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PLAY METER

Volume 6, Number 17

September 15, 1980

Annual Pool Table Issue

SPECIAL REPORTS:

Locations

Owning Tables

Shuffle Alleys



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PLAY METER

Vol. 6, No. 17

September 15, 1980

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Managing Editor: Ray E. Tilley

International Editor: David Snook
Editor, *Coin Slot*

Technical Editors: Randy Fromm
Jim Calore

Correspondents: Roger C. Sharpe
Pat Matthews
Tony Licata
Dick Welu
Charles C. Ross

Art Director: Katey Schwark

Administrative Assistant: Valerie Cognevich

Circulation Manager: Renee' Pierson

Classified Advertising: Valerie Cognevich

Staff Illustrator: Mars Walker

Advertising Manager: David Pierson

European Representative: Esmay Leslie

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PLAY METER, September, 1980

PLAY METER

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In place of our regular Coinman of the Month feature, PLAY METER devotes three exclusive interviews with location owners who tried operating their own pool tables and then went back to an operator. What they have to say is something all location owners should read before buying their own equipment.

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Cover Credit:

Special thanks go to J-S Sales Co., Inc of Mount Vernon, New York. The billiards supply company specializes in two-piece cues for the billiard industry.



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From the Editor

In our last issue, we stressed the importance of keeping accurate, timely records of the most important aspects of your business. With a good record keeping system, an operator can easily evaluate his successes and shortcomings in many different areas of his operation. Through a careful analysis of a good record system, an operator can take immediate steps to improve the overall profitability of his route.

With respect to basic business indicators, an entire industry is no different from a single route operation. An industry needs its own set of economic indicators. Until PLAY METER came along, there was no such animal. There was no way for this industry to tell just how good or bad business was in general. Since that time, we have been making every effort to lick that particular problem. Though our various reader surveys, we have been able to construct an accurate account of just how the industry is faring. We can now actually gauge the performance of the industry, reporting where it's been and where it's headed.

PLAY METER's annual subscriber poll provides the industry with a wealth of statistical data. With this information, we can accurately gauge the growth of this industry. The results show the increase in the number of locations all across the country, the amount of new equipment purchased, the total number of machines on location, as well as how much the various types earn, and a great many other items of economic importance.

Our monthly equipment poll aids the industry in determining the success of particular pieces of equipment throughout the year. By being able to determine the top earning games, manufacturers can gauge the success of their own engineering and design efforts, and operators can see how well they did in evaluating and purchasing new games.

Our surveys indeed serve a very useful purpose, and it is a pleasure to produce them for our readers. But the

important thing to remember is that without the input of our dedicated readers, none of this would be possible. So at this time I would like to thank the hundreds of operators all across the country who participate in our polls. Because of you, we can provide accurate information that is essential to the future growth of the entire industry. In order for us to continue this important service to the industry and produce the most accurate results, we would like to encourage those of you who have not participated in the past to begin doing so.

To participate in our monthly equipment polls, all one has to do is turn to page 30, fill out the coupon at the bottom of the page, and mail it back to us. Each month you will receive a postage paid card. It just takes five minutes to fill it out and drop it in a mailbox. That's all there is to it. It costs you nothing but a few minutes, but it's worth a lot to the entire industry.

Our annual Subscriber Survey will be in the mail to you this month. Because it is an annual poll, this survey is much more detailed and takes a little longer to fill out. But the time it takes is also well spent. As always, all replies are kept strictly confidential; so there's nothing to worry about there. All we ask is a few minutes of your time. It may seem like a small contribution, but in actual fact your participation is extremely important in determining the actual growth of this industry. So please help.

We at PLAY METER—and the industry as a whole—appreciate your assistance in the matter.



Ralph C. Lally II
Editor and Publisher

Five years ago in Play Meter's pages...

September, 1975

Coinman of the Month was Len Schneller, director of sales for U.S. Billiards. He had helped initiate billiards tournaments after joining that manufacturer in 1966, and the promotion had helped bring new life into the then-sagging pool industry. "We began making more pool players and they were spending more money," said Schneller.

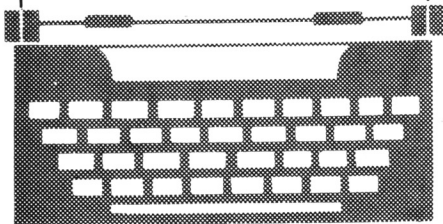
In that month five years ago, Rock-Ola was celebrating its 40th anniversary in business. PLAY METER spotlighted the manufacturer and its historic jukeboxes in the September issue.

In the news pages: Michigan operators were fighting to legalize free play on flipper games....Rowe International's unveiling of the new 1976 phonographs was covered by PLAY METER, and coverage was afforded the

\$113,000 National Table Soccer championship Tournament hosted by Tournament Soccer in Denver. Time and Sports Illustrated magazines also gave news play to the coin-op tournament....Cash Controls was expanding its markets and changed its name to International Totalizing Systems Inc. ...Shane Breaks, well known in the British amusement machine trade, was moving to the U.S. shores to join Rowe International.

New products were fast coming out of the chute. U.B.I. introduced a new roll-down game, *Sportabout*, with 100 percent solid state scoring and eight-foot length; and the manufacturer debuted its *Silver Fox* pool table with adjustable price—5 to 75 cents....Rock-Ola's newest compant console was *Model 461* with furniture styling.... Atari offered a new cocktail table version of its *Tank* video game....and Chicago Coin unwrapped a target gun game, *Hunt Club*.

Mailbox



Only where legal

In PLAY METER's July issue, 1980, page 66 refers to publications available from Bally Manufacturing Corporation. First off, the address for the publications is incorrect; the publications are available through Bally Pinball Division, 90 O'Leary Drive, Bensenville, Illinois 60106.

Secondly, one of the publications that you listed, *Introduction to Slot Machines*, is available through Bally Manufacturing Corporation at the 2640 West Belmont address in Chicago. However, for a publication like this, it should be noted that it can only be shipped into areas where gambling is legal. We have had operators writing in from all over the world for this manual, and it is not available except in the Atlantic City and Nevada areas.

B.M. Powers
Bally Pinball Division
Bensenville, Illinois

Justified smirking

Concerning your Play Meter Equipment Poll, I would like to comment that it is, for us, one of the most useful and interesting features in your fine magazine.

To many of the people in our company, picking a "winner" from all the new games now on the market is a logical conclusion to a process deeply involved in the Dark Arts. We are often accused of selling our souls—among other things!

More often than not, your Equipment Polls give us reason to stroll through the office with an all-knowing, understanding, and

patronizing smirk on our silly faces. In this company, Play Meter's Equipment Poll is the justification of our judgement!

James W. McIntyre
Lakewood Gardens Miniature Golf
Course and Arcade
Lakewood, California

Same but different

Although the situation is very different in our country from the U.S.A.—we have about 90 percent gaming machines—there are many similarities between us, like the 50 percent split. And the very upcoming

popularity of pinballs since they are electronic (solid state) [shows up in] the pins in Europe [being] 96 percent of the American industry [product]. American coin magazines are therefore also for us Europeans of very much importance...

I wish to give all personnel of PLAY METER my regards and my very special regards to Mr. Roger C. Sharpe, your pinball expert, and Mr. Paul Faris, the "Rembrandt" of the entire coin industry, Bally's superb artistic designer.

Johnn H. Termaten
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INTERVIEW

Speaking from experience, location owners answer these questions

1. *Does a location owner make more money owning his own pool table?*
2. *Is operating a pool table compatible with running a bar or other types of business?*
3. *Is operating a pool table on time more profitable, perhaps, than coin-op?*
4. *Do pool table supplies present a problem for location owners?*
5. *Is a pool table a one-time investment?*
6. *Is servicing and maintenance an easy task with a pool table?*

For the location owner who is thinking about buying his own pool tables, there are several things he ought to consider before making such a leap. From behind the bar or over a counter, the operation of a pool table can appear to be a simple procedure. But many location owners who thought this way and decided they would make more money if they operated the tables themselves are beginning to find out that it really is not the case.


Location-owned tables quickly fall into disrepair, not because they are location-owned tables, but because there's a lot of inertia one has to overcome to keep the tables earning at their maximum efficiency. The natural tendency is to put off until tomorrow what should be done today. The table needs to be re clothed, for instance, but that is postponed until you have time to do it. But, almost everyone will tell you, there is never any time. And meanwhile, the tables, falling into more and more disrepair, become less enticing for players' quarters.

And some things are just never considered when buying your own pool tables, things such as replacing old sticks, replacing lost or stolen balls, having enough chalk around, maintaining the table's level—these are the little pet peeves which location owners who tried operating

their own tables complain about most often. Of course, there are the major problems of re clothing the tables, but for those operators who have tried it, it appears that operating a pool table is just so many headaches—headaches they can do without.

This month, in a special three-part interview, *PLAY METER* Magazine learned just that from three location owners who tried operating their own pool tables and then decided to have an operator, who specializes in games and amusements, do it for them. In all three cases, the location owners' responses were the same—the pester of having to attend to the table on a daily basis took them away from what they were really in business for. They realized that a table controlled and maintained by a professional operator is far more profitable for them and is more appealing to players.

These candid interviews explore the little hassles of operating a pool table (or pool tables) which are oftentimes overlooked or ignored by those looking to buy their tables—and, most certainly, are never mentioned by those who are selling the tables. But the testimony is here nonetheless, and it speaks loud and clear—a location-owned table can spell trouble. It can mean lower income



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from the table, it can mean angry customers, and it can also mean lost business.

As one of these location owners asserts, an operator-run table can provide a competitive edge over other locations in the area. "I'm sure we're hurting a lot of bars in town that have their own tables," he said.

There are several points to consider before purchasing one's own pool tables. These views are, by no means, all of them. But the testimony of these location owners is something that should not be ignored. There is not the voice of a salesman but rather the voice of experience.

Mick Kane

The first location owner is Mick Kane who, with Thomas Murphy, is a part owner of Dooley's Lounge. Kane tried operating his own pool tables for a little under three years, then he went back to a professional operator (in this case, to Dick Hawkins of D&R Star of Rochester, Minnesota).

Dooley's, which is in Rochester, has eight pool tables and features the latest in electronic games. It is frequented by college students and a middle-class clientele. The tables are operated on 50-cent play and each year become part of a sizeable operator-initiated promotion—pool leagues.

Kane's outspoken opinion about Hawkins' operation and, by extension, professional operators nationwide, touches on a central theme. Like many location owners who consider operating their own tables, he thought he could do a better job himself and make more money—but he found that was not the case.

PLAY METER: What was your reason for buying and operating your own pool tables?

KANE: Because I'd rather have one hundred percent of something than fifty percent or whatever percentage you do get from an operator. But, in the long run, when you're talking about recovering the tables, making them look nice and playable, you're probably better off with an operator. I found that out myself—that it's better to have fifty percent of a whole lot of money than it is to have one hundred percent of so-so money because your tables are not top quality.

PLAY METER: So an operator can keep the tables in better playing condition for you?

KANE: I know we're taken care of. We get new tables in here probably twice a year, and they always look beautiful. We have new sticks instead of repaired ones. And, whenever there's a ball or anything missing, it's always a brand new ball that comes back. There's plenty of chalk. So it's a lot nicer this way. The tables always look new.

Now when I owned my tables I would let them go just a little longer. I'd put off recovering them and keep the tables longer. And players notice that.

PLAY METER: Did the players complain much when you owned the tables?

KANE: I heard so many complaints about the tables! Why, I remember one time when someone put a stick in the cloth and cut it a little bit. Well, I wasn't going to recover the whole thing: so I kind of glued it down. It wasn't right, but that's what I did. And the players really complained!

But now if that were to happen, my operator would tear it down and put a new cloth on the table right away. Players will complain if things aren't just right. They complained about my sticks not being new; and they

really weren't as straight or as smooth as they should have been. I would just keep putting on those plastic tips. But, with an operator that's all changed.

I'd say right now we have the premier pool players in this town shooting here. We've got eight beautiful tables. I'm sure we're hurting a lot of bars in town that have their own tables. I've heard just that from guys who I've never seen in here before who must have come from other bars around here.

PLAY METER: What other sorts of problems did you experience when you owned and operated your own pool tables?

KANE: I'm not an expert at operating a pool table. I found the pockets hanging up right and left. What they needed was a little adjustment, but the slate would have to come off then, and so, I had to pay someone ten or fifteen dollars an hour to tear it down. Now when I have a big problem like that, the table gets pulled and brand new ones are in there that same day.

This whole setup with an operator is definitely to our advantage. Immediately when someone steals a pool ball, he's got it replaced for me. And with his pool leagues on top of all that, it's pretty hard not to say I'm better off this way because when you look at it, I'm getting more than a fifty-fifty shake on the tables, when you really look at what you're getting.

PLAY METER: Have you found that with an operator your collections are up on the tables?

KANE: Definitely. You can't even get on the tables now, and that's because it's hard to resist them. They're in such nice shape. And the pool leagues he's got set up make it even more profitable. As I said, we have eight tables and if you don't get on the tables by six o'clock you just don't get on them. Before the leagues, my place would be dead about six o'clock. But now, with the pool leagues, we'll be packed at six. So it's good for my whole business because they'll be buying sandwiches and drinks and playing the games while they're in here. The pool leagues are like that. They just attract people. Just as there are some people who bowl, there are a certain number of people who shoot pool.

But all that is so much gravy. It just makes a good deal that much better because, as I said the big thing is that the tables are well maintained and encourage play.

PLAY METER: Did you find that when you operated your own tables, it took you away from your main business of running the bar?

KANE: Yes. It was all the headaches with the tables, in fact, that made me give it up. I've got to worry about my waitresses and bartenders showing up. I've got to make sure my bouncer is "carding" [Ed. note—checking ID's]. My number one concern has got to be the bar and crowd control, and with this set-up I don't have to worry about the pool tables at all. And to top it off, there's that nice amount I get every week when we make the split.

I don't know how other bar owners can justify owning their own tables, but this is it for me. I'm talking about something that is totally trouble-free. And, as I said, I think because of it we're hurting the other bars in town. The nice thing about this setup is that if one of those tables screws up, and one of the players complains, we give him some marked quarters to try it again. And then, if the table still doesn't work, I get on the phone and have someone out to see to it. I don't even have to mess with it. That's a big change.

PLAY METER: Apparently you experienced a whole lot of hassles from operating a table yourself.

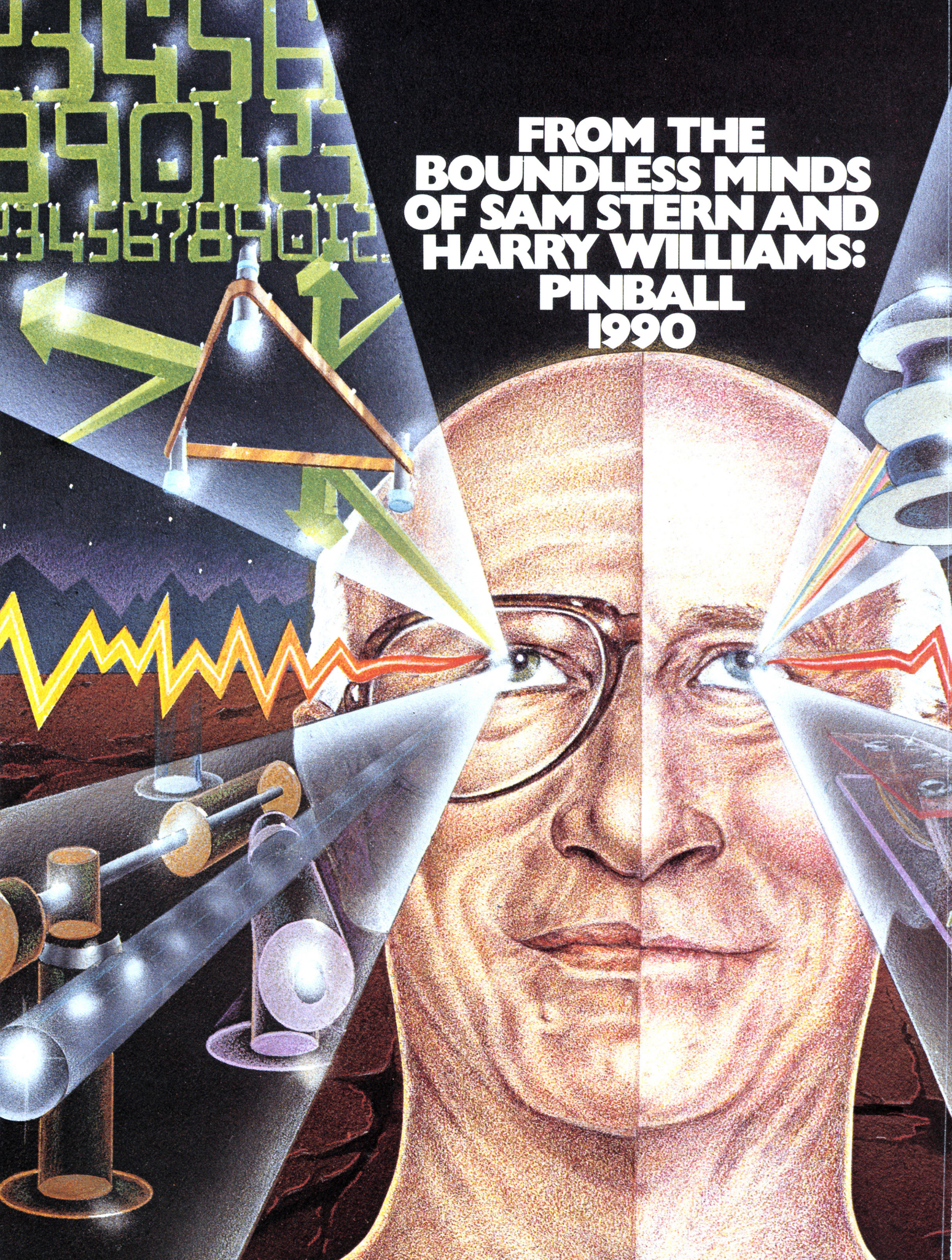
KANE: Yes, I did. I had to worry about all these things before. For instance, do you know how much a cue ball

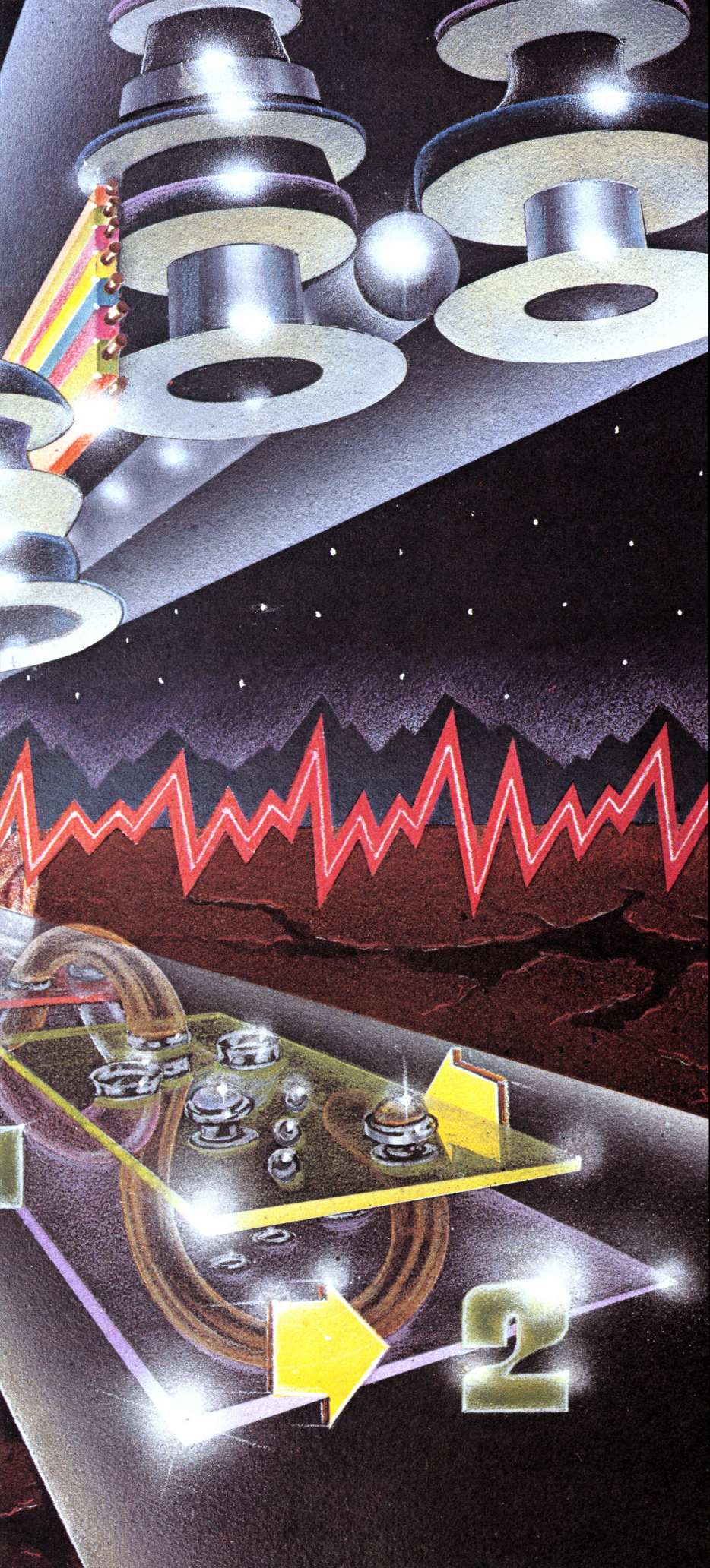
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**Pinball Forecast
Recovered
From Past**

(See inside)

**FROM THE
BOUNDLESS MINDS
OF SAM STERN AND
HARRY WILLIAMS:
PINBALL
1990**





A CONFERENCE REPORT

DATE: May 15, 2357

TO: All Stern Uni-Wide Lastronics
Board of Directors

FROM: XR Kon Jobby II,
VP Product Development

RE: The Predictions of Two
20th Century Pinball Pioneers

Recently, I uncovered some startling information. It seems two of our company's early predecessors made predictions about the future of pinball back in 1980.

Gentlemen, if not for Sam Stern and Harry Williams, it appears pinball would not be the game it is today. Evidently, they led us to where we are.

With uncanny accuracy, they forecast the evolution of pinball. How, I ask myself, was it possible? How could Harry Williams possibly have known that Neutroactive Pneumatics would one day revolutionize the industry? Was it just a good guess? Or truly a vision!

Our recent AtoMagno flipper innovation is another case in point. Sam Stern saw it coming almost 350 years ago—long before the discovery of Luranium. Was he genius? Or prophet? One may be led to think both!

I also would like to add that many of their prophecies went beyond pinball and into the socio-eco-political order: No area was left untouched.

Together, they envisioned the formation of the New, New, New, New Chrysler Corporation.

They forewarned us that yogurt would one day be judged a health hazard.

They predicted that beer would eventually fuel our automocruisers. (However, they never foresaw the present shortage of imported brews.)

In closing, let it be known that one of their predictions has yet to come to pass. The creation of Scannerball.

Gentlemen, I have their designs! We shall begin work first thing in the morning.

STERN

“You ain’t seen nothing yet!”

STERN

costs? fifteen dollars! And one of those other balls is \$8.50. Don't kid yourself, these kids get drunk every once in a while and they'll rifle one. So I just got sick of it. It drove me nuts. I remember one Saturday morning when I had three cue balls stolen! At that time it really hurt me because I only had five tables. But with an operator, there are no worries like that because he replaces them right away. And towards the end it got to the point where I just wasn't going to buy any more new balls. I even had tables where I had taken some striped balls and marked them as solids so I wouldn't have to buy any more! As you can see, it got a little ridiculous.

PLAY METER: So you would say an operator-run table is more profitable for you?

KANE: It definitely has been more profitable for me. He takes care of business, and it doesn't take any of the time I need to run my operation.

And the games he brings in here, like *Space Invaders*, are great. The players just love them. No, I have no qualms about having an operator, not at all. The only thing is, like I said, we tried buying our pool tables and operating them on our own. But I didn't have the income to justify recovering them every six months and replace the sticks and the balls they were stealing from me. It's a whole lot better to have fifty percent of a lot of money than a hundred percent of a little.

Eva Heisler

Eva Heisler, who has owned Li'l Eva's Pastime Lounge for the past fifteen years, operated her own pool table until a little over two years ago. With the pressures of running her lounge, the pester of running a pool table, too, got to be too much; so she sold the table to a professional operator, Kelly Goins of Kelly Coin Machine in Carroll, Iowa, who now operates a pool table in her establishment. And Eva couldn't be happier.

Li'l Eva's, which is located in Perry, Iowa (about 15 miles northwest of Des Moines), has a regular clientele which includes both laborers and businessmen.

PLAY METER: How long did you operate the pool table yourself?

HEISLER: About 2 to 2½ years. The upkeep just got to be a bother. And, I guess being a woman operating a place of business had a lot to do with it, too. I guess I'm not as handy as a man.

PLAY METER: What kinds of problems did you experience when you owned your own table?

HEISLER: It was just a hassle with everything about it—keeping cue sticks, replacing cue tips, things like that. It was a job in itself. And I didn't like the bother of operating it. I was continually having to pay to get the thing recovered, and the cues were continually getting broken. And ever so often someone would make off with one of the balls. So I found the upkeep was really more than what it was worth to me. But with an operator, he bothers with all that for me. And if a pool ball is missing, I can call him up and say, "Hey, guess what?" And that solves it.

PLAY METER: What was the biggest problem as far as operating the table yourself?

HEISLER: Having it recovered was a big thing. I was doing that every six months. I think the cheapest I ever had it done for was \$65, but that was a number of years ago. So I imagine it would cost me about twice that today.

But there were other problems. There was the cost of re-tipping my own cues, and I had to do that myself. So I

PLAY METER, September, 1980

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found that to be time consuming. And there were those other problems—like the broken sticks and stolen balls, all the little things to keep the table in operating order. You know the coin mechanisms on those things are not the most stable things in the world either. They'd constantly get jammed, and there were problems like checking the table's level—things like that.

PLAY METER: Did operating a pool table interfere with your time running the lounge?

HEISLER: It took a lot of my time that I needed for other things. That is definitely true. And who wants to be home at ten o'clock at night and then get a call that the pool table is jammed? It was just a big hassle. I didn't like the bother of operating it myself. It was much easier, I found out, to have an operator and call him on the phone and have him come down and fix it when it needed attention.

PLAY METER: Did you have any complaints from the players when you were operating the table?

HEISLER: Naturally. It was never in the same shape as it is now that I have an operator operating it for me. I didn't have the time to keep the table in tip top shape. And besides, this way we get a new table at least every other year. And this is something you don't get when you own your own table.

PLAY METER: Did you find you could make more money operating your own table?

HEISLER: No. When I had the table it was on 25 cents a play, but when he took over, he put it on 35 cents. And there weren't any complaints from the customers. But if I would have tried that, the customers would have come down on top of me, saying I was just trying to get rich off it. In this case, they understood that someone else owned the table. So, no I didn't make more money owning the table myself. I don't think you can make more money that way—at least I can't see where you can make more money owning your own table, than you can when you have someone else operate it for you.

PLAY METER: When you owned your own table, did you have any promotions to improve collections?

HEISLER: Yes, but then I had to foot the bill. The way things are now, I can take part in the Tri-County Tournament at no cost, and that has been quite a promotional tie-in for me. It really brings in a lot of additional business for me, business I wouldn't have gotten if I were owning my own table.

Ben Gollither

Another Iowa location owner who found out that owning his own pool table wasn't all that profitable was Ben Gollither. He owns and operates L'n'B Lanes, a bowling center in Guthrie, Iowa. He found operating his own pool tables more a nuisance than it was worth.

PLAY METER: What was the biggest problem you experienced when operating you own pool table?

GOLLIHER: Well, the control was the main thing. My tables weren't coin-operated. The players bought so much time on the table, and I found that made control a problem. I'd have a girl or two running the control desk and pouring coffee and making hamburgers, and she'd have to sign a guy in and sign him out. But sometimes the players would be so busy visiting they'd just forget, lay the stuff down, and walk off. So that was a problem. It might have been all right if I had just one person to check out people in the game room, but I didn't have that kind of setup.

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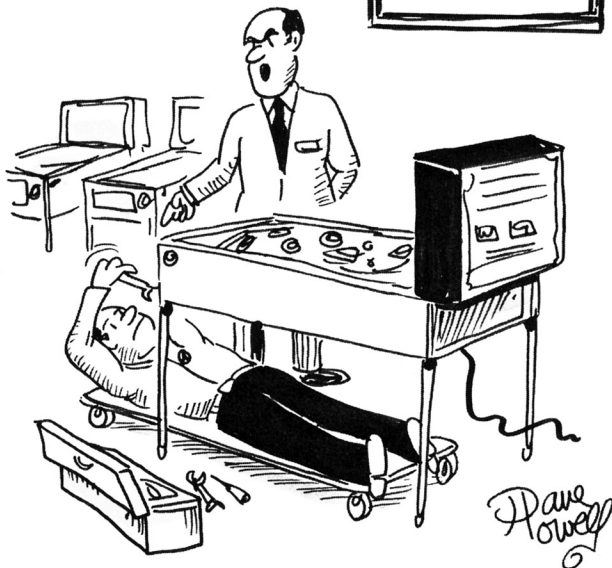
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Then there was a problem with the size of tables I had in there. They were really too big for the space I had available, but I was stuck with them. There were a lot of times when both tables would be sitting idle, of course, but a lot of times when only one table could be used. On a Friday night when the crowd was in there, for instance, they just couldn't play both tables because of the room. So what would happen would be they'd play on one table and use the other one as a coat rack.

Now with an operator handling all that for me, I have smaller tables in there, tables that fit the space I have. And the players are sitting and waiting their turn to play on both tables.

PLAY METER: Did you experience any problems maintaining the upkeep of the tables?

GOLLIHER: Sure you do when you own your own. You have to do it yourself. I had to remember when to get some more supplies; it was just another thing I had to be concerned about if I wanted to keep the table in playing order.

Now that's not a problem anymore. It doesn't take any time off of my day bothering about it. And in the bowling business, I'm more worried about my bowling leagues and things like that. The coin machines are an added income. And if other people are running them, then I don't have to worry about it. They'll bring in the new cues and keep enough chalk in there; so I don't have to worry about all that.

PLAY METER: When you made the switch to an operator, did you experience an increase or decrease in your earnings off the table?

GOLLIHER: I seriously believe there was an increase because when the guys want to play, they have to put X cents in. We didn't experience any increase in collections when we were operating the tables ourselves.

I found that the tables were kept a lot nicer when an operator handled it. Our cleanup man will sweep them off every day, but other than that, the operator takes care of that for me.

The net result is the tables are more presentable for the players. They're more enticing for them to play; so, yes, I'd say an operator-run table has been more profitable for me.

PLAY METER: Was there any complaining from the players when you switched from a pay-by-the-hour table to the coin-op tables?

GOLLIHER: The only complaint—and it wasn't really a complaint—was why did we go to a smaller table. But that was very evident because of the space available in my place.

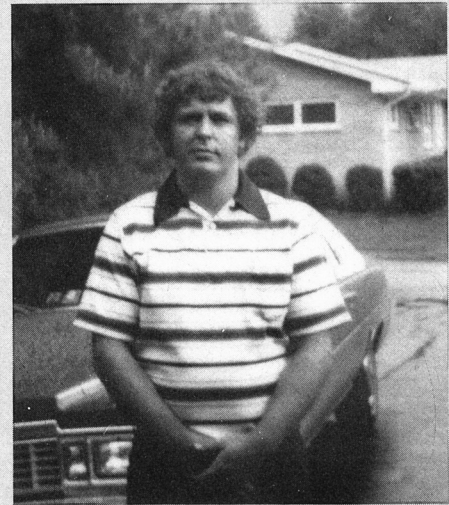
PLAY METER: Has your location been involved in any pool promotions or tournaments since you've had an operator running the table for you?

GOLLIHER: We've had a couple of tournaments in here since I've stopped operating my own tables. But the operator keeps that end of the business promoted up so I don't have to worry about it. We were in a couple last winter, and that was the first time I've ever been involved.

PLAY METER: So you would say, after the experience you've had operating your own table, you're satisfied having a professional operator handle that for you?

GOLLIHER: Yes, because I don't have to bother about it. They're always checking on what my needs are on it. In fact, when I see them coming, I just sit down for twenty minutes and talk. That's all it takes in a week to have your coin machines running. And that's a lot simpler for me

**“My men would
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— MANUFACTURERS OF THE "Eazy-Mover" —

Record industry against more fees on discs, but stands for bill on the jukebox

By RAY E. TILLEY

In testimony before the Copyright Royalty Tribunal, the president of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) has argued that songwriters and music publishers have presented "no evidence at all" of their financial need for an increase in mechanical royalties.

Notably, although the recording industry is arguing on the side of jukebox operators with regard to the mechanical royalty, it is siding with the performing rights societies for the inclusion of copyright payments to performers in the Danielson bill, AMOA officials have stated.

For mechanical royalties, a jump from 2¾ cents payment per song sold (5½ cents per single record) to 10 cents for each record—as pro-

posed by the music publishers before the CRT—would have to be passed on to the jukebox operator, RIAA President Stanley Gortikov told PLAY METER. "It will make his business more difficult, and he will possibly have to change coinage" on the coin slot, he said.

Gortikov testified before the CRT in early July as the first recording industry witness. Presentation from their sector was expected to conclude July 31, and rebuttals would be given by the music copyright owners before the Washington, D.C. panel.

The RIAA president said, "We feel that since the existing rate has only been in effect from January 1978, it is only gestating. The rate of 2 cents per tune existed for 79 years, during which time the songwriters flourished."

The publishers however, base their rate request on 6 percent of the list price—at an average price of \$1.69 a record, producing the 10 cents rate.

Gortikov argued that it is not the royalty rate alone, but the multiplier of the volume of sales that determines revenue for the publishers and songwriters.

Since the music publishers offered no financial data in the rate request hearings, Gortikov said, it should be assumed that they are doing well financially at the current mechanical royalty rate.

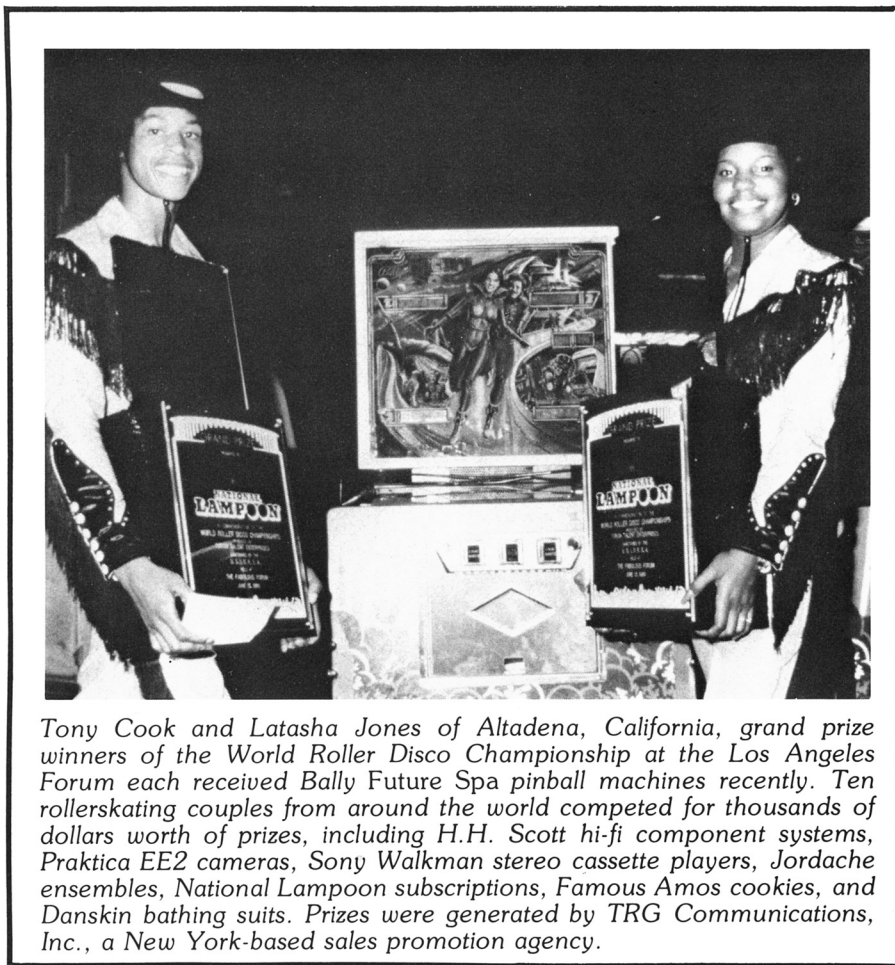
He commented also that, while singers earn their fees under contractual agreements individually, royalty dollars also flow to the singer-songwriters who are their own publishers.

The RIAA position is that, if criteria set in the Copyright Act were adhered to by the rate-setting panel, change in the present mechanical royalty would be ruled out. RIAA spokesmen contend that the compulsory royalty figure should be set, as stated in the law, to (1) maximize the availability of creative works to the public; (2) afford a fair return to the copyright owners and a fair income to users; (3) reflect the relative roles of the owner and the user in such areas as creative and technological contributions, capital investment, cost, risk, and the opening of new markets; and (4) minimize the disruptive impact on the structure and prevailing practices of the industries involved.

Those objectives are stated in the current copyright law—as the transcript of the ASCAP statement before the CRT earlier this year also points out.

The length of the copyright hearings continues to stretch through the summer, with a recommendation on whether to change the mechanical and jukebox rates appearing to remain pending with the CRT through the fall season of new jukebox introductions.

(For a look at the royalties situation the operators of the United Kingdom face, see this issue's International Datelines section.)



Tony Cook and Latasha Jones of Altadena, California, grand prize winners of the World Roller Disco Championship at the Los Angeles Forum each received Bally Future Spa pinball machines recently. Ten rollerskating couples from around the world competed for thousands of dollars worth of prizes, including H.H. Scott hi-fi component systems, Praktica EE2 cameras, Sony Walkman stereo cassette players, Jordache ensembles, National Lampoon subscriptions, Famous Amos cookies, and Dansk bathing suits. Prizes were generated by TRG Communications, Inc., a New York-based sales promotion agency.

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ALL THAT'S LEFT!

Ally Pally a smouldering ruin —and now the investigation

Standard Reporters
A TRACERY of ironwork still stands over the gutted shell of Alexandra Palace today.

This was all that remained of the Great Hall as firemen battled with the last of the flames that wrecked the centre in a massive blaze yesterday. The Great Hall was completely destroyed though the facade still stands. Iron girders were buckled by the heat but the ornate cast-iron columns which hold up part of the roof are still intact. The main ballroom suite and a refreshment rink were also destroyed. The basement of the rink is still burning as firemen play hoses under the floor to contain it.

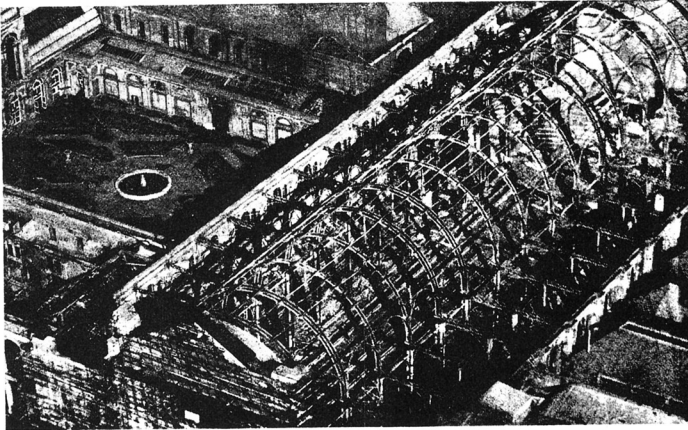
Inferno

But as smoke still rose from the ruins officials were meeting to see how soon they would have Ally Pally back on its feet again.

Mr Terry O'Sullivan, chairman of Haringey Council's Alexandra Palace Committee said his members were meeting this morning.

"We will certainly have to rebuild Alexandra Palace in some form and many of my colleagues believe it should be completely restored," he said. The area where workmen had just begun to restore Ally Pally's famous Willis Organ has also disappeared. Fire chiefs believe that this is cont. page 2, col. 6

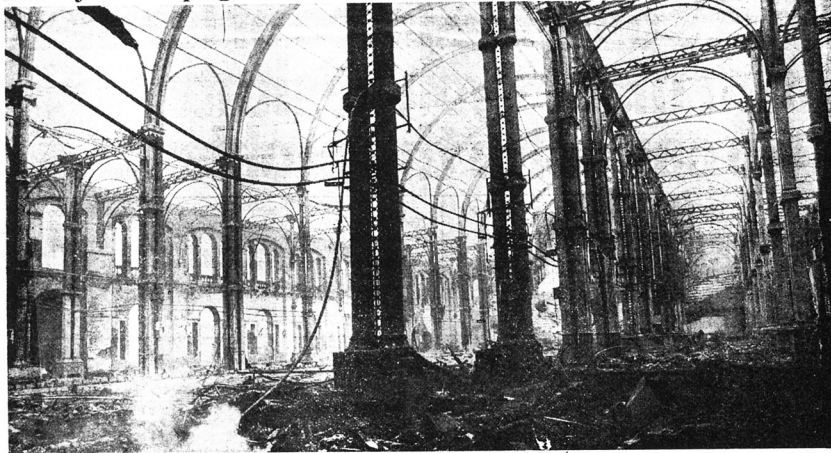
• More pictures —Page Three



EVENING STANDARD: AUBREY HART

EVENING STANDARD, FRIDAY, JULY 11, 1980—8

History of fires plagued North London's show-piece exhibition centre

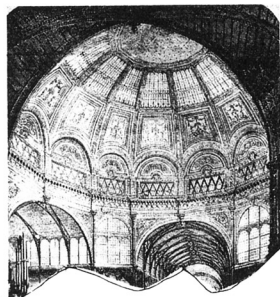


Evening Standard: Colin Haver

THE FLOOR of the Great Hall of Alexandra Palace still smoulders beneath the blackened girders today.

London's palace of ashes

Standard Reporters
A TRACERY of ironwork still stands over the gutted shell of Alexandra Palace today.



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Londis Perard... a selection at HALF PRICE... orig. \$66. **ASB**
REGENT ROOM... a selection at HALF PRICE... orig. \$66. **ASB**

London newspapers tell the story of a grandiose hall left in ashes July 10. Alexandra Palace, home of the Amusement Trade Exhibition, will be reconstructed—but ATE will have a new show space in the meanwhile, its organizers have announced: Olympia's National Hall, larger and more expensive to exhibit in than 'Ally Pally.' But Alexandra, as shown above, is a bit too much of a Victorian 'Stonehenge' now to serve the show. For more details, see the International Datelines section.

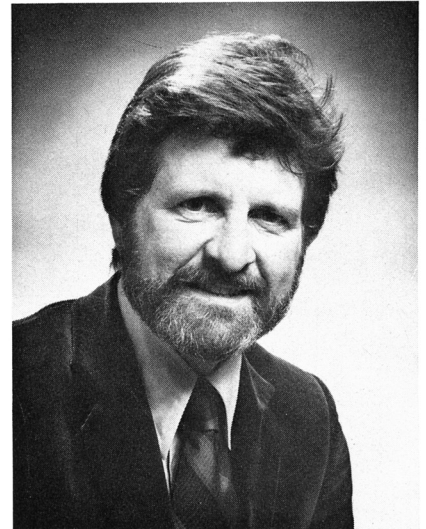
More space games to come in Fall

It looks like we can expect more space combat videos for the upcoming season. At least that's the word from Andre Dubel of Elcon Industries in Royal Oak, Michigan, who has just returned from a 14-day tour of the Far East. Dubel said his company is now preparing for the new season with some new space combat games.

"It was a successful trip for us," said Dubel. "We have come back with some new and exciting games." The game themes are again revolving around space combat, he said.

His tour took him to factories in Tokyo and Taiwan.

Elcon specializes in manufacturing cocktail and upright video games. Included in the company's output are *Cosmic Attackers*, *Collision*, *Super Casino*, *Video Blackjack*, and *Royal Flush Draw Poker*.



Tom Campbell

Stern nat'l sales mgr.

Stern Electronics, Inc., Chicago, has appointed Tom Campbell as national sales manager, announced company president Gary Stern. Campbell comes to Stern from Betson/Pacific, San Francisco, coin-op distributorship, where he was a sales executive.

Campbell's duties at Stern will include supervision of sales of the company's full line of pinball games and new line of video games set for introduction in late summer. A graduate of the University of Kentucky, Campbell and his wife, Mary Ann and son, Tom, will reside in the Lincoln Park area of Chicago.

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Right and left out lanes have bounce-back feature to send the ball back to the inter-lanes and flippers for extended play.

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Techs' salary gauge sought

A move has been started in the coin-operated games industry to try to establish guidelines for salaries of technical services personnel.

Feedback from industry individuals and companies hiring technical staff is being sought by Sega Centers, Redondo Beach, California—where Eric Ivory, director of operations, said the company found it difficult to build guidelines from what exists in the public sector. There was no direct relation between the job descriptions in public employment (or in the non-coin-op businesses) and the job roles required in the games industry, he said.

Ivory has mailed several dozen letters requesting help. He asks respondents to provide minimum and maximum salary figures paid for each of three positions: technician trainee, senior technician, and elec-

tronics technician (bench tech), with the requirements of each described on a form. The salary information in response will be kept confidential, Ivory assures the respondents, but a summary of results, if desired, will be provided in exchange for this type of information.

Establishment of minimum/mid-point/maximum salary guidelines will give the Sega employee a reasonable showing of what he can expect at twice-yearly merit reviews for pay increase, he said. This type of system is apparently lacking, for technical personnel in coin-op amusements, and Sega's salary study may aid other sectors of the industry.

Those interested in participating can contact: Eric W. Ivory, Sega Centers, 2550 Sante Fe Avenue, Redondo Beach, California 90278.

Stern bows first video

Video games are coming on the market from Stern Electronics, Inc.—a Chicago company which has established itself as a pinball manufacturer since its formation in 1976.

The new game is called *Astro Invader*, and it is a solid-state video with a space conquest theme. For

details, see the New Products section in this issue.

Meanwhile, a plan for Stern to acquire manufacturing rights to Seeburg Corp. jukeboxes is before federal court for approval as this issue goes to press. See the Manufacturing section for details.

Wide-ranging catalog available

East Coast Casino Antiques of Fishkill, New York has announced the publication of its 1980 catalog of vintage and unusual gambling paraphernalia.

For those licensed or hobbyists in this field, the catalog offers over 425 items, many one of a kind, in categories including Faro, Roulette, Hazard, Chuck-a-Luck, lotteries, paintings, prints, keno, horse racing, slot machines, trade stimulators, cards, and card presses. Also, original gambling supply house catalogs, photography related to the field of gambling, dealing boxes, card trimmers and corner rounders, chips, counters and markers, dice, tops,

layouts, punchboards, books, post-cards, and much more is included.

The new catalog includes several new categories of antique gambling paraphernalia as well as a section on new books pertaining to the field.

The catalog provides "an education in the field of gambling, with over 130 photos and detailed descriptions of each item. It's the only catalog of its kind," boasts East Coast Casino Antiques.

There is a \$2 charge for the catalog, and it can be obtained through East Coast Casino Antiques, 98 Main Street, Fishkill, New York 12524.



Atari's Football cocktail table

Special run of 'Football'

Atari has announced plans for release in August of a special limited edition version of last season's successful *Football*.

Atari Marketing Director Frank Ballouz said, "The release is timed to coincide with the beginning of the 1980 football season so operators have the opportunity to take advantage of the excitement, the tie-in possibilities, and profit potential of what looks like one of the biggest seasons yet."

Atari four-player *Football* is a realistic video sports simulation game featuring two or four-player action. Atari says it's the only game of its kind that allows two players to cooperate as a team against an opposing two-man squad in the four-player mode.

Other play features include five player-selectable pro-type plays including Field Goal, one or two point-after-touchdown conversions and multiple pass options; scrimmage line marker, adjustable game time and optional coinage; "instant response Trak-Ball" controls, and Add-a-Coin accumulator.

Wisconsin convention

Russell Dougherty, president of the Wisconsin Music Merchants Association, announced plans for the 1980 Fall Convention. This year's event will be held on the weekend of October 10th at the Fox Hills Resort and Convention Center in Mishicot, Wisconsin.

Activities will begin this year with a 4:00 p.m. board of directors meeting on Friday afternoon, October 10th. A full weekend is being planned with details to be released later.



**only the highest-income
video machines manufactured**

More on licenses and taxes

Rochester, NY—\$25 fee on all machines except cigarettes, effective July 31, 1980; plus a \$25 fee for each location for an amusement center license. This had been \$5 for amusement center license, \$15 for each arcade machine, \$50 for pins, and no fee for jukeboxes.

Grand Junction, CO—\$25 each pingame or video.

Fruita, CO—\$25 for first pingame per location, \$5 for each additional game; same for videos. Fruita also requires a \$20 business operating permit annually.

Bethlehem, PA—6 percent sales tax, \$15 license per phonograph, flipper game, pool table, or video, and \$8 for others.

McAlister, OK—4 percent sales tax and state tax of \$40 on each jukebox, pinball, pool, video, or other game, plus city tax of \$20 on each.

Macon, GA—4 percent sales tax on purchase on equipment, plus 4 percent on gross receipts; licenses: Bibb County fees of \$15—\$35 on game machines and tables, city fees of \$35—\$75, jukebox; \$45—\$100, pinball; \$45—\$200, pool table; and \$45—\$75 per video game.

Newport News, VA—county and city: \$5 to \$25 for each jukebox, \$25—\$50 each pingame, \$10—\$50 per pool table, and \$10—\$50 for each video game.

Alexandria, LA—\$50 for pins, videos; \$10 for phonographs; \$15, pool and foosball tables.

Casper, WY—\$10 per machine, \$50 for the first pool table and \$25 for each additional.

Grand Rapids, MI—\$10 per unit per year.

Hialeah, FL—\$1,000 for ten games and \$30 for any over ten.

Champaign, IL—\$60 per year per machine.

Nausau, WI—4 percent sales tax on gross receipts—location pays 2 percent, operator pays 2 percent; plus personal property taxes.

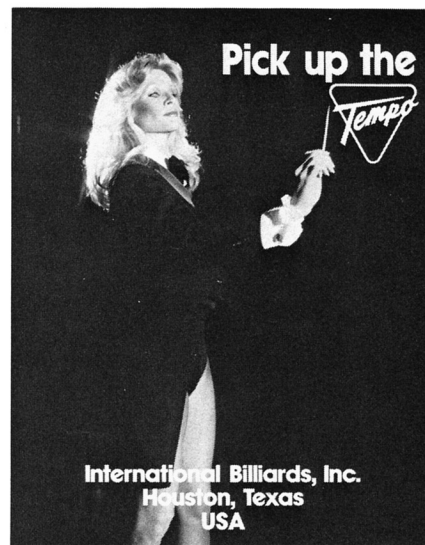
Baltimore, MD—\$150 per machine, 1 percent tax on gross.

Asheville, NC—\$25 per flipper game.

Salt Lake City, UT—\$15 annually per game.

Brigham, UT—\$10 annually per game.

Murray, UT—\$25 annually per game.



Billiards catalog

International Billiards, Inc. has announced that its new 1980 color catalog, 'Pick Up the Tempo' is available. The main emphasis this year in the catalog is on billiard supplies; but also featured are many replacement items for air-cushioned table hockey, foosball, jukeboxes, and other coin-operated equipment. For a free copy, send a business card to IBI at 16810 Barker Springs Road, Houston, Texas 77084; or call toll-free: 1-800-231-5992; or in Texas call 1-800-392-2482.

New York elects

The Music and Amusement Operators Association of New York has elected its slate of officers for the coming year. Howard A. Herman of County Amusements/Mt. Vernon is the new president.

Herman succeeds Irving Holzman, who died March 16.

In other offices, Jack Hearn, LaSalle Vending/The Bronx, is MAOA vice president; Mike Bruck, Long Island Tobacco Co./New Hyde Park, secretary; Stanley Leibowitz, Maspech/Queens, treasurer.

Elected to the MAOA Board of Governors were Frank Calland, of E&S Music Corp./Bay Shore, L.I.; Richard Hohman, Royal Leisure Inc./Framingdale; Tilford Gross, Madison Amusements Inc./East Norwich, L.I.; Steve Hochman, Crown Vending/Long Island; Al Mizrahl, Scientific Entertainment Inc./Flushing; and Bob Matthews, Countywide Amusements Inc./Framingdale. Elected sergeant-at-arms was Sam Morrison, Musical Moments Inc./The Bronx.

READER'S INPUT

We will continue to run lists of license and tax regulations in local communities and states, as reported by our readers. Changes, in particular, should be reported. Let us know what the license or tax regulation is in your community and state and we, in turn, will communicate with the rest of the industry. The information that you supply may well help operators elsewhere head off problems.

Do you pay Sales Tax? YES NO If yes, indicate percent:

State _____% City _____% Other _____%

What other license or tax levies do you have to pay on the following:

Name of City Pins Phonos Pool Videos

| | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
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| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Additional comments: _____

Send to PLAY METER, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, LA 70124.

8-Ball Championships hard-fought; home teams pocket top winnings

The Billiard Congress of America's 8-Ball Team Championships went all the way to the wire during title matches held in Colorado Springs, but in the case of both the men's and women's divisions, teams from the host city took home the crowns.

The Championships drew a total of almost 350 pool players from 48 league-winning teams, ranging from as far west as California and as far east as Newfoundland, Canada. The result was five days of exhaustion and despair—or exhilaration and triumph, depending on how the balls dropped for the five-person teams.

At the conclusion of the women's contest the Burt's Girls Team from the local Corner Pockets edged out the defending champions, the Wheel-Inn Ladies of Billings, Montana, in the final game of a cat-and-mouse match that could have gone either way. Taking third

and fourth place were the Achilles Heel team from Sacramento and the Red Barn Five from Great Falls, Montana.

In the men's division, the defending champions from the Tam O'Shanter tavern in Colorado Springs looked strong from the beginning. Under the captaincy of Charlie Shootman, they took every match—one by as much as 115 points to zero with apparent ease. However, the Folsoms, representing the California State Pool League from Sacramento, were impressive in defeat, holding the lead at the halfway point of the title match. Third and fourth places were captured by the Union Center Five (last year's runners-up) from Albert Lea, Minnesota, and the Sportsman Machine from Colorado Springs.

Following the tournament, 150 participants attended the awards banquet, where the top teams

received their trophies, championship badges, and custom/personalized Joss cues. In addition, Charles Milhem, president of The Valley Company, which contributed \$5,000 and tournament tables for the Championships, presented the Sportsmanship plaques to the two teams deemed most deserving by the tournament referees. For the women's division, the plaque went to the Wheel-Inn Ladies of Billings, Montana. The men's recipient was the Folsom team from Sacramento.

Fats and the Trick Shooters

Completing the tournament agenda for the week were a trick shooting contest run by Paul Gerni for BCA and a guest appearance and challenge matches by the legendary Minnesota Fats. Open to all players in both contests, the trick shooting portion saw Bob Williams of Royal Palm Beach, Florida, hold off Jimmie Moore and Richie Ambrose of Texas to win \$800. For the women, Vickie Frechen of Lansing, Michigan, won handily, earning \$200 in the process. Her initial string of five perfect trick shots in a row was the most impressive showing of the contest.

Fats, whose line of patter is as long as the line of pool players who want to challenge him, entertained the crowd for three days without tiring. Both he and Gerni were the subject of several local TV programs, trading trick shots and insults with equal aplomb.

Decision Coming for 1981 Site

In keeping with its policy to let the leagues select the tournament rules and sites, BCA announced that a mailing was sent to all of the 1980 participating leagues, seeking their choice of locations. Hotels in Columbus, Ohio, and Rochester, Minnesota, have offered space in which to hold the tournament.

The All-American Championships are open to the winning teams of leagues throughout the United States and Canada. Membership in BCA is not a requirement.

For information, contact Billiard Congress of America, 717 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60611.



Charlie Shootman sinks the last 8-ball for his Colorado Springs team, Tam O'Shanters, to defend its All-American crown: Home team does very well.

Play Meter Equipment Poll

Here are the September results of PLAY METER's subscriber survey ranking pinball and video games. Rankings are compared with games' standing in the August poll.

Top Pins

| SEPTEMBER | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | AUGUST |
|----------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. FIREPOWER/Williams..... | 2 | 11. SEAWITCH/Stern..... | 15 |
| 2. SPACE INVADERS/Bally..... | 1 | 12. (tie) SPIDER-MAN/Gottlieb..... | 8 |
| 3. GORGAR/Williams..... | 3 | (tie) LASER BALL/Williams..... | 5 |
| 4. FLASH/Williams..... | 6 | 14. METEOR/Stern..... | 10 |
| 5. SILVERBALL MANIA/Bally..... | 4 | 15. GLOBETROTTERS/Bally..... | — |
| 6. SUPERMAN/Atari..... | — | 16. BUCK ROGERS/Gottlieb..... | — |
| 7. BIG GAME/Stern..... | 16 | 17. TIME WARP/Williams..... | 20 |
| 8. (tie) GALAXY/Stern..... | 7 | 18. GENIE/Gottlieb..... | — |
| (tie) STELLAR WARS/Williams..... | 12 | 19. (tie) CHEETAH/Stern..... | 14 |
| 10. KISS/Bally..... | 11 | (tie) PANTHERA/Gottlieb..... | 9 |

Top Videos

| SEPTEMBER | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | AUGUST |
|---|--------|--------------------------------|--------|
| 1. ASTEROIDS/Atari..... | 1 | 6. RIP OFF/Cinematronics..... | 5 |
| 2. GALAXIAN/Midway..... | 2 | 7. COSMIC ALIEN/Universal..... | — |
| 3. SPACE INVADERS/Midway..... | 3 | 8. SPRINT II/Atari..... | 8 |
| 4. ASTRO FIGHTER/Gremlin & Data East**..... | 4 | 9. FOOTBALL/Atari..... | 7 |
| 5. MONACO GP/Gremlin..... | 6 | 10. HEAD ON/Gremlin..... | 9 |

** Note: Responses do not differentiate between the cocktail table (marketed by Data East) and the upright version (leased to Gremlin for marketing).

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.

NAME _____

COMPANY NAME _____

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TO: PLAY METER Equipment Survey, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, LA 70184



Gary Marince sets up a game for play. For him, 'a labor of love.'

SECOND ANNUAL TOURNAMENT

Pinball made easy for handicapped enthusiasts

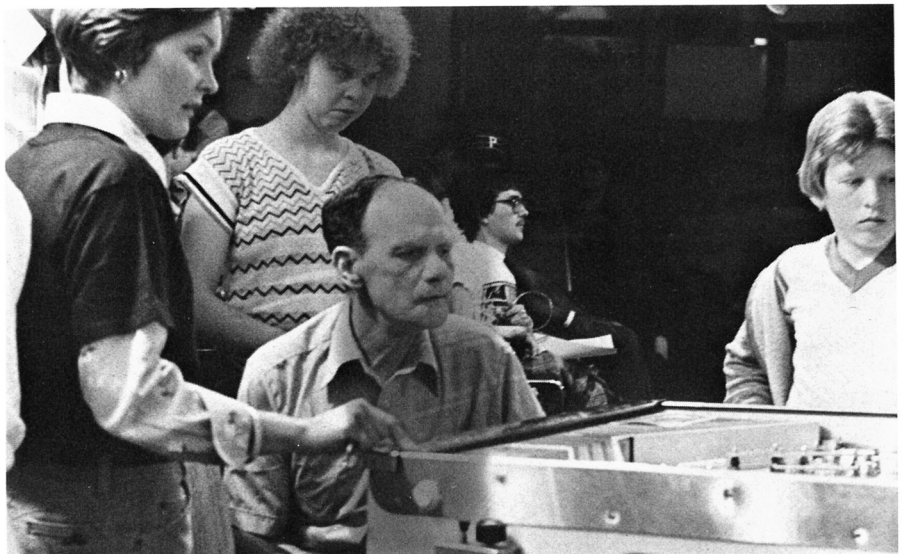
By Richard S. Greenberg

The second annual Quadriplegic Pinball Tournament took place in Harmarville Rehabilitation Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on May 15, 1980. This year's event was termed a remarkable "pinball happening" because of the tremendously large turnout, contestants in some instances having little or no previous pinballing experience. However, with specially adapted machines and a few practice games under their belts, participants enjoyed the magic of the solid state silver balls and video games just as much, if not more, than the rest of us.

Again this year, as last, the tournament was made possible through the combined efforts of Harmarville Rehabilitation Center, WDVE Radio, the manufacturers (Midway, Bally, Stern, Williams, Atari, Gottlieb)—and a dedicated young man, Gary Marince.

Harmarville provided the facility and health-care professionals. WDVE promoted the tournament, offered the services of "Little Jimmy Roach" to emcee, and donated stereos, radios, and records as prizes. The coin industry manufacturers sent T-shirts, posters, frisbees, and provided the machines. Each manufacturer had, over a period of two years, donated a late model production machine to the quadriplegic pinball project. Last but not least, the person to put it all together was Gary Marince.

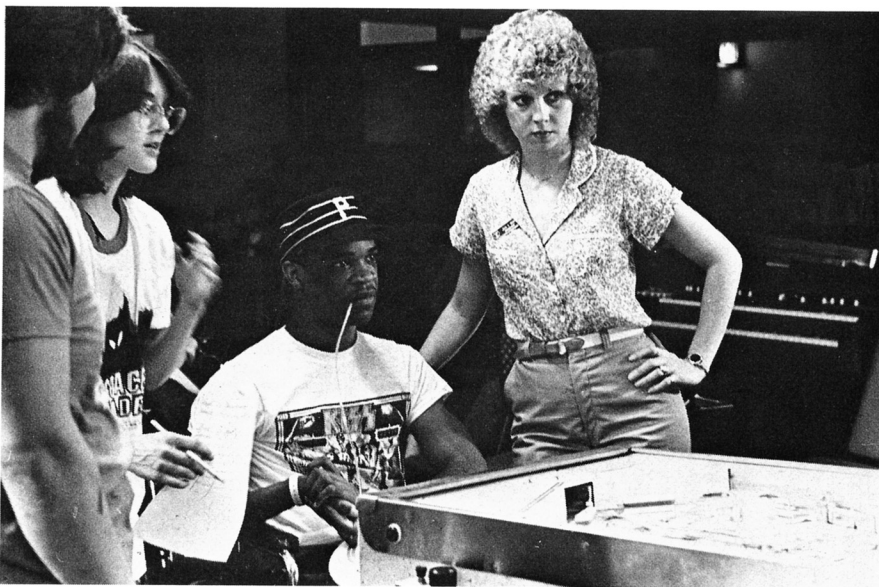
Gary's involvement in the pinball tournament came about as an act of love. With a background in electronics and an interest in pinball, he set out to modify games so handicapped people could play. In particular he wanted to provide independent



Everybody was able to enjoy pinball with the specially adapted machines in second annual Quadriplegic Tournament.



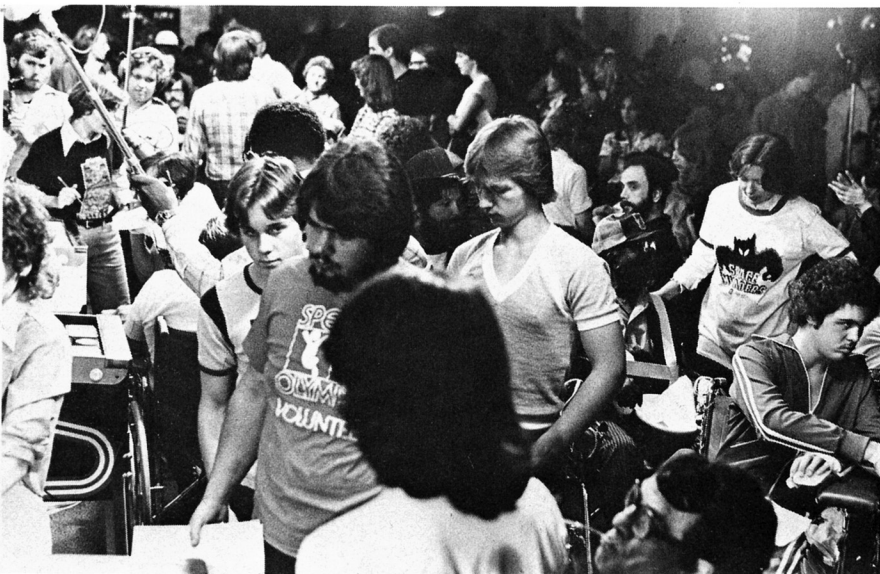
A young woman competes against the board by use of Marince's adaptive device. Health care professionals are on hand.



Playing the games meant more than getting high score to date—it meant a chance to participate where it had not been possible before.



Robbie Marince, who helped make it all possible, watches a friend playing Firepower by 'Sip and Puff' method developed by brothers Marince.



Turnout was great, and the media gave attention to the event at Harmarville Rehabilitation Center in Pittsburgh.

recreational activity for those disabled with severe bodily movement. Gary's brother, Robbie, was injured in a car accident three years ago and is now quadriplegic. As Gary pointed out, everyone in the family was distraught when they first learned of Robbie's accident. No one could be sure if Robbie would live or die, and that's when Gary made a vow to himself: If Robbie did pull through, he would do everything he could to work with him.

Remarkably, Robbie did survive, and thus there was the birth of the "interface sequence sip and puff unit." With this invention, Gary and Robbie have modified pinball and video games to the extent that they can be operated by blowing through a plastic tube similar to a straw. The machine can be turned on, credits given, a game activated, the ball shot, and flippers moved, all by puffing into the straw.

With the video games the plastic straw basically operates the same function except that instead of moving flippers, the puff triggers a video signal such as firing at a target. To move your guns left or right as in *Space Invaders*, it's simply a matter of moving the head left or right to make or break a switch.

Gary and Robbie have spent many hours together perfecting the "sip and puff" modification. In fact, you might say that Robbie has put in so many hours that he is almost unbeatable at the games. It is not an uncommon sight in the Marince household to see Robbie and his friends playing these games until the early morning hours, sometimes seven or eight hours at a time. In addition, Robbie can also play the pinball machines from his bed. With a portable video camera focused on the playfield, the image is sent through Robbie's video cassette recorder and screened onto his TV set. He can then activate the game through an extended "sip and puff" hose and play the game as he views it on the screen.

It is this type of imaginative thinking combined with the use of solid state electronics that makes the coin-op industry rather unique. Recreation and healthy competition have become the trademarks of western culture, and everyone should be able to join in the fun. The Quadriplegic Pinball Tournament is evidence of what can be done when people care.

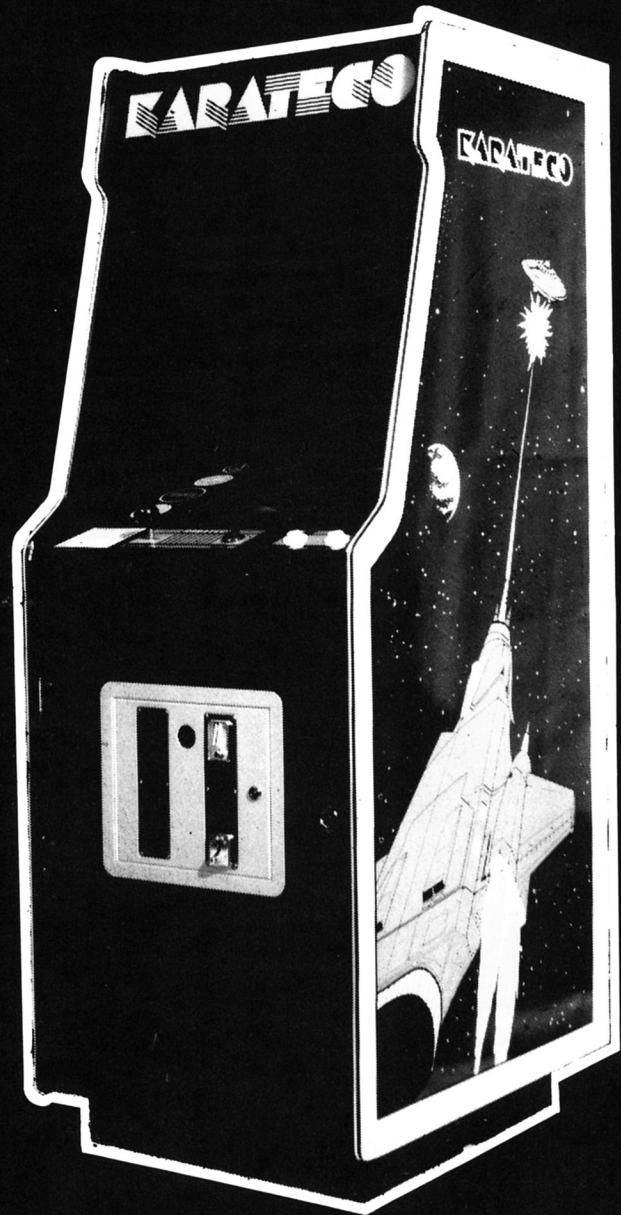
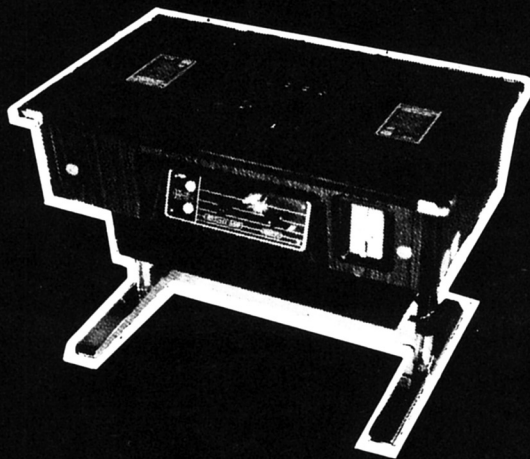
To the handicapped, playing pinball machines and video machines meant more than high score to date, single play for a quarter, or who won and who lost. To those persons, the name of the game was called—*participation.*

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Gremlin/Sega's handlers see sales tools, new games

Gremlin/Sega distributors representing 11 countries applauded two new Gremlin games with high enthusiasm at Gremlin's semi-annual distributor meeting and open house June 27-29 in San Diego.

Carnival and *Digger* were introduced in a creative new way. "The big treat for our distributors this year was the debut of Gremlin's video promotion program. Two six-minute video tapes introducing our new *Carnival* and *Digger* games were shown on a large television screen. All agreed the creative vignettes explained game play better than they ever dreamed possible," said Gremlin marketing director Bob Harmon.

Sega chairman David Rosen announced the availability of a new Sega game for U.S. distribution at the meeting—*Tranquilizer Gun*, which has proven successful in Japan and at test locations in California.

Another bonus for distributors was the presentation of video service tapes for the *Carnival* and *Digger* games. Narrated by Gremlin customer service manager Steve Margolin, the half-hour tapes give an in-depth explanation of technical operations and trouble-shooting techniques for microprocessor boards.

"Gremlin is the first in the industry to utilize video promotional and service programs. We believe the promotional tapes are the most effective selling tool available today, and the service tapes demonstrate our concern for educating operators in Gremlin electronics. Our distributors who have earned JVC (brand) video tape units will receive a promotional tape and a service tape with each new model introduced," explained Gremlin president Frank Fogleman. The JVC video tape units were awarded to Gremlin/Sega distributors as part of an incentive offer that extended to July 28.

New directions in cabinet design and graphics, coin-processing systems, and the state of the art of video were discussed in an open forum that was termed beneficial to both Gremlin management and its distributors, of which about 100 were present.

Distributors also got a behind the

scenes look as sales manager Jack Gordon provided guided tours of Gremlin's three facilities at Aero Drive and Chesapeake Drive. Two new buildings housing the final assembly and traffic department have added 36,000 square feet to the growing Gremlin operation in San Diego.

"We are extremely pleased with the results of our distributor meeting this year. It exceeded our expectations and more importantly, those of our distributors," said Fogleman.

Games On View

Tranquilizer Gun is a big-game hunt, designed to test the "survival of the fittest theory." Players use "tranquilizer guns" to avert the attack of animals in a jungle maze. As each animal is lulled to sleep with a tranquilizing potion, the player must drag the animal to his jeep before it wakes and resumes its attack.

Rosen also addressed distributors on Gremlin's position in the marketplace: "Amusement centers are faced with the problem of offering a diversified selection of games to customers in a market currently flooded with space-theme games. While the space game market is steady and holding now, there is a void of other games. *Carnival* and *Digger* are Gremlin's answer to the operator's rotation problem."

Gremlin's *Carnival* is a game based on the old-time carnival shooting gallery, with nine shooting gallery sounds and calliope music. Players shoot at a spinning pipe wheel, three rows of assorted targets, and a bonus panel for points and additional bullets. The challenge feature of *Carnival* is the flying duck targets. The ducks sitting on the bottom target row fly from their perch. If the player doesn't shoot the duck, it will attack the player's limited bullet supply.

Digger pits player against deadly, lizard-like creatures. To survive and earn points, the players must dig holes to destroy the creature. The game rises to the level of player competition, becoming more difficult as the player refines his strategies for trapping the ever-present predators.

Marcus now president of Empire Distributing

Jerry Marcus has been named the new president of Empire Distributing Inc., to succeed Joseph Robbins, in an announcement from Bob Mul-lane, president of Empire's parent Bally Manufacturing Corp.

Marcus has for three years been Empire's executive vice president, with administrative and financial roles under Robbins. To this key post in the giant distributing firm, Marcus brings wide experience in the industry.

He had put in a short tenure as president of Chicago Coin, had been an executive vice president of Seeburg Corp., and for 17 years was an executive in Rowe International, dealing with national accounts, finances, and the international market.

Marcus said, "This is a professional organization, thanks to the legacy established by Joe Robbins. My aim is to continue in that tradition."

Belam ties to Rock-Ola

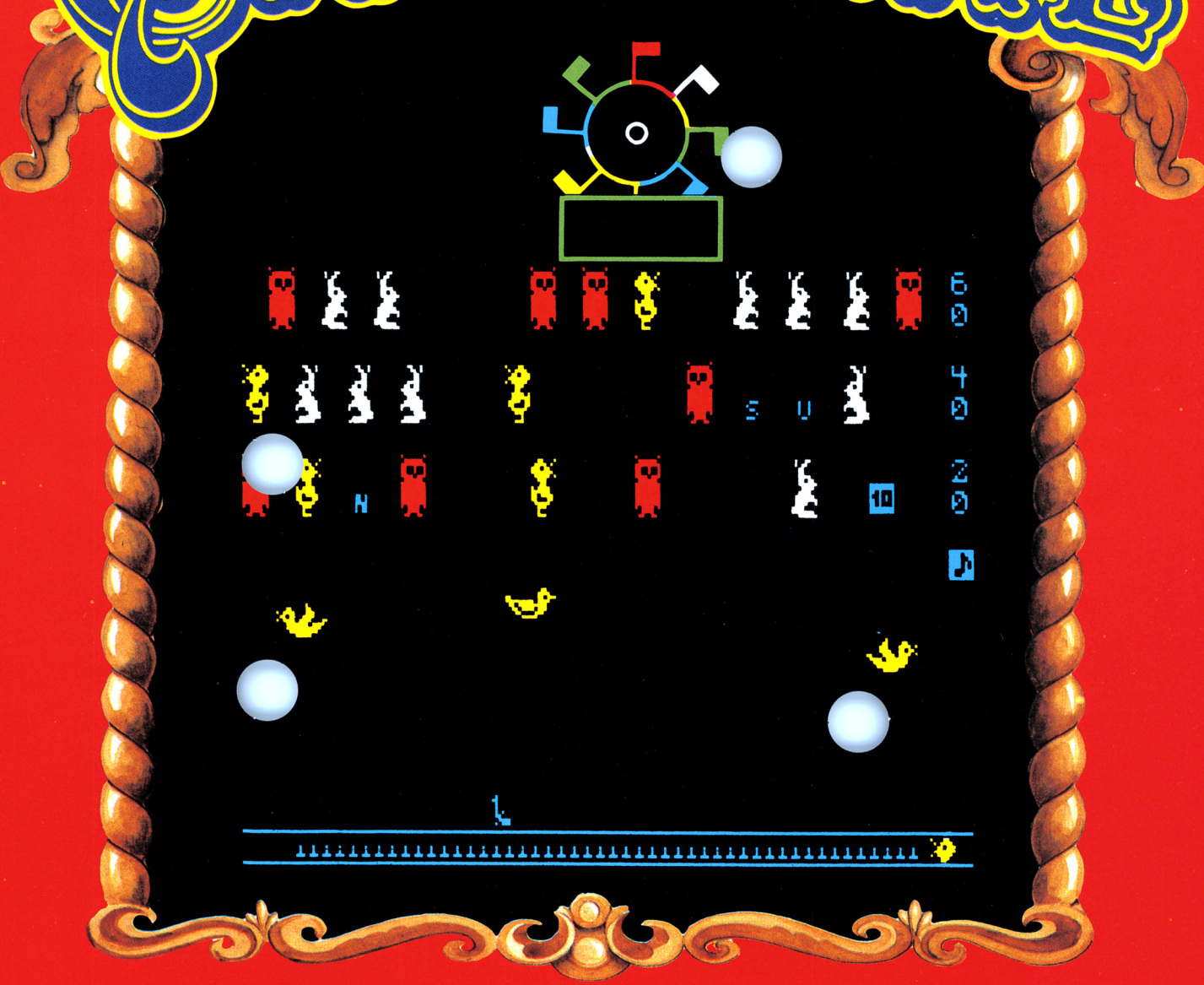
Belam Florida Corporation of Miami, Florida, has been appointed distributor for Rock-Ola phonograph and vending products in portions of Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, plus Jamaica and the Bahamas, according to an announcement by Rock-Ola Executive Vice-President Edward G. Doris.

Under the direction of President Marc Haim, Belam Florida Corp. will be responsible for all Rock-Ola sales in Florida except in counties west of Gadsden, Liberty, and Franklin. Belam will also service Rock-Ola operators in the 26 southeastern counties of Georgia, and Beaufort county in South Carolina.

"Belam Florida enjoys a valued reputation throughout the southeast as a dependable, efficient distributor," Doris commented. "As a result the organization has continued to grow at an exceptional rate in recent years. We are especially pleased to have this organization servicing Rock-Ola phonograph and vending operators in the southeast."

A complete line of Rock-Ola phonographs, vending machines, parts, and accessories is maintained by Belam Florida Corp., located at 1541 N.W. 165th Street, Miami, Florida 33169; telephone: 3151621-1415.

CARNIVAL



**It's a whole new game
for old-fashioned fun!**

On-target for fun & profit!

Hurry, Hurry, Hurry!

Step right up and see how Gremlin's new Carnival™ video game makes the old-time shooting gallery more fun than ever.

For starters, your players get lots of colorful moving targets to hit.



Then there are nine authentic shooting gallery sounds. A metallic "clang" each time a row target, bear or bonus panel is hit. Rifle shot sounds. Background calliope music. Quack sounds for duck targets. And more.

Carnival is also on-target for replay profits. Because Gremlin's exclusive MultiPhase™ makes each new round more challenging than the one before.

Loaded with action!

As Carnival begins, three rows of targets move in opposite directions across the screen, with a revolving pipe target at top center.

Players win the first round by eliminating all targets. Extra points are scored for each bullet remaining at the end of a round.

But it's *not* easy. Because those pesky duck targets come alive on the bottom row, and unless they're shot, they'll flap down to the bullet supply and quickly eat ten bullets.

Another challenging feature of Carnival is the pipe wheel. The value of these targets decrease as play progresses. So players need to hit the pipes early in the game, when it's toughest.



To give players a fair shot at winning, extra bullet boxes cross the screen with the other targets. And if a player hits all the target letters to spell BONUS, the player wins one!

After each round, a bear target comes on for a brief change of pace. Each hit brings 50 extra bonus points. As players complete additional rounds, two, three and four bears appear, offering more chances for bonus scoring.



Ask your Gremlin®/SEGA® distributor for more information on Carnival.

It's a sure-shot hit for your midway!

RANKING DISPLAY makes players more competitive, assures more repeat play.

PIPE TARGET revolves with value shown below. Value decreases as game progresses.

BONUS POINTS can be scored in three ways. First, by hitting pipes of the same color on consecutive shots.

Second, by hitting the letters B-O-N-U-S in sequence. And third, by hitting the special gold Bonus Panel when lit.

SPECIAL PANEL randomly displays plus or minus bullets or points. During advertising, top three scores with player initials appear in this panel. Top player initials are added at end of game.

SCORE 1
04980

RANK 01

+ 1111



SCORE
0000

RANK

BONUS

300

BONUS LETTERS placed at random in rows. Hit all letters *in order* (B-O-N-U-S) to score big!

BONUS BULLETS, either 5 or 10 shots, come in these blue boxes. Each hit increases your bullet supply.



DUCK TARGETS increase with each round. If a duck reaches the bottom target row, it comes alive, flaps down and eats ten bullets. So while hitting a flying duck scores no points, it does save bullets.

MUSICAL NOTE turns sound ON and OFF.

CARNIVAL

Player Controls include Right and Left control buttons for moving the rifle and a Fire button. Player can also turn off the calliope music and still maintain game sounds.

Operator Controls feature Gremlin's exclusive E-Z ADJUST™ controls for game sounds and sound-off during advertising, plus a service switch for credit game play. Service credits do not increment the coin counter. You can adjust the overall game speed with a control on the CPU board. A DIP switch gives you other game play options. Switches inside the coin door allow universal coinage selection.



Dimensions
25½" W x 67" H x 28" D
64.77 cm W x 170.18 cm H x
71.12 cm D
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Mittel heads Taito America

'Talking' TV game is coming

The next game from Taito America will embrace the new twist of "talking video." Jack Mittel, incoming president and chief executive officer of Elk Grove Village, Illinois-based Taito America Corp., confirmed that the games manufacturer will introduce "the first video game with speech."

Mittel also told PLAY METER, "We are an American manufacturer and will produce in Elk Grove Village. Our own research and development division will develop our own games for marketing, as well as games from the Taito Group of Japan."

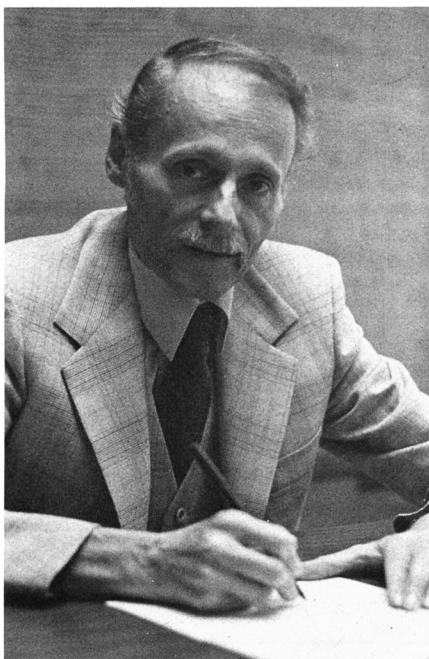
He added that, in his new post, "what I expect to do, based on Taito's record worldwide, is to see us take our rightful place in videos."

Mittel, recognized and respected domestically and internationally by the coin-operated amusement games industry, was named president and chief executive officer of Taito America Corp., effective July 1.

Mittel enjoys an enviable reputation and impressive record, with 18 of his more than 20 years in the industry witnessing his achievements as the number 2 power behind Williams Electronics, Inc. His ability to analyze games, their market success and earnings potential, has been consistently proven accurate by cashbox results, industry figures have observed.

Abba Kogan, director of Taito Corp., said Mittel's "integrity and wide-spanning administrative, manufacturing and sales expertise will be the key to Taito America's achieving its goals as a thoroughly integrated manufacturer/distributor of sophisticated electronic products."

Trade media reports were given from abroad in July, detailing Taito



Jack Mittel

Electronics' signing an agreement for a worldwide exclusive license on *Speak and Rescue*, the latest video game from Sun Denshi K.K. Outside Japan, the game will be known as *Stratovox*, featuring a speech synthesizer, reported *Coin Slot* of London. The game was expected to be marketed in the United Kingdom at late September or early October.

Stratovox is a space-theme game in which spaceships attack the

player's planet and "kidnap" the player's men from the planet surface in the face of the player's missiles. As the game progresses and the player scores hits, these are shown on the screen and repeated by the "voice," which also gives the total at the end of the game.

Taito America Corp., since its establishment in 1973, has been closely surveying the American marketplace to determine the viability of electronic video games and their positioning in the entertainment industry, said Kogan, and it has made its games available through licensing. *Space Invaders*, widely acclaimed the most popular coin-op game of all time, and *Wheels and Gunfight*, among the best games of the 1970s, were all licensed by Taito America, noted Kogan.

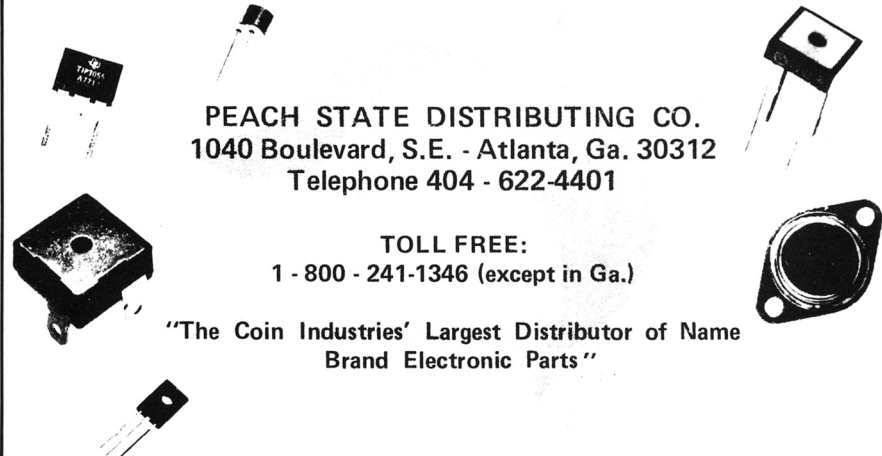
As of January 1980, however, Taito also began to manufacture video games in its Elk Grove Village facility from which it will ship product worldwide.

Mittel said he feels the evolution of electronics has given video games "uniquely high earnings and a versatility not shared by other games, while creating fewer service problems." Mittel said Taito's current game *Lunar Rescue* has had "very successful" sales.

Jack Mittel resides in Morton Grove with Judy, his wife of 25 years, and Andrea, his 18-year-old daughter.

Mike Munves moves

Mike Munves Corp. of New Rochelle, New York made a move July 1 to a new address. The location of the arcade specialty manufacturer is now: 30 Horton Avenue, New Rochelle 10801. The telephone number retains 914/636-5000.



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"The Coin Industries' Largest Distributor of Name Brand Electronic Parts"

Williams planning entry into video marketplace

The video game itself will undergo significant new developments when Williams Electronics enters the TV market in the very near future, Williams officials claimed recently.

And though, at late July, the first Williams video game did not have a name, or even a theme, Williams spokesmen told PLAY METER, the electronics are ready, and the components will produce "fantastic effects unseen before in video games," including features of explosions and other illusions on the game screen.

Williams President Michael Stroll pledged a move into videos around the time of last year's AMOA Show. "That was a commitment to our distributors, who handle videos, obviously, as well as Williams pins," said Ron Crouse, marketing director.

"We plan to be in full production at the 1980 AMOA Show time and ship video games shortly thereafter," Crouse said. "We will do some sample games in September with a small number to go to each of our distributors." The tight timing before the October 31 opening of the Chicago show is aimed at warding off "copying" of a new game idea, he indicated.



Williams Electronics will shroud its yet-unseen videos until near AMOA Show time: New concepts promised.

Engineer Ken Fedesna will head a Williams group that is putting together its first video. Teamed with Stroll, Crouse, and David Poole (who is no longer at Williams Electronics), Fedesna was in the engineering circle that was responsi-

ble for Williams' first electronic pingames.

"Our pinballs were more sophisticated and elaborate than they needed to be at the time, and we got a lot of heat for it," said Crouse. "But that system has carried us through three years, to *Firepower*, the finest pinball ever made," the marketing head claimed. "And we want to do that with video—design a system to give us more capabilities than have ever been done before. We don't want to be just another video company," said Crouse.

He reminded the listener that Williams Electronics, similarly to its planning for videos now, had planned for the "talking pingame" one year prior to its introduction at the 1979 AMOA Show. When *Gorgar* was introduced with its audio features, Stroll made the commitment to building videos "before videos really began to take off," said Crouse.

The manufacturer's officials radiate confidence that Williams' technical competency will insure a successful move into the cathode-ray tube games.

In general terms, they plan a system with advantages of both the raster scan and vector scan systems of video games. "It will have greatly increased resolution. The images we draw on the screen will have much more detail than in raster scan, much more color," said Crouse, and rather than "line drawings," the video images will have dimension, he said.

The chief technicians under Williams Engineering Vice President Ward Ellis would then bridge the gulf between the two present games systems and create an electronic product with rather different features from systems now manufactured.

With that project under way in the technical shops of Williams in Chicago, what principally remains is to define a theme of the game. Whether it will be space action, fantasy adventure, or another concept was not hinted at by the Williams staff. Crouse said only, "We'll get in a room and let the ideas flow."

by Ray E. Tilley

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*Watch for "Blackout",
our magnificent 7th,
next month!*

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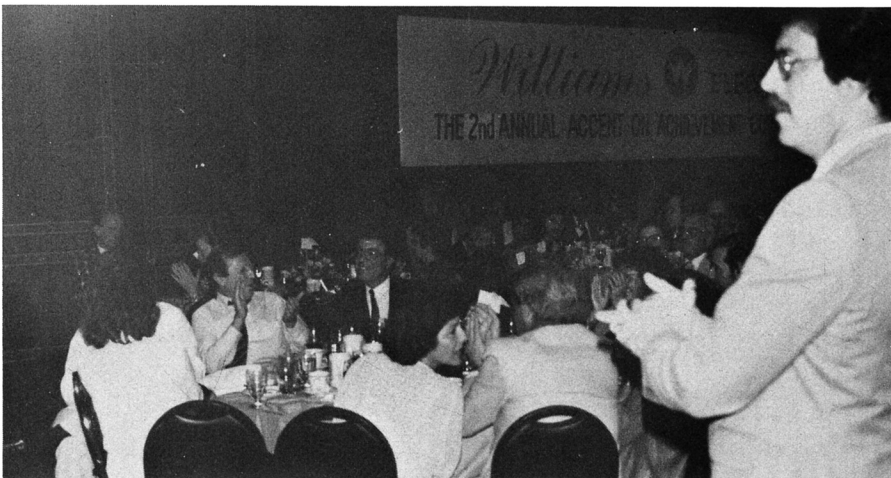
An XCOR International Inc., Company
3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618
Cable Address: WILCOIN, CHICAGO



Employees feted as Williams claims:



Steve Ritchie received award for 'excellence in design achievements' from Williams President Michael Stroll. Ritchie designed Firepower and Flash.



Among some 200 in the Williams 'family' present: seated, Joseph Quadri and Didier Salmon (left of center); Ron Crouse, marketing head (standing).



Those cited for achievement included (above) Mr. and Mrs. Mark Pugh; Nick Miku; Mr. and Mrs. Ken Fedesna.

By RAY E. TILLEY

Williams Electronics enjoys a "number one" position in pinball "excellence, innovation, and more dollars in the coin cup," and it will also take a front seat in marketing video games.

That was "a promise" given by Williams' President Michael Stroll to key employees of the manufacturer in a late-June Accent on Achievement Conference, the second annual company meeting at the Marriott Lincolnshire, Illinois resort.

While such talk of ranking necessarily has the quality of the pep rally, the Williams confab in the comfortable surroundings of a health spa/retreat was also a bit like a gathering of warriors planning an assault—on a marketplace.

The company people heard praise from a major Chicago area operator and distributors from the southwest United States to the azure coast of France in June 27 and 28 meetings.

Stroll made repeated reference to the Williams games' standings in the more recent Play Meter Equipment Poll as evidence of the company's prominence in pinball. With the dramatics of an emcee, he teased Williams personnel in a Saturday night closing banquet. Williams had no games, he noted, in ranks No. 10 through 20...but the operators' score in the Play Meter top ten was given Williams, six games including Gorgar—No. 1—and the competitors sharing the four other spots.

Referring to individual employees' efforts which were marked and rewarded that night, Stroll advised: "These achievements will never be taken away. But don't wallow in them," stressing the push to continue toward Williams Electronics' goal in the industry: "Number one."

In the context of citing Mount Pleasant, Illinois operator Bill Herman (of Mother's Pinball arcade), Stroll that afternoon had pointed to Herman's "understanding how to become successful. There are a lot of vehicles for success, but only one way to do it: by enthusiasm, excitement, motivation, dedication, and plain hard work."

Stroll added, "We have only scratched the surface on innovation and efficiency."

Reports from Mother's Pinball "tell us what is right and what is wrong

'No. 1'

with us," he said. [For a PLAY METER report on Mother's, see the May, 1980 issue.]

Friday had been devoted to employees-only meetings on engineering, game design, and marketing. What leaked out about the future of the company was a plan to invade the video market with a Williams game—as well as an “innovative pingame”—before the time of the 1980 AMOA Show at late October. [See related article.]

Saturday began with more in-house meetings of over 100 Williams people and guest speakers from the distribution level of coin-op games. One speaker, John Gatens (Southwest Vending/San Antonio), said Williams is making games for “the large majority who were not playing before,” citing first *World Cup*, “and then came the heavyweights.”

Gatens said the Play Meter Poll showed Williams “not only has met the challenge but has gotten on top of it.”

Williams employees who had a hand in the success of the previous year were the highlight of a generous Marriott dinner Saturday night. Stroll presented the awards:

Operations and Support, Mike Pugh; Game Design, Barry Oursler; Manufacturing/Production, Nick Miku; and Technical, Ken Fedesna, “whose main responsibility now is for video,” said Stroll.

Joseph Quadri, Williams European representative, was singled out for “outstanding service on behalf of Williams throughout Europe.”

And a Special Recognition Award was presented to Steve Ritchie for “dedication and excellence in design achievements during this past year.” The designer of *Flash* and *Firepower* “and more on the board” was presented an all-expense paid trip to San Juan and a cruise of the Caribbean for himself, his wife and son. In addition to plaques, the other cited Williams employees each received an expense-paid December trip to Las Vegas for themselves and spouses.

The informal atmosphere included a reception and after-dinner dancing in the Marriott Lincolnshire.

Guests also at the two-day meeting were Didier Salmon of Ets. Salmon/France, and Gerhard Gary of Excel Corporation.

50th Anniversary

1930—1980

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Sam Stern leaves exec post to serve as firm's consultant

Pinball pioneer Sam Stern has been named executive consultant to Stern Electronics, Inc. Formerly the manufacturer's executive vice president, Sam Stern's new appointment will enable him to pursue personal interests while remaining active in company affairs.

In his 47-year career, Stern bought and operated Williams Electronics as a pinball manufacturer, sold Williams to Seeburg Corporation for stock, and later joined Bally Corporation as executive vice president.

Stern returned to Seeburg as its president and retired in 1976, prior to joining Stern Electronics at its formation later that year.



Sam Stern

Seeburg settlement plan

A plan for the reorganization of the Seeburg Corporation under the Bankruptcy Code has been approved in a federal court in Illinois, and unsecured creditors were given until July 24 to vote acceptance or rejection of the plan.

The basic payout on which the creditors were voting was 30 percent of claims amounts.

In a notice given to all creditors of Seeburg, Bankruptcy Judge Lawrence Fisher ordered balloting for or against the plan on or before July 24, and a hearing was to be held the next day. In order for the reorganization plan to be accepted, creditors who hold at least two thirds of the amount owed in claims (more than \$2 million in total) and more than half of the number of claims must vote in favor of the plan.

The settlement agreement—contingent on that acceptance—considers the sale to Stern Electronics of "substantially all of the assets" of the Seeburg company, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Consolidated Entertainment Inc., another Delaware corporation and owned and controlled by members of the family of Louis J. Nicastro. Seeburg currently occupied premises owned by Xcor International, Inc. at 1500 North Dayton Street, Chicago and leased to Seeburg.

Stern would buy all Seeburg assets except patents for \$1,243,750, and Seeburg would grant Stern a right to its patents for an additional \$50,000

payment. A further \$350,000 would be paid by Stern to Seeburg on August 31, 1983 if by that time Stern has manufactured a total of 25,000 coin-operated jukeboxes. The same amount would be paid one year later if Stern has manufactured a total of 33,600 jukeboxes under the Seeburg name.

Xcor, under this agreement, could continue to make jukeboxes under the Seeburg name but would have to state in any and all advertising for such jukeboxes "that the products and services being sold are not affiliated with Stern." Stern would be required to furnish Xcor with vending machine and jukebox parts it requires for three years after the agreement is made final.

Stern would also agree to pay Chase Manhattan Bank of New York \$187,500 for its security interest in Seeburg's inventory which includes the parts inventory.

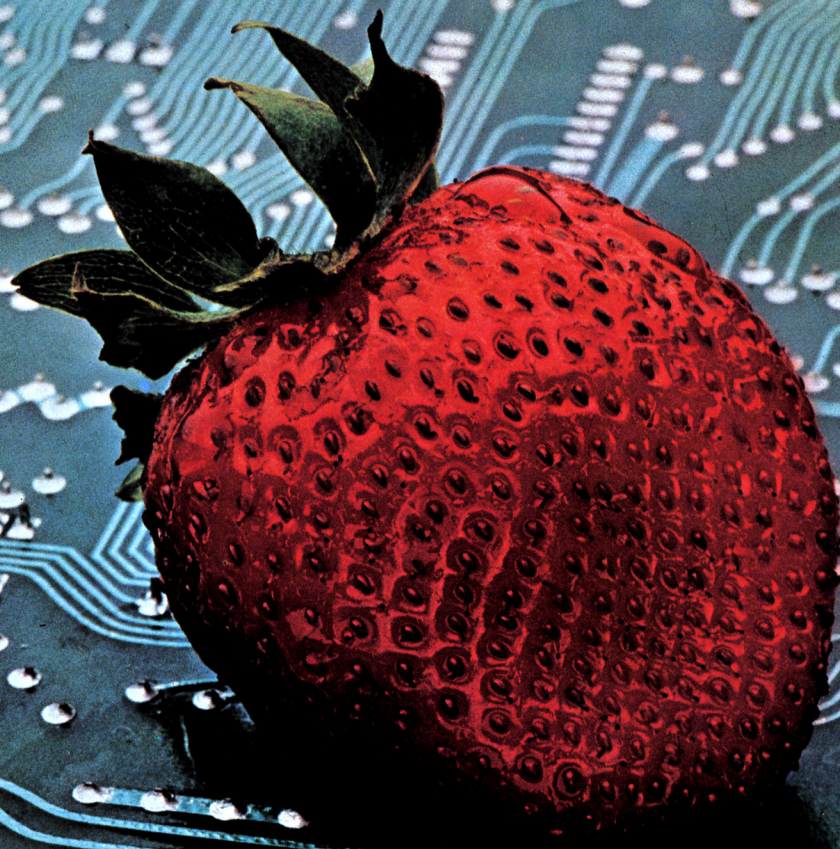
The court notice showed Seeburg assets on October 19, 1979, at which time it filed under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code, to be \$7,037,279 and its total indebtedness was set at \$7,773,577.

The unsecured creditors would receive a pro rata share of the sums paid by Stern in 1983 and 1984 if the Seeburg jukeboxes manufactured for commercial sale reach the agreed numbers. Their 30 percent payment against claims would be made on confirmation of the plan of reorganization—expected on August 15.

Home Grown.

The freshest, ripest electronic video games are now being grown right here in your own back yard.

Taito America games like "Stratovox".
To be harvested next month.



ATE home burns; site changed

Compiled from various dispatches by PLAY METER's
overseas correspondents

LONDON — Alexandra Palace will not be the site of the annual Amusement Trade Exhibition (ATE) this year. The Victorian palace went up in smoke July 10, forcing the British Amusement Catering Trades Association (BACTA), which hosts the yearly event, to reschedule the show for Olympia's National Hall January 12-15, 1981.

The show had been scheduled at Alexandra Palace for January 27-29.

The fire at Alexandra Palace broke out during extensive renovations to the Victorian building. "Ally Pally," as it was often called, was frequently criticized by American visitors for its drafty expanse. A \$20 million renovation program, which began in April and which was supposed to be completed by 1984, was underway at the time. The project had included the installation of a new floor and heating system in the palace as well as an expansion of the exhibit area.

Two hundred firemen fought the blaze all day. The palace's priceless organ and grand glass dome were destroyed, but the shell of the building, including all the cast iron supports, were reportedly left intact. There are plans to rebuild the edifice, but the real problem is that no one today can rebuild the palace in the grand old Victorian style.

The building is also occupied partly by the British Broadcasting Company, but that part of the building was reportedly not damaged.

Alexandra Palace, which was built in 1865, has had a checkered past. It was erected as North London's answer to the Crystal Palace of South London. But after being built, the building was left standing empty until 1873. Then just sixteen days after the official opening, Alexandra Palace burned to the ground. It was rebuilt in 1875, but by 1889 was closed again because of a lack of finances.

Since the turn of the century, it has been considered something of a "white elephant." The Greater London Council, which owned the building, didn't know what to do with the building and in January of this year sold the palace to the local Haringay Council for the sum total of one British pound. In addition, the Greater London Council gave Haringay Council an 8½ million pound development grant. And Haringay Council insured the palace for 31 million pounds.

Rebuilding the Alexandra Palace is now expected to take between three to five years.

That Olympia was able to offer a January vacancy for what is considered one of the world's premier amusement trade shows, was indeed fortunate for BACTA, especially in light of there being no commitment for following years.

A fresh prospectus on the new location and dates of the show has been circulated to would-be exhib-

itors, along with a note that Olympia is a more expensive location.

BACTA General Secretary Alan Willis, who announced the ATE's site change, expressed hopes that the trade would still support the show.

Olympia's National Hall will become ATE's third home, the Horticultural Hall in Westminster having been used prior to Alexandra Palace.

Olympia will offer 97,000 square feet of exhibit space, a statistic which compares favorably with the 81,000 square feet available in Alexandra Palace. Olympia, erected in 1926, will offer trade visitors improved restaurant and other catering facilities, together with more sizeable hospitality suites. Security is likely to be tighter at the show too, enhanced by ATE's proposal to section off the first day for their members only. That should ease the congestion experienced on opening day last January.

Foreign visitors will find Olympia more accessible and centrally located than the remote Ally Pally. Located between South Kensington and Hammersmith, it is within minutes of famed Harrod's, and it has its own underground railway station.

What BACTA plans to do for following shows is still undecided, but it appears that Alexandra Palace is out of the question for some time now—that is, unless the coin machine industry shows an interest in holding one of its major exhibits in a facility that more closely resembles the Stonehenge than an exhibit hall.

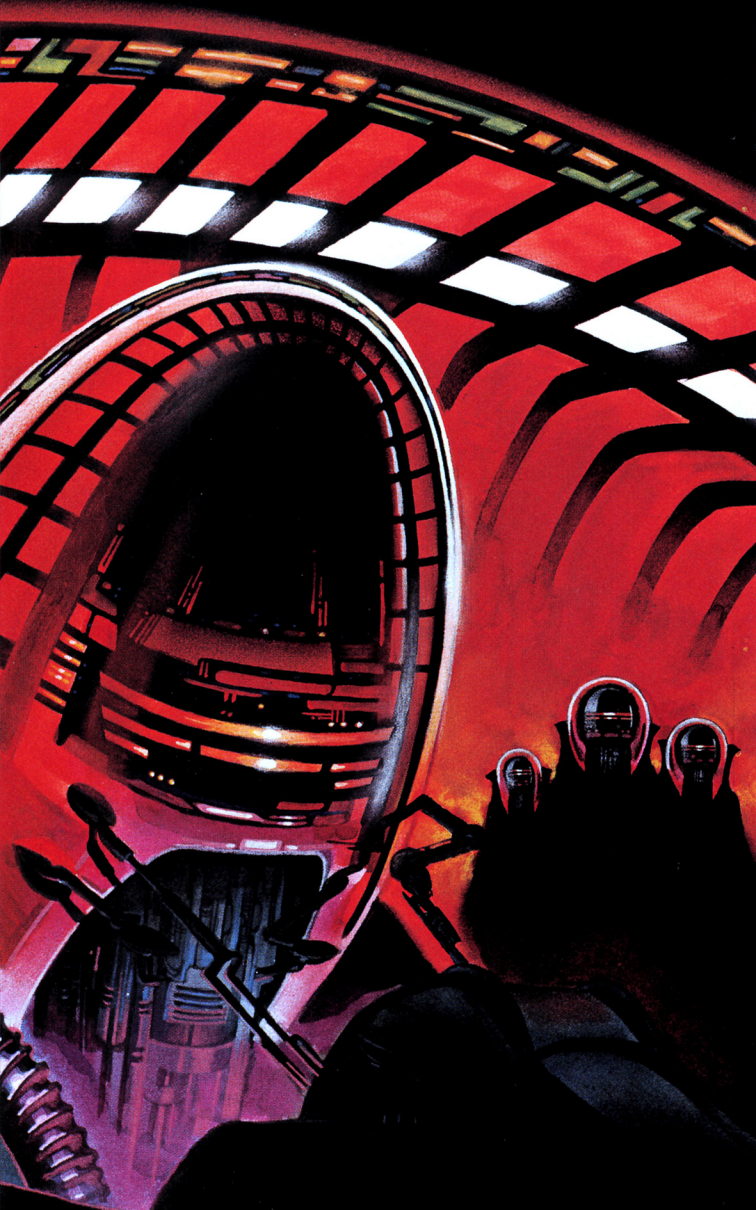


The Grand Hall in 'Ally': the scene is the main entrance where R.H. Belam distributors of New York are based during the London show.



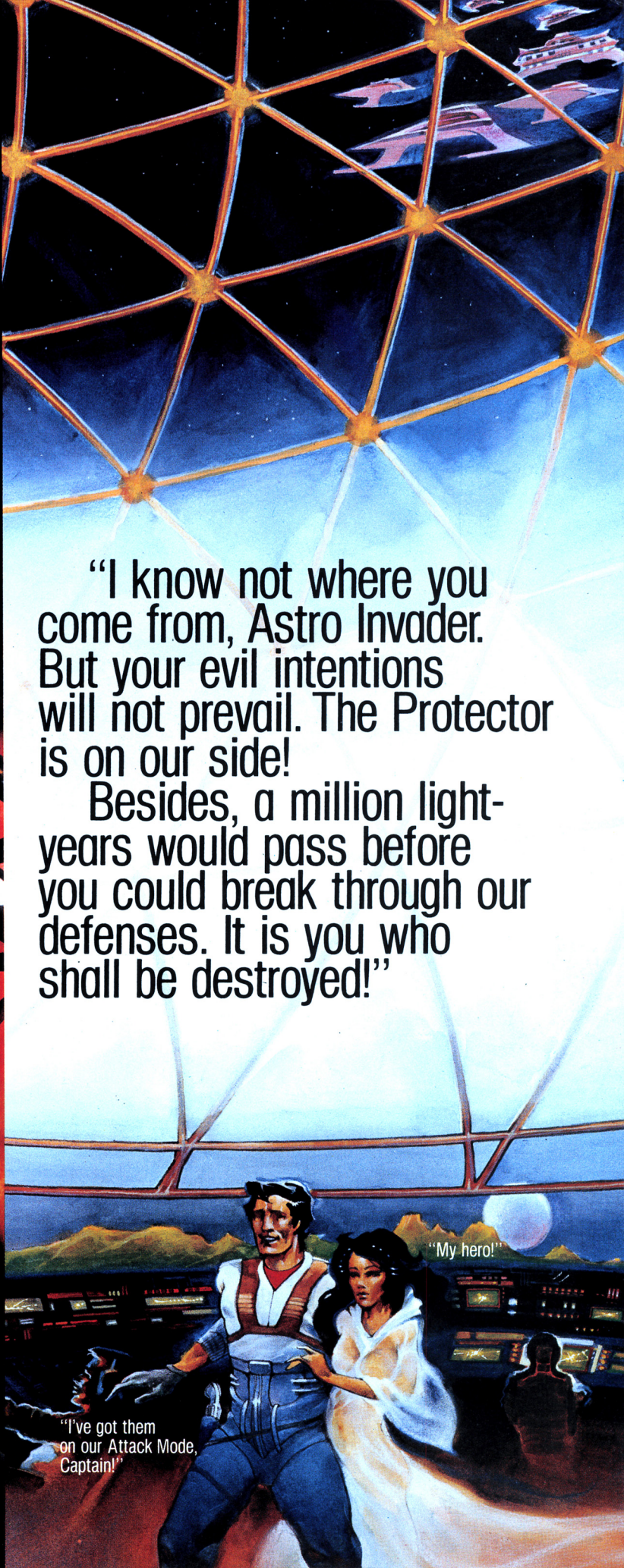
Alexandra Palace gutted: a view toward the area where the stand at ATE is usually held by Ruffler and Deith.

“Earthling, I have come to conquer your planet. You and your people shall be destroyed... wiped off the face of the cosmic universe forever... HA...HA...HA...HA!”



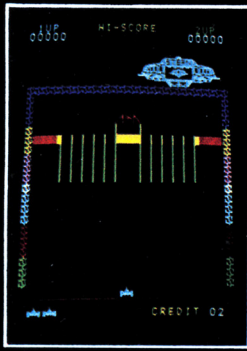
“I know not where you come from, Astro Invader. But your evil intentions will not prevail. The Protector is on our side!

Besides, a million light-years would pass before you could break through our defenses. It is you who shall be destroyed!”

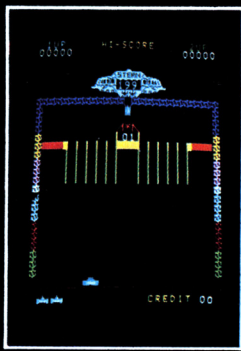


“My hero!”

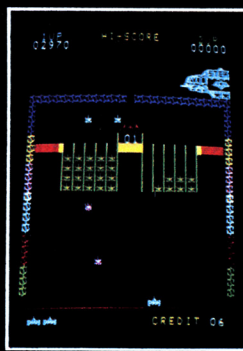
“I’ve got them on our Attack Mode, Captain!”



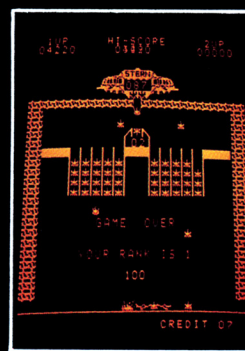
Game begins. Alien ship approaches docking bay, ready to attack earth.



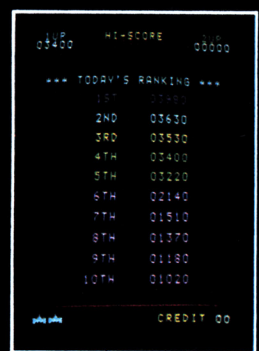
Alien ship unloads invasion fleet.



Invasion fleet fills launch pads with alien landing crafts and drops them towards Earth's defenses



Game is over when aliens overpower Earth's defenses third time



Attract Mode displays highest ranking scores earned by defenders (players).



Astro Invader may be our first video game, but it's already a proven gangbuster. It was tested in select markets prior to release. The profits were staggering. So staggering, in fact, that we almost named the game—Astronomical!

How To Play:

- One or two people can play.
- Insert 25¢ per player.
- Select one or two player button.

The Objective

- To attack and destroy invader crafts and UFOs before they annihilate you.
- Invaders are destroyed by pressing the firing button on your LASER BASE DEFENSE.

- The LASER BASE DEFENSE slides right and left to meet on-coming invaders head-on.
- If a UFO reaches Earth safely, the LASER BASE DEFENSE is destroyed.
- If player wins designated points, an additional LASER BASE DEFENSE appears on screen.
- The game is over when all LASER BASE DEFENSES are destroyed.

The Scoring:

- Each invader craft destroyed in attacking channel scores 10 POINTS.
- Each invader craft destroyed while attacking scores 20 POINTS.
- Depending on Attack Mode, each UFO destroyed scores 100-800 POINTS.
- Level of difficulty increases (more attacking invaders) as player's score increases.
- 10 highest scores to date register on screen.
- Every player's final score displayed for comparison against highest score to date.

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STERN
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Jukebox woes in Britain

LONDON—An increase of at least 100 percent on the price of play on jukeboxes is imminent in Great Britain, due to a hike in the jukebox license fee.

That was the warning given jukebox operators by Alan Willis, general secretary of the British Amusement Trades Catering Association following the sharp increase laid down in July by the Performing Right Society.

The jukebox license fee was increased from 37.50 pounds to 50 pounds with annual index-linked increases likely to increase it to at least 72 pounds sterling by 1985, reported *Coin Slot* of London.

Willis suggested the immediate step of increasing the price of play to five for 50 pence and one for 20 pence.

While this move in price may cause a negative reaction from both the jukebox-playing public and the pub owners, Willis pointed out the benefits given the operator—through BACTA—in negotiations over recent years with the Performing Rights Society. “Holding the license fee as best as possible has helped the operator keep his price of play attractive and rental agreeable,” said the BACTA general secretary.

“Now it is impractical to think in

terms of small increases in price of play. It is time to think ahead, think of the future,” he said.

The PRS ruled last year, with High Court backing, that existing bulk licensing arrangements agreed upon with BACTA would be terminated on July 5, 1980—and consequently the sites would be licensed direct.

To cushion the effect of the new fee increase, the PRS has agreed to a rebate of 25 cents during the first year to bring the net fee payable to 37.50 pounds. Rebate figures in subsequent years would be reduced to 20 percent, 15 percent, etc. Also, the PRS agreed not to impose direct-site licensing this year due to the expense and disruption involved.

The PRS has stated sites will be billed in instances where the operator does not quickly take up the bulk licensing offer. The performers’ union also is seeking assistance from the operator in requesting precise updated details of locations.

PRS charges extend beyond the jukebox fees, and the licensee also finds himself faced with increases of just under 20 percent covering background music systems and a much heavier levy in respect to live performances.

Book tells ‘all about foosball’

Johnny Lott won the World Singles Foosball Championship in his home town of Chicago recently, taking his earning over the \$50,000 mark. He is a four-time world finalist and has won numerous titles in singles, doubles, and mixed doubles competition.

He has worked personally with literally thousands of players nationwide through instructional clinics and exhibitions and is as qualified as anyone can be to compile the game’s first book—“The Complete Book of Foosball”—due out later this year.

The “Complete Book of Foosball” covers every aspect of this exciting new sport and is intended as a comprehensive guide for the amateur player. It places special emphasis on the fundamentals of the game. Techniques and shots are carefully explained and illustrated by easy to follow diagrams and photographs.

Starting with such basics as stance and grip, the book takes the beginner step by step through offensive and

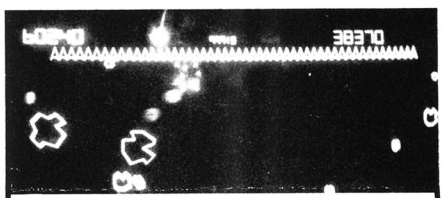
defensive techniques and gives tips from the top professionals. Also included are chapters on the history of the game, tournament play, women’s competition, advice for advanced players, trick shots, and game variations.

The official rules and a complete list of leading money winners and world champions can be found at the back of the book, along with biographies and photographs of the game’s greatest players.

Endorsed by the World Table Soccer Association, the official governing body of the professional tour, “The Complete Book of Foosball” provides the answers for the player looking for instruction and information on the sport of professional foosball.

Johnny Lott’s co-author on the book is Foos New’s editor Kathy Brainard, a professional player for four years earning Master status.

—by Gerry Wise of *Coin Slot*



Don't let this happen to you!

DATELINE—
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA:
An *Asteroids* devotee played one game of *Asteroids* for 15½ hours, scoring 7,200,620 points. He finally quit playing the game and still had 22 extra space ships left on the screen!

The reports are coming in more frequently now: Players are scoring extremely high scores and tying up the *Asteroids* games for literally hours!

And what is it doing to your investment if a player can keep your hottest game tied up for hours—on a single quarter? That's where Sparky Electronics' *Asteroids* modification kit can help you. This novel modification is designed to improve play—and increase profits—by keeping beginner play the same while making it tougher for the good players to play for a long time on just one quarter. And it's operator adjustable, incorporating five different speed levels.

NOW AVAILABLE
Asteroids Modification Kit
..... \$94.94
(with a free color kit overlay)

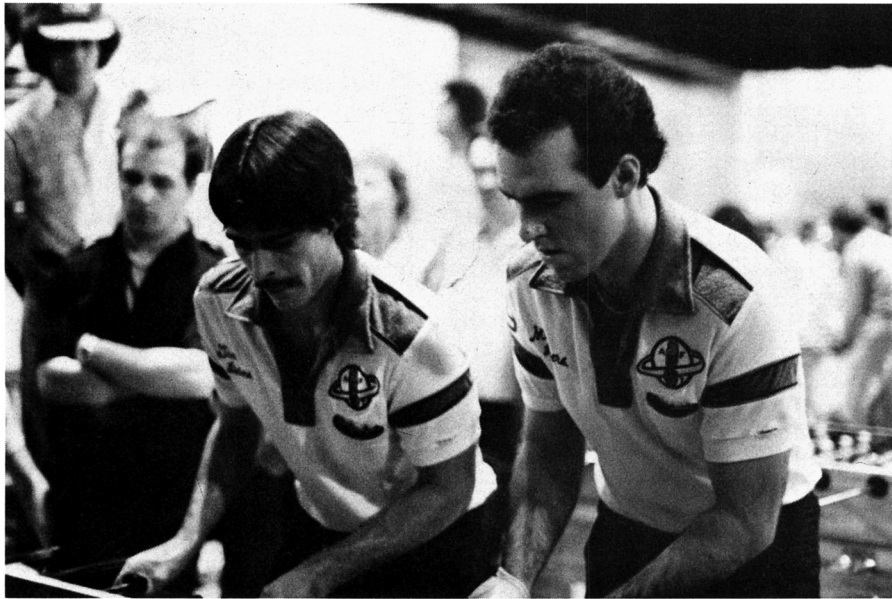
Space Invaders Modification Kit
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Color Rainbow overlays for most XY monitors..... \$14.45

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Organization keys



By Gerry Wise

of Coin Slot, London

Tournament Soccer's \$150,000 World Championships of 1980 was staged in the plush surroundings of the Hyatt Regency O'Hare Hotel in Chicago. To the increasing number of European visitors attending the championships it was without doubt big, and certainly better than anything staged on their domestic fronts.

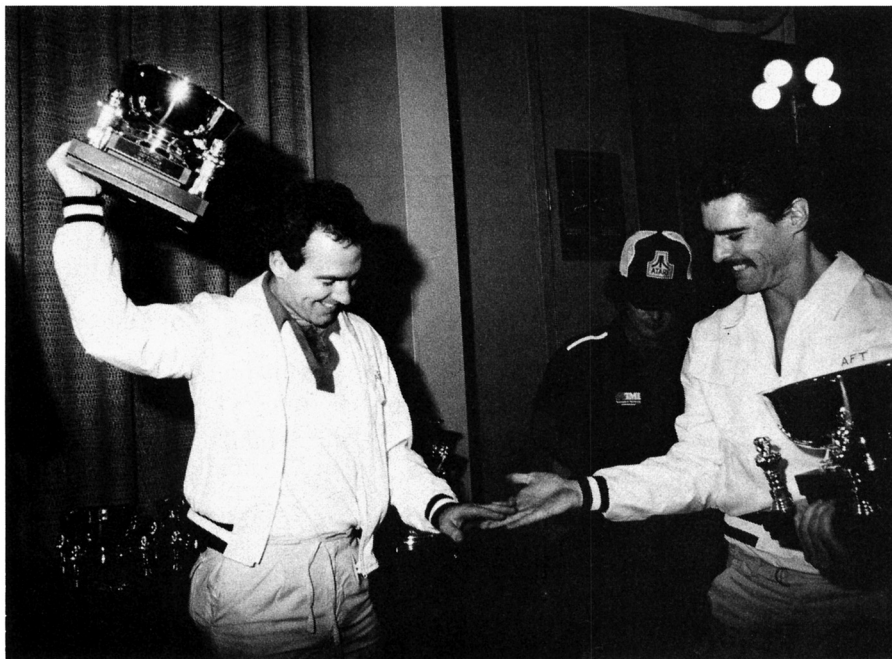
In Europe, foosball tournaments outside of England rarely benefit from such organization. The Lee Peppard-inspired organization kept the ball running for all but a few hours in the day over a long weekend in June at Chicago.

The enthusiasm is there, however, and as players and operators returned to Ireland, Switzerland, West Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg, all agreed they had learned much from the professional staging of the 1980 World Championships, and even more from the improving standards of play.

Setting those standards and gaining immense popularity in the process was a young Chicago man, Johnny Lott. He promotes Tournament Soccer through the giant Empire Distributing Company, is due to have a detailed book on foosball published later this year—and achieved the ultimate by winning the World Singles Championship—what better advertisement for Johnny Lott?

The \$3,000 he collected for his final win over the Seattle-based Samoan, Alwood Makakau, no doubt also counts a great deal.

The \$10,000 top prize for the Championship Open Doubles went to the Denver pairing of Mike Bowers and Tim Burns—who beat the favored Portland pair, Dan Kaiser and Rick Martin.



Top prize winners Tim Burns and Mike Bowers are in action, top photo. At bottom, Bowers (left) and Burns, two Denver, Colorado players take their Championship Doubles trophies—and \$10,000 each.

world foos championship

Lori Schrantz, for three years the world's no. 1 woman foosball player, lost her crown in the Singles Championship to 19-year old Carrie Crowell from Salina, Kansas. Vindication for Lori came, however, when partnering Carrie to their second successive Women's Doubles title; and joining her fiancée Jim Wiswell from Minneapolis to win the Mixed Doubles title.

These were the major winners; there were numerous others and many more in the prize money bracket. Yet one of the loudest and most spontaneous acclaims was saved for the Swiss brothers Herbert and Yvon Perrin, who received the International Cup as the highest placed Europeans in the Doubles Championships.

Foosball itself, of course, was the real winner of the weekend. The event used 144 Tournament Soccer tables, lined-out in two spacious auditoriums and even in the Hyatt Regency's ground floor lobby.

Supplementing their Tournament Soccer promotion—the culmination of a million-dollar, 12-month tour—Tournament Marketing International introduced products they intend to promote in coordination with foosball and the *Tournament Eight Ball* pool table. These were an air-cushioned table hockey table and *Arachnid's English Mark Darts*.

TMI President Lee Peppard said *English Mark Darts* was not an international marketing product but a substantial subsidiary growth-wise in the United States. The hockey table, he added, was also being geared for the domestic program, fulfilling a promotional and operational need. But neither darts or hockey will be promoted on anything like the scale of foosball and pool.

"Having concentrated on foosball for five years, TMI has put together a product line that has been carefully programmed and thoroughly looked

into," Peppard said. "This product line will expand when promotional ideas can be adapted. It's a conscious decision for a major expansion.

"We'll now have to consolidate it, accomplishing the same results and achieving the same market position we've managed with Tournament Soccer," he said.

Empire Distributing hosted the World Championships while Bally and Atari complemented the event with a dazzling arcade of the latest equipment from each manufacturer.



Two World Champions: Jack Simka plays a game of foos with Jim Weswell, the 1979 world champion in doubles and the 1980 champ in mixed doubles.

Non-table games on hand

Atari's Frank Ballouz was standing by to see eight *Asteroids* video games command continuous attention, while Bally's Tom Nieman was more than satisfied with the response accorded Bally's latest pinball line,

including, of course, *Space Invaders* and *Rolling Stones*.

In comments to this reporter, Ballouz said, "Our new *Missile Command* video game sees Atari introduce the 50-cents slot in the United States. If foosball can do it, I see no reason why video cannot. Aggressive operation is needed.... Prices are always increasing and no one has yet passed this on to the player. Now is the time for the operator to use that aggression." *Missile Command* games will have the operator's option of 25- or 50-cent play pricing.

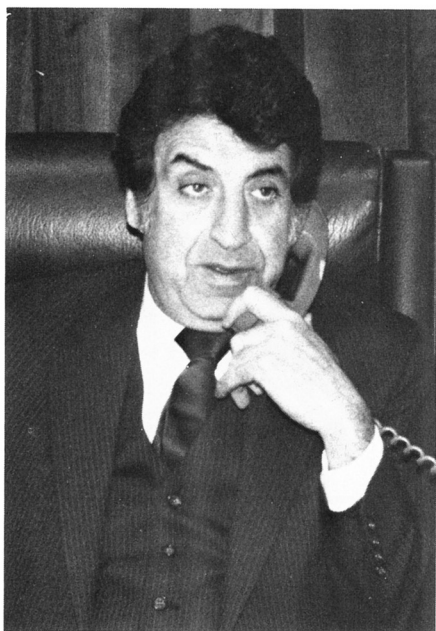
Tournament Soccer has tried promoting a 50-cents slot for some time now.

In Tom Neiman's view, "However long it may take to be accepted, accepted it has to be."

He said, "We've been told that 50-cent play is essential by the operator, who obviously needs increased collections to help break down our increased and enforced price barrier."

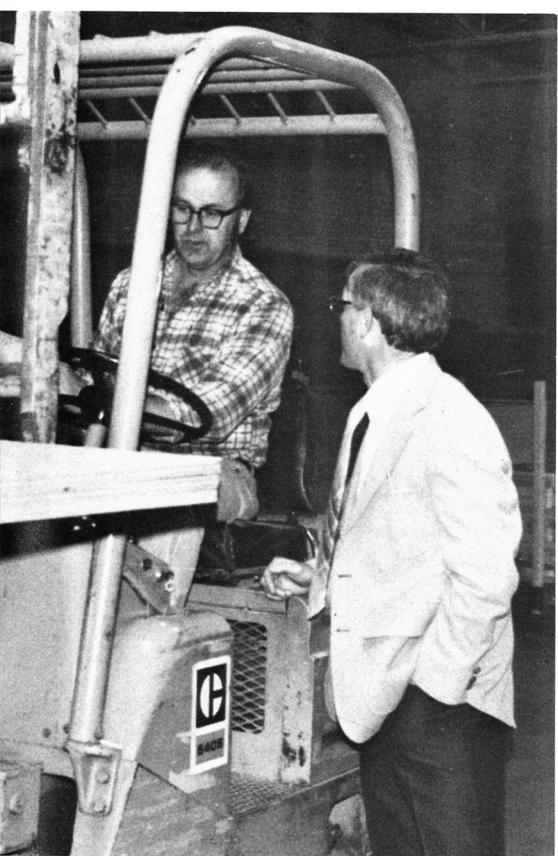
Coin-op trade personalities from many parts of the States took time out to visit the tournament, and among the European visitors within the industry Mike Green of Alca Electronics in England was able to tie up distribution and manufacturing rights of *Tournament Eight Ball* with TMI. Alca already distributes Tournament Soccer in the UK and with the European franchise for *Tournament Eight Ball* may well be motivated to expand its foosball interests.

So, apart from play there was business. A satisfactory end to a satisfying tour. Sufficiently enough, said Lee Peppard, to come back again—and off he went to open negotiations with the Hyatt Regency O'Hare for booking in 1981...and, believe it or not, the ensuing ten years.



By David Pierson

Pool table



A huge stature in the industry doesn't necessarily mean a company's plant has to be big. Nevertheless, Charles Milhem, president of The Valley Company, feels obliged to remind visitors of that very point before they even see his Bay City, Michigan pool table manufacturing facility.

"We're not really a vast organization," he says, prefacing the entire visit.

And he's right. The company employs about 125 people, but over 30 of those people work out of the company's Shakopee, Minnesota cue tip plant. The balance of employees work out of the Bay City plant, which occupies only 140,000 square feet and is housed in three warehouses in Bay City's industrial park overlooking the Saginaw River.

The cue plant in Shakopee, according to a company spokesman, is the largest volume producer of one-piece cue sticks in the country. And the pool table manufacturing facility in Bay City holds a similar status, turning out more coin-op pool tables than anyone else.

Yet, despite this sizeable achievement, the physical plant at Bay City seems almost diminutive. As Milhem states, "Our whole operation here is conditioned to the production of one thing, pool tables. We have concentrated on what we do best, and that is to make a money machine which just so happens to be a pool table. We make four different sizes of coin-op pool tables, but they're really all the same. It's what we do best; so it's all we do. We're not trying to run bars or sinks through here."

A while back, however, Valley did venture into another sector of the coin-op business when it built the *Spectra IV* cocktail table. But there

wasn't the demand there that Valley had hoped, and so the company has withdrawn and gone back again to the exclusive production of pool tables.

But with a definite trend appearing, of manufacturers looking at diversifying into other coin-op fields, can we expect Valley to venture again into another type of coin-op equipment?

Milhem was quick to answer. "One should stay in a field he has expertise in," he stated.

Location-owned equipment

One should stay in a field he has expertise in—that alludes to another, more threatening trend within the industry; that is, of locations buying their own equipment. Should a tavern owner, whose area of expertise is actually in running a tavern, take on the added responsibility of maintaining coin-operated amusement equipment as well?

Well, if the Milhem Theory is valid, that one should stay in his area of expertise, then it follows that tavern owners would be wise to avoid such entanglements as running their own equipment because it would dilute their efforts.

Still, it appears that the pool table, more so than any other piece of coin-operated amusement equipment, is vulnerable to this trend. And Milhem was quick to point out why he thinks this is so.

"The problem," he said, "is operators make it look too simple. And locations, seeing this, are easily deceived, thinking that it is easy to operate a pool table when, in fact, it's not as easy as it looks. It's something about human nature, though. If you show complacency, people will take it away from you. And because a lot

The management group at Valley includes (top) Charles Milhem, president; Richard Shelton (bottom), vice president of manufacturing; (facing page, top) Emil Marcet, sales and marketing manager who is surrounded by his assistants Leona Kloha, Melody Sutkowi, and Reni Campbell; and (facing page, bottom) Alan Schaefer, vice president of finance. With Schaefer, from left, are Connie Phillips, Shriley Kasper, Schaefer, and Bob Shepard.

manufacturer casts a big shadow

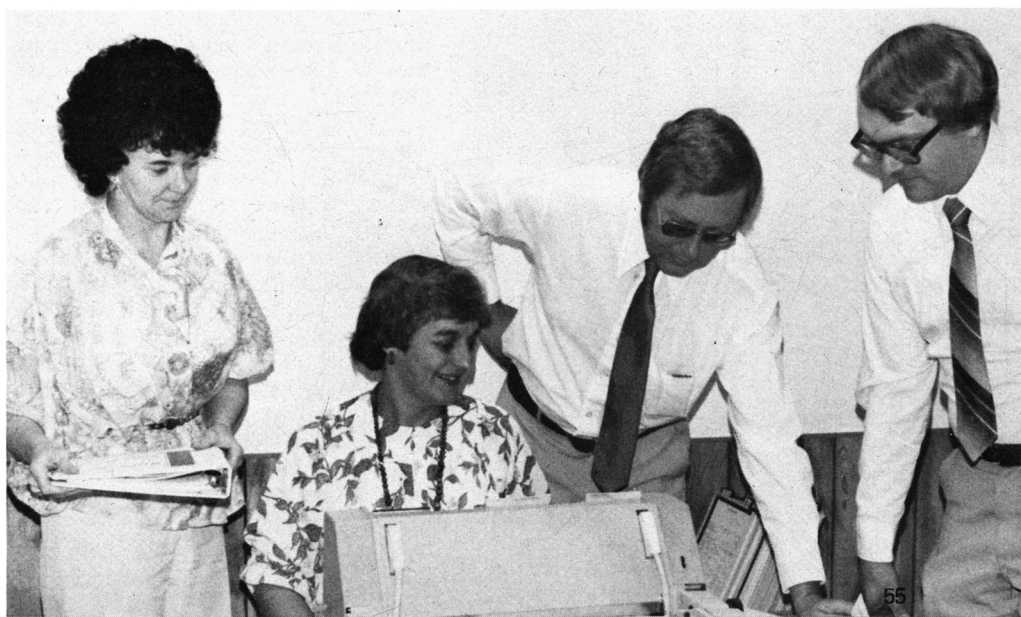
of operators have shown complacency in this area, many locations start thinking about owning their own equipment."

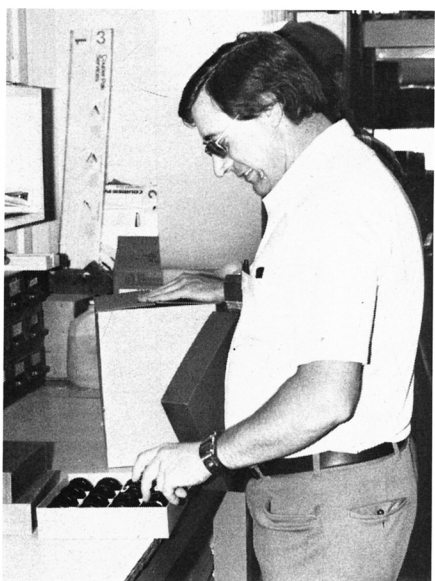
But is this really a concern for a pool table manufacturer?

Milhem was again unequivocal: "Direct sales are devastating to us. Every table sold direct hurts the entire industry, and it hurts pool. We see direct sales as lost locations forever."

Milhem continued, "What happens is that sooner or later the cloth goes bad, the sticks break, and play will naturally drop off. And the bar owner, who really isn't an operator, won't do anything about it. So the table just gets older and older until it's worn out. Then the location owner will look at his collections and conclude, 'Pool is dead.' He won't consider that maybe it's because he really doesn't know how to maintain the equipment. Instead he'll blame the low collections on the game itself. So, in the end, he'll pull the table out of the location, replace it with a few more booths and turn a deaf ear to any operator who suggests to him that he give the game a second try. For, in his mind, pool is dead, and nothing will ever change that opinion."

"So location-owned equipment is bad all the way around," Milhem continued. "For the operator, it's a lost location. But for the manufacturer it's also a lost location forever because when the location owner buys that table he's got it in his mind that it's the last investment he'll ever have to make. But all we all know that's not the way. The tables have to be maintained, and new tables have to be purchased, or else the game will lose its appeal. The operator understands that. He knows that to





Ron Smith at Warehouse 3 checks out a shipment of balls.



Slate from north Italy, here transported in Valley plant. Domestic slate can't meet the demand.



In the final assembly area, workers handle the task covering the rails.

keep his collections up, he has to perpetuate his cycle of buying new equipment."

League play

And then Milhem pointed to one way to offset the trend of locations buying their own tables. He started off by saying, "When you consider there are 35 million people in the country who play pool—or one out of every six people—you realize there is indeed a great deal of interest in the game."

He pointed to the fact that pool has become a readily identifiable element in American life. "I'm always surprised when I see the amount of exposure billiards enjoys on television," he said. "For instance, I don't know how many times I've seen commercials where, when you look closely, you would see one of our Valley pool tables standing in the background. It just goes to show you how much pool has become a way of life in this country."

But something has to be done to re-stimulate that interest in this country, he said—something to keep the people coming back. Then he pointed to bowling and the success it enjoys in this country because of its league promotions. And he inserted, "Bowling died in Japan because they were lacking a vehicle like league play to stimulate in the player a commitment to play. The players would play for awhile, but then didn't come back. They got out of the habit of playing and went on to something else. But with league play you don't have that kind of lag because it's a continual thing."

For that reason, he said, Valley thinks the game of pool is better served by league play, rather than tournaments, as promotional vehicles. "I think tournaments do stimulate interest in the game," he said, "but not to the extent that league play does. Leagues extend the interest in the game over a longer period of time, and that's got to be more beneficial for everyone involved."

"I look at leagues," he continued, "as an extended tournament. And tournaments have a place within them, as the culmination of the season, the playoffs."

"League play is beneficial to pool itself," said Milhem. "League play brings with it a commitment that the equipment will be maintained and will be good. This will, of course, place a greater pressure on the operator to put in new tables and keep them maintained, thus improving the quality of equipment on location."

The concept of league play, and tournament play as well, are also

good vehicles which can help operators hang on to their locations and even regain some lost accounts that have bought their own tables. With the fuel crunch placing more and more geographical restrictions on people, people find themselves having to stay closer to home and must find new diversions. Before, when gasoline was cheap and more readily available, maybe it wasn't such a bad idea to travel 30 or 50 miles to see the Cubs or Dodgers play a doubleheader. But things have changed. And these people are more likely to look closer to home for their diversions. And organized pool leagues, Milhem seems to be saying, is one operators can use this to their advantage.

"We really believe that pool leagues will reverse this growing trend of locations buying their own equipment," he said.

Of course, a lot of groundwork would have to be done first, but then a salaried league secretary, who would be paid out of the league treasury, could take over early on. As in bowling leagues, Milhem stated, a workable handicap system would have to be used so that everyone would be competing on an equal footing. That way players wouldn't be dissuaded because they aren't the hottest shot around.

He said, because of Valley's commitment to promoting the game, the company again actively supported the Billiard Congress of America's League Play Championships (see related story elsewhere in this issue). Additionally, Valley will be actively supporting two major upcoming tournaments—the Second Annual Nine-Ball World Pro-Am, November 30–December 3, and the first-ever Eight-Ball World Classic, December 4–7 —by supplying tournament tables. Both events, which will be held at the Tropicana Hotel and Country Club in Las Vegas, promise big money prize packages in the neighborhood of \$1 million.

Like all the phases of the coin-op industry, pool is also hampered by legal restrictions, Milhem pointed out. He mentioned Tennessee, for instance, where there is a restriction on the number of tables allowable in a location, and New York—where there is a restriction as to the size of the tables. Perhaps more and better exposure of the game through promotional vehicles such as those Valley has entered can help improve the game's legal standing in many areas, Milhem noted.

Management group

Valley was started in 1945 by Earl Feddick and E. Wall Fischer (one of the early pioneers in coin-op

pool). This year the company is celebrating its 35th anniversary.

Earl started off making toys, then shuffleboards, and progressed to radios and television cabinets, from there going on to originate Bumper Pool in 1954. Three years later Valley turned out its first six-pocket pool table; it was then a six-foot presswood, non-slate table.

In 1969 the company was sold to Victor Comptometer, which is in the adding machine business and which was looking to diversify by getting into recreation. Then in 1977 Victor sold its recreation division (Valley included) to Kidde Industries, a large diversified conglomerate of about eighty companies. Other companies in the sports equipment division of Kidde include Daisy B-B Guns, Universal Gym Equipment, Bear Archery, and Ertl Toys.

Kidde's corporate philosophy, according to Milhem, is one of letting the separate enterprises run themselves. "It's really something hard to believe," said Milhem, "but Kidde doesn't interfere with our operations here. They feel, and rightly so, that those who specialize in the production of pool tables, for instance, are more likely to know what is best for the pool table company."

Because of this corporate position, Milhem stated, "We have been able to avoid a lot of problems that are usually created when you are a wholly-owned subsidiary of a large conglomerate. We have the freedom to make our own decisions without interference or having to get authorization to make those changes."

The advantage of this type of arrangement, Milhem continued, is that it has provided Valley with the cash resources to make changes whenever necessary. Improvements which would be financially prohibitive to a company the size of Valley are possible because of this solid financial backup, and the costs associated with that improvement can be amortized over a longer period of time.

Milhem joined Valley as president in 1978, coming from Brunswick where he was vice president of merchandising of the bowling division.

Others in the management group include Alan Schaefer, vice president of finance; Richard Shelton, vice president of manufacturing; and Emil Marcet, marketing and sales director.

Schaefer has been with the company since 1969, having joined the firm when Victor acquired Valley. In addition to finance, his responsibilities include personnel, industrial relations, and insurance.

Shelton, who has been with the company since 1966, is (like all



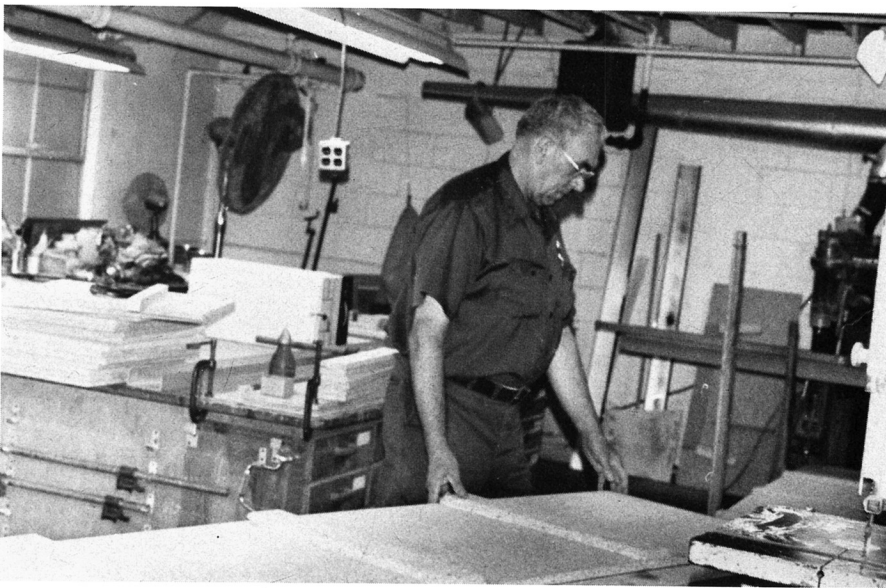
Harold Uhlmann, who has been with the company for 20 years, is one of the design originators of the Valley table. Here he studies the table's interior design with an eye to simplifying it.



'Our whole operation is conditioned to the production of one thing,' states Milhem. Here workers affix paneling to one part of the table.



A worker handles the cutting and assembly of one of the table's side panels.



Clarence Heinlein, a craftsman woodmaker, applies his skills in the company's model shop.



In another step in the final assembly area, a worker affixes the metal trim to the interior moldings.



Two Valley workers slide boards through the width cutter to one another in the process of modifying raw materials to Valley's table specifications.

management people at Valley) involved in sales and customer relations. "It's more effective this way," he explained. "We all have a clear understanding of our product, policies, and corporate objectives."

But the "hub" of Valley's contact with customers is Marcet, who is charged with sales and customer service. He also handles technical complaints and acts as transportation manager.

Table construction

Probably the most significant difference in a Valley coin-op pool table is its patented ball return system which was patented in 1968. It has no electrical or moving parts. From the player's point of view, it has meant that they can play with a cue ball that is the same size as the numbered object balls.

The simplified ball return system which resulted in a more attractive game for serious pool players, Valley staffers believe, reflects a company policy of lowering the cost of the equipment and, at the same time, providing a better table.

Valley's unitized ball separator, introduced two years ago, is another innovation that simplified the table's construction and, thus, its operation. Balls now run on a smooth, durable polyethylene track without moving or electrical parts.

Said Milhem, "The fellows here are doing things other industries should take note of. They are not afraid to take new looks at their product and see where they could incorporate new improvements that could also represent a significant cost reduction in the price of a table."

Pointing to the interior design of the table, he said that the simplified design has had the double bonus of lowering the cost of manufacturing the table. "If we hadn't gone this route," he told PLAY METER, "we would have had only one or two other alternatives—to increase the price of the tables or cheapen the tables to keep the cost down. I'd say that without our present approach of simplifying the design, a Valley table would probably cost about 25 percent more than what it already costs."

He pointed out that slate prices, laminates, and castings, for instance, which are essential ingredients of the Valley table, have all increased far above the rate of inflation.

Along those lines, despite the company's goal of continually simplifying the table's design, Milhem noted that because of the nature of the game itself, "we're locked into certain parts of the basic structure of a pool table. The table has got to have legs, slate, and, of course, a

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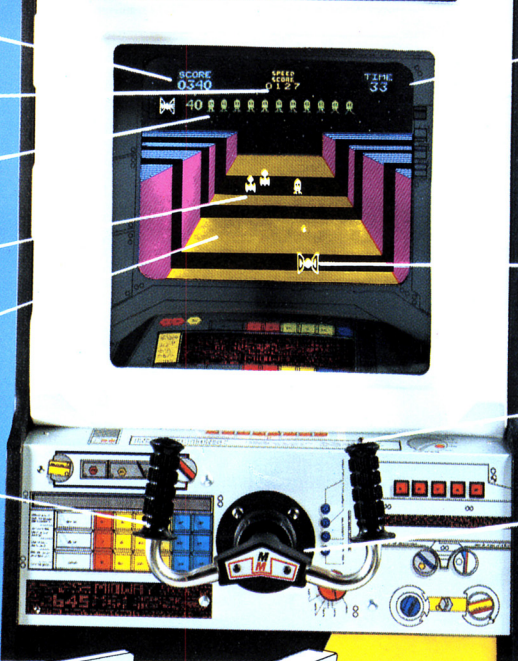
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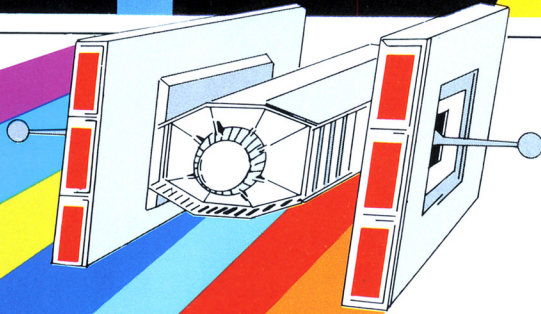
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20
POINTS



30
POINTS



40
POINTS



50
POINTS



Enemy
Space
Saucers



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table configuration.”

The result of the improvements which have been incorporated in the table is, as one Valley executive termed it, that “now we have a table that’s built like a tank. What’s left to the table’s design cannot be burned or broken off.”

The most recent change, introduced last year, was a larger cash box. “We were getting complaints the cashbox was too small,” said Shelton. Then he added, “But if you’re going to have complaints, I guess those are the best kind.”

Probably the most important ingredient in any table has got to be the surface on which the balls roll. And, like other manufacturers Valley sees the slate top as the best answer. “To date,” Milhem said, “we have not found an economical or acceptable substitute for slate. Marble, for instance, is more expensive and is more brittle besides.”

To make the problem of slate even more acute, Milhem noted that slate is imported from northern Italy, and that presents a certain logistical problem—of its transportation to central Michigan. So the ever-escalating costs of transportation have created a built-in cost problem for manufacturers.

And domestic slate is not the answer, Milhem continued. “It’s just

not available at all in quantities.” Added to this is the increased demand for slate as a building material, and Valley and other pool table manufacturers find themselves in a very competitive market for the slate. “We buy at competitive prices,” says Milhem. “We are aware that our suppliers, if they are to stay in business, have to operate profitably, and that dictates our purchases.”

Valley’s future plans

Presently, 10 percent of the company’s effort is directed toward the production of home tables. And, though Valley would like to make a bigger dent in that market in the future, the company’s major market remains the coin-op industry.

What plans does Valley have for the future in this market? With the production of videos or pins dismissed at this time as unfeasible, what areas is Valley looking to expand into, since it is generally conceded the pool table market is a replacement market?

Milhem stated that the company is investigating various areas of expansion within the pool table market, most notably a re-introduction of Bumper Pool.

“Our roots are in Bumper Pool,”

said Milhem. “It’s something we’ve always had the capacity to do.” He said that the industry could probably expect a new merchandising effort from Valley with this game in the near future. “everything has a way of re-cycling,” Milhem continued. “Because of the size limitations in many locations, Bumper Pool has always had a market pool couldn’t meet.”

A second area that Valley is investigating is the possibility of manufacturing a larger table. “Right now we’re studying the feasibility of that,” Milhem said. “But until we feel it’s structurally sound, we won’t produce it.”

Additionally, he alluded to a third area—that of producing a coin-op snooker table.

Together with that, he hinted that Valley is looking to develop its overseas market.

So it appears that Valley has quite a few options at its disposal to avoid what appears to many outsiders as a stagnant growth situation, feeding a replacement market. And those options, interestingly, incorporate new ventures in the coin-op industry, but not into videos or pins—as seems fashionable today.

Instead, it appears that Valley is quite content to make pool tables—mainly because Valley makes a lot of pool tables.



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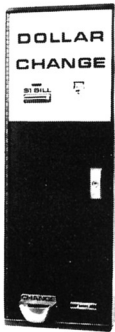
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Location-owned Tables: *Points to Examine*

Locations buying their own pool tables is a definite problem to the coin-op industry. It is the piece of equipment most often purchased by the location—and that's a problem to them as well. The hassles of ownership are covered in articles elsewhere in this issue. But Mr. Bar Owner should consider the following points about the purchase itself.

1. If owning your own equipment were a great idea, every tavern owner in your state would own his own equipment. This hasn't happened, if you will notice, because the experienced tavern owner knows he makes more money in the long run with an operator.

2. The contract you sign with a fast-talking, fly-by-night salesman is oftentimes sold immediately to a finance company which is under no legal obligation to keep any promises made to you by the salesman about the table. The salesman has his money. Since you are promised service at no charge, can you think of any reason why, when you are having trouble with your machines on a busy weekend night, that a service man would drive 100 to 150 miles round trip to repair the machine? Or why he would ever fix your machine for free.

3. Contracts have been found which do not comply with the truth-in-lending laws. The reason is that the interest charges are much higher than they appear to be in the contract. A seller who gets a kickback of 4 or 5 percent of the interest charge does not want you to see the real interest rates. The higher the interest he can charge you, the more easy money he makes; that is why the interest rate is hidden. The fine print in these contracts often stipulates that in case of non-payment, the finance company can attach your property or bank account if they feel the equipment is not worth the balance owed. If you are buying, read carefully the terms of the contract.

4. Exorbitant prices with markups of 300 and 400 percent are common. The equipment sold is, in some cases, imports of low quality and having parts and supplies that are hard to obtain. Depreciation of the equipment is very rapid. Often you can owe much more than the equipment is worth. They may tell you that owning your own equipment will add to the value of the tavern. But a knowledgeable tavern buyer knows that non-operator equipment is a detriment to his business and does not want the equipment you have paid for so dearly.

5. In most cases, your operator has done business with you for 5, 10, or even 20 years and is a local businessman. Who should you believe—the man you have found trustworthy and reliable and have known for a long period of time, or the man you have seen two or three times and is selling a promise of "pie in the sky"? Contact your local Better Business Bureau or Chamber of Commerce for a report on the people who are selling. If the BBB or the Chamber doesn't know them—you probably shouldn't, either.

6. One of the favorite ploys of the high pressure salesman is to tell the prospect not to call his operator in advance about removing his equipment. The salesman says this will prevent the operator from removing his machines before the new equipment can be installed. Actually, the reason is that the salesman is afraid that if he allows the tavern owner to call his operator before the new machines are installed, the operator will tell the tavern owner the truth about the equipment he is buying and that will stop the sale. If your operator has been square with you—what can it hurt to consult him? It might save a hurt—in your pocketbook.

7. If you are convinced about buying your own machines, you owe yourself a talk with your operator. He can refer you to hometown people who have been taken in by this sales pitch. Talk to them and judge for yourself.

8. Get a written guarantee from the seller for service and parts.

—from *Arguments to the location owners*, as compiled by
the Music Operators of Michigan
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League play promotes pool action

Pool leagues have proven their promotional worth in many locations—both for the added revenue and the wedge against location ownership of the tables.

Here is a digest of some of the ideas presented by Coinman of the Month Bill Nemgar, who has organized national tournaments through his association with D&R Star of Rochester, Minnesota. He was interviewed in *PLAY METER*, October, 1978.

The location is required to use the operator's table in order to participate in the league he organizes. A positive bond is created between location and operator, since the location owner can see this definite, special thing being done for him to generate coin box revenue. (Bar receipts typically soar during league play, which can be set for the location's slow night of the week. The set up of the league does not necessarily cost the location anything.

Starting a pool league, an operator is advised to have a six- or eight-team league. He only has to commit that number of locations to get into league play, and then he draws up a schedule. After finding out what nights the locations want to

shoot, the dates are put by matches, just as in a bowling schedule, and the schedule is passed around to the league bars. "The important factor in setting up this league is not to get involved," Nemgar advised. "The operator should...let the league run itself." Once the locations form their teams, set up a league meeting on a certain night. With all the teams together, explain the game rules to be used. Players can then elect league officers—and this delegates authority to the people who will be running the league themselves, removing it from the operator's responsibility.

Charges mentioned by Nemgar were set at \$2 per player for each night he plays in the league. Money collected goes to the location, and the cashier gives them back enough coins to shoot 15 games of pool, in D&R Star's set-ups. The remainder of cash goes into an envelope along with the score sheet at the end of the night for a league officer to pick up.

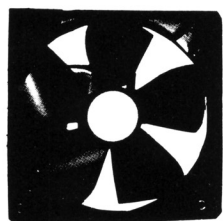
The secretary or other officer deposits the money, figures out the score sheets, ranks the teams by games won and lost and records total points for all the teams. The points determine how the players will get

paid. Suggested scoring—one point for every opponent's ball left on the table and two points for sinking the eight-ball. The won/lost standings are based on three matches. On each league night, the two teams line up their rosters, and the team that scores the most points in each round wins that match. The point system gives the losing team something to shoot for, i.e. more points for the night in one game, although the round was lost, two games to one.

Added interest can be created by "position nights," in which teams of near equal ability are matched, the number-one ranker playing number two, and so forth down the standings.

Suggested purse amounts: \$300 to be split among the first-place team, with the last-place squad sharing about \$175—so everybody gets a substantial amount of "change," and the end of the league play season sees a banquet and trophies paid by league receipts.

With the hook of league play set up, competing operators have been reported to be "laughed out the door" of locations benefitting from an operator's organizing a league.



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Keep up the table and keep the location

Editor's Note: On the problem of locations buying table equipment, here in a capsule form are tactics for the operator, as presented in PLAY METER in a past Pool Issue.

The problem is locations buying their own tables, no small threat to the coin-op amusement industry. The most-often purchased piece of equipment is the pool table.

Many operators, misled by the simplicity of it all, began to shortcut the attention they give to their pool tables. This can be where the problem begins. What these operators don't realize is that when they concern themselves only with the contents of the coin box, they are demonstrating for the location owner that a pool table is an easy piece to maintain. The operator, by doing nothing, is saying that almost anyone—including the location owner himself—can own a pool table and operate it successfully.

Of course, this isn't true. A poorly-maintained table invariably will earn less than it could if it were kept up. That is because many players will turn away from shooting if the cue sticks are warped or cracked, or the tips are flat, or the table is dirty or unlevel.

The location owner agreed to have pinball machines, jukeboxes, and pool tables in the location in the first place because the location owner looked upon the operator as a 'games expert.' But if the operator

shows that there's nothing to operating a pool table (or any other piece of equipment), then naturally the location owner is going to start thinking about ways to get the whole pie rather than just 50 percent of it. If the operator hasn't been keeping his table well-maintained—how is he going to be able to show the bar owner that he shouldn't own his own table (even though the bar owner likely won't be able to keep it well-maintained).

Answer: The operator has to show he is interested in his equipment.

On the defensive side though: If the location decides to go on to its own table—keep your foot in the door; don't threaten to take out the pins and videos as well. That tactic can be self-defeating. The "hard line" operator can find himself minus one location—which will fall into the route of another operator happy to gain one for non-board games alone.

Keep your foot in the door. Today you may have lost one pool table spot. But you'll still be in that location when the location-owned pool table runs down. The location with its wholly-owned, but wholly abused table may be begging for you to take over maintenance again.

Secure the Pool Location

One proven method to insure against pool table locations going sour is to set up an ongoing promotion such as a pool league. Pool tournaments and leagues are something that a location owner

cannot himself provide, and these have the added advantage of keeping the location owner aware that he needs an operator-run pool table in the place.

For maintenance itself, this should include brushing the table cloth every week, including underneath the cushions. On a weekly basis, replace the cue tips. Some operators don't change these as frequently as they should, but it's a simple process that shows the location you're interested. Also, if your routemen get in the habit of changing the cue tips every week instead of 'when they need it', they will be less likely to overlook or forget this maintenance.

Other routine practices should include cleaning the cue ball (since it gets soiled with chalk) and replacing worn-out spots on the table. Also, check out the ball track. And your routeman should be in the habit of cleaning the pool table cabinet with soap and water from time to time.

Finally, before he goes, your routeman should check with the location owner to see if he has enough chalk or if he's holding any broken or cracked cue sticks.

The pool cloth must be changed on a timely schedule. The average interval between cloth changes for most operators is between four and six months; it depends on the wear and tear the pool table gets.

Keep 'on top of the table' and you will keep the location for the table. Remember, you are the 'games expert.'

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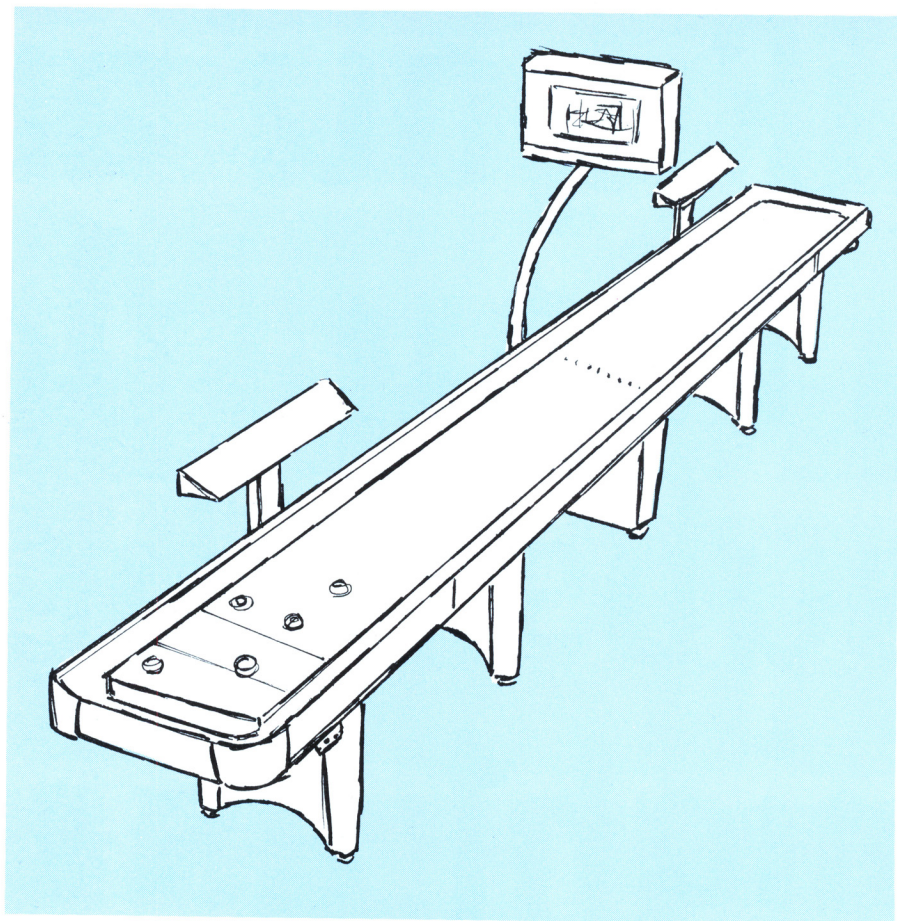
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Shuffleboard:

**The game has long-standing acceptance.
Leagues and tournament play boost it sharply.**

By Ray E. Tilley



Shuffleboard is a "seasonal" game. The board will play in summer...and it will play in winter.

Its invention was during the 17th century, when the lords in England played "Shove ha'penny." Its popularity has survived unto the nuclear era, when a shuffleboard has even been installed in a U.S. Navy Polaris submarine off the Connecticut coast.

Shuffleboard has not been without its times of threatened survival as a coin-operated game—as have many modes of automatic amusement. But it has been nearly a "workhorse" of sales and revenues over the years—its appeal rising generally since World War II—and what has been proven to stimulate board use is league organization and tournament play.

"Without tournament play, they lose their appeal," says Sam Cooper, vice president of Pioneer Sales & Service distributorship in Wisconsin. The typical pattern of competitive shuffle action among taverns in an area, with the provision of trophies and organization of teams, definitely boosts receipts in the coin box, he noted.

"It's a game that will go on for a long time, like bowling. It's a clever game, a scientific game," said Cooper.

Something of the regional origin of shuffleboard in the United States was hinted at by Houston's Larry Twar-

dowski, vice president of H.A. Franz & Co. distributors. In his area, "the influx of the 'snowbirds' from up north" help shuffle play, said the distributor. Its advantages include two game play modes: shuffle and horseshoe, he noted.

It is a game that wears its age well. Echoing Cooper's sentiments, Twardowski said that, while the pool tables may be the backbone of games sales or the "workhorse," shuffleboard is at least "the burro."

Hoofing back to the Midwest, you can find operator Fritz Bentler very happy about shuffleboards. They are so well played in a multi-state region around his Springfield, Missouri base that he stays busy in the resurfacing of tables. This has occupied his time to an extent that he hasn't found the hours in a day to set up shuffleboard tournaments he found to be successful three years ago.

Five-man-team play between the hours of 7 and midnight resulted in "holding customers and getting them to come in (to a tavern) on a bad night in winter, like bowling," said Bentler.

Tournament play around Springfield started with a few good-natured arguments centered on the question: "Who's the best shooter on the shuffleboard?" Eight teams, with 16 players, resolved that question for

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the tavern.

Bentler, who has 50 to 60 shuffles on location (as against maybe a dozen pool tables, which he feels is a ratio that is unique among operators) latched onto this competitive spirit—a players' urge that could only help increase the weight of the coin box. And at that time he augmented it this way: He provided a \$1,000 first-place prize, rented a local banquet hall, gave free beer for the tournament, and set up a new table for play—then let the weights slide. "We had a helluva crowd in there," he said recently. The competition stimulated the normally slow summer season.

At Springfield, shuffle leagues started shortly after World War II—a crucial juncture for shuffleboards' growth, we learn—with some dozen taverns participating. Today, 12 locations participate in the "Tuesday Night League" alone, he said. Then there are the Wednesday night players, a separate Sunday afternoon league schedule, and talk of a Thursday night organization around the shuffleboard.

Bentler says league play could be motivated further if an operator would only set it up.

Himself, he doesn't have the time—for good reason. "I've gotten a lot of orders for resurfacing boards."

American Shuffleboard, Inc., the manufacturer, refers resurfacing-job customers to Bentler from a wide area of the central states. He stays ahead of the orders by having a finished table ready to be shipped back, say, to Tennessee, where a 12-foot, bank-shot board may be wanted when the damaged table arrives. But if his owner/operator wants his own board returned, more time will be required for the job—"down-time" for the shuffleboard location. Fritz Bentler has had calls from military installations inquiring about the same restoration work.

Military sites have long favored the wooden table with sliding weights, according to Sol Lipkin of American Shuffleboard, who has been in the coin-op industry since 1934. In many such installations, American tables are bought for non-coin-op use, and these include VA hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, and others—YMCA/YWCA, for example (therein lying fertile ground for the professional operator with tables to make contact with officialdom and present the case against owning tables versus contracting with the

operator).

The popularity of the alleys seems to have spread as far as petroleum, across the seven seas.

The game has followed oil company people to Asia and Africa, reported Lipkin. Oil rig drillers' game rooms will typically have the tables; in the Middle East, shuffleboards have heavy concentration among Americans working for the petroleum concerns; and the Saudi Arabians have shown their interest for shuffle alleys in recreation centers, hospitals for example.

Beginnings of the game

All of this started before there were electric-lighted scoreboards, in fact before there was any steel for the weights. That was in the 1600's. From England, the game came after 1850 to the United States, becoming popular on the east coast, and California sites in those gold rush days picked it up. Lanes of 32 feet made the scene. Lipkin, American Shuffleboard's sales manager, said Brunswick Ball made games of dual lanes for bars and veterans and civic organizations.

The modern phase of popularity picked up after our boys returned from World War II. "There were loads of tables in the military. After the war, it left the east and spread all over the country like wildfire," said Lipkin. At that point, eight or more factories made the game. Rock-Ola, Olympic of California, and others entered the shuffleboard-making field.

The first electric scoreboard was demonstrated by Chicago and California manufacturers in 1948 at the Coin Machine Institute Show at the old Sherman Chicago Hotel. Lipkin, based in Union City, New Jersey now, related that two floors at the hotel were "loaded with shuffleboards." Many of the veteran operators got their start with shuffle alleys during this era, said Lipkin. At that time, "you couldn't get enough of them," said Lipkin.

But another era was born. Shuffle alleys of some 6 to 9 feet with pins lighted on the backglass and trip-levers to light the lights "knocked out shuffleboard as an industry," Lipkin related.

By 1957, shuffle tables were moving back to the front of the derby—only to face a surge of pool table interest. American Shuffleboard weathered this market storm by having its American Cabinet

Billiards subsidiary which makes pool tables. Into the late '60s and early '70s, enthusiasm for shuffleboard again picked up. Lipkin admits the up-and-down nature of the game's general popularity. Today, he can pick out three states of the south-eastern states alone and count 1200 to 1400 tables in operation. And at least 75 percent of American's table sales are for the coin-op mode, he said.

"All it needs is smart promotion. It has public acceptance," he said. No state has successfully found legal hooks to throw shuffleboard off locations, according to Lipkin. "It's a terrific couple game, at 25 cents to \$1.25 per play."

The typical operator split with a location on shuffleboard is 60/40 or 65/35, said the sales manager—the operator's argument being chiefly that the board is more expensive. But for the location, the competitive aspect produces a game loser buying drinks or food, which helps the location's receipts. Especially in winter, this effect is good for the tavern.

Upcoming location sites, he said, are in colleges and at racetracks: for example, the jockeys' recreation area, or the student center at the university.

Sam Cooper of Pioneer Sales confirms that the college areas, such as Madison, Wisconsin are playing well.

At Musical Sales/St. Louis, general manager Sam Massaro reports shuffleboard sales are doing well. The game is "a good piece, a competitive game that moves steadily." At the foot of the alley now are "a new generation of players," he says.

And Fritz Bentler estimates that, while shuffle players range in age from 20 to over-50, "some of the best players in the town are the younger." Bentler from his Springfield, Missouri operation (Bentler Amusement) sees a bright future in the tables, which he "had good luck with" since he started operating them in 1955, after 8 years in the amusement games business.

"I think shuffleboards will be here for many years," said Bentler, "and I can't see the game dissipating to where you can't find one."

He was taking time to talk to PLAY METER after just receiving an order from Des Moines to resurface five more shuffleboard tables.

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music programming



By Pat Matthews

Program/Music Director WQVE New Orleans

Recycled versions among the hit picks

The music business, or more specifically the record biz, is slowly getting back on its feet. Realizing there must have been something additional wrong besides just slumping sales, someone discovered a multi-billion-dollar pirating scheme which wreaked havoc in the industry in 1979. The culprits have not been caught, but steps are being taken to prevent such crimes in the future. For instance, The Stones' latest album "Emotional Rescue" has been coated with some sort of code substance. In the not too distant future all recording product will be "dipped" in this if the initial testing proves successful. Everybody has to make a living and this corner sees this latest exercise to protect what's legally owned by someone else an unfortunate necessity. Hope all these pirates are locked up and the key doesn't get bootlegged.

HEY THERE LONELY GIRL—Robert John —EMI America P-8049

The falsetto crooner is back, and though it's been just over a year, it seems like ages since "Sad Eyes." This, of course is an updated version

of the Eddie Holman original of 1970. The arrangement is slightly different with a more up-tempo rhythm pattern. The major drawback is that just when the song seems to pick up steam, it's over. Nevertheless, "Hey there, Robert John," it's good to have you back. Rate it 7 out of 10 or more, depending on whether the public has had its summer fill of re-makes!

I'M ALRIGHT (THEME FROM "CADDY SHACK")—Kenny Loggins—Columbia 1-11317

On first audition, I was not impressed. Then after a couple of beers and a few more listens, I looked upon this record as a three-minute-plus education in all the ingredients that make up a rock'n'roll record. It's a bit out of the ordinary for Kenny Loggins, but brings back memories of Loggins & Messina, and they were quite alright. Should be a hit: 9 out of 10.

OUT THE BOX—The Whispers—Solar JH-1212050

Hey guys, let's pull another single from the album, already.

That's what's been done! From the introductory album that's already spawned three hits (if you count the tribute to Donny Hathaway), here's another attempt to get complete national success for this talented soulful group. Sounding more like a combination of the Commodores and the "Philadelphia Sound," The Whispers have a real toe-tapper with a brassier sound than on the previous single. The synthesizer still plays the major role, and all ingredients add up to a more commercially accessible sound. Let's hope the radio programmers everywhere add it "straight out the box" 'cause it's that good: 9 out of 10, at least.

THE ROYAL MILE (SWEET DARLIN')—Gerry Rafferty—United Artists UA-X1366-Y

He's the type of artist I wish would never stop putting out new music. The man's brilliant and ever since he was "discovered" with the release of "City to City" a few years back, he has proven his worth with timeless melodies. This latest effort will prove to be equally timeless. The current lp, "Snakes And Ladders" is

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more in the musical vein of that initial success which spun off such smash hits as "Baker Street" and "Home And Dry." There's even a touch of an Irish sound with an excellent penny whistle played expertly by Richard Harvey. Let there be more Gerry Rafferty, and music will always be a joy of life. Rate this one 10 out of 10.

FOR THOSE WHO LIKE TO GROOVE — Ray Parker, Jr. & Raydio — Arista AS 0522

Ray Parker plays bass, and on this instrumental funk number he gets to shine. He does so much with so little of a melody on this, you have to hear it to know exactly what I mean. This record is already getting its share of play in clubs and some radio stations as an album. Hint: those playing it are speeding it up a lot, to get the most dancing appeal out of it. Mid-chart at best: 7 out of 10, depending on exposure.

LOVE THAT GOT AWAY—Firefall—Atlantic 3670

As unbelievable as it may seem, the lp from which this comes, "Undertow," has been the group's first disappointment. "Headed For A Fall" did just that—almost immediately. Now, it's time to try again and I believe this song could be the salvation of the album and the group. It sounds like "old" Firefall and has that happy, somewhat Tropical sound. Could go as high as 8 out of 10. I hope so.

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO KEEP YOUR LOVE FOR ME—Jermaine Jackson—Motown/M1490F

Following in the footsteps of younger brother Michael by doing a ballad for a change, Jermaine shines on this Stevie Wonder composition. Once again Stevie is there on background vocals, making Jermaine's music sound more like Stevie Wonder than those Stevie has released recently. Nice percussion and an orchestral arrangement, which brings back a feeling of the early Seventies, make this a sure shot crossover winner: 9 out of 10

YOU'RE THE ONLY WOMAN—Ambrosia—Warner Brothers WBS49508

Well I finally got a chance to find out what all the buzz was about. I listened to it. It's great! It might even be better than "Biggest Part Of Me," if that's possible. It's pure Ambrosia complete with great instrumentation and vocals. And those harmonics... out of this world! A bit more up-tempo than the aforementioned hit single, this one should take off soon — 9 out of 10 or better.

PLAY METER HOT STUFF

MAGIC—OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN—MCA***
 TAKE YOUR TIME (DO IT RIGHT)—S.O.S. BAND—Tabu***
 SHINING STAR—MANHATTANS—Columbia
 LITTLE JEANNIE—ELTON JOHN—MCA***
 ONE FINE DAY—CAROLE KING—Capitol
 MORE LOVE—KIM CARNES—EMI America***
 TIRED OF TOEIN' THE LINE—ROCKY BURNETTE — EMI America***
 ALL NIGHT LONG—JOE WALSH—Asylum***
 IN AMERICA—CHARLIE DANIELS BAND—Epic ***
 EMOTIONAL RESCUE—THE ROLLING STONES—Rolling Stones***
 SAILING—CHRISTOPHER CROSS—Warner Brothers***
 TAKE A LITTLE RHYTHM—ALI THOMPSON—A&M***
 LET MY LOVE OPEN THE DOOR—PETE TOWNSEND—Atco***
 OLD FASHIONED LOVE—COMMODORES—Motown***
 MISUNDERSTANDING—GENESIS—Atlantic***
 INTO THE NIGHT—BENNY MARDONES—Polydore
 JOJO—BOZ SCAGGS—Columbia***
 MAKE A LITTLE MAGIC—THE DIRT BAND—United Artists
 I CAN'T LET GO—LINDA RONSTADT—Asylum
 DRIVIN' MY LIFE AWAY—EDDIE RABBITT—Elektra***
 ALL OUT OF LOVE—AIR SUPPLY—Arista***
 PLAY THE GAME—QUEEN—Elektra
 WHY NOT ME—FRED KNOBLOCK—Scotti Brothers***
 GIVE ME THE NIGHT—GEORGE BENSON—Warner Brothers***
 BOULEVARD—JACKSON BROWNE—Asylum***
 LOVE THE WORLD AWAY—KENNY ROGERS—United Artists. . .

PLAY METER PICKIN' & GRINNIN'

STAND BY ME—MICKEY GILLEY—Asylum
 WE ARE NUMBER ONE—LARRY GATLIN & THE GATLIN BROTHERS—Columbia
 MISERY & GIN—MERLE HAGGARD—MCA
 TENNESSEE RIVER—ALABAMA—RCA
 LOVE THE WORLD AWAY—KENNY ROGERS—United Artists
 THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR LOVING YOU—EDDY ARNOLD—RCA
 WHEN YOU'RE UGLY—GEORGE JONES & JOHNNY PAYCHECK—Epic
 DANCIN' COWBOYS—BELLAMY BROTHERS—Warner/Curb
 DRIVIN' MY LIFE AWAY—EDDIE RABBITT—Elektra***
 CRACKERS & CLOWNS—RONNIE MILSAP—RCA
 I'VE NEVER SEEN THE LIKES OF YOU—CONWAY TWITTY—MCA

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TAKE YOUR TIME (DO IT RIGHT)—S.O.S. BAND—Tabu***
 ONE IN A MILLION YOU—LARRY GRAHAM—Warner Brothers
 GIVE ME THE NIGHT—GEORGE BENSON—Warner Brothers***
 OLD FASHIONED LOVE—COMMODORES—Motown***
 THE BREAKS—KURTIS BLOW—Mercury
 UPSIDE DOWN—DIANA ROSS—Motown***
 REBELS WE ARE—ROCKIE ROBBINS—A&M
 JOJO—BOZ SCAGGS—Columbia***
 CAN'T WE TRY—TEDDY PENDERGRASS—Philadelphia International
 LIGHT UP THE NIGHT—BROTHERS JOHNSON—A&M***
 DYNAMITE—STACY LATTISAW—Cotillion

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By Roger C. Sharpe

THE 'TOP-FLIGHT', LOOK OF THE FUTURE?

It is astonishing that although the decade has barely begun, we can already feel the impact of what undoubtedly will occur in the coming years. Much of the present focus is on the battle between video games and pinball machines and the resulting switch of players' allegiances to video, even though the prevailing equipment offers only a redundancy of theme and play strategy.

Interestingly, for pinball, many developments are taking place to position this long-time favorite as a viable alternative to the playing public. The increased refinement of cosmetics, graphically and artistically, is being neatly balanced by the further integration of memory, especially with drop targets, as well as the threshold of seven-digit scoring which holds out the hope for more sophisticated and complete design.

But even with these superficial changes and trends in hardware, what may be more dramatic is the increased growth of locations, although on close scrutiny it is apparent that much of the game room boom has been outward. Seemingly, the same audiences that game rooms have always appealed to are the continual targets when one thinks of opening a new enterprise.

For too long the lure of a nearby school or beach front has been the major motivation when looking for a location to open a game room. Even with the overwhelming success of mall locations, the industry as a whole has stagnated, not broadening its base when trying to reach new players. Admittedly, the profile of the player of pinball, video, or arcade games, if one had it, would likely describe a high school teenager.

However, one must also accept the notion that, given the opportunity and the right ambiance, an older audience can be just as ardent in a desire to play games. One need only look at the inner city game rooms at lunch time to catch a glimpse of the businessman spending some time away from the real world. Discos, movie theater lobbies, hotels, and bars are all increasingly offering games for their clientele, knowing that the additional draw can only help business. However, these few exceptions to the rule are not enough to augment the candy stores around the country that feature games—nor to foster an image different from the one most communities and legislative

bodies hold regarding coin-operated equipment as such.

The recent confiscation of gambling equipment, slot machines as well as novelty games rigged to pay out, in New York City, is evidence enough that some would try to kill the golden goose. But despite the fact that only minor inroads have been made to rectify the negative image of the industry, the games and the budding entrepreneurs continue to persevere, looking for new avenues to tap and new audiences to reach.

One of the most gratifying movements afoot is the making of games accessible to those individuals with time on their hands. The concept isn't really all that new: witness game rooms in assorted bus and train stations as well as such airports as in Denver, Jacksonville, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, and Frankfurt, Germany. And now, you can add New York to the list.

The newest of the new, Electroport, in Pan Am's terminal at Kennedy Airport is an incredible display of what can be done to make a game area appealing not only to youngsters of the world, but also to adults.

With easily fifty pieces of the latest equipment, Electroport offers an environment of carpeting, blue neon, silver walls, the look and feel of an airline, and video documentaries and shorts—for an added touch of entertainment—along with the newest in holography. The total effect is one of enjoyment, stimulation of the senses, and the fun of game playing.

This modern attraction is a glimmer of what is possible when people take a more sophisticated approach to what a game area can be, without intruding upon the surrounding enclosure and without lessening the impact of the major draw: the games themselves.

For one rare time, we are offered a setting that can lure an older audience without inhibiting their ardor to try their hand at a *Firepower* or a *Galaxian*. And in addition, we find a structure that easily accommodates visual entertainment in the form of short films, presented now on three television screens but soon to be changed to a large projection screen format. Add to this the inclusion of holographic art columns, and one can sense the next evolutionary steps for the industry.

And what better place in which to be set than in an airport, where millions of travelers have nothing but

time on their hands, waiting for a flight to take off. It's a ready-made captive audience, willing to do something other than watch the departure board change or read the newspaper or a magazine.

Marion Javits, the head of MBJ Productions, was responsible for the design concept which resulted in Electroport. Approaching Pan Am with the inventive idea of using short-subject documentary type films to entertain and captivate people for brief periods of time, she then went to Warner Communications, which sponsored her concept and provided the coin-operated games.

Ms. Javits told this writer, "I have tried to create a unique and stimulating environment using space that combines the attractiveness and variety of entertainment. Short subject films, documentaries, and holography, or even other art forms, have been included along with the amusement machines. It is my hope that this initial effort will be a prototype for not only other airports throughout the world, but also other areas where people congregate with nothing to do—whether it be hotel lobbies, galleries, other transportation centers, amusement parks, or whatever. I know I could duplicate the concept and use Electroport as a standard anywhere, as it is so successful at Kennedy," she said.

Electroport capitalizes on these advantages and more, situated next to the first class lounge and a restaurant area in the midst of the Pan Am terminal. Admittedly, one of the problems previous to this game area's existence has been the sanctioning of licenses—not only in New York, but around the country. But maybe this addition, and the scale by which it was carried out, will usher in the efforts of others to do likewise at their local airports. Electroport has taken the lead that will, hopefully, be followed by others in the major airports: once and for all to cut away the bias and negativity surrounding the operation of games in the most ideal of places.

Plans call for the addition of game areas in other Kennedy terminals by the backers responsible for this breakthrough, if Electroport proves successful—which on initial looks, should pose no problem for the people behind it.

It stands as an excellent example of how to integrate a total media environment that raises coin machines to a new level of interest.



Electroport' in New York City's Pam Am Terminal at Kennedy: Capitalizing on 'ready and waiting' customers. Special lures are futuristic neon, silvery walls, coin-op short movies, and displays of holograms. Is this the packaging of the future in air terminal arcades?



Making the most of your cash balance

By Joseph Arkin

CPA, MBA

Worthy tips on how to yield more income out of cash on hand

Playing the "short-term interest game" can put money into your pocket with very little effort and a minimum of risk.

Like most businesses you probably pay your bills by the tenth of the month. During the entire month you are receiving cash funds from game revenue.

At times the balance in your non-interest checking account will start to accumulate. Money tied up in this fashion only helps your bank to grow richer at your expense. The trick is for you, not the bank, to earn money on these idle funds.

In doing so you will want safety, liquidity and convenience, and a sufficient yield to warrant the efforts expended.

Here are some tips on how to squeeze the most income out of your checking account:

1—If you listen to television and radio commercials, or watch newspaper advertisements, you'll find that many savings banks offer a plan whereby you deposit funds and, when needed, transfer these funds to your check account. This is accomplished by calling any time, day or night, and giving your code name and/or account number and designating how much to transfer to your checking account.

2—The idle funds you have in your check account should be put into a federal savings and loan association, for you'll usually find that these institutions pay $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ percent more than regular savings banks or commercial banks offering savings accounts.

3—Make sure the bank you select is insured with the U.S. Government.

4—Pick a bank paying interest from day of deposit to day of withdrawal; otherwise, you'll negate the whole plan of earning interest, if you put idle funds into an account where interest is only paid when the money is left on deposit until three or four days before the end of the quarter.

Note: Currently you can expect to receive 5.25 percent interest; and if the bank you select compounds daily, it is equal to an effective annual yield of 5.47 percent.

5—Check on the feasibility of buying short-term certificates of deposit (CD) from your commercial bank or from a local savings institution. You can find 30-60-90-day CDs paying 5.75 percent, or 6 percent when interest is compounded daily. Banker's acceptances sold in \$5000 units pay about $6\frac{1}{2}$ percent, and maturity range is the same as CDs.

6—If you have a "seasonal" surplus of funds, you can look to 30 days to one year Treasury bills. These are sold at \$10,000 minimum but at a discounted basis so that (at this writing) you can expect to earn approximately 6 percent on an annual basis.

These can be purchased through a bank or stock broker for a nominal fee. There is no record keeping, and no hassle. You get a receipt from the Treasury Department and upon maturity a check is mailed to you. You can time the maturity to coincide with the needs of your business when you are going to need the funds for operational purposes.

Note: Interest earned on U.S. Treasury obligations are not subject to state and local taxes. These tax savings increase the effective yield.

7—You can explore other areas of placing funds on a short-term basis. There are *project notes* issued by local housing and urban renewal agencies and backed by the U.S. Government. These are not subject to federal income tax and usually not to state income taxes. They are issued in denominations of \$1000 to \$25,000 for periods of three months to one year and yield around 3 percent. They can also be obtained from commercial banks or stock brokers.

There are also municipal short-term notes which for safety sake

should be checked as to rating by Moody's. Look for MIG-1, or MIG-2. Interest is exempt from both federal and state taxes. Interest rates are usually in excess of 3 percent.

Also available is "commercial paper"—notes issued by corporations to raise funds for current needs without issuing new stock or bonds. Your broker can give you a list of what's available, degree of safety, etc. Amount of investment minimum and yield fluctuate and follow the "money market."

Various government agencies also issue short-term notes with and without U.S. Government backing. Interest is approximately 6—6½ percent and has maturity of 90 days or longer.

These too can be purchased from commercial banks or stock brokers at a small commission. If purchased directly from the Federal Reserve Bank, these have no commission charged—but you'll find that the small commission to be saved is worth the time and effort of seeking out these issues on your own.

There are also mutual money funds, sold without load charge, and offering liquidity. However, your investment is not guaranteed and when you redeem the shares or units you receive the value on the day of redemption. This could be more or less than your cost. Sold in units as low as \$1000, these yield anywhere from a range of high 4 percent to as much as 6 percent.

8—Obviously you can earn more interest if you have more money. So, install a system of immediate billing and try to collect as much of your receivables as possible in the shortest period of time.

9—Another cash-use earning method is to take advantage of all discounts offered for paying bills on time. If you get a 2 percent cash discount for paying a bill by the tenth of the month (billed to you under terms 2/10 net 30d) you are in effect earning 2 percent per year on your money. (losing the discount on a \$1000 invoice can cost you \$20; each year such invoice amounts to \$240.)

10—Depositing of cash and checks received each day should have priority in your office and come before filing and certain other office routines. The quicker you get the money into your checking account and build up the balance, the quicker you can take advantage and siphon off the funds and follow some of the suggestions outlined here.

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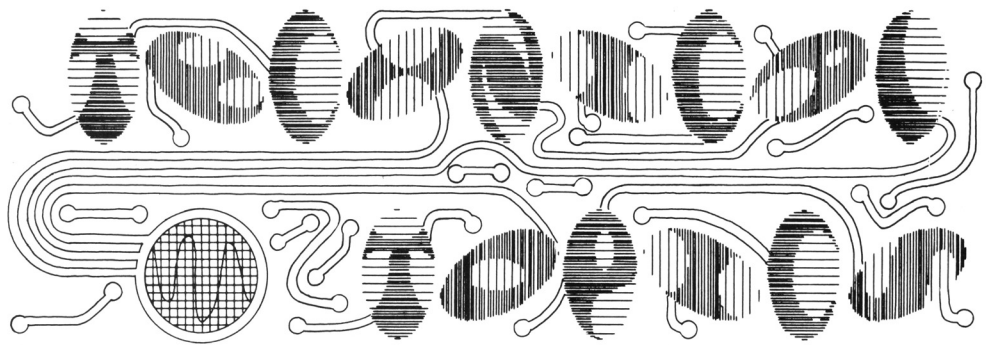
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By Joe Sillup

*courtesy of Star-Tech Journal,
Merchantville, New Jersey*

MONITOR ADJUSTMENTS

The picture is important

All video games have one thing in common—a television monitor that is used to display computerized information in the format of a game that people will hopefully pay to play. Whether a game is successful or not depends on factors such as player interest, competitive stimulation, and skill requirements. But there is also the attractiveness of the game to consider.

The most important thing here is the quality of the picture that is being displayed on the game's monitor screen. Monitors, like home television sets, require occasional adjustments to maintain the best possible

picture quality. Obviously a dull, out-of-focus, poorly centered picture will result in less attractiveness and less income for your game. The following will be a general explanation of the various adjustments that can be made to video game monitors.

Vertical and Horizontal Hold are two adjustments that are performed similarly to home televisions. Vertical Hold adjustment is necessary if the picture rolls from either the top or bottom of the screen. Proper Vertical Hold adjustment is obtained by turning the control until the picture is stabilized, then slowly continuing to turn the control until the picture starts

to roll the other way. Once this point is reached, you will know the range the control has between positions where the picture rolls—position the control in the approximate middle of the range for proper Vertical Hold adjustment.

By the way, Motorola XM5000 and XM7000 series monitors have no Vertical Hold adjustment, so a rolling picture on these monitors is a result of either logic board or monitor circuitry failure.

Horizontal Hold adjustment is slightly more complicated on video game monitors than on home televisions. A need for Horizontal Hold adjustment is indicated by diagonal lines or dots on the screen of the monitor. This is especially common when the game is powered-on cold. As with Vertical Hold, adjust for a stable picture, then set the control in the approximate middle of the range between that and loss of picture stability. Horizontal Hold also shifts the picture somewhat from left to right on the screen before stability is lost—use this ability to help center your picture.

If adjustment of the Horizontal Hold control will not stabilize the picture, you may need to adjust the Horizontal Set Coil on the monitor's circuit board. This is a small rectangular metal can usually located in the approximate center of the circuit board. Use a plastic hex adjustment tool to turn the slug inside the coil. This tool is sometimes included with the monitor, or is readily available in any electronics

CUE BALLS: How they work

Many myths have grown up about how a pay pool table separates out the cue ball for return to the customer. If the cue ball was heavier (or lighter) it would carom off the object ball(s) wrong; and if it was a different size, it would mess up your shots as well. Etc., etc.

Well, friends, it's done with magnets (all the ones that were supposed to go into electro-mech pinball machines).

Inside the ball just below the surface are three rings of thick iron

wire at right angles to one another. When the balls roll down the last little trough before they enter the display window, they pass a large magnet. The magnet draws the cue ball up out of the normal ball path and onto a rail which delivers it out to the chute. The magnet is the bar-shaped dark thing; if it comes loose and slips down, it won't lift the ball onto the return track and we will find the cue ball in with the others. Tighten the bolts.

—Doug McCallum

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shop such as Radio Shack.

If you swap a monitor between games of different manufacturers, you will usually have to make this adjustment to obtain Horizontal Hold, since Atari uses a slightly different sync frequency than Midway; and Midway is slightly different from Gremlin; and so forth.

Brightness and Contrast are extremely important adjustments for a good-looking game. Most games utilize a black background with white video information; for example, Atari's *Breakout*. For this type of picture, adjust the Brightness control until the background begins to lighten, then back the control off for a black background. Use Contrast to obtain the sharpest white video possible, without "smearing" or distorting the picture.

Other games, such as *Kee's Tank*, utilize a gray background with white and black video information. To obtain this type of picture, adjust the Brightness control for a gray background, then adjust the Contrast control until the black video starts to get slightly light. In both of these cases, you may have to play with both controls slightly to obtain the best possible picture, since adjusting Contrast tends to affect the Brightness adjustment somewhat, and vice versa.

The remaining adjustments to be discussed are located on the monitor's circuit board. These are Vertical Size and Linearity, and Focus. Focus is self-explanatory. Use a plastic screwdriver to adjust this control for the sharpest possible picture—*be careful* as this control is carrying approximately 600 volts across its terminals.

Vertical Size is also self-explanatory. This control is used to place the picture properly at the top and bottom of the screen.

Vertical Linearity is slightly more complex. This control affects the spacing between the lines on the face of the screen, and is most important in games utilizing writing on the screen. Adjust this control for equal-sized lettering or objects at the top and bottom of the screen. Since the controls are sometimes located at the rear of the circuit board, once again it is a good idea to use a long plastic screwdriver to make adjustments, so shock hazard will be averted.

Also located on the monitor's circuit board will be a Power Supply adjustment and a Video Bias control. Do not attempt to adjust these controls without a good digital voltmeter. Motorola monitors operate at 73 volts, while TEC monitors operate at 100 volts. An undersized or oversized picture may indicate a need for power supply adjustment, but nor-

mally these controls are factory-set and will not need re-adjustment. Video Bias is also not normally re-adjusted after the monitor leaves the factory.

Width is another monitor adjustment that is self-explanatory. This adjustment, usually located at the right-hand corner of the chassis, affects the width of the picture, and is used to place the video at the right and left boundaries of the screen.

The Yoke, located at the neck of the Picture Tube, is the last adjustable unit that we will discuss. The Yoke itself can be rotated to obtain a picture that is perfectly square on the face of the tube. There is a clamp around the Yoke that is used to hold it in its proper position—sometimes this loosens in shipment, allowing the yoke to slip back on the neck of the tube. This results in a picture with a "halo" effect.

Make sure the Yoke is seated firmly as far forward on the neck of the picture tube (CRT) as it will go, and that its clamp is relatively tight.

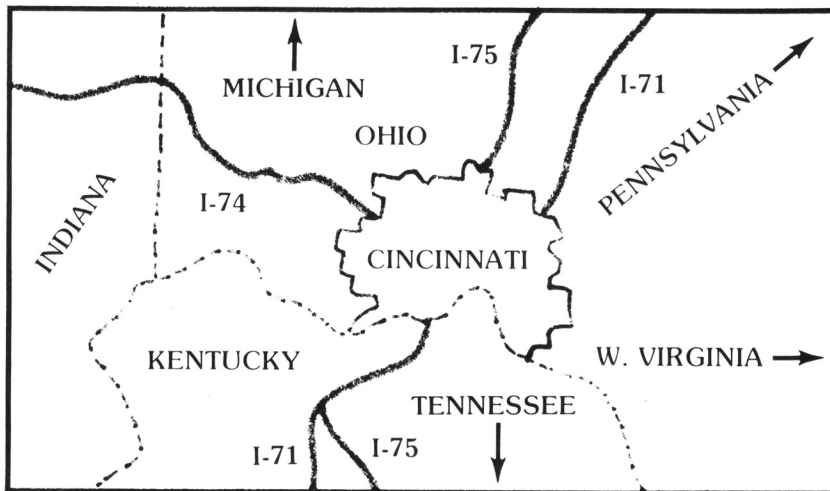
Do not over-tighten the clamp, or you will risk cracking the neck of the CRT.

The Yoke also contains two "rings" which have tabs that are used to slide the rings around the base of the Yoke. The rings are actually small magnets that bend the CRT's beam slightly, and are used to perfectly center the picture on the screen. Be very careful if you attempt to adjust the yoke, as there is high voltage present in the windings any time the monitor is powered-on.

Finally—keep the monitor's screen clean. The high voltage, typically 14,000 volts, that is present around the picture tube acts as a magnet for dust, which will eventually coat the face of the CRT and result in an out-of-focus, smeary picture. There is no way to prevent this, so regular cleaning will be required.

A little elbow grease and a knowledge of the adjustments described above will keep your video game looking its best—and, hopefully, making money.

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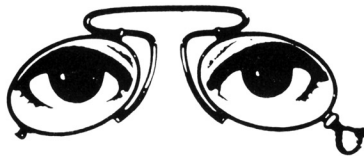
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Critic's Corner

By Roger C. Sharpe

Pinballs for fading suntans

As summer fades along with most people's tans and students get ready for another year of school, a shift, too, takes place in the coin-machine industry. Most seaside locations will cut back to winter hours after Labor Day weekend, opening later in the day and closing earlier at night, maybe even bypassing weekday hours altogether. And with these business changes will also come the return of equipment to many local distributors, who will take them in and hold on tight until the Christmas season and a chance for big mark-ups in price for the home market.

By the same token, those locations away from the water and surf crowd and closer to the suburbs and even the inner city, will once again find themselves doing a higher volume of traffic than they enjoyed for the last three to four months. With this will come the need to fill in on pieces to round out what each place offers.

We examine games from three producers this month: Stern appears to be on a hot streak, turning out models at a fairly rapid clip, and even Game Plan is back in the picture this time around with their newest entry. Bally really seems to be holding to the middle of the road, with rather staid equipment embellishing upon more of the past rather than a systematic progression into the

future. Not good or bad as a value judgement, this comment comes more as a simplification of their existing and newest efforts and the directions they seem to be taking.

For the most part, however, everyone is faced with decisions as to what may or may not be viable given the present market conditions of his particular area and location. If you've been dormant for the past season and need everything to just get up to date for your players, the selection process is going to be less than exact and you'll take anything that's available. If, however, you're just filling in pieces and pinball has taken a back seat in earnings potential to what some of your other equipment is, the elimination process is going to have to be very careful as to what you must lay out and what you hope to get back, as well as how long it will take to get back that investment and even profit from it.

With all this in mind, you'll probably even find yourself questioning whether you might want to wait the next couple of months for the show-stoppers. But the luxury of time isn't something that everyone enjoys; besides, some of the present pieces are quite inviting and better than what's been around for awhile. In the next few months, names like

Blackout, Hotdoggin', Quicksilver, Counterforce, Global Warfare, Star Gazer, Scorpion, and others will be machines to be looking at, since these will be the proposed heavies for the fall and into the winter. So hang tight and let's take a glimmer at three models recently in the news.

Bally's MYSTIC

Following on the heels of *Rolling Stones* and a further step away from the space themes we have all grown so tired with, is this newest effort from the folks at Bensenville. **PLAYFIELD:** Play opens with a middle kick-out hole sided by posts and a left and right hand lane. Move down to three thumper bumpers which fill in the stretched rubber area that leads to a center three-drop-target bank. At the left is a spinner lane back to the top that is balanced by a right side spinner lane as well. Also on the right is an interior captive ball lane that increases in value with its "mystical power spot" in order to gain bonus multipliers as well as specials. Down the field at the left is a three-drop-target bank at a nearly perpendicular angle to the flippers which is neatly offset by a similar set up on the right side. A conventional wire lane and flipper set finishes off the board.

Roger's Ratings At-A-Glance

Bally's MYSTIC..... ## *Game Plan's PINBALL LIZARD*..... ###
Stern's CHEETAH..... ###

ANALYSIS: If *Mystic* reminds you of the ill-fated *Volcan* or even *Nitro Groundshaker* you're probably not alone, since there are a remarkable number of similarities between the games in features as well as shot selections. The premise here is to fill out the tic-tac-toe card in the middle of the field by getting drop targets that correspond to either pyramids or eyes; fill in rows and the out-hole bonus accumulates and stays in the memory from 9,000 up to 72,000 in increments of 9. Add in the four lanes on the game and a top center kick-out hole and you have the other aspect of the game by which extra balls are achieved.

Other than that, the game is a hit-and-miss proposition of hitting the captive ball hard enough and enough times to gain values of any merit—and problems inherent in combatting a lack of lateral movement and slow roll-downs from the thumper bumper area at times.

GRAPHICS: With *Houdini*, the *Devil* and a devilish rendition of Bally's own *Carol P.* on the backglass, the colors and mood of these hold the theme well, even if the idea of a glass within a glass and a pyramid and eye which light—according to what's happening on the field—doesn't quite make it. All in all, however, the backglass is very catchy although the playfield really doesn't carry through dominant images or the vibrant colors.

PLAY: *Mystic* is a build-up machine that might offer 72,000 in the bank, but the scoring for the most part is going to prove rather low. There will be times when players will knock the hell out of it, but this is going to be the exception rather than the rule. For extra ball areas you should be alright going with a 150,000 point start and following it with 360,000 and 600,000 point levels. On free play, increase these limits by about 100,000 to 150,000 points each depending upon how players are hitting it.

PROS & CONS: For the most part, *Mystic* is an unexciting and unimaginative game that offers a design probably better suited for a few years ago rather than for today's very picky and searching pinball audience. In order to draw players away from video, machines are going to have to offer far more than just a retreading of features such as is the case with *Mystic*.

Shots are difficult to make on a continued basis, whether it be the captive ball of even the drop targets themselves, especially due to the lack of movement on the bottom of the board near the flippers and a fairly dead area on either wire form leading out the sides—even if the

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lanes leading down to the flippers are wider than usual.

More important however, is the fact that segmenting the action in such a way (top part exclusively for bumpers and lower part really only flippers) isn't the way to go in this day and age when it comes to pinball design. The player has to be given more and not be penalized so severely for making a good shot, which is sometimes the case on *Mystic*. It's just a shame that more wasn't done to enhance the playability and interest of the game.

RATING: ##

Stern's CHEETAH

Yet another in the 1980 lineup of pins from this company that seems to be churning them out come hell or high water, offering something for almost everyone at one time or another, here's the big game follow up to *Big Game* in all its green glory. PLAYFIELD: An interesting departure from the norm is offered at the top of *Cheetah* with three drop targets starting off the action by controlling bonus multiplier values. This leads down to a three-thumbper-bumper area that offers a target

(bull's-eye variety) at the left, and then leads down to a spinner and an opening to an upper left-hand flipper. Fronting these is a five-drop-target bank that is balanced by a right side that offers a three-drop-target bank fronting a spinner included loop as well as a lower-down spinner that leads back up to the top of the field. Move down from this on the right side and there's yet another three-drop-target bank as well as a kick-back kicker. The bottom of the field, meanwhile, offers a set of double lanes leading down to the flippers.

ANALYSIS: This Harry Williams effort has a bit of this and that combining for an interesting machine in total. The bonus multiplier values are controlled by that top set of drop targets which can be gained from some good nudging rebounds off the bumpers, as well as by the lower right-side drop targets. Add to this three more drop targets in front of the loop which have their own values in line.

More important to the game is the memory drop target bank at the left center of the field, which builds up in value as players shoot them down in

sequence. A collect bonus roll-over lane at the far left, when lit, is a difficult, but satisfying shot when made and all told the use of that lone top left flipper neatly offsets the clearance from the lower flippers in gaining access to all points on the board.

Most of the shots are far away jobs that call on power in the flippers, that, for the most part, is there, although even that right side spinner back up to the top is a bitch to make on a repeated basis.

GRAPHICS: Ignoring the old myth that green has never been a great color for pinball machines, Stern continues to use this hue again on this effort to great effect with some very beautiful artwork on the back-glass: the princess raised by cheetahs (shades of Panthera's beauty and her cats). And the playfield carries through on the motif although the detail work is sorely lacking for those appreciative of intricate styling and the attention to detail.

PLAY: One of the failings of *Cheetah* has to go with the seven-digit scoring heralded so successfully on *Big Game* and followed nicely by *Seawitch*. Here the extra digit has shown up on the playfield in the form



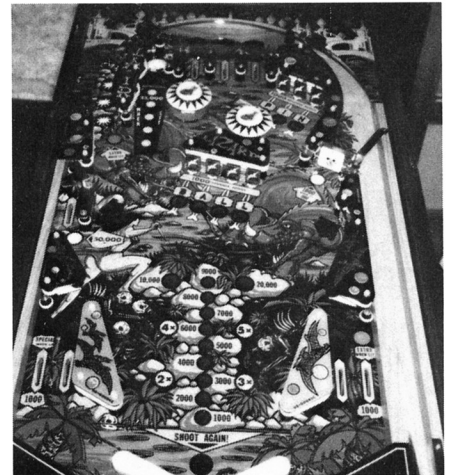
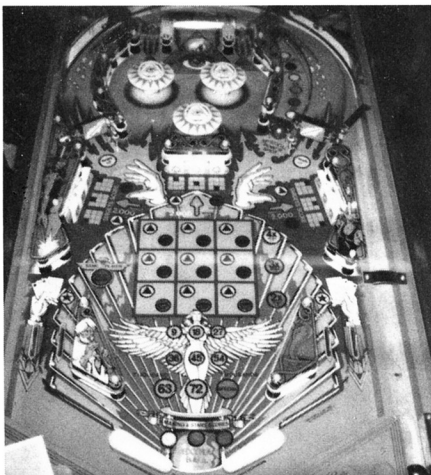
Bally's MYSTIC



Stern's CHEETAH



Game Plan's PINBALL LIZARD



of out-hole bonus that goes back to the electro-mechanical days of 10,000 to 100,000 points. But add in 5X multiplier values and you're talking about a lot of points just to achieve that seventh digit. It isn't necessary and causes the game to go back to six digit mentality, especially when you see 9 million for a high score on some machines.

With this in mind, be careful as to your settings. For extra ball areas, if you're keeping multiple extra balls in the memory, you might want to try a 650,000 start and follow it with (sorry about the zeros) 1,400,000 and 3,000,000 point levels. On free play you could probably up this by anywhere from 300,000 to 800,000 points to each limit depending, once again, on how the players are hitting the game.

PROS & CONS: For the most part, the design of *Cheetah* is a nice follow up to *Big Game*. It utilizes the size of the bigger game to advantage, and some nice shots to accomplish should keep players' interest.

Unfortunately, there are some problems inherent with the layout. If you can't make it through the loop with good velocity, the roll-downs are deadly and frustrating to say the least. The scoring, which I mentioned earlier, is a waste. The digits on the field could have been kept as usual and the inclusion of a seventh digit would have allowed for those peak times when players get hot—and this is really the rationale for the seventh digit, which probably all manufacturers will be getting into by next year if not sooner.

But the biggest distraction on *Cheetah* is one of those small things normally overlooked until the game is on location for awhile: the bottom forms leading to the flippers, with their plastic overlays, causes the ball to bounce over and down the out-hole a far greater percentage of the time that is warranted. This negative is a killer for the game and has turned off far too many players who haven't had the time to get into the game to see what it can do. It's too bad, since there are some nice shots and integration of memory with the sequential targets and other access points around the board.

RATING: ###

Game Plan's PINBALL LIZARD

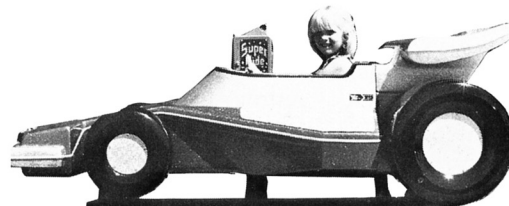
Here it is, the fourth effort from the new kids on the block and a design and package that is an incredibly large step away from their last model and an indication of things to come. **PLAYFIELD:** Three lanes at top (A-B-C) start the action and lead down to two angled thumper

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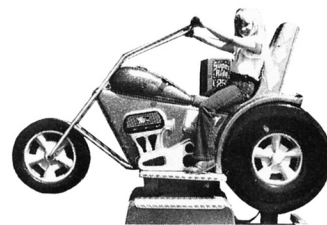
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bumpers. Up to the right is a three-drop-target bank (P-I-N) and fronting the lower bumper is another bank of four drop targets (B-A-L-L). Move over to the far right and there's a spinner for access back to the top, while on the left at the interior of some stretched rubber is a nestled kick-out hole that really is murder to make for bonus multiplier values and specials when lit. Farther over on the left is a roll-over button laneway that leads back to the top as well. Move down the field and at the right is a rectangular bulls-eye target and another on the left that faces out from a short roll-over lane that holds out 50,000 points. The bottom is a conventional wire lane and flipper set up.

ANALYSIS: *Lizard* is a ball-breaker game only because precise shots are needed to get things done. The three top lanes and bottom two control extra balls when they're all out and this remains in the memory; what doesn't remain in the memory and might have been better if it did, is the drop targets, with the center four being a piece of cake and those top three being a real hassle to make from the flippers or even from rebounds off the bumpers—but get these and the multiplier also increases up to 5X.

The shots are left to right and right to left for the most part, although reverses are beautiful for that kick-out hole and even that left side alley way back to the top. The shot selections and scoring possibilities are far more plentiful here than the previous Game Plan effort, although there aren't too many cinches here, the focus of the game is far better and more complete from top to bottom. **GRAPHICS:** Talk about a company turning totally around, Game Plan has suddenly caught up to the mood and feeling in the industry with a backglass and playfield that is colorful and eye-catching. Add to this the use of backglass lighting of the lizard and his pronged tongue, which darts out to the captive girl, this package is further enhanced by the use of sounds unlike what Game Plan has done before—prehistoric sounds, breathing, screams, and even an ode to "Jaws" on the spinner—help this creature come to life in full. **PLAY:** The million light reappears on *Lizard* and scoring on the playfield is just the right mixture to take advantage of this distinctive trademark. For extra ball play you'll probably be safe with a 180,000 point start, followed by 360,000 and 600,000 points. While on free play you might want to increase each limit

by about 100,000 points.

RATING: ###

And that's it for September's machines. Three unique approaches to pinball design and evolution.

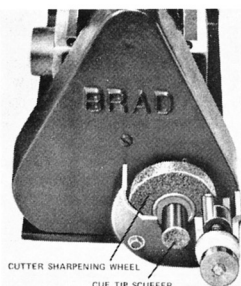
For those who may have forgotten over time the ratings' system, once again let me reiterate that any value is done on the basis of talking with operators and players and integrating their comments and feelings with my own personal observations. In addition, games are not judged *between* companies but rather within each company's own creations on the whole. As for the ratings themselves: here is a breakdown of what they represent:

= excellent
 ### = good
 ## = fair
 # = poor

Next time around I'll gear up in preparation for the AMOA and the surprises that will be rapidly unfolding.

Until next time, as always...be well and prosper. My apologies for not including Williams *Blackout* as promised this month. The game will be reviewed in a coming column.

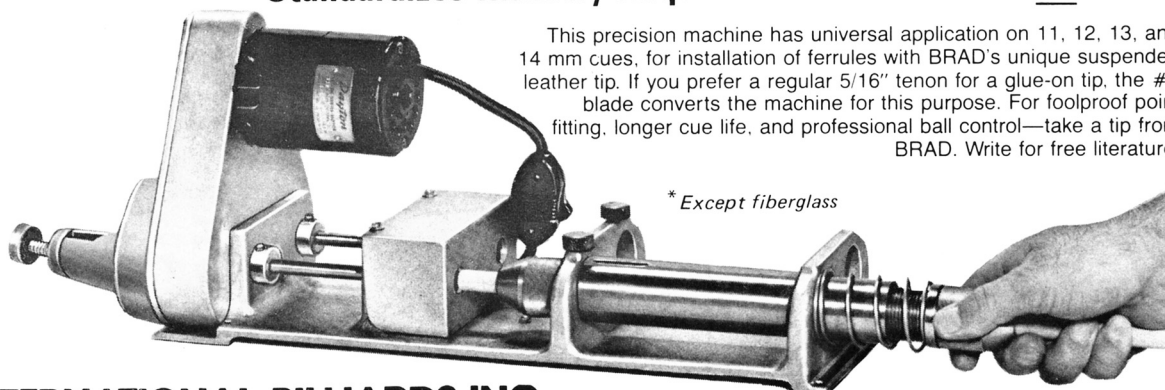
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Stern's first video

Entering a new dimension of electronic amusements, Stern Electronics, Inc., has expanded from pinball manufacturing in announcing production of its first video game, *Astro Invader*.

The new solid state, two-player game was to be launched on the market in late July and available through Stern distributors worldwide.

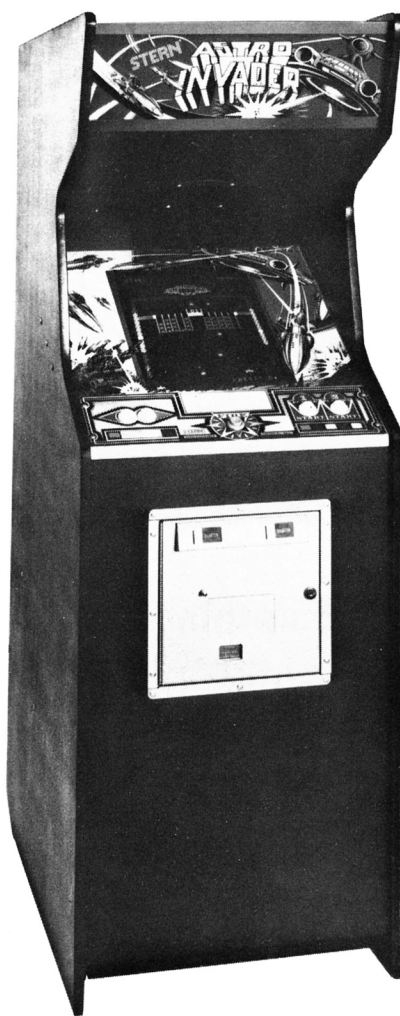
Astro Invader, already proven popular in selected test markets, features explosive non-stop play action, according to Stern. The game backglass is of a colorful design dramatizing the game theme of cosmic warfare.

For 25 cents per play, *Astro Invader* challenges earthling players to defend against an on-screen invasion of UFOs and other "supersonic enemy craft". Players are provided with a sliding "laser base defense" and firing button to attack and destroy invading craft—before they attack, destroy, and eventually annihilate earth.

Each invader craft destroyed in the attacking channel scores 10 points; each craft destroyed while attacking scores 20 points.

Each UFO destroyed scores 100 to 800 points, depending on attacking mode.

The level of difficulty increases in correlation with players' score. The ten highest scores to date are registered on the screen. Every player's final score is ranked in comparison against higher scores to date.



Practicing for World War III

Atari has announced the release of *Missile Command*, a new one- or two-player, full-color battle action video game. Commenting on Atari's new product information, Frank Ballouz, Atari marketing director, said: "*Missile Command* is the ultimate battle action experience. Along with full-color screen, graphics, dramatic sound effects, and unique TrakBall target control, it's the first production video to be set for 50-cent single play as it is shipped from the factory.

"Extensive location testing has been so dramatically favorable to both the innovative game play and coinage that this game really looks like the next runaway hit," he added.

Missile Command is a missile defense strategy game. Players must defend their city and missile bases as long as possible by guiding their missile to intercept and destroy waves of computer-controlled ICBM missiles, killer satellites, and bombers for points. When all cities are destroyed, the game is over.

Increasing difficulty and skill challenge is built-in. Wave one has MIRVs (branching attack missiles), wave two offers the killer satellites, wave six "smart" missiles.

Features include 19-inch color video display, rugged and proven TrakBall target control, bonus scoring possibilities, four operator-adjustable game lengths, eight adjustable bonus cities, extended play level, and adjustable coinage option.

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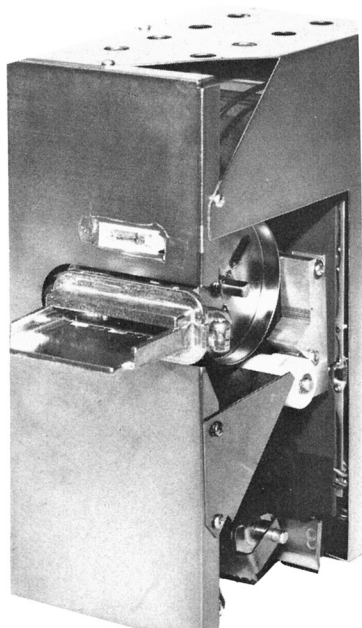
Shooting gallery

With its enthusiastic reception at a July distributors' meeting, Gremlin/Sega's new *Carnival* video game has gone into full production and distribution.

Based on the old-time carnival shooting gallery games, *Carnival* combines the latest full-color, fast-paced electronic action with an amusement appeal proven over decades, said Gremlin President Frank Fogleman.

"*Carnival's* every bit as exciting as a real, live shooting gallery—only more so," said Fogleman. "Players get lots of colorful moving targets to shoot at and there are nine authentic shooting gallery sounds—a metallic 'clank' each time a target is hit, ducks quacking, background calliope music, and more."

Fogleman also said *Carnival* is "on target" for replay profits. "The built-in ranking display makes players more competitive for more repeat plays *Carnival* also includes our exclusive MultiPhase, which makes new rounds more difficult than the one before, to keep challenging player skills and stimulate even more replays."



Bill scanner

A new customer convenience is claimed by Micro-Magnetic Industries of Palo Alto, California. John B. Riddle, president, recently announced that a "Hi-Lo" switch is now being installed on all new MMI Dollar Bill Validators that allows owners to select the bill acceptance tolerance of their currency changers.

MMI's *Series 1300* multiscan validators include five different checks to validate the genuineness of dollar bills: infra-red opacity, length, pigmentation, magnetic pattern, and an intaglio printing check. These redundant scans offer maximum protection against counterfeit bills, copies, or cut-and-pasted phonies.

The sensitivity of this system, however, at times causes older worn bills to be rejected. The new "Hi-Lo" switch offers the owner the option of selectively turning off one of the validation channels, thus reducing the incidence of old bill rejections.

At any time, full channel protection can be returned to operation if any problems with bogus money arises. All new-production *Series 1300* validators are being equipped with this new selectable feature. Existing validators can be modified to include the switch during routine repair, overhaul, or update at any of MMI's factory-owned Servi-Centers located in Elk Grove, Illinois; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Palo Alto, California. A retrofit kit for customer installation is planned for the near future.



Liquid pinball motif

Stern Electronics announced plans for international distribution of a new solid state four-player pinball game, *Quicksilver*, scheduled for release July 1

Quicksilver features bold backglass design in the art deco tradition, with vibrant accents of deep purple, rust, green, and violet color combinations.

Its playfield promises "the fastest-moving pinball ever," according to Stern brochures on *Quicksilver*. Features include:

- Eleven ways to build bonus points;

- Add-a-balls stacking capacity; up to five additional balls can be stacked or recalled by the machine;

- Newly engineered pop-bumpers and flippers boost playfield velocity;

- Making Q-U-I-C-K illuminates flashing lane lights for scoring extra balls. Making Q-U-I-C-K-S-I-L-V-E-R lights special lane for credits or extra balls.

- Getting five times bonus multiplier lights up the special target bank.

Quicksilver's electronic system was designed and manufactured by Universal Research Laboratories, Inc., a Stern subsidiary.





Transparent music player

NSM's new *Festival ES 160* phonograph features a showcase cabinet which displays the record playing mechanism. On request, the interior light may be either dark blue or dark red. The housing is also designed "to offer no refuge for glasses. Where there are no glasses to spill, there will be fewer service problems," states the manufacturer.

Large digital display numbers on the new NSM machine show the position of the record selected in the Top Nine Hits for each particular location.

A special servicing feature is a PC-board that gives the collector an automatic memory that will readout at his operation's accounts office—and each board can handle details from sixteen phonographs.

The vertical playing mechanism holds 80 records (160 selections). A total of eight speakers form the stereo system. Total music power is 150 watts, with two separate amplifiers. Remote speaker terminal boards are integrated in the control center.



Celestial watcher

Star Gazer, a four-player solid state game scheduled for late-July release was announced by Stern Electronics as its new "space-themed" pinball game.

The new game combines the latest pinball technology with a constellation of new playfield features. The manufacturer announced that its attractions include:

- Brilliantly-colored backglass art, with visual features set in synchronization with "outer space" sound effects.

- Being first in the games industry with "loop-action return," a new design that sends the ball "into orbit" from the bottom of the playfield.

- "Add-a-ball" giving the player up to five extra balls on a single play.

- Seven digit scoring of up to 9,999,999 points. Higher scoring cues the explosion of a sound and light display and gives players an extra ball for scoring maximum on bonus.

- Target design of twelve Zodiac targets and three drop targets for variable bonus scoring, plus three spinning targets for variable value scoring.

Star Gazer was designed and manufactured by Stern's Universal Research Laboratories, Inc.

Can you dig it?

Gremlin Industries of San Diego, California has announced the release of its new, full-color *Digger* video game to distributors.

Gremlin President Frank Fogleman said *Digger* is designed for broad player appeal. He explained, "What sets *Digger* apart from all other video games is that it doesn't just test a player's speed and dexterity. *Digger* also lets you plan and try different game strategies. So it challenges your mind as well as your reflexes. And that extra challenge means extra profit potential for operators."

Digger play action takes place in a maze-like desert canyon in which the player digs holes on the screen to trap attacking creatures. Points are scored when the player fills in holes that hold trapped creatures.

Gremlin's exclusive MultiPhase maintains game interest by increasing the challenge as player skills improve. The playing field changes after each successful game phase—and the number of enemy creatures increases.

Designed for one or two players, *Digger* features ten authentic game sounds and colorful cabinet graphics.

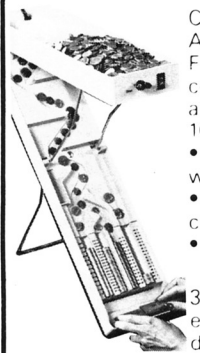


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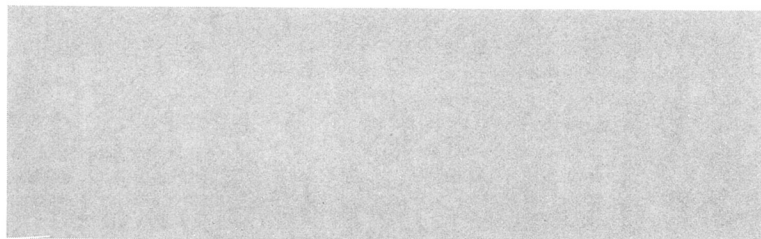
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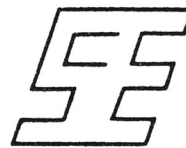
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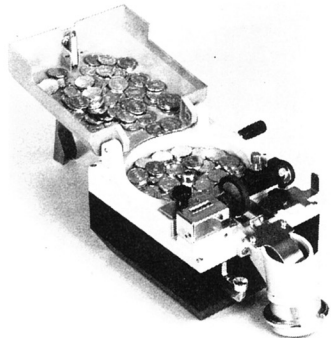
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NEWS BRIEFS

.....Game Plan, Inc., was in negotiations with several companies wanting to purchase interest in the pinball and slot machine manufacturer in late July. One potential purchaser corporation's board of directors was reportedly considering an acquisition of Game Plan at this magazine's press time. Game Plan general manager Wendell McAdams commented only that federal rules governing public companies do not permit the names of negotiating parties to be divulged before a joint agreement between them is final. (Game Plan is a subsidiary of AES Technology Systems, Inc. The current games from the Addison, Illinois manufacturer are Pinball Lizard and the Tora-Tora air-naval battle video.).....

.....Larry Siegel, administrative vice-president of Stern Electronics, said that company would need some six weeks to move the physical assets of Seeburg Corporation to Stern's Diversey Street plant in Chicago. All parties were reported confident that an arrangement for Stern to buy all Seeburg assets except patents would be completed July 25. As PLAY METER went to press, Stern officials were negotiating with some of Seeburg's creditors to purchase "work in progress" on the floor of the Dayton Street facility leased by XCOR International to Seeburg. Seeburg Corp. filed bankruptcy proceedings in court October 19, 1979, and the plant has been idle since that time. (For further details of the proposed Stern/Seeburg arrangement, see the Manufacturing section of this issue.) Stern is committed, said Siegel, to having volume production of jukeboxes in full swing by late October. Meanwhile, Stern had a second video game in the final stage of development. Called Berserk, it involves a maze and chase format, and it was bound for selected test locations in late July.....

.....The strength-testing Punchball machine by Zamperla had a supporting role in the Paramount movie "Urban Cowboy" starring John Travolta. In the Gilley's nightclub setting of the movie, there is a Punchball competition. The game will also be shown on television in a new series on NBC, "The Games People Play".

.....Hans Rosenszweig, formerly associated with Lowen-Automaten of West Germany, was reported at mid-July to have purchased an interest in Nova Apparate, Hamburg, and to be stepping into an executive post with that distributor. Rosenszweig is a veteran of the Swiss and German coin-op industry.....

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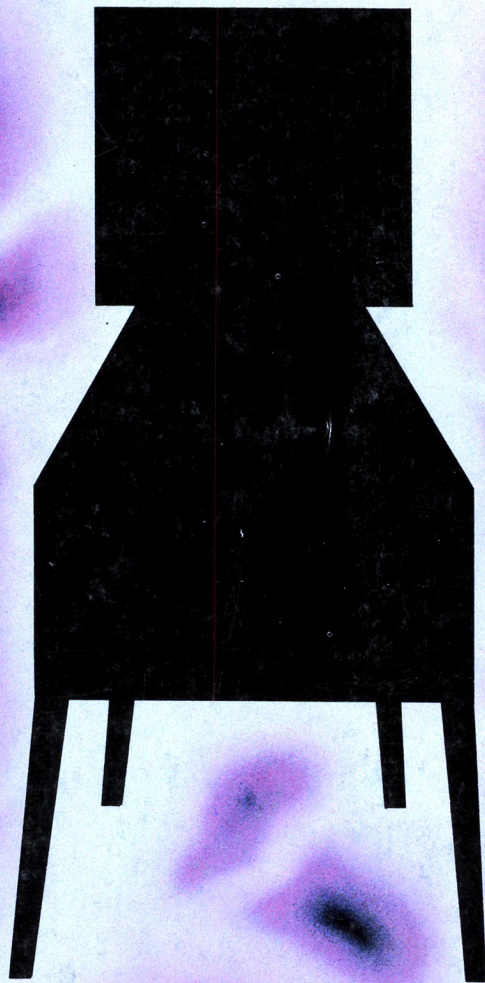
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