at the right places. Insert the CD and fix data in your computer. Press the button and wait for the end sequence.

Congratulations!

Thanks to Hans Geel from Holland for these tips.

Slightly run back to the fence, jump and whip it back to the orange.

Thanks to Masaru Kawano of South Hambarade for these tips.

SEGA MEGADRIVE

Space Harrier 2

On the title screen, press **MR & C** to access the music selection. The pieces of music correspond to the levels.

Golden Axe

On the character select screen, hold down but-to-n-it and pull-down and left together to reveal sword select.

Thunderforce

In option mode, press **A** and **START** together at the title screen.

Super Shinobi

On the waterfall stage, where the logs fall horizontally, move to the end of the ledge, jump and come back and fire so the logs go down with it. If you hear a "crack" sound, jump on it a tip and jump back onto the ledge.

Batman

When you reach the first extra life symbol, jump across and get it. Go up to the top half of the moving platforms and to back down. Another life has appeared. This can be repeated up to six times, and it's worth noting that this can be done in other parts of the game with batwings on.

Phobos

Finishing the game in advance mode, don't let the machine off. Restart the game and you can now play in expert mode.

Thanks to James Dobson for these.



Poseidon Planet Eleven

For you C64 owners currently flourishing in Poseidon, Ian Thomson from Scotland offers this rather excellent map.

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM

Thunderblade II

When you get the game over message, press button 2, down & right at the same time to get two-continue option.

Space Harrier

To enter the usual test, press right, left, down, right. When the game over message appears on the screen, press up, up, down, down left, right, left, right, down up-down up. Don't touch either button 1 or 2 as on the last up you will start where you died with right-continue option.



Wonderboy II

To get out of the labyrinth use these directions at the side sections: **DDRL, DRRUUULL, L, D, R, D, R, D, D, L**.

Galaxy Force

Go to the planets in the order: Green, White, Blue and Red.

Captain Silver

To continue when the words Game Over are on the screen press up, left and then both-but-tons.

Chopflifer

When you die, press the buttons very fast and you should have collected all the hostages.

Afterburner

Turn on and press pause exactly 100 times. The dials won't start and when you die you can continue up to stage seventeen.

Thanks to Andy Goodall for these tips.

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Rats!

Sometimes. Not knowing what will happen next. Or even when it will happen. Fear of making your best decision. Terror that it will be your last if you get it wrong.

Unfortunately impending these emotions has made all but the most original software sellers. To offer the computer gamer player is presented with the whole picture. There are no dark corners in which monsters may dwell.

The Rats was a notable exception. A late entrant into computing by book publisher Hodder and Stoughton, the 1985 release combined strategy and adventure to capture the mood of James Herbert's gory horror classic.

SET UP A DREADSCAPE

The cinematic, animated title sequence established the sense of foreboding. A scuffling rat's eyes were caught in the beam of a torch, setting the scene for the horrors to come.

Hours indeed, but not quite immediately for The Rats is a somewhat plodding game, and the first persons you meet in Finkin, Under-Secretary of State and the only man given the job of allocating resources to deal with the growing rodent menace. This is done on a map of London, which also serves to indicate whenever reports of rats arise.

Tue to Herbert's novel, the government is slow to provide emergency finances, so at first your strategies are severely limited. RatKil is a specialist pest extermination organisation and you can also draw on the fire brigade and police. Eventually, as attacks increase, the army becomes available.

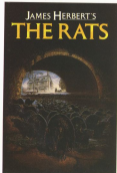
Each service has a variety of weapons to choose from. Nobody can be given a protective suit while the police can be allocated dogs, riot shields and rifles. RatKil personnel can use chemical gas while the bomber have high-pressure water hoses and axes and the army has guns and flame throwers.

You also need to take research and development into account. This allows you to investigate where the rats are coming from; how to defend humans against the creature; how to kill the rats; and the biology of the menace. As more information becomes available the buffs might show sonic locators, sonic accelerators, electric chat rods or anti-Rats gas. It's left to you to discover how effective these weapons are.

You aren't given time to explore your options before an alarm sounds and you're into your first rat attack. These encounters are presented as mini adventures, loaded randomly from a selection of scenarios. Each starts with you being told your surroundings and which of Herbert's characters you are.

One of the neatest things about the game design is that it's entirely controlled by joystick or cursor keys. Commands use menus consisting of the verbs and nouns

Deep below the Hall Of Fame lies the mausoleum devoted to horror software. John Minson descends a hair-raising encounter with The Rats!



which are relevant to the situation. Not only are you spared the hassle of searching for the right word, you might also find the Run Away option you need is suddenly available.

Running away is indeed often the smartest, if not the only way, to survive. However if you consistently avoided encounters, there will be no new information for Finkin to use as the basis for his campaigns. Which means moving into ever more dangerous areas as the real-time information appears on screen. You can afford to lose central characters to a grisly death but the lives of key Hems, scientist Howard and Cookins, have to be preserved at all costs.

As the game switches between strategic rooms and over those dangerous adventure encounters, you gather information which allows the R&D boys to discover the rats' lair and to develop the necessary weapons to destroy them. We also have to keep track of where sightings are occurring in order to discover the secret runs used by the rodents.

The use of real-time action keeps you on your toes. If you don't act fast as Hinkins, you won't be prepared for the individual encounters. And those dramatic incidents carefully plot Herbert's techniques to develop a high level of horror. No punches are pulled when it came to describing the attack on Paula Blakey's baby, for example.

Hodder wasn't the only book publisher at this time to dabble in software but it never became a force to challenge the Osborn and USI Gods. Perhaps because it wasn't part of the software establishment it didn't bring preconceptions about existing games and what a game should be to the design stage. The result was a novel program with an elegant control system which generated a realising atmosphere.

HALL OF FAME

How does a game qualify for the Hall of Fame? It may have been a best seller in its day or overlooked and undervalued. But one thing for certain, it led the field, either creatively or technically. Games don't qualify, however competent, and it's got testing appeal. It's the program you still want to play after years - not weeks. So if you've got any suggestions, drop us a line.

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New Year - new machine? If your heart is set on buying a new set of clips to help '91 go with a bang, we've got the specs, the breakdowns, the details and the go on every 18-bit machine on the market. Nice buyers should read thoroughly.
- 99 Direct Line**
...to YOUR errors. If you own one of the ten major releases or classics, there's a section for your computer here as ACE correspondents talk man to machine...
- 111 Hot Off The Shelf**
The finest releases of the last three months, and a couple of slightly older classics served up in a delicate creamy dressing.
- 117 The ACE Diary**
Our monthly guide to what's in where and what's out when.
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Put Winterville with her regular section for dedicated adventurers.
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Software for virtually nothing. Available for people who aren't afraid to share. What a caring society we live in.
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ACE CHARTS

The ACE Charts give you the definitive list of top scoring games EVERY MONTH - as reviewed by ALL British games magazines.

DO YOU WIN LAST MONTH?

The winner, reader was unfortunately nominated in splitting votes! In fact, and completely with no votes. For example, 100,000 spotted *Outrun* for the PC but will have to wait. **Dragon's Lair** (of *Dragon's Lair*) however, lots of people spotted *Powermanger* for the Amiga prior to *Andromeda*. *Master of Deceit* and *Sea Patrol* (*Blizzard*) on the Spectrum. *Intergalactic*. *Robot Wars* of *Compton*. Finally, on the CPC, dozens of reviews spotted *Sea Lord* - including a surprising number of scores of value from *Sea Lord* also including some from *King of the Hill*.

New month's main highlighting improvements to the best market page - don't mistake them for a regular drawing for the following month's best charts, or by comparing them with our own charts or our best review ratings (which become the ACE Chart positions) early into any different

What you can win

You'll get a mystery game worth up to £25 for your machine if you can pick out NEXT MONTH'S top chart winner. Get all five right in any category and you'll get £750 worth of software! *Key instructions are opposite.*

THE STOCKMARKET

In addition to our games charts, we also have a bit of fun with the figures each month when we produce the ACE Stockmarket. It's a list of the top 25 software as determined by the ratings these games are currently receiving. You can see their fortunes rising and falling in each issue.

Having followed all the games reviewed in the latest issue of computer magazines, we calculate the average mark that each publisher received for every one of its games, in any format. This is the rating that you see in the second column. So, for example, if the company is great at creating 16-bit games but lousy up to 8-bit conversions, that will pull down the average mark, even if you can see one of its titles leading on the Amiga. It is the 'share price' for the page. If all the games are excellent, or if the company has just one brilliant program doing the rounds of the sector, it will consequently have a high rating.

The last column shows how well a company's games have fared compared to the Software Index. This single figure represents the average review mark (expressed as a percentage) that all games, all formats, received during the last month. It's a quick guide to how good the current crop of titles is, and each company's index score shows how well their games compare to the rest. For example, in this month's chart, *Sea Lord* is current winner, but even a 68 percentage points above average - according to the industry's reviewers.

We print only the top 25 companies each month, so that, we keep tabs on all of them, but you don't need to read through a list of over 100 names in every issue. Occasionally, a new company will enter the listings, in which case its name is marked with an asterisk.

Finally, we take care that the information here is genuinely useful. So that you, we don't count companies which have only received a single solitary review.

Software Index: 77.42
(including scores of around 75.0 over the Christmas period).

Andromeda	82.00	+1.00	80.00	Outrun	81.00	-1.00	82.00
Andromeda	80	+0	84.00	Outrun	81.00	+0.00	81.1
Blizzards	80.40	-1.20	11.00	Andromeda	80.00	-0.70	81.0
Blizzards	80.0	-0.80	10.00	System 2	79	+0	10.0
Compton	80.27	-1.0	9.00	Blizzards	79	-0	10.0
Compton	80.00	+0.70	8.00	Blizzards	79	-1.00	10.0
Dragon's Lair	80.00	+0.00	8.11	Sea Lord	79.00	+0.00	8.00
Digital Magic	80.0	-0.20	8.00	Blizzards	79.1	+5.1	1.00
Dragon's Lair	80	+0	8.00	Blizzards	79.00	+0.00	1.19
Dragon's Lair	80.00	+0.11	7.99	Sea Lord	79.0	+0.00	1.10
Virgin	80.00	+0.10	8.00	Sea Lord	79.00	+0.00	1.01
Blizzards	80.00	-1.70	8.00	Compton	79.00	+0.00	0.90
Andromeda	80.00	+0	8.00	Blizzards	79.00	-0.00	0.90

AMIGA

Powermanger	Electronic Arts	89.00
Killing Game Show	Pygmalion	89
Leica Turbo Sprint	Compton	88.00
Sea Lord	Compton	87.00
Colours	Image Works	87.00

Powermanger retains its number one slot from last month - and even increases its lead over the runner-up.

C64

Golden Axe	Virgin	89
Sea Lord	Compton	87.00
Blizzards	Compton	86.00
Blizzards	Compton	86.00
Blizzards	Compton	86.00

Sea Lord along C64 chart with lead over original games, showing off the budget image that it's had for most of the year here at ACE so makes *Blizzards* 2 deserve the number 2 slot, though.

AMSTRAD CPC

Shadow of the Beast	Compton	89
Blizzards	Compton	88
Sea Lord	Compton	88
Time Machine	Blizzards	88
Tiger Road	Compton	79

Completions are always good value, and Compton's TNT moves to number one. Nice to see that Sea Lord, highly acclaimed on 16-bit machines, has converted well to the CPC.

IBM PC

King Commander	Virgin	89.00
Blizzards	Blizzards	88.0
Sea Lord	Blizzards	88.00
Blizzards	Blizzards	88.00
Blizzards	Blizzards	88

Blizzards' STLL here and this is Blizzards' second month in the top five. Early days yet for Blizzards' advertising. Sea Lord!

WHAT THE FIGURES ABOVE MEAN...

First, of course, you've got the game. Then the software house and - in the last column - the average score (converted to a percentage with typical ACE precision to two decimal places) the game received in ALL reviews during the last month. Don't forget that the review ratings are taken from all UK magazines, not just ACE, so we don't necessarily agree with some of the judgement here, but all review ratings are, to a certain extent, subjective.

SPECTRUM AND ST CHARTS
OPPOSITE

HOW TO ENTER

STEP ONE

Fill a postcard - or write your entry on the back of an envelope. Enter your name and address, a daytime telephone number if you have one, and the Round Number.

STEP TWO

Put in your age and which machine you own, but it does not matter.

STEP THREE

Complete the machine charts. Then, using our knowledge of the games scores, try to predict which games will come top of the six machine-specific charts. Finally, enter on your postcard.

- The top game for the Spectrum
- The top game for the C64
- The top game for the EPIC
- The top game for the BBC/PC
- The top game for the Amiga
- The top game for the ST

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ENTER A SUGGESTION FOR EVERY MACHINE! You may enter for one, several or every machine if you wish.

STEP FOUR (OPTIONAL)

You can also try to predict which company will lead the top of each month's Stackmarket by filling out the pages. Enter on the card. The top entries will be... names of company.

STEP FIVE (OPTIONAL)

If you want to get for the jackpot £250 prize,

then predict six of the previous categories and try to predict the top 100 entries for each month instead of just the top one. There list on which category you're predicting for - it can be either the Stackmarket or any of the machine categories in Step Three. **RM500000 - PLUS CAN THEN SUBMIT ONE POSTCARD PER YEAR!**

STEP SIX

Post the card (with a stamp) to us to give us before the top closing date for this round (5) or January. The address is:

**ACE Stackmarket
205-82 Flamingo Lane
London**

STICKERS!

The first correct forecast for each category taken out of the list wins the prize. If you get more than one entry correct, you'll be entered in further draws for each category, thus increasing your chances of winning prizes.

THIS IS ROUND 15

Each month competition has a round number so that we can correctly identify entries. You'll find the round number on your postcard otherwise your entry has nothing announced correctly.

THE RULES

- Complete the card immediately, leaving it in a post.
- Only machines included on our lists are eligible for prediction, other than a case of AMI Magician or eligible for entry.
- Only entries per household. Proof of postage not used as proof of delivery.
- The correct prediction is defined as by software lists as correct, but not correct that an individual entry either to predict that the game will be within scoring.

ATARI ST

Speedball 2	Image Works	100.00
Nine Lives	ABC	90.00
MTV Santa Barbara	Microgen	80.00
Demoral	Electronic Arts	60.00
Team Yankee	Empire	50.00

Important things you'll have on Speedball 2 (also in with a bullet in number one, MT) Santa Barbara has been a long time coming, but was obviously worth the wait...

SPECTRUM

8 Eyes	MTI Digital	100
Star Trek: The Motion Picture	Image Works	90
Mean	Genem	70
Walk Dangerous 2	Micro Style	60
Pong	Genem	50

It seems slightly ironic that a two year old budget program has beaten Puffins to the number one slot. 800 deserves its plaudits however, and Pong is a real title score.



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SOFTWARE

Building Software Base: A very wide base exists in all fields except games.

Current Releases: Adequate, though largely of US origin and in the business or B/B field.

Sales: Very low outside titles but plenty of local B/B-type adventures.

Graphics: Lots of excellent software for those interested in CBT publishing.

Music: Very well supported for MSX software - but it's expensive to buy.

Propriety: As always, restricted - especially in business and B/B.

Software Loading: Quick and reliable.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: Generally the best - when we only deal through dealerships. Ask for a salesman for best.

Second Hand Availability: Better market exists in older models but there are few available.

Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Apple offers AppleCare - "insurance" you take out to cover the early years after the guarantee has run out.

ATARI ST



Models: Atari 500/514M, 1000/1050/1050E, Mega 1/2/3, Sharp

Package: 512 and 1024 frame buffers built with built-in 3D chips. Mega versions have separate keyboards. Power Pack includes 500/1050 with 1024 pins, joystick and 1024 of "hard" software then "Discovery" pack includes similar value software to Power pack but with a 17MB and an additional frame.

Hardware: 500/514M and 1000/1050 (1024 pins, Mega 1/2/3) machines expand internally to 2MB.

Processor: Motorola 68000

Recommended Retail Price:

500/1050 (Power Pack) £295

500/514M (Discovery Pack) £295

1000/1050 £495, Sharp NA

Cartoids: Atari £75 £344

IN BRIEF

Excellent as a general purpose home machine for games, small business and productivity. It's the number one choice for MSX machines. The ST's price will give it a slight edge over the graphically more advanced Amiga. The new baby ST - Italy - is topped by Atari to beat the musician's PC-XT clone it is a complete 2MB or 4MB ST with sound chip and more memory in a hard disk.

ATARI ST

ATARI ST

ATARI ST

ATARI ST

ATARI ST

ATARI ST

ATARI ST

HARD SELL

The upgrade path is long and filled with potential pitfalls. Here, as part of our reader service, is the fully updated ACE guide to the machines you're most likely to want which will help you find the one best suited to your needs.

Due to space restrictions, this guide is run in two chapters. 16-bit machines this month and models next. When space permits we'll print both. Good hunting!

ADORN ARCHIMEDES

Models: Archimedes 250, 5000, 250 40, 40

Package: Keyboard, mouse and disk. Keyboard mouse and drive plus monitor (optional or manual)

Memory: 5000 14.9K, 250 15MB, 250 40 495, 495, 495, 495

Processor: Acorn-A68000

RAM: Prices range from £789.91 for 14.9K down to £299.99 for A440 with colour monitor

Cartoids: Acorn 5000 240/288

IN BRIEF

On the cutting edge of micro technology, Acorn's ARM is about the same thing this side of a Cing. This eye-catching machine - although eye-catching versions since the introduction of the A68000 - still looks a good game software base and a lot left to the imagination.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 320 x 256 or 640 x 256, 400 x 312 available with multi-line monitors.

Colors: 60K

Software: From more up to 254-255 x 312 or 14-64K x 312.

PC Text:

Monitor Output: Screen composite video colour @ 60K x 312.

Monitor Supplied: Depends on package bought.

Monitor Options: Acorn dedicated

14 inch monitor (no colour), 17 inch high top model. Multi-line colour.

Speakers: 1

Speed: Slowing.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Good

Music: With extra hardware.

Screen Output: Yes

Performance: 16 channels (2 channels 240K, 8 channels, 1 internal speaker)

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 5.5 inch - 800K

Disk Price: From £1.26 upwards.

Disk Performance: Good and fast.

Keyboard: 80 keys with programmable auto-repeat. Early keyboards have a cheap feel given the quality of the machine.

Mouse: Available. 3 buttons mouse to support the program.

Interface: 25 pin D parallel, 9 pin mouse, 8 pins serial, RS-485/RS-422, RS-485 video, RS-422 expansion port, IRC 100-video output, 80 interface.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: 100 very limited. Some games available most software is for productivity and business.

Current Releases: See above.

Games: Most famous are Darwin (Pilot) and Computer. But there have been several impressive line-off titles released recently.

Graphics: Professionals only used.

Software: Excellent packages available.

Music: 16K graphics, but developers are creative.

Propriety: Limited. From the cheap or mostly fast if tough competing with MS and Amiga.

Software Loading: Very reliable.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: As ACP

Second Hand Availability: Not great, some 50K and 10K starting to appear (but expect to pay for them).

Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Return to factory machines desirable.

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points.

HARDWARE

Disk Formats: 1.2M—1000000
1.44M—1,300,000 bytes

Disk Prices: \$10—13.00

Disk Performance: Average

Most PC owners also buy hard disks. A large amount of PC application software refuses to work unless you have a hard disk.

Highlighted: Almost as many variations as there are colors. Prefer the 40- or extended-80 layouts to the XT layout since it easier to use.

Apple/Atari/Amiga: Neither supplied is standard. The better choice

include a mouse or at least a mouse port, especially since IBM's AT/XT systems introduced the feature more popular.

SOFTWARE

Installing Software Easy: Most current software did major software houses never produce for the PC, with many now supporting the superior VGA needs.

Games: Most of the Amiga/XT titles appear on PC version or later.

Graphics: Given the right graphics adapter, the PC handles graphics and the software is usually excellent.

On a CGA/ET, the graphics often no matter how good the software is. **Music:** Unexpensive/ET's graphics. However, add-on boards offer some of the best sound you'll hear on home computers.

Highlighted: The PC is the standard champion — it offers full-byte mapping & carries on getting faster and better all the time. This is aided by Intel constantly improving the processor and the rest can't help but develop better equipment.

Software Loading: Fast and will allow any fast non-hard-disk.

BUYTIPES

Best Buy Drive: Watch out for package deals from large chains and mail order companies. If you don't know too much about PCs, go for a name you know.

Second Hand Availability

Common but be careful you do not get a ragged-out monitor/keyboards.

Maintenance: Usually a year's guarantee — but competition has forced the price of maintenance contracts down to affordable levels. This often means that they're machines worth for free.

HARDWARE UPGRADE

The big fear of most when upgrading is that your new machine will become obsolete within a few months of purchase — even worse, the company manufacturing the machine will go out of business. No such fears with the machines on offer here.

Current 3.5-in technology is unlikely to change for at least five years. That's because although the leap from 5.25- to 3.5-in architecture represents a quantum leap in power, the upgrade from 10-bit to 32-bit is nowhere near as dramatic in processing terms. 32-bit tech-

nology, however, would generate significantly higher performance, but without a really worthwhile increase in functionality.

And there are no choices of Apple, Atari, Commodore, Amiga or Acorn going under in the foreseeable future.

For that reason, the PC, the Amiga, and the PC are probably here to stay for some considerable time, so you can choose between them for the Amiga and Apple) without worry.

Of course, there is one other consideration: consoles. Our view of ACE (and we've said it

before and we'll say it again) is very definitely still. Consoles necessarily offer greater creative gaming possibilities and the forthcoming CD-ROM units and smart cards should bring even out some of the data storage problems that make these machines unattractive for data-hungry consumers. However, the added functionality of a computer with keyboard and expansion options remains, in our opinion, essential to the state of the art gaming.

The inevitable conclusion is this: that you need a console Amiga or 3.5-in computer. And when it comes to consoles, we only really have two strong recommendations at present, the

Nintendo Gameboy and the Sega MegaDrive (see our article recommending this unit and comparing the opposition in issue 26 of ACE).

To help you with the console choice, however, next month we'll see the ACE board that Commodore bundles with all the Euro and Figure you want about the various consoles. Be there!



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Command HQ, (Grand Strategy)	(Micrograce)	IBM	£39.95
Railroad Tycoon (see Strat + Review)	(Micrograce)	IBM	£34.95
Silent Service II (Sub Simulation)	(Micrograce)	IBM	£34.95
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Harpoon (Modern Naval)	(SSI)	IBM, Amiga 1MB	£39.95
Harpoon Battle Set (All North Atlantic Convoy)	(SSI)	IBM	£24.95
Harpoon Editor (Editor for Harpoon)	(SSI)	IBM	£29.95

This is a small selection of titles now available a more detailed description of these and many more can be found in our catalogue.



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Three new official launches from 1989 landed on our desks this month. And what a wide spectrum of gaming styles they represent. There's Aerial Assault, an out-and-out shoot-em-up. There's World Cup Italia '90 for sports fans and there's World of Illusion II offering a new role-playing level for Master system owners.

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

When World Cup Italia '90 was converted onto home machines, after being reasonably well received in the arcades, the immediate objective had to overcome what the competition from the towering great of sports games, Kick Off.

Unfortunately, the comparisons weren't especially kind, with World Cup falling down in all the areas where Kick Off did so well.

Now the game is on the Master, it seems to be much more at home. It was never intended to be a viable alternative of soccer, more a

knockabout flavour of the game. Indeed, there aren't even enough players on each team. The degree of fitness which you have over the ball is at best limited and at worst laughable.

However, the speed of the game, the swift switch-over from player to player and the 30 penalty shoot out offer something up for support in Kick Off. The penalty section itself is a great feat, with you and an opponent (computerised or formed online against each other) in a high-speed battle of reactions.

AERIAL ASSAULT

Fans of Mr Squasher will find no surprises here, just an entertaining horizontal scrolling shoot 'em up. An interesting horizontal scrolling shoot 'em up. Your basic, medium or hard mission is detailed at your HUD computer, and it's off into the wide blue yonder to do some killing. Ignoring enemy jets drops power-up speed, multi-directional fire, bombs etc) and you must take a wide variety of enemy attacks before reaching your target, while the presentation may seem a little hackneyed, the gameplay is sound.

ULTIMA IV

Lord Minkid, the wise and compassionate ruler of Britannia wishes to erase the legacy left behind by three evil lord. And he's out to recruit you to do the job.

Those unfamiliar with the Ultima games should play this one in the shops before buying, as it may not be to your taste. Even experts of the genre will find the redesigned text narrative difficult to read.

Mike Hughes

DIRECT LINE

To YOUR micro...

Monthly machine specific columns for the users of the ten most popular machines, written from a personal viewpoint by other users...

MEGADRIVE



While you've never competition for all you Megadrive owners this month, but there's still a lot in a moment...

EXCLUSIVE CITY

Last month's ACE will be of particular interest to Megadrive owners. Not to get an exclusive magazine with some state-side programmers who have been working away on some super-rare cartridge entertainment in secret until now!

If a searching exclusive, we get the guys to do the dirt on their recent games. We can't take them yet, but just wait until next month - you'll be amazed!

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Of late worded 16-bit machine owners with games like Populous and Ivy 900. And now they're getting ready to turn their hand to the Megadrive. They say they want to maximise their coding potential and marry it with the superb

capabilities of the Megadrive. The next issue of Ace will be carrying a sneak preview of their new releases, along with a lengthy comparison between the style of EA's state-packed simulation software and how it will convert onto a console system.

MEGADRIVE COMPETITION

Everyone knows that there's nothing finer to start the New Year like a whopping bundle of free software. And us, you'll be pleased to hear that simply by answering a couple of short form quiz, you can win a fabulous bag of Megadrive loot. Not to going away £200 worth of software to the first person out of the hat who has answered all of the questions correctly and has written the best phrase at the end.

So, it couldn't be more simple, just read the questions below, fill in your answers on the coupon and send it (on the back of an envelope) to: ACE/ACE MEGADRIVE COMP, Priority Court, 30-32 Farnborough Lane, London EC3R 3AL. The competition closes on February 28th.

THE QUESTIONS

1) What was the Megadrive called in the USA of course?
50 00
50 00
1000

2) How many bits has the central processor at 16
16 18
11 2020

3) What colour are the Gray Insect Megadrives, available through mail order?

- 4) Gray
- 5) Black
- 6) Silver

THE TIEBREAKER

Complete (in no more than twenty words) the following phrase:
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To: Breaker

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Mike Hughes

AMIGA



Xmas is due for another year. Did you get the games you wanted? I finally got a limited version of Electronic Art's Powermanager - and it's brilliant. Congratulations to programmers taking.

TOTAL THEATRE

Well, I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it. Ocean have finally released Total Recall for home, and it should have led the charges by the time you read this, just in time for the video showing. Because of ACE's tight pre-Amiga deal the it just seemed getting into this issue - we had hoped to do a big Photocopy-Recall special - but it did definitely be getting the full ACE treatment last time.

However, I can give you my early opinions on it, though I should point out that I'm only played through the first two levels so far, should not be thought of as being a definitive review!

My first impressions were mixed. The music,

by David Whittaker - computer music maestro who recently wrote the tunes for Shadow of the Beast 2 - is excellent and suits the nature of the game and fits perfectly. Unfortunately the pre-game intro sequence is very disappointing due to the fact that Ocean are not allowed to copy Arnie's likeness, unless it comes directly from the film (i.e. the poster or still). Therefore the title in the intro and the game doesn't look anything like the man himself. A pity.

The first level takes place just after Quaid's disastrous visit to Rekal. The lovely Colleague's men chase Quaid as he searches for pieces of helpful equipment on a multi-directional scrolling network of platforms and lifts. Luckily there's a gun to help Quaid defend himself. This level's incredibly tough, due to the tonnes of badasses and the slow firing rate of the gun.

Survive this and you can try to escape in Johnny Cab. You look down on a road, and can aim the cab on a road scrolling from left to right, jam packed with other cabs and nasty alien cars that fire at you. I wasn't immediately taken with the level - it looks very primitive and is highly reminiscent of the Battle levels in the Best version of Ocean's Datsun. However it does grow on you and it's quite addictive.

Overall I'm a little disappointed by Recall. For a start, Ocean seem to have jumbled up the plot - in the first level you're looking for the suitcase, which surely Quaid doesn't find until after the Cab Chase? The game itself seems very derivative of other Ocean levels and it's very tough in places. That said, there's a fairly steep wage in a case back and play again. Give it a go! by in the

shop before you buy or read for the full review next month.

IT'S TOPPER TASTICE

Soak, soak, what's got it hot so far are, I'm talking about the pasticcios in the higher levels in Gremlin's attractive and original shoot 'em up Venus - The Fly Trap. So here they are:

- Level 2: MARIJO
- Level 3: COCOGAS
- Level 4: POPPUDES
- Level 5: PERDES
- Level 6: SATYRE
- Level 7: CYGNEO
- Level 8: PIRALE

My word, just the sort of pasticcios you'd have a jolly good chance of guessing, aren't they? Thanks to Sigl Goods of Beaker in Australia for these...

Yes, yet another letter from down-under! I think most readers learn from the endpapers that the national Airways. Sigl also tells me that you can jump to the next level of Domark's Reigen's Play by hitting down the spacebar and the 'I' key at the same time. As Sigl says, it makes the game pretty boring but there you go!

And a final 'hello' to Mark Madman's Send from Malta. He's one of the bonies who spent in a jail soldier to Progress: Shadow of the Beast 2. Sorry, no prizes for first place: you Russell Lazzari and Philip Keeler got there before you all too 'I'm TI'. But at least you got a name mention, as Madman? To go see yinchoo-backs to all your mates!

■ Ben Vignola

ATARI ST



For this month's review of new Atari ST software we're concentrating on MIDI-based music products; there have been so many in the last couple of months that an update is very needed! For pros, Steinberg's Cubase 5.0.1 sequencer is now available; the main update is the long-awaited addition of a sequencer.

Other new features include 16-bit interactive Piano Synthesis. This allows a musical phrase like "ritard" through a series of processors using programmable hardware and rhythmic, and altering the note length, position, density, pitch, velocity and harmonics, modified cyclically by "Last Frequency Oscillator", each with its own frequency and amplitude, then added together. Cubase 5.0.1 costs £300-000, but there's now a cut-down Pro-compatible version for the 1 meg ST. Cubase.

It's still pricey at £285, but has most of the features of Cubase, including 16-bit tracks, 16P Visual Song Processing, MIDI multitrack

ing, human sync, key and pitch bending, multiple MIDI channel recording, chord recognition and so on; it doesn't lack something in some of the more advanced MIDI management functions. Holly Research's Trackman is also up to 82.5, and you can also get a demo disk of this well-regarded sequencer, complete except for saving facilities (and it crashes after 20 minutes); also included on the disk is a fully-working patch library for the Roland D50, and over 500 patches for Yamaha 8-operator synths such as the DX7.

Take Control's excellent Atari ST sequencer Music Publisher now has full MIDI implementation including note data input, playback of scores, and the ability to import MIDI disk files. The program also allows import of graphics files in bit image and metafile formats, making the display options more flexible - scores can also be enlarged and reduced. ROMOS has announced the most professional music DTP package yet for the ST - Passport Edition. It's based on ideas developed in the Master Tracks Pro sequencer, and can intelligently transcribe and print staff scores from Master Tracks Pro, Trax, and 81.1. It sequencers, and MIDI standard files.

Doore requires a mouse monitor and 1 meg memory, and can handle up to 64 musical "parts" at a time, using up to four voices per staff. Cost is £425. For budgeting musicians, Stein's Trax, an entry-level ST sequencer at £99, it looks very similar to Master Tracks Pro, it's file-compatible and has the same 64-track Trax Sheet with functions such as MIDI channelisation, program numbering, naming, mute, solo and

loop; the graphics Song Editor, with cut/copy/paste functions; Step Editor, with auto-and-drag event editing; the Tempo Conductor; MIDI data files; 243 FPOK resolution and tape-transfer style recording controls.

The most enjoyable music software program around is PC Music's Bandwidth, distributed in the UK by Zone. Band uses a computer-to-processor system that the "sequencer" options do for home keyboards; it provides a bass, chord and drum accompaniment for you to play a melody line.

You can take the program to work with the required synths, then assign MIDI channels to the bass, chord and drum parts. To write a song you accommodate, just type chord letters and rhythm into the keyboard display grid, and select Play.

All familiar chord types are supported, and you can change the tempo, number of repeats and such like using dialogue boxes. An update available shortly (10 to be implemented) includes multiple styles per song, tempo and patch changes, all of which can be saved as part of a disk file; variable time signatures; MIDI 16/88 option and a 'pro' facility. A more extensive update available later includes user-definable styles; you can buy Bandwidth for an incredibly low £45, or £65 complete with two "MIDI Piano Books" each featuring 250 files of classic songs, normally £20 each separately, or £25 together. 2-voice Soundboards - 0993 895464 (note: Soundboards - 0461 01191) MCMUSIC - 061-563 0662 Tase Coaster - 0123-708 60852one Distribution - 081-788 5954

■ Chris Jackson

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THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT DURING 1990. WE WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

GAMEBOY

Last month's top team to go with a little, judging by the buying racks we found ourselves with around ourselves. (Said racks, that is)



TURTLE POWER

These heroes in a half-shell seem to be a popular choice for handheld gamers, picking a double lot of top JP titles means that *Beatup Level 2* (game) can be defeated here. As soon as you land in the room at the end of level 2, jump up as *Beatup* runs in then the left. He will fire his laser to use your weapon to absorb the beams. Jump up and command over him so he runs to the left of the screen. He will turn and fire, so absorb the beams with your weapon and strike him when he approaches. He will retreat, fire and punch. Carry out the same procedure four times to defeat him.

Bonus levels can be obtained easily. *Beatup* game 2: In the first level, you've got to go right until you come across the first set of three barrels. Then you must jump in between the second and third barrel to destroy the second one. Now walk in the direction of the first barrel. Four turns

will flash and you'll enter the bonus stage.

Bonus game 2 can be reached by walking right until you reach a piece of pipe above your head. Here, jump up to the water. Don't jump up. Walk until you reach the wall. Again, the tube will flash and you'll enter the bonus stage.

Bonus game 3 is found at the first level of the sewer stage 4. You have to walk until you reach the first set of bats. Now jump into the water and walk under the pipe in the wall.

CODES CODES CODES

Christoph Schneider from Germany has been brewing away on *Paladin* and has kindly produced a massive set of passwords. Ready?

002 YOSHINO	009 SHIMAZU
004 GOTAGOTO	009 OOHISOKO
006 FURUICHI	007 YUKIYAMA
008 ZENISOKO	009 ZENI DOKI
010 TAKEMINE	011 HIRAYAMA
012 DARUJI	013 FURUKAWA
014 NAGAIWA	015 YOSHINO
016 MOTOYOSHI	017 TOMOYOJI
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032 YOSHIDA	033 SHIMAZU
034 NISHIMOTO	035 YAMAGUCHI
036 CHAGIWA	037 SAKUYAMA
038 SAKURAI	039 MAKIYAMA

040 MATSUDA	044 NISHIMURA
042 DOKUBAYASHI	043 YOSHIMURA
044 HOGANISHI	045 YOSHIMURA
046 FURUKAWA	047 KIMURA
048 KAWABUCHI	049 KAWABUCHI
050 FURUKAWA	051 SHIMAZU
052 FURUKAWA	053 SHIMAZU
054 KAWABUCHI	055 SHIMAZU
056 TAKAGI	057 SHIMAZU
058 YAMAGUCHI	059 YAMAGUCHI
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074 YAMAGUCHI	075 YAMAGUCHI

MOJAVE, MOJAVE, GET AROUND, I GET AROUND

And finally, there's a hint for players stuck in *Mojave* from Kenan from Ian Henderson, in case: "Towards the end of the second stage, there's a large mound hanging from the roof of the cavern which produces bad guys. It also has a slip underneath it. Shoot out the slip and the mound and fly into the remains of the mound to enter the bonus stage."

Thanks to all our readers this month. If you've got any game tips, are currently fundraising in a gamemag, drop me a line at the usual address.

Richard Stone

AMSTRAD CPC



Who goes for the fancy copy this month, readers. The posting yielded a number of enthusiastically written and photographed letters, exclusively for Amstrad owners. First up, Wolfgang Rottger would like me to mention to our "me" CPC Power International, which can be obtained by either sending 4 international replyed coupons to:

CPC Power International, Im Hagenweg, 17 B 5820, Kohn 50, Germany.

Those planning to contribute to or purchase any of Wolfgang's organ should be made aware, of course, that although it's packed with tips and letters and useful programming advice, it's in German.

As for the best British fanzine to arrive in Play Mags, edited by Carl Sany from Barnet. Carl's mag is heavily games oriented and has a club-by-club which is a must for any good fanzine. Currently up to number four, Play Mags, as you would expect offers its readers a regular, steady stream of new fanzine games and articles, and would surely act as a force for those bent on

producing a masterpiece in bytes.

You can get yourself a copy of Play Mags by sending 10p to:

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Herts EN5 5EQ

COMPETITION

So you reckon your fanzine is the best in your field, here's your chance to prove it. Send us a copy of your fanzine, together with a list of points on why you think it covers the current Amstrad scene better than any other. We'll be awarding a prize and printing extracts from the best entry we receive in the next ACE Lines.

Send your entries to:

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Clarnon
London EC2R 1AG
Contact: 0858, 9th February.

CONSOLE CUSTOMER

Greenix Graphics has been busily working away on their first project for the Amstrad Console, and hasn't it been worth the wait!

From the size of the packet to the style of the box artwork, this feels like a very Japanese product. Greenix have certainly taken the cartridge

market by the reins.

In the game, you play Alex, last of the Barkleys. You must collect the 16 fragments of the shattered freckle. In order to arrange the freckle and final slaying of your fellow country man.

You begin the game alone and armed on an open-ended, unstructured, (preluded) by writing except "freakle" title mechanical operations. Slaying these color-bands will mean heavy bit points and you'll also probably get dragged back to the pits.

After a little practice, it becomes easy to avoid these suckers and you'll swiftly find yourself exploring the network of underground tunnels and corridors which make up the evil air-beds' empire.

Life in the tunnels is short. Enemy soldiers take around every turning, and you'll need to collect all the available weapons to survive.

Some of the scrolling, even on the console is a bit poor, with the screen building up as you manipulate it. However, the detail of the backgrounds and variety of the enemies and traps you have to deal with puts *Switchblade* right up there with *Rocky* and *Conquest*.

Obviously, collecting the 16 fragments of the freckle is far from easy. Simply slaying other long enough to collect one seems like a tall order when you start, but the more you survive, the greater the rewards.

Heavily congratulated go to Greenix for a leading fanzine into the console market rather than simply standing on the sidelines like so many other publishers. Full review next issue.

Richard Stone

IBM PC



It had to be hell if you're one of the many PC owners who still working with a monochrome screen. Because no matter how easy on the eye your black and white set for that matter under a green display may be, you end up looking wistfully at the glorious 256-colour VGA screens that which seem all computer magazines these days like a good child with his nose pressed against the window of a sweet shop.

But do you really need all of those colours on your monitor to have a good vision at your key board. He of course you aren't saying that colourful games are better than their monochrome counterparts is like saying that Santa Claus the Movie is better than Casablanca.

Although good use of colour can enhance a playable game, if the original idea had what it takes that it doesn't matter if the display is the colour of a balustrade.

So yes, for the first time ever, ACE is going to induct some members into its Hercules Club Of Fame. The following list makes no claim to being exhaustive it's simply a guide to a few already great games which lose nothing but their colour

C64



interesting comments from Ant (Cherish on the IBM PC scene this month).

"A lot of you're going to do so many things with your Commodore 64. It was thought to be done for educational purposes, or at least that's what you told those who bought it for you. You could organise your accounts, make music, write letters to... That was in the beginning, but now people have said that the 64 has a very short life span. But that doesn't have to be the case.

Public Domain is the reason! Surprisingly, a lot of old gamers know nothing about what's available. It's time to put that right.

"When you say 'public domain', what do you think of? ACP (Amiga) I get! That's what the majority of users would say anyway if you're some arse who reads every word of word and wonderful demos and programs that you can get for the 64, you'll also know that there's a lot of life in the old beast yet.

WHAT YOU GET

Public Domain software has a wide range of uses. You want to do some programming? There are BASIC booklets and machine-code

when they make the jump from one of the 'Geo-Ar' family to Hercules.

XENON II - MEGABLAST

The 'strong brother's' definition doesn't set up a lot the more impressive on the PC than it is on other machines because of the general lack of competitors in this field. It seems that no matter what the configuration of machine it plays superbly, and the lack of option to customise that by a good set of grey shading. In fact, the only thing that the brother lacks is a means to support the any of the major sound boards - but then, if you've got a more display than you're likely to have one of those, are you? Xenon II is published by Image Works 0973 908 1454.

SWIRFLEPUCK CAPE

Although this isn't exactly the greatest game on Earth, it does offer a little more than average style simulation... and in fact has one positive advantage in that it's actually better in more than it is in colour in VGA colour, the table on which the game of intergalactic air hockey is played out is a serious strain on the eye. Hercules machines however, suit the game's atmosphere perfectly, making the board stand out and your opponents look any weaker indeed. Prospective Swirflepuckers should call Demand on 081 190 2221.

SCRABBLE DE LUXE

Being Gamble (part of the Virgin stable, in 0973 923 8870) specialises in adaptation of popular board games. And although this is not to be superseded by Ultimate Knowledge, and the version

flourishes around to make life that little bit easier. You can also find a small handful of games that were produced specifically for public domain, and I must say that the ones I have seen are of a good standard, so maybe you'd like to try them out. Is that all? Well, no. A large spread of word processors, spreadsheets, databases, art utilities, music routines. The list is almost endless.

Cassette users are catered for, but the list of programs aimed for tape-based machines is limited. Answer: get yourself a disk drive. You'll praise the life of your machine, and open the door to a flood of new software.

Games will still be produced, of course, but there's nothing like a lot of fairly basic with fairly graphics to make you giggle. We've seen a lot of demos and they all seem to come from our European counterparts (Denmark, Germany, Norway etc). And they compete with each other to show off their talent. Exciting stuff!

While there will always be music and graphics demos for the Amiga, some of the few 64 programs genuinely push the machine to its limits. A lot of these can be found on Compuart and can be downloaded, but for people who don't have access to a modem, the public domain is where a large number of these demos and other programs can be found.

There aren't many PD users around that cater solely for 64 users, so if you know of anyone who distributes stuff, write to ACE and let the world know they exist. The 64 will

will probably end up with a budget label pretty soon, but one in particular works just as well if not a little better (whether coloured or not).

PIPERMAN

Engin's plumbing puzzle has just picked up a prestigious '88' (88 award) - and lucky this wasn't for its exceptional use of colour rather than simply changing the colour to grey. Hercules Piperman utilises an all-time character and graph 1024 cells, without the colour version can carry off some extremely graphic 1024 and bits, this two-colour effort uses a plain grid and simplified piping to make the graphics as clear as possible with no loss of playability. If you're interested, contact Engin on 02948 541 136.

PRINCE OF PERISA

Brookbury's Middle Eastern on sale at home and abroad quite a star in the ACE office (as you may have noticed), and for some you owners of monochrome PCs aren't going to be left in the dark in it what all the fuss is about. Although Hercules Prince Of Perisa uses a smaller screen size than its coloured brother, it's been received perfectly and the main character still mixes with the grace and dignity of an athletic gymnast. Like all Brookbury games, this one is distributed in three parts by Demand - 081 190 2202.

So, there we are. If you're willing to hunt around, it's perfectly possible to stay fit on high-quality games in Hercules. There's no need for our new players to lose out on the fun had by their colour counterparts.

©Chris Brown

be supported for a long while yet. Remember Public Domain is only as good as the people who will continue to support it. Long live the Commodore 64!

TELL ME MORE!

If it's demos you're after, then I heartily recommend PROCD-PEL, which is:
Wicked PD
PO BOX 633
Sutton
Essex.

Also try Compuart's pages. They're full of good demos, utilities and general tips. Write to:

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If you would like a copy of Demo of the Year II to completion of European demo (in 1988), just send a blank disk and a stamp to me and I'll send you a table of what's in store.

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HOT OFF THE SHELF

Got lots of Xmas gift money burning a hole in your pocket? Don't waste it on a duff title that won't even keep you hooked until teatime - look through this list, make a choice and buy with confidence!

The list you see here includes the highest-rated titles featured in ACE over the past three months, as well as some of the older but essential buys. All you see here should be available from your local dealer now.

B.A.T.

Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99 ■ CD-ROM £24.99 ■ CD-ROM £24.99
Set in the 22nd Century, you play

an agent of the Bureau of Aerial Troublemakers, or B.A.T. for short. The astronomical fringe (made-up name) is holding the plot at Selenia, home of the galaxy's major businesses, to ransom with chemical weapons. Lose Selenia and there'll be galaxy-wide trouble. You've got to feel Vanger and stop her - quick! Two years in the making, all that effort shows in this graphic adventure gem excellence. Every location and event is depicted graphically, with all game interaction carried out using the mouse. Not to touch a game, more a way of life. As an added bonus, there's a single soundtrack to give the humble ST Amiga-quality samples. **ACE RATING: 900 ON AMIGA ST**

BATTLE CHIEF 2

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £29.99
Repeat the success from Hollywood to the computer industry! This time round the tales are based on the Chinese variant of Chess, which infiltrators stole into movies, has a new meaning: the board (which some players can't cross) and lends the King's movement to an Imperial Palace". As before the board is placed in 3D, with all the pieces taking each other in a variety of amusing and well-estimated ways. While a hot and irritating turning from foppers due to it all the wrapping, a hard disc shows the game to be far faster and more useful than normal Chess. A good purchase for jaded Chess fans. **ACE RATING: 890 ON AMIGA PC**

BLAKE ROGERS: COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY

SSI/US Gold ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ PC £24.99 ■ CD-ROM £24.99
The year is 2456, and Buck Rogers, tactical genius and fearless defender of freedom, is deflected from cryogenic suspension to help lead rebels on a managed Earth to victory and freedom from a tyrannical government. An RPG with some letters to the 500 AD&D games, the action is viewed in familiar pseudo-3D. All interaction is menu driven, with selections made by clicking the mouse. The number of locations are many and varied, and most are introduced by an attractive picture. Fans of the genre should be more than happy with this, and the space setting makes a welcome change from the usual medieval fantasy. **ACE RATING: 880 ON AMIGA**

CAPTIVE

Microage ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £29.99
Another in the ever increasing number of RPGs portrayed using first-person perspective. 'Captive', written by veteran programmer Tony Crowther, gets you against hordes of rampaging aliens, with nothing to defend you but a breathless. The interface, however, contains a computer giving you remote control over a four-droid team with which you must free yourself from the fortress where you are imprisoned. Excellent bitmapped graphics, atmospheric real-time sound and a total of 10000 levels to explore place 'Captive' very much in

the ACE-rated category.
ACE RATING: 830 ON AMIGA

CONVERT ACTION

Microage ■ PC £29.99
Yet another secret agent game! You play Max Remington, ex-CIA man, who is now getting a crash as a undercover investigator. However, Max is known to save the face for the President of the United States. On offer are four skill levels, three mission areas, three-time types and over a dozen enemy operatives to contend with. As you would expect from Microage there's a wealth of detail and the tasks on offer are going to require many months of work to crack. Go to it, Max. **ACE RATING: 860 ON AMIGA PC**

CORPORATION

Core Design ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ PC £29.99
This side-playing cybernetic extravaganza from Core pushes the limits of previous RPGs and that bit further. Corporation is a 3D exploration, point-and-click arcade combat game (it is the mould made traditional by the original Dungeon Master RPG), but objective is to find and remove an embryo belonging to the ultimate biogenetic killing machine, bred by the UCC Corp. Light-source shaded graphics and sound of fine-art quality, along with excellent playability and an intuitive control method all contributed in pushing Corporation over the 900 mark. **ACE RATING: 940 ON AMIGA**

CRAMOLEON

Microage ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ PC £24.99
This unusual combination of light and adventure game, and sequel to the well-received Monarchy, has been in development for a couple of years now, but the resulting game has been worth the wait. The wireframe graphics of the original game have been replaced by solid 3D vector graphics, but they are just as fast. There are now nine planets to explore instead of one (six), so there's plenty of long-term challenge here. **ACE RATING: 830 ON AMIGA ST**

F-16 STEALTH FIGHTER

Microage ■ Atari ST £29.99 ■ Amiga £29.99 ■ PC £29.99
A program that could well be described as the Flight Simulator's Flight Simulator. The PC version has enjoyed much success since its

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twelve year ago, and now it's back on the ST and Amiga box set to do the same. The aim is based around the much talked about (or perhaps to be whispered about) Death Fighter. It boasts four huge scenarios with hundreds of missions, and plenty of detail. If you are looking for the definitive fight sim, then you can't go far wrong with this one.

ACE RATING: 925 04 9264 PC

4D SPORTS (BOOKING)

Motorace ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99
 This wheel class between two solid-polymer-generated opponents is the best rendition of the 'bookie art' yet seen on a home computer. The use of polygons allows the action to be viewed from absolutely any angle, and a video playback option allows you to watch that decisive corner over and over again. Highly realistic, with a huge range of moves and a lot of work to be put in if you're going to become World Champ!

ACE RATING: 945 04 9264 PC

4D SPORTS (DRIVING)

Motorace ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99
 A 3D-polygon racing game - and arguably the best yet, providing far more depth than its nearest rival, Indy 500 (though how it compares to 'Real Drive' 2 has yet to be seen). Can be played against the clock or another driver, in which case each designs a course, trying to exploit the weaknesses of the other in a fair of feisty. Both drivers then race on the two tracks. Spectator view and crashes can be viewed from any angle in the playback option. A successful mix of simulation and knock about fun.

ACE RATING: 930 04 9264 PC

BARPOON

Motorace/F103 ■ PC £29.99
 Quite simply the best novel simulation to be released for the General Public, the barfaced that comes with the game deals with East-West conflict in the North Sea, but other battles will be available soon. A clever system of three map types is used to effectively manage each nation. The real thing about Barpoon is that the computer takes care of all the boring mechanics, allowing you to concentrate on tactical tactics. A must buy for anyone interested in modern naval warfare.

ACE RATING: 940 04 9264 PC

THE IMMORTAL

Defender Arts ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ Amiga £24.99
 Nothing new in the plot department, unfortunately. Old wizard...evil dungeon...defiant monsters...aster traps...cube puzzles...necro Grand Wizard...etc,etc. However, the presentation is something else. An isometric-3D angle is used to view the events, and your character moves around it freely, controlling monsters and so on. Every move is beautifully animated. There are only 30 locations to visit, but every one is going to take a lot of work to push through. **WARNING!** - the program's only sales on 15th November!

ACE RATING: 910 04 9264 ST

INDIANAPOLIS 500

Defender Arts ■ PC £24.95 ■ Amiga £24.95
 The ultimate racing game, Indy 500 uses state of the art solid arc graphics which really add something to the high speed action. As in Accion's Blunder there are a variety of out-of-control views to select from, the realistic handling of the car will have you coming back to this game time and time again.

ACE RATING: 935 04 9264 PC

LOTUS ESPYR TURBO CHALLENGE

Genesis Graphics ■ 16-bit format £24.99 ■ 8-bit format £30.99
 Remember Pit Stop at Genesis obviously-ah, because this game employs a similar split-screen effect so that aging classics to allow two players to race against each other at the same time. This, and the fact that the 3D-effect actually does convince you that you're travelling at the speed on your meter, puts Lotus way ahead of the rest of the pack. With 32 tracks, 3 difficulty levels and the option to choose between automatic and manual gears, this is one racing game with far a lot of mileage.

ACE RATING: 975 04 9264

MIDWINTER

Monoprice ■ Atari ST £29.99 ■ Amiga £29 ■ PC £29
 The latest mega hit from top programmer Mike Singleton, creator of Lords of Midnight, the game is set on a frozen island in the future. The task is to recruit members of the Peace Force to fight off General Muller's invasion force. This is done by managing people and resources via a series of Fractal Maps and menus. The game has a disappointing sound, but nice 3D

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graphics, and enough solid game play to keep you going for months.
• ACE RATING 848 ON AHEAD 57

MYTH

System 3 ■ 544 formats
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The game that pushes the 664 and Spectrum further than they have ever been before. Fight your way through several time zones to reach the ultimate confrontation with the god Gaerem. The game is captivating, not only because of its wit and depth but also because of its rich and visually animated scenes and sheer playability.
• ACE RATING 858 ON AHEAD

POWERMONSTER

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga £29.99 ■ Atari ST £29.99

A real computer classic, with one of the highest ACE ratings ever. You play a wizard, exiled from your homeland along with twenty followers, who has just landed on the shores of 200 islands, ripe for conquering. Unfortunately the current residents are not quite as keen on your enforced leadership, and will do all they can to resist you. Using a similar concept to Populous, the landscape is here polygons

based and this can be manipulated in just about any way you require. The excellent visuals are supported by highly atmospheric sound, its control is by mouse, and resistant to crash. To play it is to worship it, its absolutely essential buy.
• ACE RATING 875 ON AHEAD

PRICE OF PERALS

Softdisk/Strawhead ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ IBM PC £24.99

A game that could so easily go unnoticed and ignored by the shell-scouring hordes looking for the latest releases. The graphics, when static, are fairly impressive (although they do get a lot better in later levels), but when they move... The animation as you guide a young Prince through various levels of perils, pits, spikes and bewitched men is quite excellent and brisk. And the gameplay, although it may sound unimpressive, is as good as the graphics. Some of the action has a real off-beat edge to it. A gem.
• ACE RATING 818 ON AHEAD

IRON BARRAGE 2

Microstyle ■ 16-bit formats £24.99 ■ 32-bit formats £9.99/\$14.99

After his baby exposed adventures in the present, Rick looks to the stars and Iron looked and found gold for his second novel with the Fat Man. Set over five levels, the game generously allows the player to take on the first four in any order. The graphics and sounds are nice, but not stunning. With platform game playability is everything, and *Iron 2* has it in buckets.
• ACE RATING 879 ON AHEAD 57

BRASSAGE EMPIRE

Origny/Microscape ■ PC £26.99 ■ Amiga £26A

Using the Ultima II interface, Orign has taken a side-stay from the medieval world of their previous games, and now plunges you into a nightmare scenario where you control a party of characters mysteriously transported to a dimension-infused Lost World, full to the brim with new quests. A rollicking good yarn well told and - hard to believe we know - actually better than *Ultima II*.
• ACE RATING 888 ON AHEAD 60

SHALOCRA

Microstyle ■ Amiga £28.99 ■ Atari ST £28.99

In the future, physical conflict is a

thing of the past, with all wars being fought in Cyberspace. However, a virus has caused the simulated realities to spill into 'real' reality. You must enter the 'subo machine', destroy the rampaging virus and ultimately the matrix itself. Although basically a shoot-'em-up, with the usual variety of addons to pick up, *Shalocra's* claim to fame is the incredible rotating cutscenes. 3D world where the combat takes place. Fast and furious action, excellent aesthetics and a slight strategy element make this one of the best games of the year.
• ACE RATING 886 ON AHEAD 57

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Edgen/Microscape ■ Currently only available on PC in the US. Call US Phone on 0181 901 771 6700 for mail order details.

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quite dreadful) tumour, graphics (occasionally enticed) and - most importantly - an engaging plot with twists of sub-tantrics. The only minus point is the antiquated camera, which had to be told to do something.

ACE RATING 800 ON IBM PC

SPEEDBALL 3

Microsoft ● Amiga 424.99 ● Atari ST £24.99 ● PC £78A

The sequel to the *Stripes* (see) 'no test' 98 hit. Basically more of the same but with improved graphics, a bigger multi-directional scrolling pitch (designed with bumpers) and ball movement, with a power-up and armour to pick up in play between games, smoother control and a depth-enhancing player-manager element. Highly playable, and the power-ups do have a noticeable effect on the game. More fun than leading up your kid brother. Or even better, play your brother in Newplay mode then beat him out!

ACE RATING 889 ON IBM PC

SPINQUEST WORLDS

Activision ● Amiga 424.99 ● Atari ST £24.99

Yet another sequel (but still in 1984)

Shirley's original (800) game. This one sees the return of GORBLD (the on-screen Geographic Environmental Reconnaissance And Landmarking Device), who resembles a spinning top and who have to guide around 32 multi-directional scrolling 'worlds' of pre-ordered plot forms, 400 traps, 160 switches and mining routes in a search for diamonds. A clever mix of arcade style and puzzle-solving that requires you put in a little effort at first, but will make you glad you did in the end.

ACE RATING 800 ON AMIGA AND 889 ON IBM PC

TEAM TRACKER

Empire International ● Amiga £29.99 ● Amstrad ST £29.99 ● PC £34.99

The interesting use of 3D bit-mapped graphics to depict the action rather than the expected polygons says off in this leading tank war simulation. Although they get a little *Docky* close-up, this is more than compensated for by their speed and detail that the trick is being able to correctly identify your own vehicles and not fire on them. You control a four tank platoon, which you can switch

between with ease, on a wide range of missions. Dark accessibility but mounting complexity so you gain experience make this a perfect purchase for any strategist from novice to master.

ACE RATING 800 ON AMIGA

ULTIMA VI

Origin/Mindscape ● Atari ST £78A ● Amiga £78A ● PC £34.99 ● C64 £78A

The ultimate role playing game. Between thousand vignettes, but hundred and fifty characters, unlimited encounters, a quest that will take months to solve, and graphics better than you'll see in any other game of this type. The *Ultima* series of 690s go from strength to strength. Join forces with Lord British and save more order the free... unbelievable stuff and if you find it's in your taste, the King on the castle is that Origin are also producer remains using the same system. *Savage Empire* is already out... see ACE issue 99.

ACE RATING 994 ON IBM PC

WING COMMANDER

Origin/Mindscape ● Amiga £78A ● PC £34.99

Another 3D space combat game, but any sense of depth is a completely obscured by the use of stunning ray-traced and digitized graphics for the spaceships. They rotate, shrink and grow with amazing speed and fluidity. Animated screens purchase the action and present the first true cinematic experience on a home computer. The multitude of missions mean this isn't a game of surface gloss. Sucky only best appreciated on a high speed PC.

ACE RATING 940 ON IBM PC

WONDERLAND

Magnate Books ● Amiga £29.99 ● Atari ST £29.99 ● PC £34.99

The *Scrolls*, having stomped the world with *The Power* way back in 1981, return with a new classic. An adventure game based on the famous novel *Alice in Wonderland*, the plot follows the book enough to retain its weird flavour but not so slavishly as to make it tedious by simply knowing the story. The lavish text, featuring with hundreds of tough-but-logical puzzles, is accompanied by a number of stunning animated graphic screens. All adventure fans must and play... an essential buy.

ACE RATING 910 ON IBM PC

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ACE DIARY

JANUARY

6 - 12 JANUARY SOFTWARE RELEASES

NEW RELEASES AT A GLANCE

True Kick Heavy (Amstrad Spectrum £24.95, C64 £24.95, £79.99 tape/£74.99 disk), Amiga, PC £24.95. Shoot 'em up based on the Beaty/Madison film.

Software Business: First (C64 Amiga £24.95). Arcade-style action.

Thriller: Evilhearted Lord (C64 £24.95). Appealing neo-noir novel game with subtle cartoon-style characters.

Wings: Espionage (C64 £19.99 tape, £74.99 disk). Belated appearance for C64 version of classic board game.

Sunday 6

Death Night: One to take all those tired looking occupations down. Football (4 Cup tied round matches take place.

Monday 7

Tuesday 8

Birthday of Elvis Presley, 1935. Birthday of David Bowie, 1947.

Wednesday 9

Thursday 10

Friday 11

Saturday 12

Sunday 13

14 - 20 JANUARY SOFTWARE RELEASES

NEW RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Beauty: Band Brivler (C64 £11, Amiga £24.95, PC £29.95). More content, a strength-program course facility, and two plays, two-machine option.

Pygmalion: Masters Read (C64 Amiga, PC £9.95). Based on an new budget label of new budget price.

Ballin's (C64 Amiga, PC £9.95). Blood Money (C64 Amiga, PC £9.95).

Police: Trapshot Smash (C64 £24.95).

Wings: Gambol Wing (Spectrum, C64, CPC tape only £3.95, C64 Amiga £3.95). Budget cardbase.

Monday 14

Tuesday 15

Wednesday 16. Prohibition began in the USA on this day in 1920.

Thursday 17

Friday 18

Saturday 19

Sunday 20

21 - 27 JANUARY SOFTWARE RELEASES

NEW RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Pygmalion: Masters: Infestation (C64 Amiga, PC £9.95).

Mercure (C64 Amiga, PC £9.95). Mox (C64 Amiga, PC £9.95).

18-8888: The Atomic Blaster (C64 £4.95). Type-in adventure based on TV series.

Magnus: Battle Wonderland (Amiga £29.95). Innovative graphical adventure, based on Lewis Carroll's Alice books, using Savell's own mindboggling and multi-screen environment.

Image Works: Back to the Future 4 (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape/£74.99 disk), C64 Amiga, PC £24.95). Shoot 'em up chase game which follows the third instalment of the film.

On Screen: Secret of the Blood Island (C64 Amiga £24.95). Secret of the Labyrinth (C64 Amiga £24.95).

Monday 21

Martin Luther King Day (USA). Terry Waite disappeared in Beirut on this day in 1987.

Tuesday 22

Wednesday 23

Thursday 24

Friday 25. Roll out the Huggis - It's Burns Night. Cricket: England vs Australia. South Test match begins in Adelaide.

Saturday 26

Australia Day. National Day, India.

Sunday 27

American Festival: Superowl XXX.

28 JAN - 3 FEB SOFTWARE RELEASES

NEW RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Scenario: King of Robbers (C64 Amiga £24.95, PC £29.95). Flight sim based on the renowned British air fighter.

Krisalis World Championship Boxing Manager (C64 £24.95). Released by Galath Games last year on ST and Amiga; Krisalis snapped up the PC rights.

Virgin: Judge Dredd (Spectrum, C64, CPC £19.99 tape/£49.99 disk), C64 Amiga £29.95). Federal Fire crews' efforts to track 'em game licensed from the comic strip.

Monday 28

The US space shuttle Challenger exploded shortly after lift-off on this day in 1986.

Tuesday 29

Wednesday 30

Thursday 31

FEBRUARY

Friday 3. Cricket: England vs Australia fifth test match begins in Perth.

Saturday 2. Canberra Day.

Sunday 3

Eighth Sunday before Easter.

4 - 10 FEBRUARY SOFTWARE RELEASES

NEW RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Image Works: Gods (C64 Amiga £24.95). Arcade adventure with a classical Greek flavour.

Image Works: Outlaw (C64 £24.95). Image Work's arcade adventure set in western Texas.

Krisalis: Hill Street Blues (C64 Amiga, PC £24.95). Last instalment in the Hill Street precinct as new play Frank Ferris, looking after up to 1,000 computer generated vehicles and people.

Image Works: Battle Master (C64 £29.95). Final Battle (C64 £9.95). Theme Park Mystery (C64 £19.95). Killing Cloud (C64 Amiga £24.95).

PBS: Champion of the Day (C64 Amiga, £9.95, PC £29.95). Local 8 developed graphic adventure set in British-occupied India.

Wings: Espionage (C64 £29.95). Highly complex game incorporating trading and domination. Part of Fury Spectrum tape only £9.95, C64, CPC tape £19.99/£24.95, PC Amiga £24.95). Compilation featuring Death Dragon II, Ninja Warriors, Dynamite Dan and Shokki.

Monday 4

National Day, Sri Lanka.

Tuesday 5

Wednesday 6

Waikato Day, New Zealand. England play Cameroon in a friendly at Wembley.

Thursday 7

Friday 8

Saturday 9

Sunday 10

Planning an event?

Don't miss your chance to see some of the more subtle talents in computer graphics as we take you to the very heart of the game of a chess set. See highlights starting on page 100 and 101.

ACE DEALS

It's a great time for bargain hunters. All those goodies that never made your Christmas stocking can now be snapped up at a substantial price with some judicious shopping around.

Software Circus' bargain sale has already taken off, with some great deals on 512, Amiga and PC software in its London-based stores (store locations are given below).

The Microsoft sale will be holding sales in most outlets throughout January, along with a special double CD-ROM (soft) stamp promo. Pick up a Collectors' Guide folder from the store and there each time you make a purchase you'll be given stamps to stick in it. As you collect a certain number of stamps and you can trade in the folder for free products. Double Collectors' Guide means more stamps for your portfolio.

In the last week of Jan, the Virgin Games Centre's sales begin in all

Lots of post-Xmas offers here! Check 'em out!

stores around the country. Virgin provides copies of software, a few bargain consoles, and add-ons such as joysticks going for a song.

As for special offers on particular games, these are notoriously difficult to arrange at this time of year, thanks to the phenomenon of 'Christmas stopper' - products due before Christmas that mysteriously creep into shops in January.

However, Virgin is planning (yet another) great set of special offers on Sega consoles for the first two weeks of 1991 - so check individual stores for details.

Software Circus is taking heart from the increasing popularity of the PC, competitors for entertainment jobs, and will be featuring

some new UK imports in its stores (you'll about how. Also, Software Circus should have a new store opening soon, probably in the City of London area, so if you work round there, you'll be able to go software shopping in your lunch hour. Full details in this column as soon as the plans are finalised.

On the hardware side, Computer Store's Amiga Megastore is still on sale. For £799 you can get a pack including the Amiga 500, colour monitor and 850k printer, complete with blank disks, dual-boot mouse and printer cables.

There are Microsoft stores in the Arcade Centre, Manchester; the Broadmarsh Centre, Nottingham; Colgate, Wakefield; the Metro Centre, Bradford; the Greenmarket, Newcastle Upon Tyne; the Kingsgate Centre, Bedford; the Bull Ring Centre, Birmingham; the County Arcade, Leeds; Picture Road,

Leeds; Meadow Hall Centre, Sheffield; in John's Centre, Liverpool; and in Ganger's Centre, Reading.

Virgin Has Games Centre on London's Oxford Street (at Marble Arch), within the Magicians, and at the 100, Bristol, Kingston and Oxford, and also in Magicians in Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Cardiff, Dallas, Edinburgh, Glasgow (at Union St and Apple St), Leeds, and Nottingham.

Both Software Circus outlets are in London's West End, one in The Plaza, Oxford Street, the other in 280, High Holborn, London WC1.

The Computer Store chain is based in Yorkshire, with shops at Penningthorpe in Doncaster; Ingleby, Bradford; Trinity in Airedale, Leeds; Market Place, Huddersfield; Whitworthfield in Wakefield; St Sampson's Square, York; The Workings, Halifax; Whitson St, Barnsley; High Street, Southwell; Finsbury Green, Sheffield; and the Broadmarsh Centre, Nottingham.

All offers and prices are subject to stock availability. Although we do our best to ensure our information is accurate at the time of going to press, ACS cannot take any responsibility for changes or variations to dealers' plans.

Attention dealers! Don't keep your promotions, competitions, special offers, etc. a secret. Sell us at ACS and we'll tell everybody else!

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ADVENTURELINE

Stuck in an adventure? Write in with the name of the game and the nature of your problem. Be as specific as possible and I'll do my best to answer (on these pages only so no SAEs please), and if I don't know the answer, I know a man who.....! News, tips, gossip, anecdotes and adventuring trivia are also all most welcome. Write to me, Pat Winstanley, Adventureline, Pink Box, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU

NOW HEAR THIS!

If you want to contribute to these pages, get your pen out and start scribbling! Particularly welcome are short, self-contained hints and simple problem solutions. I'm also interested to hear of PR and Shareware programs - the best will be reviewed (space permitting), as I've done with Jungle Bungle here. So get it started!

CAPTIVE

This month I've been plugging away at CAP-TIVE and in the course of testing help have discovered a handy hint for starting off with stronger than usual characters. If you name an android "WHY DROD?" you'll end up with attributes of 4, 15 and 35 - quite a flying start. There is also a name based on Betwax which creates good attributes - has anyone found a name which will give a straight 15 across the board?

Still on Captive, once you collect some firearms, watch where the shots go. Weapons such as the Hunter shoot high, while Magnums shoot low. On one of the early planets you'll be confronted by floating monsters which are responsible for fatalities unless you use the Anti-Gas to turn upside down. It's well necessary to explore every cranny of each level - sometimes all the extra rooms hold any extra monsters. While this means extra money, the cost of repairing your armour can outweigh any gains made!

Try to collect as many probes as possible early on, then instead of tripping yourself

dragging them around with you (as I did), set them all off as soon as possible, making a note of the co-ordinates and order in which future planets are found. Another idea thing I managed was to land on planets which were only contained a single square of land - yes, you've got it - also forget to visit the cross-hairs on the one and only island!

Don't bother with fancy weapons until you have the skill to use them. The monetary system is well judged to match your progress, and better weapons cost far more to am than simpler, equally effective ones. By the way, keep round corners carefully (and save regularly) as there are some enemies - namely those men with cannons shooting blue cannon balls - who will take you out with one shot! However, careful use of doors as shields can cause enemy fire to bounce back on the enemy component, and cause it to effectively commit suicide. But watch out - the same can happen to you as I discovered to my cost! Space Station, here I come.....

LEISURE SUIT LARRY 2

Agatha De Sluik's solution continues. Time now for some holiday antics. Try on the shorts you brought behind the cupboard. Now go to the pool, put on the sunscreen and wait on the sunbed until a woman comes. Don't follow her because she is a KGB agent. Dive into the pool and swim. Get the bikini top under water quickly, get out of the pool and cover yourself with sunscreen again. Sit down, and again, ignore the woman because she is another KGB agent.

Now go back to your cabin and wear your leisure suit. Save your game before entering the other room. Open the night stand drawer and quickly get the sawing kit and saw. Head for the bridge and move the switch on the right hand side without attracting the captain's attention. The alarm should sound, so run for the lifeboat. Jump in, and when in the water wear the cap, use sunscreen and eat the spinach dip. In 30 days you'll be on the beach.

Go south in the vegetation and get a flower then find a gap in the vegetation and you should be at the restaurant. Talk to the man and wait

until you are shown to a table. Then sit at the waiting chair, and once you are allowed in get the knife at the buffet bar. Leave, finding another gap, and you should be in a guest room where you should pick up the soap and matches before heading for the barbers.

ZAK MCKRACKEN

Mike Benham's solution continues. You should now be controlling Arnie. Walk to the airport and use the reservations terminal to buy a ticket to Cairo. Walk to the plane the walk outside. Go to the bag on the splint with the secret door in it and enter. Use the splint map again to find the room with the secret panel in it. When you are there, read the magazines and push the red bars on the wall in the order they say. Switch to Zak. Use the crayon on the wallpaper map.

Read the strange markings on the wall and make a diagram of them, calling it Pic. 3. Use the splint map again to find your way back to

LET ME KNOW!

If there's any special subject you'd like to see covered in Adventureline, then let us know at the address in the panel on the left.

the airport. Buy a ticket to Rindasta and board the plane. Walk through the jungle as before and you get back to the village. Enter the shaman's hut and give him the yellow crystal. He will now show you how to use it and you will end up outside the hut. Use the yellow crystal and you will see the wallpaper map. Click on Egypt which is in the middle right of the map. You will see a teleportal to the secret room in the top of the pyramid. Walk to the left and pull the lever on the side of the wall.

Switch to Arnie and use the optics map to find your way out. Go left to the pyramid and through the door. It is very dark in here so use the "what is?" command to find the door. Now go in and walk as far left as you can. Again use the "what is?" command. Use time to find the stairs, then go up them. You are now in the room with Zak. Pull the lever in the side of the wall and switch to Zak. Hints by Puzzled Players and Confused Countrymen - from Paul Hardy

INGRID'S BACK

And don't you wish she wasn't? Close the carriage to the top of the hill and ride it down again - then try to cross the bridge with your additional speed. The rock will fly you to the top of the lightless cave if you exit it. At the back of Idun's house Thoryn will be talking. Head Idun's to close the stone walls, follow Idun's and tell Idun to be down in front of it. To distract the latter say "Shiny, gold pinch, knock, a, knock, a knock, a knock, a knock."

ADVENTURE GAME TOOLKIT

A couple of months ago I mentioned NATBACK II, an adventure creator for the Amiga. This month a plug for AGT for the ST. AGT gives two levels of use. Standard level is billed as being for those with no programming experience (readers and simply requires the use of a word-processor or text editor to create descriptions of locations, objects, action results etc. The Professional level however gives the user the opportunity to use meta language to create complex games with Infocom style look and feel. A good range of adventures written with AGT is currently available, although the standard of the games I've seen is very variable. As with any other programming language, what comes out is directly related to the imagination and precision of what goes in. AGT is well worth a look, and with a registration fee of only £20 if you use the system, not a particularly expensive addition to your collection. AGT and some of the games written with it are available from the Goodman PO Box 91-0100-030490. This library has a strong interest in adventures and is well worth contacting for a catalogue £1.95 for 60 pages which include reviews and articles in addition to software listed on the above numbers.

ZORK ZERO

To put the betting to rest, long to it and it will trouble you no more. Sit on Ozzard's favourite throne and snap fingers to reveal a secret tunnel. In the library, rub armour three times to find something which may be useful.

BEYOND ZORK

To help the mice, erase footprints when you hear the hunter approaching. To stay the Unholy Winter you will need some holy water. Then simply throw oil at wemics. When you have the rabbit's foot, rub it for luck. By the way, this is not one of the better text games around.

RED MOON

Turn the handle to drain the lake. To get the firewood, wear gloves. As soon as the game begins, dig for a crown. To open the safe, turn it. Throw the stone to create a floating, glowing sphere. Wear the robes to pass the metal room. Burn your opponents to defeat your enemies early and stop them reanimating as ghosts.

When you find the moon crystal, get crystal. To slay the dragons, wear fire. A silver crucifix will hold Mandara the Vampire at bay, but a floating, glowing sphere will kill her. To stop the demon killing you, rub the line out. In the room of floating lights, drop the black ball. Near the broom's to enable you to carry more. Fill the tub with water, and give it to Kalf, the farmer who is dying of thirst.

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Hi Dudes! This is Games again!

It's New Year and all that 'n' 'n' or 'Mr Mike is inside' around with all this fuzzy stuff. He's got some really good new stuff in the with disks with me or 'em and these really cool!

Also Dudes, I could hardly move for all these new Star Fantasy things. So you had better get some off the while he's got 'em. And he's got all these ribbons or 'disks or' things or 'ribbons or' things so you might want some of 'em or will Dudes!

Well, that's it then Dudes. Hope you're having up to the New Year. Bye Dudes

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THE M E A S U R E M E N T

END

FRANK B. THREKLE ACE!

Don't forget ACE has always been published on the first Thursday of every month, but it now appears on the shelves on the 5th of every month instead.

The new system will make a big difference in terms of coverage and convenience, so think B. Threkle ACE (EEMAF) again! (19)

SOOPER FAMICOM!

The Super Famicom looks cooler and cooler. Although there are still very few games available for it on the grey market, there's still one thing about the machine that may give it a few heavyweight surprises during the coming year: It's the holes... you see, you...

Most consoles don't have that many holes. There's usually a couple for joysticks, one for the monitor/TV, and the more successful consoles usually manage to have one for cartridges.

The Super Famicom, however, has holes for all sorts of things. And there is now no doubt that one use for them will be the provision of a CD-ROM drive in the "very near future."

NEC have already proved that consoles and CD's go well together, with almost 60% of the world's installed base of CD-ROM drives being attached to PC Engines. However, the Super Famicom has sufficient processing clout to do clever things with a CD-ROM, and Nintendo may well be considering adding CD+G and CD+video capability into the peripheral unit. By linking the console to the audio CD-market, the company could spread even further the penetration of games units. Good news for all of us...



ANOTHER CHANCE TO SHIMI!

You, we're giving you another chance to demonstrate your inventiveness wit and ingenuity. Our photograph shows two well-known Italian toy figures. We want to know who they are and what their New Year Resolutions were. Send your entry in a postcard to ACE (Editorial Department), One Street, 10111 Pennsylvania Lane, Houston, TX 77036. We want US worth of self-addressed for the most featured entry... so don't forget your address and machine (phone) (listing soon February 20th 1991).

Now that we're safely ensconced in 1991, here are latter's awards to the industry for 1990...

1. The Darkest Business Decision of the Year
NEC for their continued offering over the PC Engine US release. Never in the field of games technology has a machine been wanted so badly by its fans and held up by so few.

2. The Most Outrageous Hype of the Year
Sengalee for their promotion of the SE Brothers. It's hardly no coincidence that the first Sengalee SE May title will be called Gods...

3. The Most Deceased Phrase of the Year
Virus really. Closely followed by Co-Operations.

4. The Dullest Ad of the Year
Labsell's Ram ad was, well, lark.

5. Most Disappointing Footy Game of the Year

Oh...all of them. Kick Off 2 is not a footy game. It's a way of life.

6. The ABC Repeaters Award for Dope Mo Dibs, for giving us more of what we've seen before than what we've seen before.

7. The Fullest in Water Again Award

SAB. You'll never play it again...

8. The Most Sensible Business Decision of the Year

The Low price cut.

9. The Best Attended Press Conference of the Year

Microsoft's launch for MS Peak Platform at Bowdler Camp. The food, for SE, was fairly sufficient for Bill Bill Stealey, Martin PR Mac Math, and the ACE Editor.

10. The Most Obvious Piece of Padding at the End of An Issue

There have been no nominations for this category yet.

And now, to close, a word from our new Editor, Jim Douglas.

I am to make this a magazine for mature road warriors. Not shockers to anyone who disagrees...

NEXT MONTH'S RED HOT!

...and we mean it! Not only will you be able to luxuriate in a full exclusive preview of *WhiteWolf 2: Flames of Warlock*, but there'll also be a special cover-mounted gift to commemorate this magazine's latest magmagazine.

Hot on the heels, blaring within... with a special preview of *Peapack 2*, the latest news from the massive CES show in Las Vegas, development reports from Electronic Arts' US office, and up-to-the-minute information on the latest Caribbean video releases. And if that's not enough for you, we'll also have the second part of our Greatest Games of All Time listing and a weekly report from the Toy Fair.

ACE 42, out on Friday, February 28th - burning with the white heat of games technology!

DEAR MARGARET!

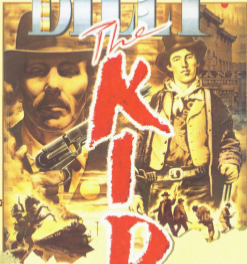
I like the magazine so much, I want to buy the company. Unfortunately, because I am not as rich as Bill Gates (the owner and main shareholder) I cannot. I guess I'll have to write for a couple of the very reasonably priced March issue of ACE Magazine (Advanced Computer Entertainment), that out on Friday February 28th, until he forces in your debt. And I will get my free cover-mounted gift!

My name: _____

My address: _____

BILLY

The KID



"BILLY THE KID" IS A 1 OR 2 PLAYER ACTION STRATEGY GAME SET IN THE WILD WEST WHICH ALLOWS THE PLAYER TO ASSUME THE IDENTITY OF EITHER A GUN TOTTING ESCORTRADO WITH A HEART OF GOLD, BILLY HIMSELF, OR HIS 12-BEST FRIEND. SHARP SHOOTING, LAW ABIDING DEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY, SHERIFF PAT GARRETT.

THEY ARE IN LOVE WITH THE SAME WOMAN AND ULTIMATELY IN A NAIL BITING CLIMATIC FINALE, ARE GOING TO END UP POINTING GUNS AT EACH OTHER. ONLY ONE CHARACTER CAN WALK AWAY FROM THIS SHOWDOWN.

BUT THAT'S JUST THE WAY OF THE WEST.

ATARI ST
CBM AMIGA

ocean

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NIGHT SHIFT.



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