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# CTW

15-8-88 BRITAIN'S TOP COMPUTER TRADE WEEKLY ISSUE 199

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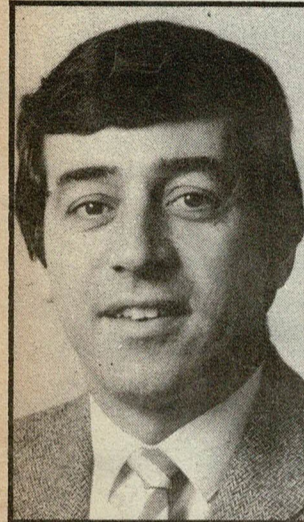
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## Cambridge punts for retailers



STREETER: Pitching dealers

Cambridge Computer is hoping to increase the number of Z88 dealers by nearly five times as a result of its soon to break £200,000 promotion.

As well as a national press campaign running almost exclusively in *The Independent* it is also seeking to stimulate trade interest via telesales, mailshots and a discount offer.

The press ads begin on September 9th with two consecutive full pages and then a series of insertions running until October 21st. To back an education push, ads will

Continued on page two

## INSIDE:

### CLASS WARS

Scarcely a week goes past in this industry without one major hardware manufacturer claiming to be mounting an assault on the lucrative education market. Big American firms from Apple to Atari to Tandy are all seeking to challenge the dominance of Acorn (and to a lesser extent RM). So where does Commodore fit in to all this? It's the standard 'could do better', it would appear..... 8

### ROLE OF THE DICE

Elves and wizards and trolls and goblins and dragons beset they may be, but role-playing games are finding an increasing overlap with the world of computers. Abandon hope all ye who turn to page 10

### PC SHOW

On September 5th CTW is publishing its PC Show supplement. We urgently need all firms who are exhibiting to supply their details. See the ad on page..... 6

### SOFT OPTIONS / CHARTS 14

## Commodore surges back

Commodore has come out of its financial doldrums with a vengeance: profits to the year end June 30th have almost doubled to \$55.8 million.

The company has been emerging slowly from its nadir in 1985/86, when it was only the intervention of the banks which kept Commodore afloat. The latest crop of figures indicate that the company has been turned round via drastic cost-cutting, together with the Amiga finally taking off.

Turnover for the year increased by around eight per cent to \$871.1 million from

\$806.7 million. In the context of an industry still experiencing annual growth rates of 20 or even 30 per cent, this is noticeably low.

Once more, though, it underlines just how far Commodore had to go to slash its overheads. To manage this at the same time as increasing profits is something of an achievement. Staffing levels have been cut by just over a third.

For the fourth quarter to June 30th, sales were up 13 per cent from \$190.4 million to \$215.2 million on the equivalent 1987 period. Profits jumped from \$2.1 million to £12.2 million. This six-fold increase in profits is particularly important in judging the

company's performance coming, as it does, at a relatively quiet time in the computer-selling calendar.

Gross margin on the comparative quarters rose from 28 per cent to 33 per cent, due to the increased sales of higher margin products, coupled with the firm's "on-going margin improvement program". In effect, this indicates Commodore's switch from dependence on the ageing and cheap C64 to the more expensive Amiga and PCs.

Despite sizeable advertising and marketing budget increases, Commodore's operating expenses improved one point to 22 per cent.

Commenting on the results, Commodore's chairman and

chief executive officer Irving Gould said that sales had increased in the major markets of Europe, the US and in Australia.

He added: "I am pleased that Commodore was able to restore meaningful revenue growth and more than double income (profits) before extraordinary items in 1988. We will strive further to build on last year's accomplishment and achieve further progress in the year ahead."

Commodore does not break down its figures into local markets, so the UK performance cannot be analysed. No one from CBM UK was available for comment on the details.

## UK falls back as PCs leap

By volume and value the European PC market increased last year by 66 per cent - but the United Kingdom has slipped from first to third amongst European PC purchasing countries.

Amstrad sold 300,000 PCs in Europe during the year, split two to one in favour of 'home' (ie individual) to corporate purchase.

These are among the detailed findings of Intelligent Electronics, the French based firm which claims to be "the leading research group on the personal computer markets of Europe".

Its figures and analysis refer to all 8088/86, 80286, 60386

and 68000 based machines - and therefore not to the PCW range, like other research firms. The total market for the year was 3,010,000 units - a sharp increase of 66 per

cent. The similar rise in value is in part due to the abiding weakness of the US dollar: a more accurate level would be closer to 35 per cent.

The business sector in-

creased 43 per cent by volume, but the major growth was shown by the individual purchase area where sales rose 264 per cent. In the UK, the

Continued on back page

## Activision in TV splash

Mediagenic / Activision is lining up the leisure industry's biggest ever TV ad campaign to back three of its major winter releases.

Afterburner, SDI and R-Type will all have their own 20 second ad appearing 12 times each on LWT, Central, Granada and TVS.

The ads will be shown exclusively on Saturday morning TV, running for three

weeks. The campaign breaks on November 14th.

Actual spend is claimed to be just short of £100,000. Mediagenic has handled its own media buying and claims that this in conjunction with early booking has helped it achieve a cost-effective deal.

Other TV campaigns by firms such as Ocean, Virgin, Beau Jolly and CDS have tended to be localised or completed within a very short timescale. Mediagenic claims that its campaign is the first true nationwide assault from any publisher.

In true corporate style the firm is also pitching the move as one that will benefit the industry as a whole.

"There are all kinds of benefits. We're actively trying to lead the industry into more mature marketing techniques.

The market has grown up a lot and that has to be reflected in the way that leading firms like ours reach the end user," commented Mediagenic's UK marketing manager Larry Sparks to CTW.

Afterburner and SDI are both Activision titles with R-Type being released on the Electric Dreams label. There will be no mention of Mediagenic in the ads.

The US firm has also just completed the signing of a further batch of Sega coin-op licences. *Galaxy Force*, *Altered Beast*, *Sonic Boom*, *Hot Rod* and *Ace Attacker* are already being pencilled in for 1989/90 release.

"It just goes to show the strength of the relationship we have with Sega," added Sparks.



SPARKS: TV splash in November

## Amstrad monitors market

Amstrad's new PC games machine the Sinclair Professional will after all be marketed with a monitor at £299.

But the indications at this stage are that the machine will only be launched next month and will not actually be available until next year. Given the seasonality of the games market, this appears a strange decision. But it could be related to the initially lukewarm reception given to the Professional by those present at a preview at Amstrad recently.

Reports suggest that the new machine will have only four colours and CGA graphics. Essentially, it is said to look like a CPC model.

The argument doing the rounds last week was that Amstrad would have been better advised to produce its own non-standard 68000-based machine, thus capitalising on the better graphics capability. Despite not being compatible with either the ST or Amiga, figures in the trade were reasoning that software houses would have nonetheless written for it in the wake of Amstrad's abiding ability to pull through sales.

Meantime, unconfirmed - and not especially reliable - reports in the Spanish computer press suggest that Amstrad will be producing a £299 PC which is both 68000-based and compatible with the Spectrum. Though perhaps desirable, such a beast sounds fanciful.

## Future weekly looms

Future Publishing is launching the third consumer market weekly computer magazine in September.

And the firm has also revealed that it has signed up industry veteran Graeme Kidd as the editor of its all formats monthly *Ace*.

The news of the weekly confirms the identity of the mysterious "Project X" alluded to by the firm in recent weeks. It will be competing with two Focus titles: the long established *Popular Computing Weekly* and the soon to be launched *Computer Games Week*.

Called *New Computer Express*, it will be edited by Peter

Continued on page two

# Gold coins it in the States

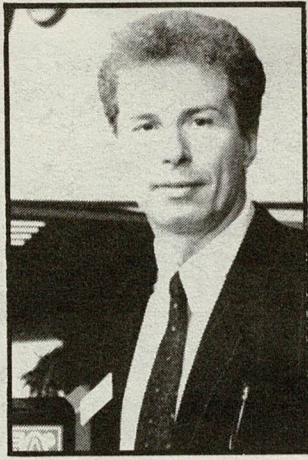
In the wake of announcing US orders of \$2 million in its first four months, US Gold has secured a marketing deal with Continental Airlines.

Gold was launched in the States at the Chicago CES via a reciprocal deal with Epyx. In its first few days, it claimed orders worth \$1 million. Now it says orders worth double that have been "confirmed".

As a result of this initial success, a co-promotion has been arranged with Continental. This will see the airline's logo appearing on screen at the start of Gold's games, along with the latter's American slogan "You've just struck Gold".

In turn, Gold titles will carry entry forms for a Continental Airlines competition, with prizes including round trips to Los Angeles from anywhere in the States.

Noting that the deal represented "an excellent way of getting additional exposure



**BROWN: US success** and awareness of our American label", Gold chairman Geoff Brown said that there would be further marketing tie-ups.

Gold's games in the States retail between \$19.95 and \$39.95. The first batch of six to be released by next month include titles from Gremlin, Go and Hewson. Additionally, Gold has stressed that its main US orientated titles – such as *Techno Cop* and *Dive Bomber* – haven't yet been released over there.

# SOR point for Coders

Code Masters has made the all but unprecedented decision to market one of its titles on full Sale or Return (SOR) – in an attempt to prove something to the industry.

The move follows an apparent reluctance on the part of

some independent retailers to stock the firm's Plus range, which retails at £4.99. Such is the claimed level of confidence in *Professional BMX Simulator* that it is now being offered on full SOR until the year's end.

The firm claims that sales are likely to double on the title. It was released on C64 earlier this year and the Amstrad version appeared a couple

of weeks ago. The Spectrum incarnation is due this week.

Other titles are unlikely to gain the SOR treatment. The firm argues that once the point has been proved the exercise does not need to be repeated. Three Plus titles have been the firm's biggest revenue earners this year. Several more Pluses are due.

# Cambridge

Continued from front page also appear in *The Times Educational Supplement* and *Educational Computing*.

"In terms of pound spent per person reached *The Independent* was the best value. Our new copyline is "A computer for people on the move" and they're the kind of people we'll be hitting," commented Cambridge's sales and marketing manager Paul Streeter to CTW.

There are currently 120 Z88 dealers in the UK with the product having been available for just under a year. Streeter claims that this total could be as high as 500 once the forthcoming push has been completed.

Z88 distributors Hugh Symons, Bytech, Northamber and Lightning will be facilitating a scheme whereby once dealers have registered they receive a £15 voucher redeemable against Cambridge. This offer will last until the end of September.

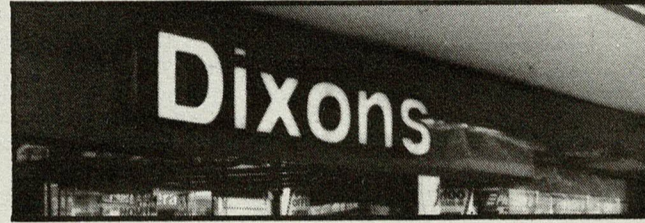
Further back-up will also be visible in the form of some 6,500 mailouts and 2,000 tele-sales calls.

"The trade can't fail to be aware of what we're going to be up to in the next few months," added Streeter.

# Dixons: further foray upmarket

Further indications of Dixons' attempts to shift upmarket came last week with the news that it is stocking Lifetree's £425 Total Word package.

Its flagship Oxford Street store has begun selling the item on special offer at £349. It marks a significant departure for Dixons, which has



**DIXONS: Further moves upwards**

hitherto concentrated almost exclusively on low-cost clonesoft products.

It follows Dixons' announcement the previous

week that it will be establishing solus Business Centres, as well as selling PS/2 machines through more branches (CTW August 8th).

# Future

Continued from front page

Worlock – himself a one-time *Pop Weekly* managing editor. As expected, the magazine will be A4 format and a claimed "high proportion of colour throughout". Cover price as yet has not been finalised, but it is not likely to be

dramatically adrift of 50p.

Worlock offered: "I've always been convinced that there is a demand for a weekly magazine that reflects the excitement and the fun of the personal computer industry. Future Publishing has an unmatched record of successful launches – the most recent being *ST/Amiga Format* – and I have no doubt that *New*

*Computer Express* will extend that record."

The editorial remit covers the entertainment to business, consoles to clone sector, with particular emphasis on leading edge machines. It intends to concentrate on news and reviews, with news on the front cover. Issue size initially will typically run to 56-64

pages, with a 60/40 editorial to advertising split.

Future is working on a dummy issue for September's PC Show. It will go weekly some time in October.

Kidd's appointment means that he will be linking up again with Kevin Cox, who was recently poached as a publisher from Dennis. The

duo worked together on the successful launch this spring of *Computer Shopper*. Prior to that, Kidd was the publisher in charge of computer titles at Newsfield, where he also produced the well received first issue of *The Games Machine*.

Meantime, Future is also trumpeting the success of its three Amstrad titles. In the latest ABC figures, *PC Plus*

has put on 30 per cent to 31,911 issues a month (and is thus claimed to be "Britain's best-selling PC magazine"); the PCW magazine *8000 Plus* has increased by 4,000 copies to 28,523; and the CPC title *Amstrad Action* has shown its third successive half year increase to 35,095. All three are said to be at their record levels.

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# 'Genic warns of Nintendo shortages as sales boom

**Mediagenic / Activision last week tempered its latest encouraging financial results with a warning that growth is likely to be hampered throughout the rest of the year.**

The surprising comment came from Mediagenic's chief executive officer Bruce Davis. It appears that whilst the Activision games side has benefited enormously by backing the Nintendo console and cashing in on its subsequent US explosion, targets based on this experience are now set to be missed.

"Recent severe cutbacks in supply of Nintendo cartridges due to the widespread chip shortages plaguing the computer industry have required us to cancel millions of dollars of orders scheduled for delivery prior to Christmas," said Davis.

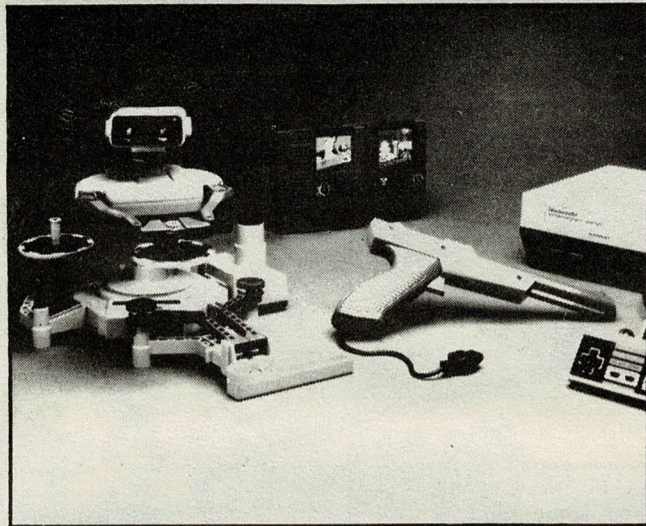
The lion's share of Nintendo cartridges that are available will go to Nintendo itself for its own games. Mediagenic is only a third party publisher and will have to make do with what is left for its titles.

Keeping on the subject of consoles, Davis noted that first quarter sales for Atari 2600 software were up as increased production had cured

usual post-Christmas shortages. He added, however, that consumer demand forecasts indicated that substantial additional pre-Christmas 2600 orders were unlikely.

Figures for the first quarter 1989 ending July 2nd showed a fifth consecutive increase in sales. They rose by 55 per cent on the previous year from \$8.7 million to \$13.5 million.

Profits dropped from \$500,000 last year to \$400,000. This was explained by the acquisition of Californian marketing firm Triton Products Corporation and foreign currency exchange losses.



NINTENDO: Good and bad news for Mediagenic

## Greyhound ponders hardware options

**Distributor Greyhound is hoping to take on hardware in the autumn, following a move to larger premises.**

At this stage, the firm is keeping tight-lipped about its plans, beyond saying that it hopes to take on a PC range. Leisure market machines have not been ruled out.

The move to new premises - still in Leeds - take place early next month. Its current site in North Street, its retail operation Micropower will take over the rest of the existing site in North Street.

"We're certainly considering doing hardware very closely," general manager Phillip Allott said. "And at this stage we're interested in talking to anyone who wants to talk to us. We've done a few monitors and fringe things in the past, but we're looking for something else this time. It's most likely that we'll take on a PC range."

In recent months, Greyhound's profile has shifted away from its leisure background. On software,



ALLOTT: Hardware looming?

Allott said, it currently splits 60/40 in favour of low cost business software to leisure. It is also hoping to tie up some exclusive deals in the next few weeks.

As part of the general clearing out process ahead of the move, Greyhound has also

been selling off some clonesoft packages at large discounts. Allott stressed that this is simply a short term move, and that even though decent titles from the likes of Amstrad and Lifetree are included, it does not represent a loss of faith in the sector.

## Wilding offers Brotherly love

**The launch of Brother's first PCs next month is likely to be boosted by retail chain Wilding taking them on nationwide.**

The typewriters and printers based firm had planned a conservative foray into PC manufacture with the appointment of just 200 Brother Computer Centres. Indeed, the firm's computer products division manager John Carter told CTW earlier in the summer that he would be "quite happy" with sales of just 500 units a month.

Wilding director John Howlett told CTW last week, however, that it is very keen on the new machines. "We're a big Brother dealer and they've got a hell of a large customer base.

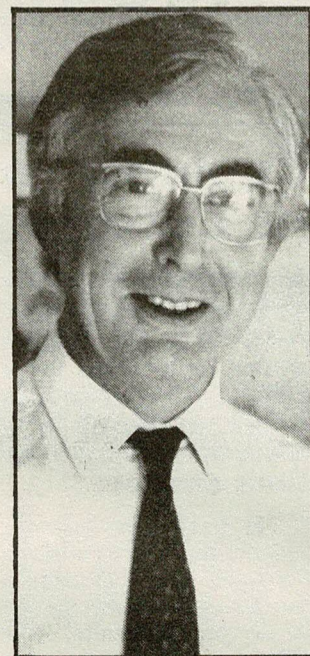
"They're not going to be a major force like Amstrad, for example, but I think that with them being so well known there's room for a nice competitive PC with the Brother label on it."

Wilding currently has 57 outlets, and it recently acquired Tyne and Wear Office Supplies.

The Brother PCs come in two four model brands. The BC-10 XT starts at £780 for a single drive mono and the BC-20 AT starts at £1,350. A smallish marketing campaign is expected to break in the near future.

Meanwhile, Wilding has ruled out the prospect of stocking any leisure product this autumn, despite the growth in more upmarket Amiga, ST and PC game sales.

"If we go with something,



HOWLETT: "There's room for Brother"

normally we stick with something. It's tempting to cash in on the Christmas sales but if you drop in and drop out you end up with nothing except upset customers," added Howlett.

## Schneider to take four for UK bash

**After prolonged courting Schneider expects shortly to announce the signing of four UK distributors for its PC range.**

The ex-Amstrad German distributor now expects the full range to be available from October. The entry-level Euro PC has already sold a claimed 8,000 units in Germany after just two months.

"We should be able to announce the distributors in a fortnight. They are all looking at the systems and think they're very good. The firms range from, shall we say, box-shifters to more upmarket outfits," commented Schneider's UK marketing liaison co-

ordinator Cliff Preston to CTW.

Schneider has also given firm details of UK pricing for the first time. The Euro PC will retail at £399 with mono monitor, 512K, *Microsoft Works*, one 3.5 inch disk drive and several expansion slots. This is around £50 cheaper than previous estimates. A colour version will cost £549.

The Tower AT will come in six different models ranging from single drive mono to 20Mb. Prices will start at £799.

"We're getting closer to the launch and we've just got to make sure we've got good supply. We don't want to make a song and dance and then not have any stock," added Preston.

## Amiga to gain Beeb emulation

**Commodore is working on BBC emulation for the Amiga in an attempt to crack the education market.**

The move has been on the cards for some time, given both the residual loyalty to BBC software shown by educationalists and also Commodore's desire to be a major education player.

As yet, details of the planned BBC compatibility are scarce. But the firm is expect-

ing to have it available by the end of the year.

"What I'm looking to do is effectively run BBC software to a level acceptable to educationalists," Commodore's national education sales manager Peter Talbot told CTW.

"The government has put a lot of money into the BBC and it wants to protect that investment. We need to ensure that the comment 'Oh we can't buy an Amiga because it doesn't run BBC software' doesn't apply."

## 16-bit bitten by value packs

**The 16-bit market seems to have finally come of age following news of ST and PC compilations from Ocean and Mediagenic / Activision.**

Ocean is releasing a strong ST pack for £24.95 featuring its own *Wizball*, *Barbarian* (Palace), *Crazy Cars* (Titus), *Rampage* and *Enduro Racer* (both Activision)

Mediagenic/Activision itself is releasing three Infocom adventures: *Zork 1*, *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* and

*Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*. It will retail at £24.99 on PC.

Despite several attempts at budget product, the 16-bit market has generally been able to hold up pricepoints at around £20 and above. This advent of compilations, however, means that products are effectively available at £5-8 each.

It is not yet known what other compilations are being planned by 16-bit publishers although several 'big titles, big value' packs are no doubt already pencilled in for autumn launch.

# CTW

Computer Trade Weekly

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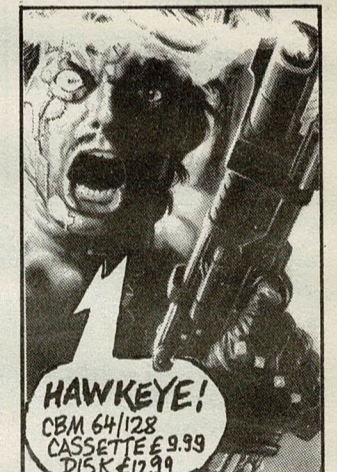
Published by Specialist Retail Press Limited, Business Technology Centre, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2DX.

Telex: 825824 (Answerback "Bustec"). Fax 0438 741247.

Printed in England by Cherwell Valley Lithographic Ltd, Banbury. Typesetting by Kestrel Origination, Bond Industrial Est, Bond Ave, Bletchley, Milton Keynes

Subscriptions: UK £75; Europe £120; US and Asia £220; Australia £250 Registered at the Post Office as a newspaper

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# Star prices to rise as EC tightens levy

**Star warned last week that it is likely to increase its printer prices by an average of 10 per cent following yet more instructions from the European Commission.**

Several Japanese printer firms recently upped their prices or made public their criticisms following the EC's decision to impose import duties of up to 33.4 per cent on printers, due to alleged dumping.

Star had a 13.6 per cent levy imposed on its products and initially absorbed this in order to keep prices stable. The EC has now ruled that the levy must be passed on to trade price, thus distributors will pass on the increase to consumers.

At this stage Star is not announcing the full details about the increases or how quickly they will come into effect. It is only confirming that there will be an increase



**LC-10: Price hike due** and some models will be affected more than others.

"We feel that the levy being aimed very definitely at Japan is a little bit short-sighted. Other countries make and dump printers and Japanese firms could quite easily make their machines in Hong Kong or Taiwan," commented Star's UK sales and marketing director Roger Bayley to CTW.

"It's all rather sad really because it's a political struggle and the only person who loses out is the end-user."

Ironically, Star's top-seller the mono LC-10 will also have to suffer a price increase even though it is manufactured in the UK. According to Star, the extra costs of producing LC-10s at its South Wales plant mirror almost exactly the EC levy.

# Eltec to bounce back

**After a particularly quiet few months spent researching the market, Eltec is shortly due to bounce back with the announcement of a batch of new distribution accounts.**

These are likely to be up-market from its current business, which includes the likes of Amstrad, Atari, Citizen, Philips and Opus.

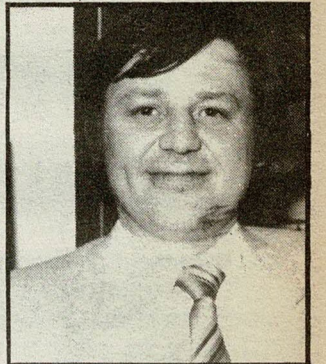
"There'll soon be a lot of changes at Eltec and ones which will in a very major way affect the company's profile

over the next three years. We've got the agreements, but at this stage we're not really prepared to go into too much detail.

"Essentially, we'll be going more upmarket with more sophisticated products that will be taken only by a small nucleus of dealers," sales director Roger Purssglove told CTW.

Additionally, in November at the company's year end, there will be a "full review" of its whole product range. At this stage, Purssglove said, there are no plans to drop any lines.

Meantime, Margaret



**PURSSGLOVE: Upmarket moves**

Greenwood has become the firm's official marketing manager, having been the designate for some months.

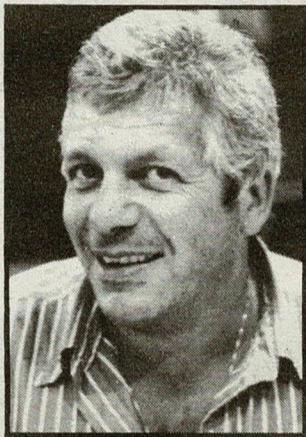
# Palan picks up Epyx

**Palan has secured the rights to sundry Epyx cartridge games, following a deal struck with the American firm and US Gold.**

According to Palan boss Lou Fine, Gold agreed to pass on the rights in the knowledge that Palan could do a better job. In recent times, Palan has become the leading supplier of VCS 2600 software.

"US Gold were doing the Epyx cartridge titles, but they weren't really doing the numbers to make it worthwhile for them. They knew that we had a bigger market share, so they did the deal with us," Fine offered.

The titles involved are *Summer Games*, *Winter Games* and *California Games*. They will be released at £14.99 in



**FINE: Epyx deal**

October, with other Epyx titles likely. Currently, Palan has a range of around 40 VCS games, based on the Activision and CBS (Colecovision) back catalogues. Cartridge games currently account for around 50 per cent of the firm's business.

Fine added that the whole cartridge sector is shortly to be boosted via an in-store push from Atari. Some 50 stores have been supplied with a display stand including the 2600 and XE plus software, with others being pitched. Nominally, the stock on each stand is said to be worth £8,000.

Meantime, Palan has cut back on its hardware business. Principal victim is Commodore's A500, due to claimed "warranty problems". The customarily loquacious Fine would not be drawn on the level of faulty machines his firm had been experiencing.

"I really can't get involved in that. But it costs us about one per cent for every unit we ship out through the door, so we simply can't afford to have anything coming back."

# Sugar GEC: not quite ...

**Amstrad has lambasted press reports that boss Alan Sugar is shortly to join the board of electronics giant GEC.**

The notion has been doing the rounds in the City for some time, and finally emerged in *The Independent* under the headline 'Sugar poised to spice up GEC board'.

"It's complete rubbish," responded an Amstrad spokesman. "It's silly season market rumour-mongering. It's just a lot of people putting two and two together and making six and a half."

The idea appears to stem both from GEC's desire to be seen as more entrepreneurial and Sugar's need to reinforce his grudging acceptance in the business establishment.

# Suncom sticks gain UK debut

**MicroProse is lining up a pre-States launch for two of the latest models from US joystick manufacturer Suncom.**

The two new products are upgraded versions of the Tac 3 and Tac 5, called the 30 and 50. They will be arriving in the UK for European distribution in September - four months before their US launch.

"It's mainly because we've got our act together better here than in the US. We've been closely involved in the development and these products are very important for Europe. We can also ship them in quicker from Taiwan than the US can," MicroProse UK boss Stewart Bell told

CTW.

The original Tac models will continue to be available. The new versions, however will boast a new aircraft-style design. Both come with a standard two-year guarantee. They will retail at £13.99 for the 30 and £14.99 for the 50.

Other new lines to be unveiled at the PC Show in September include three new analog joysticks for PCs and Apple machines. The Edge, Plus and Extra have also gained an aircraft-style design, retailing at £19.99, £27.99 and £34.99 respectively.

Future Suncom products also include the IBM Animation Station graphics tablet for £94.99 and a range of Nintendo cassette storage media.

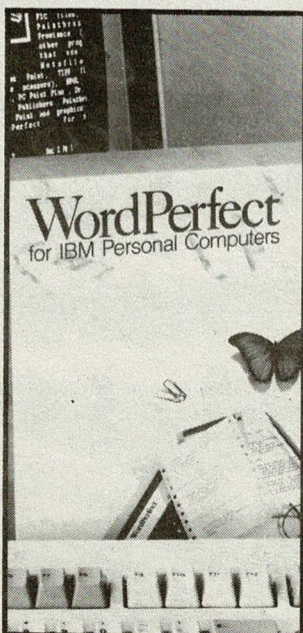
# Sentinel signals OS/2 WordPerfect

**WordPerfect - handled in the UK by Sentinel Software - has announced its intention to make a broad entry into the OS/2 sector this year.**

The first 1.0 OS/2 version of its flagship product *WordPerfect* will be released close to Christmas. A 1.1 version has been earmarked for a 1989 launch. The firm has also stated an intention to ensure that its range of network programs comply with OS/2 LAN Manager.

"The time is right to move into the OS/2 arena," commented marketing manager Dave Godwin to CTW. "OS/2 is popular and we want to take advantage of that."

He added: "Of course sales depend on how popular it becomes and I certainly wouldn't speculate as to future ratios between MS/DOS *WordPerfect* and OS/2." He



**WORDPERFECT: OS/2 version imminent** claimed that the recently launched *WordPerfect 5.0* had sold 7,500 copies in its first month.

# ASA quiet for once

**Continuing last month's trend, the computer industry has gained another brief respite from the wrath of the ASA.**

The advertising watchdog wraps just one firm in its latest report: Datel Electronics in Stoke. And for the second time in twelve months it was due to a complaint over the claimed compatibility of the Datel Midi 64 Interface.

An ad in *Commodore Computing International* claimed that the product was compatible with Joreth software packages, although the complainant found that this was not the case.

The ASA upheld the complaint and noted that Datel had not responded to either of the two complaints about the product. The Code of Advertising Practice Committee was informed of Datel's failure to comply with regulations.

# Gremlin gets comical

**Despite plans to shift its profile upmarket, Gremlin is lining up two major comic licences for release later this summer.**

One is a licence of Fleetway Publications' forthcoming comic *Gary Lineker's Hotshots* and the other is Fleetway's veteran performer *Roy of the Rovers*.

Both, of course, are soccer games and follow on from the just released *Gary Lineker's Super Skills* and last year's *Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer*.

"We're using *Gary Lineker*

to the full because he's such a good property and such a clean guy," commented Gremlin boss Ian Stewart to CTW. "All the soccer games are totally different products."

*Gary Lineker's Hotshots* is to be launched later this month by Fleetway and is expected to sell over 100,000 copies a week. Gremlin had a soccer game already under production and has gained the *Hotshots* licence in order to benefit from Fleetway's own marketing.

The *Roy of the Rovers* licence was a Piranha property

before its owner MacMillan Publishing closed the label several months ago. Gremlin programmers are currently "polishing" the original game development.

The US Gold stablemate has traditionally targeted itself at the youth end of the market. This is hoped to shift slightly with the release of games like *Night Raider* (just out), *Federation of Free Traders* and *Ultimate Golf*.

"We won't ever ignore our original market but we probably won't take up anymore toy licences. The market has moved away from that," added Stewart.

# Business contemplated as Cascade appoints

**Management difficulties at Cascade appear to have come to an end with the appointment last week of Peter Wilkinson as operations director.**

The firm has also indicated a desire to enter the business software market with two packages likely before the end of the year. Currently, some "financial" programs are being evaluated.

Wilkinson fills the gap left by John Lewis six weeks ago. He departed amidst talk of disagreements within the company. Wilkinson's background is in high end software for financial institutions and

the Ministry of Defence.

"It's a big difference but I've got a lot of experience in management areas and that's transferable," commented Wilkinson. "We want to develop Cascade in games but we're also looking at the business sector."

"We want to stamp Cascade's name on the business market's wall. Quite how we do that I'm not sure but we have direction. It's going to be a hard task."

He said that the "problems" in the firm's management had now been cleared up. "Cascade's management problems have been corrected. The idea now is to apply a professional business management team."

# Alternative: full price on the cards

**Alternative Software is set to break into the full price market with the launch of a new label in the autumn.**

The label is as yet untitled but the umbrella name for the project is Tiger Developments. So far no specific product or first release dates have been announced but a number of licences which the firm describes as "interesting" have been lined up.

Alternative boss Roger Hulley told CTW: "We're not going to saturate the market, we're going for quality and longevity. We don't believe in throwing a whole load of product against the wall and seeing what sticks."

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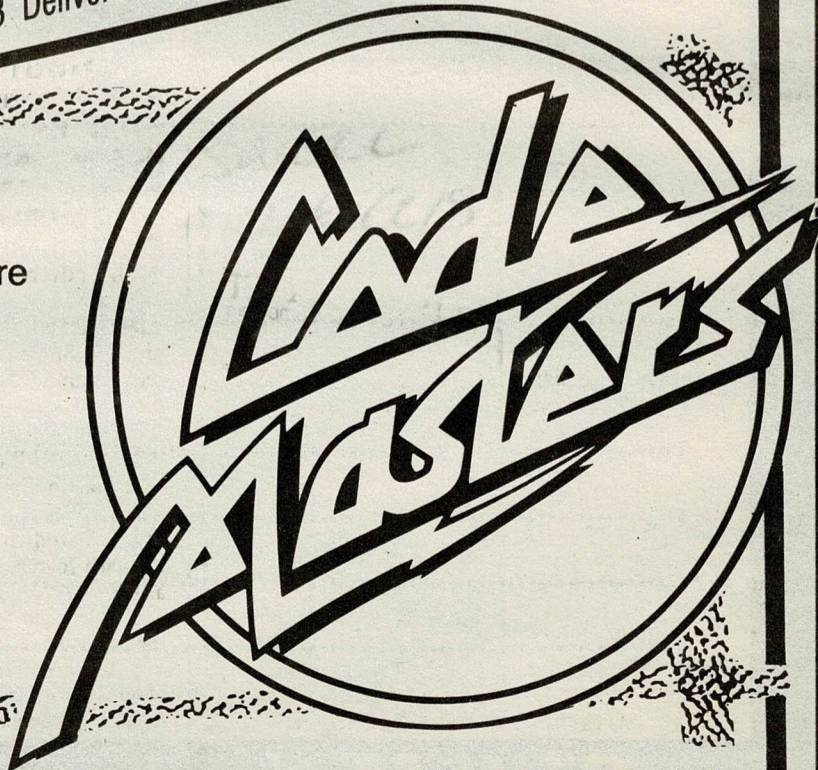
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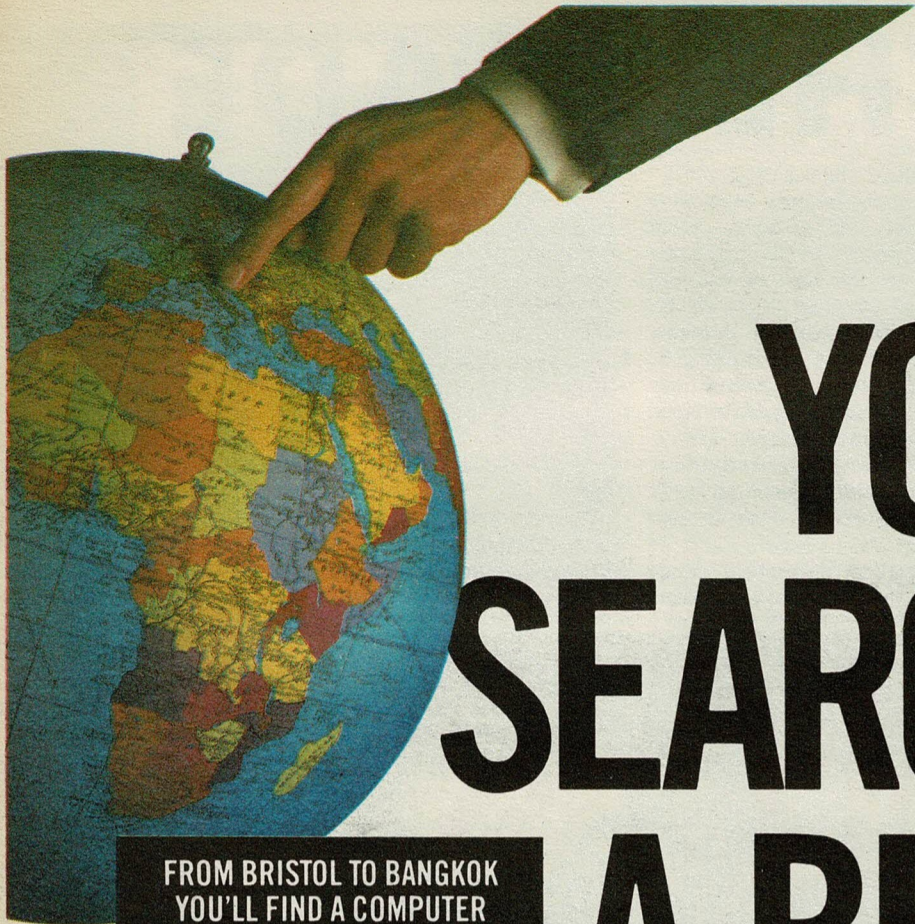
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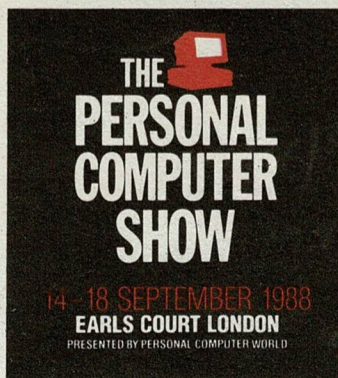
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# SCHOOLING THE TRADE

These days Commodore is keen to get across a polished and professional image on all fronts. Education is no exception and the firm has recently launched a new price structure for the sector. COLIN CAMPBELL talks to CBM's education man Peter Talbot on a most complicated marketplace . . .

Governmental bureaucracy has always made the education market something of an ogre to normal dealers. Many would prefer not to get involved with the complicated machinations of such an entity.

These are things best left to specialist dealers who

understand the market and have established contacts. The traditional view seems to be that education is tied up by people who have the stamina to deal with all the paperwork.

After all, the simple matter of choosing a machine involves long, arduous meetings and recommendations. At the

grass roots level teachers are advised by advisers who then talk to Her Majesty's Inspectorate who in turn are advised. Those advisers then talk to one of a number of government bodies recommending any decision which may (or may not) have been made.

Speculators by and large agree though that it's a market well worth tapping now that the BBC is finally beginning to look a little dated even for educationalists. The Government is much taken with the notion of computers in schools and whilst millions of pounds aren't being tossed to a grateful industry willy nilly, the powers that be do their best to promote spending on computers.

## Archimedes, principally

As such, the battle lines are currently being drawn between various manufacturers all with machines perfect for the job. That at least is what they would have us believe. Acorn, recognising that the BBC has seen better days, has struck out with the powerful Archimedes. And its closest rival Research Machines still has a great deal more influence on the market than its nearest rivals, via the Nimbus and prestige associations with Education 2000.

Apple is pitching the Mac hard hoping to repeat successes made in education Stateside. And then there's Commodore and Atari.

Commodore's effort is being headed up by national education sales manager Peter Talbot. Talbot was brought over from Granada by that firm's former sales director Steve Franklin (CBM's MD).

As with all of Commodore's departments there have been reshuffles and a re-thinking of strategy. As has been seen in the business market Commodore is keen to project a 'new leaf' image. It would like the trade to accept that a lot of ground work has been done this past year with the true benefits about to stack up.

Talbot has been trawling around Europe talking to other Commodore people about education and has launched one 'initiative' and now a campaign based on special prices to education.

One would expect him to join the legions of Commodore related folk who like nothing more than to start banging on about the Amiga. And indeed he does. "If you demonstrate an Amiga the conversion rate for people going away convinced that it's a hell of a machine is 100 per cent."

Commodore though is only a pretender in the education market and something of an upstart at that. Its task is an unenviable one because of prejudices built into the system.

Firstly there's the extraordinary dominance of the BBC. As such there's an awful lot of BBC software hanging around. It's standard policy for most schools to look for a

# G.M.

The Independent Fantasy Roleplaying Magazine

£1.20  
SEPTEMBER 1988  
Volume 1 No 1

PREMIER ISSUE



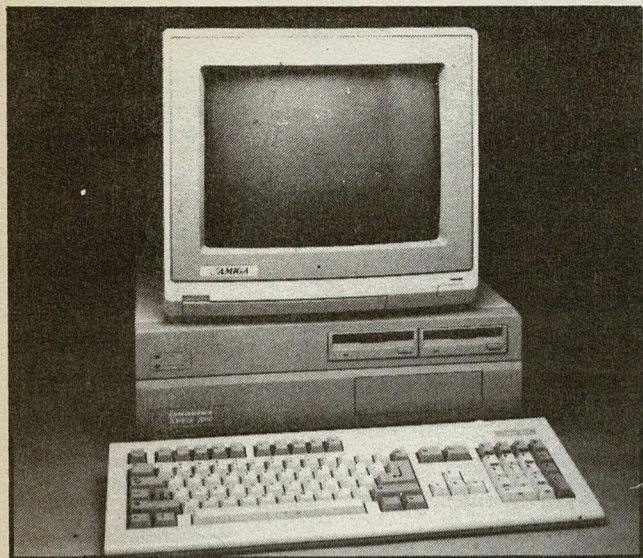
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SCENARIO





**AMIGA:** Due to gain Beeb aid machine which will run its BBC software.

Also, the educationists prefer their machines to be made in Britain by British companies. This though is not entirely reasonable given that Acorn is 80 per cent owned by an Italian company and given that most computers (or at least their components) are sourced from the Far East.

Commodore came to the conclusion last April that a BBC emulator for the Amiga would be a good thing. That should be ready by the end of the year but what shape it will take or how expensive it will be isn't yet known.

"What I'm looking to do is effectively run BBC software to a level acceptable to educationists," offers Talbot. "That removes the objection about the Amiga. The government has put a lot of money into the BBC and it wants to protect that investment.

"We need to ensure that the comment 'Oh we can't buy an Amiga because it doesn't run BBC software' doesn't apply." Acorn's (and Commodore's) competitors which can supply that will stand in good stead.

**Beeb battle**

Talbot acknowledges that the BBC's legacy is a mountain of BBC expertise and BBC software which is still useful. OK, if the school only wanted to run those programs it would keep its old BBCs - but there are new needs in art and design. These are both areas which Amiga enthusiasts are forever crowing about.

"You have to allow them to make the transition from the BBC to new technology. They must be able to afford it and the machine must be both powerful and easy to use."

Education represents a limited pool of money and resources are spent with great care and deliberation (thus the impenetrable strata of officialdom and decision makers). Talbot explains: "Education likes to get as much value as it can - and more than any other market because it has a limited amount of money available to it. That's why we've had to address it not only with specialist dealers but also with special prices."

Education authorities will order direct from Commodore under the new scheme labelled CDOS (Commodore Direct Ordering Scheme). Then, the school (or authority) will nominate an appropriate dealer to install and support. This has the effect of cutting out sales by dealers and so prices are lower (£299 for a PC1).

For this to be effective

though Commodore will need to promote the Amiga and its PCs properly. The message which the firm has formulated has to reach the right ears.

"My task is really to make sure that the advisers are made aware of the Amiga. Once they are convinced then that can go away and do our job for us by speaking to the teachers. When you show it (the machine) you show it right with appropriate and applicable software.

"The whole impact this has on the dealer base is the most relevant aspect. What we stated from Day One was that we don't intend to sell direct at any stage - primarily because we can't support it."

Currently, Commodore has 20 specialist dealers nationwide. That the firm would like to back that up with normal dealers getting involved in education is no surprise.

"We want to encourage them to sell to education and so we provide favourable terms. Normally we'd encourage dealers to go out and promote. This is a demanding and slow process. With CDOS we're trying to speed that up by allowing schools and universities to order direct from us whay they prefer."

In order to compensate for the fact that dealers aren't doing so much of their own

promotion Commodore is having to ramp up its own ad campaigns. Usually, a campaign will coincide with one on the business or leisure sectors.

If the A2000 is being promoted to the business fraternity as a DTP machine then that will be mirrored in education ads appearing in specialist education press. There are also the usual direct mail outs and of course exhibitions and roadshows.

"This direct orders allows us to provide a corporate face to promote corporately to the education market and to promote extra business to the dealers."

These also have to run with educationists' spending in mind. Most money passes hands throughout the first six months of the calendar year. By April they are wanting to spend any surplus on luxuries - a category which products such as the Amiga come under.

In Somerset for example the adviser was left with some money and was looking to use it in his art departments. One school had an Amiga; he was sufficiently impressed and ordered one for each art college and for each art department in the county.

This move wasn't done without deliberaion. Accord-

Continued on page 13

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# ROLE OF THE DICE

Those dice-ridden role-playing games don't just live in their own world of ersatz sci-fi: they're increasingly becoming a factor in the leisure games market. Firms such as US Gold, Telecomsoft and Electronic Arts have all realised the possibilities of cross-over appeal. But just what are RPGs? And how do they fit in with the software business? The answers to these and other questions come from CHRIS ELLIOTT and RICHARD EDWARDS, who run a software design and development house . . .

The Dutch call them *fantasised socio-drama*. They started in the USA in 1974, cover everything from *Watership Down* to Vietnam, support at least two monthly magazines in the UK, and give the leading British company producing and retailing them a turnover around £7 million per annum.

They also rival computers as one of the most jargon-ridden and eye-glazing subjects to explain to the uninitiated. They are Role-Playing Games.

Once, the phrase would have meant little if anything to the average computer games player, but more and more titles are now described as role-playing games. *Gauntlet*, *Phantasie*, *Bard's Tale*, *Dungeon Master* and their sequels, to name but a few.

From this, and the sections in computer games magazines now devoted to *real* role-playing games (ones that don't run on a computer), it's clear that they are a powerful influence on computer games, and the link goes back further than most people realise; the enormously successful *Elite* bore a striking resemblance to the science fiction role-playing game *Traveller*.

## Dicey business

At first, it's not easy to see why. A wander round Virgin Games Centre in Oxford Street is likely to give the impression that pukka role-playing games (ready for a bit of jargon? RPGs), consist of two things: books, and dice — lots of dice, four, six, eight, ten, 20, 100 sided, and even spherical ones.

The sheer variety is daunting, and people used to conventional board games think that the books are all rules that have to be read and memorised before you can begin to play. Which is a bit like thinking that before you can load *Carrier Command*, you have to be able to programme in assembler language.

In fact, the analogy between RPGs and computers is a close one. RPGs were as revolutionary as personal computers, because they were the first new *type* of game for a long, long while. They came about when fantasy fiction fans wanted a game to create the sort of adventures that filled the books of writers like Tolkien, Moorcock and Robert E. Howard, and war-gamers were moving from battle simulations, involving whole armies of men, to combats between individuals.

When the two strands met, a new type of game emerged, and the biggest selling RPG of all (you could say the industry's IBM PC) started life as a series of supplements to fan-

Continued on page 13

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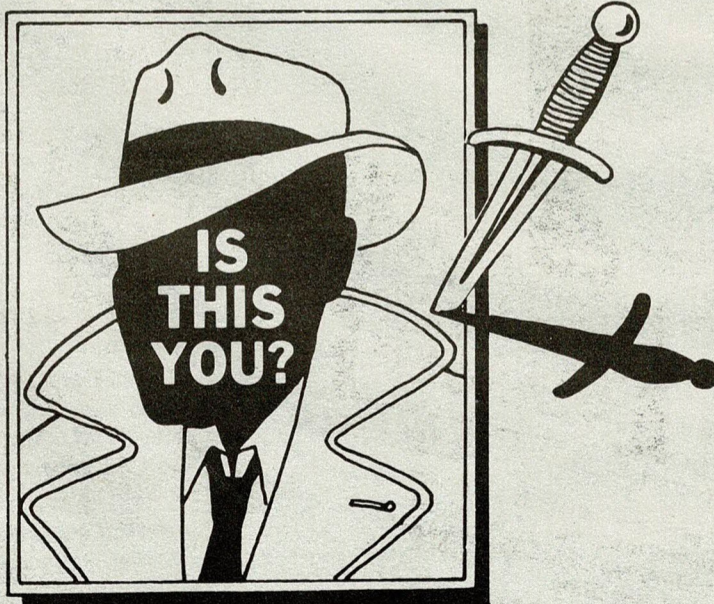


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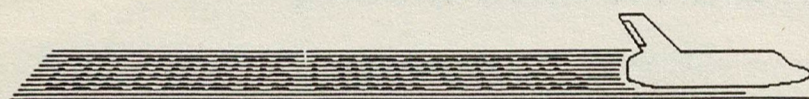
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# SCHOOLING THE TRADE

Continued from page nine

ing to Talbot though Her Majesty's Inspectorate saw it as a progressive move and were pleased with the decision. Talbot was pleased with the decision too.

## Fighting the three As

But what about the competition all attempting to cash in on the BBC's last days as a frontline education tool? Talbot reckons Acorn's follow up the Archimedes is too strong a machine. He uses the analogy that you don't buy a big car

just for doing the shopping.

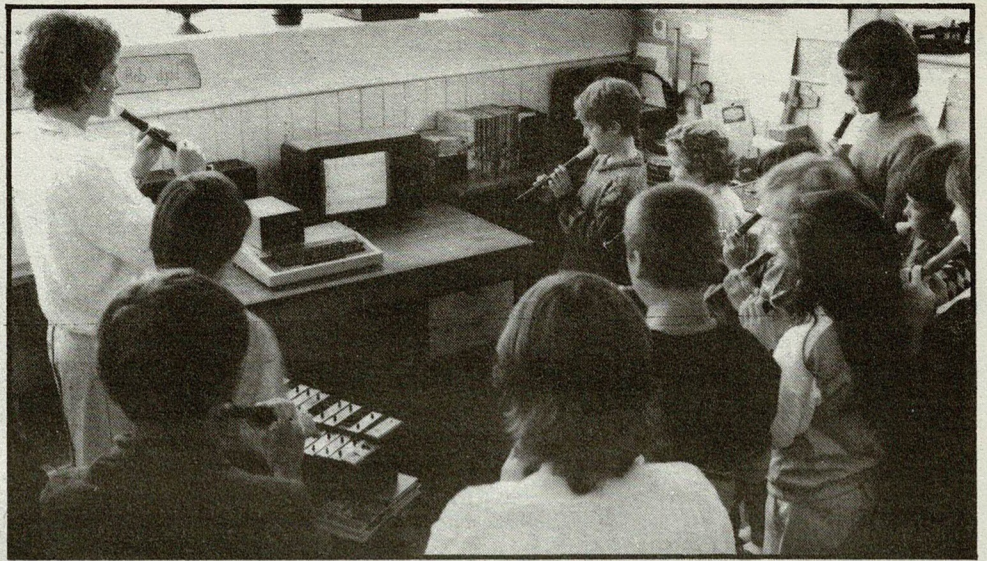
And he appears to be more than a little worried at Apple's aggressive approach to the market. "Their strategy has worked many times before. They're spending two years' profits before they make them on putting machines into locations and flooding areas of the market with free machines.

"They've set up learning centres with the intention of giving each free machines with the sole proviso that each site has a person trained to use the machines. That's OK but you're not selling the machine

- you're just making sales."

And of course there's Commodore's old rival Atari to think about: "The thing about Atari is they seem to make a dip into a marketplace, get a taste of it and then tend to find another marketplace as opposed to sustaining an effort."

Naturally Commodore is claiming that it will be sustaining itself in education primarily with the Amiga but also with its PCs. There is a good market in administration and MS/DOS still features high in schools.



CBM, amongst others, is seeking to persuade schoolkids to play a different computer tune

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## ROLE OF THE DICE

Continued from page 10  
tasy wargaming rules.

In an RPG players each take the part of a character in an imaginary setting, which can be anything from fantasy to sci-fi, horror to espionage. (A cult classic is *Bunnies and Burrows*, where players create intelligent rabbit characters in a world based on *Watership Down*.)

The characters have skills and abilities, which are given numerical values and dice rolls are used to determine success or failure when they are used. For example, if you were playing a detective in a game inspired by the novels of Dashiell Hammett, you might want to draw your .45 before a hoodlum drew his. If your Dexterity rating was 14, and you rolled 8 on three six-sided dice, you would be successful. If you rolled a 16, tough.

As well as players, RPGs need a referee, who goes under a variety of names (Keeper, Dungeon Master, Game Master) and is responsible for creating the situations in which the players' characters find themselves, and resolving the outcomes of characters' actions.

Published material for the games is basically of two sorts: 'rules', which mainly detail the skills and attributes which characters can have, and the world they exist in; and scenarios, which are like a screenplay for an adventure in which the characters take part.

The referee is necessary to decide how successful characters are in doing what they want to, and how this affects the course of events. If you like, you can think of the rules as an operating system/language, the referee as a super powerful chip, and the scenarios as software packages.

Having in the past inspired computer games, RPGs are now starting to appear on computers themselves as licensed products, and this September should see the release of the big one - *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* (TM).

Despite some less than successful past attempts to bring the one RPG that you may have heard of into the mass market, via cartoons, films, and bendy toys, the no doubt exaggerated rumours of the amount paid for the licence indicate that US Gold mean business.

And they may well be right. Computers, especially 16-bit ones, can do something that may bring RPGs out of their hobby ghetto; they can do away with the piles of expensive rule books, and all those dice.

# SPECTRUM TOP 20

TW	LW	Title	Publisher	RRP£
1	1	FOOTBALL MANAGER 2	ADDICTIVE	9.99
2	2	EUROPEAN FIVE A SIDE	FIREBIRD	1.99
3	4	AIR WOLF	ENCORE	1.99
4	11	FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS	1.99
5	7	GHOSTBUSTERS	MASTERTRONIC	1.99
6	9	FRANK BRUNOS BOXING	ENCORE	1.99
7	12	SAMANTHA FOX STRIP POKER	REACT	1.99
8	26	TRAP DOOR	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
9	16	TARGET RENEGADE	IMAGINE	7.95
10	5	YOGI BEAR	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
11	13	BEACH BUGGY SIMULATOR	FIREBIRD	1.99
12	18	ROCKY HORROR SHOW	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
13	29	BMX SIMULATOR	CODE MASTERS	1.99
14	17	WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST	MASTERTRONIC	1.99
15	6	STUNT BIKE SIMULATOR	FIREBIRD	1.99
16	10	STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER	BLUE RIBBON	1.99
17	15	NINJA SCOOTER SIMULATOR	FIREBIRD	1.99
18	3	RALLY DRIVER	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
19	21	OUT RUN	SEGA/US GOLD	8.99
20	20	SWORD SLAYER	PLAYERS	1.99

# C64 TOP 20

TW	LW	Title	Publisher	RRP£
1	1	FOOTBALL MANAGER 2	ADDICTIVE	9.99
2	10	STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER	BLUE RIBBON	1.99
3	2	AIR WOLF	ENCORE	1.99
4	4	EUROPEAN FIVE A SIDE	FIREBIRD	1.99
5	NE	GREAT GIANA SISTERS	RAINBOW ARTS	9.99
6	19	SAMANTHA FOX STRIP POKER	REACT	1.99
7	13	BEACH BUGGY SIMULATOR	FIREBIRD	1.99
8	7	BRUCE LEE	AMERICANA	2.99
9	9	RALLY DRIVER	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
10	5	FRANK BRUNOS BOXING	ENCORE	1.99
11	15	GHOSTBUSTERS	MASTERTRONIC	1.99
12	6	A C E	CASCADE	2.99
13	22	SOCCER BOSS	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
14	26	TARGET RENEGADE	IMAGINE	9.95
15	12	WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST	MASTERTRONIC	1.99
16	3	STUNT BIKE SIMULATOR	FIREBIRD	1.99
17	8	YOGI BEAR	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
18	27	OUT RUN	SEGA/US GOLD	9.99
19	RE	NINJA SCOOTER SIMULATOR	FIREBIRD	1.99
20	20	ALIENS	MASTERTRONIC	1.99

# AMSTRAD TOP 10

TW	LW	Title	Publisher	RRP£
1	2	AIR WOLF	ENCORE	1.99
2	1	FOOTBALL MANAGER 2	ADDICTIVE	9.99
3	RE	TRAP DOOR	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
4	12	ROCKY HORROR SHOW	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
5	6	A C E	CASCADE	2.99
6	7	YOGI BEAR	ALTERNATIVE	1.99
7	19	GHOSTBUSTER	MASTERTRONIC	2.99
8	9	BEACH BUGGY SIMULATOR	FIREBIRD	1.99
9	4	STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER	BLUE RIBBON	1.99
10	11	EUROPEAN FIVE A SIDE	FIREBIRD	1.99

# ATARI ST TOP 5

TW	LW	Title	Publisher	RRP£
1	RE	VIRUS	FIREBIRD	19.95
2	2	GAUNTLET 2	US GOLD	19.99
3	10	BIONIC COMMANDO	CAPCOM-GO!	19.99
4	RE	CARRIER COMMANDO	FIREBIRD	24.95
5	4	DUNGEON MASTER	MIRRORSOFT	24.99

# AMIGA TOP 5

TW	LW	Title	Publisher	RRP£
1	1	INTERCEPTOR	ELECTRONIC ARTS	24.95
2	RE	IKARI WARRIORS	ELITE	19.95
3	2	AAARGH	MELBOURNE HOUSE	19.99
4	3	BUGGY BOY	ELITE	19.95
5	NE	STREET FIGHTER	CAPCOM-GO!	19.99

## SHARE OF SALES BY MACHINE

Machine	Units sold (%)				Titles sold (%)			
	This week	Last week	4wks ago	12wks ago	This week	Last week	4wks ago	12wks ago
SPECTRUM	42.8	44.4	44.8	44.6	27.9	30.2	28.7	27.9
COMMODORE 64	23.7	23.7	23.4	22.6	23.6	23.7	26.5	25.8
AMSTRAD	18.0	19.7	19.1	18.9	17.8	17.6	18.6	18.9
ATARI ST	4.8	3.5	3.5	4.2	7.2	7.2	6.8	6.9
COMMODORE 16	2.5	2.6	2.6	1.9	3.6	2.9	3.3	2.5
AMIGA	1.9	1.2	2.0	1.1	4.0	3.3	3.8	2.7
BBC	1.8	1.3	1.3	1.9	4.0	3.2	2.9	3.8
ATARI	1.5	0.8	0.9	1.9	3.9	2.5	1.9	2.9
ELECTRON	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	2.9	2.1	2.2	2.7

## AVERAGE SALES PER PANEL SHOP

This week	Units Sold		
	Last week	4wks ago	12wks ago
134	115	96	91

# Soft options

**SOFT OPTIONS** carries salient details of leisure software titles just released or which are due to appear in the next few days. Software houses wishing to be included should fax (0438 741247) or phone (0438 310185) through details ten days prior to our publication date.

There are always a couple of weeks each summer when the games industry turns unhealthily anaemic, with just a handful of games coming out to keep the school holiday hordes happy. This just happens to be one of those weeks, thus explaining the paucity of entries in this week's Soft Options.

Of course, there are a few companies who are releasing games this week who won't be getting a mention. That's because us chaps here at CTW unfortunately aren't mindreaders. So, for all it may concern, let us know if you've got product coming out. Otherwise we'll all just have to snooze until the PC Show...

▲ **CODEMASTERS:** *Blade Warrior* (Sp - £1.99) This is actually *BMX Simulator* with *Ben Hur*-style blades fitted to stunters' spokes. It's just that the Coders thought *BMX Blade Sim* was a bit much. Only kidding. In fact this is a true platform smash-em-up and it's a totally new release, honest. ▲

▲ **DOMARK:** *Empire Strikes Back* (BBCAg - £9.95-£19.95) These are the last two versions of *ESB* for a

while. The Twits can now just sit and count the pennies and stop worrying about this dashed releasing business. ▲ **ELITE:** *Overlander* (SpAmC64ST - £7.99-£19.99) Wasn't it typical that a game that should cause so much of a stir would make people wait a little bit longer than originally planned? When it does finally appear it'll be very interesting to see how it performs compared to *Roadblasters*. A whole nation holds its breath. Well, sort of. ▲ **FIREBIRD:** *Carrier Command* (Ag - £24.95) Much talked about and one of the games that started the real boom in ST sales a little while back. Amiga fans shouldn't be disappointed with this one. ▲ **MIRRORSOFT:** *PT109* (Mac - £34.99)

This is a game from Mirrorsoft's US subsidiary Spectrum Holobyte. As one might expect from a flight simulator on the Apple Mac it's well into detail and so it should be for £35. If you're wondering what a PT109 is it's a motor torpedo boat, a vessel in which John F. Kennedy apparently served during his naval career. Well, well, well, how interesting. ▲

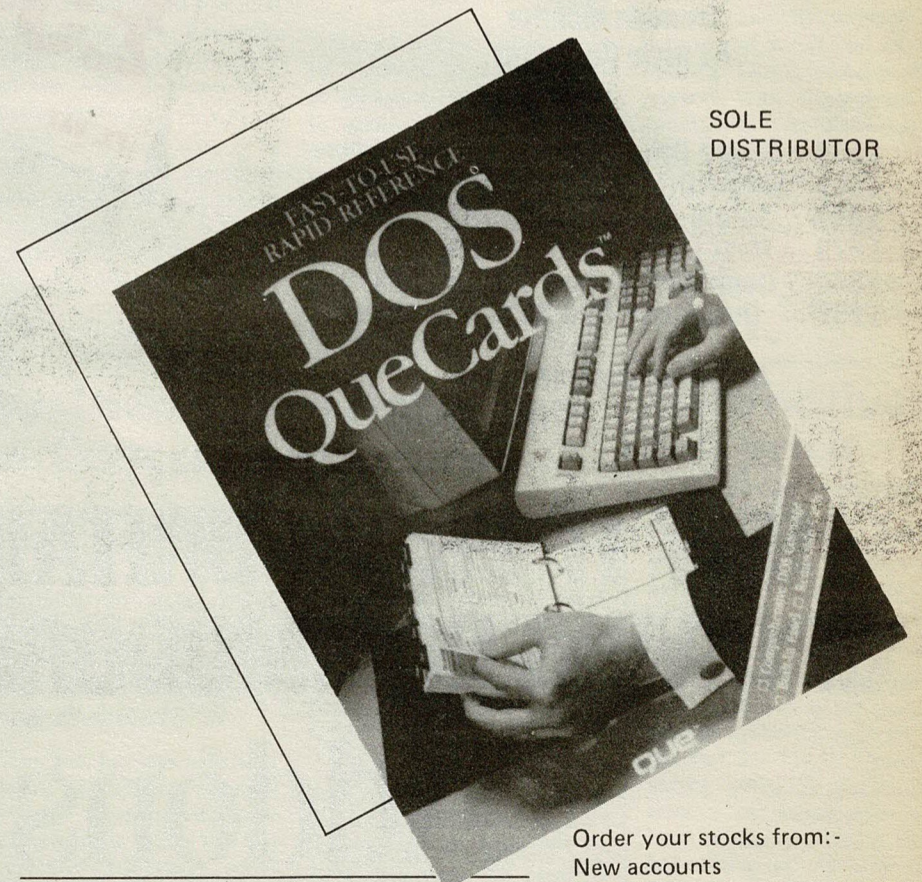
▲ **SILVERBIRD:** Thingy &

The Doodahs (Am - £1.99), *On The Run* (SpAm - £1.99), *Star Slayer* (C64 - £1.99) Three more from the BT stable that has seen its fortunes improve over the past few weeks. *Thingy* is notable for its desperation title and *On The Run* is an old Design Design game. ▲ **US GOLD:** *The Games - Winter Edition* (Am - £9.99-£14.99) This well publicised Olympic tie-up from Epyx makes its third Soft Options appearance in four weeks courtesy of the Amstrad version. Expect it to sit in the charts for a few months along with the other versions. ▲ **US GOLD:** *Psycho Pigs UXB* (C64SpAm - £8.99-£14.99) Unfortunately any plaudits this game might have attained for being original in theme and content have been completely blown by its advertising. In fact, this games spread is possibly the most sexist in computer ad history. It features two nauseous boys staring up at a billboard showing a scantily clad model holding a copy of the game. "I know which one I'd rather play with," says one of the boys. This is pathetic, cries a Soft Options columnist.

**KEY:** Sp = Spectrum; 64 = Commodore 64; Am = Amstrad CPC; ST = Atari ST; Ag = Amiga 500; +3 = Spectrum +3; PC = IBM PC/compatibles; PCW = Amstrad PCWs; C16 = Commodore 16; Mac = Macintosh; XE/XL = Atari XE console and 800XL; Sg = Sega console; Nn = Nintendo console; VCS = Atari VCS 2600 console; MSX = very unlikely.

Experienced users often need clarification of ideas they have not used for some time. Trivial lists of the syntax do not help if you cannot remember what the purpose of the instruction is!

DOS Que cards are Que's way of solving this problem, they are already in wide use at CBL!



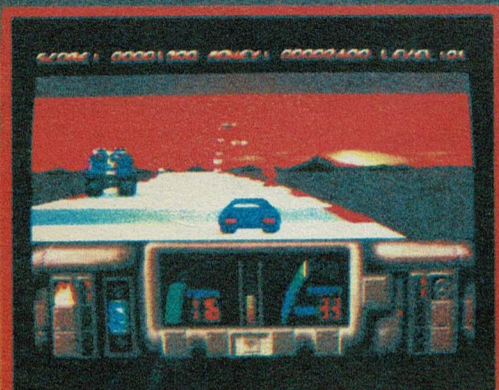
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Pole Position	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	N/A	✓
Pit Stop	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Outrun	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Road Blasters	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	N/A	✓
Chequered Flag	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
WEC Le Mans	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	N/A	✗
<b>OVERLANDER</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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Amstrad	Disc	£14.99
Amiga	Disc	£24.99

# elite

# Psion organises TV campaign



GOING UNDERGROUND: Psion's Tube campaign, as it plans its other campaign on the tube

**Psion will this autumn be joining the select band of computer firms using television to advertise their products.**

A claimed £400,000 actual spend campaign kicks off in late October in the London region on both ITV and

Channel 4. It is being supported by sundry other advertising pushes which take Psion's spend this autumn to £800,000.

The TV push comprises 30 second slots attempting to reach "the serious professional market", according to sales director Peter Norman.

"We've always spent a lot of money promoting ourselves and we think that now is the right time to make our debut on television. We've established a very-good market for the Organiser and now we're in a position to be broadening that into the mass market."

The advert is due to be shot at the end of this month. It will run on such slots as *News At Ten* and *Channel 4 News*.

Psion is currently half way through a press campaign in the notionally better national tabloids, featuring the copy line "Now at a pocket near you". In September, a quality press push commences.

Additionally, the firm is shortly due to start a cam-

paign which will see a Psion poster in every carriage of every train on every line of the London Underground. This follows a similar effort last year.

Costing some £80,000, it features on one side a desk cluttered with office paraphenalia - calculator, clock, filofax etc - contrasted with just the Organiser on the other side. In turn, this is being backed by a 4"x2A4s wide window poster.

Meantime, Psion is shortly due to announce details of an exclusive promotion for its premier retailers, via distributor Lightning. It currently has some 100 such dealers in place.

## PCs leap

Continued from front page:

business sector put on 28 per cent, but rises of 56 per cent (France) and 35 per cent (Germany) mean that the UK is now in overall third place.

Intelligent Electronics attributes this to the extraordinary growth in the UK in 1986 (largely fuelled by Amstrad and the PC 1512 range); the continuing dominance of IBM; and the price sensitive nature of the local market which means that "it is often considered unprofitable by the other major worldwide vendors".

Amongst other findings:

- The highest levels of business market growth was achieved by Holland (70 per cent) and Sweden (58 per cent).

- Despite grabbing so much media coverage, 386-based machines during the year accounted for just 1.6 per cent of sales. 8088/86 products totalled 44 per cent, up 38 per cent on 1986. 286-based machines showed the largest growth, up 89 per cent to just over a third of all sales.

- Of the 286 sector, IBM clearly led the way with just over a third of sales - ahead of Tandon, Olivetti, Compaq, Bull, Victor, HP and the South East Asian (SEA) compatibles, each with shares ranging from four to seven per cent.

- Of the 8088/86 sector, Amstrad sold just under a quarter with Olivetti just ahead of IBM at 16 per cent.

- The good news for laptops is that sales doubled from 1986 to 1987; the bad news is that they nonetheless still only accounted for around one in 20 of all computers sold.

- The non-IBM compatible market rose to 17 per cent of all sales, up from 14 per cent. Commodore with the Amiga and Atari with its ST each had about one third of the market, with the Apple Mac weighing in at 26.5 per cent. Apple in all is measured at having sold 140,000 units, up 70 per cent.

- Though IBM showed a relatively modest volume growth of 26 per cent, this is significant because it indicates a slowing down in the erosion of its market share. Intelligent Electronics also reports that IBM's share has started to increase for the first time in three years.

- In the home/individuals sector, Amstrad leads with just under a third of all sales, and Commodore heads off Atari 23 to 21 per cent. Intelligent Electronics dubs this "an oligopolistic competitive situation".

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