

COIN INDUSTRY

PLAY METER

Volume 3 No.1

January 1977

1977

DIRECTORY ISSUE

Profit Outlook '77

A.T.E. Preview

**Pinball:
the player's view**

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Tom Hogg, Microcomputer Programmer, Atari, Inc.

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"If the roadway and steering looks like this picture and moves with the wheel, you're OK.

3. *Lamps.* The start pushbutton should be lit.

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COIN INDUSTRY PLAY METER



Volume 3/No. 1
January, 1977

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staff

Publisher and Editor:	Ralph C. Lally II
Managing Editor:	Richard S. Dietrich
International Editor:	David Snook Editor, <i>Coin Slot</i>
Technical Editor:	Robin Minnear
Correspondents:	Roger C. Sharpe Thomas Borden Timothy Jarrell Dick Welu Mary Claire Blakeman
Circulation Manager:	Carolyn Desmond
Production:	Earl Dupre Carol Lally Vickie Lofton Hellen Seal
Typography:	Skybird Typography
Advertising Representative:	Ralph C. Lally II
European Representative:	Esmay Leslie

European Office: Advertising & subscriptions—Play Meter Promotions, 15 Great North Road, Brookmans Park, AL9 6LB, Hertfordshire, England. Tel: Potters Bar, Herts., 43071.

PLAY METER, January, 1977, Volume 3, Number 1. Publishing offices 4136 Washington Avenue, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, La. 70184. Telephone (504) 827-0320. Printing Offices: Franklin Printing Co., 209 Magazine St., New Orleans, La. Controlled circulation at New Orleans, La. Subscription rates: U.S. and Canada—\$25; Europe and Japan—\$40; Elsewhere—\$45. Multiple subscriptions (one order): 2-9, \$17 each; 10-24, \$15 each; 25 or more, \$10 each. Advertising rates available on request. Copyright 1977 by Skybird Publishing Company. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without express permission. The trademarks, PLAY METER and COIN INDUSTRY PLAY METER, are registered. The editors are not responsible for unsolicited contributions. Postmaster: Send form 3579 to Play Meter, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, La. 70184.

from the editor

Welcome to the year 1977 and welcome to Volume III of Play Meter. It is with a great deal of pride and satisfaction that I can look upon the first two years of Play Meter. They were two years that saw the beginning of a new era of technology and enlightenment, and from the beginning Play Meter was designed to serve the needs of the operator during such a period of rapid growth and soaring costs.

Helping the operator to survive was the focus of Play Meter's editorial content then and it always will be. That was a time to dispense with a trade journalism that only concerned itself with gossip columns, smiling faces, music news and loads of manufacturer propaganda. The time had come to provide this industry with a publication that would serve the operator rather than sell him. It was a time to inform the operator not deceive or patronize him. And as an informative vehicle, Play Meter has since become the leading and most respected publication now serving the industry.

But so much for the past. What everyone is interested in is the future. As I gaze into my "bionic" crystal ball, the year ahead seems to be clouded with question marks. While many of the question marks concern themselves with the new Carter administration, it's far too early to say yet what effect that will have on this country much less the industry. But I think I would be safe in saying that the amusement machine industry has little to worry about politically on the national level. Indeed the industry was born into the worst economic depression the country has ever seen and should flourish forever in good times and bad.

What this industry is selling is an attractive, compact, efficient, miniaturized amusement device, which is fully automated and provides entertainment for millions of people, young and old everywhere. In the days of old when a nickle was a nickle and with one you could muster up a loaf of bread or a bottle of beer, pocket change was real money and not readily parted with. These days pocket change has been reduced to a mere nuisance, when it isn't being used for tax tokens. But change can be put into all kinds of coin operated devices designed to make life a little bit more convenient and hopefully more enjoyable. So from that standpoint, coins are not a nuisance but in a very real sense "tickets" that entitle the bearer to entertain himself at his leisure.

While we count the days until we see a dollar coin and games that accept one and even five dollar bills, we at Play Meter are going to continue to make sure our readers are up on all the new and old ways

of gathering up as many of these "tickets" as they possibly can.

In the year ahead we plan to continue our drive to promote the image of the industry at national, state and local levels. We will continue to key on state and local legal problems and urge everyone to help legalize all amusement machines. We will continue to search out operators who have been successful in certain areas of the business in order that they may share their experiences and knowledge with us. Hopefully we will enable operators everywhere to re-negotiate a more realistic and sensible commission arrangement with their locations. We will continue to provide our readers with new product information that is informative, unbiased and educated.

In this issue as well as the year ahead, we are expanding our coverage in the management and technical fields. Some of this expansion will show itself in our new mid-month publication Update launched a few months ago and sent to all paid subscribers. We feel that better business methods and top notch service will be extremely important in the years ahead. Too, with two well-attended, highly successful Phase III Digital Service Schools behind us, we're looking forward this year to sponsoring several more and perhaps some lower level schools as well. Up until Play Meter's very first school back in October, we had no idea how thirsty technicians are for digital logic information.

As was done this same time last year, we extend our deepest thanks and appreciation to our faithful paid subscribers that have stuck by us over the year. We were delighted some time ago to reward your faithfulness with our mid-month sister publication Update. We are now equally proud and delighted to present to you an industry directory. A great many staff hours have gone into its preparation. You will find that it is the most complete, accurate and useful directory of its kind. We took special care to make sure it turned out that way because you are so special to us. Accept this special issue as our gift to you to whom we owe so much. From all of us to all of you—a very prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,



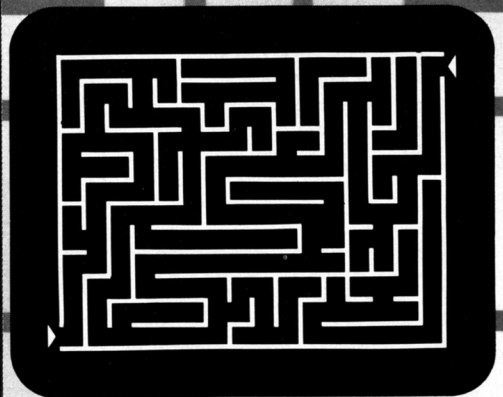
Ralph C. Lally II,
Publisher & Editor

Midway's **AMAZING**

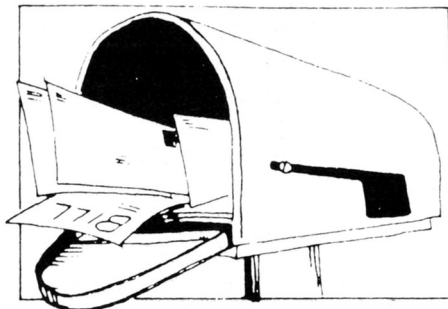
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mailbox



FORMER COINMAN

Thank you very much for the interview article in the November issue of *Play Meter*. I was very happy with your reporting of the interview.

Best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season.

Ted Nichols
Former President
Music Operators of America
Owner
Automatic Vending Service
Fremont, Nebraska

HOLIDAY WISHES

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of you at *Play Meter*.

Thank you for your response and editorial on location owned equipment. The problem is still here, but I think that we can bear with it until the particular operator falls flat on his back.

Rick Koch
Keith's Music
Spokane, Washington

[Rick, a Marketing major at Gonzaga University, was recently written up in the university's newspaper. "The article," he writes us, "has turned out to be good P.R. for the coin-'biz' on our school's campus."

We at Play Meter want to thank Rick, Ted and those others of you that sent along holiday wishes, and we want to extend special greetings to you readers of and especially you writers to Mailbox. Keep those cards and letters coming.

—Ed.]

NOTICE

Saturday, Nov. 27, 1976 9 AM till 12 PM
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All proceeds from Games People Play, (located in Jackson Square across from 1st National Bank), plus any donation will be appreciated. Lydell suffered a broken neck while playing in a football game for Whitten Jr. High. This young man has a lot of courage but he needs all the help and prayers we can give him. Donations can be sent to:

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There are some arcades in our area that are under the gun so to speak from the general public, so we need to improve our image whenever and wherever we can. We like for our industry to look good so we can all be proud to be a part of it.

William R. Jones
Southern Amusement Co.
Clinton, Mississippi

[Play Meter agrees with your thinking. Community involvement is worthwhile not only because it can help the operator achieve a certain, desirable recognition from the community, but for its own sake.

—Ed.]

25 CENT PLAY

Is it a fact (or fiction) that music operators across the country are having great success with one play for 25 cent music as some articles state?

Chuck Esch
Zone Mgr., Mountain Zone
Acme Cigarette Service
Colorado Springs, Colorado

[For most of the operators we've talked to this remains an experiment, but Norman Little is one who has been successful with 25 cent play. We interview him as next month's Coinman.

—Ed.]

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Projection Racing

Conversation with Masaya Nakamura Inventor of F-1



"The most important thing to stimulate and keep this business field going is to prevent copying. Otherwise you cannot have a sound market."

Masaya Nakamura's card reads [in Japanese] "designing and planning, manufacturing, sales and management, leasing, exporting and importing." The inventor of F-1, probably the hit of this year's MOA show, is obviously a jack-of-all-trades in our industry.

Mr. Nakamura got started in the industry as an operator. His father was a gunsmith, and Mr. Nakamura considered following in his footsteps, but "the regulations for handling a gun in Japan are very, very severe," he said, "and for that reason the business hasn't such good prospects." Mr. Nakamura graduated from Yokohama Industrial Technical College where he majored in shipbuilding.

Still, in 1955, he became an operator, with one small location. The first years were difficult. "At that time I had no international support," Mr. Nakamura recalls. But his business did start to expand—although slowly—"so that within seven years I was able to have about three or four locations." And he began to talk to manufacturers about supplying machines in larger quantities, "also with long stretch payment terms and a relatively cheap price."

PLAY METER The operation began expanding more rapidly and soon Mr. Nakamura was buying his games in quantity and getting quantity discount prices. So he began distributing as well. "Since I could get the games cheaper, I was able to sell some to other people in

the same area, small location operators." Mr. Nakamura now distributes exclusively in Japan for Atari, who in turn represent him in the U.S. and Canada, also on an exclusive basis.

Soon Mr. Nakamura had arrived at a point where he envisioned certain machines for his locations that no one else was making. And in 1965, he began making his own games. "We couldn't make any games to match my ideas at first," he said, so they began by fixing up their kiddie rides "with a little reasonable idea of my own put in." For example, Mr. Nakamura was the first in Japan to utilize cartoon characters on the rides, and later he entered into a contract with Disney Enterprises in Japan so that he could make rides using those famous characters.

That was only the beginning of course. Soon he was manufacturing games after his own ideas, the latest and most exciting to date, of course, F-1, the projection driving game.

Mr. Nakamura is active in the Japanese Amusement Trade Association. Currently he is vice-chairman of the association itself and chairman of its show committee. He is married and has one daughter, nineteen years old.

With the help of an interpreter, Play Meter editor/publisher Ralph Lally—his own Japan-

ese is a bit rusty—interviewed Mr. Nakamura in late November at the IAAPA show in New Orleans. They talked about Mr. Nakamura's impressions of the United States and his experiences in Japan as an operator and manufacturer.

PLAY METER: What was the first amusement device that you built?

NAKAMURA: It was a submarine game, called Periscope, a three-player game, three periscopes set up in parallel.

PLAY METER: And what was the next step from there?

NAKAMURA: Then we made a tank game adapted from a big tank battle between the Allied forces and German forces during the second world war.

PLAY METER: When you started manufacturing, did you sell these games to your competitors, the operators you had been distributing to?

NAKAMURA: Yes.

PLAY METER: The submarine game that you mentioned sounds like Seawolf, yet this was ten years ago: would that be the first periscope game ever?

NAKAMURA: I don't believe so, but it was the first famous submarine game in Japan. I think there were some similar games before. However this was the first famous periscope game.

PLAY METER: Did it make a lot of money?

NAKAMURA: It made considerable money. But still the manufacturing part of the business was relatively small, smaller than the operating portion of the business. For instance, at that time, it was about 80 per cent operation and 20 per cent manufacturing and sales. The biggest advantage I had (and still have) was the fact that everything we manufactured, we can always utilize in our locations. So if we make 100 games, we can sell 50 but the rest of the 50, we can use those games in our own locations.

PLAY METER: Don't Sega and Taito operate in a similar fashion?

NAKAMURA: Yes.

PLAY METER: And they are your major competitors over there? They do the same things?

NAKAMURA: Yes exactly, on a little bit larger scale than Nakamura.

PLAY METER: Up until F-1, what was the best game you ever came out with?

NAKAMURA: That was about seven years ago. I developed, the company developed a game called Racer. It was an upright arcade driving game, sort of a prototype of F-1.

PLAY METER: Similar to Speedway by Chicago Coin?

NAKAMURA: Well, in appearance, yes, like Speedway. However the device in this original game was similar to the device present on F-1, so that device was invented about seven years ago.

PLAY METER: What more can you tell me about Racer?

NAKAMURA: The Racer— we don't have a picture with us at this time. The features of the game are much like F-1, but it was an upright game, a small game. Then we enlarged the whole device and developed a game called Formula X

Mr. Nakamura had with him at the interview a number of pictures of the earlier games he had manufactured. He is showing these to our interviewer as the discussion continues.

PLAY METER: I've seen this before. Where could I have seen it?

NAKAMURA: We gave many pictures to many people in the United States. This is a very big piece of equipment. It's about six feet in width; the depth is about ten feet; and the height is about seven feet. The game is, of course, covered by those patents applied to Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain and the U.S.

PLAY METER: Is this machine still for sale?

NAKAMURA: No, we discontinued production about two years ago, but the secondhand game is still available on the Japanese market.

PLAY METER: I see that this has several cars on the race track where F-1 has only two. Why is that?

NAKAMURA: This is a very, very sophisticated machine. First of all, this race car is

(Continued on page 14)



"I believe the video game will retain its position in the market just as the pinball game has been retaining and still expanding."

(continued from page 13)

the actual size of the actual race car. And then the game is classified into three levels of driving skill. The player can push a button which determines the difficulty of a particular play.

PLAY METER: What makes the play more or less difficult?

NAKAMURA: With the four-shift pro-grade, you had to drive the car exactly as you would drive a real race car. You had to change gears and use the clutch if you wanted to shift. You had to drive it just like the real car. That's the most difficult game. The next easiest step is almost like an automatic transmission driving game. You still have to change a gear, one, but without using a clutch at the second gear. The easiest one, you don't have to do anything. You just drive, step on the gas and steer.

PLAY METER: Why didn't you incorporate that into F-1?

NAKAMURA: This was too sophisticated a machine, that's No. 1; and No. 2, it was too large for just about any location, and it was a little bit too expensive for operators to purchase. So it had to be modified, and we came out with F-1.

PLAY METER: What's next? What comes after F-1?

NAKAMURA: I would like to tell you about it but the timing is a little too soon.

PLAY METER: But we can look to your

company to provide several pieces during the coming year?

NAKAMURA: The Nakamura Co. will introduce at least ten pieces a year to the Japanese market. Within that ten to twelve pieces that we're introducing in Japan, probably three or four should be acceptable to the international market and hopefully one or two of those that we will introduce into the international market will be real winners.

PLAY METER: Better than F-1?

NAKAMURA: Hopefully, yes.

PLAY METER: Will that be at the A.T.E. in London?

NAKAMURA: Maybe, but as you know, this is a very delicate point. Therefore, although we may well be able to introduce a game at the A.T.E., still we might not do it. Since we're doing so well on the F-1, we will stick to the F-1 to a certain point; then we will come out with a new game. Of course the games that we are talking about are being developed in our central laboratory.

PLAY METER: As a manufacturer, do you worry about other manufacturers copying your games, reverse engineering in effect?

NAKAMURA: In Japan we made a provision in the Amusement Association regulations that when the original game manufacturer displays his own game in a show, whoever is a copier of this game is not allowed to show the copy game in the same show.

PLAY METER: How do you settle who had the game first? At the MOA, for example, there were about four different night driver games. How would the association go about deciding whose gets to be shown and whose doesn't?

NAKAMURA: Everybody is free to display his games. However, if somebody claims "that guy is copying my game," then the association will go into very severe investigation as to who developed the game first; then they will decide.

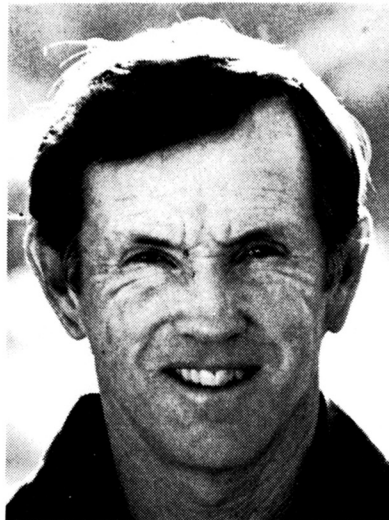
PLAY METER: So you police yourselves on that. I don't think you'll see that happen here unfortunately, mainly because we don't have an association of manufacturers. There is no common body or organization that the manufacturers belong to, to my knowledge, not one at any rate that would police an eventuality like that.

NAKAMURA: The most important thing to stimulate and keep this business field going is to prevent copying. If there is an original idea maker and he comes up with a very good idea and he develops it and starts making something, which becomes a fabulous game and well accepted by people and the market, then somebody starts copying it tomorrow or the next day or something, then his enthusiasm or strong will to manufacture an original game will disappear and because of this attempt made by these copiers. A copier just copies; he does not go through the

(continued on page 49)

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Gene Littler

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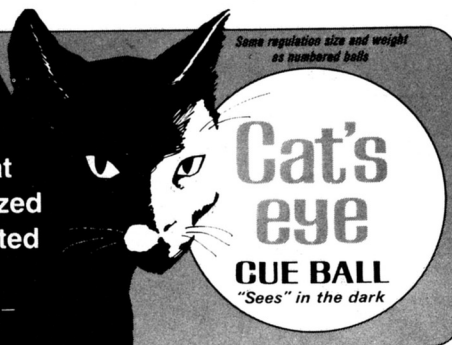
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Play Meter Service Schools to Continue

On December 14, 15 and 16, a special state-of-the-art video logic seminar was held at the Denver Hilton hotel in Denver, Colo. The school was the joint effort of *Play Meter* and Kush N' Stuff. The school was presented by Robin L. Minnear, head instructor at Kush N' Stuff and technical editor for *Play Meter*.

This school was the second in a series of schools that are to be held regionally around the U.S. The first school took place in New Orleans in October.

The school opened with an impromptu talk by *Play Meter* Editor Ralph Lally on the need for up-to-date education and on what *Play Meter* is doing to help the serviceman. Then Ralph introduced Robin Minnear and everyone was off to a land of ones and zeros.

The *Play Meter*-Kush N' Stuff schools begin with a *random* logic presentation. The random logic presentation takes up the entire first day and is equivalent to most two-day logic schools that have been presented in the past. Subjects covered are basic T.V. monitor theory, raster scanning, analog vs. digital, basic TTL logic, binary logic, clocked logic and random logic troubleshooting techniques. The troubleshooting portion consists of a test instrument analysis of a common paddle game.

Minnear admits that "the first day's pace is a little fast for people who have had no previous exposure to digital logic. But random logic schools have been around for a long time. To go to work in this industry as a technician requires the ability to repair on all levels of video logic." This school, Minnear continues, "was specifically put together to be a state-of-the-art presentation. That means *random* logic (phase I and II) and *processed* logic (phase III)."

The second day begins with a discussion of how memory devices (ROM's) are used in random logic systems. The ROM address-multi-

plex scheme as seen in Tank was used as an example at the Denver school and led into a discussion of interlaced raster scanning.

After lunch begins the *processed* logic or phase III portion of the school. The discussion starts with

an explanation of why the industry has moved to microcomputer systems to control game operation. "The reason CPU's (central processing units) are used is simple, Minnear states, "money! CPU systems today contain one-half to

Fun Factory Starts Tours

Fun Factory tours have been initiated to educate children and adults to the workings of arcade equipment, beginning with the electromechanical games, through the integrated circuit/T.V. games, to the microprocessor/ calculator games. The California Fun Factories, Inc., based in Redondo Beach, run a chain of fun arcades in the state.

What is offered is a tour of the San Diego or Redondo Beach facilities, with a light instruction of how the different games operate and a visual demonstration and look into the various pieces of equipment. The instruction period is followed by allowing the guests to play some of the games. These tours are offered before opening hours or during slow periods. The ideal group is about thirty people although there are groups scheduled with as many as three hundred.

Initially started to stimulate sales and raise public opinion of the amusement business, the Fun Factory tours are becoming an integral part of the operation in that the tours give the employees a better understanding of the customers, according to Stephen P. Shoemaker, Jr., president of California Fun Factories.

The managers explain how they keep the games clean and demonstrate the preventive maintenance programs the firm has developed. Having the employees go over the material with customers as critics keeps them on their toes, Shoemaker says. Also it gives the

individual employee additional pride in his particular location.

The people who usually come to the Fun Factory to play *after* the instruction find themselves often impressed with the intricacies of the games. This education into the complicated and delicate equipment, according to Shoemaker, greatly stimulates customer respect and eliminates much of the abuse common in the business.

The Fun Factories have also found the effect on parents and teachers beneficial; the often mistaken opinion that arcade games and pinball machines are in some way bad and breed degeneration quickly changes. These adults realize that the child who wants to be a pinball mechanic is not really crazy but, in reality, is interested in a progressive and complicated field which requires thorough electrical and mechanical skills as well as an understanding of solid-state design.

Through the tours, people become aware that the amusement business is alive and well and that places such as Disneyland, Knotts and hundreds of smaller operations need qualified mechanics and are willing to offer good salaries and benefits to them.

"Originally conceived as a promotional tour, the Fun Factory tours are fast becoming a part of our regular business," Shoemaker said. "So popular have the tours become that organizations are scheduling trips as far as a month or two in advance."

one-third the devices of their random logic counterparts. Engineering costs are also reduced."

Next comes a short skit where Robin plays the part of a CPU. He runs around mimicking the operations of the CPU performing its normal functions. "Even though a technician has no control over the internal operations of the CPU, I believe that a basic understanding of its abilities and *software* are necessary to understand the surrounding *hardware's* function," he says.

The second day closes with a look at the devices that make up a microprocessor system.

The third day everyone plunges

into the world of existing CPU game systems. The systems discussed in Denver were the 6502 system as seen in Flyball, the F-8 system as seen in Spitfire, and (in depth) the 8080 system as seen in Gunfight. An extensive troubleshooting session followed that was concerned with Gunfight.

When asked at the school why three different CPU systems were studied, Minnear replied, "The CPU's we looked at are basically the same. The emphasis was placed on the differences in the surrounding hardware devices."

The third day also included discussions of static problems and fixes, care and adjustment of T.V.

monitors, and what to look for when buying test equipment and how much to spend.

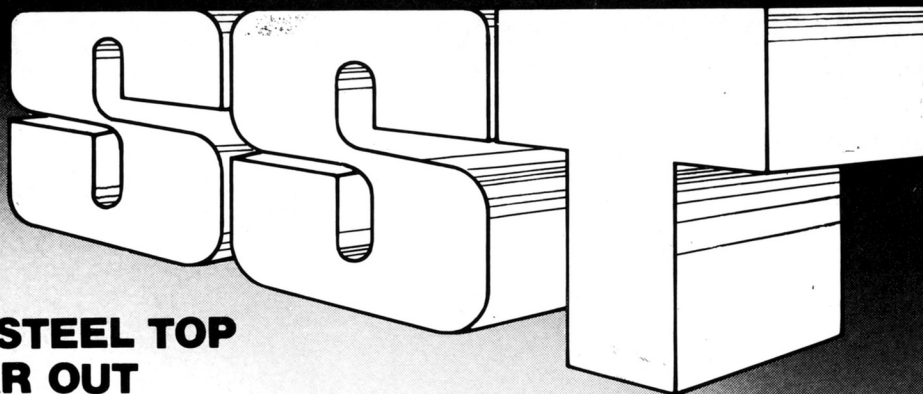
Everyone who attends receives a *Textbook of Video Game Logic* and a 42-page workbook which contains an extensive processor troubleshooting guide and a half-dozen schematics.

The over-all response to both schools has been tremendous and every spare moment has seen Minnear swamped with people who want specific answers to their individual questions.

It's also the policy of these schools to distribute comment sheets to all attendees. "It's import-

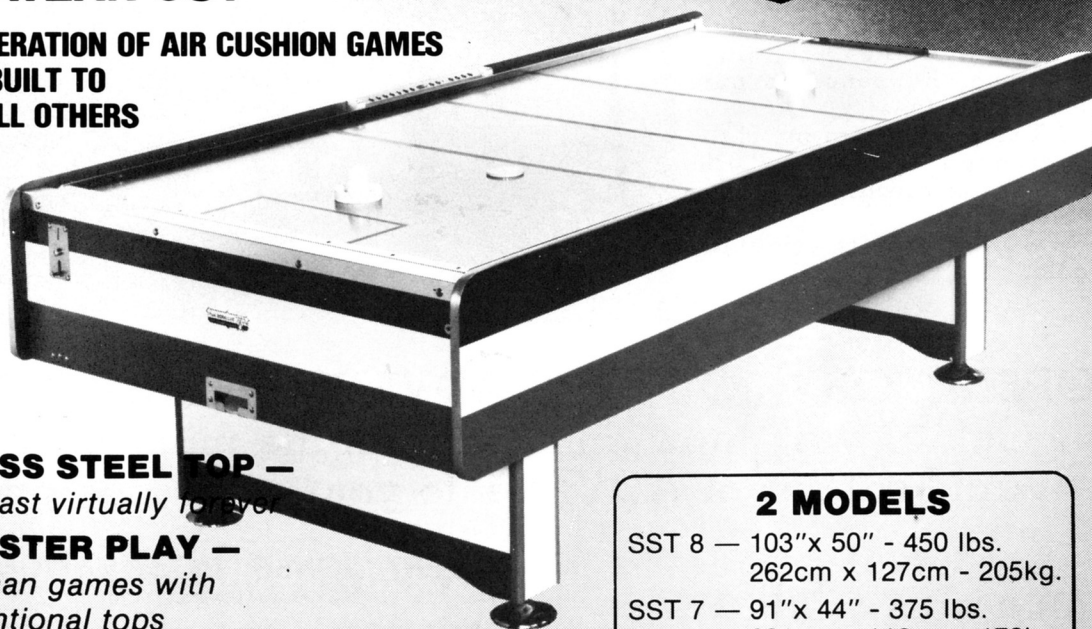
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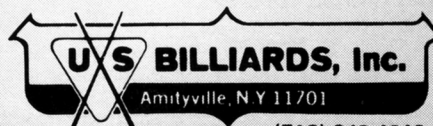
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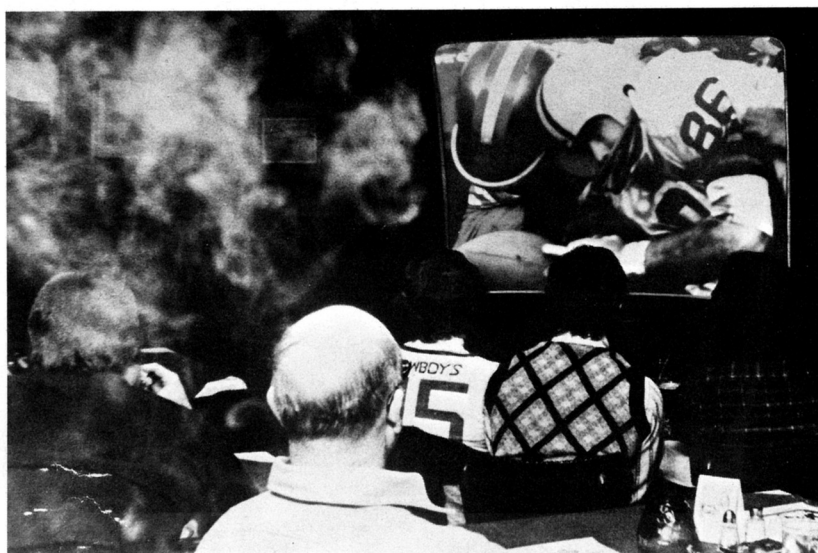
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*The TV picture on the screen is a real one, but (for pro-football copyright reasons) not the one the crowd was watching.

distributing

Empire Hosts School

Empire Distributing, Inc., Green Bay, Wis., held its latest weeklong school Nov. 29-Dec. 3 at the Sheraton-Southfield Hotel, Southfield, Mich. The school represented something of a departure from past schools; many of the changes were made at the request of operators.

The first two days of the school emphasized the basics and, while the sessions might have served as a good review for any technician, were aimed primarily at the new serviceman. Gottlieb, Chicago Coin, National Rejectors and Bally participated in the instruction.

The rest of the school was dedicated to solid-state and was according to Bob Rondeau of Empire, "a fantastic adventure for the serviceman who really wanted to learn something about our changing industry. Not only did we have all the solid-state manufacturers together but we had them helping one another," he added.

Wednesday morning's instruction was by Jim Sneed of Kurz-Kasch.

Visits Wichita

A Midway service school was conducted in Wichita, Kan. at United Distributing Co. October 16-17. Mark Blum and Mark Blum, Jr. of United served as hosts for the affair.

The subject matter at the school was video games and the micro-processor systems. Midway Service Manager Andy Ducay demonstrated with Gun Fight, Sea Wolf and Tornado Baseball.

Attending the school were servicemen from United, CM Distributing, Automatic Music Co., Jayhawk Distributing, Ronnies Amusement Co. and Wichita Billiard all of Wichita, from Hutch Vending of Hutchinson, Midwestern Music of Arkansas City, Gran Diel Music of McPherson, Landes Vending and Hawk Vending both of Salina, and from Cal's Coin College of Nicoma Park, Okla.

He was followed that afternoon and Thursday morning by Fred McCord of Atari. Darrell Blendowski of Electra Games was on Thursday afternoon and evening, and Midway's Andy Ducay followed on Friday. In addition, all instructors were available at the school, in the classroom to help any students with problems.

Joining Sneed, McCord, Blendowski and Ducay as instructors at the Empire school were Cliff Strain of Gottlieb, Dick Doubek of National Rejectors, Willie Taylor of Chicago Coin, Bill Findlay of Rock-Ola and Bernie Powers of Bally.

Laughing Sailor

Universe Affiliated International, Inc., Union N.J., has announced that they are now reimporting the famous Laughing Sailor into the United States and Canada as the manufacturer's exclusive representative.

Barry Feinblatt, president of Universe Affiliated International, explained how the deal came about. "The Laughing Sailor has been a very famous arcade piece that was produced in England and was very successful," he said. The manufacturer went out of business a few years ago and we were able, within the last year, to locate the company who had bought the original dies and molds. Consequently we are now having the machine remanufactured and are reimporting it."

The Laughing Sailor features a rubber mannequin sitting on top of a log. When a coin is inserted, the sailor, bottle in hand, rocks back and forth giving off his famous and infectious laugh. It is "literally impossible for anybody listening to the machine not to laugh," according to Feinblatt.

The Laughing Sailor was demonstrated by Universe Affiliated International at both the MOA and the IAAPA shows.

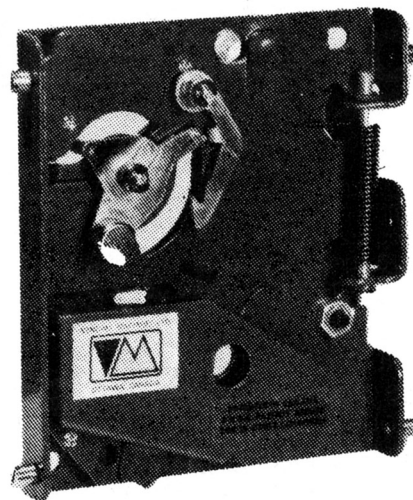
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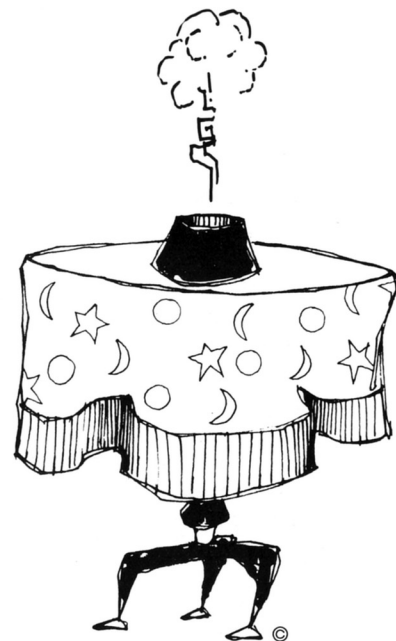
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Midwest

Market

Forecast



Business P

by *Debbie Courtright*

Play Meter asked two of its reporters to talk to operators in their areas and come up with reports previewing the economy for next year as it would affect those operators. Their reports differ considerably.

Debbie Courtright, a journalism major at Northwestern in Evanston, Ill., describes her article as a "Midwest market forecast." She talked to at least one economist and a number of operators in the Chicago area, and she records their opinions about this year and their hopes and fears for the next.

This year, especially during the holiday season, the coin-operating industry has been deluged with more and more requests for home games. Video tennis, soccer, and hockey foosball games are big items for Midwest operators.

"The trend is just now really picking up for home games and I expect the trend to continue through 1977, probably much bigger," said Phillip Szymarek of P & S Amusements. Szymarek operates pinballs in Madison County, Ill., and Granite City, Ill. "I would imagine the reason for this big market now is because young adults have more money than before and can afford to get these video games for their families. What better Christmas present for the whole family?" he asked. "I think that's why the whole coin-operated business has boomed over this past year in general—more money to spend for fun."

With the 1974 recession under the country's belt, people feel a little easier about spending some money on entertainment.

Mike Kelly, controller at Empire Distributing, Inc., a Bally subsidiary in Chicago, said their Midwest sales to Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan and Iowa have picked up by roughly 30 per cent over 1975. He attributes this to the economic growth and an optimistic feeling among the public. "The economy has definitely improved and the young teens are getting hold of money to spend for pinball. They don't have a lot of money, but enough for pinball," he said. In addition, Kelly said the machines themselves are getting more interested and intriguing.

Howard Lascelles, owner of Lascelles Vending in Havana, Ill., agrees with Szymarek and Kelly that the surplus money people have will boost pinball appeal because "when

money is tight, people just won't play anything." However, Lascelles, about to retire, hasn't seen much of a big increase in his pinball and jukebox operations in the past two to three years.

"It's and old, steady business. No big changes in demand as far as I can see and I'm not really expecting any," Lascelles said. "It's just too established."

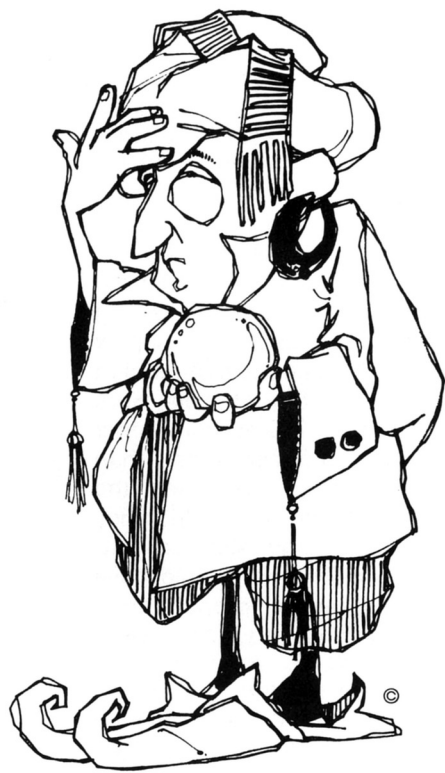
However, one operator will stick to the Depression theory of pinball appeal. The Depression theory is that when the economy is bad, money is tight, and people who cannot afford to go to expensive movies or travel, will play the pin games because they are more economical entertainment. "It's the cheapest type of entertainment there is," said Kem Thom, manager of Western Automatic Music, Inc., which operates out of Chicago. He believes in the Depression theory.

(Continued on page 44)

One

Western

Opinion



review '77

by Gene Beley

The amusement machine operator is like the farmer that harvests the grain but is not there for the feast.

Moreover, the amusement machine industry historically has gone through the cycles of feast and famine. This past year, 1976, began blowing some chill winds through the grass roots of the industry—out where the operators grow the grain. The effects should be noted especially at the manufacturing level during 1977. So before any of the manufacturers threaten to cancel their *Play Meter* advertisements, a lot of this information can benefit them the most.

I sincerely hope my predictions are wrong, but *Play Meter's* strong devotion to journalistic principles and our mutual goal to print the truth commands me to be blunt. The revolution that begun in 1976 had its seeds planted in the birth of the video games and quietly grew in the soil of inflation that plagued the

entire world. My five-year forecast that will obtain a strong footing during 1977 includes:

—80 per cent fewer working amusement machine operators;

—The large conglomerates with vending will accelerate their amusement game holdings. These companies will begin to obtain an almost monopolistic-type power in the industry that will help them to better dictate more favorable terms (for themselves) to locations by 1980. During 1977 there will be acquisition fever, as the large companies compete for buying independent companies' locations, or putting them out of business by offering outrageous bonuses and percentages to the locations.

—1977 will be a good year for independent companies thinking about selling to take advantage of the demand factor in the marketplace.

—Traditionally outstanding loca-

Gene Beley, who has been both a newspaper man and an operator, is a regular contributor to Play Meter. Beley recently left the operating field for a position at the Holographic Development Corp. of America.

Gene called as he sent in his article to warn us that it might reflect too much his own recent unfortunate experiences with the industry. "Read it and see what you think."

We think it's controversial and we don't agree with all of it, but we do think Gene ought to be allowed to speak his mind. So here it is.

tions like bowling centers, amusement parks and miniature golf courses will continue the trend in the West to buy their own machines directly from the distributors and operate themselves. One bowling center chain in the Greater Los Angeles area now operates their own amusement machines in 27 bowls. The technology that began in the early 1970's will make the machines more reliable to operate and many may soon diagnose their own ailments. As the rising costs of parts and labor cause operators problems, as they try to pay the bills out of the 50 per cent or less share, the locations controlling 100 per cent of the money are naturally in a better position to pay the bills and eke out a better profit. Also, most of the large locations such as bowling centers have diversified cash sources and either pay cash for machines, or obtain 90 day terms to

(Continued on page 22)

(Continued from page 21)

earn the total purchase price, using none of their own money. In the short-run, at least, they are probably preferable customers for the distributors that sell the equipment as opposed to the majority of operators who may take up to 24 months to pay.

—By the end of 1977, distributors who aren't already operating equipment will be forced to operate to cope with their own economic problems.

—Legalized gambling will become a part of the industry nationally by 1980, and the wealthy conglomerates will begin in 1977 to stake out their locations by paying outrageous bonus figures and more than 50 per cent to locations that are suitable for gambling devices. Atlantic City is not on another planet! This activity will puzzle the independent operator struggling to pay his bills on the same fixed quarter denomination coming into his cash boxes, while another price raise in oil-based products such as flipper rubbers and plastic playfield parts makes him sick to his stomach.

Pessimistic? Hopefully, yes. But I was one who, three years ago, when I read a book called *How to Prepare for the Coming Depression*, thought it was radical—saying things like major cities would go broke, large banks would also declare bankruptcy, and spelling out many other things that have since become history. So let's slowly back up and analyze what has been happening in the amusement machine industry.

Prior to the introduction of video games, there were rifles, car games, and others in the "arcade" category. A few states even allowed the flipper games prior to 1973—about the time they became legal in California. But the general category of games to purchase was more limited than now and the cost of each game was approximately one-half of today's price.

I can still remember Bob Portale (Portale Automatic Sales, Los Angeles distributor) showing me the first Pong game by Atari. When he told me the price of over \$1300, I looked inside at the Hitachi TV set, and joked, "For that price, I at least ought to get a Sony."

But when we discovered that the cash boxes overflowed in the

Pongs, we overlooked the Hitachi and the other adolescent pimples on the Pong (such as giving free games when it was kicked or received a charge of static electricity). The industry rejoiced. Nolan Bushnell became the Messiah. And, better yet, before the payments were even completed on the Pongs for all of the operators' locations, along roared Gran Trak 10 and its twin, Gran Trak 20. No operator could afford to be without such equipment. As a result, an abnormally large amount of equipment was purchased on credit, frequently with no down payments, during this boom period.

Manufacturers were throwing new video games into distributors showrooms faster than Billy Jean King could hit tennis balls over the net. Many of those games that are now skeletons in the closets of manufacturers looked great enough to try and buy. Again, I and many others bought on credit from our friendly, helpful distributors. Fortunately, because the video games were still a public novelty, times were good, the payments got paid, and, if a particular video game began turning sour, we hustled it back to the distributor, and got a fair trade-in price on the latest TV game. Everyone was happy—for a while.

Some of the older, wiser, and financially-sound business firms in the industry suffered the most during that period. If they refused to buy every new novelty game that hit the market, many times they lost a major location contract to a new operator, perhaps just starting out, but who could supply an all new line-up of these flashy games.

Operators began to realize they really weren't making money on these games. The location was getting the feast. And everyone else in the distribution chain. But the operator began to ponder the predicament by the end of 1975. A track record had begun to emerge and the operator compared it to the earnings of flipper games. Sadly enough, several veteran operators on the West Coast faded quietly out of the business, along with the video machines that were creating a grave-yard. In 1976 distributors began being highly selective in which video games that they would even accept for trade-ins. By the end of 1976, it was almost impossible to sell any video game but a

Gran Trak 10, 20, or Indy 800 to a Los Angeles distributor, though the same distributor may have sold the same game six months before!

The Indy 800—thought to be the Rolls Royce of games—had a resale market value at Los Angeles distributors of \$4000 by the end of 1976. And this game was sold for \$9000 in 1974. When I bought an Indy 800 in 1974, one of the sales pitches was how Atari intended to build only 200 of them for the world market. I reasoned it would be in short supply with a high demand, keeping a high resale value. Atari officials were astounded to sell 200 of them rather quickly and produced more than originally intended to meet the demand. Then in 1976 they introduced the Indy 400, an outstanding machine that would have been a better service to operators if it could have been produced before the Indy 800. Anyhow, the introduction of the Indy 400 in the price range of \$4,000 greatly helped to devalue the Indy 800 on the used market.

What other factors are taking the bloom out of the commercial video game flower?

The very manufacturers who got the feast from the operators' dollars may have outsmarted themselves. They entered the retail marketing arena to feed themselves again. Electronic tennis boards sitting on the shelves of manufacturers were dusted off and toted to Sears and other large department store chains. By Christmas of 1975, Santa was busy delivering streamlined versions of coin-op tennis on everyone's home TV set.

The professional operators who had paid the bill for the research and development of such games silently bit the bullet as they say the \$100 price tags, while they were still being charged more than \$200 for logic board replacements. By the Christmas of 1976, the price was more like \$50 in many discount stores, while operators were trying to unload expensive video Pong tables, purchased for more than \$1200, for \$300 to \$500, usually with no buyers.

Intel Corp. of Santa Clara marketed the first microprocessor chip in 1973 at a cost of \$50 each; today the cost is \$5. This would seem to indicate that the cost of games should be going down, yet each

(Continued on page 45)

Are your games game?

—a pinball player's view

by roger c. sharpe

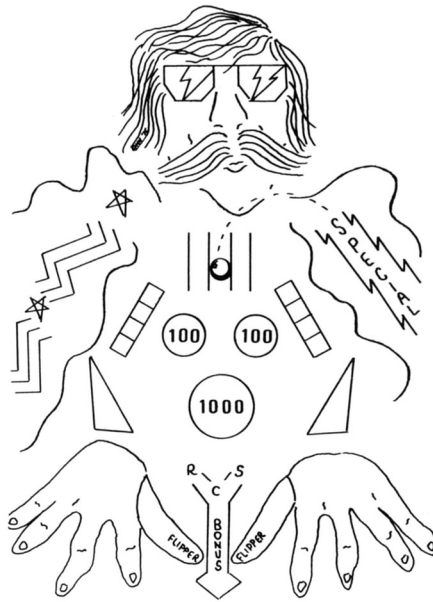
The MOA show is well behind us now but a question remains concerning the games shown there, and I don't mean just pinball machines but video games and all the rest of the coin-op deluge as well. What do the players think? What determines the successful venture from one that just gets by?

This article you are reading is going to get into many of these points and a few others. I'll try to relay to you the places I've visited, the people I've met, the feedback I've gotten and my own impressions of the game scene today. If all goes well, it's going to be (at least) a two-part project. I hope it will be informative, interesting and ultimately helpful.

I've visited arcades and game rooms of all sizes shapes and descriptions all over the U.S. and Europe during the past two and a half years. There is much to be learned from all of it. Probably the most important aspects of my findings are the locations themselves and the shape of the games.

An example may prove the best approach for now. I "recovered" from the Chicago MOA scene in sunny Florida, specifically in the Fort Lauderdale area. And what does a pinball junkie do when he's away from the hustle and bustle and wants to unwind? Well, he gets some sun and surf in the daytime and seeks out the steel ball at night. So I tried my hand at every major pinball place in the area and one thing struck me: the games are not being maintained. Players are walking away unsatisfied, not because they're not good players, but because the games are in horrendous shape.

The problem stems from any number of things, but if an operator is trying to "screw" his patrons, he can take lessons from some of the machines I "tried" to play while in Florida. I tell you it's criminal to



think that the games you see at a convention or in a distributor's showroom are going to be different on a route.

The player frequently doesn't have a chance (and many know it). Some games are doctored. I played a Williams Aztec at two different locations and this is what I found: on one the flippers had been altered to lessen the span and scope of the power zone—in simpler terms, the flippers were almost in a straight line rather than at an angle. What did it mean to the play of the game? Well, the natural stroke through the spinner from the right flipper was impossible and only the left flipper could handle the shot (badly too!). On the other Aztec, the action of the thumper bumpers was deadened and the game slowed way down.

The same game we played at MOA, yet here the players weren't given the chance to play it the way the designer had planned it. Aztec is a good game, it has done well in many places, but because of the way it was handled here, it was experiencing down time. Now the

operator can blame the manufacturer or even the distributor but ultimately it rests in his lap.

In New York, I took a friend to a place to play pinball and we tried our hand on an Old Chicago by Bally, a game that I personally like though I have never found one on location that played as well as the showroom sample. My friend's reaction? He hated the game. Yet later, he ran across it in another location, tried it again and liked it—he now sees some of the merit of the game.

It goes on and on from coast to coast, and the key word is *consistency*. Why should a player have to take his risks whenever he drops in a coin? He doesn't know if the game is going to be a winner or a loser, and I'm not talking about the features or play action of the game—just the condition of it and how *true* it will play.

In this day and age of mass production many of the problems stem from assembly line errors, but all the blame doesn't rest there. It moves instead to the operator who needs to invest time and pride in what he is displaying for his clientele. Maybe the feeling is that since the public is a twelve year old kid it doesn't matter. But I'm telling you it does matter. Kids talk about how bad a game is playing or how dirty a location is. And the wrong word-of-mouth can be the kiss of death.

What can be done? Well, let's look at the games and take it from there. How often do you clean them? Once a week, once a month, when they break down? What parts of the machine should be regularly checked? How about flippers (without them you're lost), thumper bumpers (they should thump and bump not thud), targets (if they're supposed to go down make sure they do, and if they're supposed to do something else, they should), spinners (they shouldn't be wound

(continued on page 45)

The A.T.E. Previewed

London Rain, a Drafty Palace

by David Snook

The message to American coinmen bound for London's A.T.E. is the usual—bring your overcoats. Pampered by the Conrad Hilton's carpeted warmth at your M.O.A. show, the uninitiated may make the mistake of assuming the same facilities exist at the world's largest coin machine show. They don't, as any hardened U.S. businessman who is a regular visitor to the British show will tell you.

Alexandra Palace, in North London, is a crumbling Victorian edifice of elephantine proportions which assumes the thermal aspects of a refrigerator in the winter months. At the same time the standard of catering seems skillfully designed to promote despair and the car parking is totally inadequate.

So why use Alexandra Palace? The answer is, quite simply, that the organizers have security of tenure at Alexandra Palace and while the show is now probably large enough to move to somewhere like Earls Court, there is no guarantee that they will be allowed back there the following year for the dates they want. And, of course, having moved away from Alexandra Palace

they would hardly get a sympathetic ear from the Palace authorities if they were forced to return there cap in hand.

In the past 12 months there has been a certain amount of pressure from the trade to shift the whole caboodle to the new National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, but the show organizers rightly point out that the visitors, both British and overseas, like the bright lights of London's West End. Birmingham, although Britain's second largest city, isn't in the same league for entertainment.

So, Alexandra Palace it is and be forewarned about the climate!

This leading American complaint is closely followed by another, traditionally, the lack of "policing" at the show. A.T.E. just doesn't have anything like the checks on who gets in as M.O.A. has, or didn't until now.

Previously just about anyone could get into the show, and this often included members of the general public. It was a problem that Americans and Britons alike complained about.

Perhaps it was a spin-off of

M.O.A.'s growing international importance and many British exhibitors having seen the system of control operated at M.O.A. that this year they began a vigorous campaign to get a similar system adopted at A.T.E.

Led by the British trade press the campaign gathered momentum until a situation was reached where the organizers dropped their previous response that the system would be "too expensive" and looked at the idea more carefully.

The upshot is that registration will be necessary at A.T.E. this year and that badges will be worn so that everyone knows who everyone else is. American visitors are therefore advised to save themselves some hassle at the door on the opening day and to pre-register now.

The address, by the way is, Amusement Trades Exhibitions Ltd., 122 Clapham Common North Side, London SW4 9SP.

So what can everyone expect from the 1977 show?

As usual it is a sellout with a waiting list of about 20 companies. There were 133 booths, or stands as the British call them, at the last count, ranging from odd little corners to the mammoth Associated Leisure and Ruffler and Deith displays.

There are noticeably more stands from overseas companies this year, perhaps reflecting the criticisms of last year by American companies in particular that preference was being given to the home manufacturers.

This of course left the organizers in something of a hole. The overseas companies complained that if they were left out then A.T.E. was not living up to its international image. Including so many overseas companies this year, however, has left A.T.E. open to criticism from some British companies for not helping the balance of payments by



Alexandra Palace, London. Home of the A. T. E.

giving space to overseas companies while British companies had been left out. Who'd be an exhibition promoter!?

The overseas exhibitors include Robert Andries Automatic of Brussels, Belgium; Ardac Inc. of Willoughby, Ohio; Atari Inc. (for the first time ever) of Sunnyvale, California; R.H. Belam Co. Inc. of New York; Bell-Matic A.S. of Denmark; Brunswick GMBH of West Germany; Competition Industries of Belgium; Model Racing S.A.S. of Italy; Original Kart of Italy; Rene Pierre S.A. of France; Playmatic S.A. of Spain; Reverchon S.A. of France; S.D.C. Organization of Italy; Taito Corporation of Japan; U.S. Billiards of New York; and Zamperla Antonio of Italy.

At one time Bally had booked a large stand, but the company mysteriously cancelled its space. As the company is well represented in Britain by distributors, it is likely these were not too happy about the firm taking space. It is well known that Bally is planning to launch a big sales drive with a new range of slots in Britain. The company has fallen sadly behind in the competitive race

for sales on Britain's 100,000 slot machine locations and is planning to launch a whole new range at A.T.E.

Slot machines will, as usual, dominate the show, for the British market, along with West Germany, is the best organized legalized machine gambling set-up in the world. This sector should see a whole new crop of machines on the new payout structure just agreed by Parliament, with top wins of 20p (30 cents) in cash and 50p (70 cents) in merchandising tokens being permitted in pub sites. Jackpot machines of the Las Vegas type are allowed in the nation's private clubs.

The rest of the market can be broken down into games, phonographs, pinballs and pool tables, with a scattering of showmen's equipment, kiddie rides and merchandising companies.

The games will include the cream of the new products shown at M.O.A., with a heavy accent on video games, for these have made a big comeback in British and European arcade sites during the past year. But they will also include the best from Europe with one or two good pieces coming from the Italian

manufacturers and from one or two notable British ones. The competition, while not sufficient to seriously challenge the U.S. manufacturers, should be good enough to at least keep them on their toes.

The phonograph market will be a repeat of M.O.A., with a battle going on between the three big American manufacturers, Rock-ola, Seeburg and Rowe International, and the two West German companies, N.S.M. and Wurlitzer. In London, however, the Germans may well hold the advantage for lower Common Market tariffs will give them the edge.

It is in the displays of pinball machines that we are likely to see the most fascinating struggle for the operator's investment. M.O.A. posed big questions about the ability of American manufacturers to face the challenge from Italian and Spanish manufacturers.

While it is fair comment that the Americans still lead in quality and that at one time the Italian and Spanish pinballs had a terrible reputation for poor quality, it is now true that the Europeans have ad-

(continued on page 27)

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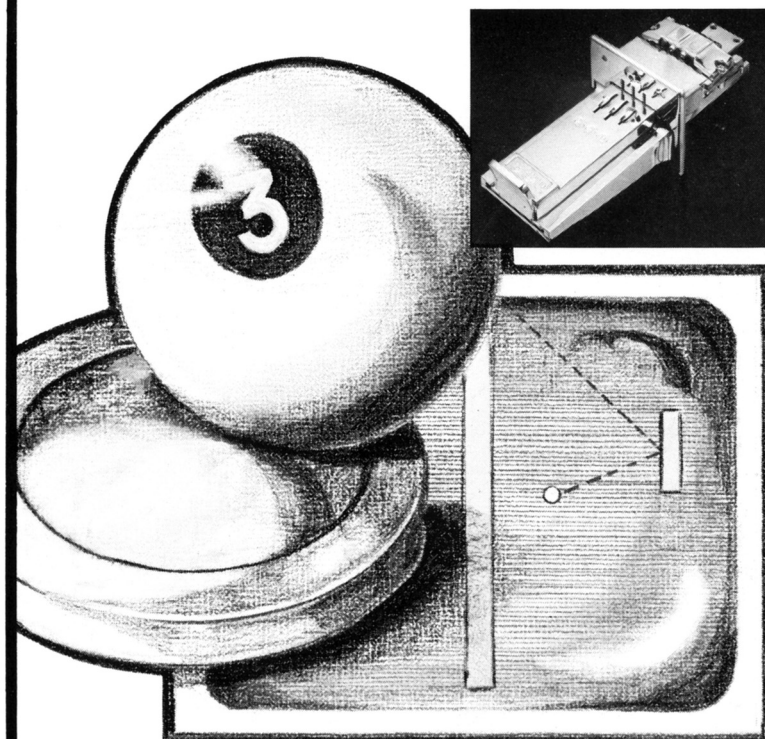
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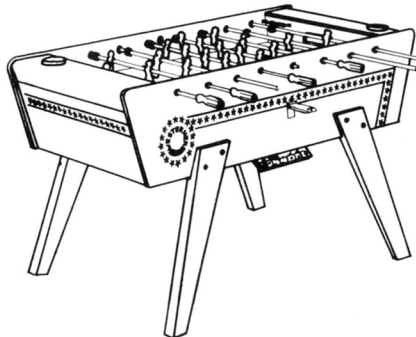
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(continued from page 25)

vanced tremendously in this field and with shipping costs what they are, they must have a big advantage over the U.S. manufacturers in the European market.

In the pool table field the limited American representation at A.T.E. will at least have very high quality on its side with U.S. Billiards, for example, but there are now a handful of British manufacturers who are putting out products approaching the quality of the much longer-established American companies. In addition the British companies have something of a strange hold on their own market through being more ready to adapt the game to British tastes (smaller pockets etc.) So A.T.E. will by no means be an exercise in order-taking for the U.S. firms; they'll have to work hard to win their sales.

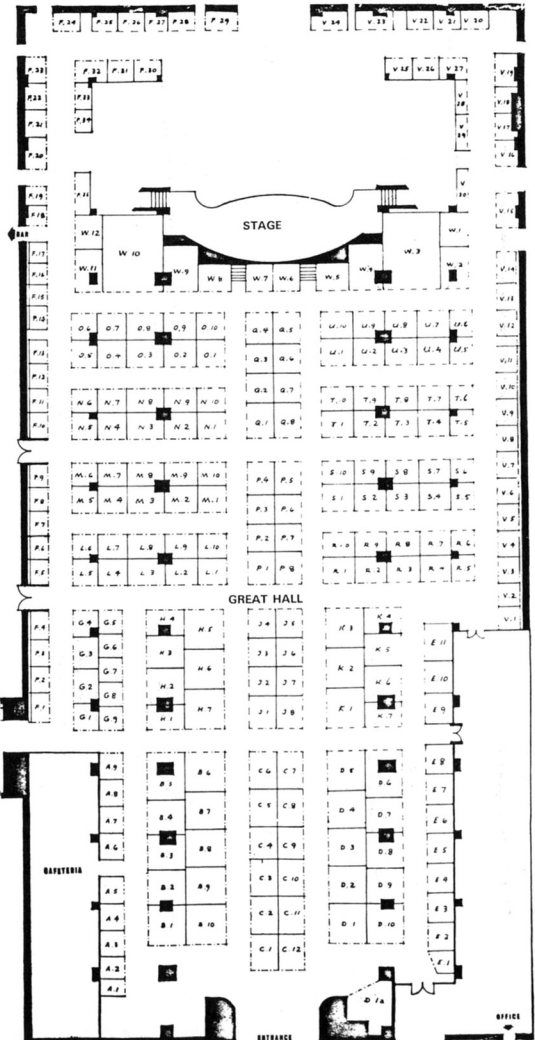
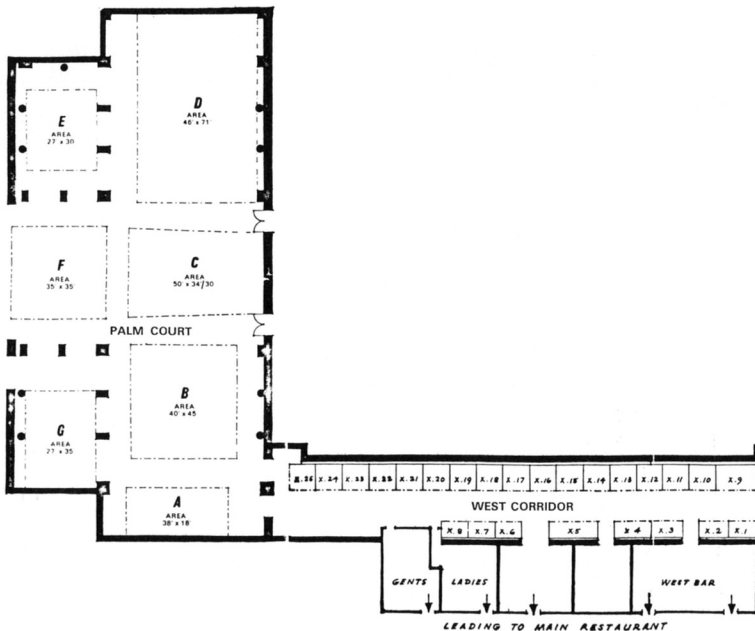
And in addition they will have to suffer the mortifying effects of Alexandra Palace's icy draughts, curly sandwiches and warm beer! Ah well, at least it will teach them to appreciate the Conrad Hilton's comforts a little more....

A.T.E. Exhibitors List

EXHIBITOR	STAND	EXHIBITOR	STAND
A.1 Stores	A.5	Brunswick GmbH	G.3-6
Aarvak Electronics	F.28	Bryans Works	F.1
Abloy Locking Devices Ltd.	F.34	C.B. Amusements Ltd.	S.7-8
Academy Signs Limited	F.18-19	C & F Enterprises Ltd.	X.21-13
Ace Coin Equipment Ltd.	D.6-8	C.R. Vending & Electronics Ltd.	V.28-29
Alca Electronics Ltd.	K.1-7	C.T. Leisure (Leicester) Ltd.	X.3-4
American Foods Ltd.	F.29	The Cherry Group	D.1a
Amusement Equipment Co. Ltd.	L.1-2 & 8-10	Chicago Automatic Supply Group	W.10
Andries Roberts Automatic	F.30-31	Cobirch Vending Ltd.	V.18-19
Appliance Components Ltd.	E.5	Coin Controls Ltd.	W.11
Ardac Inc.	F.33	Coin Operated Parts Services Ltd.	Q.3-6
Aristocrat Automatics (Sales) Ltd.	P.5-8	Competition Industries	O.5-6
Ark Sales (Toys) Ltd	E.1	W.S. Cowell Ltd.	V.1-2
Associated Leisure Sales Ltd.	B.1-10	Alfred Crompton Ltd.	M.1-3 & 8-10
Atari Incorporated	W.3	Direct Machine Distributors Ltd.	U.1-10
AutoAir Structures	P.C.	Direct Supplies Co.	V.23
Automatic Fruit Designs	F.2	E.F.S. Automatics Ltd.	V.8
Automatic Machine Service	P.C.	F.P. (Imports) Ltd.	V.5-7
Barcrest Ltd.	S.2-3	Fort Knox Floor Safes	V.16
Malcolm (Dollar) Beer Sales Ltd.	T.4	Funbag Inflatables Ltd.	P.C.
R.H. Belam Company Inc.	T.5-6	G.B. Cutlery Co. Ltd.	V.3-5
Bell-Fruit Manufacturing Co. Ltd.	H.1-7	Gemini Manufacturing Co. Ltd.	A.8-9
Bell-Matic A/S	F.22-23	Glendearg Research Ltd.	S.4
Brenco Equipment Ltd.	S.1 & 10	Glenvil Group	F.35
Bristol Coin Equipment (Distributors) Ltd.	N.8-9	Hazel Grove Music Co. Ltd.	T.7-8

(continued on next page)

Alexandra Palace, London A.T.E. Exhibition Hall



PLAY METER

EXHIBITOR	STAND	EXHIBITOR	STAND	EXHIBITOR	STAND
Hustler Pool Tables Ltd.	V.30	Modern Products (Lindsey) Ltd.	P.C.	Streets Automatic Machine Co. Ltd.	D.3-5
Hutchinson & Gilroy Importers Ltd.	F.32	Morecambe Coin Equipment Ltd.	W.5	Subelectro Ltd.	V.20-22
I.C.C. Machines Ltd.	N.10	Mullermechs Ltd.	X.6	Taito Corporation	E.6-8
Imagine Transfers Ltd.	X.24	Music Hire Group Ltd.	G.1-3 & 7-9	Thomas Automatic Co. Ltd.	R.1-10
Instone & Ashby Ltd.	F.6-7	National Rejectors (UK) Ltd.	T.3	Edward Thompson Group	X.9-12
Italiana Biliardi of Naples	X.19-20	Nixsales Ltd.	O.7-8	Tim Tod Abergavenny Ltd.	F.24
J & F Sales Ltd.	V.24	W.H. & A. Nutting Ltd.	L.3-7	T. Tinsley & Son Ltd.	X.1-2
J.P.M. (Automatic Machines) Ltd.	Q.1-2 & 7-8	Omser Ltd.	S.5-6	U.S. Billiards	V.9-11
J.S.K. Electronics Ltd.	E.2	Original Kart della Prato Bianco	P.C.	Variety Markets Ltd.	F.27
Jamieson Automatics Ltd.	V.12-14	Henry A. Perks (Sales)	P.3-4	N.G. Wallis	P.C.
Dennis Jezzard (Coinmatics) Ltd.	D.9-10	R & N Phillips	F.10	W.S.G. Operating Co. Ltd.	D.1b
Jubilee Products	E.9-11	Rene Pierre S.A.	M.6-7	Wamster International Ltd.	P.C.
Kando Floss Sales	V.17	Playmatic S.A.	F.25-26	Whittaker Bros. (Amusement Rides) Ltd.	N.4-7
M. Kesner Ltd.	F.8-9	Playsafe	P.C.	William Perks & Sons Ltd.	P.C.
W. Lancaster & Co. Ltd.	N.1-3	Pleasure & Leisure Inflatables Ltd.	P.C.	The World's Fair Ltd.	Dressing Room
Landscape Entertainments Ltd.	P.C. L	Portobello Printers Ltd.	F.5	Zamperla Antonio	X.25
Laren For Music	M.5	R & A Developments	P.C.		
W. Lennard (Leather Goods) Ltd.	F.20-21	Reverchen S.A.	P.C.		
Lewis Bros. (Manchester) Ltd.	X.13-16	Rhein Automaten Ltd.	T.1-2 & 9-10		
London Coin Machines Ltd.	C.1-12	Robinson Partners (London) Ltd.	O.3		
Lowe Automatics	W.9	Ruffler & Deith Ltd.	Stage & W.6-7		
Lyngard Automatics (MFG) Ltd.	E.3-4	S.D.C. Organisation	P.C.		
Mailing & Mechanisation Ltd.	V.25	Ron Saint of Romford	W.1-2		
Major Matics Ltd.	F.14-17	Samson Novelty Co. Ltd.	O.4		
Marion Electronics Ltd.	W.8	Sarmtern Ltd. & Wizard Electrician Mfg. Ltd.	W.4		
Mar-Matic Sales Ltd.	O1-2 & 9-10	I. Schwartz & Son Ltd.	A.1-4		
Mayfield Diamond Electronics Ltd.	D.1-3	Morris Shefras & Sons Ltd.	J.1-8		
Maygay Machines Ltd.	A.6-7	Philip Shefras (Sales) Ltd.	P.1-4		
James H. Mellors Sounds	X.7-8	Sherwood Coin Sales Ltd.	X.5 & 18		
J. Mirgaux (J.M. Kiddie Rides)	X.7-8	R.L. Smith (Fibreglass)	P.C.		
R.G. Mitchell Ltd.	P.C.	Standard Coin Counting Co. Ltd.	M.4		
Model Racing S.A.S.	P.C.	Stannite Automatics Ltd.	F.11-13		

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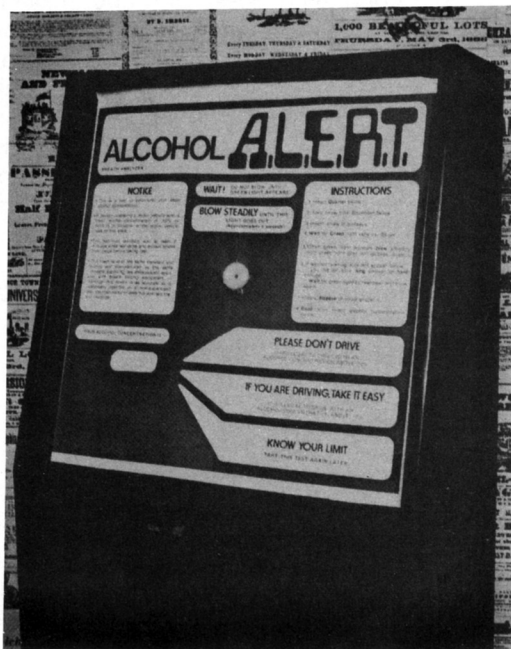
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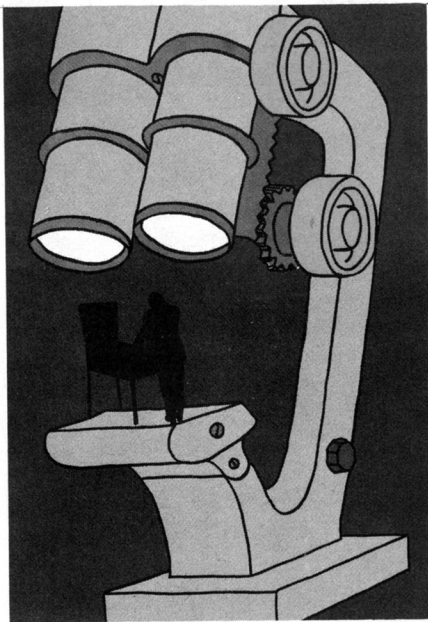
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PLAY METER



More Foreign

Intrigue by Roger C. Sharpe

The Bicentennial has rolled over and died quietly it seems. For most the transition to a new year will mean no more than changing the 6 on the check to a 7. That's where it stands now as one looks back and then ahead to gauge the state of pinball. Besides the repercussions legally, 1976 showed that everyone could still make a good game, and on occasion a "great" one. But nothing remarkable occurred that makes the year singularly exciting. Sure there were more promotional

happenings and some stock will be changing hands as manufacturers expand their capabilities. Even the home market had its time in the sun, finally becoming a viable avenue for both distributors and manufacturers alike.

The big story though, in the final analysis may be the intrusion of foreign games onto American soil. It was inevitable—ask the automobile manufacturers—but suddenly one was seeing machines that could "cut the mustard" and be compared to the native product.

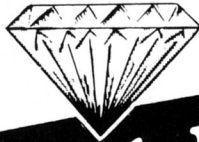
Last month in this column I even chose to highlight some Spanish games (and an Italian model) over the American pins, feeling that each of you was more curious about what was going on "over there." Well, as promised, I'm picking up where I left off to cover the rest (if space permits) of the foreign makers. Some may be familiar, others raised a few eyebrows at the Chicago convention; and all are sure to be around in some arcade somewhere—maybe even yours.

So folks get ready for a little more of Merry Pinball, Merry Pinball: a continuing saga of hope, frustration, dream, anxiety and, of course, fascination. Some of this month's editions have mellowed over time, while others still haunt my consciousness. As I said last time, since many of these were played on the run at the Hilton, if any features are inadvertently omitted, have a heart; after-all I'm only human. Although my love affair with pinball could preclude this observation. Anyway, here goes. . . .

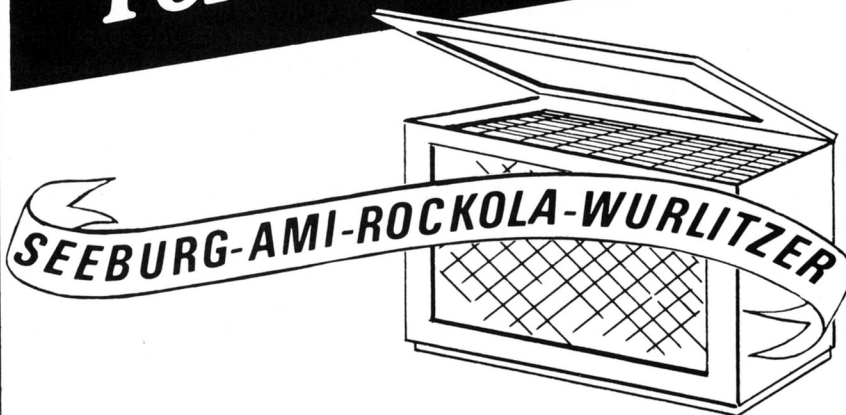
*Zaccaria's UNIVERSE
(Ten Stars one-player)*

It was strange to see Gary Stern and Steve Kaufman manning the booth of this Italian manufacturer, and not be at the Williams' area; but then this industry is made up of change. And that's not a lot of Bologna; I couldn't resist that one. Anyway let's get into this game, which as a

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single player, has been around Europe for a while.

At first glance the game's striking quality is all the color that's used. Somehow I think most of us associate *foreign* games with slightly foreign ideas so that we're surprised when they come up with games that are *American* in appearance. Maybe what I'm driving at is that there were no real surprises here. The overall play of the game seemed rather "heavy" compared to some of the major companies' efforts. It was an almost bulky sensation that I noticed.

Looking from top to bottom, the first feature to consider was a top kick-out hole neatly guarded by two posts at either side. An opening comment about this configuration is that it can slow up action; although it can add to nudging possibilities for the player. It's just that it seems Chicago Coin did it some years ago, so why have it reappear now? But in terms of guarding the top it works for the game, although one cannot easily return to the top of the playfield; a feature that has become almost a standard on many of today's games.

Three thumper bumpers in a spread triangular configuration supply most of the action at the top middle of the playfield. Just below these is the major shooting feature of the game—a center target area that had *special when lit* written all over it. A set-up of three square yellow targets, one at an angle to the left, one head on and one at a slight angle to the right, have four posts between and around that can mean an instant drain for any shots that are off the mark.

Drop targets make up the rest of the playfield skill shots on *Universe*. Four in all, A and C are at mid and top left of the board, while B and D are at mid and top right. Although the set-up is reminiscent of what Williams has done in the past with their drop targets, the Zaccaria version are larger and broader giving the player "more" to shoot for. A conventional Gottlieb (did I once say *Italian*) bottom is, of course, in evidence here with a slightly narrower lane.

But what about the game itself and how it played? Well, the shots are a long way away from the flippers. The top two drop targets are better gotten with rebound shots off the bumpers, but the

bottom two, which have a steeper angle, must be hit from the flippers. Depending on the players' capabilities this can be a good factor or a negative. The flipper power is okay for all of these movements, but it could be better. Somehow the game lacked a lot of punch to it. Granted it's a pinball machine, but it's not a *pinball* machine.

The reason is that the play action is standard and rather average. Bonus value is a hard thing to collect in great quantity and extra bonus means higher score, but there isn't a great wealth of goodies on this piece. The saving grace could be the artwork.

Graphically, Zaccaria has unloaded the kitchen sink of color on the machine making the game visually exciting, or at least different. The back glass even has a pseudo-Fireball God clad in red. Flashes of reds, blues, yellows and oranges helps to save the game, but not by much.

In terms of hints to playing the game, although the drop targets have a large part in the scoring, since the game is symmetrical in design, players will probably go for the middle targets the majority of the time. Springier thumper bumpers (like the ones on Williams' *Aztec*) could help this game a heckuva lot.

Rating: ##

Zaccaria's MOON FLIGHT (one player)

This game unfortunately falls victim to the modern pinball peril of emphasizing multi-players and chastising single players. If anything Zaccaria should turn this into a multi-player, because *Moon Flight* is a good game. For a one-player it could border on greatest, except for the *feel* I mentioned earlier when discussing *Universe*. There's a lot for a player to shoot for and there's even reasons for hitting some targets and not others.

Again, looking at the game overall one can see that the playfield is full; in fact there's almost too much. Four top lanes begin the action with return lanes on either side of the set-up, and the left housing a special as well as advance bonus possibilities. Three thumper bumpers make up the rest of the top design in such a way that nudging at the right time can get the ball back up through the top four lanes.

The big thing on this game though are four targets at the mid-right of the playfield. The numbers on the top plastic, 2-5-3-1, mean something folks! The whole object of the game is to advance the modules that grace the playfield artwork (similar to the idea in Gottlieb's *Outer Space* and a few other games). In this case the idea is to spell out the word O-R-B-I-T, which gets you all types of great things like special lights and a great deal of bonus points, as well as personal satisfaction. Anyway, the targets at the right side have those numerical values which stand for how many modules you can move ahead by hitting them; obviously the second one from the top (value 5) is the best one. I want you to know that this revelation took almost an entire afternoon of playing. (After all, who reads the directions at the bottom left of a game?)

Finishing off the rest of the playfield, one sees two targets at the mid-left of the playfield which increases the bonus, as well as a center target and two more targets at mid-top right and left center. The Gottlieb bottom remains as a staple feature for Zaccaria here.

Although I still felt a certain "heaviness" to the play of the game, all the action more than compensated for this. And this may have only been a personal reaction which I had and one which others may not have sensed. Sometimes I think I'm too sensitive to how a game feels, but then take it all with a grain of salt. *Moon Flight* offers more than enough for a single-player game, and the build up in action works well in the total scheme of things. The one thing, for those who revel in the idea of turning a machine, could be the seven (count 'em) digit scoring. Who wants to try for 10,000,000 points? Getting over 3,000,000 was tough enough.

Getting into the graphics, the space motif is carried off with a moon walking astronaut looking into the command ship at a short-haired blonde traveling companion that could warm any cool lunar evening. The colors are dark and rather celestial, but they work within the context of this add-a-ball space trek.

In terms of playing hints, players should direct themselves to the targets at the right and the return

(continued on next page)

(continued from page 31)

lane at the left, although most average players tend to spray their shots out to the middle of the play field. Getting to the top though, shouldn't take precedent over hitting the targets for moving the module. Advancing the bonus can mean points, but advancing the module can mean galactic pleasures. Rating: ##¾

The big thing, forgetting about the ratings for a minute, is that Zaccaria has come to these shores to show us what they're capable of doing. Obviously they have a way to go in terms of refining the playability of their games, but the foundation is there as is the creative thought. The games may not break down any

doors now, but the potential remains for this company, and I for one am curious to see what they have up their sleeve concerning future games. To Gary and Steve I wish them well with their new venture.

Playmatic's SPEAKEASY
(four player)

This Barcelona based company could be taking a *gamble* on this particular pinball machine, although the idea is a novel one. The stumbling block I am alluding to is the slot machine back glass cut-out which ties in most of the playfield action. Maybe we can all think of it as an updated roto-spin, who knows? Anyway, Playmatic has

shown much in its most recent games and this four-player is no different, although kick-out hole action is different from the targets and spinners many American (and Europeans for that matter) are used to. For this game, if nothing else, is a tribute to the kick-out hole.

The top, which lacked a great deal of movement, is being modified to include two more roll-overs that may tie in with the slot machine movement. At the convention, the prototype had one roll-over—so something should be done to beef up this portion of the playfield. Three top thumper bumpers featured the Playmatic square top, and played well with the top two targets at either side of the field.

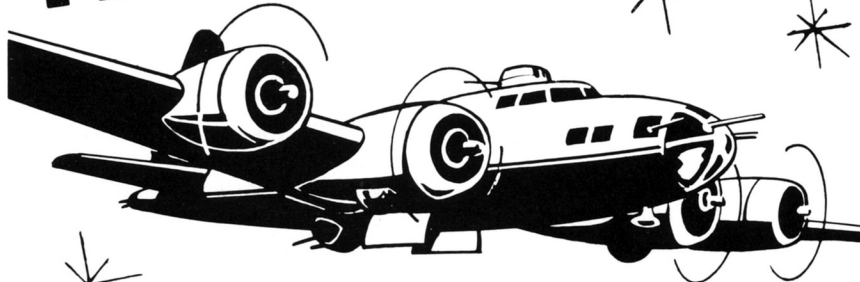
The rest of this area is side rubbers, before one moves down to kick-out hole territory where there's two at the left and two at the right—the top holes advance all the reels in the slot machine while the left side bottom hole advances the left reel and the right corresponding hole advances the right reel in this particular configuration. Two other targets on either side finish off this part of the playfield.

At the middle of *Speakeasy* one finds a slight arc round-about which features yet another kick-out hole that advances the center slot machine reel. This center feature also has two targets at the right of the opening to add bonus for the player that's a little off in his aim. If the bottom flipper configuration looked familiar, it's probably because you remembered Gottlieb's *Outer Space* and reversed it, putting the flipper lane at the right rather than the left.

But all I've covered so far are the features of game. The play action is what counts, and there may be some problems. The whole concept of the game is geared around the slot machine reels (three 7's in a row is good for two free games). Putting a *scoring* feature such as this on the back glass could pose a problem. Most *good* players never look at the back glass until the ball has drained: it tends to break concentration otherwise, and instinctively a player knows how many points he's scored and how he's doing. At one time Williams and even Gottlieb put in a roulette wheel type set-up in some older games from the mid-to-late

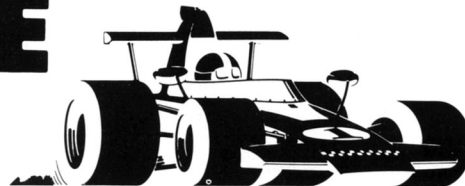
(continued on page 37)

Electra's FLYING FORTRESS



and

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TJM's Drums Keep on Spinning

The slot machine was invented in the latter third of the nineteenth century by Charles Fey of San Francisco. Fey called the original machine "Liberty Bell" though why, no one knows. The machine bore a remote resemblance to the devices of today. It had ten symbols and ten stops. Payoffs, however, were in money, merchandise or drinks. Because the machine could accommodate only one coin at a time, there were no such things as "jackpots." Payoffs were made only on the center line; there were no variations, no multiple chances at winning.

Fey tried to patent his machine, but unfortunately for him, the United States Patent Office didn't recognize gambling devices, in fact refused to issue patents on them. So Fey had no protection; his idea was easy game for anyone who wanted to take a chance on it.

One who did was Herbert Mills of Chicago. Himself an inventor of sorts, in 1889 Mills came up with a game called "Three for One." It was an extremely simple device consisting of three tubes. The player dropped a coin into the slot; if it rolled into one of the three tubes, the machine returned three coins for his one; if it rolled into either of the other tubes, he lost.

With the help of his brother Cecil, Mills refined the machine bringing out in succession "Owl" and the very popular "Dewey" named for the Spanish American war hero. The latter machine was so successful that it guaranteed the growth of the Mills operation and Mills began producing all types of coin operated machines, peep movies, grip testers, weight lifters, fortune tellers and music boxes, including an elaborate instrument that combined the playing of a violin and a piano.

He also stole Charles Fey's ma-

chine. At least he managed to get hold of one. He dissected it and built one of his own, and Mills was into slots as well.

The first electrically powered machine didn't come out though until much later in 1931. The machine called "Electrojax" was the brainchild of O. D. Jennings. Jennings had worked for Mills then split from him in 1906. Until "Electrojax," he manufactured what were pretty much Mills machines with a Jennings label.

The new electrically powered machine was initially unsuccessful; the public was apparently not ready for it. But "Chief" which came out in 1935, was a great success and became the prototype for slot machines over the next thirty years. Two features of the "Chief" combatted the two most common forms of cheating. A slug rejector prevented the cheating player from using slugs, and the anti-overlap coin return device prevented his jamming up the payout mechanism.

In 1954 O. D. Jennings Co. was purchased by TJM Corp. TJM, itself a subsidiary of American Machine & Science, is also parent company to Mills Bell-O-Matic and J. H. Keeney.

Mills and Jennings held approximately 80 per cent of the slot machine market until 1964 when Bally's Lion machine swept into the marketplace and swept up the market.

Since then, kept alive by sales of its mechanical machine to service clubs, and more recently by foreign sales to Canada and Australia, TJM has been trying to come back, according to President Tom Carroll, trying to develop a competitive machine. One million dollars of research and development investment later, "we think we have a machine capable of competing,"

Carroll said.

The new machines in the Jennings 400 series are a far cry from Charles Fey's original. They are fully electronic, with solid state and modular construction. Coin switch and hopper are monitored; there is even a memory bank for power interruption. And the machines are convertible. The standard single coin machine can be modified to a two, three or five coin multiplier, a three or five line machine, or the big-payoff double progressive.

The new solid state machine is "designed for reliability in operation and to eliminate service requirements," Carroll stated. He is optimistic about its future. He is pleased with TJM's success in the foreign market, and while he considers the Nevada market a difficult one to penetrate, he thinks that "we do stand a good chance to penetrate that market with this machine."

Irving Kaye

The Irving Kaye Co., Inc. has moved its entire operation from Brooklyn, New York to new quarters in Stamford, Conn. The new factory provides for 77,000 square feet of working space all on one floor. Its location allows for five acres of expansion space.

The new facility, according to an Irving Kaye spokesman, "is amongst the most modern and progressive factories in our industry and will enable us to reach a potential that was far beyond our Brooklyn factory."

The company's new address is Irving Kaye Co., Inc., 48 Union Street, Stamford, Conn. 06906. The new telephone number is (203) 348-1800.

on the move

Mirco Announces Two Appointments

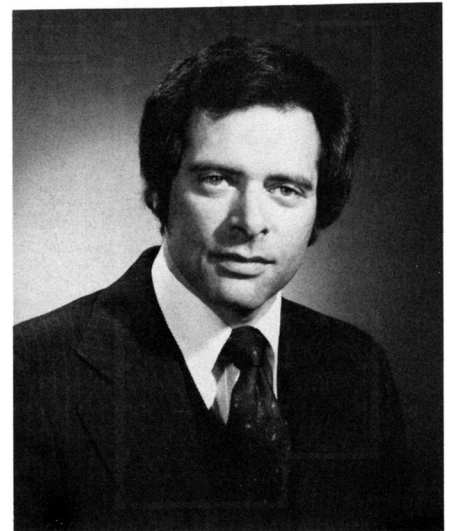
Mirco Games, Phoenix, has announced the appointments of Robert Edgell as director of marketing and Vanessa Reinhardt as assistant director of marketing.

Edgell will be responsible for directing the sales in both coin and non-coin markets. Ms. Reinhardt will assist the new marketing director in co-ordinating all marketing functions from production to distribution. She will also work with Edgell in developing marketing plans for the coming year and will act as an in-house salesperson.

Edgell joined Mirco in January of 1975 as marketing manager for the soccer division. He has also held the positions of promotion director and most recently of director of marketing for retail products. Edgell will work closely with Vern Leas, general manager of Mirco Games,

to develop new products and strengthen Mirco's position in the coin and consumer markets.

Ms. Reinhardt joined Mirco in June of 1976 as an executive marketing assistant. A Summa Cum Laude graduate from the University of Houston with a B.A. degree in French and English, she is married and the mother of two children.



Michael Stroll

Stroll, a graduate of the University of Hartford, is married and has two children.



Vanessa Reinhardt

Polanek Becomes URL President, Chief Officer

The appointment of Edward L. Polanek as president and chief operating officer of Universal Research Laboratories was announced by the company recently. URL along with its Electra Games Division manufacture coin-operated and consumer electronic video games and contract electronics. W. E. Olliges, co-founder of the company along with Polanek, is chairman.

Polanek, formerly with Ampex Corporation and Seeburg Industries, was previously executive vice president of Universal Research which was founded in 1970. He is an enthusiastic but time-deprived "suburban farmer," living with his wife and five children in a ranch house on 20 acres of farmland in Woodstock, Illinois. As an engineer-turned-manufacturing-executive he handles the factory and general administration areas of the corporation.

URL is currently producing its home TV game, Video Action Indy 500, a combination auto racing and paddle game which is being marketed through major retailers. Its Electra Games Division is manufac-

Stroll Named Vice President at Seeburg

Louis J. Nicastro, chairman of the board of Seeburg Industries, Inc, announced recently Seeburg's employment of Michael R. Stroll as vice president—technology. Stroll, formerly manager of Systems Development Microprocessors with National Semiconductor Corp., Santa Clara, Cal., will be based in Chicago, Ill. and will have prime responsibility for assisting in the development of new products incorporating solid-state technology, both for Seeburg Products Division and for Williams Electronics, Inc.

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turing the coin-operated video game, "Flying Fortress", which simulates bombing runs by the famed World War II aircraft.

Bally Names Seidenfeld as General Counsel

Glenn K. Seidenfeld, Jr. was recently named secretary and general counsel of Bally Mfg. Corp., Chicago. He was formerly associated with McDermott, Will & Emery, a Chicago law firm and, prior to private practice, he was an attorney with the Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington.



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What Gets Top Priority?

by Thelma L Fair

Today's busy individual is a person constantly confronted with priorities as to what is to be done and which effort must be set aside in working life. Hardly a day goes by without such a choice being made.

Here is a check list to make the selection process easier. It is based on the decision making values used by business and professional men who have developed the technique of selection to a point where the right decision is made with few exceptions.

How much of an emergency is involved? Does the given step have to be taken now or can it be handled just as effectively next week or next month? A moment's reflection is in order most of the time in such situations for it is easy to rate something as an emergency when it really is not.

Is everything set up to handle the program ready to go at this time? If so then a top priority is worthwhile. If not, other factors are equal, it may be better handled after such background has been acquired.

Look at the long term gain involved in each such particular working step. Those which possess short range values seldom merit high priority when a number of other long term programs are in existence at that particular time.

What other things in your working life are dependent on a given step being taken? Where there are a number, a high priority is justified, for the total effect of delay can mount up in a short period of time through the cumulative factors involved in their presence.

The amount of time that you have available to handle the effort needs consideration on any occasion where you are fixing priorities. It usually pays to set aside the step requiring more time than can be spared at present in favor of the one where only a minimum amount is needed. Attempting the first step on those occasions generally means only half way accomplishment.

Negative effects involved in each step under consideration need weighing as well as the positive factors. The step with greatest possible damage potential to your work if something is *not* done quickly merits a high priority on most occasions.

Cost elements should also enter into the establishment of any priority. Where a given step in your work can be handled at a later period with less financial strain than at the present time, there exists a better chance for success than now.

Top priority is also best given to any step that can use to advantage the conditions existing at present in your work areas. In other words, when all elements involved are just right for something at a given time it is best undertaken then and there.

Availability of outside assistance which may be required for a specific step is another element worth weighing in setting up this priority. Such assistance can not be taken for granted as being present as any time in the future. If you have that assistance now, take the step now.

Immediate values that will be returned through increased staff efficiency as the result of a step being taken usually enter into selections. Where these have small value the step should be set aside in favor of one with a high potential in this area.

Choice between a number of steps is easily swayed on these occasions by personal attachment to one program or step over others. This has been proven to be an uncertain basis for establishing any priority. Its value exists only when no other considerations are involved in making that selection.

The status factor, on the other hand, should never be considered lightly. Where as simple personal satisfaction is a questionable consideration, a major effect upon your working area is not. Efforts that have such an effect should be given

(continued on page 64)

TECHNICAL TOPICS

by Robin Minnear

As the prices of new games get higher and higher, operators have been looking for ways to increase the life of their old games.

It seems that the single most important factor that affects game life is variety. If a player is faced with the same set of circumstances each time he plays a game, he is going to become bored with the game much sooner than he would if the features varied. New or different games are almost always your highest money-earners. Game rotation and game modification are two ways to extend the high money earning life of your games.

A game that has never yielded good profits probably won't make money no matter what you do to it. Most electromechanical games do not lend themselves to change because modifications would be extensive and costly.

Because of the nature of video game design and availability of inexpensive parts, videos have probably seen more operator modifications than any other type of amusement device.

This month is a discussion of a simple logic modification that will make your Gran Trak 10, Trak 10 and Formula K earn more by

resembling a newer video design. Even though these games date back almost three years, they are still fair money earners and there are still many on location today.

This modification will automatically switch between two different track configurations each time a lap has been completed. The two tracks which will appear are the Formula K track and the Trak 10 track. This is possible because these games use the exact same ROM. The ROM is a permanent memory device that contains the information necessary to display the two tracks. By changing the signal on one of the ROM's inputs, one or the other track will be displayed.

Modification Instructions

1. Locate device L-5, pin 13 (Fig. 1).
2. Turn board over and cut the trace leading from pin 13 with a sharp X-acto knife as in Fig. 2. Be sure to leave about one-half inch of trace still connected to pin 13.
3. Locate devices C-2 Pin 10, C-7 pin 6 and D-1 pins 8 through 13 and mark them on the back side of the board.
4. Solder a wire from pin 8 to pin 12 on D-1.
5. Solder a wire from pin 11 of

D-1 to pin 10 of C-2.

6. Solder a wire from pin 9 of D-1 to pin 13 of L-5.

7. Solder a wire from pin 10 of D-1 to pin 6 of C-7.

How It Works (Fig. 3)

Device L-5 is a 7400 NAND gate that controls one input of the ROM. If pin 13 is held at a logic HI(5 volts), the ROM will display the Formula K track configuration. If pin 13 is held at a logic LO(0 volts), the ROM will display the Trak 10 track.

Device D-1 contains an extra "D" FLIP-FLOP. By tying pin 8 to pin 12, the output (pin 9) will change from HI to LO or LO to HI whenever the input clock (pin 11) is triggered.

GRANTRAK 10/FORMULA K LOGIC

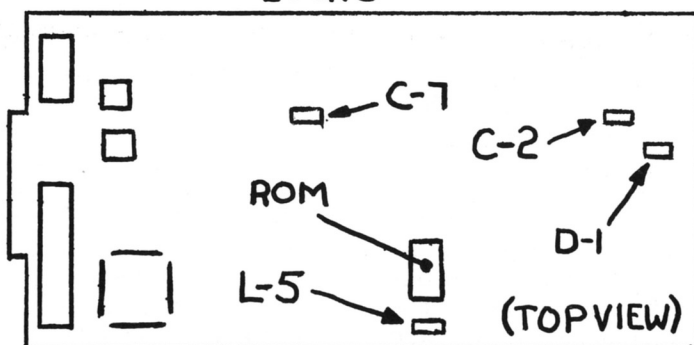


FIGURE 1

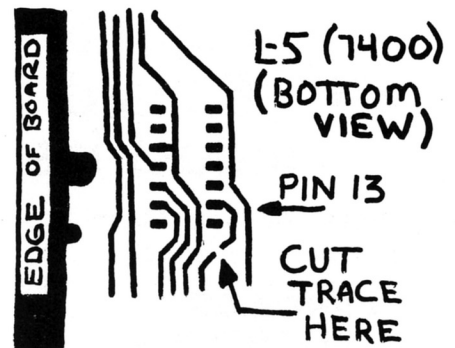


FIGURE 2

Pin 10 of device C-2 changes from LO to HI at the start of each lap and is tied to pin 11 of D-1. This will cause the output (pin 9) of D-1 to change at the beginning of each lap.

Pin 9 of D-1 is tied to pin 13 of L-5 and will determine which track the ROM will display.

Pin 6 of device C-7 is at a logic LO before a coin has been deposited. After a coin is deposited, pin 6 goes HI. This will force pin 10 of D-1 LO, which in turn will cause the Formula K track to be displayed. After a coin is deposited, pin 10 of D-1 will go HI.

When the start button is pushed,

Pinball Service Hint

by B.M. Powers

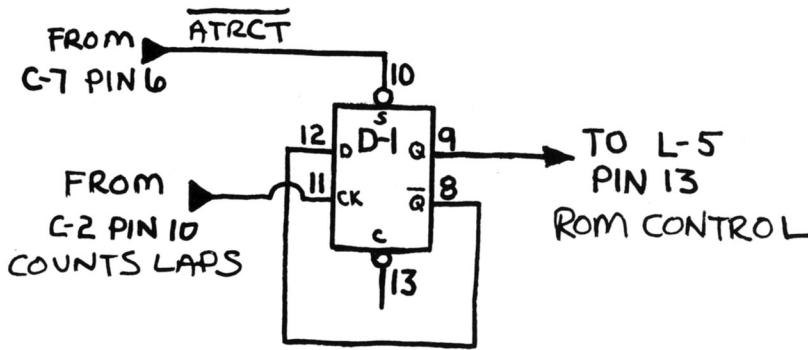


FIGURE 3

C-2 pin 10 goes HI which causes pin 9 of D-1 to go LO and display the Trak 10 track.

After each lap the track will change. When the game is over, the track will again display the Formula K track.

By changing the wire from D-1

pin 10 to pin 13, the track order will be reversed.

This modification will work on all Trak 10, Gran Trak 10 and Formula K logic boards. I have found that placing a sign on the game stating there are two tracks will help generate interest.

Critic's Corner (continued from page 32)

60s. If the feature worked, and I've heard that the games were successful, it was in part due to the fact that the player's vision was already directed toward the area where the roulette wheel was located—it happened to be built into the playfield near the flippers. With *Speakeasy* you're almost telling a player to modify his style of play—I don't know about that. If the slot reels could be additionally set somewhere in the center of the playfield my fears could be substantially lessened.

Granted, for a multi-player game, players playing in competition could "help" their friends ("Hey, shoot for the left reel...all you need is the 7'."), but what about the lone wolf who ventures to an arcade all alone. The reel action is mostly lost to him. Turning to the idea of slot machine motifs and action, one may fear any legal hassles. After all, how are the free plays percentaged on the reels? There could be a whole ticklish situation here, but then again, with the passage of casino gambling in New Jersey and more liberalized views, *Speakeasy* may not have any trouble.

The graphics on the game are sublime and offer a brief rest from the harsh red, white and blues so many games feature. Subtle pastel shades harken back to the mid and early 60s when color meant tonal quality. The back characterizations

are nicely portrayed and a bit of deco trim adds to the overall luster of the machine.

On hints to play this six-digit game, the first suggestion is to have someone standing nearby to tell you when you should be aiming for certain slot reels. Since the playfield is fairly open, a ball can skip over a kick-out hole, especially with the prevailing Spanish slope of the field and the polyurethane coating, the action is rather fast. The Playmatic flipper takes some getting used to since there is some resonance when ball meets flipper—much like [the feel] when you hit a baseball on a cold day, you "feel" the hit. The stroke, although complete, has a gliding power rather than an overwhelming blast, so flipper control can be a problem for the less than skilled player. The most popular areas players will hit to, due to safety rather than choice, may be the side kick-out holes with hope that the ball can get back toward the thumper bumper area. The center target, if not hit right, could be a sucker shot since the ball can drain right down the middle. Obviously, with this game, leveling of the machine is going to be an important factor determining whether the machine will be played or not. Either way you look at it, *Speakeasy* should keep players *reeling*, even if they can't beat the *house*.

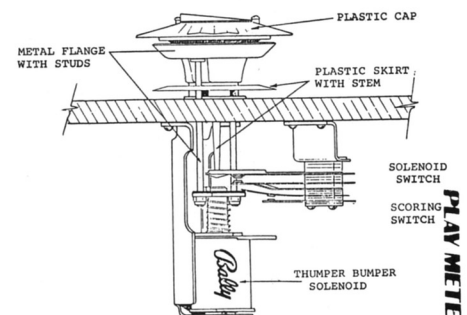
Rating: ###

The thumper bumper as shown in the accompanying illustration, is the D.C. type bumper which has been used in Bally games since *Bow and Arrow*. The basic difference between the A.C. and the D.C. type assembly is that the D.C. is operated directly by its own contacts; therefore, no relay is used as in the A.C. type previously used.

The basic actuation of the thumper bumper occurs when the ball interacts at any point with the plastic skirt above the playfield surface. The stem, which should be centered in the cup of the switch, will make contact on the solenoid switch contacts. The stem should be centered for two very distinct reasons: one, to insure actuation will take place at any point around the skirt and two, to insure the solenoid switch is not locked closed. This switch should have a gap of 1/32 in. in the open position and follow through upon actuation of 1/32 in.

The solenoid is then activated and two events take place. The first is the metal flange interacts with the ball. The second is the scoring switch closes to acquire the points the assembly is valued at. The scoring switch, as seen in the drawing, should be adjusted to a 1/16 in. gap.

The D.C. type bumper does not require any lubrication in the cup switch because of the type of plastic used. The older type bumper assemblies need to have a *lotorque* instrument grease in the cup. The old type should also be cleaned periodically to insure that actuation does not become sluggish.



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new products

Sega Releases Novel Shooting Game

Plinker's Canyon, a new portable, self-contained action shooting game, has been introduced by Sega of America. Plinker's Canyon, which is equipped with four laser beam rifles, three moving targets and nine stationary targets, was demonstrated at the Sega exhibit booths at the MOA and the Rowe booths at the IAAPA Show.

An example of the versatility and portability of the new shooting game is the fact that six units can be mounted together on a flat bed truck to make a 24-station shooting gallery, or conversely in an arcade, three systems can be connected to make a gallery of twelve rifles. All of the twelve may be fired at any of the total of 36 targets in the three cabinets and yet still register the proper score with each laser gun.

When Plinker's Canyon is set in action, rollicking hillbilly music is heard in addition to realistic rifle shots and bullet ricochets when the trigger is squeezed. The three moving targets are an egg that rolls along a branch; a flying bird that squawks and flaps when hit, and a dodging mouse that can be trapped

under a strainer if the shooter is accurate.

The nine stationary targets include a ball that breaks in half and reveals a hissing snake; a bird that pops up in a nest; a frying pan that rattles, shakes and puts its fire out; a hat in which a hole can be drilled; an ace of hearts that falls down, and four beer cans that when hit are knocked off a log.

Amazing!

Midway Mfg. Co., Franklin Park, Ill., has introduced Amazing Maze, a one- or two-player game in upright and cocktail table models. The game was shown at the MOA in Chicago.

The object of the game is to negotiate the video maze and reach your opponent's goal before he reaches yours. The first to reach his goal scores a point. Each time a



Amazing Maze

point is scored a new maze appears and competition begins again.

The two-player game gives the players three mazes or a maximum time of four to six minutes. The time limit is operator-adjustable.

A single player plays Amazing Maze against the machine. The machine starts slowly. As the player wins, the computer speeds up the machine's marker to make the game more competitive. The player continues to play as long as he wins.

There are over a million patterns to Amazing Maze. A player can play the game for 24 hours or for 24 years and never see the same pattern twice.

The upright cabinet is 26 in. wide, 64 1/2 in. high and 24 in. deep. It weighs 220 lbs. The cocktail model is 38 1/2 in. wide, 29 in. high, 32 1/4 in. deep and weighs 195 lbs. Features include proven microprocessor logic cards, 23 in. solid-state TV monitor, adjustable timing, and attractively designed cabinetry.



Plinker's Canyon

Atari Brings Out Namco's F-1

Atari, Inc., Sunnyvale, Cal., has announced distribution of F-1, the projection driving game from Namco. F-1 is more than a game. It's like a driving simulator. Players actually "drive" their own Formula One race car.

The F-1 projects actual three-dimensional images on a giant race course screen while the driver faces seated in a realistic race car cockpit.

Frank Ballouz, Atari national sales manager, stated: "The overwhelming response at both MOA and IAAPA shows has convinced us the F-1 is the hottest racing attraction ever introduced to the market. The realistic feeling of speed has to be experienced to be believed."

F-1 has quick positive steering and instant response to acceleration whether the player sets the gear shift at "slow" or "fast". The

constantly twisting track and 3-D competition racers create the excitement of true Formula One racing.

Much of the skill factor involved in the game is in trying to keep from crashing into cars that the player has to pass, or which are trying to pass him. Driving off the road also causes a crash.

Another F-1 attraction comes at the moment of impact with another car. Crash sounds fill the driver's ears and the entire screen is filled with flame-colored explosion.

All scoring and game times are digitally displayed on a large, easy-to-read panel above the projection screen. The highest score previously achieved is stored and displayed. A button is provided for score reset.

Extended play is awarded after

the driver scores 3,000 points.

Assembly of the game is simple. Car body and electronics module cabinet move easily on casters. And the lightweight three-piece hood attaches to the electronics module quickly. The dimensions of the assembled game are width: 48 in., height: 71 in., overall depth: 89 in., floor area: 30 sq. ft.

F-1 is designed by Namco and manufactured by Atari.

Counter Poker

Computer Kinetics Corp., Aurora, Cal., unveiled their new counter-top blackjack game at the MOA convention.

The Vega 21 is a new concept in



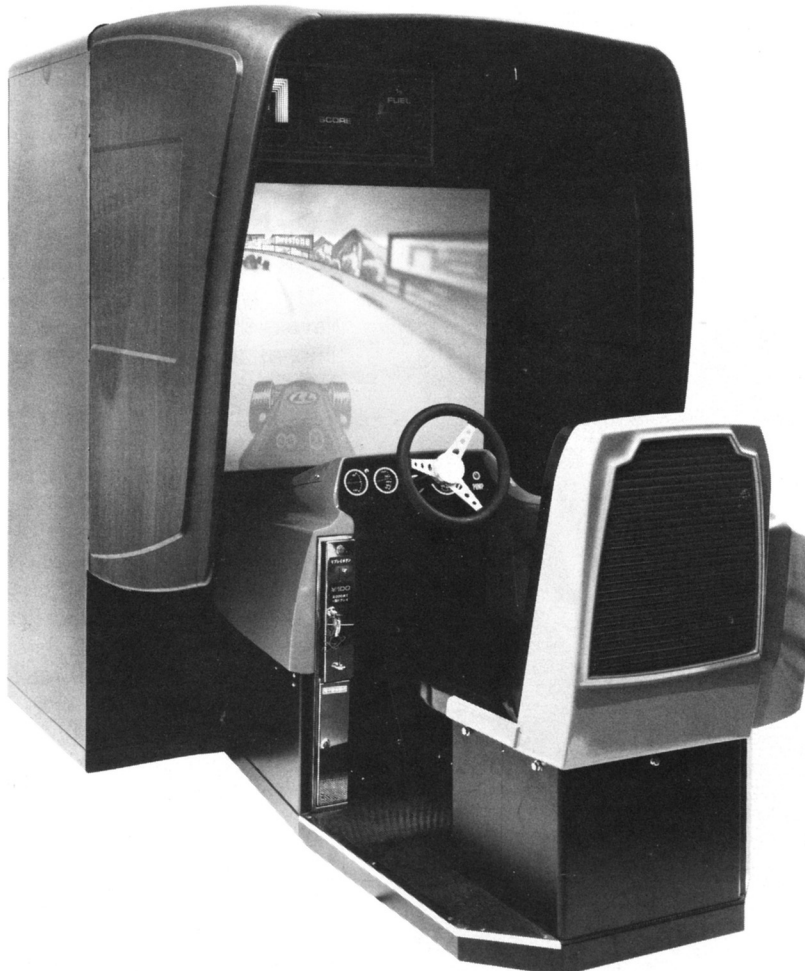
Vega 21

coin-operated amusement games. Small size is its most striking feature; the game measures only 17 in. x 17 in. x 9.5 in. This small size allows the unit to be placed at many new locations such as bar tops, tables, booths, check-out counters and on cigarette machines. But despite the Vega 21's small size, it has been carefully engineered to play a true Blackjack game with all the exciting options.

The combination of Super Plasma Display and lighted keyboard switches tells the player exactly what is happening at any given point in the game. No great skill at cards is required to play Vega 21 and one simple rule applies: any lighted keyboard switch may be played.

Vega 21 plays with all the exciting options found at the Las Vegas tables: insurance, double down, and split. In addition, for the system players, the number of cards remaining in the deck is shown. For location promotions, the high game of the day can be registered with a glorious shower of lights and tones.

When the game is not being played, customers are attracted by the Banorama Display, a smoothly moving message that can be cus-

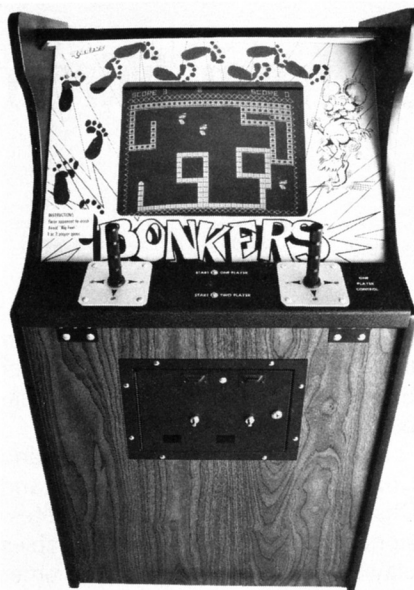


Namco's F-1 by Atari

tom ordered with any message up to 80 characters in length. At the end of each message, an optional melodious tone entices those within hearing distance to challenge the machine.

Other features include a three-level coin incentive, the number of decks, the number of hands per coin, and the point totals at which free games are won. Service features include locked vault door on the coin box, rear security fastener, and coin mechanism adjustable to a wide range of the world's coins.

Each time the Vega 21 is turned on, it performs a self-test check of the system's major components, verifying that it's ready for the day's run. Factory burn-in and computerized testing of the machine insures a long trouble-free life on location.



Bigfoot Blocks

Blockers Blocking

Meadows Games, Inc. is now busting out with Bigfoot Bonkers. A game guaranteed to stomp the amusement industry. Addicting, Bigfoot Bonkers will entrap players for hours of playing time.

Bigfoot Bonkers is a one- or two-player upright featuring two competitive forces whose trails criss-cross back n' forth and up n' down the screen with each player trying to pin the other's pathway into a small area with no place thus forcing a KRASH! The challenge does not stop there; each player must avoid the Bigfoot obstacles that randomly appear on the screen.

Single players can play Bigfoot Bonkers—literally. It's man versus machine as each tries to make the other crash while still trying to avoid crashing themselves.

Bigfoot Bonkers has also incorporated a couple of new innovations. The trails of both players are very distinctive. Therefore there is no confusion identifying the players at any time—no matter how fast and exciting a game gets.

Operator options include adjustable playing time, adjustable coinage, and adjustable sound effects.

Let's Play Hockey!

"A new approach to cocktail lounge and tavern equipment" is what Project Support Engineering calls its Ric-O-Chet Stick Hockey. A new variation on air cushion games, Ric-O-Chet employs a redesigned playfield area to maximize rebound and ricochet shots and give the player a new dimension in fun and skill.

The subdued lighting in most tavern locations will accentuate the playfield which is lit by two blacklights. The visual effect of this creates a unique test of hand/eye coordination.

The cabinet features include a one-quarter inch thick tempered glass top, large locking coin box; solid state score display, adjustable maximum score and heavy duty "hockey sticks." Pricing is set at 25 cents per game.



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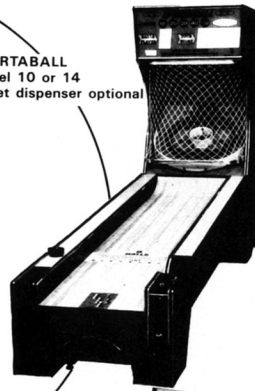
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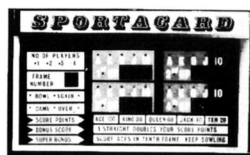
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INNOVATORS OF THE INDUSTRY

PLAY METER

Two New Games from Mirco

Mirco Games introduced two new products at the annual MOA convention in Chicago.

Mirco's latest video game, Super Stud, is a microprocessor based amusement game. The game is the third microprocessor product that Mirco has developed to date.

Super Stud is an electronic version of five-card stud and has all the exciting elements of poker—betting, raising, calling and bluffing. The game is played under regular poker rules with no wild cards. Players begin with a 1,000 chip "stake" and an opportunity to play five hands.

Super Stud is fully automatic. Players simply push control buttons to check, bet, fold, or view their hole card. The machine performs all functions such as dealing, scoring and shuffling. At the end of each hand the winner is indicated on the monitor, and new chip totals and number of hands remaining are automatically determined and displayed on the screen.

Since the two, three, or four

players compete *against each other* and not against the machine, Super Stud is highly competitive and suspenseful to play.

Mirco also introduced the Grand Champion VI soccer table. Grand Champion VI is a king-sized professional soccer table which enables play by up to six players at one time.

Operators can realize an increase in profit with this game since it contains a 50 cent coin chute mechanism rather than the conventional 25 cent slot on the 4-player tables.

Grand Champion VI has all of the standard Mirco features: rugged, chromed steel playing rods; convenient leg levelers for a steady game; a tempered glass playfield that is virtually unbreakable; precision edges for accurate bank shots; and Mirco's patented figurines which provide improved 2-point ball control.

The first production models of Super Stud are now available to all Mirco distributors. Grand Champion VI will be on the market by mid-January.



On Target

D. Gottlieb & Co., Northlake, Ill., has announced distribution of Target Alpha, a new four-player flipper game.

The game features 15 drop targets and four flippers to generate full top to bottom playfield action. Ten of the drop targets are located at the top of the playfield providing scoring opportunities from all four flippers, the two at the bottom of the playfield and two smaller ones staggered left and right at mid playfield.

The five drop targets at mid playfield right offer further scoring opportunities off the bottom flippers. Additional scoring comes from two thumper bumpers at top right and lower left.

Getting all top targets down lights two right rollovers for extra ball and special scoring. Dropping all five of the right side targets lights left rollover for extra ball.

Target Alpha is convertible to add-a-ball.

The playfield and backglass are decorated in muted tones of yellow, blue and various purples and depict scenes from a futuristic target practice.



Mirco's Grand Champion VI

Bazooka Shows Interesting Twist

Project Support Engineering, Sunnyvale, Cal., had released its line of new games premiered at the MOA convention. Headlining the video game line-up is Bazooka. This one player upright game is the first in a series of video games to incorporate a new microprocessing technique developed by P.S.E. engineers.

The play begins with target vehicles emerging in random fashion from either side of the playfield. The faster the target moves across the playfield, the more points are scored for hitting it. Scores vary from 200 to 800 points. Each hit is realized with a realistic explosion and accompanying sound effects.

Periodically, an ambulance or stretcher bearers cross the screen

and a penalty of 200 points is assessed for shooting either of these obstacles. With no set pattern to the target generation, each game is different and the challenge to the player is constant.

Other features include a mirror image playfield, 23 in. monitor, dual sound system, realistic red flash at rear of bazooka with each shot fired, extended play capability and even a slide out step for shorter players.

The Bazooka cabinet features a high capacity locked cash box, 25 or 50-cent play pricing, adjustable length of game feature and heavy duty controls.

Ramtek Intros Blocking Game

Ramtek Corp., Sunnyvale, Cal., has announced sample shipping to distributors of a new game, Barricade. As the name implies, Barricade is a two-, three- or four-player upright video blocking game.

The object of the game is to force your opponent to crash into your wall, his own or the edge of the playfield before he can force you to. The walls, built brick by brick, are

controlled by four buttons, one each for vertical, horizontal, right and left movement.

Barricade employs a 23 in. monitor. The Ramtek logic board is warranted for 6 months, exchange free.

The new game has the ability to take 50 cents per game. Points per game are operator adjustable from one to seven. Speed settings—there are seven from slow-slow to fast-fast—are player adjustable.

Gremlin

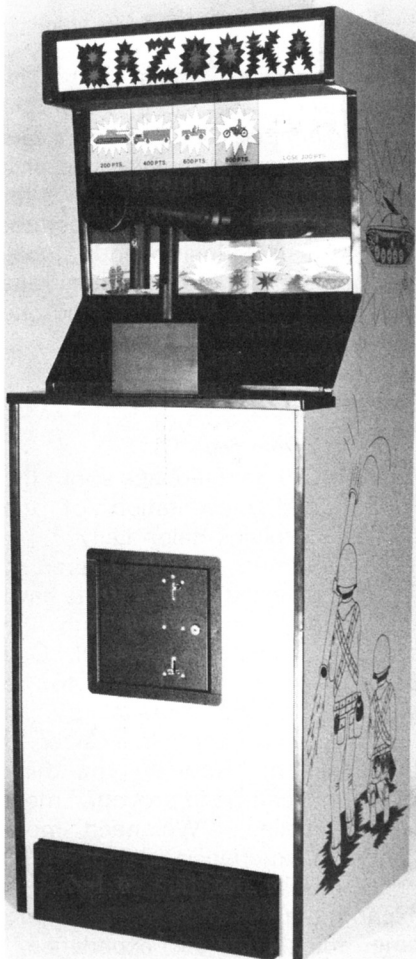
Intros

Blockade

Blockade-Gremlin's smash hit of the MOA and park shows. Blockade is a 2 player upright for many types of locations. The company claims excellent location reports and believes this is because of both its player and operator appeal. The game is easy to learn, and challenging. No two games are alike.

The game action and scoring is based on steering your arrow with control buttons, surviving by not hitting anything, and conquering by forcing your opponent to crash.

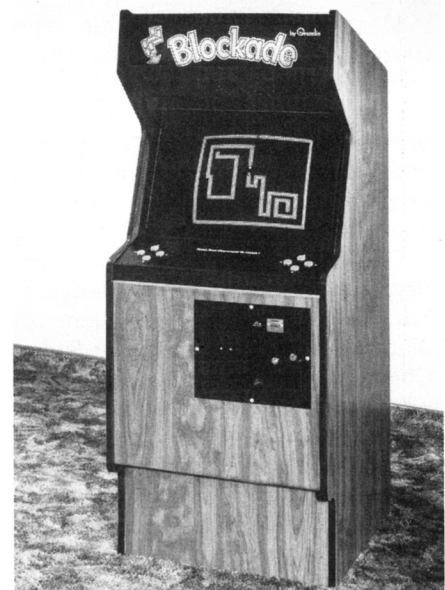
CoMotion, Gremlin's other outstanding hit of the November shows, is similar in game action to Blockade. CoMotion is a 2-3-4 player video table in both cocktail and stand-up versions.



Bazooka



Barricade



Blockade

Preview '77

(continued from page 20)

"If the economy goes up, it can't help the coin-operated industry any," he said.

Most economists agree that 1977 will be a good year for business in general as far as sales and profits. According to Mike Evans, president of Chase Econometrics, a division of the Chase Manhattan Bank, the first three quarters of 1977 will bring increased sales to businesses. The economy will continue to be on the upswing. Of course, some industries will do better than others, but business forecaster Evans sees overall business being 15 per cent ahead of 1976 in the initial three quarters of 1977. The fourth quarter will begin to deteriorate economically and by 1978 a recession will be developing.

So 1977 will be good for coin industry operators if a good economy *does* boost game appeal, but they could experience a drop in demand for coin products if the Depression theory proves to be true.

Herschel Taylor, Taylor Sales Company, operates all types of pin games and juke boxes in a 100 mile radius of Belleville, Ill., and claims pinball will always be a growing industry and next year will be no exception, regardless of the economy. "Pinball is always there—it's a standby while other games come and go. Pinball has *always* been there," Taylor, an operator for 50 years, said. "There's action in them and that's their appeal. People want action."

Most operators agree the new Carter administration will not affect pinball or coin-operated business. "What can Carter do to us?" one operator said. "We're such an old, established business; no new government will interfere with us, legally or any other way."

One change for Chicago in the new year, however, may be legalization by the city government of pinball operation within city limits. Chicago is one of the few areas left where pinball is still illegal. Some operators will not predict the possibility of legalization, others say there is no way of knowing what will happen in the city government, but most Chicago operators of pinballs or games for the suburbs, where it is legal, feel pinball will probably be legalized in 1977.

Thom of Western Automatic Music, Inc., who does 85 per cent of his phonograph, pinball, and game business in Chicago and suburbs through 200 locations, said, "Hopefully, pinball will be made legal because of the big demand to play it in the city. Now people have to go out to the suburbs just to put a quarter in a machine," Thom said. "I feel it will be legal next year." (1977)

If legalization does occur, Thom will operate pinball machines in the city since he thinks there will be an open market, at least for a while.

Empire Distributing, Inc., of Chicago has not included the possibility of a new market because of legalization in their operating budget for 1977. But Kelly thinks legalization will occur and changes will be made in the budget to accommodate legalization and a new market. Their 1977 goals will depend on this happening. Without legalization, Kelly predicts the market for distributors and operators will remain stable, with no major changes from 1976. However, in the event of legalization, Empire plans to increase games sold or rented by about 2,000.

John Pratl, owner of Johnnies Amusement Company in Chicago, has a different view than most other operators on legalization. "Pinball eventually will be legalized, that's for sure. It's hard to say when, but it will," Pratl said. (Johnnies Amusement Company operates jukeboxes, games, and pool tables.) "But," Pratl said, "It's nothing to get overexcited about. What's the big deal? Chicago's just a drop in the bucket." Pratl does not think legalization will alter his market very much, but may begin operating pins if it happens.

The market for 1976 proved Bally pinball games were the most appealing, according to most operators questioned. Szymarek of P & S Amusement Company and Kelly of Empire Distributing, Inc., agreed that the Bally Wizard and Captain Fantastic pinball machines were the two most popular machines of the year. They predict these will be big sellers for 1977 as well.

William Miller of AAA Amusement and Miller Coin Machine Service in Chicago operates about 10 machines a month and he said there was no one machine that sold better or he predicted would pick up

in the coming year. "They're just all hot sellers. They all go well, especially the Ballys," he said.

According to Szymarek, the only machines he would not reorder are the Allied Leisure games, because they "were full of bugs that just weren't worked out yet." He trades his older equipment in every three to four years to replace the machines, but he will not buy a lot of new or different equipment this year, except for his replacements.

Thom of Western Automatic Music, Inc., says foosball popularity has increased 10 per cent per year. He said this game is a favorite of the young who seem to be becoming more interested in games. In addition, jukeboxes for the home have become a much more popular item for Thom's business. "The demand is just greater than we can handle," he said. "It's not a large part of our business, but we have had a big jump in demand anyway."

Szymarek will buy the new Bally machines. He also noticed a trend toward single-player home games like the Buckaroo this year, so he thinks that may be a big seller in 1977.

Bowling alleys appear to be the most used place for operators to install machines, but Szymarek said the "pins are just beginning to pick up in taverns. That's a big place for games now." Another operator said, "Yeah, drinking and pinball just seem to go together—one entertainment for the head and one for the hands."

Play Meter School

(continued from page 17)

ant for us to get feedback about the format and presentation of the school," explains Ralph Lally.

The comment sheets gathered so far have revealed that students have been more than happy with the amount of material covered. One person wrote, "It's great to be exposed to the material by an unbiased instructor." In answer to the question, "How do you think the school can be improved?" most people replied, "We need more hands-on experience."

"Discussion is going on now to expand the school to allow more time for hands-on experience," states Lally.

The next school is planned in the Southeast sometime in February.

Specific information on future seminars can be found in *Play Meter* or by calling 504/827-0320 or 408/379-7180.

Preview '77

(continued from page 22)

new game has a higher price tag. The farmers in the field are beginning to ask questions. And they have mixed emotions as they see the big department stores merchandising well-built home flipper games.

Some of the operators polled think this home market is good, especially since it will tend to enhance the overall image of the industry. Other operators remember what happened to the billiard parlors when home pool tables became the rage.

In 1976 flipper games remained King in the West. New York City and Canada's legalization of pin games resulted in distributors' shipping games to that area, creating a strong demand and higher prices for used flipper games. This was just one more factor helping to depress the economics of operating video games.

Some of the games enjoying prolonged success in 1976 on the West Coast were Midway's Sea Wolf, Gunfight and Tornado Baseball. No doubt about it, if Academy Awards were issued, it would be declared a Midway Year. Sea Wolf was the sleeper of the year, since it looked like a remake of an old movie, but like King Kong, the remake continues to rake in the coins.

Cocktail tables are not completely dead, as many people might think. Midway has done an excellent job in designing a handsome video cocktail table in which they housed Gunfight and Tornado Baseball. Although the original euphoria over cocktail tables has diminished, there are some excellent locations where an operator can benefit since the video tables tend to stay on longer than conventional locations without changing the machine, and since they experience less maintenance problems since you're usually dealing with adults.

The technology that entered the scene during the introduction of video games undoubtedly accelerated the labor costs in the industry. When the charges reached \$15 an

hour at the distributor level, even the flipper game mechanics working there would feel they were worth that amount when they did free-service calls. This impact was felt widely by operators, still struggling on the same basic income.

I seriously question how long the industry can continue to increase the price of machines, labor, parts, and related costs of doing business, and survive.

The small operators simply can't compete against the large conglomerates with money fed to them from stock-market sources and a diversified income base.

Amusement machine vendors making a profit say they are making 10 to 20 per cent on their money by not borrowing much capital, and taking a conservative approach to buying new machines today. Most people with any amount of money today know they can obtain relatively safe investments with a rate of return of at least 15 per cent and spend their time on the beaches of Hawaii or their favorite resort, without working seven days a week. But there's no doubt about it, the operator who can hang in there and actually show a profit is a shrewd businessman.

Looking into my holographic crystal ball for 1977, I see fewer machines being produced by the major manufacturers and the distributors being highly selective on what they buy. Credit will tighten drastically in 1977. It began in 1976, as manufacturers began demanding distributors to pay in 90 days, then 60 days. The old days when the manufacturer gave the distributor enough time to sell the machine and the distributor gave the operator at least 90 days before signing a conditional sales contract are memories. Financial institutions financing the contracts are upping their standards and look for them to start pressuring the distributors to require financial statements on a semi-annual basis from operators.

(Can you imagine some operators' shock and the reply, "What's a financial statement?")

I seriously believe many operators with good routes should strongly consider analyzing their corporate entity. Many operators have drifted along as a sole proprietorship from the time they bought their first machine. The corporate form can

make or break the business financially. A good operator with a solid route should form either a corporation or a Limited Partnership, which can raise capital easier, without relying on the distributor conditional sales contracts at 18 per cent annual interest. Investors can claim some of the machine depreciation and providing dividends on the investment may be a lot easier than meeting payments.

The year 1977 will be a time of maturing. Companies at all levels—manufacturing, distributing and operating—will concentrate on belt tightening and improving their business. George Muraoka of Associated Coin Amusements (ACA), a large West Coast firm that has undergone a drastic reorganization in 1976, summed it all up nicely:

"Everything always looks dark and black, but seems like we keep on going year after year. Something always seems to come along as a life saver."

Are You Game?

(continued from page 23)

so tight that a ball can't pass through them)?

There's more obviously, like cleaning the playfield surface. I actually played one Hi-Deal (a Bally game) yesterday where someone put some tape—that lousy brown stuff that offices always use—over a top white rollover that was probably broken. On the same game, parts were missing from the playfield.

We as an industry have the gall to charge a quarter a play on games in this kind of shape? Something's wrong, and next month I'll tell you what the players are saying about it. It isn't all nice, so be prepared.

For now the important issue is how to maintain your location. The best run places I've seen and the ones that have the smoothest operating equipment also have signs by the front door that read: NO SMOKING, NO FOOD, NO DRINK.

I'm not calling for everyone to do this, but a spilled drink on a pinball machine can ruin it forever. Brown stains from cigarettes can ruin the glass and also blur a player's vision; it all adds up. Regular cleaning has got to help your games.

If you think that I'm exaggerating the conditions players have to face

(continued on page 47)

ANNOUNCING!

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MAIL THIS FORM TO:
PLAY METER SERVICE SCHOOL
P.O. Box 24170
New Orleans, La. 70184

(continued from page 45)

these days, let me give you a rundown of the games I played and the problems I encountered during three days of my Florida trip.

Gottlieb's Abracadabra—loss of power and game unbalanced: leaned to the left; kicking rubbers shot.

Bally's Capt. Fantastic—okay when I played it, out of order the next two days; okay another location.

Gottlieb's Sky Jump—no action from thumper bumpers; left flipper shot; targets didn't reset.

Gottlieb's Super Soccer—scoring mechanism broken.

Gottlieb's Big Indian—flippers weak; drop targets stuck.

William's Aztec—see above.

Gottlieb's Surf Champ—excellent shape in one location; played slow in another.

William's Space Mission—game not level; thumper bumpers shot.

Bally's Wizard—spinner too tight; thumper bumpers dead; game not level.

Bally's Bow and Arrow—okay at one location; back legs even with front legs at another location.

Bally's Delta Queen—flippers didn't work (no refund either).

Bally's Hi-Deal—see above.

Allied Leisure's Thunderbolt—played slow and sluggish; no action.

Bally's Old Chicago—weak flippers; some drop targets came up, others didn't; on another location had no thumper bumper power and was not level.

Bally's Hokus Pocus—okay, but playfield was filthy.

Gottlieb's Royal Flush—loose thumper bumper collar and weak flippers; on another location had dirty and grimy playfield; on another had uneven playfield slope; on another was okay.

These brief descriptions are from some notes about and some memories of what has been some futile pinball playing. I know things can be better; I know they will have to be if pinball is going to survive and thrive.

Next month: *the players talk.*

**READ
PLAY METER**

1977 A.T.E.

IMPORTANT

ANNOUNCEMENT

There will be a CHARGE FOR ADMISSION TO THE 1977 AMUSEMENT TRADES EXHIBITION, to be held at Alexandria Palace, London, on January 25, 26 & 27. The standard charge will be \$4.00 per person (except for ACCOMPANIED juveniles under 14, who will be admitted free) and this will cover the full three days of the Show. But visitors who OBTAIN BADGES IN ADVANCE there will be a REDUCED CHARGE of \$2.00 per person.

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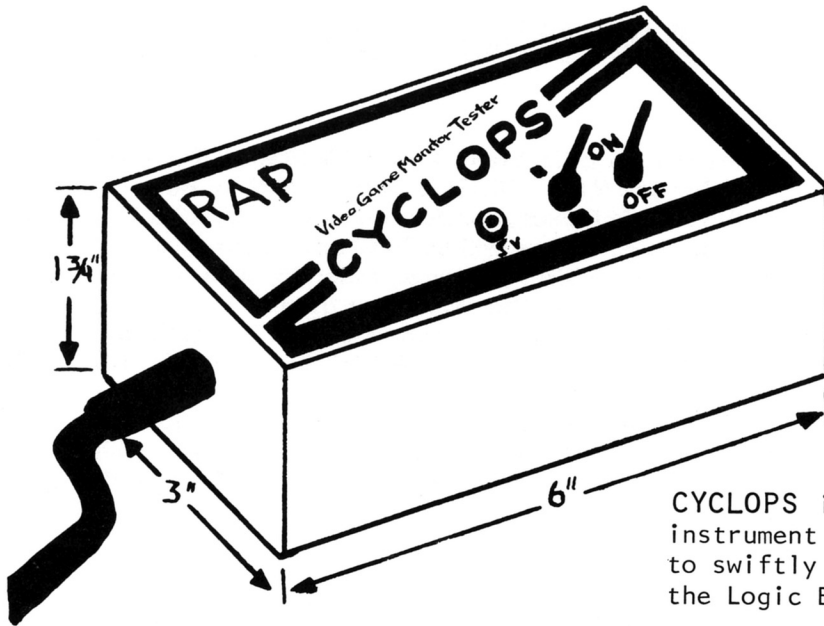
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(continued from page 14)

risks or efforts that the original maker put in. It's like if somebody plants a seed in the ground and takes good care of it and then when the good fruit starts growing someone else comes in and steals that good quality of fruit. If that kind of thing once becomes popular in a business field of any kind, then you cannot have a very sound market and you will not have very sound creative minds to stimulate the market. So it has to be prevented.

PLAY METER: Does the answer lie in legislation, or in the courts?

NAKAMURA: This is very difficult because, for instance, you can apply for a patent but it takes a long time for the patent to be granted. However, if you have a sound business field or some kind of association supported by all members, who are in the business, then you should have a self-control. Then if that tendency (to copy) becomes increasingly stronger, you can probably change a law at a later date. However, at the first stage you have to have self-control. For instance, the Japanese toy manufacturers were very notorious for imitation toys but then those people started to have a self-control system of their own, and they are beginning to have very good control among themselves and very few imitations in Japan.

In Japan we do not have a very strong association for games manufacturers only, but probably in the next year some time we will construct one. We will establish a manufacturers association, for manufacturers only. It's a very necessary thing and I think this is just about time for us to organize that kind of system because now everybody is feeling that we should take steps to prevent those copying attitudes.

PLAY METER: Are you still involved in the operating end in Japan?

NAKAMURA: Yes.

PLAY METER: Perhaps you can tell us a little bit about what it's like to operate in Japan then. Approximately how many operators are there in Japan?

NAKAMURA: Including the small operators—you may not call them operators; they have maybe a couple of machines in front of their shops—those included, there are probably well

over 20,000 operators.

PLAY METER: What if you don't include those one- or two-machine operators?

NAKAMURA: I would say that there are about 600 operators with more than say ten games.

PLAY METER: Are there many big operators like Sega?

NAKAMURA: Sega, Taito, and Namco are the top three in that order. Then there are several smaller but still large-scale operations.

PLAY METER: How big is your operation now?

NAKAMURA: About three hundred locations with well over 5000 games placed in those locations. Some of these locations have a monorail or ferris wheel, though a small one, not like the great big monorail you see in Disney World.

PLAY METER: These are still big pieces of equipment. Most locations in Japan are very small and confined, aren't they? How do you manage this?

NAKAMURA: Yes, as you stated, most of the Japanese locations are very small. However, to have a very good design for a location, sometimes one has to have one big piece and around that one big piece place small pieces to make for a balance. So there is a pretty big market for large machines like those.

PLAY METER: Do you operate music?

NAKAMURA: No music.

PLAY METER: But you do operate arcades. Are arcades very popular over there?

NAKAMURA: Yes. We operate many arcades, probably twenty or thirty.

PLAY METER: Do you import a lot of games from the U.S.?

NAKAMURA: Yes, there is quite a bit of American equipment on the route.

PLAY METER: Is this mostly Atari?

NAKAMURA: Well, I'd say about, a rough figure now, that 50 per cent of Japanese video games are Atari, distributed by Atari Japan and Namco.

PLAY METER: Are you going to make video games eventually?

NAKAMURA: We are fully capable of making video games at Namco, but at this moment, I'm not thinking of producing any video

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(Continued from page 49)

games in Japan by Namco. We are fully confident of Atari's capability of developing new games which will match the operators' and distributors' requirements and desires.

PLAY METER: How well are video games accepted in Japan?

NAKAMURA: It's becoming stabilized. In other words, we had a big boom at first and everybody talked about it and now it's beginning to stabilize. Just about every operator has about three or four pieces in each location.

In this field, the games should be divided into video games, flipper, in Japan pachinko for another, then another type of coin-operated game machine. Those are four very rough classifications for the games in the market and I believe the video game will retain its position in the market, just as the pinball game has been retaining and still expanding.

PLAY METER: What are the most popular brands of pinball in Japan?

NAKAMURA: Bally, Williams, Gottlieb.

PLAY METER: Are Japanese companies going to become more involved in producing their own pin games? They must be awfully expensive to import.

NAKAMURA: Yes. Some Japanese companies are making a small number of pinball game machines, but in order to produce a good pinball machine you must have good preparation, programming, designing and so forth. That involves a lot of money and you have to make a couple of thousand at least. You just can't make ten or twenty. Therefore the good pinball machines will be produced by a big company like Sega, for instance, or otherwise they must be imported from Bally, Williams, Gottlieb and so forth.

PLAY METER: What would you say is the most popular type of game in Japan right now?

NAKAMURA: I would say driving games are the most liked games in Japan.

PLAY METER: Like F-1. How long has F-1 been on location in Japan?

NAKAMURA: Ever since we placed five of them out in the late part of July, but it's been only three months since we placed a considerable number of F-1 games on location.

PLAY METER: How are the original ones doing?

NAKAMURA: Unbelievably well.

PLAY METER: What would the average weekly take be, in American dollars?

NAKAMURA: Average times played per day is 210 times. This is the average. If it's 25 cents a play then approximately \$50 a day, \$350 a week revenue. However, most of the people, at least that we have heard about, want to go for 50 cents a play

PLAY METER: That'd be \$700 a week.

NAKAMURA: Well no, not that much be-

cause as you increase the one game to fifty cents a play, play time is always dropped down. We have done this for survey reasons, charged the equivalent of 25 cents a play in one place and 50 cents a play in another.

PLAY METER: How did that affect the number of plays?

NAKAMURA: It dropped down to about 65 to 70 per cent. So revenue did increase to about \$70 per day.

PLAY METER: What is the commission arrangement for operators in Japan?

NAKAMURA: Usually 40/60, 60 on the operator's side and then sometimes 30/70 for the operator.

PLAY METER: How do you get away with that?

NAKAMURA: When the 30/70 arrangement is applied, either the operator or the manufacturer must provide the personnel to run the location. In other words, here's a location owned by somebody. We get in to use this space as a location and the owner of the location gets 30 per cent and we get 70 per cent. But we have to provide personnel to run the place and to keep it clean.

PLAY METER: That would be like an arcade, and the operator has to pay out of his 70 per cent all expenses— is that correct?

NAKAMURA: The location owner has to pay for the electricity.

PLAY METER: What about the regular bar location?

NAKAMURA: They're 60/40. Bar gets 40.

PLAY METER: Are there any operators who earn 50/50 over there?

NAKAMURA: Yes, quite a few, especially if there is a particularly good location down in the middle of things, where everyone gathers, and open 24 hours a day. These places, you know, every operator wants, so there's tough competition and you may have to sacrifice to 50/50.

PLAY METER: Have you enjoyed your trip to the United States?

NAKAMURA: One of the things that made this trip most worthwhile is that I was able to communicate with a lot of people, such as Mr. Robbins of Empire, Mr. Hank Ross of Midway, Mr. Fogelman of Gremlin, and Mr. Al Bettelman of C.A. Robinson, real gentlemen all. I had the opportunity to talk with them and communicate with them for better understanding. Of course at the same time I made an even tighter relationship with Atari. That was another big worthwhile fact of this trip.

PLAY METER: F-1 was quite an exciting piece, beyond a doubt the talk of the show, How do you feel about that?

NAKAMURA: I'm very, very happy. To be frank with you, I had some confidence in F-1, that the game would be a success at the show. However, I did not expect this much success for F-1 in a show in the United States such as MOA.

As a closing I would like to extend my full appreciation from the bottom of my heart to you for providing me with the chance to talk with you and sort of publicize my opinions through your magazine.

Freedom of Choice

That's what reading magazines is all about. You choose what you want to read, when you want to read it. You have the freedom to properly assess what you like in these pages at your leisure.

Reading *Play Meter* also gives you the freedom to compare product information from the coin-operated amusements manufacturers and service companies. If you would like to learn more about our advertisers and their products or services, feel free to find them in this alphabetical listing, then circle the corresponding number on our Reader Service Card between pages 8 and 11.

RESPONSE NO.	PAGE NO.	RESPONSE NO.	PAGE NO.
1	81	19	49
Active Amus. Mach.		Henry W.T. Mali & Co.	
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2	8	20	35
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Alcohol Counter Measure		International Billiards	
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13	80	31	101
Cleveland Coin Int'l.		Pan American Amus.	
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14	4	32	107
Dynamo Corp.		Play Master	
Grand Prairie, Tx.		Columbia, Mo.	
15	25	33	69
E.S.D. Equipment Stms.		Portale Automatic Sales	
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16	32	34	92
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17	71	35	38
Empire Distributing		Ramtek Corp	
Chicago, Ill.		Sunnyvale, Ca.	
18	89	36	48
Exidy, Inc.		Rap Enterprises	
Mt. View, Ca.		Los Gatos, Ca.	
37	26	37	26
Rene Pierre		Rene Pierre	
New York, N.Y.		New York, N.Y.	
38	18	38	18
Robert Jones Int'l		Robert Jones Int'l	
Dedam, Mass.		Dedam, Mass.	
39	108	39	108
Rock-Ola Mfg. Corp.		Rock-Ola Mfg. Corp.	
Chicago, Ill.		Chicago, Ill.	
40	3	40	3
Rowe International		Rowe International	
Whippany, N.J.		Whippany, N.J.	
41	76	41	76
Runyan Sales Co		Runyan Sales Co	
New York, N.Y.		New York, N.Y.	
42	89	42	89
Standard Change Makers		Standard Change Makers	
Indianapolis, Ind.		Indianapolis, Ind.	
43	95	43	95
Suzo Trading Co		Suzo Trading Co	
Rotterdam, Netherlands		Rotterdam, Netherlands	
44	106	44	106
TJM Corporation		TJM Corporation	
Chicago, Ill.		Chicago, Ill.	
45	28	45	28
Taito America Corp		Taito America Corp	
Chicago, Ill.		Chicago, Ill.	
46	34	46	34
Tweeten Fibre Co		Tweeten Fibre Co	
Chicago, Ill.		Chicago, Ill.	
47	41	47	41
U.B.I., Inc		U.B.I., Inc	
Union, N.J.		Union, N.J.	
48	17, 59, 75, 85, 103	48	17, 59, 75, 85, 103
U.S. Billiards		U.S. Billiards	
Amityville, N.Y.		Amityville, N.Y.	
49	15	49	15
Valley Mfg. & Sales		Valley Mfg. & Sales	
Bay City, Mich.		Bay City, Mich.	
50	19, 85	50	19, 85
Vendall Machines Ltd.		Vendall Machines Ltd.	
Ottawa, Canada		Ottawa, Canada	
51	30	51	30
Walco Electronics		Walco Electronics	
Clifton, N.J.		Clifton, N.J.	
52	105	52	105
Wurlitzer GmbH		Wurlitzer GmbH	
Hullhorst, W. Germany		Hullhorst, W. Germany	
53	98	53	98
Zytronic		Zytronic	
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.		Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.	

music programming

ROMANTICISM: MICKEY NEWBURY

by Michael B. Klein

It seems as though we're always on the verge of discovering a star capable of a real tour de force in the music business. Some do make it; others slip into obscurity even after a few albums. We have the blending of both of these in the talents of Mickey Newbury because for years he was relatively unknown.

Mickey defies all rules of categorization. And, at times, intentionally. Kris Kristofferson has said, "Deliberately defying a label, he is neither country or soul...Behind the deceptive simplicity of some of the lyrics, there are levels of mental landscape that can take you in some strange direction often past the edges of understanding." But to sum it up, Mickey is a poet.

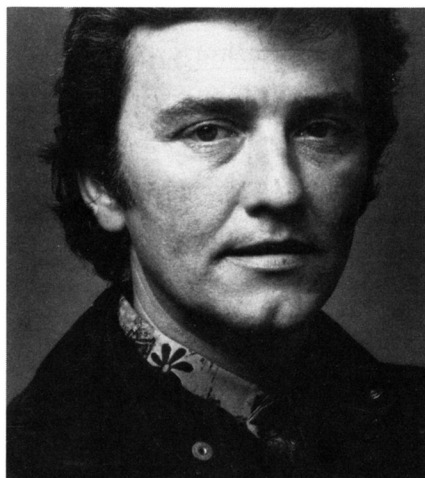
In an instant he can lift you to incredible emotional heights, and drop you just as quickly. There is a bit of everyone of us in Mickey. His point of view is usually singular, as seen through his eyes, but it becomes an incidental part of our lives as we recall through past memories, our experiences...and damn it they relate!

I referred to him as a poet. And Mickey is a true romantic poet the likes of Keats. The question that is often raised by critics of Mickey is how much of this romanticism can we take? I can only surmise that Mickey is making a point, philosophizing if you will, not trying to write Rod McKuen tearjerkers.

And if this type of lyric and music reaches you...fine. It obviously has had much impact on interpreters of all types of music, for artists as varied as Ray Charles to Olivia Newton John have recorded his material. While many top artists in contemporary music, he has only begun to perform publically and, as a result, the public and critics can

now only fully realize the impact of his writing.

Most people tend to think of Mickey as primarily a writer, but he is a fine singer. He has a smooth melodic tenor. As interpreter of his own material he projects the lyrics



Mickey Newbury

well, knowing exactly which words to stress, just when to pause a bit for emphasis, and when to smile a bit in his voice. His country influence is apparent in all of his vocals, but it's not the nasal twang that offends so many people.

Mickey now records for Elektra Records where his best work has been done, with the exception of one lp released on Mercury Records, *Looks Like Rain* (produced by the famous Jerry Kennedy). Immediately it became a collector's item, with country and pop devotees paying as high as \$50.00 a disc. The wise people at Elektra re-released it as a double package with another re-release, *Live At Montezuma Hall*. *Live* is an interesting disc as it features only Mickey and his guitar, with no back-up musicians. And it provides an interesting departure from the conceptual and innovative approach

usually taken by Mickey. His lps include the effects of falling rain, a roaring freight train, and an atmospheric orchestral link between the tunes. All of his albums are classics (and I don't usually use that term loosely) and if ever discontinued, will become instant collector's items.

Mickey combines the ultimate combination of the country influence without the drab dull three chord (C, F, G7) progression. There is a blending of minors, 7ths, and diminished chords, coupled with lyrics like, "Frisco's a full day from home when you can't afford to fly, But it might as well be the moon when you're as broke as I." Or, "Now my mind surrenders as all the remembers come to steal the moment away. Yesterday's gone, and where I stand here alone, it's a hollow ringin' place called today." And finally, "He walks the streets, the few nights he can stand, Drinkin' her memory away when he can." Devastating.

I hope I've made it clear that this isn't country foot-stompin' beer drinkin' music. Instead, you'll have to listen to it privately, within your own head. There will be bits and peaces that will touch you, often blatantly and openly...filled with the joy of living, and the heartbreak of loss, graced with Mickey's gift of being done simply with sophistication. And that's what it's all about. Isn't it?

Mickey Newbury:

A Chronological Discography

Elektra Records-

Frisco Mabel Joy-EKS-74107

Heaven Help The Child-EKS-75055

Live At Montezuma Hall/Looks Like Rain-EKS-7E-2007

I Came To Hear The Music- EKS-7E-1007

Lovers-EKS-7E-1030

Top 20 Country

Now	Was		
1	2	SHE NEVER KNEW ME	DON WILLIAMS/ABC Dot DOA 17658
2	5	SWEET DREAMS	EMMYLOU HARRIS/Reprise RPS 1371
3	1	GOOD WOMAN BLUES	MEL TILLIS/MCA 40627
4	8	BROKEN DOWN IN TINY PIECES	BILLY CRASH CRADDOCK/ABC Dot DOA 17659
5	6	BABY BOY	MARY KAYE PLACE/Columbia 3 10422
6	3	THINKIN' OF A RENDEZVOUS	JOHNNY DUNCAN/Columbia 3 10417
7	10	STATUES WITHOUT HEARTS	LARRY GATLIN/Monument 45 201
8	13	YOU NEVER MISS A REAL GOOD THING (TILL HE SAYS GOODBYE)	CRYSTAL GAYLE/United Artists XW883 Y
9	11	DON'T BE ANGRY	DONNA FARGO/ABC Dot DOA 17660
10	12	TWO DOLLARS IN THE JUKEBOX	EDDIE RABBITT/Elektra 45357
11	17	I CAN'T BELIEVE (SHE GIVES IT ALL TO ME)	CONWAY TWITTY/MCA 40649
12	4	TAKE MY BREATH AWAY	MARGO SMITH/Warner Bros. 8261
13	14	EVERYTHING I OWN	JOE STAMPLEY/ABC Dot DOA 17654
14	9	LAWDY MISS CLAWDY	MICKEY GILLEY/Playboy 6089
15	7	HILLBILLY HEART	JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ/Mercury 73855
16	22	CHEATIN' IS	BARBARA FAIRCHILD/Columbia 3 10423
17	18	LOOKING OUT MY WINDOW THROUGH THE PAIN	MEL STREET/GRT 083
18	20	HANGIN' ON	VERN GOSDIN/Elektra 45353
19	21	SHE TOOK MORE THAN HER SHARE	MOE BANDY/Columbia 3 10428
20	23	ARE YOU READY FOR THE COUNTRY/SO GOOD WOMAN	WAYLON JENNINGS/RCA PB 10842

Top 20 Soul

Now	Was		
1	1	DAZZ	BRICK/Bang 727
2	2	CAR WASH	ROSE ROYCE/MCA 40615
3	3	ENJOY YOURSELF	THE JACKSONS/Epic 8 50289
4	4	YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A STARITO BE IN MY SHOW	MARILYN McCOO & BILLY DAVIS, JR./ABC 12208
5	5	HOT LINE	SYLVERS/Capitol P 4336
6	6	DO IT TO MY MIND	JOHNNY BRISTOL/Atlantic 3350
7	12	I WISH	STEVIE WONDER/Tamla T 5427(FMotown)
8	7	LOVE BALLAD	LTD/A&M 1847
9	8	THE RUBBERBAND MAN	SPINNERS/Atlantic 3355
10	9	SHAKE YOUR RUMP TO THE FUNK	BAR KAYS/Mercury 73833
11	13	I KINDA MISS YOU	MANHATTANS/Columbia 3 10430
12	11	CATFISH	FOUR TOPS/ABC 12223
13	14	WITH YOU	MOMENTS/Stang 5068 (All Platinum)
14	27	I LIKE TO DO IT	KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND/TK 1020
15	16	KEEP ME CRYIN'	AL GREEN/Hi 2319(London)
16	25	FREE	DENIECE WILLIAMS/Columbia 3 10429
17	19	OPEN SESAME	KOOL & THE GANG/De-Lite 1586
18	15	SO SAD THE SONG	GLADYS KNIGHT & THE PIPS/Buddah BDA 544
19	21	SATURDAY NIGHT	EARTH, WIND & FIRE/Columbia 3 10439
20	26	I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOUR LOVE	EMOTIONS/Columbia 3 10347

Alphabetical Listing

A FIFTH OF BEETHOVEN RFT Music Pub. Corp. (RFT, BMI)	47	DRIVIN' WHEEL Dan Hartman (Knee Trember, ASCAP)	46	KEEP ME CRYING Willie Mitchell (Jec/Green, BMI)	53	SHE'S GONE Arif Mardin (Unichappell, BMI)	36
AIN'T NOTHIN' LIKE THE REAL THING Mike Curb & Michael Lloyd (Jobete, ASCAP)	51	ENJOY YOURSELF Kenneth Gamble & Leon Huff (Mighty Three, BMI)	34	LIVING NEXT DOOR TO ALICE M. Chapman with Nicky Chin (Chinnichap, BMI)	77	SLOW DANCING Paul A. Rothchild (Jazzbird, Benchmark, ASCAP)	79
AFTER THE LOVIN' Joel Diamond & Charlie Calello (Silver Blue, ASCAP)	15	FERNANDO Benny Andersson & Bjorn Ulvaeus (Artwork, ASCAP)	42	LIVIN' THING Jeff Lynne (Unart/Jet, BMI)	12	SOMEBODY TO LOVE Queen (Queen/Beachwood, ASCAP)	27
BABY BOY Brian Ahern (Stock, ASCAP) (Electrosad, ASCAP)	74	FLIGHT '76 Thomas J. Valentino (RFT/Don Kirshner, BMI)	59	LOST WITHOUT YOUR LOVE David Gates (Kipahulu, ASCAP)	39	SOMEONE TO LAY DOWN BESIDE ME Peter Asher (Sky Harbor, BMI)	92
BETH Bob Ezrin (Cafe Americana/Kiss Songs, ASCAP: All By Myself, BMI)	40	FLOWERS Maurice White & Charles Stepney (Saggifire, BMI/Kalimba, ASCAP)	67	LOVE BALLAD Larry Mizell & Fonce Mizell (Unichappell, BMI)	32	SORRY SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD Gus Dudgeon (Big Pig/Leeds, ASCAP)	10
BLINDED BY THE LIGHT Manfred Mann (Laurel Canyon, ASCAP)	22	FLY LIKE AN EAGLE Steve Miller (Sailor, ASCAP)	54	LOVE ME Freddie Perren (Unichappell, BMI)	24	STAND TALL Richard Perry (Shillelegh, BMI)	9
CAN'T LET A WOMAN Alan Parsons (Rubicon, BMI)	95	FREE Maurice White & Charles Stepney (Kee-Drick, BMI)	68	LOVE SO RIGHT Bee Gees & Alibhy Galuten (Casserole/Unichappell, BMI)	18	STILL THE ONE Chuck Plotkin (Siren, BMI)	71
CAR WASH Norman Whitfield (Duchess, BMI)	7	FREE BIRD Tom Dowd (Duchess/Hustlers, BMI)	31	"LOVE THEME FROM 'A STAR IS BORN'" Barbara Streisand & Phil Ramone (First Artists/Emanuel/20th Century, ASCAP)	100	THAT'LL BE THE DAY Peter Asher (MPL Communications, BMI)	98
CARRY ON WAYWARD SON Jeff Glickman (Don Kirshner, BMI)	89	HAPPIER Denny Diante (Paulanne, BMI)	84	LOWDOWN Joe Wissert (Boz Scaggs/Hudmar, ASCAP)	75	THE BEST DISCO IN TOWN (MEDLEY) J. Morali & R. Rome (Can't Stop, BMI)	44
CATFISH L. Payton (ABC-Dunhill/Rail, BMI)	91	HEART ON MY SLEEVE David Kerchenbaum (Irving, BMI)	63	LUCKY MAN B. Blackman & M. Clark (Brother Bill's, ASCAP)	80	THE RUBBERBAND MAN Thom Bell (Mighty Three, BMI)	4
C. B. SAVAGE Rod Hart (Shelby Singleton/Little Ritchie Johnson, BMI)	82	HELLO OLD FRIEND Bob Fraboni (Sigwood/Unichappell, BMI)	70	MADEMOISELLE Sixx (Almo/Stygian, ASCAP)	60	THE WRECK OF THE EDMUND FITZGERALD Lenny Waronker & Gordon Lightfoot (Moose, CAPAC)	26
DANCING QUEEN Benny Andersson & Bjorn Ulvaeus (Countless, BMI)	78	HOT LINE Freddie Perren (Bull Pen, BMI)	5	MAGIC MAN Mike Flicker (Andorra, ASCAP)	69	THIS SONG George Harrison (Ganga, B.V., BMI)	33
DAZZ Jim Healy, Johnny Duncan, Robert E. Lee & Brick (Silver Clouds/Trolley, ASCAP)	11	I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOUR LOVE M. White & C. Stepney (Pamjokeen, BMI)	67	MAN SMART, WOMAN SMARTER Steve Smith (Chesdel, BMI)	94	TONIGHTS THE NIGHT (GONNA BE ALRIGHT) Tom Dowd (Cock & Trumpet, ASCAP)	1
DEVIL WOMAN B. Welch (Unichappell, BMI)	73	I KINDA MISS YOU Manhattan Prod./Bobby Martin (Nartahnam/Blackwood, BMI)	96	MORE THAN A FEELING John Boylan & Tom Scholz (Pure, BMI)	13	TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS P. Yarrow & B. Beckett (Muscle Shoals, BMI/Silver Dawn, ASCAP)	25
DID YOU BOOGIE (WITH YOUR BABY) Joe Renzetti & David Chacklee (Goblet, BMI)	99	I LIKE DREAMING Kenny Nolan (Sound of Nolan/Chelsea, BMI)	38	MUSKRAT LOVE Captain & Toni Tennille (Wishbone, ASCAP)	6	WALK THIS WAY Jack Douglas (Daksel, BMI)	20
DISCO DUCK (Part 1) Bobby Manuel (Starfree, BMI)	23	I LIKE TO DO IT Casey/Finch (Sherlyn/Harrick, BMI)	51	NADIA'S THEME (THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS) Barry DeVorzon & Perry Botkin, Jr. (Screen-Gems-EMI, ASCAP)	14	WEEKEND IN NEW ENGLAND Ron Dante and Barry Manilow (Unart/Piano Picker, BMI)	37
(DON'T FEAR) THE REAPER M. Krugman, S. Pearlman & D. Lucas (B. O'Clu, ASCAP)	65	I NEVER CRY Bob Ezrin (Ezra/Early Frost, BMI)	8	NEW KID IN TOWN Bill Scymczyk (publisher not listed)	30	WHAT CAN I SAY Joe Wissert (Boz Scaggs/Hudmar, ASCAP)	90
DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY Hal Davis (Mighty Three, BMI)	88	I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU Jimmy Ienner (Chappell, ASCAP)	64	NIGHT MOVES Bob Seger & Punch Andrews (Gear, ASCAP)	50	WHISPERS/CHERCHEZ LA FEMME/C'EST SE SI BON Sandy Linzer (Miller/Fisher-Pink Pelican, BMI)	41
DON'T TAKE AWAY THE MUSIC Freddie Perren (Bull Pen, BMI; Perren-Vibes, ASCAP)	62	I WISH Stevie Wonder (Jobete/Black Bull, ASCAP)	16	NIGHTS ARE FOREVER WITHOUT YOU Kyle Lehnig (Dawnbreaker, BMI)	19	YEAR OF THE CAT Alan Parsons (Dejamas, Purple Pepper, ASCAP)	87
DO IT TO MY MIND Johnny Bristol (Bushka, ASCAP)	57	IF NOT YOU Ron Haffkine (Horse Hairs, BMI)	97	9,999,999 Roy Dea & Dickey Lee (Lowery, BMI)	66	YESTERDAY'S HERO Jimmy Ienner (Edward B. Marks, BMI)	56
DO WHAT YOU WANT, BE WHAT YOU ARE Christopher Bond (Unichappell, BMI)	45	IF YOU LEAVE ME NOW James William Guercio (Big Elk/Polish Prince, ASCAP)	29	OB-LA-DI OB-LA-DA George Martin (Macleon, BMI)	76	YOU ARE THE WOMAN Jim Mason (Stephen Sillis, BMI)	17
DO YOU FEEL LIKE WE DO Peter Frampton (Almo/Fram-Dee/UA, BMI)	48	IN THE MOOD Prod. Not listed (Shapiro, Bernstein & Co./Lewis, ASCAP)	83	OPEN SESAME K. G. Prod. & Mr. Vee Prod. (Delightful/Gang, BMI)	55	YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A STAR TO BE IN MY SHOW) Don Davis (Groovesville, BMI)	2
DREAMBOAT ANNIE Producer not listed (Andorra, ASCAP)	72	IT KEEPS YOU RUNNIN' Ted Templeman (Tauripin Tunes, BMI)	81	PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC Robert Parissi (Berns/Blaze, ASCAP)	43	YOU MAKE ME FEEL LIKE DANCING Richard Perry (Brainstorm, BMI)	3
		JEANS ON Air Prod. (Math/Dick James, BMI)	35	PRISONER (CAPTURED BY YOUR EYES) Gerry Klein (Koppleman-Bender, BMI)	93		
		JUST TO BE CLOSE TO YOU James Carmichael & Commodores (Jobete/Commodores Ent., ASCAP)	28	SATURDAY NIGHT Maurice White & Charles Stepney (Saggifire, BMI)	49		
				SAVE IT FOR A RAINY DAY (Stephen Bishop, BMI)	58		
				SHAKE YOUR RUMP TO THE FUNK Allan Jones (Barkay, BMI)	52		

Jukebox

TITLE, ARTIST, Label, Number, (Distributing Label)
Now Was

WKS. ON
CHART

Now Was

1	1	TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT (GONNA BE ALRIGHT) ROD STEWART Warner Bros. WBS 8262 (6th Week)		13
2	3	YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A STAR (TO BE IN MY SHOW) MARILYN McCoo & BILLY DAVIS, JR./ABC 12208		16
3	5	YOU MAKE ME FEEL LIKE DANCING LEO SAYER/ Warner Bros. WBS 8283		11
4	2	THE RUBBERBAND MAN SPINNERS/Atlantic 3355		15
5	8	HOT LINE SYLVERS /Capitol P 4336		10
6	6	MUSKRAT LOVE CAPTAIN & TENNILLE/A&M 1870		14
7	18	CAR WASH ROSE ROYCE/MCA 40615		7
8	9	I NEVER CRY ALICE COOPER/Warner Bros. WBS 8143		14
9	11	STAND TALL BURTON CUMMINGS/Portrait 6 77001		13
10	12	SORRY SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD ELTON JOHN/ MCA/Rocket 40645		7
11	16	DAZZ BRICK/Bang 727		10
12	15	LIVIN' THING ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA/ United Artists XW888 Y		9
13	4	MORE THAN A FEELING BOSTON/Epic 8 50266		14
14	7	NADIA'S THEME (THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS) BARRY DeVORZON & PERRY BOTKIN, JR./A&M 1856		18
15	17	AFTER THE LOVIN' ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK/Epic 8 50270		9
16	19	I WISH STEVIE WONDER/Tamla T 54274F (Motown)		4
17	10	YOU ARE THE WOMAN FIREFALL/Atlantic 3335		18
18	13	LOVE SO RIGHT BEE GEES/RSO 859 (Polydor)		14
19	14	NIGHTS ARE FOREVER WITHOUT YOU ENGLAND DAN & JOHN FORD COLEY/Big Tree BT 16079 (Atlantic)		12
20	38	WALK THIS WAY AEROSMITH/Columbia 3 10449		6
21	20	ROCK 'N ME STEVE MILLER BAND/Capitol P 4323		19
22	32	BLINDED BY THE LIGHT MANFRED MANN'S EARTH BAND/ Warner Bros. WBS 8252		7
23	21	DISCO DUCK (PART I) RICK DEES & HIS CAST OF IDIOTS/ RSO 857 (Polydor)		20
24	26	LOVE ME YVONNE ELLIMAN/RSO 858 (Polydor)		9
25	35	TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS MARY MacGREGOR/ Ariola America P 7638 (Capitol)		5
26	22	THE WRECK OF THE EDMUND FITZGERALD GORDON LIGHTFOOT/Reprise RPS 1369 (WB)		18
27	33	SOMEBODY TO LOVE QUEEN/Elektra 45362		5
28	24	JUST TO BE CLOSE TO YOU COMMODORES/Motown M 1402F		17
29	25	IF YOU LEAVE ME NOW CHICAGO/Columbia 3 10390		21
30	52	NEW KID IN TOWN EAGLES/Asylum 45373		2

31	37	FREE BIRD LYNRYD SKYNYRD
32	29	LOVE BALLAD LTD/A&M
33	36	THIS SONG GEORGE HARRISON
34	39	ENJOY YOURSELF JACKSON 5
35	41	JEANS ON DAVID DUNN
36	28	SHE'S GONE DARYL HALL & THE JOY SEPARATION
37	48	WEEKEND IN NEW ENGLAND THE BEATLES
38	45	I LIKE DREAMING KENNEDY
39	50	LOST WITHOUT YOUR LOVE THE COMMODORES
40	23	BETH KISS /Casablanca M
41	42	WHISPERING/CHERCHEZ LEZARD DR. BUZZARD'S BONES
42	30	FERNANDO ABBA/Atlantic
43	27	PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC HERBIE HANCOCK
44	34	THE BEST DISCO IN TOWN THE BROTHERS
45	47	DO WHAT YOU WANT, WANTS THE BROTHERS
46	51	DRIVIN' WHEEL FOGHAT
47	31	A FIFTH OF BEETHOVEN THE BEATLES
48	40	DO YOU FEEL LIKE WE THE BEATLES
49	58	SATURDAY NIGHT EARTH
50	63	NIGHT MOVES BOB SEGAR
51	53	AIN'T NOthin' LIKE THE THE BEATLES
52	55	SHAKE YOUR RUMP TO T THE BEATLES
53	54	KEEP ME CRYING AL GREEN
54	71	FLY LIKE AN EAGLE STEVE NUNO
55	57	OPEN SESAME KOOL & THE GENERATIONS
56	60	YESTERDAY'S HERO BAY CITY ROLLERS
57	59	DO IT TO MY MIND JOY B
58	67	SAVE IT FOR A RAINY DAY THE BEATLES
59	61	FLIGHT '76 WALTER MONTELEONE
60	62	MADEMOISELLE STYX/A&M
61	70	I LIKE TO DO IT KC & THE LIGHTS
62	49	DON'T TAKE AWAY THE THE BEATLES

CHARTMAKER OF THE WEEK

63 — **HARD LUCK WOMAN**
KISS
Casablanca 873

Charts cour

TOP 100

	WKS. ON CHART	Now	Was		WKS. ON CHART
YRD/MCA 1948	4	64	44	I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU BAY CITY ROLLERS/ Arista 0205	17
1867	12				
RRISON/Dark Horse DRC 8294 (WB)	6	65	46	(DON'T FEAR) THE REAPER BLUE OYSTER CULT/Columbia 3 10384	21
ONS/Epic 8 50289	7	66	68	9,999,999 TEARS DICKIE LEE/RCA PB 10764	7
AS/Chrysalis 2094	10	67	69	FLOWERS/I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOUR LOVE EMOTIONS/ Columbia 3 10347	14
LL & JOHN OATES/Atlantic 3332	22				
LAND BARRY MANILOW/ Arista 0212	4	68	72	FREE DENIECE WILLIAMS/Columbia 3 10429	7
Y NOLAN/20th Century TC 2287	7	69	43	MAGIC MAN HEART/Mushroom M 7011	23
OVE BREAD/Elektra 45365	5	70	64	HELLO OLD FRIEND ERIC CLAPTON/RSO 861 (Polydor)	8
WB 863	17	71	66	STILL THE ONE ORLEANS/Asylum 45336	23
LA FEMME/C'EST SI BON		72	87	DREAMBOAT ANNIE HEART/Mushroom M 7023	2
ORIGINAL "SAVANNAH BAND"/ RCA PB 10827	6	73	56	DEVIL WOMAN CLIFF RICHARD/Rocket PIG 40574 (MCA)	26
tic 3346	19	74	65	BABY BOY MARY KAY PLACE/Columbia 3 10422	8
IC WILD CHERRY/Epic/Sweet City 8 50225	28	75	74	LOWDOWN BOZ SCAGGS/Columbia 3 10367	26
WN (MEDLEY) RITCHIE FAMILY/ Marlin 3306 (TK)	17	76	75	OB-LA-DI, OB-LA-DA BEATLES/Capitol P 4347	6
BE WHAT YOU ARE DARYL HALL & JOHN OATES/RCA PB 10808	6	77	88	LIVING NEXT DOOR TO ALICE SMOKIE/RSO 860 (Polydor)	3
/Bearsville BSS 0313 (WB)	6	78	91	DANCING QUEEN ABBA/Atlantic 3372	2
WALTER MURPHY & THE BIG APPLE BAND/Private Stock 073	30	79	83	SLOW DANCING FUNKY KINGS/Arista 0209	3
OO PETER FRAMPTON/A&M 1867	12	80	92	LUCKY MAN STARBUCK/Private Stock 125	3
H, WIND & FIRE/Columbia 3 10449	5	81	99	IT KEEPS YOU RUNNIN' DOOBIE BROTHERS/Warner Bros. WBS 8282	2
GER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND/ Capitol P 4369	4	82	89	C. B. SAVAGE ROD HART/Plantation/Little Richie PL 144	2
E REAL THING DONNY & MARIE/ Polydor PD 14363	6	83	—	IN THE MOOD HEN HOUSE FIVE PLUS TOO/Warner Bros. WBS 8301	1
HE FUNK BAR KAYS/Mercury 73833	7	84	95	HAPPIER PAUL ANKA/United Artists XW991 Y	2
EN/Hi 2819 (London)	7	85	86	HEART ON MY SLEEVE GALLAGHER & LYLE/A&M 1850	4
VE MILLER BAND/Capitol P 4372	3	86	—	BE MY GIRL DRAMATICS/ABC 12235	1
THE GANG/De-Lite 1586	4	87	—	YEAR OF THE CAT AL STEWART/Janus 266	1
CITY ROLLERS/Arista 0216	4	88	—	DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY THELMA HOUSTON/Tamla 54278F (Motown)	1
HNNY BRISTOL/Atlantic 3350	6	89	—	CARRY ON WAYWARD SON KANSAS/Kirshner ZS8 4267 (CBS)	1
AY STEPHEN BISHOP/ABC 12232	4	90	96	WHAT CAN I SAY BOZ SCAGGS/Columbia 3 10440	2
PHY & THE BIG APPLE BAND/ Private Stock 123	7	91	85	CATFISH FOUR TOPS/ABC 12223	9
&M 1877	6	92	98	SOMEONE TO LAY DOWN BESIDE ME LINDA RONSTADT/ Asylum 45361	2
E SUNSHINE BAND/TK 1020	3	93	94	PRISONER (CAPTURED BY YOUR EYES) LA JETS/RCA PB 10826	2
MUSIC TAVARES/Capitol P 4348	8	94	97	MAN SMART, WOMAN SMARTER ROBERT PALMER/ Island 075	2
		95	90	CAN'T LET A WOMAN AMBROSIA/20th Century TC 2310	3
		96	100	I KINDA MISS YOU MANHATTANS/Columbia 3 10340	2
		97	—	IF NOT YOU DR. HOOK/Capitol 4364	1
		98	73	THAT'LL BE THE DAY LINDA RONSTADT/Asylum 45340	19
		99	84	DID YOU BOOGIE (WITH YOUR BABY) FLASH CADILLAC & THE CONTINENTAL KIDS/Private Stock 079	17
		100	—	LOVE THEME FROM "A STAR IS BORN" BARBRA STREISAND/ Columbia 3 10450	1



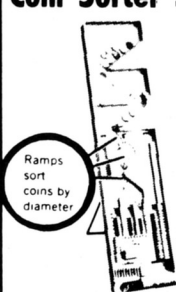
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1977

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Vice President: Bob Sabath
Secretary: Hendricks Rothchild
Sales Manager: John McEntee

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Phone: 313/643-0001
Product Line: arcade games
President: R.W. Fogerty

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245 W. 74th Place
Hialeah, Fla., 33014
Phone: 800/327-5830 (toll free)
305/558-5200
Product Line: arcade games,
video games, gaming machines,
kiddie rides, computer portrait
systems, pinball games
Arnold Fisher

American Shuffleboard Co.
Division of American Cabinet &
Billiard Co.
210 Paterson Plank Road
Union City, New Jersey, 07087
Phone: 201/865-6633
Product Line: pool tables, shuf-
fleboards, and supplies
President: Mary Cusano
Secretary & Gen. Mgr.: Nicholas
Melone
Sales Manager: Sol Lipkin
Service Managers: Leo Stelter
Dick Delfino

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700 West Virginia St.
Milwaukee, Wisc., 53204
Phone: 414/272-4323
Product Line: arcade games
Daniel N. Winter
Keeth Egging

Amutech, Ltd.
395 School Road
Novato, California 94947
Phone: 415/456-2370
TWX 910/384-4273
Product Line: arcade games
H. Marion
M. Brandt
Sales Manager: J. Keller
Service Manager: David Price

Amusement Technology
1200 Memorial Drive
Asbury Park, N.J., 07712
Phone: 201/774-3000
Product Line: kiddie rides
President: Merrill Braverman

Arachnid, Inc.
2500 North Main Street
Rockford, Illinois 61101
Phone: 815/962-7155
Product Line: dart games
Stanley A. Daniels

Atari, Inc.
1265 Borregas Avenue
Sunnyvale, Calif., 94086
Phone: 800/538-6892 (toll free)
408/745-2500
Product Line: arcade games, vi-
deo games, pinball games
Chairman of the Board: Nolan
Bushnell
President: Joe Keenan
V.P./Marketing: Gene Lipkin
V.P./Engineering: Steve Bristow
V.P./Manufacturing: Gil Williams
V.P./Finance: Bill White

V.P./ R & D: Al Alcorn
Sales Manager: Frank Ballouz
Customer Service Rep.: Don
Smith

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Ridgeland, Mississippi 39157
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Product Line: kiddie rides
Monroe "Sonny" Beckham



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1450 Industrial Park
Covina, California 91722
Phone: 213/967-7375
Product Line: video games
Steve Bailey
Ron Ravana

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Phone: 312/267-6060
Product Line: pinball games,
gaming machines
President: William T. O'Donnell
Director of Marketing: Ross B.
Scheer
Asst. Director of Marketing:
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Sales Manager: Robert R. Harp-
ling
Service Manager: B.M. Powers

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 Vice President: Peter Feuer

Service Manager: William Horn-
 ing

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 games, video games, puck bowl-

ers, pinball games
 President: Jerry Marcus

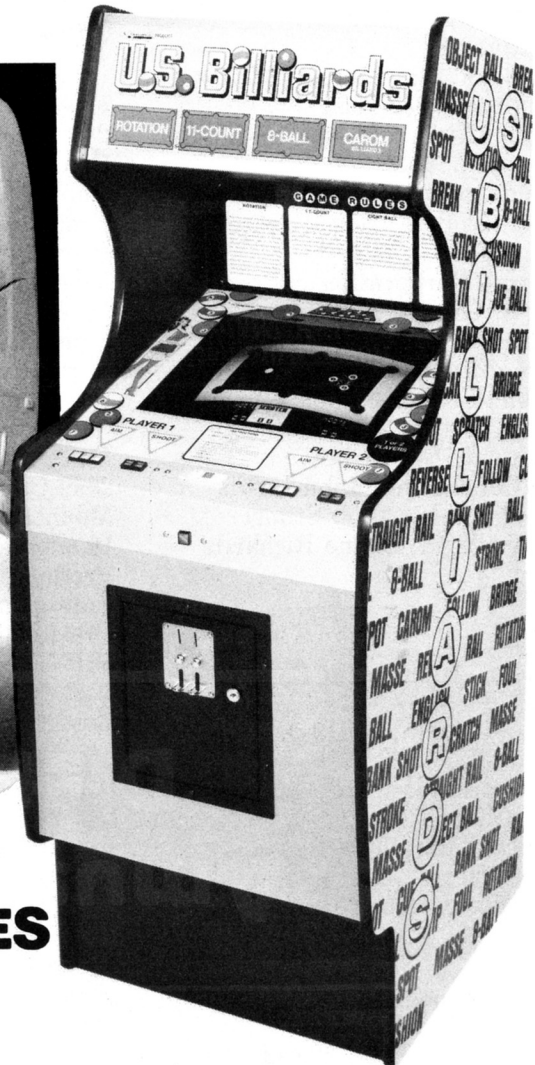
Cinematronics, Inc.
 1044 Pioneer Way, Suite B
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 Phone: 714/440-2933
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President: M.C. Wachter
Vice President: Sue Wachter

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V.P. of Sales: Stanley Jarocki

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V.P.-Marketing: Paul C. Jacobs
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Vice President: Thomas Leon
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Sales Director: Jerry Monday



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408/732-8110
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Vice President: Ray Dennison
Mktg. Director: Lila Zinter
Customer Service: Alan DeWolf
Service Manager: Jim Rhine

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Azusa, Calif., 91702
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Gen. Mgr./Games: Vern Leas
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Service Mgr.: Preston Wagner



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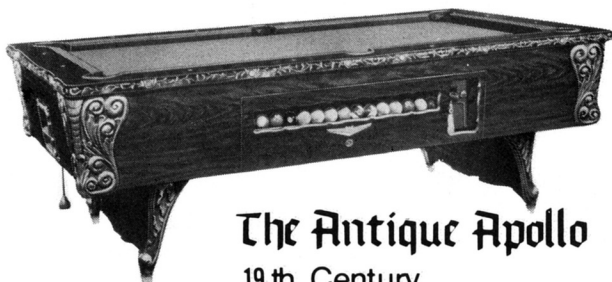
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Product Line: video games
President; J.C. (John) Chaudhry
Vice President: Jack Forrester

(continued from page 35)

high priority consideration.

The extent of existing outside pressures to give first priority to a given step can be a major element. The immediate returns (in reduction of those pressures) making this move can often be of such value as to justify a top priority over programs that may also be pending.

The number of existing steps under consideration can be a determiner of what calls for top priority. Where it is possible to handle three or four of these in the time and effort required for one other, then it may be the best to dispose of the several first. Doing so may also permit handling of that one major problem more efficiently through providing a greater amount of time in which to do so at a later date.

All of the foregoing check points can be used to make the scheduling of priorities for your working tasks easier and provide assurance that the best results will be obtained at the same time.

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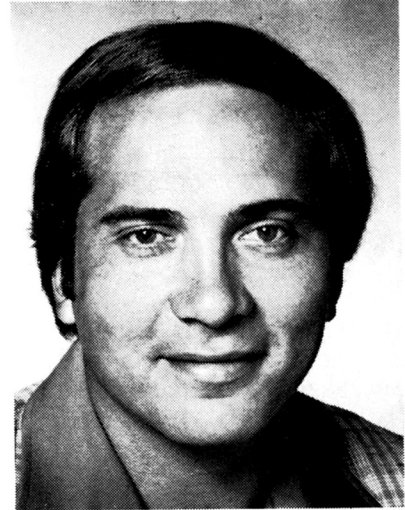


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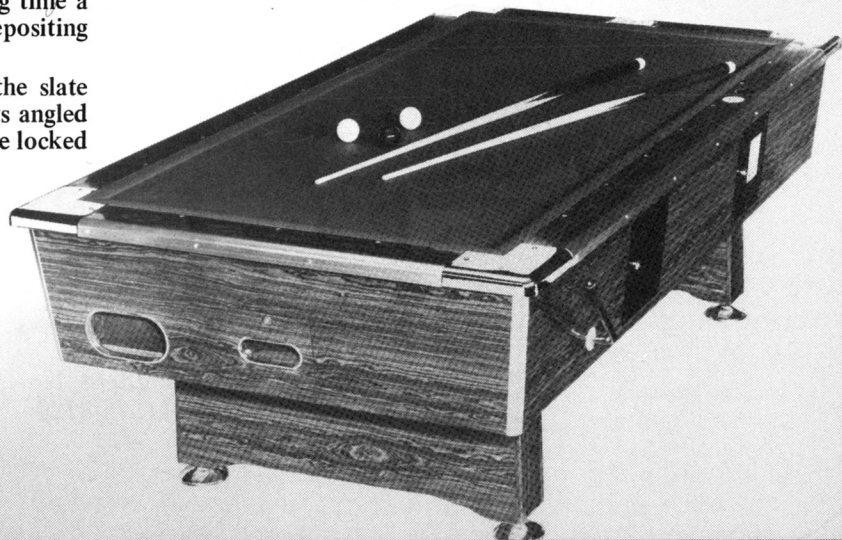
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3. Raising the slate releases 3 carom balls.
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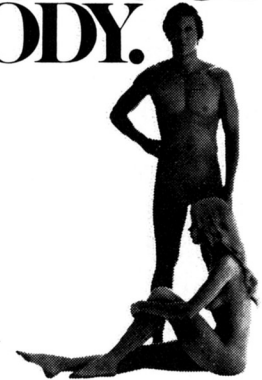


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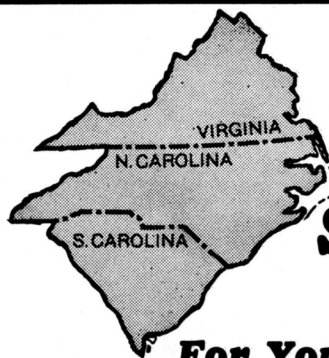
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COIN INDUSTRY **PLAY METER** UPDATE

Vol 2 No. 15

December, 1976

Columbia Pictures Buys Gottlieb

Alan J. Hirschfeld, president of Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc., has announced that it has entered into an agreement to acquire all of the outstanding stock of privately-held D. Gottlieb & Co. Gottlieb pioneered the development of the non-gambling coin-operated pinball machine fifty years ago and today is the world's largest manufacturer of such amusement machines, according to Hirschfeld.

Hirschfeld noted that this acquisition presents an opportunity to explore entry into the rapidly-expanding home entertainment market in addition to Columbia's moving into a growing worldwide amusement market that complements its film, television, record and commercial activities.

Hirschfeld also stated, "This acquisition comes as a logical consequence of the overall plan carried out at Columbia over the last three years. After accomplishing an initial turnaround, we succeeded in substantially reducing our bank debt, in divesting the company of certain operations and in achieving significant improvements in our management efficiency and in the level of our operating profits. We felt that process was completed early this fall and we began a thorough search for the kind of acquisition we are now announcing. Gottlieb is a major company in a growing industry that we feel will add to our earnings base and will introduce stability into our overall results." Hirschfeld went on to say that "with more than 1600 employees, two manufacturing plants in

Illinois and one in Fargo, N.D., Gottlieb meets Columbia's established acquisition criteria of a strong financial position, an outstanding record of growth and experienced management."

Terms of the acquisition call for Columbia to purchase Gottlieb's common stock for \$47 million of which \$6 million will be paid on closing, \$24 million on January 3, 1977 and the balance in installments during the calendar years 1977 through 1982, subject to deferral in certain events. In addition, the common stockholders of Gottlieb will receive options to purchase an aggregate of 400,000 shares of Columbia common stock at \$10 per share, subject to reduction of the option price based on a formula should the market price of Columbia common stock exceed \$10. As *Play Meter* went to press, Columbia stock's Big Board exchange value was \$7.25 per share.

Columbia has also agreed to purchase all outstanding Gottlieb

preferred stock for \$3.3 million on a deferred payment basis effective no earlier than 1980.

The transaction, which has been approved by Columbia's Board of Directors, is subject to, among other conditions, consent of Columbia's lending institutions from whom the firm will re-borrow approximately \$22 million with regard to this transaction. This represents approximately the amount received by Columbia from the sale of its music publishing business. After closing, D. Gottlieb & Co. will operate as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Columbia under its present management who will serve with long-term employment contracts.

Hirschfeld estimated that for the twelve months ending December 31, 1976, D. Gottlieb & Co. will report consolidated net income before taxes of more than \$11.5 million and that at closing the consolidated net worth of Gottlieb should approximate \$24 million and \$17 million, respectively.

ChiCoin Sold at Auction

The assets of Chicago Dynamics Industries was offered for sale at public Auction Dec. 13. CDI is parent company to Chicago Coin. The property offered for sale, in bulk only, included all the goods of the company located at both Chicago addresses. This included all furnishings, fixtures, machinery, tools and equipment. Also for sale was the entire inventory of the

company, including all coin-operated machines, amusement devices and games, all raw materials, parts, supplies, goods-in-process and finished goods. "General intangibles" (not including registered patents and trademarks) in which Chicago Dynamics had an interest were also included in the sale.

The sale was offered by Central National Bank in Chicago and Main

(continued overpage)

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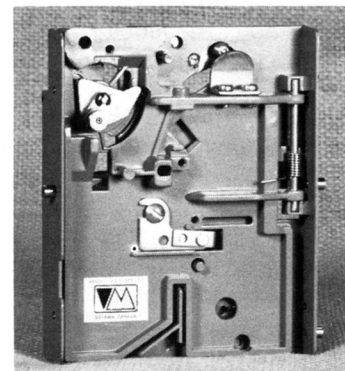
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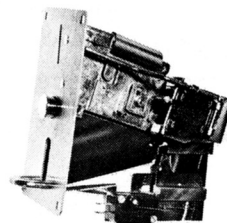
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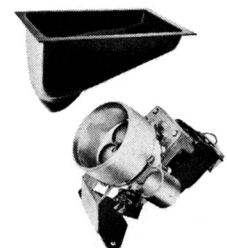
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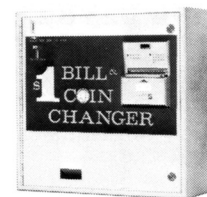
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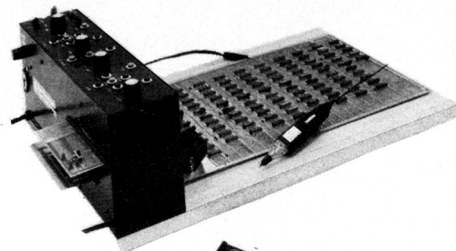
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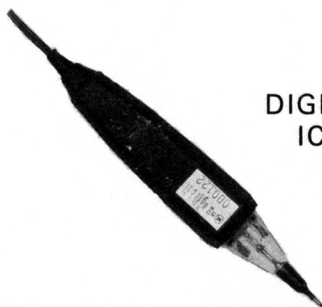
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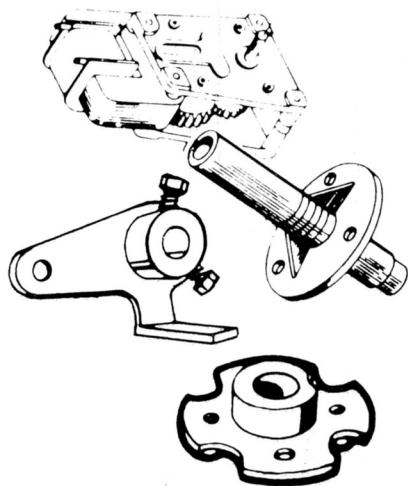
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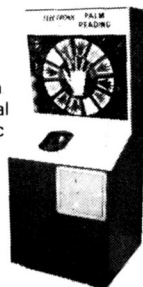
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Phone: 800/327-5830 (toll free)
305/558-5200

Atari, Inc.
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Phone: 800/538-6892 (toll free)
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Bailey International Inc.
1450 Industrial Park
Covina, Calif., 91722
Phone: 213/967-7375

Century Industries
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Blue Bell, Penn., 19422
Phone: 215/272-1400

Chicago Dynamic Industries, Inc.
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Chicago, Ill., 60614
Phone: 312/935-4600



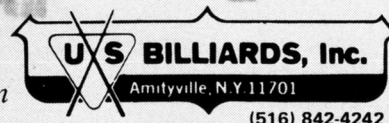
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Fun Games
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Micronetics, Inc.
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