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PLAY METER

Volume 6, Number 7

April 15, 1980



Amusement Operators Expo



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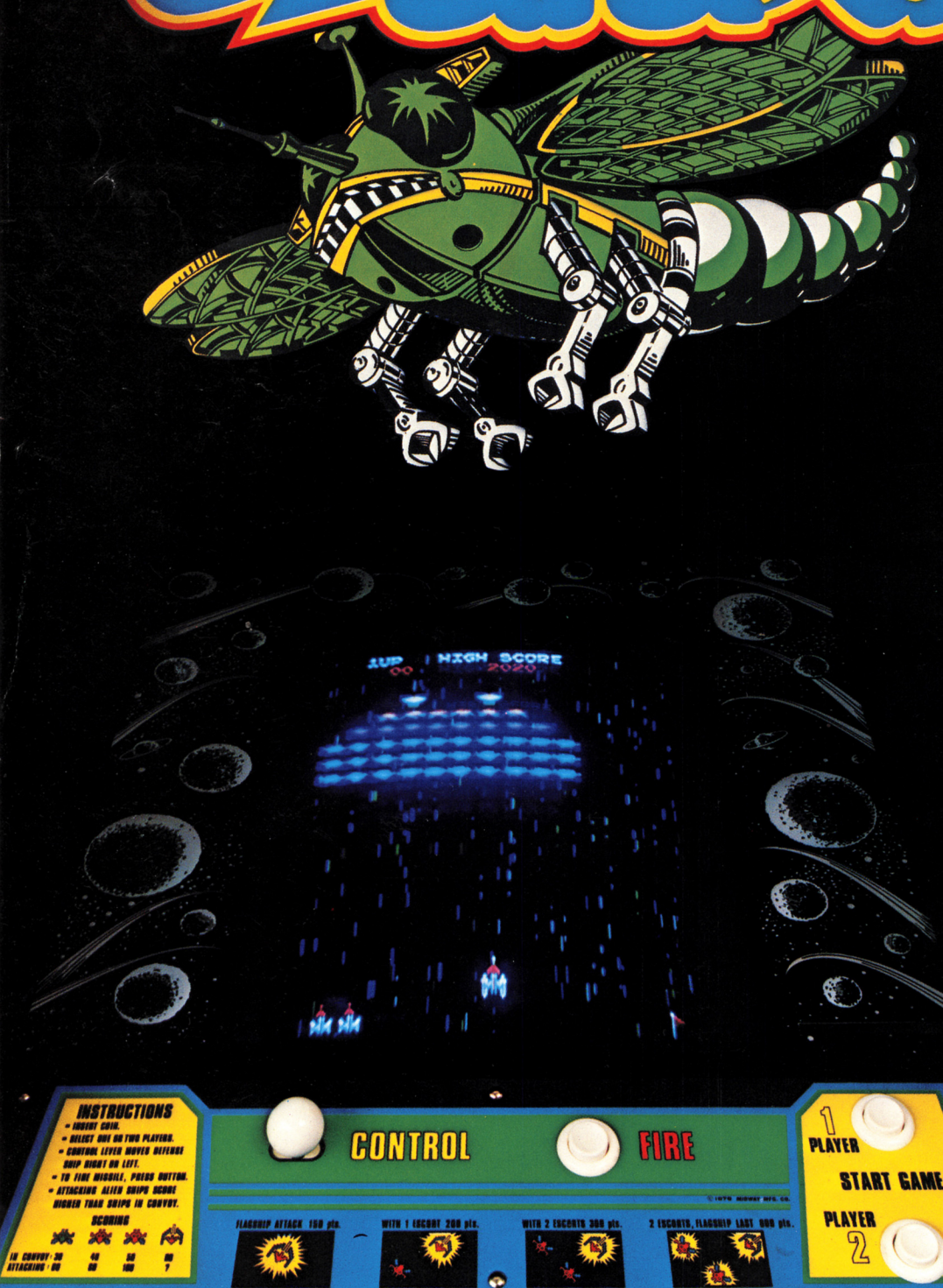
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PLAY METER

Volume 6, Number 7
April 15, 1980

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From the Editor

A very special welcome goes out to the operators, distributors, and manufacturers who came from all parts of the United States to attend the first ever Amusement Operators Expo.

After two long years of planning and preparation, I believe that we have succeeded in producing a trade show for the industry that is geared to the needs of today's operator. So our warmest thanks and deepest appreciation is extended to you who have supported us with your confidence. By your participation in this first ever industry event, you have demonstrated your faith in our concept and your determination to better yourself and the industry. We are confident you will not only see a lot, but learn a lot also.

The seminar portion of the show has received an overwhelming response and has contributed greatly to its success. The exhibit hall has been sold out completely, and the exhibitors represented here have gone out of their ways to display a wealth of new games, products, and services useful during the upcoming arcade season.

To get the most out of the show, we urge our visitors to attend as many seminars as possible and spend as much time as possible evaluating all the new equipment. The seminar program is designed to expose you to fresh new ways of running your operation. The exhibits are there to enable you to preview and evaluate all the new games that are about to be released.

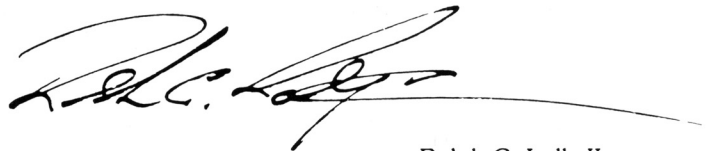
We are delighted with your participation and support and wish you the best trade show ever.

This show has been something new for us, of course. And comments we've gotten about putting it on haven't all been exactly complimentary either. But we are certainly heartened and encouraged by those of you—from all ranks within the industry—who have said that what we have tried here is something good for the industry.

As someone told me recently, "It takes guts to do this because you're leaving yourself open to criticism from unthinking parties."

It's a comment we appreciated because it has not been an easy task for any of us. But I feel we have prevailed and, hopefully, the industry will be the better because of it. The criticism is to be expected whenever you try something that is new and right.

Again, thank you for your support of the Amusement Operators Expo and our magazine. Our goal has always been—and will remain—to provide for the betterment of this industry.



Ralph C. Lally II
Editor and Publisher

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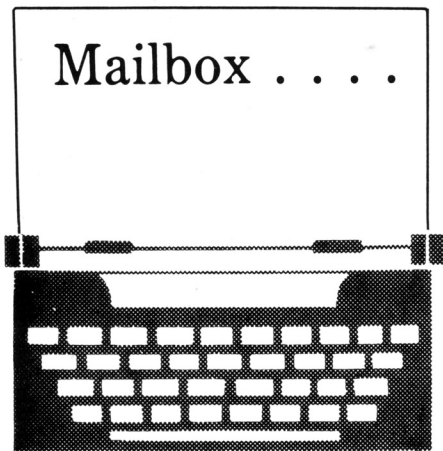
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An old timer

As per your request in the December 15, 1979 issue of PLAY METER on old timers, I'd like to give you the name of Frank A. Toce, who is now 75 years old and is still operating. He started when he was a little boy, with his father.

**Walden Courville
Melody Music Co.
Lake Charles, Louisiana**

Another old timer

In the "Mailbox" section of the December 15 issue there was a letter about the "Old Timers". I'm writing to you about my husband, who started in the coin machine business in 1936. He worked as a serviceman until 1958, when we started our own business.

He was born in April of 1906, so he will be 74 this coming April. He is still active in the business and runs his own service calls. We don't have too many locations, and since he has diabetes now, he has slowed up some, but he works every day with no idea of "retiring."

**Mrs. Roy (Alice H.) Fruit
A and R Entertainment
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Library info

The Jukebox Issue we recently received was well done as always; however, I was disappointed to find that in both in depth articles nothing was written about record libraries.

Record Libraries always have

been an important part of a jukebox route but should be extra important in these times of inflation. If all operators could do a good job of finding requests we could cut down on costs by not buying so many new records that won't play anyhow.


In our particular case, we inherited a huge library, but we aren't using it efficiently. The system used is following the trade services publications—one can look up the title or artist alphabetically in the book.

There are many problems with

this system, one being that a record may only appear in a book for two months, so to find a particular song, one must look through many books.

Only our large major labels like Columbia, Capital, MCA, RCA etc. are filed alphabetically with sub sections for known artists. It is very difficult to work with and I am in great need of ways to improve our system.

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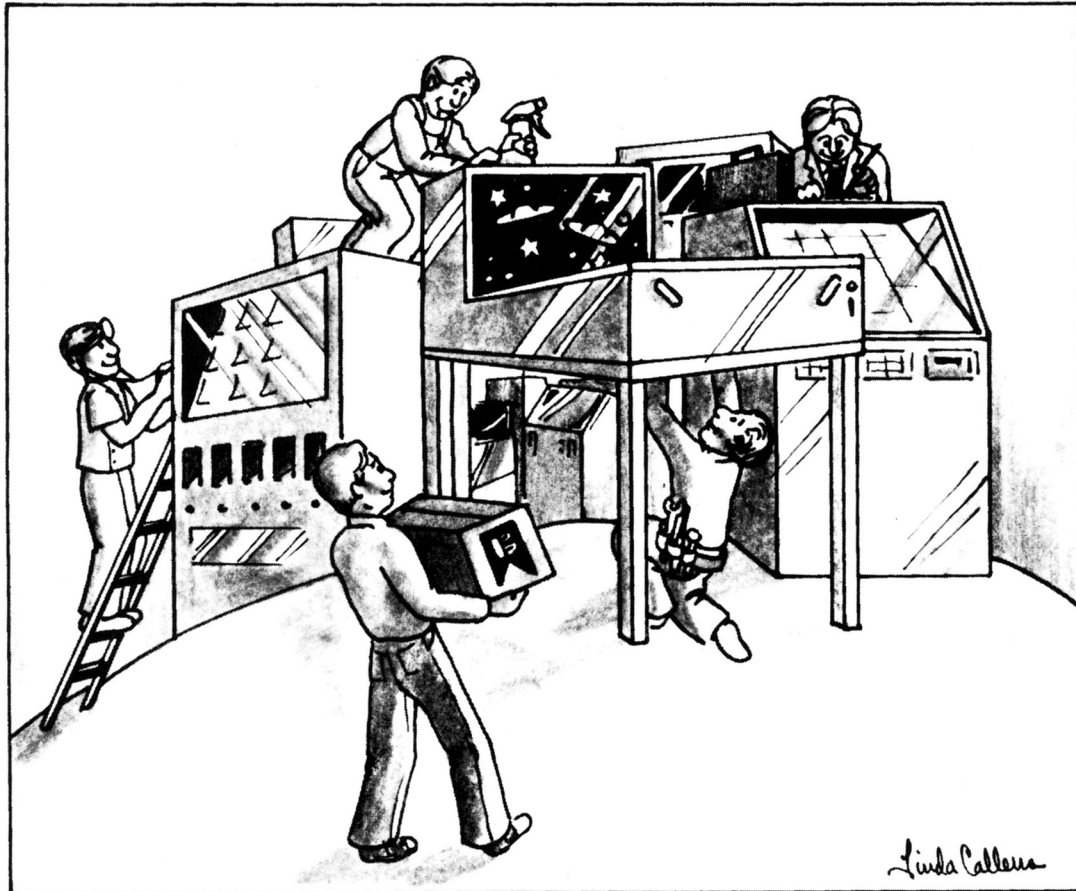
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Spring Show Preview:

Pinball heavyweights and video dynamite to debut in New Orleans

By David Pierson

Besides the 24 operator seminars and besides the peculiar charm of the city of New Orleans—there is something else that makes the Amusement Operators Expo all the more attractive to exhibitors and convention goers alike. And that is the show's timing.

Because of it, we can probably expect to see an unusual number of heavyweight games at the March 20—22 exhibition in New Orleans.

The reason is this: game manufacturers in particular contend the industry has long needed a show in the spring to coincide with the industry's peak buying season.

A careful study of when the year's best games are produced seems to bear out this contention. For, although a fair number of new game heavyweights are introduced during the fall and winter months, an even larger number of them make their opening bows during the spring months.

Consider as evidence PLAY METER's annual operators survey, which determines the top twenty pinballs and top twenty videos of the year. PLAY METER's top twenty games in both categories, because of the wide sampling, generally are regarded by the industry as a whole as the year's "winners".

Now, considering the production start-up dates for these winners, we find that the game manufacturers' contention for a spring show is well-founded. For, in fact, a near majority of these games are released in the spring.

Here is the evidence, the tabulation of how many of those forty

game models (twenty pinballs and twenty videos) were released each month:

January — 4
February — 4
March — 5
April — 3
May — 3
June — 9
July — 0
August — 2
September — 4
October — 1
November — 1
December — 4

In the four months from November through February where the timing of the AMOA Show is best for the game, thirteen winners started their production runs. But, in the following four months, from March through June, where a spring show would be the best timing for the game, twenty winners (or exactly one-half of all the year's winners) started their production runs. In other words, inside of a four-month period last year, this industry produced fifty percent of all its winning games, and that period was in the spring.

For the record, the slow months of July through October showed only seven winners.

In the area of pinball, eight of the top twenty games started their production runs during the AMOA prime time months, and nine of the pins started their production runs during the next four-month period. But in the video game category, where the new game releases are

probably more critical because of the greater chances of copying, only five of the top twenty games were produced during the four-month AMOA show time slot. By contrast, eleven of the twenty were produced in the next four-month time slot.

Why all this concern with timing? What does it mean to the convention goer? What does it mean to the operator who is in the market for new games?

It means manufacturers will have fewer tricks up their sleeves because there won't be a great concern with other manufacturers ripping off their games before they produce them themselves.

In an interview in the January issue of PLAY METER, Ralph C. Lally II, editor and publisher of PLAY METER and the sponsor of the AOE Show, said that he felt a spring date for an industry show was essential because "we've found that game manufacturers are hesitant to release new pieces at the AMOA Show in November, knowing that they will not be fully geared up to start selling those games until the early spring. And the reason for their hesitancy is that if they premier a good game at the AMOA Show, it gives their competitors about three or four months lead time to copy the new game. So, by the time the peak buying season hits, their competitors will be in an excellent position to steal their thunder and capture a substantial part of the market for that piece."

Lally's comments were borne out almost immediately. When American visitors attended the IMA Show in

Frankfurt, West Germany and the ATE Show in London, England, late in January, they found about fifteen versions of a new video game that had been well-received at the AMOA Show. The game, *Galaxians*, which was designed by Namco of Japan and licensed to Midway, was a big attraction at the November show—apparently not only to the distributors and operators there but also to some copycat manufacturers who wasted no time in manufacturing the game many had tabbed as the successor to *Space Invaders*.

By contrast, it should be pointed out that *Space Invaders*, which has proved to be an enigma in more ways than one, is a puzzle in this regard, as well. *Space Invaders* did not make a big splash at the AMOA Show. In fact, it was overlooked by many. Much of the attention was focused instead on the likes of Atari's *Football* and Exidy's *Star Fire*—two solid games in their own right. But why was *Space Invaders* overlooked? One reason seems to be that the great glut of new games at the AMOA Show helped obscure such a simple winning design.

And this suggests an interesting ploy which manufacturers may be starting to use to insure the exclusivity of their new games. It appears manufacturers may be trying to hide the winning games in their stables by surrounding them with several skill games which may or may not be manufactured or which may or may not be successful on location. In this way, by presenting a sheer gorge of new games at the earlier show, they can distract the attention of copycat manufacturers and keep to themselves their prized video possessions until they are ready to release them. And, in the meantime, they can give sneak previews for those few industry insiders.

If this theory is true—and, admittedly, it is all conjecture—then it follows that if the lead time is stripped away, manufacturers will not have to resort to such ploys for a show in the spring. The really big one won't be hidden behind a curtain or up in an exclusive hospitality suite. Instead, it'll be right there on the floor.

That means it'll be easier for the convention goers because there won't be as many blind games to sift through, and with all those no-count games out of the way, only the real winners will be left.

So, with that short scenario of the manufacturers' chess game behind us, what can we expect to see at the AOE March 20—22?

In the pinball department, we can expect to see the heavyweights putting out some heavyweight pinballs.

And, speaking of heavyweights,

Stern Electronics will be previewing its latest about boxing's greatest—*Ali*. It's a conventionally-sized pin that should attract a fair share of quarters simply because of the name and face recognition of the sports world's most famous figure. Also, two other pins, which were previewed at the AMOA Show and are now in full production—*Big Game* (Stern's wide body) and *Galaxy* (a conventionally-sized pin)—will be on display.

From Bally, there will be the conventionally-sized pin *Silverball Mania*, of course, and the company's next conventionally-sized pin about some heavyweight entertainers.

Also, the Bally people will be taking the wraps off their dynamite new wide body pin, *Space Invaders*. That's right—the name that made a killing for you in the video games market now comes to pinball-land. And it'll be interesting to see how Bally incorporated the video game's theme into a pinball game.

From Williams, which is still turning out one hot game after another, there'll be the wide body *Laser Ball* on display, but also a conventionally-sized pin which many Williams people think will be the *Flash* of 1980. It's *Firepower*, a captive ball game that features multi-player and multi-ball capabilities.

And Gottlieb, which will be showing off its new System 80 concept with *Spider Man* (a conventionally-sized pin), will also be exhibiting a new wide body game, *Circus*. To date, the Northlake, Illinois manufacturer is keeping close counsel about this one.

And, finally, Game Plan, which made its mark with *Sharpshooter*, will still be showing its *Coney Island* upright pin, its *Vegas* sitdown—and a new upright called *Super Nova*. So it looks as if, after a few quiet months, the pinball manufacturers will be busting loose with some really hot items.

In the video department, Midway will be showing both *Deluxe Space Invaders* and *Galaxians* in upright and cocktail models, as well as *Super Speed Race*, *Submarine*, *Phantom*, *18-Wheeler*, and a couple of surprises, including possibly a sports attraction game.

Exidy, which purchased Cinematronics' subsidiary, Vectorbeam, a few months back, will be showing its *Tailgunner 2* sitdown game and the ever-popular *Star Fire*, along with *Fire One*, *Side Trak*, and *Bandito*.

Universal USA has been making a big splash in the United States in recent months, and it intends to maintain that posture by showing both upright and cocktail versions of *Galaxy Wars*, *Cosmic Guerilla*, and

Cosmic Alien. The company will also be showing its sitdown driving game, *Getaway*.

Taito, which in the past had attracted enough attention to itself with *Space Invaders* and which most recently generated even more interest by opening a U.S. plant, will be showing a new space-type piece that a company spokesman says is not anything like *Space Invaders*—as far as the game theme, that is.

Also, Taito can be counted on to introduce a new video gun piece and a new cocktail table model. Of course, *Space Chaser* will be there in both upright and cocktail versions as well as *Field Goal*, a football game, in both configurations and a *Space Invaders* in a color cocktail version.

Gremlin will be featuring its Dual game concept with game programs of *Head-On*, *Invinco*, and *Deep Scan*. The San Diego-based company also will be featuring new cocktail tables in Dual and slim-line configurations. *Monaco GP* may be there, a company official reported, and a couple other new games.

IJS, the exclusive importers of Nichibutsu products from Japan, will be showing four videos—*Two in One Rolling Crash*, *Moon Alien*, *Moon Base*, and *Phase II*.

In the Cinematronics booth you can expect to see *Tailgunner*, of course. But, also, Cinematronics' officials promise a delightful new game surprise which they are keeping especially mum about.

Game-a-Tron will be showing four upright gaming video games—*Space Zap*, *Thorobred*, *Draw Poker*, and *Stud Poker*.

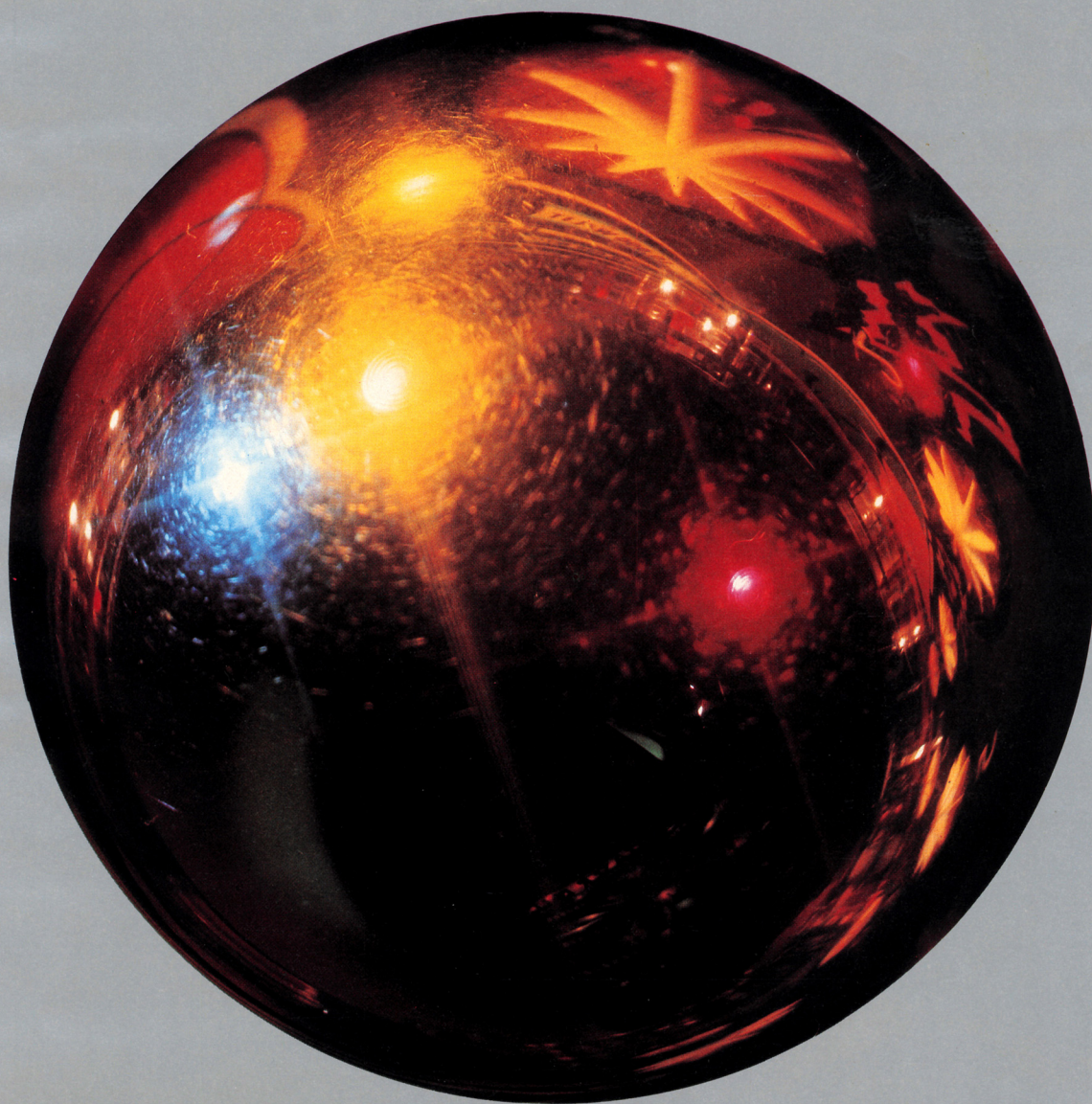
And Allied Leisure will be showing, in addition to its *Clay Shoot* arcade game, an updated version of *Space Bug*, and possibly another video piece. Also, possibly, the firm will be ready to show a special electro-mechanical arcade game relating to sports.

Other game manufacturers will include DUSA, which will be showing its two-player arcade piece, *Astro Ball*; and Zamperla, which will be showing two strength testing machines—*Punch Ball* and *Bull Machine*, as well as a coin-op helicopter ride.

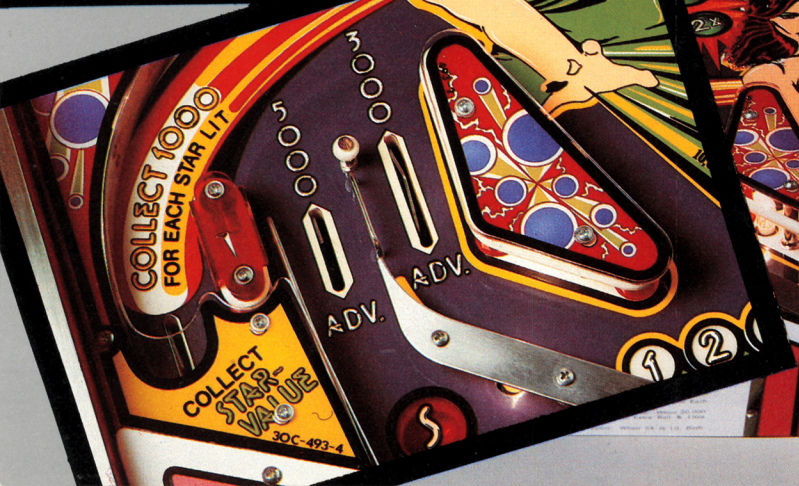
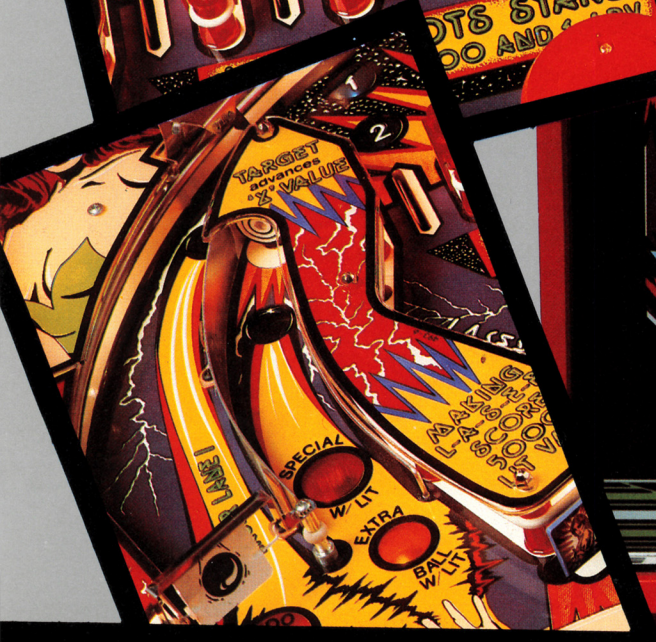
And so, the spring sweepstakes are upon us.

The pinball majors are coming now with their big ones, and in videos, the manufacturers are keeping hush-hush, not wanting anything to jeopardize the timing the AOE Show is providing for them. But, for the visitor to the Amusement Operators Expo, it can mean only one thing. There will be a lot of heavyweight equipment making its first debut at the industry's first spring show.

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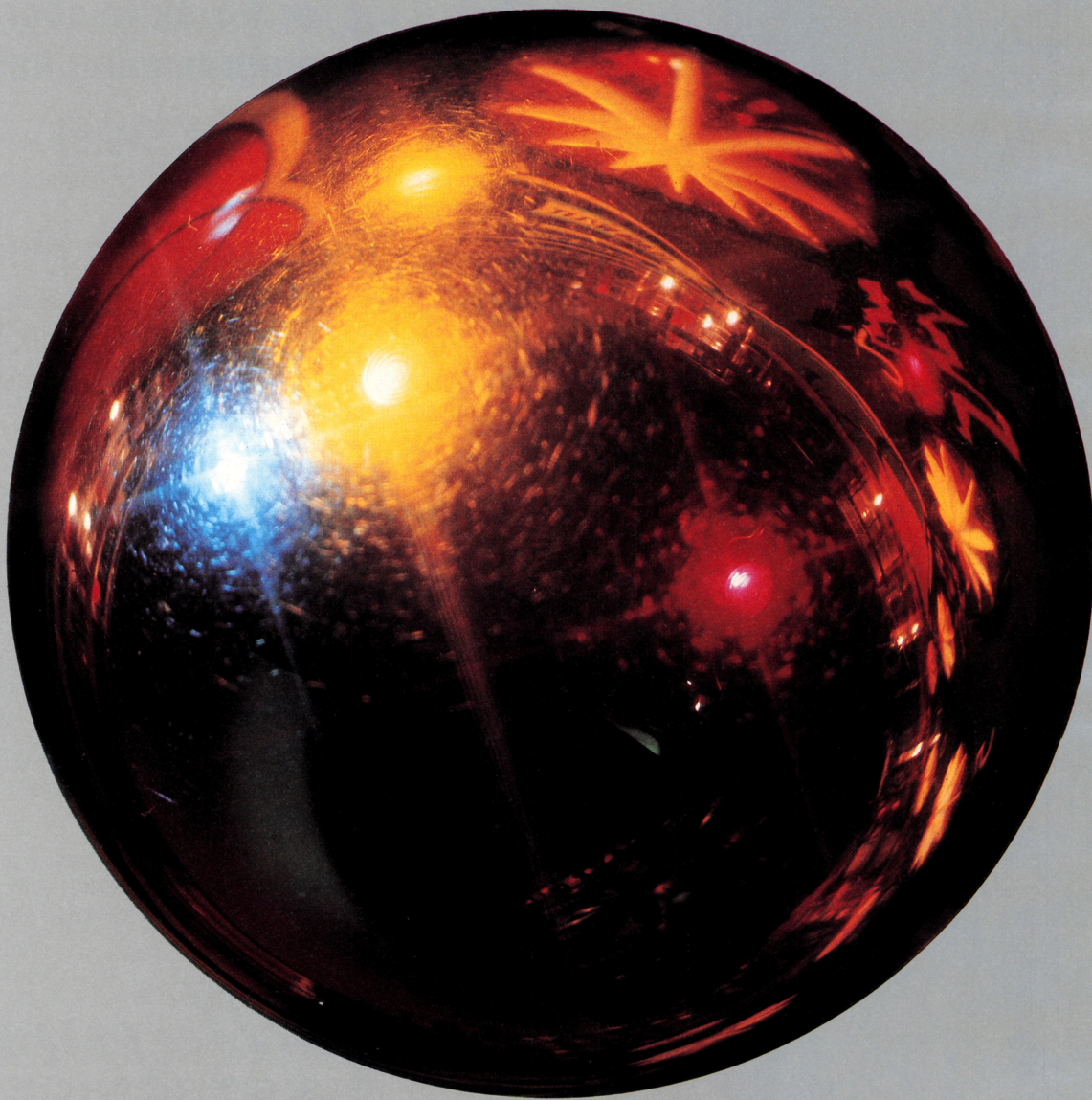
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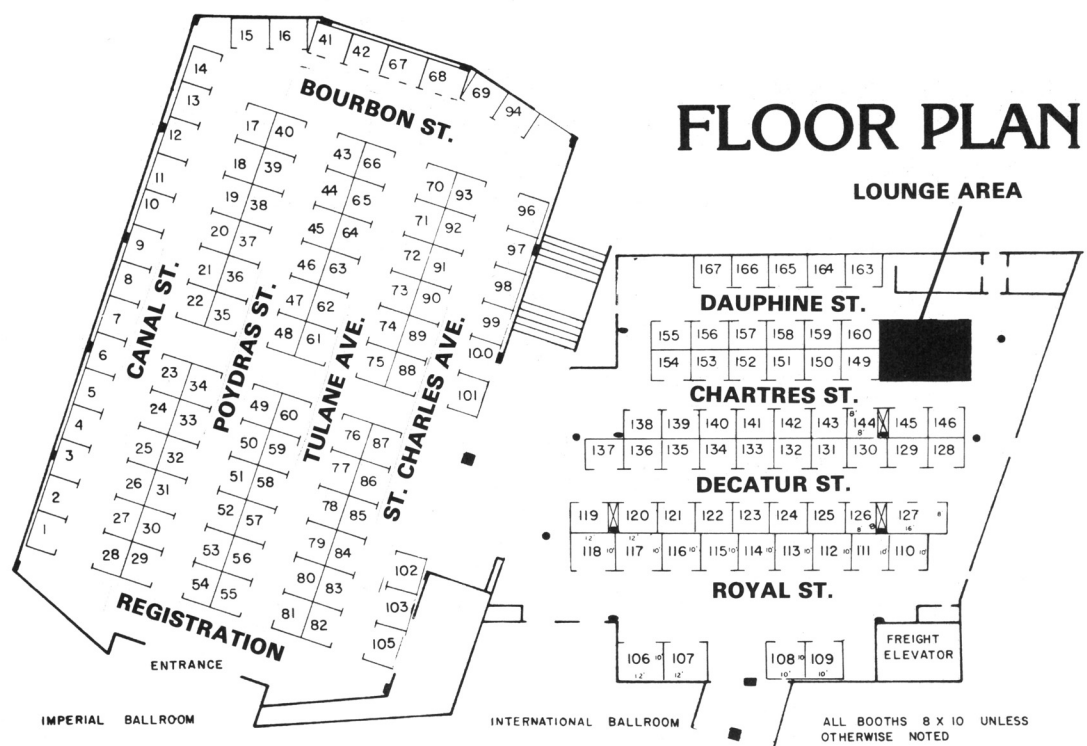
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Seminar Program

(What to bring and what to expect)

By Vicki Darlington

It's the feeling of many industry people that the Amusement Operators Expo's time has come. The AOE, which is set for the Fairmont Hotel in New Orleans March 20-22, is an event this industry has long needed to complement its present show setup.

The industry's only other show in the United States (the AMOA Show in Chicago) has been described by exhibitors and attendees alike as a show for distributors and manufacturers, a show that focuses almost exclusively on the exhibits.

The AOE, on the other hand, has been building a show for the third segment of the industry—the operators. The AOE's plan is to bring operators together for three days of idea sharing, information gathering, and new product buying. And that is an ambitious attempt for this industry.

What follows is a short description of many of those seminars so that you'll know what to bring and what to expect.

Mini-Tour and Foosball Promotions

"The reason operators should put on tournaments is so they can make money, not just try to be a nice guy. I've seen it from both ends—I'm a player and I'm involved in the business end, too."

Joe McCarthy, president of M&M Distributing Company in St. Louis, knows whereof he speaks—he's put on many tournaments and determined them to be a profitable source of revenue.

In "The Mini-Tour and General Foosball Promotions", which will be held on March 20 beginning at 10 a.m. and running until 11:30 a.m., McCarthy will discuss the framework for setting up leagues—how to run tournaments to make them successful. Increasing business opportunities is the bottom line of the course, and all aspects of foosball promotion—

which includes how to schedule, promote, and conduct the event—are covered with profitability in mind.

Handouts will include a brochure on how to promote a tournament, courtesy of Tournament Soccer, amateur program information from Tornado, and an outline of the course.

McCarthy, who also resides in St. Louis, Missouri, is president of the company he formed in 1975.

It's Time for Schooling

Are your employees good? Are they honest? Do they need more training?

Art Seglin, an instructor in vending machine repair for the Hudson County Area Vocational-Technical School will examine these and other questions along with operators who attend his class on "It's Time for Schooling" set for Thursday morning, March 20, from 10 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

The class is designed to teach operators proper personnel evaluation techniques. For instance, at class beginning operators will be asked to rate two of their employees—one as a collector and one as a mechanic. After that is completed, a following sheet will be handed out which will require rating of the same two employees according to Seglin's evaluation techniques. A comparison of the two sheets may surprise some attendees.

Sources of new personnel, wage scales, training requirements, and other facets of personnel problems also will be covered. And training facilities available that operators may be unaware of will be noted, as well as utilization of good training techniques.

A description of the "ideal" training situation will end the class.

Seglin, a resident of Maplewood, New Jersey, will hand out a self-designed pamphlet to follow the lecture and worksheets. A pencil or

ballpoint pen are the only utensils operators need bring.

Starting and Managing the Arcade

Finding a location for an arcade is only one step in the process. Knowing how to put it all together and finding professional management after it's open, among other things, are equally important.

Ted Olson, president of Time-Zone, a division of Aladdin's Castle, will give the straight dope on "Starting and Managing an Arcade" on Thursday, March 20 beginning at 2 p.m. and running until 3:30 p.m.

The best location must be evaluated by many factors: the economic makeup of the area around it, demographics, kind of ethnic mix, cost, if it's in a shopping center and other considerations if it's not located in a shopping center.

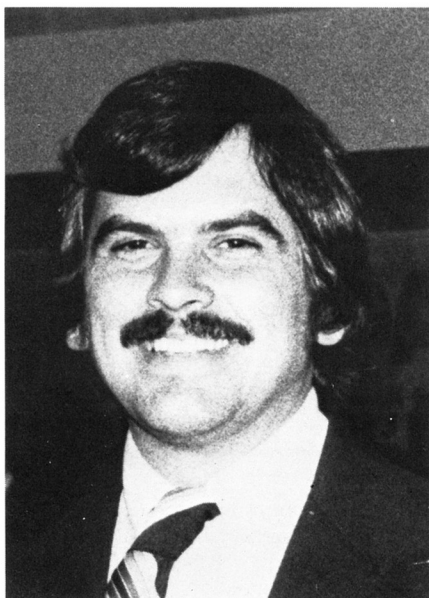
What it all probably boils down to is this, Olson noted: "Don't open up across from a church."

The omnipresent landlord also must be dealt with. Price must be negotiated in terms of the contract and, before you sign a lease, check with the city on licensing requirements might be in order. Is there any kind of variance that must be gone through? Construction work, too, must be considered—carpet, graphics, paint, partitions, etc.

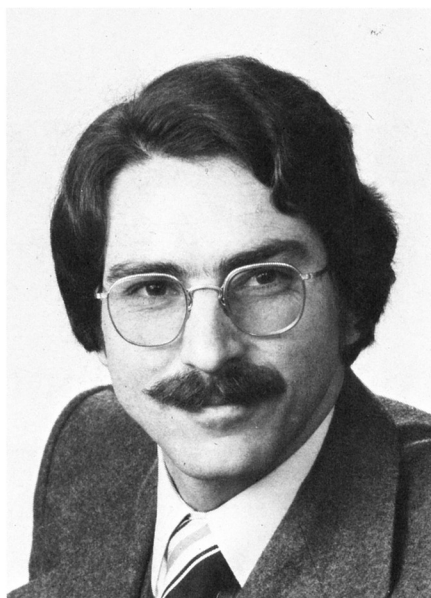
Cash controls must also be observed. And, should you use money or tokens or both? Locating a manager also can be tough—but Olson has some helpful guidelines in his Thursday seminar.

An outline of the course, which will follow the lecture, will be handed out. No supplies are needed, although the Time-Zone executive requests that attendees bring "lots of questions."

Olson, who resides and works in San Jose, California, has a background in finance, although he has been active in the coin-op industry for eight years.



Joe McCarthy



Bill Arkush



Millie McCarthy

Running a Pool League

"It's just phenomenal what it's done for us," Dick Hawkins, instructor in the Thursday, March 20 session 203, 'How You Can Benefit from a Pool League', told *PLAY METER* recently.

Five years ago, Hawkins started with one league with six teams, five men on each team. Today, in 1980, his operation features 5,000 people in men's teams, women's teams and mixed doubles. "And it's helped the relationship between us and our customers," Hawkins added.

Hawkins, who is president of D&R Star in Rochester, Minnesota, reported that his firm has purchased a lot of location tables back from his customers, installed its own equipment, and them put leagues in. "It puts dollars in their tills. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights, which are normally slow, we come in and make it one of their better nights by organizing leagues," he said.

"For example, take a bowling alley. Take the league play out of the bowling alley and what sort of an alley would it be? Not much," Hawkins noted.

"Pool leagues, however, bring people out on weeknights for organized play. At \$2.50 per player—shoot for three hours, fifteen games that last two and a half to three hours, all he receives is additional play. The tavern owner receives additional beverage sales. The player is playing for his own money on a per point basis. If he earns 500 points throughout the season—worth 25 cents a point—then his prize money is \$125.

"Many operators say 'Gee, I just don't have the time to spend on the

streets.' It's going to take a lot of hard work to implement," Hawkins said. But apparently it pays off—in hard cash.

Sample score sheets, league rules, patches from the BCA and D&R Star Pool League will be shown. No special supplies are needed.

Hawkins has operated D&R Star since 1963.

New Equipment Purchasing

"New Equipment Purchasing for the 1980s", session 301 which is set for Friday, March 21, 10-11:30 a.m., will be taught by Fred Skor, vice president, World Wide Distributors.

Faced with the stark realities of rising costs, the owner/operator must become familiar with the various factors leading to a wise purchasing decision.

Skor, who has been with World Wide Distributors for thirty years, will examine these factors with an eye toward selectivity, reliability, and supplier analysis.

Skor, a Northbrook, Illinois, resident, works in Chicago.

Shopping Centers, Arcade Leasing Internal Cash Controls

"I started in business in shopping centers and I've been involved in shopping centers with almost every project since then, so I've had to be very familiar with establishing them," Jon Daugherty, president of LeMans Developmenty Corporation, reported recently.

He will share the knowledge he's gleaned on Saturday, March 22, beginning at 2 p.m. and running until 3:30 p.m. at session 603, "Shopping Centers and Arcade Leasing". A host of national arcade company executives and shopping center developers also will be on hand to augment his considerable expertise.

The shopping center is recognized as one of the prime factors in the growth of the amusement industry. This session will discuss the factors in finding and selecting locations within a shopping center, negotiating leases, and analyzing the costs involved.

Daugherty, who charts nine years in the industry, acts as a consultant in the construction of amusement arcades in shopping centers.

No special supplies are needed. Brochures will be distributed.

In a second seminar, Daugherty will bring together a panel for a discussion of "Internal Cash Controls and the Absentee Owner".

This session will take place Friday, March 21 from 10-11:30 a.m.

Panel members will speak from various areas of expertise—including token operations, electronic metering systems, locked and sealed boxes, and polygraph testing.

Basic controls in business practice, such as reporting procedures, meter readings, etc., also will be touched on.

Although participating companies will supply brochures, no special supplies need be brought.

Daugherty, who has been in the amusement arcade business for nine years, started out building big amusement centers in shopping centers all around the country.



Jon Daugherty

Daugherty, a consultant in the construction of amusement arcades in shopping centers all around the country, had to learn good internal cash controls, which he'll share with those attending session 302.

National Promotion

"We're talking about promotions, a common denominator," Millie McCarthy, president of the New York State Coin Machine Association, declared recently.

"In fact, I think it's one area of business where we can all get along, from the player to the manufacturer. The bottom line here, of course, is profit, and for that reason, from location owner to manufacturer, it should be a common bond," she added.

Session 303, "National Promotion — The Common Denominator", slated for Friday, March 21, beginning at 10 a.m. and running until 11:30 a.m., will feature a panel of promotion experts who will discuss the key points necessary in initiating a national promotion campaign.

The roles of the consumer, location owner and manufacturer will be highlighted during the session. A good understanding of what may be expected from a coordinated promotional effort—and the part it plays—will be featured.

No special supplies are needed.

Troubleshooting Concepts

The parametric analyzer will be the focus of Bill Arkush's four-part workshop on troubleshooting Friday



Carol Kantor

and Saturday, both morning (10-11:30 a.m.) and afternoon (2-3:30 p.m.) sessions to be held on each day.

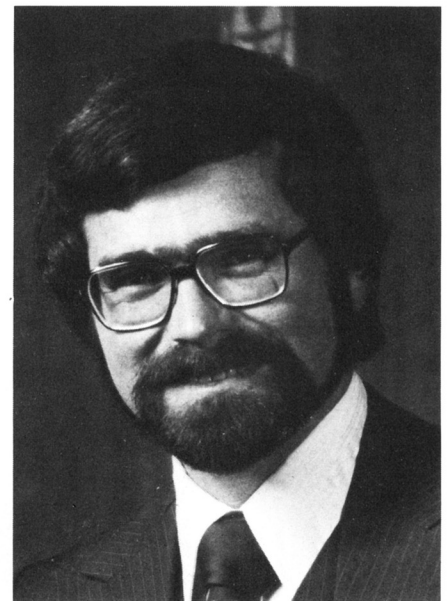
The series, entitled "Troubleshooting Concepts I-IV", will analyze the procedure by which technicians service various types of equipment.

The first seminar/workshop, which is set for Friday morning, March 21, between 10-11:30 a.m., session 304, will look at the analysis of sub-systems and major function component assemblies, with an eye on the identification of those areas which are in fault. Sub-assembly architecture component evaluation—such as in jukeboxes, vending machines, arcade pieces, and generation-one video games—will be covered.

Session 404, "Troubleshooting Concepts II", scheduled for Friday afternoon, March 21, familiarizes the technician with and operator with various types of test equipment. The proper selection of equipment, based both on need and application, will be covered, with emphasis placed on the use of certain pieces of test equipment.

The third seminar/workshop, session 504, slated for Saturday, March 22, between 10-11:30 a.m., will deal with the identification of individual component problems with a sub-assembly. Highlights of this lecture will include wave form analysis and device architecture.

"Troubleshooting Concepts IV", session 604 and the last in the Arkush series, will be held on Saturday, March 22, at 2-3:30 p.m. The understanding of processor architecture, debugging concepts, and interpreting data, and the interplay of memories will be the thrust of



Charles C. Ross

this lecture.

Arkush, a San Jose, California, resident, has been employed by Exidy for a year and a half as micro-electronics division manager. He presently is involved in work with solid-state physics of semiconductor devices.

The Profitable Distributorship

"The Profitable Distributorship", session 401 offered Friday, March 21 starting at 2 p.m. and running until 3:30 p.m., is open to *distributors only*.

Taught by Chuck Arnold, general manager, North East region of Rowe International, the course will feature a generic financial statement of a mythical distributorship. The topic? Increasing the bottom line—probably the four most important words a businessman ever hears.

Arnold, who runs one of the most profitable distributorships in the United States, has been in the distributing line for three years. He worked for a games manufacturer for nine years before that.

He will discuss the "hidden profit centers" of the distributorship, including freight, shop and services, and parts. A favorable profit margin will seem within reach by course end.

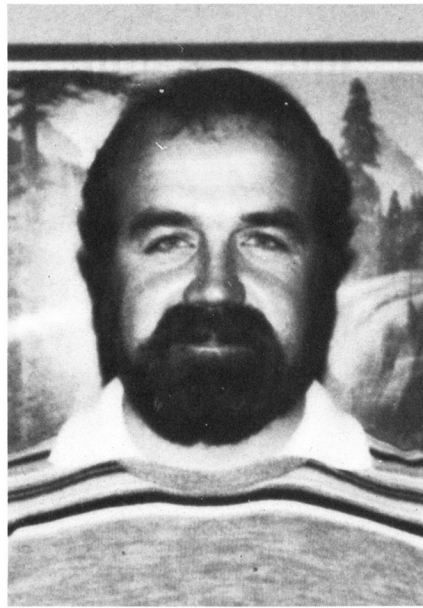
Attendees may bring their own financial statements for comparison if they so desire, although it is not necessary.

Old Game Play Appeal

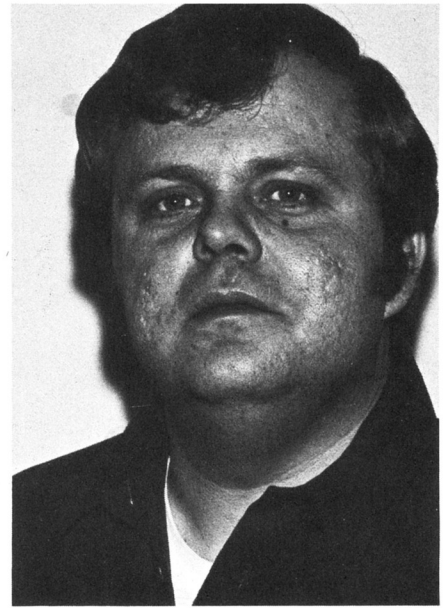
Modification is the name of the game in Tom Howarth's Friday,



Art Seglin



Ted Olson



Tom Howarth

March 21 course running from 2 p.m. until 3:30 p.m., "Old Game Play Appeal: Use Your Imagination".

Dusting off old equipment to make what Howarth calls "hot rods", or using part of one game and part of another to create an updated game, will be the focus of the class. Electrical changes relating to power distribution considerations, using LEDs to display game status, mounting monitors, adding color to video, designing new control panels, working with plexiglass and doing away with non-pertinent graphics will be touched on in the class.

Class participation is encouraged. Howarth will report on various innovations that he originated in game modification and hopes to hear of others from the class. "I plan on drawing ideas out of the class to create a 'rap session' atmosphere," the industry veteran noted.

Howarth, who is a resident of Marlton, New Jersey, is chief engineer for his own company, Amusement Game Services of Medford, New Jersey, which repairs logic boards, designs and builds add-on products. His latest accomplishment was the design of a sound system for *Ski Ball*.

Handouts will be given out. No special supplies are needed for attendance.

Marketing and the Coin-Op Business

Setting a marketing program in a realistic way to meet promotional objectives will be the thrust of Carol Kantor's seminar—workshop 403, "Creative Marketing and the Coin-Op Business", set for Friday, March 21 from 2-3:30 p.m.

Kantor, who is president of Business Builders/A Full Service Marketing Agency, will give attendees some tools with which to work to develop their own creative marketing strategies. Hypothetical situations will be analyzed to help those who attend the class learn to develop their own creative marketing abilities.

Promotion, too, is a very important aspect of marketing that will be covered. The advertising and publicity of any operation both much mesh for maximum marketing efficiency.

Kantor requests prospective attendees to begin thinking about very specific objectives on how they want to increase their revenue and profitability. Should new people be brought into the location? Should the play level of current players be increased? Or should there be more cooperative promotion between the location and self and possibly outside sources?

Special events—obtaining proper publicity and evaluating the results—also will be covered.

"I hope this can be an enjoyable session where we can share ideas as a class. I'm looking for a lot of participation, rather than a straight lecture format," Kantor reported.

Return on Investment Depreciation

Depreciation and its impact on business profitability will be the thrust of this Saturday, March 22 workshop—seminar which starts at 10 a.m. and runs until 11:30 a.m., conducted by Charles C. Ross.

A brief review of how depreciation

is computed, as well as the various methods operators should be using to determine it, will be given (See *PLAY METER* January 15, February 15 and March 15, 1979 for the three part series on depreciation by Charles C. Ross). Also, Ross will clear up common misconceptions about depreciation, the most prominent of which is the feeling on the part of many operators that money can be made from depreciation.

Ross will show operator-attendees how to structure an effective depreciation system so that net income can reflect depreciation expense for each location.

"Depreciation is a very real thing," Ross noted, "and it's something that many operators don't give proper attention."

Handouts on how to compute depreciation and setting up an effective depreciation system will be given out. An overhead projector with transparencies will be utilized, as well.

Business profitability from both a return on investment and marginal cost/marginal revenue standpoint will be examined in Charles C. Ross's Saturday, March 22 workshop beginning at 2 p.m. and running until 3:30 p.m., "Return on Investment and Business Profitability".

Profitability, of course, is the key word in the course. Ross will go over the three financial statements which help determine whether a business is profitable — income statement, retained earnings statement, and the balance sheet.

The "how-to's" of an operation are also covered: How return on investment is computed; how it is done by location; how to implement your accountant or bookkeeper's analysis; and how to make decisions

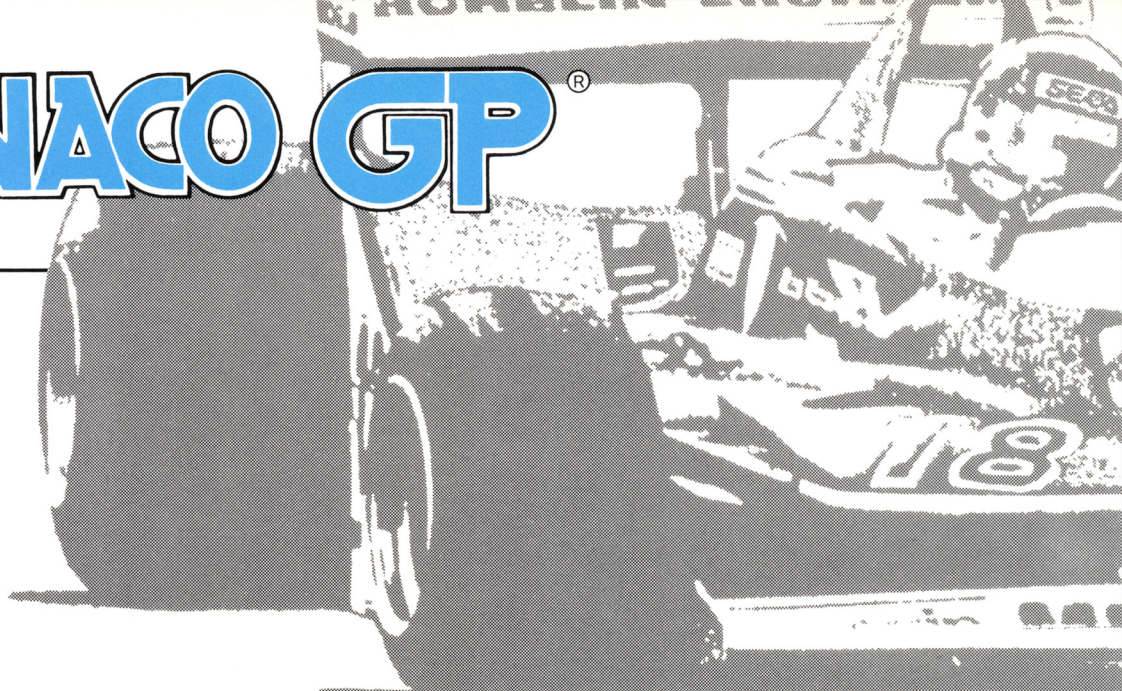
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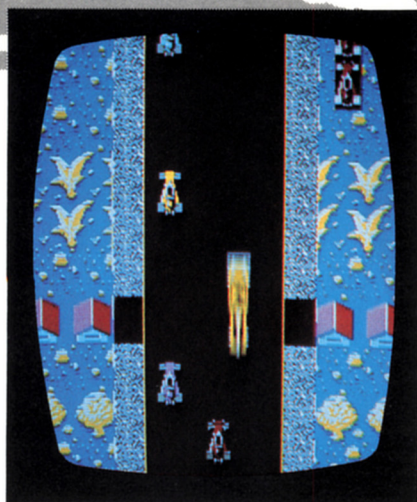
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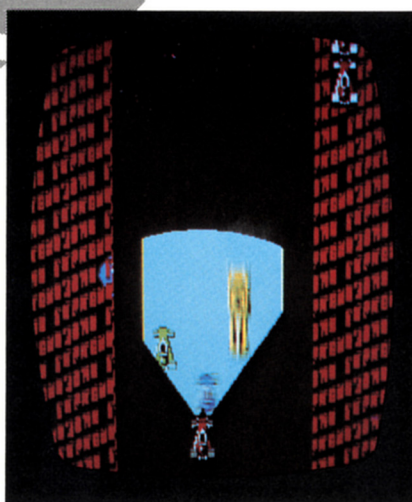
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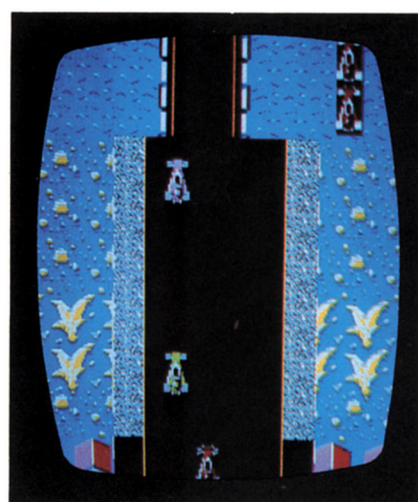
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Challenging obstacles!

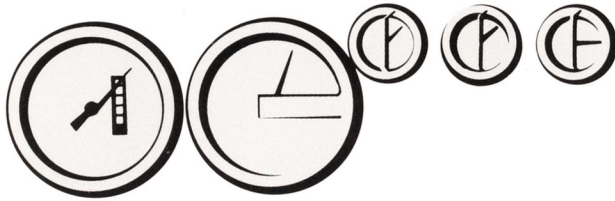


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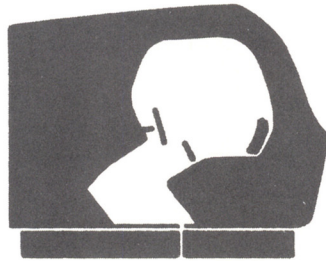
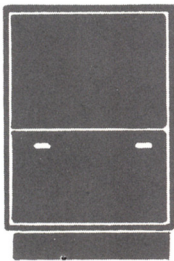
MONACO GP[®]

Controls



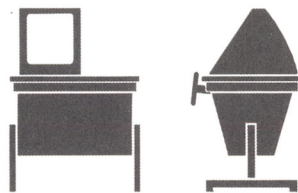
MONACO GP player controls include a padded racing steering wheel. A stick-shift lever to increase the RPM's. A responsive accelerator pedal. Even a full complement of working instrument gauges!

Cabinet Models



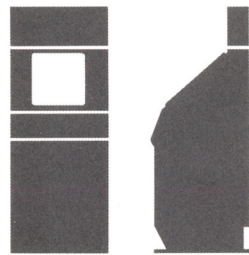
The MONACO GP Cockpit cabinet is built for player appeal. Its contoured bucket seat gives an exciting race car feeling. And the colorful racing graphics are a real eye-grabber.

27 ½"W x 59"H x 67"D
69.85cmW x 149.86cmH x 170.18cmD
120V - 200W - 50-60Hz
20" color CRT
330 lbs./150 kg.



MONACO GP's Cocktail model brings gran prix thrills to the social setting. Authentic racing graphics make it stand out in any crowd — a real attention-getter.

22 ½"L x 34¼"W x 24 ½"H
57cmL x 87cmW x 62cmH
120V - 200W - 50-60Hz
20" color CRT
115 lbs./52 kg.



The Slimline gives you MONACO GP's big profit potential while taking very little space. Perfect for squeezing unlimited video fun into limited areas, MONACO GP's Slimline makes every inch count. And pay!

24"L x 25"W x 56 ½"H
61cmL x 63cmW x 144cmH
120V - 200W - 50-60Hz
20" color CRT
165 lbs./75 kg.

from their analysis. For instance, what is an acceptable return on investment? How does an operator go about determining that?

One area that many operators take for granted that Ross will scrutinize is that of the function of accountants and bookkeepers. What do they actually provide operators with? What do operators need from them?

Limited time will require that much of the information be compressed; to that end, an overhead projector will be used.

Attendees of this class may bring a calculator if they desire, although it is not a requirement.

Ross is an instructor of finance and accounting at Southwest Texas State University where he teaches corporate finance, accounting, financial institutions, investment analysis, and financial cases. He also serves on the Small Business Institute Committee at Southwest Texas State.

Ross acts as a consultant for several businesses in the Austin-San Antonio area. He holds an MBA degree from Southwest Texas State University.

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Play Meter Equipment Poll

Here are the April results of PLAY METER's subscriber survey ranking pinball and video games. Rankings are compared with games' standings in the March poll.

Top Pins

| APRIL | MARCH | APRIL | MARCH |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1. METEOR/Stern..... | 2 | 11. PLAYBOY/Bally..... | 11 |
| 2. FLASH/Williams..... | 1 | 12. FUTURE SPA/Bally..... | 14 |
| 3. GORGAR/Williams..... | 8 | 13. PARAGON/Bally..... | 6 |
| 4. STELLAR WARS/Williams..... | 4 | 14. STAR TREK/Bally..... | 15 |
| 5. GENIE/Williams..... | 12 | 15. SHARPSHOOTER/Game Plan..... | 9 |
| 6. KISS/Bally..... | 5 | 16. LASER BALL/Williams..... | — |
| 7. SUPERMAN/Atari..... | 10 | 17. [tie] GALAXY/Stern..... | 16 |
| 8. TIME WARP/Williams..... | 3 | [tie] TRIZONE/Williams..... | — |
| 9. BUCK ROGERS/Gottlieb..... | 19 | 19. TOTEM/Gottlieb..... | — |
| 10. HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS/Bally..... | 6 | 20. SPIDERMAN/Gottlieb..... | — |

Top Videos

| APRIL | MARCH | APRIL | MARCH |
|----------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. SPACE INVADERS/Midway..... | 1 | 6. HEAD ON/Gremlin..... | 8 |
| 2. ASTEROIDS/Atari..... | 3 | 7. STARFIRE/Exidy..... | 7 |
| 3. FOOTBALL/Atari..... | 2 | 8. LUNAR LANDER/Atari..... | 5 |
| 4. TAILGUNNER/Cinematronics..... | 9 | 9. COSMIC GUERRILLA/Universal..... | — |
| 5. SPRINT II/Atari..... | 4 | 10. CLAY CHAMP/Allied Leisure..... | — |

The PLAY METER subscriber survey of pinball and video games will be a regular feature in subsequent PLAY METER publications. If you would like to join readers currently participating in the survey, simply fill out the coupon below and return it to PLAY METER.

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NOTE — Please make sure you print your name legibly on the address portion of the survey card.

Some random thoughts about the springtime show

By Roger C. Sharpe

While you're in New Orleans for the convention, make sure you confront the real problems this industry is facing

Since the reason for trade shows is and should be a time to showcase equipment and, hopefully, bounce off ideas and problems with fellow industry members, it may be fitting that we have a springtime show where all the manufacturers should be setting their pace for the remainder of the year. What may be closer to the point of this Expo isn't so much the equipment—although we'll get into some of the pins you're likely to encounter—but rather the realization that a semi-revolution is going on in the industry that must be dealt with and quickly.

I suppose that with all the seminars planned, some of the pertinent issues will be talked about and many people attending will be able to report on their own particular dilemmas. But something that really hit home to me recently was a current story I read that shows we're not out of the woods on potential adverse legislation—not by a long shot. Admittedly, this may be a local problem. But the point is, it hits at the backbone of the entire industry and the image problems we still have, as well as our own inability to police ourselves.

The story, which ran in the New York Daily News dated February 6, was titled "City seeking to pull the plug on unlicensed pinball games". It went something like this:

"Unlicensed pinball and other arcade games are cheating the city of at least \$210,000 a year in permit fees, the Department of Consumer Affairs said yesterday.

"The agency called for changes in

the law to facilitate crackdowns on the unlicensed coin-operated games. And it urged the City Council to increase the present \$25 tax on each game to \$250, saying this would produce an estimated \$1.3 million a year.

"Consumer Affairs lawyers have sued 55 pinball game distributors in Civil Court for illegal activity. They are asking for 'the strongest remedy possible under existing law', \$100-a-day fines for both the game distributor and the owner of the illegal pinball location.

"A recent Consumer Affairs survey concluded that there are nearly as many unlicensed pinball machines—4,200—as licensed ones—5,400 in the city.

"A closer look at the existing restrictions on licensable locations as well as stronger enforcement tools is needed so that the city can collect the revenues it is entitled to under the law,' said Consumer Affairs Coordinator Bruce Ratner.

"City law now permits pinball games in only seven kinds of locations, including places with a liquor license, hotels, movie theaters, dance halls, cabarets, and sports facilities and for recreation only in educational institutions."

Now, I know what you're thinking—why am I writing about New York in a preview of the New Orleans show? Well, I feel it's too important to ignore, especially if one is to believe that the purpose of a trade show is to exchange ideas and problems, as well as solutions to

**As for the pinball machines on the exhibit floor--
many of the names you've heard
in whispered rumors will be on hand**

problems,

And this is one that must be met head on before the licensing price drives out the small operator and the newspapers begin their travail on pinball machines. Because, one and all it's going to be a long year. This is election time, after all, and as I've always said, pinball gets some budding politicians into the news. So when you're walking around the floor of the convention looking at the new equipment, think about the events that could force you out of business.

As for pinball machines on the floor—many of the names you've heard in whispered rumors will be on hand. Bally is tentatively going to knock you into space with a

wide-body that everybody's talking about, the name of which you're all familiar with. And for a conventional game, it's hi-o silver and the continuation of better sound balanced by some incredible graphics.

Stern, on the other hand, has a heavyweight knockout and the "Big Game" we all caught at the AMOA. This company has gotten its act together and continues to impress and improve.

Game Plan offers something for everyone—whether you're into the amusement of a Coney Island or the star quality of a nova, it'll be on display for you to catch sight of.

Gottlieb has woven a web with a superhero winner that marks a new

beginning for the company. See their standout piece of work that's going to please and surprise many of the company's detractors.

As for Williams, they're going to send you reeling with some new hijinks for you sound and action aficionados with a firefall of power and more moves than someone trying to juggle.

All of the machines on hand are going to bridge the gap in the new calendar year and should prove that the manufacturers are indeed forging ahead and continuing to improve on their products.

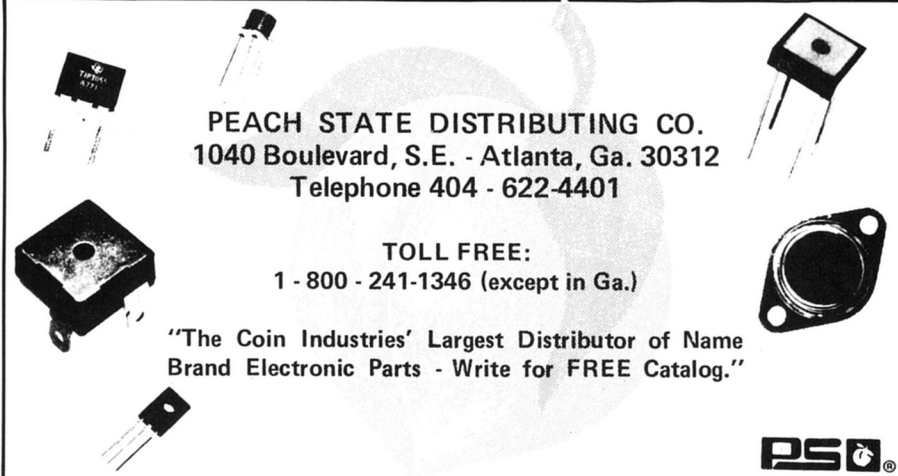
But when you're looking at the new equipment, think mightily on the new wave of feeling that's spreading which could hurt the industry where it lives—with the player. What I'm talking about, of course, is the irrational pricing going into effect in more and more places. Fifty-cent play for three-ball just isn't going to make it yet. But some are trying it, and too many of the games—no matter how good they are—aren't going to sustain the idea that they're worth that kind of money. Even three plays for a dollar pricing that some folks are talking about to help Susan B. is going to meet with more resistance than most of you are probably willing to accept.

Wait. The time just isn't right now, unless you're talking about five-ball games for fifty cents—now that might be more palatable to the majority of players out there.

It is, after all, no longer a captive audience as it once was. Video games are increasingly appealing, even to the pinball players, and they're taking away the quarters that once made it to the pinball coin slot.

So when you walk around the show checking out the games, think also about the pricing of the equipment at your location, the impending legislation that will undoubtedly rear its ugly head and how you're going to survive it, and, lastly, try to enjoy that New Orleans hospitality. Hopefully, I'll be down looking at the games at the same time you are—I'm planning my first trip to that magnificent gateway of the south. But whether Joshua wants his daddy to leave remains to be seen.

Maybe I'll see you there, if not catch the pins which are in the news. The batch, by and large, is a good strong one. Who knows? It may yet turn this year into the year of the pin.



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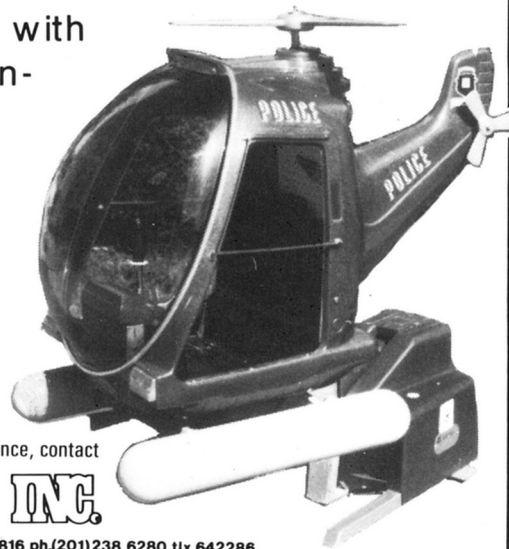
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Hedonistic Heaven awaits Expo-Goers

By Vicki Darlington

Oysters are served all year round, jazz may be heard nightly into the wee hours of the morning, and lassitude is a way of life.

Don't rush to check your pulse—you haven't died; and no, you're not checking in with St. Peter at the Pearly Gates. Some folks, however, do feel just as if they'd died and gone to heaven when they have the pleasure of sampling New Orleans' inimitable lifestyle for the first time.

PLAY METER's Amusement Operators Expo, set for March 20-22 in New Orleans at the Fairmont Hotel, is the perfect chance for the first time visitor — as well as those who fell in love with the city a long time ago—to enjoy America's most

delightful city.

Deciding what to do when you're in the "Crescent City" may be the biggest headache you'll encounter during your stay. There's so much to choose from that a person can easily get bogged down just making the choice.

Music, of course, is played all over the city at all times of the day or night. And you've heard all about the cuisine—it's world famous.

Shopping offers endless possibilities, as do historical, maritime, sports, and theater activities. To ensure a fun-filled weekend for Expo attendees and so that you don't miss anything, we checked the calendar at local establishments to let you know what's going on.

Night Spots

The familiar strains of Al Hirt's trumpet, for instance, may be heard every Monday through Saturday, with doors opening at 9 p.m. and the show beginning at 10:30. The club, located at 501 Bourbon Street—walking distance from the Fairmont—charges a \$15 per person cover which includes two complimentary drinks and the show. Attire is casual.

The unusually titled "& Mo Jazz", located at 614 Bourbon Street, features Milton Rich at 4 p.m. and Johnny Horne at 9 p.m. No cover is charged, and the club is billed in a visitor's guide as being "devoted to the best in live jazz." Five shows are performed nightly.

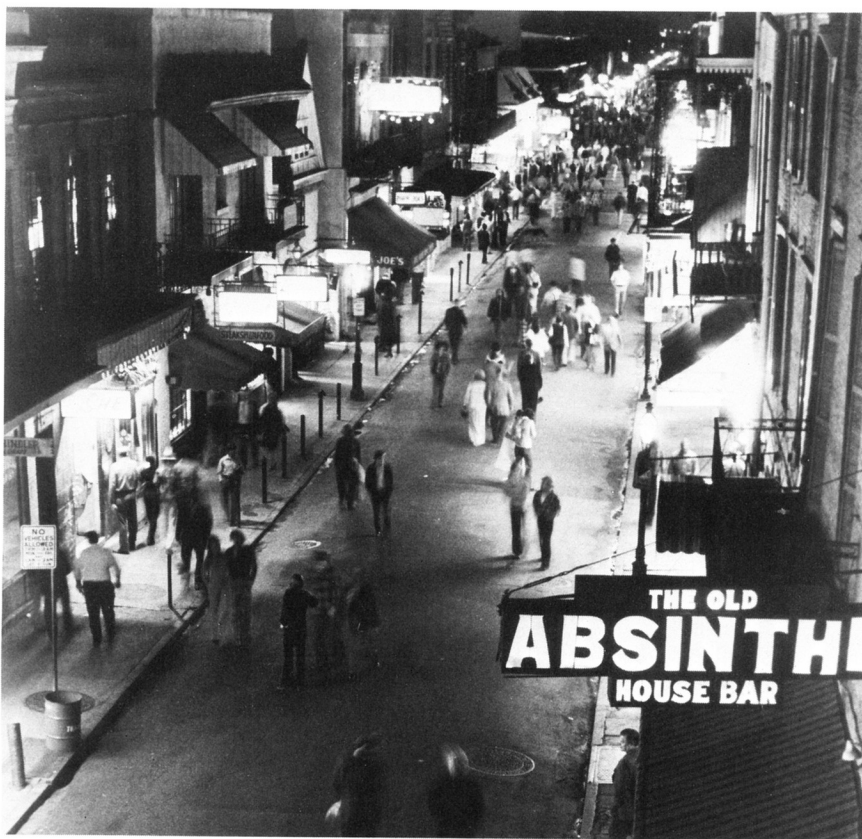
Bienville House Hotel Pump Room at 320 Decatur Street features a sing-along piano bar with nightly entertainment. Over-sized drinks and an air of seclusion add to the charm. Live music is available at 11 p.m. until closing—whenever that may be.

Listen to George Finola and the Chosen Few from 8 p.m. until 1:15 a.m. every night except Thursdays and Connie Jones at the Crescent City Jazz Band from 4 p.m. until 8 p.m. except Wednesdays. Casual dress is accepted and dancing is encouraged. And all you have to do is buy one drink...there's no cover charge.

Chris Owens, a shapely brunette who's been gracing the stage at her establishment for quite a few years, offers quality nightclub entertainment. Stage shows and a dance band may be enjoyed at the corner of Bourbon and St. Louis streets every Monday through Saturday from 8 p.m. until the management decides to close.

Crazy Shirley's at 640 Bourbon Street spotlights Tommy Yetta on trumpet and his New Orleans Dixieland Band. Shows are going on nightly from 8:30 p.m. until 1:30 a.m., with no cover but a one drink minimum per person per set.

The Inn on Bourbon Street



Bourbon Street, which is alive with activity at night, is best known for its jazz and burlesque.



Horse-drawn carriages in the Quarter are manned by tour guide escorts who tell interesting, if not entirely accurate, versions of local history.



Iron grillwork, brought here by the French and Spanish, graces many multi-story buildings in the French Quarter.



Artists line the sidewalk around Jackson Square, near St. Louis Cathedral, and offer tourists works in nearly all media.

features Carlos and Company between 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. every Monday through Saturday. The club, located at 541 Bourbon Street, accepts all major credit cards.

La Boucherie, a slick, popular disco with a cafe downstairs, offers a game room and custom made sound equipment. Located at 330 Chartres Street in the French Quarter, the establishment features daily "businessman's luncheon."

Le Centime Lounge, located in the stately Le Pavillon Hotel, is a realistic simulation of a French cellar bistro. Entertainment goes on nightly from 5 p.m. until closing. Located at Baronne and Poydras Street, it is open daily from 10:30 a.m.

Intrigued by Dixierland? If you're curious as to exactly what a "Dixierland jazz parlor" is...visit the Maison Bourbon Nite Club at 641 Bourbon Street between 11 a.m. to 1:45 a.m. daily to see for yourself. casual attire and children are welcome. There is a one drink minimum but no cover.

The Maison Dupuy Hotel's Cabaret Lautrec highlights Bill Bachmann and his New Orleans Jazz Phile daily between 9:30 p.m. until 1:20 a.m. Located at 601 Burgundy Street in the French Quarter, the cabaret offers an intimate Moulin Rouge atmosphere.

Duke's Place, located in the Skylite Lounge of the Monteleone Hotel, features the Duke's of Dixierland every night except Sundays. The Carousel Lounge starbills Sylvia Johns on the piano beginning at 9:30 p.m. The cover of \$9.25 per person includes two drinks.

The Hilton offers a range of activities. Pete Fountain's offers shows Tuesday through Friday at 10 p.m., and on Saturdays at 9 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. for a cover charge of between \$13-15, which includes two drinks. The Rain Forest offers disco-ers a haven nightly after 9 p.m. and ten cent oysters may be purchased between 5 and 6 p.m. weekdays at the Oyster Bar in the French Quarter.

Combining music with good food is a goal the Hilton has pursued successfully with its theme buffets on Friday and Saturday nights, and jazz brunch on Sunday. Strolling opera singers accompanied on a piano wait on your tables at the Italian buffet held every Saturday night. And the seafood buffet on Friday nights features the music of The Cajun Two. Both buffets, which begin at 9:30 p.m., are priced at \$11.95 per person. The brunch on Sundays features the lively notes of Louis Cottrell and his group. Conducted between 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. every Sunday, the brunch is priced at \$10.95.

The French Garden Bar at the Hilton features Willie Metcalf's jazz after 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and after 10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. And for an unforgettable dining experience, sample the elegance of Winston's, where a maid and butler deliver the verbal menu, and a harpist-violinist team stroll among the antique English tables. Dinner is priced at \$22.95 per person.

The Royal Orleans, located in the French Quarter at 621 St. Louis Street, has Rich Fullman headlining the Esplanade Lounge piano beginning at between 4-5 p.m. on Thursdays, and 8:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

Ray Ladd is the featured pianist in the Royal Sonesta Lounge between 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. nightly. Elario, an accomplished guitarist who plays a variety of music, including the romantic flamenco, is on stage every night from 10:30 p.m., except Mondays.

John Gary will be the attraction at the Fairmont Hotel's fabled Blue Room during Expo week. Shows start at 9 p.m. and 11 p.m., with an \$8 cover charge during the week, \$10 on the weekend. Jimmy Elledge will be the featured performer in the hotel's Fairmont Court beginning at 9:30 p.m. nightly. A minimal cover is

charged.

And if you've a hankering to hear some Dixieland jazz, as well as enjoy a breath-taking panoramic view of the city, stop in at the Top of the Mart, located in the Trade Mart at the foot of Canal Street. The 360-degree revolving bar features the Smart Guys nightly at 8 p.m. No cover is charged.

Restaurants

The Hyatt Regency at Poydras Plaza also has a revolving restaurant, the Vendome, which serves lunch between 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., and prime rib dinners on weekends between 6-9 p.m. Reservations are required. Cousin Joe, a blues singer, may be heard every Sunday through Thursday at Le Club—a two drink minimum is charged. The Courtyard is a garden atrium with the bonus of a full service menu.

Jonah's has a double oyster bar set in a select atmosphere with seafood, beef, and roast duck-oriente. The menu revolves around seafood, beef, and duck selections.

Houlihan's, a restaurant and bar, features a convivial atmosphere, good food, and Maynard Chatter's Ragtime Band on March 20-21 beginning at 10 p.m. and continuing until 1:30 a.m.

There are hundreds of intriguing

restaurants that are located near to the Expo site. One that you will want to try is the Acme Oyster and Seafood House, at 724 Iberville Street in the French Quarter, offering typical old time New Orleans surrounding and a limited menu, but it's hard to beat their po-boys. Oysters on the half-shell seem to taste better here, too.

The Andrew Jackson Restaurant at 221 Royal Street offers elegant dining with a French flair. Antoine's, located nearby at 713 St. Louis Street, is one of the world's most famous restaurants. Widely acclaimed specialties include Oysters Rockefeller, Filet de Boeuf Marchand de Vin, Pompano en Papillote, and Crepes Suzette.

Perhaps one of New Orleans most unusual dining spots, Anything Goes is true to its name—anything does go. Your waiter or waitress at this whimsical establishment, which bills itself as "a shady place for sunny people", may be as a gorilla or a rabbit. A dress code is observed, surprisingly, although no reservations are required at this 727 Iberville Street location in the lower end of the French Quarter.

Benhana of Tokyo Restaurant features a host of smiling Oriental cooks who prepare orders right at the hibachi on every table. The sur-

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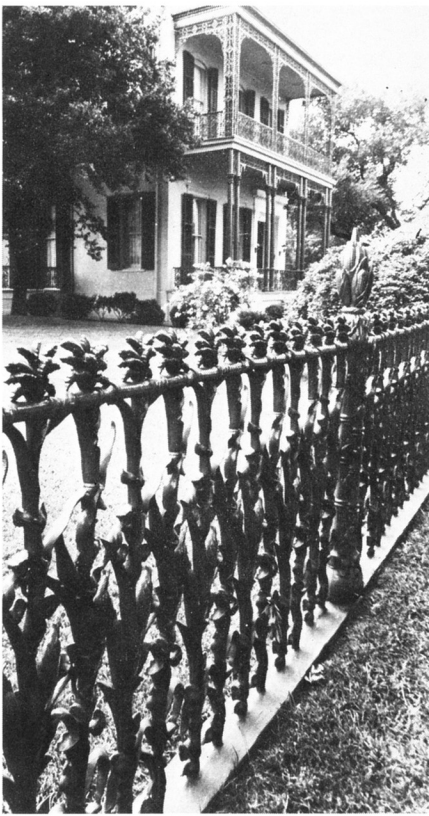
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The Cornstalk Fence, a Garden District landmark, surrounds a typical home in the area of New Orleans known over a century and a half ago as the "American Sector".



Royal Street in the French Quarter, renowned for its numerous antique shops and excellent selection of European and American pieces, is haunted by tourists and native New Orleanians alike.

roundings are charming and authentic, with the finest in steak, poultry, seafood, and vegetables served in an atmosphere of the famous Japanese hospitality. Japanese, Palavan and Korean are spoken at the 720 St. Louis St. address.

Breakfast at Brennan's, located at 417 Royal Street, is something that show-goers shouldn't miss. Ten separate dining rooms and an outside patio for cocktails are the setting for Brennan's famous French and Creole cuisine. Coats are required in the evening.

Broussard's is a favorite spot of natives. Located at 819 Conti Street, Creole and New Orleans cuisine is served in elegant surroundings.

Cafe Maspero has something of an unsavory beginning—it was built in 1788 and originally used as a slave exchange—but there's nothing unsavory about the food, which includes a variety of thick, juicy sandwiches served on several different breads at reasonable prices. The 440 Chartres Street address features al fresco dining when the weather permits, and that probably will be true during traditionally balmy March.

The Cafe Pontalba on the corner of Chartres and St. Peter streets is the oldest apartment building in America. Overlooking Jackson Square and St. Louis Cathedral, it serves such New Orleans staple dishes as red beans and rice and generous "po-boys" (which is, by the way, a local bastardization of the proper name—poor boys).

For a taste of true Creole-Soul cuisine, Dooky Chase Restaurant is a moderate taxi cab ride away for true aficionados. Heavenly Creole gumbo and seafood dishes are the specialty at this well-known New Orleans institution. The restaurant, located at 2301 Orleans Avenue, "appreciates" reservations.

Flamingos Cafe and Bar features a light menu primarily composed of omelettes, quiches, salads, soups, and a Sunday champagne brunch. Pink and green flamingoes, not surprisingly, abound in the tropical atmosphere. Hop a streetcar on St. Charles Avenue and get off at the 1625 address for an unusual evening in this century-old New Orleans home. The jukebox selection, which includes hits from the 40s and 50s, can't be beat.

Galatoire's at 209 Bourbon Street is one of New Orleans' oldest, most famous restaurants. Operated by the fourth generation of family restaurateurs, it specializes in trout marquetry and shrimp remoulade. Coat and tie are strictly required after 5 p.m. and all day Sunday.

The history of the area is rich in color and tradition. If time permits, a visit to any of the plantation homes in the area would be a pleasant step back in history.

The Derbigny Plantation, located on the West Bank's River Road in Westwego at Nine Mile Point, was constructed in the 1830s and built by Charles Derbigny in honor of his father, Pierre, the fifth governor of Louisiana. Admission is \$2.50 and is open daily from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. except Mondays. A lengthy taxi ride is necessary, or a tour may include this stop.

The Pitot House is not very far from the Fairmont—a moderate taxi ride separates the two—and is a quaint example of 18th century architecture. The residence of James Pitot, the first mayor of New Orleans, the two story structure is furnish in antiques. Costumed docents escort visitors through the house. Open Thursday only from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. Admission is charged.

Steamboat and river tours may be engaged at the foot of Canal Street on the Mississippi River. Admission is minimal and some tours last several hours. Information on fishing boat excursions in the Gulf on a U.S. Coast Guard-certified vessel may be obtained by calling 282-8111.

And theater buffs may see one of the all time great names of the screen live at the Beyer Dinner Playhouse during the Expo dates—Lana Turner in "Murder Among Friends". The buffet opens at 6:30 p.m.; curtain is at 8:30. The per person admission is \$14.95 on Thursdays, increasing nightly by one dollar through Saturday. Located at 217 Labarre Road, the theater may be contacted by dialing 837-4022.

New Orleans' considerable repertoire of activities hopefully will not obscure the main reason for the visit—the Expo. As you're probably aware of by now, the show offers something for everyone—the seminars, which number over 20, have been designed with just that in mind. A faculty bearing excellent industry credentials will provide practical education for almost every segment of the coin-op industry. Experts have been tapped from just about every pertinent field imaginable—from the creative marketing end to profitable distributorship to troubleshooting concepts.

Your stay in The City that Care Forgot, as New Orleans is affectionately called by those who love her, will be as enjoyable as it will be educational, we feel sure. But keep the memories warm—come back soon—and try to be convincing when you explain to doubting friends that the trip really was business...



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Tele: 404/352-3040

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Empire Distributing, Inc.
1343 Sadlier Cir., South Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46239
Tele: 317/352-0466

IOWA
Philip Moss & Co.
1420 Locust Street
Des Moines, IA 50309
Tele: 515/288-3331

KANSAS
United Distributing Co.
420 S. Seneca Street
P.O. Box 1995
Wichita, KA 67213
Tele: 316/263-6181

KENTUCKY
Kentucky Coin Machine Distr.
6005 Fern Valley Road
Louisville, KY 40223
Tele: 502/966-5266

LOUISIANA
A.M.A. Distributors, Inc.
1711 Saint Charles Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70130
Tele: 504/529-2315

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Banner Specialty Co.
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P.O. Box 287
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MICHIGAN
Empire Distributing
11998 Merriman Road
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Tele: 313/525-8700

Empire Distributing
1931 South Division
Grand Rapids, MI 45907
Tele: 616/243-3644

MINNESOTA
Lieberman Music Co.
9549 Penn Avenue, South
Minneapolis, MN 55431
Tele: 612/887-5300

MISSOURI
Philip Moss and Co.
1601 Forest
Kansas City, MO 64108
Tele: 816/421-4570

NEBRASKA
Philip Moss and Co.
1514 Davenport Street
Omaha, NE 68102
Tele: 402/346-3933

NEW JERSEY
Betson Enterprises
6 Empire Blvd.
Moonachie, NJ 07074
Tele: 201/440-2200

NEW YORK
Bally Northeast Distributing
601 Thompson Rd. N.
Syracuse, NY 13211
Tele: 315/463-6251

Coin Machine Distributors, Inc.
213 N. Division Street
Peekskill, NY 10566
Tele: 914/737-5050

NORTH CAROLINA
Brady Distributing Co.
1900 West Morehead
Charlotte, NC 28208
Tele: 704/373-1211

OHIO
Cleveland Coin International
17000 S. Waterloo Rd.
Cleveland, OH 44110
Tele: 216/692-0960

Monroe Distributing, Inc.
2999 Payne Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114
Tele: 216/781-4600

OKLAHOMA
Southwest Vending Sales Co.
720 N.W. 4th Street
P.O. Box 25006
Oklahoma, OK 73125
Tele: 405/232-0253

OREGON
Dunis Distributing Co.
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Portland, OR 97202
Tele: 503/234-5491

PENNSYLVANIA
Active Amusement Machines
666 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
Tele: 215/684-1600

Banner Specialty Co.
639 Alpha Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
Tele: 412/782-0800

Eastern Music Systems
334 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Tele: 215/564-4415

Roth Novelty Co.
333 North Pennsylvania Ave.
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701
Tele: 717/824-9994

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Charlotte, NC 28208
Tele: 704/373-1211

SOUTH DAKOTA
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Tele: 605/578-2121

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Nashville, TN 37211
Tele: 615/244-6646

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Atari ad controversy:

Cloud over Atari...

A recent advertisement by Atari, Inc. in a trade publication for consumer electronics retailers has caused many operators to question Atari's direction and intention in the coin-op business.

The ad, which appeared in the January Buyer's Guide of *Consumer Electronics* (Volume 8, Number 1), was promoting Atari's new home video cassette game, *Space Invaders*.

Family members were pictured standing in line waiting their turns to play the new TV game, and superimposed over the top of the picture was a headline that read: "People have been standing in line at arcades to play 'Space Invaders'. Now, thanks to Atari, they can stand in line at home."

The sting for operators of seeing their biggest ever video game money maker in a home model version was further intensified by a blistering last line in the advertisement which read: "We're doing everything we can to get those long lines of people out of the arcades and into your store."

The advertisement appeared in a trade publication which, like *PLAY METER*, is not distributed on newsstands and which goes only to consumer electronics retailers.

But a Minnesota operator who owns several arcades and subscribes to the publication spotted the advertisement and brought the matter to the attention of his distributors and to his state association at a board of directors meeting of the Music Operators of Minnesota.

Stopping short of any boycott of Atari products, the Music Operators of Minnesota issued a strongly worded statement in protest of the advertising to Raymond Kassar, chairman of Atari. According to a member of the state association's board of directors, it is the first time the Music Operators of Minnesota has ever censured a manufacturer.

The letter of protest read, in part: "The Board of Directors (of Minnesota) has gone on record as being opposed to such advertising directed against our industry.

We feel that the coin machine operators in our state have done much to support the growth of Atari, and we strongly protest such attempts to intentionally 'take customers out of the arcades,' in an effort to support a spin off of our industry.

"We feel that our purchases have contributed to the development of the Atari Video Computer System, and that we should be allowed to realize a full return on our investment before these games are released for other purposes."

The letter went on to say: "The Music Operators of Minnesota hope that Atari will consider our position in future marketing plans."

Other operators reportedly sent out letters of protest to Kassar of Atari upon hearing of the advertisement.

One member of the Minnesota board of directors termed the advertisement a "knife in the back."

"There's a great deal of resentment," he told *PLAY METER*, "that our very strong support for Atari has been ignored."

He informed *PLAY METER* that the board of directors' vote was unanimous. It was the unanimous feeling of everyone on the board that this was against the spirit in which we have supported Atari in the past."

When reached for comment, Kassar downplayed the significance of the advertisement, saying, "This was strictly a trade ad. It was a one-shot ad timed for the Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show. It was unfortunate the agency got carried away. But we certainly have no intent to obviously do anything that would be detrimental to our coin-op business.

"We are very embarrassed by it,"

he told *PLAY METER*. "It's one of those things that happens. There was no intent. It had very limited exposure. No consumer saw it. It was strictly for the Consumer Electronics trade show."

The Consumer Electronics trade show in Las Vegas in January drew about 54,000 visitors. By contrast, the annual AMOA Show, the coin-op amusement industry's largest trade show in the United States—draws in the 6,000 range.

Kassar tried to explain the wording of the advertisement—especially the last sentence—by saying, "I guess the agency felt it was a very good selling point, and saw it as a positive thing—not a negative thing.

"We love the coin-op business," he continued. "We love arcades. We love our distributors. We would do nothing in any way, knowingly, to damage this relationship. It was just an agency ad that the consumer people never thought of negatively."

Atari, like many large manufacturers, has its own in-house advertising agency.

The statement that it was all merely an ad agency snafu didn't sit well with one operator who communicated with Kassar by letter. The operator said he was surprised when Kassar wrote him back and "more or less acknowledged that he knew about the ad in advance."

Kassar told *PLAY METER*, "There was no intent to damage any distributor or operator. It was hardly a major catastrophe. It's one of those things that in retrospect we would have been happy if that mention had not been made."

He also told *PLAY METER* that Atari is the only legal licensee of the *Space Invaders* name in the home cassette market and that Atari is committed to marketing the *Space Invaders* cassette.

"Obviously, we're not taking anyone away from the arcades," he said. "We see our effort in the home

Bally-Stern test fixture introduced

Universal Amusement Distributors recently debuted its model 101 test fixture engineered, according to officials, to "be a reliable, durable and yet inexpensive way to test all the major boards used in Bally and Stern electronic flipper games."

It tests solenoid driver boards,

lamp driver boards, MPU boards, score display boards, and sound boards. It is portable, expandable, and tests boards individually or together as a system.

The most significant feature of the fixture helps to avoid "expensive repair costs by helping operators

diagnose and repair many problems themselves, as well as increase collections by decreasing repair time," product literature reports.

Contact Universal Amusement Distributors at 2337 Philmont Avenue, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006, (215) 947-4054.

Operators question intent

market as expanding the base of interest for the product, and we think our coin-op customers will benefit. We're giving it a lot of publicity. We're spending a lot of money promoting the game, and that can only help anyone who's got a *Space Invaders* game."

But the fact that Atari still plans to market the game over numerous protests from operators has created another stir.

Said one member of the Minnesota operators' board of directors, "If they're going ahead with marketing the game, it can't mean good news for operators."

Another arcade operator stated flatly, "The home *Space Invaders* can't help our collections." He noted that it's not hurting us at the present time, but if the manufacturers start pumping out these cartridges on every coin-op game there is, it would hurt us severely. That's just common sense."

He said that one reason *Space Invaders* home cassettes haven't hurt the coin-op business yet could be that the games are only now being marketed. Also, "You have to look at what percentage of our customers in arcades have these home video cassettes because the initial unit is in the \$300 range. That's the question — what percentage of our customers have them?"

The operator continued, "I would like to see some of these games not on TV until at least six months after we've finished with them."

But, as for the advertisement which started the whole controversy, many coin-op industry people are seriously questioning Atari's direction and future plans. Several operators and other industry people expressed the suspicion that Atari was fully aware in advance what its advertisement said, and started backpedaling only after an operator saw the ad which was designed only for the eyes of consumer electronics retailers.

People have been standing in line at arcades to play "Space Invaders." Now, thanks to Atari, they can stand in line at home.



Now one of the most popular coin operated games in history is available as an Atari Game Program™ cartridge. After "Space Invaders" Atari will be introducing five more new games, at the rate of one a month: Adventure, 3-D Tic-Tac-Toe, Golf, Night Driver™ and Circus Atari™.

It's created an incredible amount of excitement. In fact, "Space Invaders" has become so popular we believe the demand for this game alone can sell a large number of Atari Video Computer Systems™.

All you have to do to sell plenty of these new cartridges is to stock them. But please be sure to order early. That way you'll be sure of getting an adequate supply.

We're doing everything we can to get those long lines of people out of the arcades and into your store.


 Atari, Inc. 1265 Borregas Ave. Sunnyvale, Calif. 94086. Phone (800) 538-8547
© Warner Communications Company © Nov 1980

Atari, in its advertisement above, claims that "we're doing everything we can to get those long lines of people out of the arcades and into your store." That statement, plus the company's all-out push at marketing home Space Invaders units, has stirred controversy in the coin-op business.

Dynamo expands production facilities

Dynamo Corporation of Grand Prairie, Texas, a manufacturer of pool tables, recently increased its production capacity with the addition of 25,000 square feet of space.

The additional space brought the

square footage to a total of 70,000, up from a former total of 45,000.

"This is our fourth year of manufacturing pool tables. I'm encouraged by our growth rate in the pool tables market," John H. Lewis,

vice president, noted.

Dynamo Corporation is located at 1805 Gsw. Parkway, Grand Prairie, Texas 75051; phone 1-214-641-4286 or 1-800-527-6054.

Copyright collections down, operator non-compliance

The number of jukeboxes registered with the U.S. Copyright Office in 1979 was down by 10,333, and the number of operators who filed was down by about 350 when compared with 1978 figures.

And Walter Sampson, chief of the licensing division of the U.S. Copyright Office, suspects that noncompliance by operators, rather than a reduction in the number of machines, is the reason.

"We're very concerned about the high noncompliance with the jukebox section of the Copyright Act," he reported in a telephone interview with PLAY METER.

A rough count of the number of operators who filed in 1978 totalled 3,239, according to Sampson, while the number in 1979 was 3,830. The total number of jukeboxes licensed in 1978 totalled 144,368, of which 140,338 were licensed for a full year. Half year licenses numbered 3,830.

Jukebox licensing in 1979, however, was secured for 136,368 units, of which 134,035 were registered for the entire year. Six month licenses accounted for the remaining 2,333.

Monies collected by the Copyright Office for distribution by the Copyright Royalty Tribunal in 1978 added up to \$1,147,803.38 and were reduced in 1979 to \$1,085,599.06, a decrease of \$62,204.32.

The licensing division of the Copyright Office feels that the underlying reason is non-compliance. When Sampson was asked if he had anything to base that assessment on, he replied affirmatively. "The performing arts societies

(such as BMI, ASCAP, etc.), who have enforcement powers to protect the copyright owners they represent, have filed many suits across the country recently. In fact, there were 35 such suits filed by ASCAP alone in September of 1979. That's one way we know noncompliance is up," Sampson said.

"The other is that, in our efforts to contact as many operators as possible (to remind them of the copyright law), we got in touch with about 500 cities across the country in each state," he said, "asking if they had licensed jukebox operators and if so, if they had publicly available listings that we could use to notify them."

"The cities responded speedily and with fairly lengthy listings which showed a lot of them did not have a breakdown on jukebox operators but did have records on a license or tax charge where the jukebox was located. Those showed us that there were many, many more machines out there than we thought," Sampson observed.

"Also, the AMOA has publicly announced that there are about 400—500,000 machines in operation. And it was stated on the Jukebox Awards Show that was aired on television recently that there are 500,000 jukeboxes," he said.

"But there's no provision in the law to improve the Copyright Office's enforcement. That's just the way the law was written. There's nothing more that we can do except work closely with the performing rights societies," Sampson said.

"However, we did meet with the AMOA and ask them if there was anything we could do, or if there was anything that they would like from us, to help notify the operators. We've also notified the state associations. But we really can't do much more than that—we just don't have the authority," he stated.

"We're caught in the middle here. We're really like a conduit between the copyright users and the copyright owners. We gather the information, collect the fees, and pass the money on to the CRT for distribution to the copyright owner. The law, as I understand it—I wasn't here at the time—was a compromise and that's when we got caught in the middle," he noted. "Also, we're unique in the government structure because we deduct our operating costs from the royalty fees that we collect, not from the overall Library of Congress budget."

The "publicly available" listings of locations that were supplied to the Copyright Office reportedly "were not asked for" but apparently were supplied. "We did not ask for location listings (when we contacted the cities)—that's not one of the requirements of the Copyright Office, although it is from the Copyright Tribunal."

"There is, however, a provision in the statute that says if a machine is located in an establishment, the owner of that place must give the operator's name if asked for it. So, if we know a machine is in a certain place, we can ask for the operator's name. But we don't ask for location listings," Sampson reported.

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'Gross mismanagement' leads to Seeburg shutdown

By Vicki Darlington

Seeburg Corporation temporarily has shut down its doors at the behest of court-appointed trustee Nathan Yorke. Stemming the flow of dwindling assets for investors and creditors was cited as the reason for the move.

Yorke feels that the main savings would come from the absence of executive salaries and utilities.

No employees remain on the Seeburg payroll, a move which the company official says saves about \$40,000 per month. In addition, XCOR, which owns the building that houses Seeburg Corporation, has taken over the utility bills.

"I don't have any more utilities except the telephone, and that is being changed over to a one or two line system instead of the present board, which costs \$5,000 a month," the trustee stated. "I've cut expenses down to almost nothing."

Yorke was appointed trustee by the U.S. Federal District Court of Northern Illinois, Eastern Division, after Judge Lawrence Fisher determined the company guilty of gross mismanagement on the basis of large hotel bills from the French Riviera, allegedly incurred by executives and charged to Seeburg.

Yorke had been charged with looking after the floundering company since the beginning of February. The firm, which was not in assembly operations even at that time, was selling parts under the name of Seeburg Service Parts

Company. Unpaid liabilities then had climbed in excess of \$300,000.

A loan in the amount of \$5.6 million has been applied for. That Yorke feels may restore the ailing concern to financial solvency if approved. Local officials in that office already have given Seeburg the go-ahead, but final word from Washington has not yet been received.

"If Seeburg gets that money, they stand a chance of setting forth a plan in which creditors might accept an extended period of time to be paid off," Yorke said.

Stern Electronics, Inc. recently tendered an offer of \$1 million to acquire Seeburg jigs, dies, patents, tools, and parts; but Yorke indicated the figure was too low.

"That (amount) doesn't do anything for the creditors. At the present time, Seeburg owes in excess of \$300,000 in debtor possession liabilities under the chapter eleven proceeding. In addition, they owe \$400,000 in back taxes. Before you look around, the creditors won't get a dime," Yorke told PLAY METER in a telephone interview. The company, he added, owes a total of between \$4-5 million to unsecured creditors.

"The assets Stern wants are the major assets, and there is some dispute as to who owns them," he said.

According to Yorke, John Dillon, former Seeburg chairman and treasurer, began "purchasing" parts from

Seeburg Service Parts Company in May 1979 with an initial lot worth \$50,000, apparently under the assumption that it was a division of the Seeburg Corporation. An "IOU" entry was made in the books, stating "We owe you \$50,000" and more parts were taken over a period of time, Yorke said.

"When I came into the picture, however, I found out that the stock of the Seeburg Service Parts Company is owned by Consolidated Entertainment," of which the Lou Nicastro family is the major stockholder. Consolidated Entertainment also owns the stock of the Seeburg Corporation.

"At this point, the Seeburg Service Parts Company alleges that the Seeburg Corporation owes them \$58,000. I can't see it but it's something to look into," Yorke reported.

"But I can't operate Seeburg Service Parts Company when I'm trying to get Consolidated Entertainment to turn over parts to me," he said.

What further complicates an already cloudy picture is the possibility that the parts have a lien on them by the Chase Manhattan Bank. There is some question of whether an inventory lien held by that bank was terminated or only partially released when the vending division was sold in 1979.

"We'll have to go through the courts to settle this," Yorke reported.

AMOA president selected small business delegate

AMOA President Bob Nims was a delegate to the White House Conference on Small Business held in Washington the latter part of January.

Delegates chosen to represent

small businesses in all 50 states met to discuss and vote on a number of proposals intended to help small business owners.

Some of the areas discussed were capital formation, regulations, paper-

work, training, inflation and energy.

President Carter addressed the conference on Sunday evening. On Monday, delegates began the task of reviewing 397 pages of "issue papers."

PLAY METER
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Cinematronics sues Atari, claims patent infringement

Cinematronics, Inc. and its two principals, Jim Pierce and Tom Stroud, Sr., have filed a patent infringement suit against Atari, Inc. and a San Diego, California operator February 1.

Specifically named in the suit as the alleged infringement is Atari's newest X-Y monitor game, *Asteroids*.

The suit pertains to patent number 4,053,740, a patent which concerns the use of a vector-generated display in conjunction with a video game.

The license to this patent, along with patent 4,027,148 (a patent on the "vectorbeam" monitor) was acquired by Pierce and Stroud from inventor Larry Rosenthal on June 1, 1979. The rights were then guaranteed to Cinematronics.

Through the suit, Cinematronics is asking for an injunction against the manufacture of *Asteroids* by Atari and an accounting for damages suffered by Cinematronics as result of the sale of the allegedly infringing device.

The designer and manufacturer of the monitor, Electrohome, Ltd., of Ontario, Canada, is not named in the suit because the patent concerns the use of the monitor in a video game and not the manufacture and sale of the monitor itself.

Manufacturers' lawsuits, or threatened lawsuits, are common in this industry. Atari sued Fun Games over

its use of *Tankers*. Gremlin had discussions with Ramtek about its *Barricade* copy of Gremlin's *Blockade* and with Exidy about its two-player version of *Head-On* called *Crash*.

But it is the first time an operator has been included in a manufacturer's patent infringement suit.

Mark Madura, owner of the Yellow Brick Road Arcade in La Jolla, California, University Towne Centre Shopping Mall expressed surprise at his being named in the suit. "Naturally I'm quite concerned about this suit," he told PLAY METER, "not only because of my involvement but also for the sake of operators across the country who might find themselves in the same position."

He went on to say he was "distressed" to find himself named in such an action when the distributors from which he purchased the two *Asteroids* were not named.

But Cinematronics' patent attorney, Henri Charmasson, explained that more parties would probably be named in the suit—including distributors and more operators.

Charmasson told PLAY METER, "There's no use in our bringing suit against Atari if we don't stop the distributors and users too. In order to protect interests, we have to stop this

infringement and get an injunction against anybody who may be either selling, distributing, or using the units.

"We're not singling out the user," he added. "That is not the case."

He explained that Cinematronics' position is that Atari's *Asteroids* game infringes upon Cinematronics' patent; and Cinematronics, as the patent owner, has "the right to exclude anybody from making, selling, or using the patent without its authorization."

The Cinematronics attorney said that the majority of patent infringement cases are settled by licensing agreements between the two parties.

As for the users of the patent, Charmasson said, if Cinematronics prevails with its suit, any compensation due the operator for purchasing the units would come from Atari as the infringing party. "Atari," he said, "as the company that is putting the product on the market, is supposed to be giving an implied warranty that its product is not infringing on anyone else's patent. As a manufacturer, it is guaranteeing that its unit is saleable and is not infringing on anyone else's patent."

Atari has been given an extension until March 28 to reply to the Cinematronics claim. At presstime, Atari's attorney, Skip Paul, was unavailable for comment.

More license fees

Baton Rouge, LA—\$50 per machine

West Dundee, IL—\$100 per game per year, \$500 fee

Winnetka, Schaumburg, Wills, IL—no games allowed

Centerville, IL—\$25 per jukebox and billiards; pingames, videos, \$15

Shawnee Mission, KS—\$10 per machine per location, videos and arcade games; shooting games, pins \$50 per year per machine per location

Toledo, OH—\$100 per game up to four; after that, you need an arcade license at \$750 per year

Fort Wayne, IN—\$5 per game per location for license

Indianapolis, IN—\$500 for master license plus \$5 per year per machine

Farmington, UT—\$500 per location per year or \$20 per machine per year

Memphis, TN—1/8 percent of gross receipts

Lynden, WA—\$10 per month per game

Sumas, WA—\$10 per year per game or \$5 per month per game where alcohol is sold

Pittsburgh, PA—\$75 per game or \$50 per jukebox

Butler, PA—\$35 per machine

Kittanning, PA—\$50 per machine

Waco, TX—\$7.50 per machine

Camden City, NJ—\$35 to \$50 per machine

Woodbury, NJ—\$100 per machine

Miami, FL—\$55 occupational license, \$50 per game

Cheektowaga, NY—no fee

Mid-Missouri, MO—\$5 per game

San Francisco, CA—\$50 per game

San Mateo, CA—\$60 per game

San Jose, CA—\$50 per game

Santa Clara, CA—\$50 per game

Mountain View, CA—\$50 per game or jukebox

Chicago, IL—\$75 city tax

Delran, NJ—\$250 per year for one to ten machines; all others, \$50

Palmyra, NJ—\$50 per machine per year

Riverside, NJ—\$25 per machine per year

El Paso, TX—\$15 per machine

Montrose, CA—\$10 per machine, \$15 per pool table

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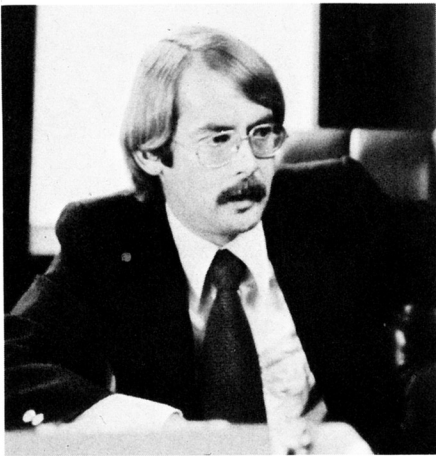
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Paul C. Jacobs

Jacobs joins Universal USA

Paul C. Jacobs recently joined the Universal U.S.A., Inc., family as its executive vice president, effective January 14, 1980. He will be in charge of all American operations and also extensively involved in European sales activities.

"Universal is very pleased to have a man of Paul's knowledge and industry join our company," stated John T. Nomura, president of Universal U.S.A. "He represents Universal's commitment to attain a significant presence in the American marketplace."

Jacobs, 34, has been active in the coin machine industry for over sixteen years. Originally a Wurlitzer distributor in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, he has since held executive positions with Chicago Coin, Exidy, and Vectorbeam.

Universal is currently shipping two new video games—*Cosmic Guerilla* and *Galaxy Wars*— which were recently previewed at the AMOA Show in Chicago. They are available in both upright and cocktail table models.

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Vectorbeam = Exidy II

Exidy II is now official. Beginning with *Tailgunner II*, the new Exidy II logo is being seen on game cartons, product brochures, and ads and it will soon be replacing the Vectorbeam sign at their Union City, California, production facility.

Exidy's President Pete Kauffman reported, "We feel the beginning of Exidy II represents the merging of the high standards and quality technological achievements in the two organizations. The name change marks the unifying of the two groups to work together to reach new levels of excellence in our future products."

The transition from Vectorbeam to Exidy II is going well. *Warriors*, the last game to use the Vectorbeam name, has proven to be an excellent product with an innovative dimension in visual attraction. *Tailgunner II*, the first of the Exidy products, also applies this unique depth perception

together with the total action environment that Exidy became known for with the overwhelming success of *Star Fire*. "The change from Vectorbeam to Exidy II with *Warriors* to *Tailgunner 2* is a very positive progression for the company," said Kauffman.

Ed Anderson, plant manager for Exidy II, who has been with the Vectorbeam group since its early organization, confirmed the good feelings about the change. "Our goal is to be number one," he said. "We believe that the Exidy name, as well as their experience in the industry, was advantageous to reach that goal."

Anderson indicated that the Vectorbeam staff is pleased with the merger and name change. "The new Exidy II sign in front of our building will be a symbol of our unity and growth," he noted.

Disney film could mean additional 'Star Fire' profits

Midnight Madness, a new adventure film from Disney studios, features Exidy's *Star Fire* video game in a significant role.

The game play becomes an intricate part of the action in this new movie that centers around a treasure hunt where competing teams of college students seek clues to lead them to the treasure. They are directed to an arcade, where they must attain the high score on the *Star Fire* game to get a clue. The video images of the game action on the movie screen add to the excitement and intrigue in the movie.

Ted Michon, *Star Fire* game designer, provided the technical assistance to get the footage for the scenes. A special converter was used to allow the film crew to videotape the game play. The tape was then converted to film for the movie.

"This process of converting the format is necessary due to the differences in image production technology," explained Michon.

"We are pleased that Disney producers selected our game to feature in the movie," said Pete Kauffman, Exidy president. "The explosive color action of *Star Fire* on the movie screen will attract new attention to the game."

Midnight Madness opened in early February. The new Disney "parental guidance" rated film has received good reviews and it will be widely distributed. The exposure is excellent for the industry and could lead to a new promotion for the *Star Fire* game.

"Operators having the game in their locations should consider getting some of the movie public relations material and place a sign, 'Highest Score Might Find the Treasure, as in *Midnight Madness*', above the *Star Fire* game," suggested Carol Kantor of Business Builders Promotion Agency.

The extra exposure in the Disney movie is sure to have a positive impact on the game's collections.

OBA omitted from category

O.B.A. Inc., which supplies replacement parts, was inadvertently omitted from the Replacement Parts category in PLAY METER's February Directory Issue.

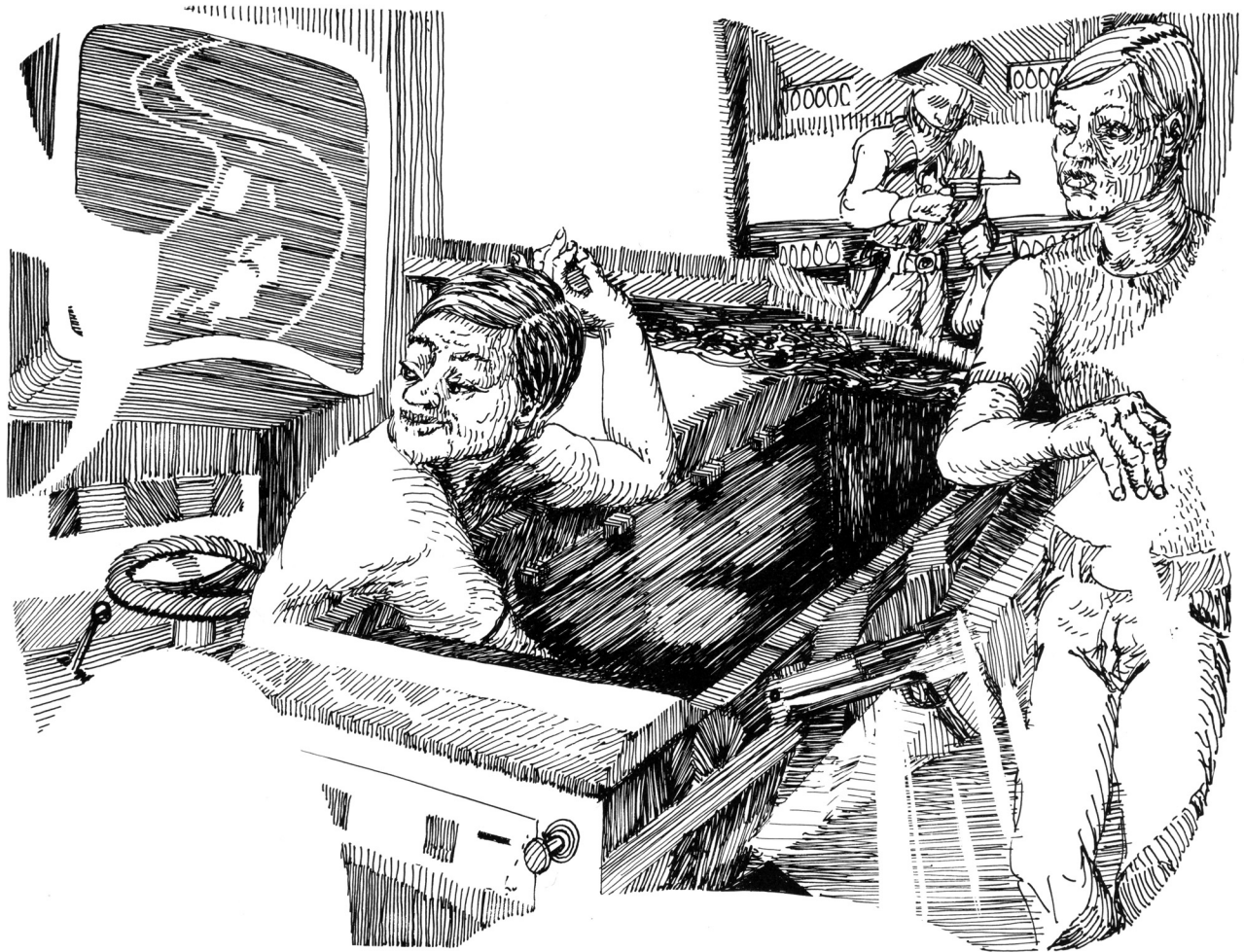
The company is headquartered at

2522 Irving Blvd., Dallas, Texas 75207 (telephone 214/630-8004).

O.B.A. handles Challenger billiard supplies, coin-op game supplies, fussball parts, Challenger fussball tables, and Challenger chemicals.

Employee Theft:

If your employees tell you “Don’t worry, Boss,” it’s time to worry



By Barry Fireman

Don't let your employees see this article, operators. And don't talk about it, either. You're being robbed—and here's how.

Did you know that...you can actually suck coins out of a cash box with a vacuum cleaner? That you can scoop coins out of almost any full cash box with your fingers? That you can wrap scotch tape—or, better yet, masking tape—around a pencil, sticky side exposed, and fish coins out? (An old trick, admittedly, but it still works.) That you can perform the old “lift up the playfield and shake the cash box” trick?

But perhaps the best of all is the “unscrew the bracket that holds the

cashbox and take the whole cash box home” trick. This only works on most flipper games, where, directly behind the box, is the bracket attached to a piece of plywood. The bracket has a hole on the top through which the padlock attaches the cash box to the machine. After the cash box is taken out, flip it over, and shake until done. Just two little screws to hold a couple of hundred dollars? Boggling, isn't it?

But there are even more elegant methods available to the employee who prefers a simpler mode of theft. Try squeezing the sides of the cash box until the lid pops off its tracks. This facilitates scooping out quarters

by the hands-full.

Shocked? No? That's terrific—what have you done about it? Here's what some of the operators I've spoken to about it have had to say:

“Our collectors are honest.”

“We check our meters daily and they check out just fine.”

“I collect and fix the machines myself, so I don't have to worry about meters or bookkeeping systems.”

This one's priceless—“We're so busy, who's got time to check meters, anyway?”

When I first went into business, I bought about ten pins from a person I thought was a good operator. The machines came in without lids on the

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is the new battle game that involves your players in action-packed video fun. All the action is in bright, thrilling colors. Realistic sounds add to the excitement with every shot and every enemy warrior hit. And built-in MultiPhase™ keeps INVINCO a constant test of speed and coordination.



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gives you two great Gremlin games in one machine. You can combine HEAD-ON or HEAD-ON 2 with either DEEP SCAN or INVINCO. Or combine DEEP SCAN and INVINCO for an unbeatable duo. Putting two games together like this gives you double profit potential. And another reason why it's a whole new game for '80 with Gremlin.



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gives you all the color, sounds and excitement of big machine games in a compact, space-saving package. Measuring only 22" x 21" x 20", MINI-VIDEO can be supplied with most Gremlin games. And you can change games as easily as pulling out one game drawer and sliding in another.



MONACO GP™

is the hottest new racing game on the amusement circuit! For total player involvement it's got full stereo sound. Full color action. A tricky, thrill-packed race course. Realistic racing sounds, too. Even a full complement of driver controls and working instrument gauges! And the new ranking display is sure to excite your players' competitive spirit, for replays you count on. For more information on these and other Gremlin games, contact your nearest Gremlin Distributor or call (714) 277-8700.



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cash boxes. I called him to see what happened to the lids. Not only did he not know where the lids were—he didn't know what the lids were.

I jogged his memory with a brief explanation and then he remembered—they were the cause of many service calls because his collectors put them on wrong. The coins would jam on and around the lids and everyone in his company was much happier without them.

I remember another of my early experiences, this time with my first amusement center. It was a rainy Saturday afternoon when business is at its best. But we ran out of change—unexpectedly, I might add—and without change, of course, we might just as well have closed up and gone home. (I must hasten to add that we have since revised our change-handling procedure and no longer run out of quarters.)

I received a phone call from the manager of one of my centers. "Hey boss, I'm running out of quarters. What should I do?" a harried voice on the other end of the line queried.

"Hold on," I said. "I'll send someone with a key so you can buy quarters out of some of the cash boxes."

"Just a second," he said. Muffled voices. Then, "Never mind, boss. You don't have to go to all that trouble. We can get the quarters out without opening up the locks. I'll put bills in for the quarters I take out. That'll keep my change bank and the collection money straight."

"How can you do that?" I asked, as calmly as my wildly beating heart would allow.

"It's easy," he reported breezily. "We remove the glass (this is on a pinball machine), tilt back the cash box, slide the lid back just a crack, and shake like mad. Out come all the quarters."

"What about the padlock?" I asked.

"Don't worry about that, boss. There is just enough play between the padlock and lid to allow it to slide back about a quarter of an inch. Don't worry, I'll take care of everything." The connection was broken.

Don't worry. I was frantic. My whole security system wasn't worth a damn and I didn't even know it.

I got in my car and sped to the game room but by the time I got there, the cashectomy had been successfully concluded. The games were all being played and I wondered how the meters would check out.

The meters, you'll probably remember, in those early days registered replays and paid games on the same reading. I reminded the

manager how closely I checked the meters but somehow I wasn't really reassured by making that veiled threat. Our meters never checked out, anyway. We always were lucky to get them close. And sometimes they were so far off that it wasn't hard to believe that you were looking at a reading from the wrong machine.

The manager, ever on his toes, was quick to come up with a solution. His suggestion, which I blush to admit I considered, was to put a psychiatrist on the payroll to help us deal with our anxiety attacks. I was a desperate man.

Whenever a discrepancy crops up, I always ask a standard question—"What's wrong with the machine?" That inquiry doesn't accuse anyone of wrongdoing. It simply assumes that something is wrong with the machine, not the people who work on, in, and around it. In fact, that question gives employees a chance to say something canny like, "Oh, yeah, boss, that machine was out of order and the shortages are actually tests. I'm sorry I forgot to mark them on the tape. I was busy."

I, of course, am not totally lacking in pithy rejoinders. "Oh," I say. "Damn," I think. "Please be more careful next time and record your tests. You know we can't keep track of these machines without accurate test figures."

The problem is that the employee is better off not marking the tests which makes for a very serious problem involving the bookkeeping systems, both digital and mechanical, and cash boxes. Both systems together are about as useful in our industry as a jet engine in your house. It will impress a lot of people but it won't fly.

I know some operators who use mechanical meters on new digital flipper games because they can't be bothered with all the confusion involved. Coins through chute one, chute two, and chute three. Replays on score, match numbers and specials, total games and games and replays, total replays on score and match numbers, how many minutes the ball was on the playfield including the time the player had to run to the rest room unexpectedly.

Who cares? What happens when a fuse blows and the game won't start up and the mechanic pulses the coin switch fifty or sixty times trying to find out what is wrong? Kiss your bookkeeping system goodbye for another week.

And what happens when the board is on the blink and has to be shopped? What happens when the batteries run down? I'll tell you in one word what happens.....poof!

The industry needs a new set of standards. Every flipper and novelty game should conform to a set of industry regulations—a "state of the art", if you will. The problem is that each genius in each factory is afraid to be outdone by another genius in another factory. So all the golden factory prodigies are giving little thought to better control systems—I'm pleading for us all, I think, when I ask that manufacturers make it possible for us to live with our machines.

Those control systems need to be overhauled so that we operators can make bigger profits—to pay you, the manufacturers, more for the increasingly costly machines you're making.

All of which points to yet another problem—capturing the ear of manufacturers is as difficult as capturing the Holy Grail. Believe me, I tried at the last AMOA show and I've concluded that they all have short attention spans.

You all probably remember a few years back when a really terrific television game debuted which took in lots of money. Strangely enough, the cash box was designed well and only with a great deal of difficulty could you rob quarters out of it. On and on went the steady collections. There seemed to be no end in sight to the game's popularity.

The manufacturer, hoping to cash in on a good idea, made a "super" version of the game. Of course, we operators bought it and first-week collections showed both the old and new versions of the game doing well. Then, as could be expected, the money began to shift away from the old model to the new.

Then a strange thing happened. The new model began to collect less and less money. The meter showed more and more.

"What's wrong with this machine?" was my stock question.

"Don't know, boss," was the stock reply.

Check, check, search, investigate, ask questions, think, think, think. No! It couldn't be! Somebody in my employ was stealing. Of course, Sherlock Holmes merely would say "elementary" and point to the culprit—the newly designed cash box which was very shallow with big square holes in the lid.

Why, all a person inclined toward dishonesty need do is stick their fingers in and take out as many quarters as they desire. We caught and fired the thief, needless to say, and redesigned the cash box.

We sent a copy of the cash box to the manufacturer and, lo and behold, one year later they redesigned my redesign of their original

design. And guess what—you can still take as many quarters from their redesign of my redesign of their design. It's a vicious circle...

Incredibly naive, most operators and manufacturers. When you stop to think of the dollar amount employee dishonesty represents in national industry loss figures—more than holdups, robberies, and shoplifting combined—you must conclude that this particular industry is getting ripped off accordingly.

Perhaps saddest of all is that none of us are taking steps to do anything about it. And worse, we don't seem to care.

The cash box should be placed in a part of the machine which is not accessible to people who, even though they have a legitimate business in the machine, might be tempted by the "easy" money. It's not out of the question—there've been some machines, mostly television and novelties, in the past which have implemented this idea.

The cash box should be designed in such a way that the coin must go in the box directly. How many times have you found coins inside the machine which have missed the cash box completely and rolled all over the place?

Quarters sometimes have landed directly on the board, blowing it to kingdom come. You all know, as well as I do, that tape over the hole will ensure that the coin will never reach the box. When the door closes, the mechanism should reach all the way into the box. Any tape or paper on the hole will be torn or pushed away, or will not allow the door to close. The coin should drop deep into the box and the box, of course, should be sturdy, solid and tamper-proof.

Meters should not depend on the coin switch for activation but should be independently powered by rechargeable batteries. Coins should be counted as they enter the box, not as they pass over the coin switch. A coin switch reading could be employed as a back-up which might also tell how many tests were conducted on the game.

The situation as it now stands is that tests show up as a coin. I suggest that a separate coin switch or a photo cell that actually sees the coin enter the box be incorporated into the cash box design.

Humor aside, operators need help. Cash box redesign is imperative. There must be a change. But manufacturers will not know there's a problem unless operators make it known to them by letters and phone calls.

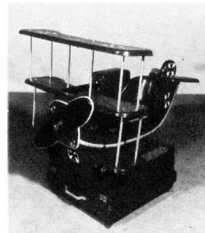
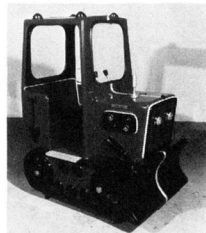
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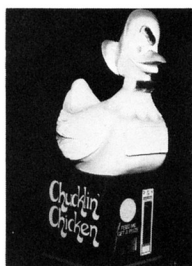
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Coin-op video system allows personal sports analysis

Video Dynamics, the company that has given PGA Tour players instant video replays of their golf swings, will debut a coin-operated version at the Amusement Operators Expo, March 20-22 in New Orleans.

Instant Replay is the trademarked name of the only self-contained, coin-operated video system on the market. Video Dynamics touts its uses as "limitless." However, tennis, golf, baseball, and track and field athletics are immediate considerations for *Instant Replay*.

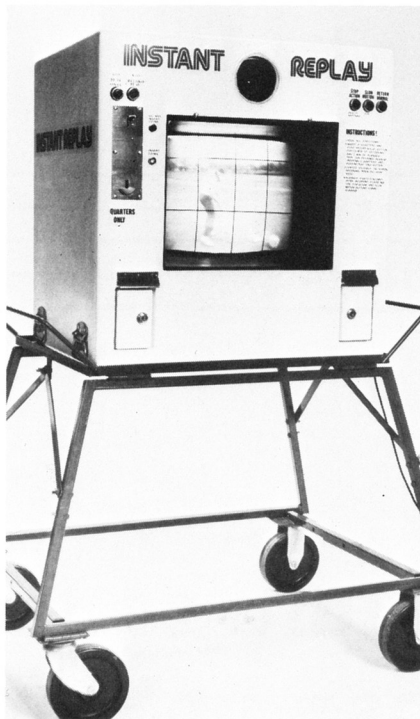
With its mobility and 145-pound weight, the machine developed by Paul Wakefield can be located at driving ranges, tennis courts, batting cages, bowling alleys, and numerous other facilities.

As an example of its use, *Instant Replay* may be located by an operator on a golf driving range or at a country club course. For \$1.00 a golfer can have several of his/her golf swings taped for one minute by *Instant Replay*.

The video system will then play the tape back for two minutes at regular speed, slow motion, or stop action, depending upon player selection. Coinage and time is totally operator programmable.

Manufactured in Utah with a factory support of advance replacement of PCBs and parts, *Instant Replay* has been thoroughly field tested for both income and product reliability. From these field tests Video Dynamics has determined a revenue division suggested at 80 percent to the operator and 20 percent to the location.

Presently at a golf driving range, the golfer takes his/her swings while another person holding the camera, tapes the golfer's action. They must then proceed to a facility where the



Instant Replay is shown here with its included 36-inch portable stand. With hood, the unit has 70-inch height, weighing 145 pounds.

tape can be shown on a video cassette player. This process, on the average, costs about \$8.

Instant Replay need not be attended by anyone from the golf course nor operated by anyone aside from the golfer. In addition to the money savings, the golfer using *Instant Replay* gets immediate reading on what he/she is doing wrong.

A remote unit to plug in for a golf pro's use for lessons gives total control of the unit with a 20-foot cord.

Environmental controls are auto-

matic, designed to maintain temperature and humidity within manufacturer specifications during operation.

Length of recording times at the owner-operator's control are one, 1.5, two, four, six, and eight minutes.

Quarters to operate can be set at one to eight (25 cents to \$2.00) at the owner's control.

Other specifications of *Instant Replay*:

Height: 34 inches.
Width: 31 inches.
Depth: 24 inches.
Recording format: VHS.
Maximum recording time:

two hours.

Tape life: 2,000 vend plays.

Tape replacement cost: \$20.

Electrical power: 110 volt A. C.

Weather considerations are ranges of 30-105 degrees F. temperature; humidity, 0-99 percent ambient, not submersible.

Case construction is high-impact, wood reinforced, laminated fiberglass. The case is termed "weather-proof under all but the most extreme conditions" and "vandal proof."

Lighting factors are termed "excellent," from brightest sunlight to night lighted courses to normal interior light.

For more information on marketing *Instant Replay*, write or call: Video Dynamics, P. O. Box 9335, Ogden, Utah 84409; telephone (801) 393-1981.

Video Dynamics also announced in New Orleans that Don Hutmier has been appointed as vice president of marketing. Hutmier is available at Reno, Nevada: telephone (702) 826-6588.



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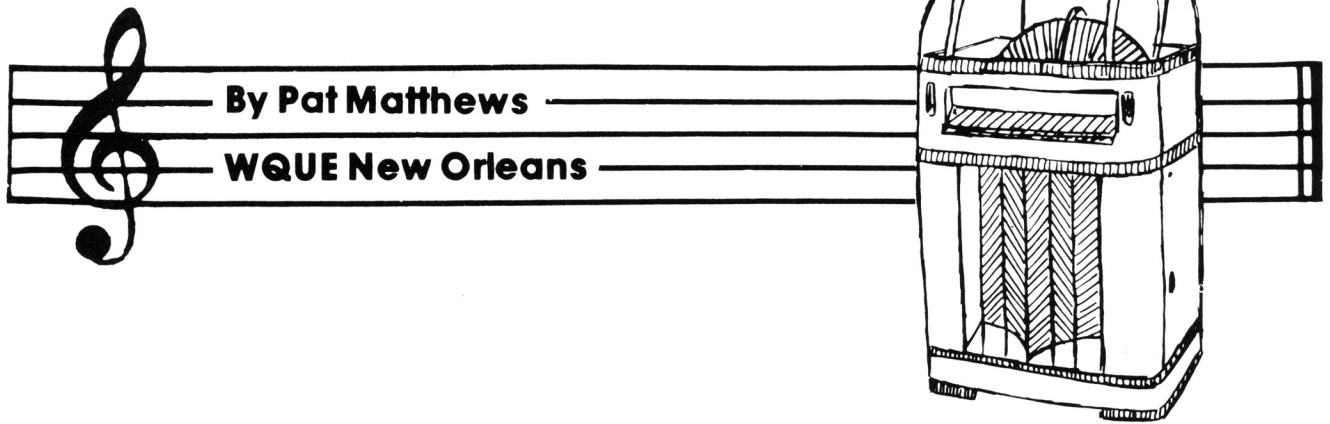
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Now is the time to look for those unknown singers

I've read in the radio "trades" recently that it's the "easiest time ever" to get new artists exposed on the radio. Maybe that's true. If it is, it occurs to me there could be many theories, one of which might be that it's all because of the increasing competition for the radio listener. Radio programmers are entering an aggressive decade which could go farther to prove that we're about to musically revisit the Sixties. You remember the time—it was when someone by the name of Crispian St. Peter found himself a household name.

PILOT OF THE AIRWAVES—
Charlie Dore—Island IS 49166

Bearing in mind what I've just said, here's a perfect example of a newcomer who still reminds one of a

couple of ladies already well-established in the music biz. That's right—this Charlie is a lady—like the one in the perfume ads. And she sounds like a cross between Joni Mitchell and Joan Baez. That's quite a combination, too. The song is refreshing, up beat, and exceptionally produced. It's an ode to a radio disc jockey, and that in itself gives it some merit. Watch for some country action, too. Seven out of ten or higher.

TWO PLACES AT THE SAME TIME—Ray Parker Jr. & Raydio—Arista AS0494

Something new from the group that used to be called simply by the moniker of "Raydio", but it's apparently time to give recognition to that mellow voice which always highlights their material. We have a nice soulful ballad here with a mid-tempo

danceable beat. The lyrics are typical but effective. You'll have to listen to find out where those two places are, by the way. Soul charts—eight out of ten; might cross over to Pop.

CARRIE—Cliff Richard—EMI America P-8035

"We Don't Talk Anymore", Cliff's hit Stateside in a few years was a perfect song (and it still is). There aren't too many "perfect" records out there and with this new single from the current album, Cliff tries to live up to the precedent he set with "We Don't Talk..." and comes very close. It's an interesting song with a good story in the lyric. Once again, the arrangement is flawless and the sax solo blew me away. A mystery is set up in the body of the song, then bass and synthesizer fade at the end, sort of leaving the solving to the listener. Eight out of ten or better.

The records are rated as follows: 10 out of 10 = Top 10 peak; 9 out of 10 = Top 20 peak; 8 out of 10 = Top 30 peak; 7 out of 10 = Top 40 peak; 5 or 6 out of 10 = Somewhere in Top 100; 4 or less = Forget it, loser, break in half.

LOVE ON A SHOESTRING—The Captain & Tennille—Casablanca NB 2243

What can you say about these two? Just when it seemed like they had all but died off and run out of silly love songs, they suddenly re-appear on a new label with a gutsy new sound, no less. This one isn't quite as sexually blatant as "Do That To Me One More Time", but Toni Tennille's voice continues to purr sex and Daryl Dragon's synthesizer keeps ya honest. This one is hot on the heels of the aforementioned smash and should get a lot of exposure. Ten out of ten—Top 10 record anywhere.

TAKING SOMEBODY WITH ME WHEN I FALL—Larry Gatlin & The Gatlin Brothers Band—Columbia 1-11219

Larry Gatlin and his brothers have a definite country following and he may expand his audience in all directions with this one. It sounds a lot like the music of Kenny Loggins and is definitely crossover material, but it's very hard to tag a label on. It's not country—entirely. It has a bossa-nova beat with that sort of percussion and appealing vocals. You've got to hear this one to believe it's who it says it is. Definite crossover material penned, sung and co-produced by Larry Gatlin. Nine out of ten country—eight out of ten MOR—and a possibility of at least a seven out of ten Pop.

GIRL WITH THE HUNGRY EYES—Jefferson Starship—Grunt JH 11921

It's gonna be tough to match the success of "Jane", but an effort to attain such heights is very much in evidence with this high-powered, pound-it-out rocker from the lp "Freedom at Point Zero". It's Grace Slick-less, of course, and sounds a little like something Cheap Trick might do, all the while maintaining the "sound" of the Starship. Should do well on its own merit, without relying on the group's name, but it won't hurt. Eight out of ten or better.

DO RIGHT—Paul Davis—Bang ZS9 4808

Here's the first one in quite some time for the sensitive balladeer. There are definite religious undertones and the song may come off as a sermon. Not that that's bad—on the contrary, it may help sales. And like I said, it's been a while since Paul Davis has been with us and who knows what he's been up to? The record is very well produced and has a message. Seven out of ten at least.

PLAY METER HOT STUFF

HIM—RUPERT HOLMES—MCA ***

TOO HOT—KOOL & THE GANG—DeLite ***

99—TOTO—Columbia ***

DESIRE—ANDY GIBB—RSO

LONGER—DAN FOGELBERG

ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL (II)—PINK FLOYD—Columbia ***

WORKING MY WAY BACK TO YOU—SPINNERS—Atlantic

HOW DO I MAKE YOU—LINDA RONSTADT—Asylum ***

ON THE RADIO—DONNA SUMMER—Casablanca

BACK ON MY FEET AGAIN—THE BABYS—Chrysalis ***

REFUGEE—TOM PETTY—Backstreet(MCA)

SEPTEMBER MORN—NEIL DIAMOND—Columbia ***

GIVE IT ALL YOU GOT—CHUCK MANGIONE—A & M

SECOND TIME AROUND—SHALAMAR—Solar

RIDE LIKE THE WIND—CHRISTOPHER CROSS—Warner Brothers ***

THREE TIMES IN LOVE—TOMMY JAMES—Millenium ***

SPECIAL LADY—RAY, GOODMAN & BROWN—Polydor ***

I CAN'T TELL YOU WHY—EAGLES—Asylum

OFF THE WALL—MICHAEL JACKSON—Epic ***

COME BACK—J. GEILS—EMI America ***

CALL ME—BLONDIE—Chrysalis ***

YES I'M READY—TERRY DE SARIO WITH KC—Casablanca

WITH YOU I'M BORN AGAIN—BILLY PRESTON & SYREETA—Motown

DAYDREAM BELIEVER—ANNE MURRAY—Capitol

KISS ME IN THE RAIN—BARBRA STREISAND—Columbia ***

WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN—BETTE MIDLER—Atlantic ***

PLAY METER PICKIN' & GRINNIN'

YEARS—BARBARA MANDRELL—MCA

I AIN'T LIVING LONG LIKE THIS—WAYLON JENNINGS—RCA

DAYDREAM BELIEVER—ANNE MURRAY—Capitol

MY HEROES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN COWBOYS—WILLIE NELSON—Columbia ***

I WISH I WAS EIGHTEEN AGAIN—GEORGE BURNS—Mercury

NOTHING SURE LOOKED GOOD ON YOU—GENE WATSON—Capitol

WHY DON'T YOU SPEND THE NIGHT—RONNIE MILSAP—MCA

CRYING—STEPHANIE WINSLOW—Warner-Curb

LYING TIME AGAIN—MEL TILLIS—Elektra

NUMBERS—BOBBY BARE—Columbia

SUGAR DADDY—BELLAMY BROTHERS—Warner-Curb

I'D LOVE TO LAY YOU DOWN—CONWAY TWITTY—MCA

PLAY METER FUNKIFIED

THE SECOND TIME AROUND—SHALAMAR—Solar

SPECIAL LADE—RAY, GOODMAN & BROWN—Polydor ***

AND THE BEAT GOES ON—WHISPERS—Solar

GOT TO LOVE SOMEBODY—SISTER SLEDGE—Cotillion ***

TOO HOT—KOOL & THE GANG—DeLite ***

ON THE RADIO—DONNA SUMMER—Casablanca

BAD TIMES—TAVARES—Capitol

WHAT I WOULDN'T DO—ANGELA BOFILL—Arista GRP

THEME FROM THE BLACK HOLE—PARLIAMENT—Casablanca

YOU ARE MY HEAVEN—ROBERTA FLACK & DONNY HATHAWAY—Atlantic

WORKING MY WAY BACK TO YOU—SPINNERS—Atlantic

STOMP—BROTHERS JOHNSON—A & M

*** Records previously reviewed by PLAY METER

New Orleans Arcade Spotlight:

When the 'Jolly Ox' moved in,



Funland, an arcade stocked with 55 video and pinball machines, is slickly packaged in a Colorado-style decor of natural wood and eye-pleasing graphics. Nancy Osborne, marketing and promotional director for the Village Aurora, feels that the entertainment center has introduced a lot of parents to the shopping center that may not have stopped in on their own.

In years past, a developer who allowed an amusement arcade in his shopping center exiled it to the most discreet corner.

But with the increasing sophistication of game technology and a diminished association with all the traditional negative facets of the industry, these entertainment stores have achieved respectability.

"We've proved we can pay the rent," says Don Hanson, president of a New Orleans-based company called Jolly Ox Arcade.

In fact, an arcade called Funland, for which Hanson supplies 55 video and pinball machines, has been drawing customers to Village Aurora Shopping Center on New Orleans's West Bank in droves. Funland opened in June 1979, an arm of the company's operations in Monroe and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

"The arcade has introduced a lot of parents to the shopping center," says Nancy Osborne, marketing and promotional director for Village Aurora. "Maybe they would not have shopped here had they not come to bring their children."

Osborne also credits the arcade with bringing in clientele other than the teen-age group.

"Businessmen in the area office buildings come to participate in a sport that takes them back to their youth," she observes.

"They might stop by the ice cream parlor or get a hair cut here because of the environment.

"There are not many recreational opportunities in this area—no skating rinks, for example," she says.

Osborne said although several merchants adjacent to the arcade, notably clothing stores, feared that noise and crowded sidewalks would result when Funland opened, that didn't happen.

"We let the young people know

no one had to move out

By Sharon McRae

we would not allow them to loiter and there would be no smoking, drinking, or eating on the premises," she says.

"The stores adjacent to the arcade still complain about the ringing of the machines, but that problem can be solved by further sound-proofing of the walls."

Despite the initial reservations of some merchants, the managers of an ice cream parlor and a Mexican quick-food restaurant agree that Funland has sent business their way.

"Most of the store owners were scared at first that there would be problems, but it's been exactly the opposite," says Robert Perry, manager of Taco Toro. "We haven't had any trouble.

"They come in to get something to eat or drink and they pick up after themselves.

"On Saturdays and on school holidays we can tell business has increased," Perry says. "We're sitting here hoping for summer. Kids spend more money here than families."

Jerry Conrad, manager of Bresler's 33 Flavors Ice Cream Shop, says his children frequent Funland. His personal preference is the foosball game.

"The kids the arcade brings in eventually get tired and come in here to sit," says Conrad. "They don't spend a lot of money but the place creates traffic which helps everybody a little."

Conrad would like to see more promotion at the arcade, like a foosball or pinball tournament. The mere mention of a tournament, he thinks, would bring even more business—to Funland and Bresler's. "The kids have to go in to practice, don't they?"

Osborne says the shopping center management is planning a pinball tournament to be held in the parking

lot for the spring or summer to attract West Bank locals to the arcade and, hopefully, to other areas of the shopping center.

Hanson concedes that fellow merchants are often leery of the atmosphere they think will be created by the introduction of an arcade into a shopping center or mall, but he believes the image can be stymied by good management.

"One of the major problems an arcade has in a strip center (like Village Aurora) is control of the customers," Hanson says. "I think by and large we've proved that our customers are no worse than any others.

"Our manager makes sure the store front is clean, and he knows a majority of our customers on a personal basis.

"If you have good management inside your store," Hanson believes, "kids will behave themselves outside your store."

While developers want to be selective about their tenants and merchants about their neighbors, Hanson says there's a fine art to choosing a successful location for an arcade. For every thirty or so possible locations that Jolly Ox Arcade considers, only one provides the correct exposure for an arcade, he says.

The secret, Hanson says, is demographics.

"You have to have the proper mixture of tenants and a neighborhood that is in the family formation age group," he says.

"You take Uptown New Orleans (an old area of the city)—you have an area with less children in the proximity of a store location. But in suburban areas you have young families with kids and a closer proximity to the schools."

Hanson says that while he's con-



Robert "Radar" Perry, right, and Cindy Seba confer over the packaging of an order at Taco Toro, a Mexican fast-food restaurant. Perry, the manager of the growing concern, reported that merchants were apprehensive of the arcade at the first but their fears were never realized.

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Karen Horne, left, and Manager Jerry Conrad ring up a sale at Bresler's 33 Flavors Ice Cream Shop. Conrad, who noted that traffic in his store has increased as a result of the arcade, would like to see more promotion at the entertainment center, which is located in a suburban New Orleans shopping center.

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stantly looking for shopping centers and malls that meet this criteria, he's actually not interested in a center with less than 100,000 square feet because any center smaller doesn't generate enough foot traffic.

Village Aurora is smaller, but, Hanson says, its situation in the community is unique.

"It's separated from other shopping centers and entertainment centers," he says, "but it's located in an affluent area with families who have young children."

Hanson admits that the proximity of a six-plex theater in the shopping center has helped tremendously to attract clientele.

He agrees with Conrad that promotion of the arcade is important and that the business of one merchant can easily become the business of another.

"You can't put games in, sit back, and expect to make money," he says. "You have to promote your product as aggressively as any other merchant."

Hanson believes a common promotion gimmick among merchants can be helpful. For example, the purchase of an ice cream cone next door can be the chip to a free game at the arcade, he says.

"We (Village Aurora merchants) have to contend with the short-duration shopper because there are

no large-draw department stores here," he says. "So we have to generate our own traffic and not rely on foot traffic."

Hanson also promotes the arcade through coupons in school newspapers and athletic events rosters, and in school yearbooks. "The stronger the ties to the local high schools and middle schools, the better your ties to the community," he observes.

Hanson says he advertised heavily for two weekends before Funland's grand opening last summer and had on-the-scene radio spots from the arcade during the first day of business.

"Kids are looking for some way to excel, to prove their peers that they can do something even though they're not captain of the football team," Hanson says.

Even though Hanson says he's convinced that children have more disposable income than their parents, he'd like the pinball wizardry to spread through the entire family.

"I need to get the father and mother and the younger children involved so that they know the older kids are being entertained in a safe place."

That's good for an amusement arcade's image—and, apparently, it isn't hurting anyone else's business in the shopping center.

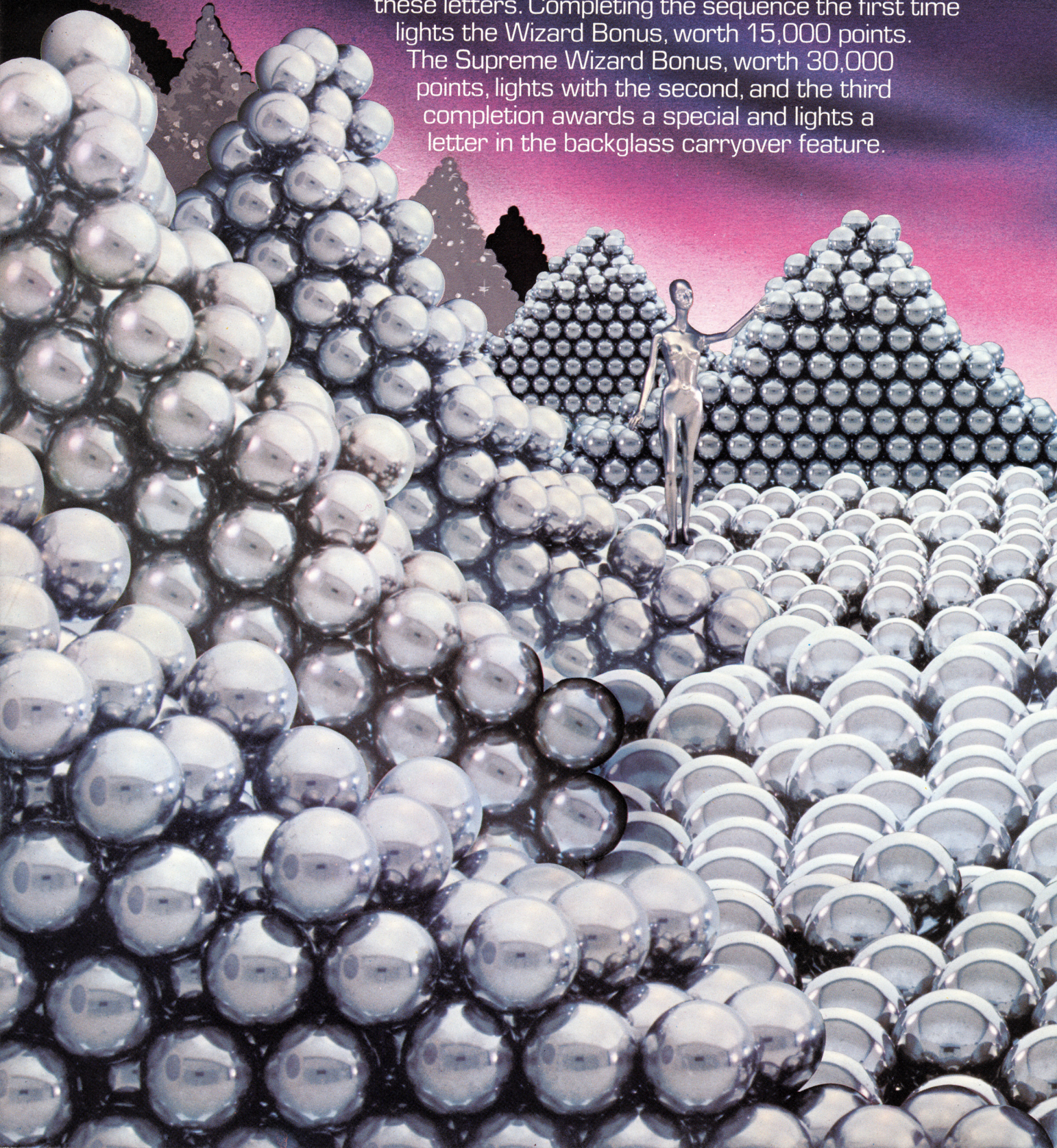
In the Beginning, it was just pinball.
Then Bally Created
SILVERBALL MANIA™



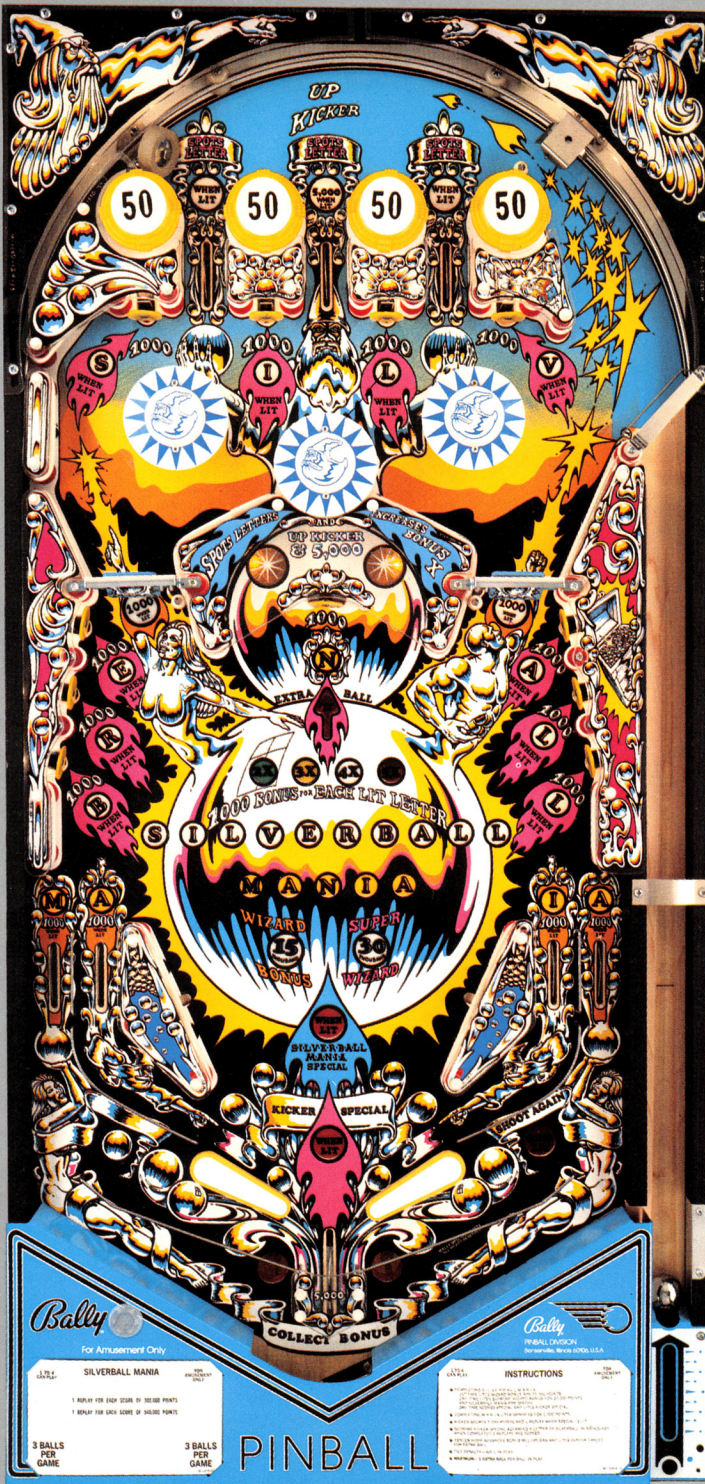
The Pinball Vision Materializes

Silverball Mania Lights the Pinball World

Each Silverball Mania letter, when lit, is worth 1,000 points. Up to 44,000 bonus points, times the multiplier, may be collected by these letters. Completing the sequence the first time lights the Wizard Bonus, worth 15,000 points. The Supreme Wizard Bonus, worth 30,000 points, lights with the second, and the third completion awards a special and lights a letter in the backglass carryover feature.







Players become Silverball Maniacs with Center Hoop feature

This feature contains 2 rollovers and a target. Going over the rollovers spots either one or two letters in "Silverball Mania," depending upon the setting, and increases the bonus up to 5X. The center target completes the "N" in "Mania" and awards an extra ball when lit.

After almost 2 decades the recreation of the Carryover feature

Each 3 times "Silverball Mania" is completed during a game, or when the kicker special is activated, one letter of "Silverball" lights on the lower left backglass. This feature is operator adjustable; the letter will remain lit from game to game, enticing players to try for its completion and an operator option award!

Supernaturalistic Disappearing Kicker feature

Beneath the flipper is a kicker that sends the ball back into play. The top center lane, or the center hoop, raise the kicker to activate the feature. A special is awarded if kicker special light is lit.

The Vision reflects in Bally's Silverball graphics

Silverball Mania's unique artwork is unlike any pinball game to date. The future happens today within the graphics, color, and total package design of this instant attention grabber.

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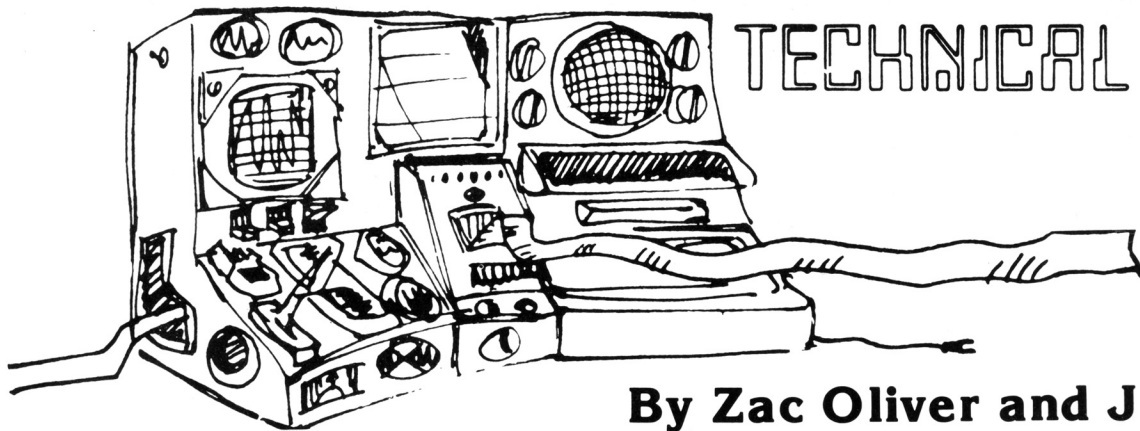
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By Zac Oliver and Jim Calore

A common pinball problem-- the inoperable solenoid

The problem most often encountered in pinball maintenance is an inoperable solenoid. In electro-mechanical games, the solution was fairly cut and dried: replace the coil and check for a closed switch. In electronic pins, however, a little more research sometimes is necessary.

Since most late games have several fuses protecting the solenoids

supply line, replacements of coils have been greatly reduced. However, transistor failure does occur. The electronic hardware involved in the solenoid drive uses a few components and its circuit configuration and operation are quite similar among different game manufacturers.

The circuit in Fig. 1 is used by Bally and Stern, and the driver

section is basically the same on Gottlieb, Atari, Williams, and Game Plan. U2 is an IC that decodes the data on its A, B, C, and D inputs and selects one of sixteen outputs. The 74L154 chip receives its data and enable (pin 19) from the MPU board. This enable goes to a low logic level (0 volts) to accept the data. The outputs of U2 are active low, meaning that they are normally at a

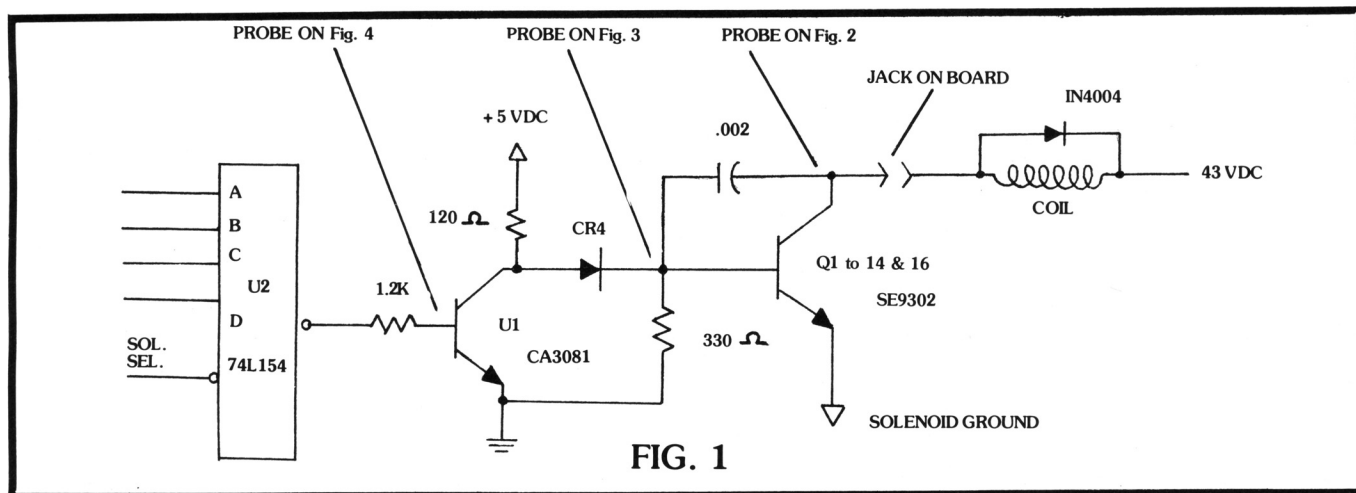


FIG. 1

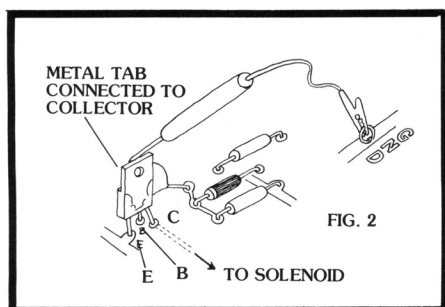


FIG. 2

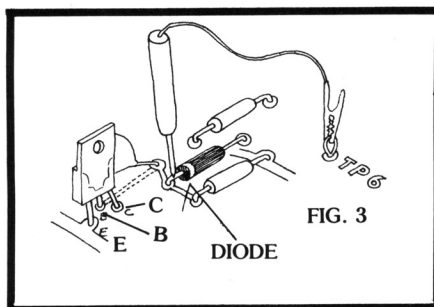


FIG. 3

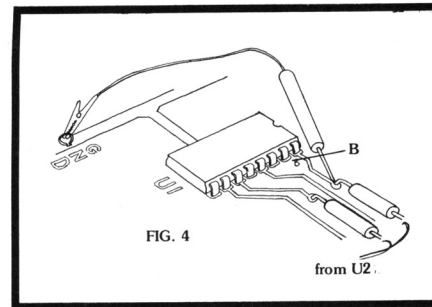
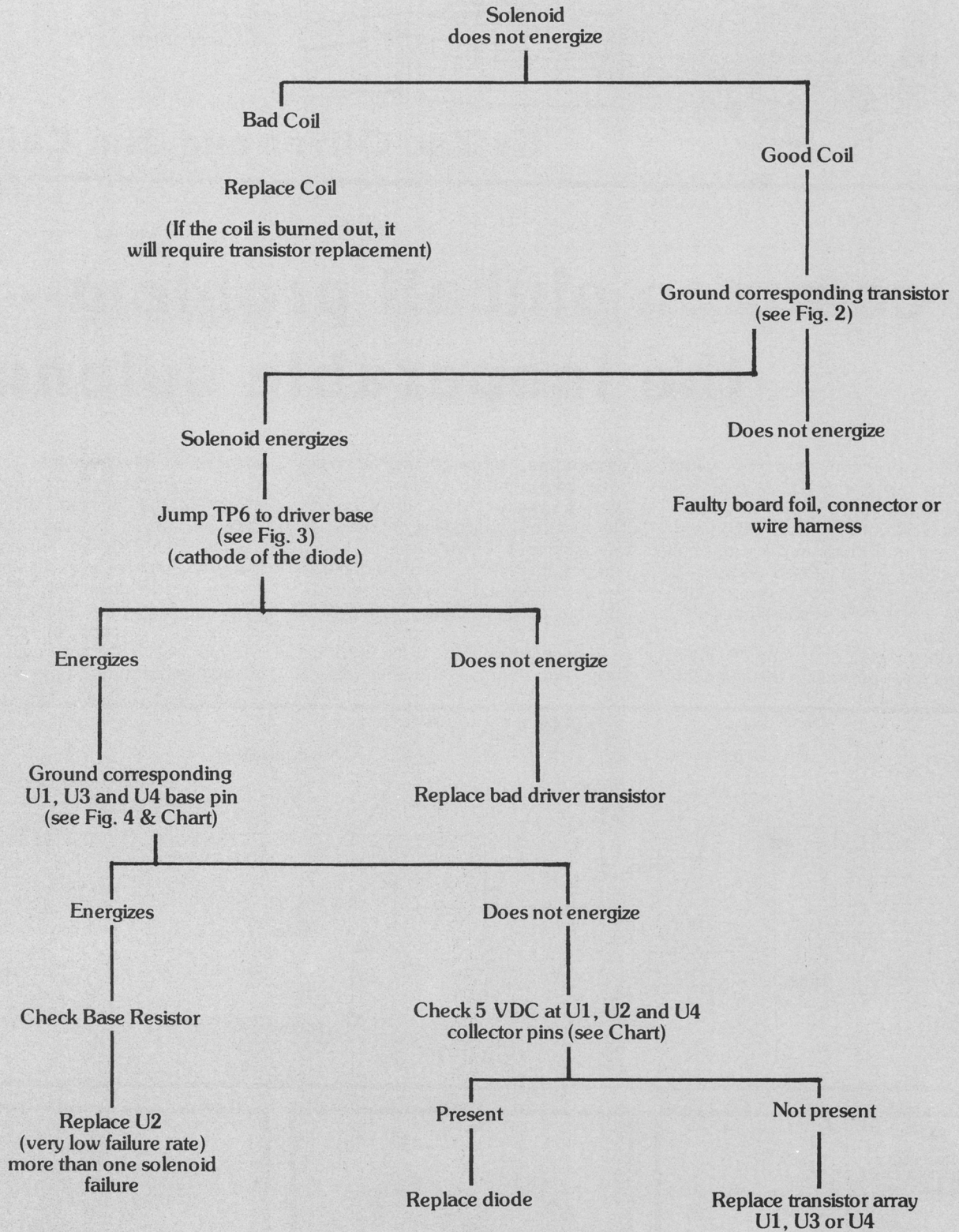


FIG. 4

Solenoid trouble shooting chart



+43 V.D.C. and Ground Active/activate self-test for solenoids

high (+5 volts) state and when selected, go low.

U1 is an IC transistor array that inverts the signal and buffers the control circuitry to the output transistor. CR4 is an isolation diode which further protects the IC's. The low going signal selected by U2 is inverted by the NPN transistor (U1) to a high going signal at the base of the driver transistor (an NPN type Darlington) which in turn conducts and, in effect, grounds the solenoid.

The 1N 4004 (rated 400 P.I.V.—Peak Inverse Voltage) diode across the coil clamps the back emf (electromotive force), generated by the collapsing magnetic field in the coil. I prefer to use a 1N 4007 (rated 1000 P.I.V.) since the spikes generated during solenoid operation might reach several hundred volts above the ratings of the 1N 4004.

The capacitor in the circuit acts as a desparking device to further protect the driver. It usually ranges from .001 μ F to .005 μ F. If the diode fails, the capacitor couples the spike to the driver base, turning it on. The transistor then conducts the spike to ground.

The 330 ohms resistor is a pull down resistor. It assures that the 120 Hz solenoid supply voltage, coupled also by the capacitor, does not turn the driver "on" during stand by. The 120 ohms resistor is a pull up/bias for the Darlington driver.

Once the components are known and the circuit is understood, troubleshooting becomes quite easy. In most cases, the use of a multimeter can be omitted. A jumper wire consisting of a probe and an alligator clip at the other end is all that is necessary.

Solenoid power supply problems are not analyzed here. We assume that +43 VDC is there, which can be easily determined by the self test, coin lockout coil, and knocker coil. Also, without the +43 VDC, the zero crossing detector circuit, in the MPU, will prevent the power up test from flashing the LED the seventh time.

Therefore, for the single solenoid failure, follow the troubleshooting chart and the figures. In the field, schematics are not really necessary for the troubleshooting of this circuitry. The color codes in the wire harness, again a jumper, and/or a multimeter, will supply all the necessary information.

Caution of course, must be used when performing these tests. Always remember: the solenoid driver board in focus is also the regulated supply +190 VDC for the displays, +5 VDC for the control circuits and is linked to the MPU through the PIA's output posts.

Referral chart for opposite page

| Q1 to 14 or 16 | CA3081 | Base Pin No. | Collect Pin No. |
|-------------------|--------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Q1 | U1 | 16 | 1 |
| Q2 | U1 | 3 | 2 |
| Q3 | U1 | 6 | 4 |
| Q4 | U1 | 8 | 7 |
| Q 5 | U1 | 13 | 14 |
| Q6 | U1 | 11 | 12 |
| Q7 | U1 | 10 | 9 |
| Q8 | U3 | 16 | 1 |
| Q9 | U3 | 3 | 2 |
| Q10 | U3 | 8 | 7 |
| Q11 | U3 | 6 | 4 |
| Q12 | U3 | 10 | 9 |
| Q13 | U3 | 11 | 12 |
| Q14 | U3 | 13 | 14 |
| Q16 | U4 | 8 | 7 |

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Critic's Corner

By Roger C. Sharpe

Agreeing with Stern-- and rating three others

Before we get into this month's games there's something that bears a closer look because of the intent and, hopefully, impact it will generate. What I'm talking about is Gary Stern's open letter to the industry in last month's issue regarding the rising costs of equipment. The manufacturers have always been fair game for most of us intrepid writers—who tend to drop the blame in most matters of contention square into the laps of the pinball producers.

But this letter really struck a responsive chord with me, if for no other reason than the fact that I was ready to lash out at the manufacturers for their price increases on equipment and the subsequent effect on players. But Gary's right and his letter fell on at least one set of sympathetic ears.

After all, facts is facts—continued research and development for further integrating new "lower-cost" technology is expensive. And quantitatively, the price increases as they now stand are probably far less than they would have been if the games were still electro-mechanical. It's easy to take pot-shots at the majors but it's also unfair when you realize just how far they've come since the days of

Allied Leisure's *Dyn O' Mite* and Mirco's *Spirit of '76*. Admittedly—and this column has been harsh at times—the improvements and evolutionary factors haven't been of the greatest or most recognizable nature, but steps have been taken and are ongoing.

If indeed I'm a stern critic of the improvements that are going on in the industry, I can also be the first to accept and congratulate the efforts of integrating memory into pinball machines, the better use of trip drop targets, better sound effects, an increased importance of graphics and new color techniques, a refinement of engineering and mechanical components, and a slew of other things, not to mention the tremendous effect of inflation on materials and labor. And so it is that Gary's letter is a timely and, at the same time, timeless statement of something that I'm sure the other manufacturers feel. If we are to be critical, we must at least put everything into its proper perspective which doesn't lessen or minimize a tougher approach to game evaluation, but everything still is reflective of the times and what's possible, given the nature of the business.

And, with this said, the time is

probably right to take a look at the games and to once again stress that the ratings given in this space are *not* and were never meant to be an indication or value judgement of machines *between* companies. Rather it is a process of determining how well a particular company is progressing.

So, if three games from three different manufacturers get the same rating as was the case a couple of issues back, that's not to say that each game was equal in its appeal, design integrity, or overall presentation. Rather it is an evaluation of that company's past efforts and where they are going in terms of innovating and altering their games on an ongoing basis.

And, again, this writer is the first to admit that it's what is in the cashbox that really counts. My purpose is to help you decide which games may be a better bet for your particular location before you race out to buy everything in sight. Whether you agree or disagree with what I write each month is somewhat important, but I feel it's more important for you to take a more analytical view of games. I hope that's exactly what this column does—stimulate your critical juices.

Roger's Ratings At-A-Glance

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|--------|
| Bally's NITRO GROUND SHAKER | ##1/4 | Williams' LASER BALL | ###1/2 |
| Gottlieb's TORCH | ## | | |

Bally's NITRO GROUND SHAKER

It's "search & destroy racing" with this new "supercharged pinball" from the recently moved folks at Bally.

PLAYFIELD: A center kick-out hole flanked by two lanes begins the playfield action. Move down and there's a stationary target on the left and one on the right. At the middle are three thumper bumpers with a right hand spinner lane entry for access back to the top and a left side kick-out hole for collecting bonus points and building bonus points. Moving right along and there's a single target on the left side just below the alley way to the kick-out hole, while on the right side is a four drop target bank. A conventional wire form lane and flipper bottom is helped by two rubber ringed-posts above the outlanes and finishes off the game board.

ANALYSIS: The whole rationale for *Ground Shaker* is the building up and collecting of bonus points activated by either of the kick-out holes, with the left side pulling heavy duty since it counts down bonus as well. The two top lanes (A) and (B) along with those two top targets (C) and (D) along with the lower lanes (E) and (F) builds up the super and nitro bonus values of 20,000 and 30,000 points with the specials also tied into this feature. The right side drop targets offer some extra ball and special possibilities, but the big thing with this game is the left side kick-out hole.

The top kick-out hole is more of a random opportunity for hitting 2X bonus—if you happen to land at the right time—and the multiplier points can be plentiful. But the game is really a somewhat dated design that leaves much to chance and only offers straight away shots of left to right and right to left, especially with the gaping space between the flippers.

The saving grace is that the sound is strong and attention getting as is the count-down on the field and the borrowed graphics from another distant racing game of Bally's, the memorable *Twin Win*. The color scheme is very similar—there's the same left and right bonus on the field. And there's almost too much emphasis on the kick-out holes; however, the setting of the game is very important in terms of leveling so that the drain from the left side is lessened.

GRAPHICS: This period piece works well visually and is a nice break from much of the "futurismo" theme that we see so much of. D.C. has done some great detail work, especially with some of the spectators in the stands and the refrains of

"racing on a track of clay" keeps going through my head (remember the old Sixties' commercials?) But it works here, and it's a refreshing change of pace more pleasing to the eye given the inherent violence and skeleton thrills. And the playfield picks up where the backglass leaves off with some nice touches of its own, not the least of which is reading the little messages sprinkled throughout.

PLAY: The scoring on *Ground Shaker* is one extreme or the other, depending upon the money you decide to leave in the game and whether some of the lanes are doubled up, etc. But for the most part, you're dealing with a three-ball effort. For extra ball areas, a 130,000 start isn't too bad, followed by 300,000 and 500,000 points. On free play, you'll probably want to increase these levels by at least 100,000 points, depending on the caliber of play in your location and the way you like to percentage your machines.

PROS & CONS: Bally has become a pinball company in transition with subtle changes taking place in their equipment from game to game. The cosmetics, in terms of sound, have gotten to a far better point than they once were, say, six to nine months ago, and there are a few breakthroughs even in design that will undoubtedly have a future impact.

But *Nitro Ground Shaker* isn't going to really shake up too many places and players. It's really an interim game, as witnessed by the date on the backglass and even the nature of the layout. It's a throwback to another era which has been dressed up with a very solid package but, on the field, the nuances are missing for a machine that will have staying power over a period of time. The gap between the flippers is intense and the random nature of the top kick-out hole for only a 2X possibility may not be enough to sustain players used to getting 4X and 5X scoring.

The coup d'etat, however, is the left side kick-out hole, where you can countdown and accumulate scads of points. But unfortunately that's only one feature on an entire board.

The game is decent playing but no great shakes—it at least offers some variation from the company's usual fare.

RATING: #1/4

Williams' LASER BALL

A wide-body wonder from this company that follows in the footsteps of some of their flashier efforts.

PLAYFIELD: Five top lanes start the action that leads down to a field with a target on the left of the

MOON BASE



Nichibutsu



- Play with one or two players.
- Use one coin for a single's game, and two coins for a double's game.
- Put in the coins and the game will start when you press the button for "single" or "double".
- Shoot down bombs coming from the MONSTERS by operating Fireing button located on the right side of the game machine. To defend yourself from the MONSTERS attack use the laser gun directed by lever on the left side of the machine.
- If you shoot down the UFO, ? points is added to your score.
- When all the laser guns are destroyed by the MONSTERS or the MONSTERS occupy the moon base, the game is over.
- If you score over 5,000 points, you can enter your score and name.
[In case of two players]
- When a player's laser gun is destroyed by the MONSTERS, the other player begins to play the game.

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interior set-up and a kick-out hole on the right. Three thumpers are in the middle with one bank of four drop targets on the right, a bank of three in the middle of the field at a slight angle, and another bank of drop targets at the left. Move back over to the far right and there's a spinner lane for access back to the top with a right side flipper just before the spinner.

On the left there's an inner lane to a recessed bulls-eye target and another outer spinner lane. The bottom offers to outside kick-back flippers, an out lane in between, and the conventional wire form lanes down to the two flippers. And, just above the flippers at mid-field, one finds a pyramid shape of ten rollover buttons, for the basic layout of the machine.

ANALYSIS: A good balance of action is the keynote on *Laser Ball*, where everything works beautifully together from the top lanes with their double number values and the ten rollover buttons. All this ties into the value for the drop targets and, specifically, the right side four bank, the value of which runs from 10,000 to 60,000 points.

The other target banks work on

lighting increased values along the board and are neatly offset by the kick-out hole at the right or the bulls-eye target, both for bonus multiplier, as well as extra ball and special values. The bottom offers some great lateral movement off the kick-back flippers.

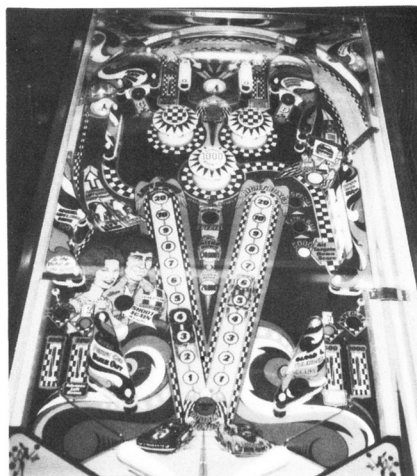
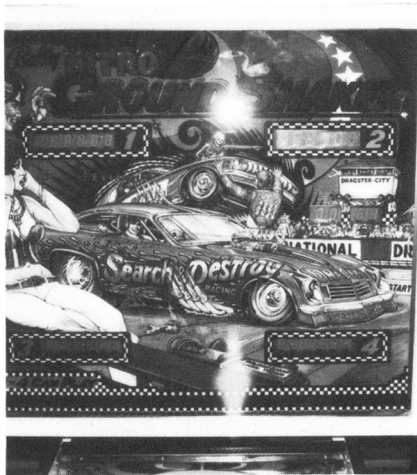
What it all adds up to is that you have a wide-body machine that does everything well for the player, especially in heightening shots with proximity to the flippers. There are some good reverses to the target areas and more than ample capabilities for getting back to the top, plus a very hot thumper bumper area. A main ingredient here is also the use of sound, which has become a Williams' trademark. And the striking flashing lights that draw attention whenever the game is played can't be overlooked, either.

GRAPHICS: Both in color treatment and the central character, which is repeated over and over again, *Laser Ball* is strong visually in an almost mesmerizing way. The girl pops out of the game and with those red laser balls flying about, the game is pleasing to the eye, and a standout as an example of the power of the old color processes.

PLAY: The point potentials on *Laser Ball* are incredible with the use of memory and the building up of 20,000 points and 30,000 points. It's a definite three ball effort and for extra ball areas, you'll probably be safe with a 200,000 point start followed by 400,000 and 600,000 point limits. On free play, you might want to increase these levels by 100,000 to 150,000 points each, depending on the type of players at your location.

PROS & CONS: It's interesting that the state of the art is such that, with the AMOA and the unveiling of Stern's *Big Game* and the soon to be released Gottlieb game, this machine, *Laser Ball* is almost a relic of the past. I think of it as a "Squat body" and, for its kind, it's probably one of the best made in terms of play and the layout of features.

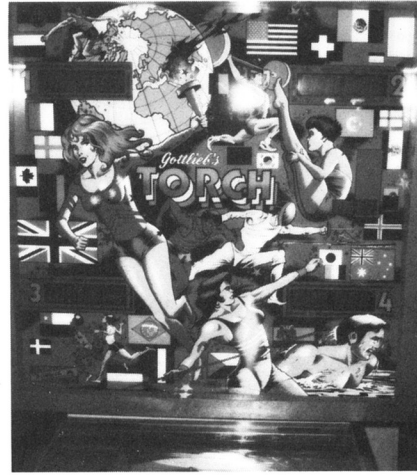
The problems associated with the shape are unavoidable, however, with a circular movement around the board that's a part of this type of machine size. One thing in Williams' favor on *Laser Ball* is that the bottom has been better utilized—the kick-back kickers give this game the feeling more of a conventional sized machine. But the fact remains that



Bally's NITRO GROUND SHAKER



Williams' LASER BALL



Gottlieb's TORCH

the size begun by Atari has its faults and limitations. However, retrospection on the wide-body tells me that super-sized games such as *Paragon*, *Genie*, *Superman*, and *Stellar Wars* can help *Laser Ball* take its place as a standout for this type of machine. It probably won't be with us this time next year now that manufacturers have recognized the need for proportion in increasing a machine's size, but it's not a game to ignore.

RATING: ###1/2

Gottlieb's TORCH

Athletics and an Olympian tie-in are visible on this recent effort from the folks of Northlake that makes for a machine that is really the end of an era for the old technology.

PLAYFIELD: Two green lit lanes are at the top toward the right side, with two blue lit lanes over at the far left side for beginning the action on the board. Just between is a roto-spin feature that ties in an A-B-C lighting sequence. Move down and two widely spaced thumper bumpers supply top field rebounding action with a gate at the right for access back to the top or a roll down to the plunger.

Just below this on the right is a recessed bulls-eye target before one gets to a wide open middle. On either side, just about mid-lower field, is a left side five drop target bank which is balanced off by a right side five drop target bank. The bottom is a departure and almost a variation on the old *Top card* design with its two stretched rubbers and outside lanes that lead down to a post.

ANALYSIS: The old bingo type card format is back on *Torch* and is tied into the roto-spin with the numbers 1-2-3 as well as the drop target banks, which spot the corners on the middle lighting configuration. This is where the bonus multiplier comes into play, depending on whether you finish a line top to bottom, across or diagonally.

The pair of lanes up at top light the lower outside lanes for extra ball value—a completed card gets the score to 10X value. But the shots are simplistic at best, with reverses to the targets off the flippers possible, rebounding from the bottom kickers possible, and the use of the top thumpers more for the roto-spin.

But the game is more of a gun-and-run effort to keep velocity and power up because of the bottom. There is a semi-countdown of bonus once the score gets up to 20,000 points and the right side gate up to top lights up. And that's the basics of *Torch*.

GRAPHICS: With their own style

firmly embedded, Gottlieb once again shies away from the format of some of their "celebrity stars for the '80s games", offering some physically active forms through both back-glass and playfield. The colors for the most part aren't that vibrant, but it is a decent, standard effort visually.

PLAY: The scoring on *Torch* isn't remarkable because so much is tied into the center card and building up to the bonus. On the average, you'll probably be better off going for some lower settings and seeing how your customers are hitting the game. For three ball and extra play, try a 100,000 point start and follow it with 280,000 and 400,000 point limits. On free play, increase these limits by at least 100,000 points, and if you're going to the five-ball route, you might want to add another 50,000 points to each limit.

PROS & CONS: The first problem associated with *Torch* from what players are saying is "if it only had memory". It is frustrating to almost finish the card, lose the ball, and then be faced with a fresh card all over again for getting the bonus multiplier.

The other problem with design lies in the bottom of the game which makes anything near the flipper almost instant death. One side set up as it is now and one conventional bottom side might have proven more successful for a machine that plays fast but doesn't seem to hit the fine line for earning power (from an operator's standpoint) and timing. The player, I'm afraid, will feel that he's not getting his money's worth. And the draining capacity on this machine is so intense that it's a shame—it doesn't have to be that much of a ballbreaker. The lack of memory, or course, is the culprit which leaves too many players feeling cheated by the lack of playing time and incremental scoring build-ups on the playfield.

But, as I said at the top of this review, this machine is a turning point for Gottlieb and represents the institution of a new system in their next machine that should prove the company's capabilities and long range success.

RATING: ##

And that, fun seekers, is yet another installment of the "get toughs". As always, I'm ready to take any of you criticism and comments regarding the direction and tone this space has taken. Next time we'll take a closer look at the Game Plan second effort, as well as some of the rumblings of the "bigger games" in the news for the coming spring and summer season.

Until then, be well and prosper.

2 in 1 ROLLING CRASH



Nichibutsu



- This game is designed to be played by one or two players.
- Use one coin for a single's game, and two coins, for a double's game.
- Put in the coins and the game will start when you press the button for "single" or "double".
- The player must drive his car [yellow one] safely not to make his car crash into the red one which comes toward the player's car from the front. Drive with the handle lever. The target disappears when the player drives safely. To accelerate, press the "high-speed" button on the right side.
- Each time the target disappears, points accumulate.
- The mark appears at the center and when the mark, called BIBINBA, disappears from the screen, the driver gets bonus points.
- The selection of the drive course becomes advantageous when the "OTHER ROUTE" gate opens, the driving course becomes better.

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The West German trade show IMA was better attended than ever before, perhaps because it was scheduled before the ATE this year. Buying was heavy and, for the first time, there was a lot of new equipment on display.

Coming of Age in Frankfurt, West Germany

By Gerry Wise

The West German trade show IMA—immaculate in its presentation, astute with its timing just a week before London's crowded ATE—is destined to become an annual event in Frankfurt.

With its international airport, adequate hotel accommodations and spacious Messegelände exhibition hall complex, Frankfurt offers an ideal location and now a show that is bound to prove more than just a stopping off place en route to the ATE.

Over 100 exhibitors from nine countries benefitted from substantial orders and found many new customers among the 5,826 specialist visitors who arrived from 33 countries other than West Germany.

Music made a major contribution to IMA's success, with two 160-selection juke boxes being shown for the first time anywhere. AMI introduced their first attempt at manufacturing a 160-selection box, the compact R 1-3, which is made especially for the European market

although it will be made available for the United States.

Lowen Automaten introduced visitors to NSM's new *Prestige ES 160*, an elegant box with a darkened see-through front panel revealing the unit's internal workings. A well-illuminated selection board complete with labels bearing a novel postage stamp size picture of each of the artists programmed is also featured.

The *Phoenix 160* selection box from Seeburg was also shown at IMA while Wurlitzer included their new credit card meter on an *Atlanta 200* electronic box.

The big Rock-Ola attraction was their first full-view wallbox. All the promotion features found on their 478 and 480 models, including the bonus and location hit panel, are in evidence. Dr. David Rockola said this box was being shown very much with the British and European markets in mind.

The Rock-Ola *Max 477* was presented with a new color scheme,

coffee and beige, making the compact box more readily acceptable to a greater number of decor conscious locations.

The continuous boon in video games, both upright cabinet models and cocktail table versions, was evident throughout the three day show. Exidy Sales Manager Lila Zinter flew to Frankfurt to present the *Tailgunner 2*, *Fire One*, and *Side Trak* games for the first time in Europe. Bally Marketing Vice President Tom Nieman basked in the attention accorded Midway's *Galaxians* and *Submarine* games.

Atari's most successful video was undoubtedly *Asteroids* while Grem-lin's *Monaco GP*, in particular the mini-version, also proved popular.

Western European countries, of course, are known pinball enthusiasts and Bally's *Nitro Ground Shaker* and *Future Spa* flippers were instant hits.

Alvin Gottlieb and his firm's senior vice president Robert Bloom has much to enthuse over, however, as



Number One In
GOTTLIEB'S
"A New Decade of Stars"

GOTTLIEB
STAR SERIES
80



SPIDER-MAN
 INSTRUCTIONS 3 BALLS PER PLAYER
 COMPLETE THE 3-3 BONUS ROUND, BEATS POINTS, AND
 ONE OF SEVEN SPECIAL BONUS TARGETS AND 10000 POINTS
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 FOR 10000 POINTS
 THE BONUS TARGETS SCORE 8000 POINTS, COMPLETING BONUS BONUS
 TARGETS, BONUS TARGET EXTRA BALL FEATURING, BONUS TARGET AND
 BONUS TARGET BONUS
 POP BUMPERS AND SPIN TARGET SCORE 100 ON 1000 WHEN HIT.
 THE BALLS ARE SHOT BY A PLAYER.
 INSTRUCTIONS AND BALLS SHOULD BE IN POSITION TO BE SHOT THAT APPEARS ON
 BACKGAMES SHOULD BE IN POSITION TO BE SHOT.

STAR SERIES
 80

D. Gottlieb & Co.
 A Columbia Pictures Industries Company
 1 REPLAY FOR EACH SCORE OF 310,000 POINTS.
 1 REPLAY FOR EACH SCORE OF 340,000 POINTS.
 1 REPLAY FOR EACH SCORE OF 480,000 POINTS.
 3 REPLAYS FOR BEATING HIGH SCORE TO DATE.

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**Spider-Man™ – the premier game
in Gottlieb's new "Star Series 80"
starring "System 80" and "Dimension 80"**

- ...augmented "game-with-a-brain" memory
- ...new playfield size designed for the ultimate in pinball play action
- ...unique ear-level sound through the new Gottlieb "Sound Projector"
- ...new "attract" sound and sight modes with sequenced flashing playfield lights
- ...new high-powered, individually controlled pop bumpers
- ...new lightbox design with easy-access insert
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- ...optional triple coin chute, non-resettable coin counter and tape printout accessories

What more appropriate theme for Gottlieb's first "Star Series 80" game than Marvel Comic's universally recognized adventure character Spider-Man™?

And the game teems with brilliant new playfield features made possible through the new "Dimension 80" playfield size and "System 80" electronics. A new level of sophistication including the unique "roving" light feature continually tantalizes the player. Alternate opportunities to complete scoring objectives leading to the elusive free game and extra ball abound and make the impulse to play Spider-Man™ a continuing compulsion.

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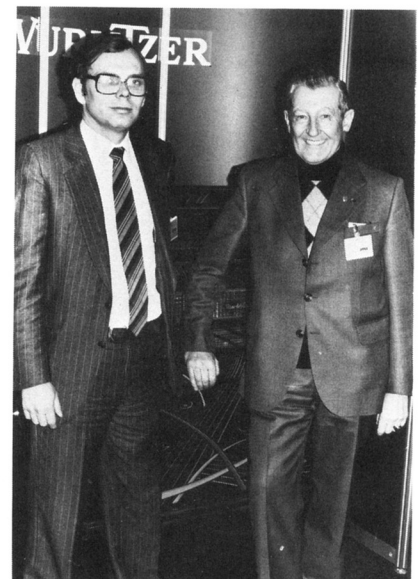
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U.S. businessman Steve Parks, left, and Frank Happ, both of the WICO Corporation, are pictured here at the firm's booth with the interpreter, Marion Kornig.



N.S.M. Director Ullrich Schultze, left, and Peer Von Oertzen display one of the new 1980 phonographs on the Lowen-Automaten stand.



Klaus Telgheder, left, export manager for Deutsche Wurlitzer, shows Wurlitzer's new phonograph line to Swedish distributor Erich Bracker.

the four-player *Amazing Spiderman* pinball made its European debut. Valley's *Spectra IV* flipper in table form, a four-player game with the playing field able to rotate, was another success on its European debut.

Prototypes of some Universal pinballs with a video display screen and sound effects plus catering for up to six players were shown but production dates were not revealed.

Gaming machines, mainly for the West German market but manufactured to be in compliance with the law, were in abundance. British firms JPM and Ace showed their equipment while a pyramid of Merkur Venus machines highlighted the

ADP stand. Rotamint introduced its new *Double Jackpot*, as well.

Tournament Soccer was prominently featured and staged the West German location finals during a tournament in a hall adjoining the exhibition. Cal Rogers was present to lend a hand with the promotion to European Marketing Manager Luc Mertens.

Pool was also surprisingly prominent for a game that has not established itself in any dynamic way in West Germany.

Leading British manufacturer Hazel Grove completed a distribution deal for its *SuperLeague* tables in Switzerland. It is firmly believed a substantial market for pool exists in

Western Europe, especially the small pocket tables, which are preferred to the larger American styles.

The American influence was evident, however, with Valley's *Big Cat* a constant draw.

All in all, the IMA show offered a great deal and the West German industry, monopolized by about eleven companies which are responsible for the distribution of over ninety percent of all equipment in the country, appears to be in a healthy state. Latest figures show 85,000 juke boxes located; 150,000 gaming machines; and 170,000 ancillary amusement machines currently operating.

The IMA has come of age.

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viding the proper Token is selected, Coin Mechs can be set to eliminate slugging completely.

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Analyzing your costs

(Distasteful but necessary)

By Charles C. Ross

Most people consider costs or expenses to be distasteful. While it is definitely hard to argue against that, it is also impossible to eliminate cost. Therefore, we may as well study costs and see how we can use them to our advantage, if that's possible.

First, let us be sure we agree on a definition of costs and expenses. Cost is the amount of cash given to acquire properties or services. Costs referred to as "unexpired costs" are commonly referred to as "assets." As the assets are sold or consumed, they become "expired costs" or "expenses". The most common asset that amusement operators "consume" is equipment, and, of course, that consumption is called depreciation. (See PLAY METER, January 15, February 15, and March 15, 1979).

Certain costs are consumed without really being an asset. These types of cost are normally referred to as "expenses". The best definition of expenses is that an expense is simply "a cost incurred in the process of producing revenue." Now think about that for a moment and review each expense you have. You'll notice that the expense must be incurred in order for you to have revenue.

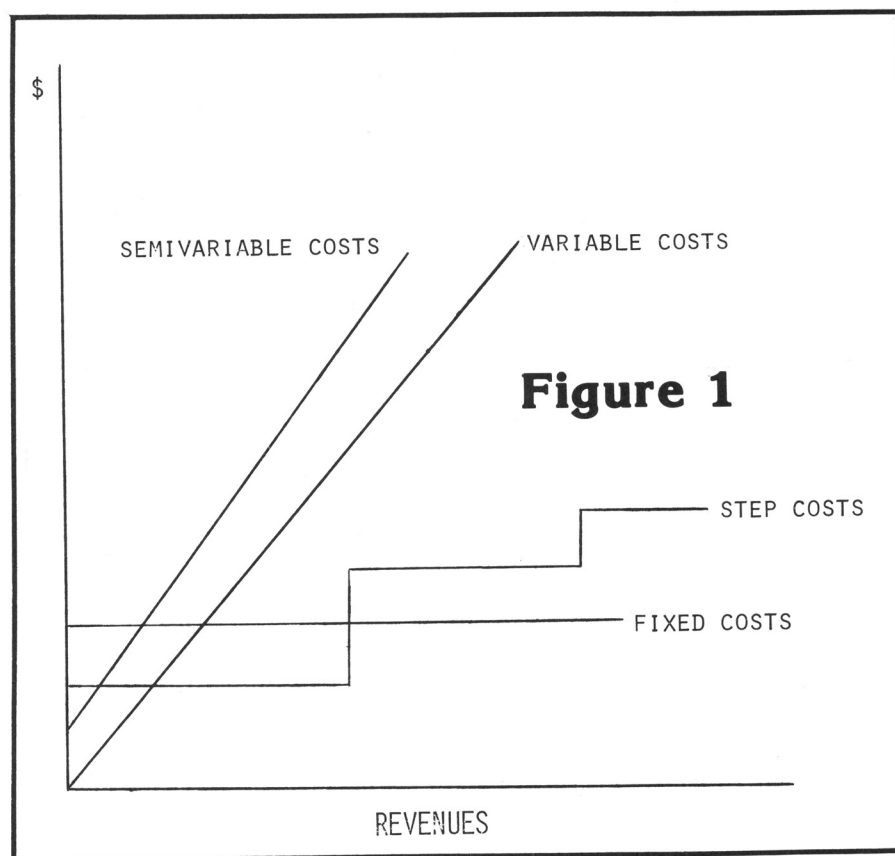
If there are any expenses you are incurring which do not contribute to, or allow revenues to be derived, the solution is simple—eliminate that expense. If it is not benefitting your organization, why spend the money? The wages you pay are expenses but without them you would soon have no revenue, and likewise for your repair expenses. Without repairing your machines, they would make no money. So you expend money for repairs in the process of producing revenue.

These unfortunate "cost incurred in the process of producing revenue" take on various characteristics. Fixed

costs are related to time and are often times contractual, like a lease payment on a building. They require payment as of a specified time period much like, say, rent expense and utilities expense. But fixed costs do not always have to be the same amount. They can change just as your utility bill changes from month to month but that does not alter it as a fixed cost. The utility bill and rent expense are fixed costs because they go on, regardless of the amount of production or revenues the business generates. And many fixed costs normally cannot be eliminated with-

out tremendous complications to the firm. For example, the impact of not paying the electric bill at an arcade location will cause monumental problems which cannot be solved until the bill is paid or an alternative source of power is found.

Variable costs or variable expenses are those expenses that relate directly to the firm's sales or the volume of goods produced. In the amusement business (unless you are a manufacturer) variable costs are almost nonexistent. Being a service oriented business, it is difficult to determine which costs vary according to the



revenues a machine or location earns. About the closest thing to a variable cost an amusement machine operator faces is repair costs. The more play the machines get, the more they will break down. If there are expenses which you can isolate and which vary, as to revenues that increase or decrease, you have found a variable cost.

Semi-variable costs or mixed cost are those costs which are comprised of both a fixed and a variable component. As the level of activity increases, the total cost also increases. A typical example of a semi-variable cost is truck expense. There is a certain fixed expense with operating a truck for such items as interest on the borrowed money and insurance. As business activity increases, more demands are placed on the truck and it is driven more miles causing more gasoline and oil expense which is the variable expense portion of the truck expense. Any cost which has a certain base level and then goes up as activity increases is a semi-variable cost.

Step costs are costs incurred in a series of fixed amounts. The cost is constant over a range, then it increases or decreases. The salary of a supervisor or a manager is a step cost. The cost of supervisory personnel will remain fixed over a broad range of activity, but when a certain level of activity is reached, it will be necessary to hire an additional manager. The cost of supervisory personnel, too, will increase to a new level. The cost now will remain constant over another range of company activities before stepping up again.

Step costs are often experienced by an expanding firm. As expansion occurs, new demands are faced for more managers, more office space, more trucks, and repairmen. Consequently, at some point, the cost steps up to a new and higher level. (See Figure 1)

Now that we have examined the various types of costs and their characteristics, how can the amusement operator use this information to benefit his organization? There are two things any business can do to make a bigger profit. They can either increase revenues or decrease expenses. So, let us work on the latter and see how the operator can decrease his operating expenses.

First, you need to categorize your fixed costs into committed fixed costs

and managed fixed costs. Committed fixed costs are those fixed costs which are nondiscretionary or inescapable. These costs are normally committed by contract or an implied contract because of past management decisions or commitments.

Committed fixed costs normally relate to the operation at a certain level of business activity. To the amusement machine operator, costs such as depreciation on equipment, lease or rental costs of buildings, property taxes, salaries of key personnel, and insurance, are all committed fixed costs. Careful evaluation should be made of committed fixed cost before they are entered into or eliminated, where management has such an option.

Managed fixed costs which are discretionary or escapable are those fixed costs incurred on a short-term basis according to some management objective. Management decides it is going to expend money to achieve some objective and then expends the money. For example, management may decide wider community knowledge of a trade name or business location is an objective they want to achieve. The accomplishment of that objective is a managed fixed cost.

Public relations costs, advertising costs, promotional costs, employee training costs, charitable donations, location improvement costs, major office rearrangements, and the expense of attending seminars are all examples of managed fixed costs. Just because these costs are managed or discretionary costs does not mean these costs should be arbitrarily eliminated.

Theoretically, these managed fixed costs could be substantially reduced by management, and profits, in the immediate future, would increase. But any adverse impact of reducing a managed fixed cost would probably not be realized by the firm until some future time period.

Each managed fixed cost should be carefully considered before money is expended or before it is eliminated. What would be the ultimate benefit of this cost and what will be the adverse effects of eliminating this cost are the two critical questions which must be asked regarding all managed fixed costs.

As already explained, most costs incurred by the amusement operator

are fixed costs, with a few, and often times hard to distinguish, variable costs. Many variable costs the amusement operator faces are related to preventive maintenance and good planning. Equipment repairs, for instance, are a variable cost because the more the equipment is used, the more breakdowns will occur. By keeping pool tables clean and chalk-free the life of the cloth can be extended, reducing your recovering costs. Proper maintenance of pinball playfields will extend playfield life as well as increase player appeal. These principles apply to proper maintenance of foosball tables as well as service trucks.

An efficiently planned schedule for servicing, repairing, and emptying the coin boxes of machines can reduce wages expenses as well as truck service expense, and free some valuable employee time.

Utilizing economy vehicles for routine maintenance and revenue collections and full-size trucks for machinery rotation may help also to reduce your auto and truck expense.

The business manager-owner who is really serious about controlling his costs should periodically work through an exercise such as the one illustrated in Table 1. It can be a worthwhile experience to see what costs you can control.

Costs may be good and costs may be bad. A good cost is very simply a cost which will generate more revenue than its outlay. And, of course, a bad cost is a cost which does not return its cost. Deciding which costs do return their own outlay (we'll call them the Saints) and which costs do not return their own outlay (the Devils) is what distinguishes a profitable organization from a very profitable organization, and a bad manager from a good manager.

FIGURE 1

Fixed costs are represented by a straight line but that is not to say that fixed costs do not change. Fixed costs in any year may be very different from the amounts of such costs in previous years, but these changes which occur are not attributable to revenue changes. That, of course, is why fixed costs are depicted in the graph as a straight line. Fixed costs may change as a function of time but they do not change as a function of revenues.

Theoretically, variable costs

**“A careful evaluation should be made
of committed fixed costs
before they are entered into or eliminated”**

should be constant per unit of output and thus, in the aggregate, should vary directly with revenues. In practice, however, the difficulties in hiring employees for fractions of hours or having the same dollar amount of repairs as revenues increase are not realistic. The important thing to remember is that variable costs rise as revenues rise.

The semi-variable cost line does not originate out of the zero point because semi-variable costs are comprised partially of fixed cost, then the cost increases, or becomes variable, as revenues increase. How fast the cost rises as revenues increase depends on the particular cost being considered.

Step costs are also comprised of a fixed portion. For example, one supervisor can handle the management problems until the firm reached a certain level of activity, at which time the costs "step up" as new management personnel is required. At what level the step up occurs and how high the step is depend on the cost being considered. As the graph shows, step costs may change different amounts at different levels of revenues.

TABLE 2

Take a company income statement and transfer your cost and expenses onto a form similar to the one below. You do not have to use

just the small items on the income statement. Take and break them down into smaller categories. For example, you may want to break-down repairs into parts and labor.

Do not be overly concerned about the split between fixed and variable amount. Use your best guess to split between fixed and variable costs—this is a management tool and not an accounting report. Also, don't hesitate to leave some columns blank if they don't apply. Fill-in with "N.A." for not applicable in those instances. The main objective of this cost controlling tool is to get you to confront your costs and evaluate them as to their benefits and their costs.

Table 1

SO YOU WANT TO CONTROL YOUR COSTS?

| COSTS | * FIXED AMOUNT | ** VARIABLE AMOUNT | CONTROLLABLE? IF YES, WHAT PORTION IN DOLLARS? | IF CONTROLLABLE EFFECTIVE MEASURES WHICH COULD BE TAKEN. | POSSIBLE IMPACT IF INCREASED? | POSSIBLE IMPACT IF DECREASED |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| REPAIRS | \$250 | -0- | NO | BETTER PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE | NO | LOSS OF REVENUES INCOME |
| TRUCK EXP. | \$250 | \$100 | YES, \$100 | USE SMALLER TRUCKS SCHEDULE BETTER | BETTER SERVICE TO LOCATIONS | NONE (IF NOT DRASTIC) |
| ADVERTISING | -0- | \$1200 | YES, \$1,200 | TARGET OUR ADVERTISING BETTER IN MARKET PLACE EVALUATE ADS. | MORE REVENUES IF PLACED PROPERLY | LOWER COSTS LOSS OF COMPANY EXPOSURE TO CUSTOMER |
| PERMITS | \$2,000 | -0- | NO | NON-APPLICABLE | NON-APPLICABLE | NON-APPLICABLE |
| DONATIONS | -0- | \$150 | YES, \$150 | EVALUATE BENEFIT TO OUR BUSINESS. | BETTER COMMUN- ITY IMAGE | POOR COMMUNITY IMAGE |
| PAYROLL | \$50,000 | \$20,000 | YES, \$20,000 | SCHEDULE EMPLOYEE TIME BETTER, MORE EFFICIENT ROUTES. | | |

* THE FIXED AMOUNT OF A COST OR EXPENSE IS THAT PORTION WHICH IS A COMMITTED COST BY CONTRACT OR LAW AND IS TOTALLY INESCAPABLE.

** THE VARIABLE AMOUNT OF A COST OR EXPENSE IS THAT PORTION WHICH IS A MANAGED COST OR THAT PORTION WHICH CAN BE RAISED OR LOWERED WITHOUT VIOLATION OF A CONTRACT OR LAW.

Table 2

SO YOU WANT TO CONTROL YOUR COSTS?

| COSTS | AMOUNT | AMOUNT | CONTROLLABLE? IF YES, WHAT PORTION IN DOLLARS? | IF CONTROLLABLE EFFECTIVE MEASURES WHICH COULD BE TAKEN. | POSSIBLE IMPACT IF INCREASED? | POSSIBLE IMPACT IF DECREASED |
|-------|--------|--------|--|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | | | | | |

Parametric Analyzer

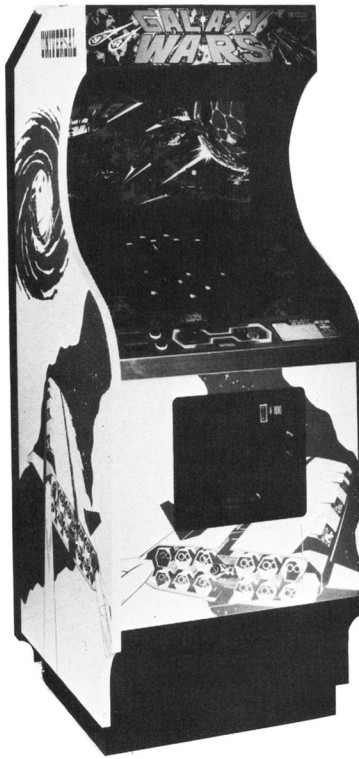
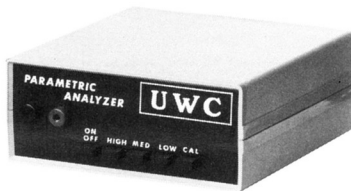
The Parametric Analyzer, which premiered at the 1979 AMOA Show, has proved to be a boon to the bench technician.

Different from a test fixture, the Parametric Analyzer is a test instrument which stands alone and utilizes the existing oscilloscope as the display medium. The reactance analyzer utilizes either the VCC or GND reference plane to establish a reference signal which excites the semiconductor junctions in or out of circuit on any non-powered circuit board.

The instrument's probe tips utilize an AC low voltage which is impedance matched to protect the device under test. The instrument can test all devices, ranging from the simplest diode junctions through all the semiconductor ICs and transistors, to the MSI and LSI packages of the microprocessor and memory devices.

The Parametric Analyzer comes with all necessary cables to interconnect it to your oscilloscope and a comprehensive operators' manual which indicates the basic waveform patterns.

Factories are using the parametric analyzer in production test areas, field service groups, and customer service departments. Bill Arkush, formerly associated with Atari, Kurz-Kasch and Kush'N'Stuff, primarily was responsible for the design, production and sales of two previous "generations" of test equipment for the amusements industry.



Defending the solar system

Galaxy Wars, Universal's latest video game, has taken a bow on American shores.

A mysterious fleet of armed UFOs appears suddenly on the screen, assaulting the player by bombing.

The only arm for solar system defense forces lies in the missile network. The fire button can be depressed and a missile will launch. The speed of the missile will increase when depressing the fire button continuously.

Meteorites drift in and out of the battle space. At game start there are five meteorites, which increase one by one as each pattern is erased. A maximum of 32 meteorites appear.

Scoring, which can run into six digits, is effected by awarding 50—550 points for UFOs. There is a bonus of 600 points for one pattern. A launcher appears per 3,000 additional points (alterable to 5,000 points by controlling dip switches).

Messages flash on the screen while play is on: "Good", "Very good", "Wonderful", "Fantastic", and "Give Up".

Games are countable up to 99 games. The number of credit games also is displayed.



Shooting some more aliens

Game-a-Tron recently premiered its latest word in the space games race, *Space Zap*, a unit that "is just as simple to play as it is to service," product literature reports.

A space gun turret, anchored in space, is operated by the player. The gun in the turret has four positions—North-South-East-West—and is controlled, aimed, and fired by the player. Enemy alien space ships appear in space, randomly, at which the player must fire. The alien space ships fire space mines at the player's turret and, if hit by mine, the turret will explode.

The mines increase with speed toward the turret which the player commands to stimulate player interest.

Space Zap used an 8080 system, a power supply monitor and front door, as well as a panel button control.





First Beetle Mania, then Disco Mania, now...

Bally reports that it has taken pinball "a step beyond" with the creation of *Silverball Mania*, its newest conventional flipper.

The object of the game is to completely light up the words "Silverball Mania" on the playfield. Each letter is worth 1,000 points and each completed sequence is worth even more.

The first completion lights the wizard bonus, worth 15,000 points; the second lights the supreme wizard bonus for 30,000 points; and the third completion awards a special and lights a letter in the backglass "Silverball" carryover feature.

Any lit letter in the carryover feature, whether by player or operator adjustment, will remain lit from game to game, enticing other players to try their skill at completing the sequence for an operator option bonus.

A center hoop feature with two rollovers and one target help to light the playfield letters, and the rollovers also increase the bonus up to five times. The target can also award an extra ball.

Bally designers also have added a disappearing kicker beneath the flipper. The kicker can be activated by the top center lane or the center hoop. Also, there is a kicker special light that can be lit.



Web-slinger adorns backglass

Spider-Man, the first in Gottlieb's new "Star Series 80" line of flipper pinball games will be shipped to U.S. distributors in April, according to an announcement by Jack H. Mittel, the company's vice president and general sales manager.

The game which was presented to Gottlieb distributors at a national distributor sales meeting in early January has two new basic features — "System 80," the company's new solid state system and "Dimension 80" which incorporates a new playfield size and lightbox design.

The most immediately apparent physical characteristic of the Star Series 80 game is its unique new playfield size, approximately two feet by four feet, or roughly halfway between the old standard and the wide body game. The company maintains, after exhaustive testing, that the "two-by-four" configuration is the ideal playfield size—large enough to accommodate the vast new potential for playfield features made possible by current solid state technology, yet no wider at the game's widest dimension than the old standard. Playfield area has been increased 34 percent with almost 300 additional square inches added.

Dimension 80 also includes a new approach to lightbox design incorporating easy accessibility to solid state boards and components. In addition, the speaker has been relocated in the top section of the lightbox, taking it away from the underside of the cabinet and providing what the company calls ear-level "sound projection."

System 80 refers to the new solid state system or, "the game with a brain." The new electronic format has added an expanded memory system, fifteen-step bookkeeping including automatic calculation of replay percentage and continuous averaging of playing time per game. Gottlieb engineering has also provided a redesigned and more powerful pop bumper, and "attract" mode of new sounds and the sequenced flashing of playfield lamps when the game is at rest. System 80, according to the company, also has unparalleled accuracy in scoring.



Pinball splits the atom

Williams Electronics, Inc., is in production with its new four player wide body pinball game, *Laser Ball*.

The playfield is combined with "atom smashing" lights from the background spectrum for a visually exciting appearance. Throughout the game, throbbing intergalactic sound surrounds the player as scoring builds.

Laser Ball offers three flipper play with double flippers at the bottom of the playfield and a powerhouse flipper placed in the middle of the battle arena to challenge the ability and dexterity of the player.

To accomplish high point scoring, the *Laser Ball* skids through the top lanes, activating the star-studded force field. Triggering all ten stars lights a "laser beam" for 10,000 points. Hitting drop L-A-S-E-R targets, drop B-A-L-L targets, the super-charged hole kicker, and "laser lane" spinners score points, as well.

Laser Ball continues to utilize Williams's total front end programming introduced in *Stellar Wars* for easy adjustments without removal of the top glass.

Gremlin's new ones

Gremlin has introduced two new games, *Invinco* and *Head On 2*, videos available in its new dual-game cabinet concept.

Head On 2 pits players against the Multi-Phase concept—making the game tougher as the players' skills improve. First, a player drives against one computer car; if he clears all the lane markers, 200 bonus points are awarded. Then two computer cars race against the player. Clearing the lane markers provides a bigger bonus.

Next, three computer cars appear, and again bonus points are won when all the lane markers are erased. At 5,000 points, the player gets another car. The "ultimate test" is presented—with four cars.

Head On 2 is available as a one or two player game. And, like *Invinco*, the game features operator-adjusted sound volume and on-off during advertising. The number of player cars in *Head On 2* and the number of player weapons in *Invinco* can be varied by the operator's setting a switch on the logic board.

The game on the *Invinco* console begins as you fire at attacking rows of warriors above your defense wall with your weapon. As the enemy breaks through, you and he are face-to-face in battle.



Miniature elapsed time meter

A new miniature elapsed time meter from Kessler-Ellis Products Company of Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, measures two inches square and provides a full six digit non-resettable display to read in hours and tenths.

Driven with a synchronous motor for AC applications, the timer is available for both 50 and 60 cycles.

A visible internal moving gear indicates unit operation, while the four screw mounting provides for the most rugged application.

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Two games in one

Rolling Crash, a high-powered game maneuvered on a race course, and *Moon Base*, a galactic destruction mission, are both combined in Nichibutsu's new video, *2 in 1 Rolling Crash*.

The unit is wired for single play, in which the player uses one coin, or double play, in which two coins are deposited.

In *Rolling Crash*, a player must drive his car, which is yellow, safely so as not to "crash" into the red one coming toward him from the front. Drive is effected by the use of a handle lever. A "high speed" button on the right side is pressed to accelerate.

Each time the target disappears, points accumulate.

A pattern of dots, called Bibinba, appears at the center and points are awarded when it disappears.

The driving course becomes more easily navigable when the "other route" gate opens. And when the player reaches 5,000 points, the driver of the yellow car gets another car.

The game is over when the yellow cars have crashed.

Moon Base operates from a simple strategy—either the laser guns are destroyed by the monsters or the monsters succeed in occupying the moon base. Either case concludes a game.

Monsters are destroyed with the laser gun by pressing the laser eject button. Another laser gun is added when the score reaches 2,000 points.



Profit Power Pinball

Williams Electronics, Inc., is causing ripples within the industry with its new multi-ball, multi-player pinball machine *Firepower*.

Firepower's scoring furor builds as all the center targets are made. Spinner lights switch on and flashing rockets fire up to advance bonus points and activate randomly two of the eject holes which ignite the skill-challenging "multi-ball" feature. As each missile lands in an activated eject hole, it is locked out of play—*Firepower* kicks out a second projectile to be launched into play.

When a player locks up all three balls, then the professional action begins, as all three missiles are bombarded onto the playfield at the same time.

Since *Firepower's* solid state boards have memory retention, for the first time in pinball history as many as four players can utilize "Multi-ball" play. *Firepower* has the ability to lock in each individual's playfield position as his ball drains and returns to that exact position on his next turn at play. At the end of the game, all held balls are kicked out so that the "Multi-ball" feature is completely equalized, from player to player, from game to game.

Another feature introduced by Williams with *Firepower* is the "lane-change" factor. *Firepower* enables players, by manipulation of the right flipper, to control and rotate unlit lights on the "fire lanes" to score through any lane without concern as to where the ball is propelled.

The system produces 31 sounds, some with up to 147 variations, and has a vocabulary of 21 speech phrases. From "FIREPOWER" at the start of the game, and "FIRE I, II, and III" on "Multi-ball" play to any of twelve different phrases *Firepower* articulates randomly at the conclusion of the game, the speech and background sounds encourage players.

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News Briefs

.The Second Annual International Coin Machine Trade Show dates are April 18-20 at the New York Statler Hotel, New York City. It's billed as an "all-inclusive vending machine trade show" and will feature merchandise vending, amusement games, jukeboxes, and coffee, cigarette, and drink machines, plus trade supplies. For further information about exhibits, tours, and package rates - contact Ben Chicofsky at 250 W. 57th Street, New York 10019.....

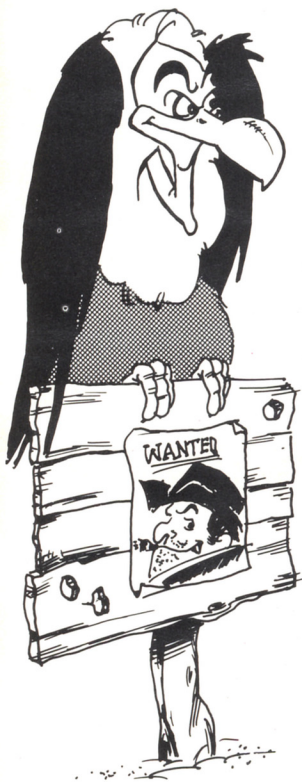
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. Southern California operators enjoyed Portale Automatic Sales' dinner party to introduce the Rock-Ola 480 Techna and other new products from the manufacturers they represent. Three hundred people attended this affair at the Los Angeles Holiday Inn.....

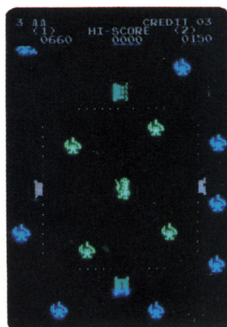
. Bally Manufacturing Corporation announced recently it has received an order for 948 slot machines from Harrah's Reno, Nevada casino. The slots will be used in conjunction with the expansion of the casino, and shipment is planned for before July 1.

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- DROP CHUTE COIN MECHANISM
25¢, 35¢ and 50¢ play
- Full set of quality cast-phenolic balls, and four Valley-made cues included
- Long-lasting cloth and professional gum rubber cushions
- Imported, precision-ground one-piece slate
- Durable, stylish chrome corners
- Easy-access clean-out door
- Four sizes to suit your needs

THE VALLEY COMPANY

Subsidiary of Walter Kidde & Company, Inc.

KIDDE

P.O. Box 656, 333 Morton Street, Bay City, Michigan 48707

