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PLAY METER

Volume 6, Number 23

December 15, 1980

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Vol. 6, No. 23
Dec. 15, 1980

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PLAY METER

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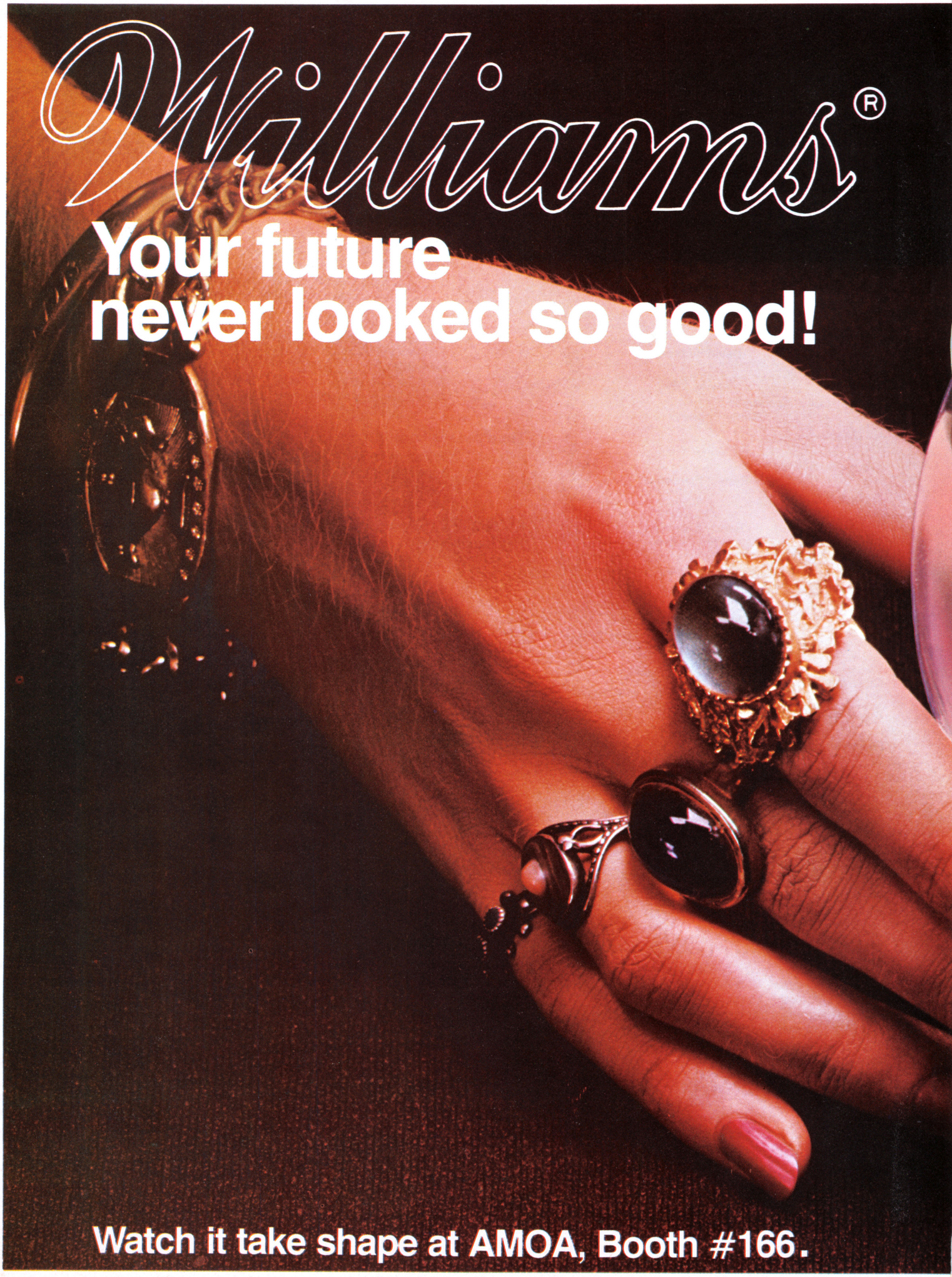
Peak of R&N Silkscreening, San Jose, California designed the cover for this AMOA Convention Issue.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From the Editor

Well, it's that time of year again—convention time! Major events will be taking place both here and abroad over the next six months. Here at home, the AMOA will be kicking things off in Chicago. While this issue was at press, the Japan show (JAA) and the vending show (NAMA) were held. Still to come are the parks show (IAAPA) in New Orleans, the British show (ATE) in London, the Amusement Operators Expo (AOE), also in New Orleans, and a number of state and regional conventions.

I cannot agree with those who say this industry has too many shows. Every successful convention that has been held has served a very vital purpose. That is to bring people in this industry together. The various sectors of this industry cannot afford to isolate themselves from one another. Open lines of communication and interaction between manufacturer, distributor, and operator are essential elements in assuring the continued growth of this industry. Conventions serve that purpose and contribute a great deal to the overall success of the industry.

Those short-sighted ones who play down the importance of conventions are only fooling themselves by looking at only one side of the ledger. Sure, conventions cost money—doesn't everything that is worthwhile? If one takes the proper attitude, there's a great deal to be gained from a convention. The benefits of a convention can be both tangible and intangible.

Any manufacturer worth his salt should jump at the chance to expose his products to a gathering of thousands of operators! With the competitin so fierce at the manufacturing level, product exposure becomes an essential ingredient to any successful marketing plan.

For distributors, conventions provide an excellent opportunity to meet with the various suppliers they represent. A number of manufacturers use conventions as a means of holding distributor meetings and social events. By doing so, manufacturers can show their appreciation for successful sales performance, discuss any existing problems, and make plans for the future.

For the operator, a convention offers an excellent opportunity for meeting face to face with the creators of the equipment with which he makes his living. He is free to air his complaints as well as his compliments and suggestions. Since operators are the ones who are faced with the day to day business of operating equipment, they can offer a great deal of useful information. Of equal importance is the opportunity for operators from different parts of the country to meet with each other and openly discuss mutual problems and solutions. Under normal circumstances, operators don't usually talk shop with their local competitors. But at a convention, there are operators from different parts of the country who are more likely to talk freely with each other without the fear of aiding the competition. A vast amount of information can be shared and learned in this manner.

Another very important aspect of any convention is the opportunity to inspect first-hand the latest equipment being offered. Buying the right equipment at the right time is of utmost importance. There is a big advantage in not just knowing what *is* available, but also in what *will* be available. Attending a convention is a lot like taking a peek into the future. Games for future release are often displayed at conventions. And knowing what's ahead is a big advantage in planning equipment purchases.

The educational aspect of conventions should also not be overlooked. Most conventions offer a series of seminars, meetings, and workshops—all designed to educate and promote the success of operators. An educated operated has a much better chance for a successful operation. The more operators learn about their business, the better businessmen they become. And this process benefits the entire industry. The more successful operators become, the more successful the industry becomes. It's that simple.

I could go on and on about the beneficial aspects of conventions, but suffice it to say that conventions are good and serve a very meaningful purpose. Too many conventions? For all the good that come out of a convention, I say there's not enough! Let's make the most of the ones we do have. Support them and do your part by communicating and sharing ideas and information.

Ralph C. Lally II
Editor and Publisher

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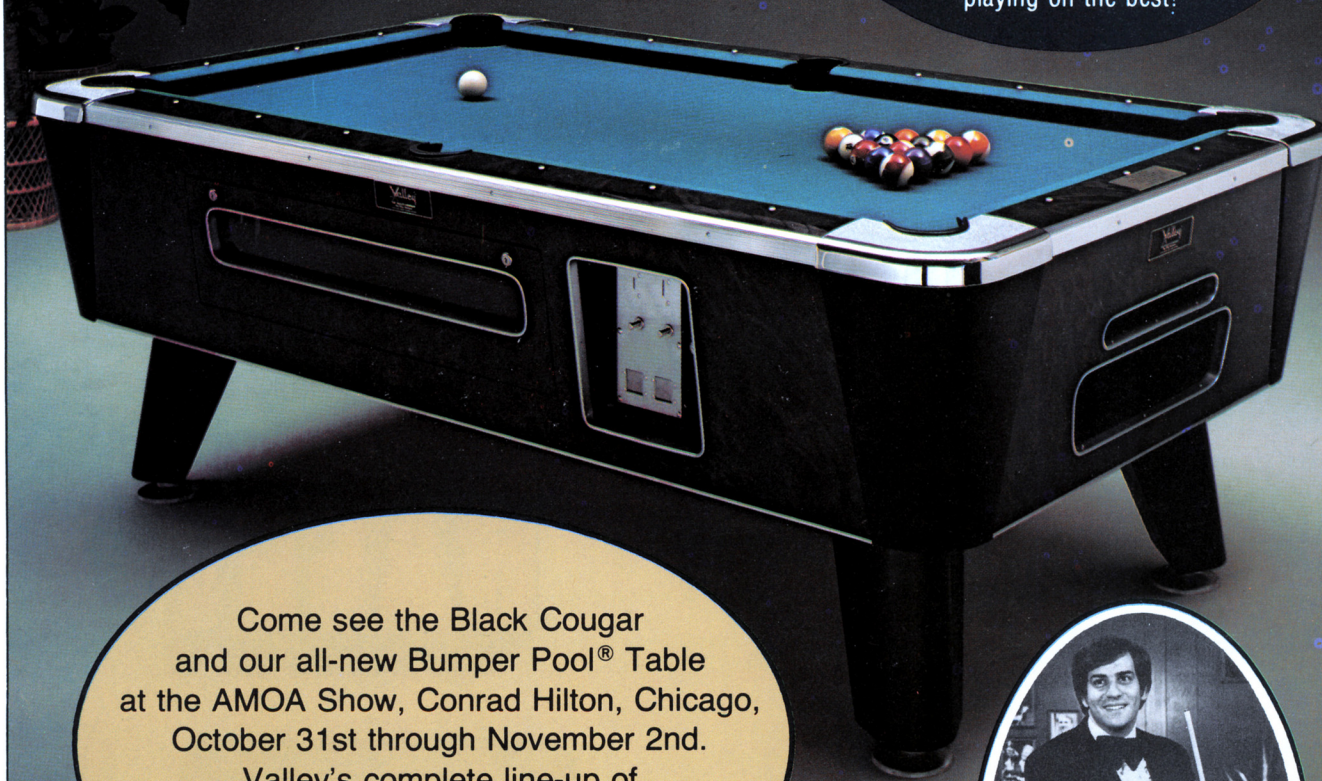

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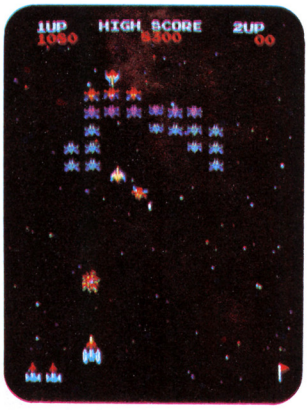

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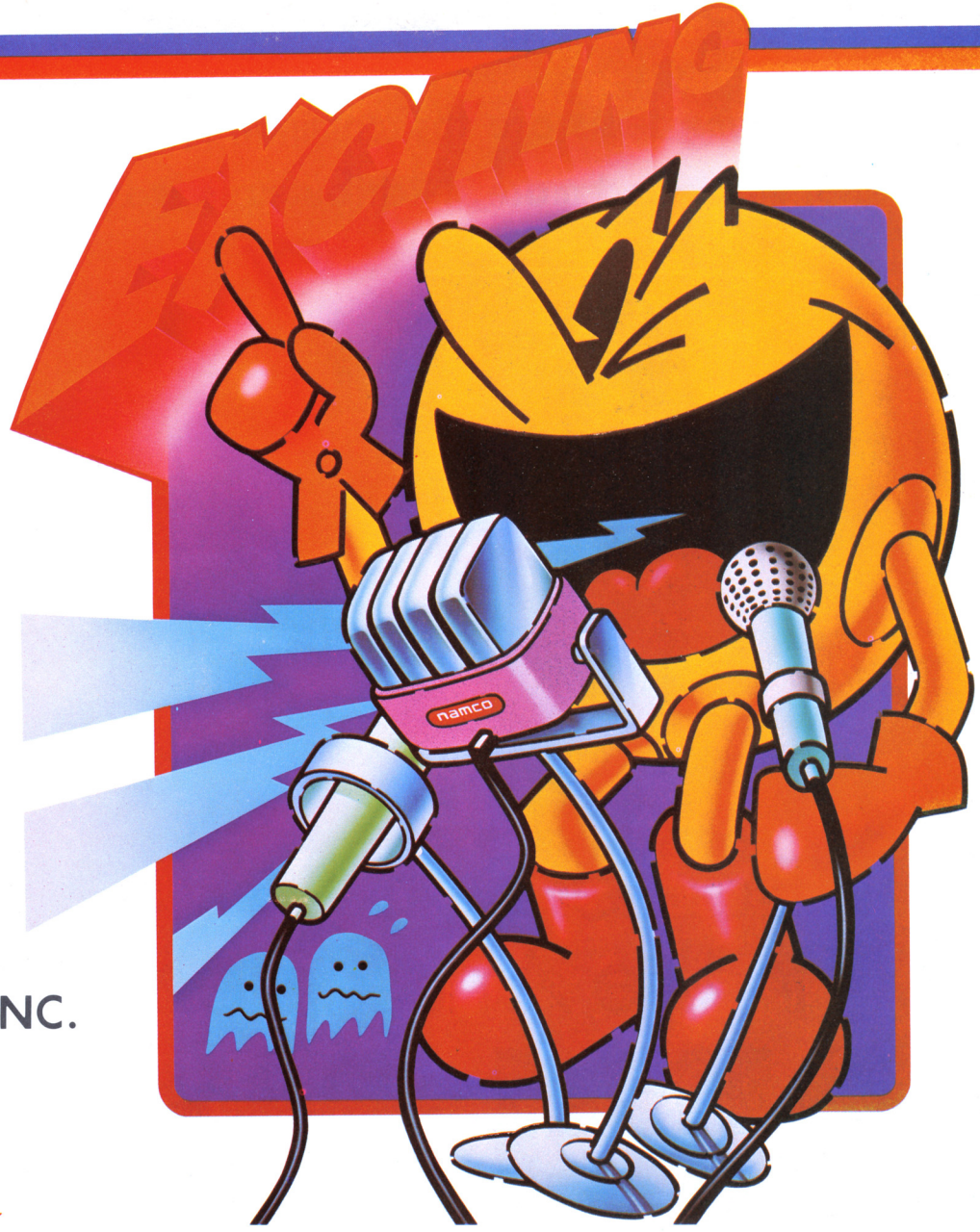

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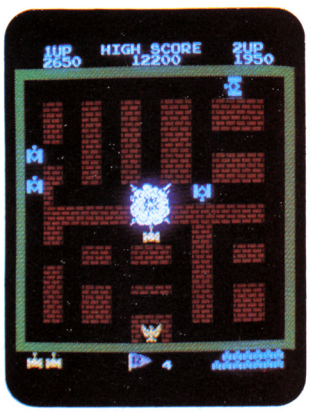

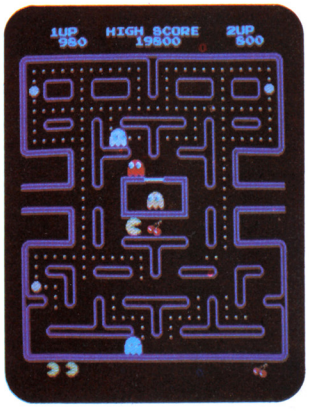

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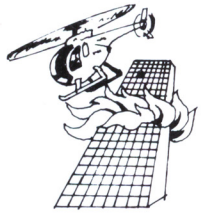

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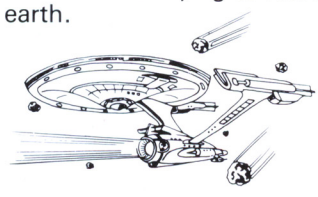

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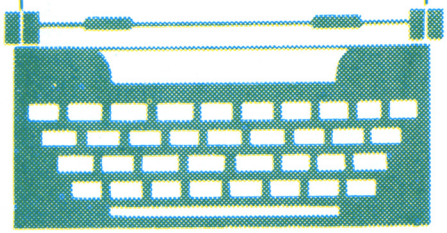

Game has feelings, too

[*The following letter evidently was penned by a youthful—and poetic—reader.* —*ed.*]

I'm a *Space Invaders* video game and I'm in an arcade. I've just been turned on and my CRT is beginning to light. Now I'm in my attract mode. This is the mode I'm in most of the time; not really—you see I'm a very popular game. People usually stand in line to put their quarters in me. Ah, here comes somebody now. *Doot-doot, smash; doot-doot-doot smash; doot-smash.* (Oh boy was that guy a bad player, he didn't get through the first wave of invaders. Well, here come somebody else...

Hey, what's this kid trying to do—he trying to flip a penny in my coin return. Sorry, Pal it won't work—I'm equipped with an anti-penny kit. Boy does that make me mad. OUCH—he kicked me. Boy would I like to give *him* a few seconds of my anode lead! Here comes the manager—thank God he got rid of that kid. Oh my aching cabinet.

Here comes someone else—Oh Jez, he's a smoker, that means I'll have to sustain another third degree burn on my contol panel. Oh no, I'm getting that strange feeling again—I think I'm getting a ROMache. Oh, the difficulties of being electronic. I *am* completely electronic. You must know that, after all you got me to TALK and that isn't even in my program!

F.L.
A Play Meter subscriber

Voted for Hobbs

I just read in the AMOA newsletter that there will be a Conference of State Associations on October 30th at the Convention—Russell Mawdsley, moderator.

At Ohio this year, most of us signed a resolution to made Milton Hobbs of North Carolina our chairman. Those of us who signed, recognized Milton Hobbs and Milton Hobbs only, and will work on any program he sets up.

The State Associations group is not an AMOA function. We have not come to this through AMOA *just because* of AMOA—because AMOA furnishes no Program to help States. The move was started by Ohio's search for answers to problems other States may have solved. The only way AMOA should come into the picture is if it decides to become the central bank of information for States to draw their research from. No one anywhere has as yet compiled a political history of this industry. If they had, a meeting would not be necessary.

We are coming to vent our problems at a conference and maybe to help one another. We should be treated like any other State Association holding its meeting at the Convention. A separate organization is not intended—definitely not on my part.

Millie McCarthy
Hurleyville, New York

[*Ed. note: Mrs. McCarthy is president of the New York State Coin Machine Association and participated in the Ohio meeting. See PLAY METER, July, 1980.*]

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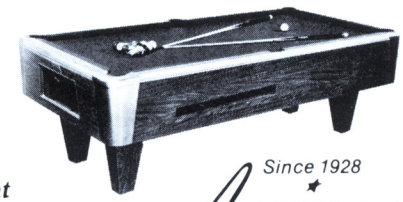

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Coinman of the Month

BOB NIMS

Bob Nims of Lucky Coin Machine Company in New Orleans is the outgoing president of the Amusement and Music Operators Association, and so he was the fitting person to interview for this, our special AMOA Issue.

Bob has been in the coin machine business since 1942, with 33 of those years being spent in business for himself. He started Lucky Coin from scratch back in 1947 and ten years later got into the distributing end of the business when he started representing the Rock-Ola phonograph line. He's now in his 24th year as a Rock-Ola distributor and has added several major game and pool table lines to his AMA Distributing Company.

Employing a total of between 65 and 70 employees, with two-thirds of that total devoted to the operating side of the business, Bob obviously has a thorough understanding of the many sides of the coin machine business. In fact, he handles in his operation all amusement machine equipment types—from pinballs and videos to jukeboxes and pool tables and shuffle alleys.

Born in Spokane, Washington, he grew up in southern California, but World War II took him to New Orleans where he settled. He was in the merchant marines at the time and visited his sister in New Orleans, only to find himself staying a little longer than he had anticipated. He got a job changing records on jukeboxes for a local operator and then later went into business for himself, starting out with pingames and branching out into phonographs. But the real turning point for Lucky Coin, according to Nims, came in 1953 when he got into the business of operating pool tables. At the time, no one in the area was even remotely interested in operating pool tables in the New Orleans area; so he was able to capitalize heavily in that end, and it resulted in s solid pool table route that is further strengthened by his annual pool table tournament promotion which draws quite a bit of attention in the New Orleans area.

Bob joined the AMOA [back when it was the MOA] seventeen years ago. He got involved in the national association because he was interested in fighting what he thought were some unreasonable demands by copyright owners. Well, as president of the AMOA for the past year—probably the most active year of the copyright struggles yet—Bob certainly had his hands full. It seems that things were happening on all the copyright fronts at once.

He has served on the board of directors of the AMOA for fifteen years, though not consecutively. And he has held all the possible executive positions on the AMOA, with the exception of past president. But as of the conclusion of the AMOA Show in Chicago, he'll be serving in that capacity, too.

He recently served as a delegate from Louisiana at the White House Conference for Small Businesses, a meeting which brought together small businessmen from all across the country to deliver a message to the U.S. Congress and to the President. As a result of that conference, Nims told PLAY METER, there are several bills pending in Congress which are the fruits of that meeting.

Besides belonging to the national Small Business Association, he is also a member of the National Automatic Merchandising Association, and the Young Men's Business Clubs of Orleans and Jefferson parishes. His wife these many years, Jerry, has been a principal officer and driving force at Lucky Coin since 1952.

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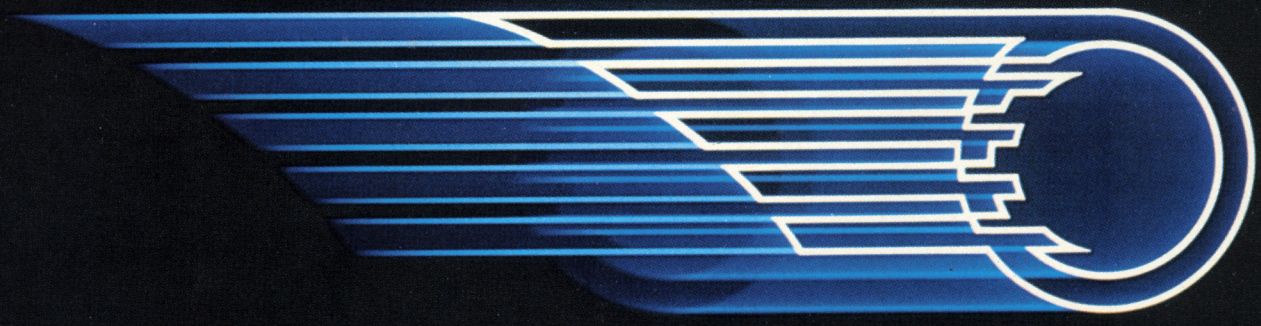

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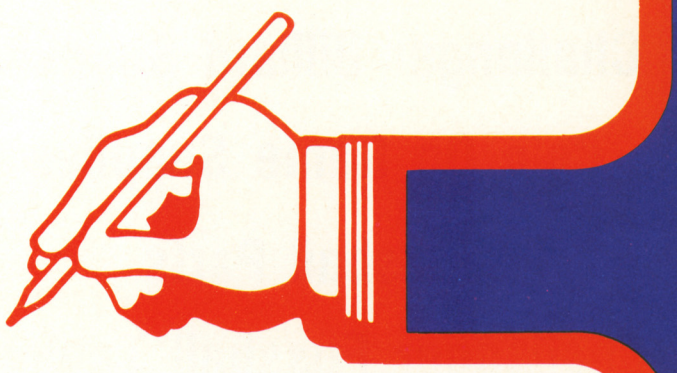

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PLAY METER: What success has the AMOA had over the past year as far as recruiting new members?

NIMS: We have not, during my term as president, had a real membership drive. We haven't gone out and really recruited new members, not that we don't want to because we have had membership drives in the past. But this has been a very busy year for us, and we only have so many staff members so there's only so much we can do.

I will say this, however, that as of right now, we have the highest membership ever—we're over 1400 members. Of course, we certainly welcome any and all operators to join and support their national association because it is very beneficial to the operator, as well as everyone else in our industry, to belong to the AMOA.

PLAY METER: Figuring that the total number of operators in this country is much higher than 1400, is a membership of that number satisfactory?

NIMS: Let's put it this way. In either BMI's or ASCAP's final brief before the Copyright Royalty Tribunal on the royalty review hearings, it was pointed out that everyone in the industry does not belong to the AMOA. They said our membership represents about 20-25 percent of the industry; so they faulted us by using this statistic in a negative manner. I would like to know of any trade association that represents everybody within its industry. I would doubt very seriously that everybody who is in the restaurant business belongs to the restaurant association and that everybody who is in the shoe business is in the shoe retailers association—

PLAY METER: (Interrupting)—Or everyone who writes songs belongs to one of the performing rights societies—

NIMS: Right. But that's what I mean about not belonging to the national association being more detrimental to the operator. To belong to the AMOA is a very nominal cost, and it would behoove all operators to stand up and be counted as part of their industry. The national trade association has to represent them, but it is much better to have larger numbers for reasons like this.

By belonging to the AMOA, the operator adds strength to the AMOA and to himself. You should belong at least to your national association. In fact, you should belong to your state and local association, as well. If a man's interest is in the coin machine business, he should belong to the AMOA. It's kind of foolhardy for anyone who is deriving his livelihood out of a business not to do something to support that industry.

PLAY METER: What does an operator gain by joining the AMOA?

NIMS: First of all, he gains from the assurance that he is represented on the national level. Plus he gets many benefits from belonging to that trade association, benefits which are bound to improve his business and that he might not otherwise gain.

For nine years now, for instance, the AMOA has sponsored the Notre Dame Seminars, and I can

THE PINBALL PROJECTILE

Steel Ball Tells All

(See inside)

WHY
EVERY
STEEL
BALL
WANTS
TO BE
IN A
STERN
GAME.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
by Richard Leslie

Not knowing much about the game of pinball, I was a little apprehensive about meeting one of the "superstars" in the game. But it's all part of my job. So I left Chicago to track down the busy Stern Ball. Two weeks later I caught up with it inside an arcade in Melbourne, Australia. The Ball was kind enough to take a few moments off to talk.

Leslie: What makes a Stern game so special? I thought all pinball games were alike.

Ball: ***Are you kidding? Some games can put a ball to sleep. But you've got to stay on your toes—err... I mean rounded bottom—all the time in a Stern game. The action's always fast!***

Leslie: Is that what you like most about a Stern game? The action?

Ball: ***Yeah... The hits and bumps and all the exploding lights and sounds get me into the game fast. The old adrenalin starts flowing immediately and I end up getting lost in the competition.***

Leslie: You mean there's competition between you and the player?

Ball: ***Of course... That's what the game's all about. Sure I appreciate a perfectly timed gunch or a great release on the flipper. But I sure do love to see their faces when I go straight down the drain.***

Leslie: One last question... If given the chance, would you add anything to a Stern game?

Ball: ***That's hard to say... Stern's always innovating the game so... oh yeah... cheerleaders! Football has them, why not pinball? How 'bout shooting a game before you go?***

Leslie: Better not... I gotta catch a...

Ball: ***C'mon... just one little game...***

Leslie: Well... okay... but just one...

Ed. Note: Leslie has yet to return from Melbourne.

STERN

"You ain't seen nothing yet."

STERN Electronics, Inc. 1725 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614, 312/935-4600

certainly attest to the fact that these seminars are becoming better every year, for the simple reason that the staff of the continuing education program at Notre Dame University has really gotten into our industry. They understand what our industry is all about. That's one benefit, but, of course, there are other benefits.

There are hospitalization programs, and different insurance programs, and cash programs. We also have for the past few years been conducting schools for mechanics, and this has been a great service. The AMOA has also provided for its members an audio-visual program to be used by members who want to give a talk or a presentation to a local Lions Club or business club so that people will know what the coin machine business is all about. Unfortunately, most people don't know what the coin machine industry is all about, and our audio-visual program is aimed at that void. It's something that more individuals and state associations should take advantage of to help them at their local levels. It is really a great tool that can be very beneficial to them.

And then there's our monthly newsletter. Of course, there's the enormous benefit they derive from the AMOA trade show and the general membership seminar and the two other mini-seminars. And, for the second year in a row, we will have our state association conference before the show opens. That is attended by state association leaders, and it's obvious this service will develop a better understanding of people's problems around the country.

PLAY METER: As you've visited various state associations this past year, has there been any feedback from the members as far as other types of programs they would like to see the AMOA institute in the future?

NIMS: I would like to say yes, but, unfortunately, I can't say that anybody has come up with a specific program that they would like to see the AMOA institute. I can say AMOA is looking for new and additional educational services for the membership.

Also, we really do go all out to support our state associations. We believe in independent state associations that are not satellites of the AMOA. We don't tell the state associations how they should run their organizations. We are there merely to answer any questions they may have and to give them advice if they ask for it.

PLAY METER: There are two suggestions that we at PLAY METER have picked up within the past month that I would like you to comment on. Both of these suggestions come from manufacturers. The first question comes as a result of last month's Coinman interview (Gary Stern, president of Stern Electronics). Mr. Stern told PLAY METER "gray area" equipment could become a problem because it might create confusion at the state and local government levels when public officials try to distinguish which games are for amusement only and which machines are gaming devices. Without specifying the AMOA, he went on to say that an organization of operators should address themselves to this matter. So my question to you is this:

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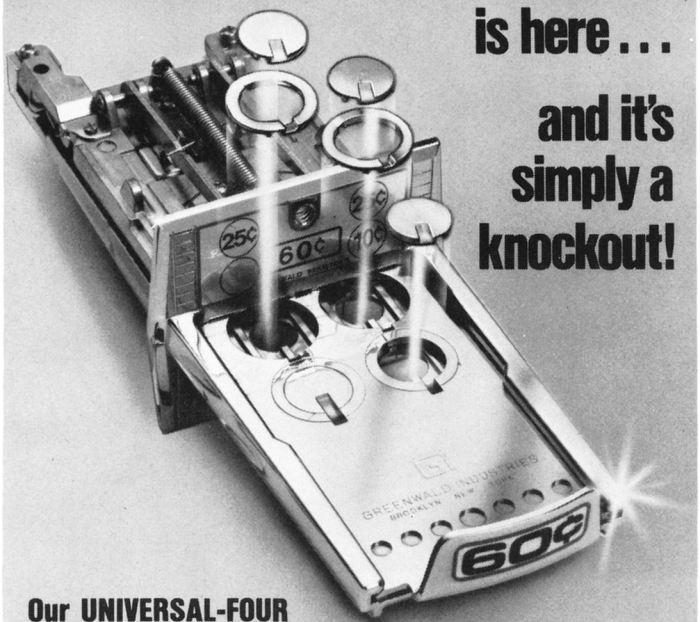

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Could or should the AMOA take a stand as far as "gray area" equipment so as to avoid this possible confusion?

NIMS: Anybody who has been in the coin machine business for any number of years knows what games are legal in his state and which games are illegal and which games are in that "gray area." And I think this is something that goes purely at the local and state level. The people in this industry would know better what is legal and illegal in their areas than a national trade association would.

PLAY METER: But the problem, as Gary Stern expressed it, was that this confusion—as far as what is for amusement only and what isn't—is something that is not so clear to legislators, and these legislators will in many cases pass laws prohibiting all types of coin machines rather than pick their way through those machines which are amusement games and those which are not. Could the AMOA help in this?

NIMS: As far as the AMOA is concerned, a gaming device could be any game that could be classified as such under the Johnson Act. AMOA has very strict and exact rules which must be adhered to by the exhibitors at our show in order for them to have those games on exhibit at our trade show. The AMOA feels that any coin-op games that come within the purview of the Johnson Act would be gaming devices. And since the so-called "gray area" machines fall into this category, they would be gaming devices.

But, in answer to your question, I suggest that any operator who is in doubt as to whether a game is or is not a so-called gaming device should follow those guidelines.

PLAY METER: Let's move on to the second suggestion from a manufacturer. Also in last month's issue, Frank Ballouz, Atari's marketing head, explained to PLAY METER that although Atari was investing money in hopes of opening new types of locations (specifically for its equipment, but by extension for coin-op equipment in general), he felt that this was something the AMOA should be doing. In your opinion, should the AMOA be actively pursuing the matter of opening the doors at new types of locations to operators, either by placing advertisements in those industries' trade publications (as Atari is doing) or in some other way?

NIMS: Let me answer that this way. The AMOA has been doing that for years. With our Notre Dame seminars, and with our seminars at the national convention, we've shown people new areas and new approaches for placing equipment. We've been providing this service for years. So, to answer if there's something we can do, I would say we're amongst the pioneers in doing this. What we try to do is instill that initiative within the membership. We explain to our members ways and means to create that demand. And I think we have provided a tool in this regard with the audio-visual program. But for the AMOA to become actively involved in the field, or to place advertisements in other trade magazines in order to try to get those locations

to call up an operator—I really don't know even if we did that if it would work. I think you have to instill that idea into the members by giving them the tools on how they can do this because they have to be able to pursue it. I know the AMOA has been doing that for at least fifteen years.

PLAY METER: One last question before we get into the matter of the copyright law. As president of the AMOA, what are your feelings about other trade shows, specifically those in the United States, such as the Amusement Operators Expo, which is sponsored by PLAY METER in the spring. Do such shows represent a conflict to the AMOA and its show in the fall?
NIMS: I would have to say positively no, and the reason for that is that if there's a need for that kind of trade show, then that's all that matters. You can't expect anyone or any trade association to be everything to everyone. If there's a need that has to be filled, then there's nothing wrong with filling that need.

PLAY METER: Okay, now getting into the matter of the copyright law. What are the various fronts the AMOA was fighting on during the past year?
NIMS: We have had four major problems this year—the Danielson Bill, the mechanical royalty charge, the per-box royalty review hearings, and the location list battle.

PLAY METER: Let's focus in on the Danielson bill first. What happened there?

NIMS: The Danielson Bill, or H.R. 997, as you know, was for an additional copyright fee that would be paid to record manufacturers and the performing artists on a 50/50 basis. The House Judiciary Subcommittee studied the bill the latter part of last year, in late November, and I attended as president of the AMOA along with Wayne Hesch, who is the chairman of the Government Relations Committee, and we testified against that.

The proposal for additional copyright payments to the performers of the records is not something new. It's been around for a long time. And the performing artists originally were supporting this copyright fee. And when it appeared they were not going anywhere with it, the record companies came along and joined them and agreed to help, if they would be assured half the royalties. And, as everyone knows, the record companies have a very powerful lobby. So this bill came up again this past year, and we fought the bill from getting out of committee. And up to this point, we have been successful. This time around it died in committee, but that doesn't mean it can't come up again and again. Still, this is a situation that we cannot rest easy about. If there's anything the jukebox operator doesn't need right now, it's another copyright fee.

PLAY METER: Okay. Now what about the volatile regulation regarding location lists. The news on this front isn't as promising at this point, is it?
NIMS: That's a continuation of a problem from last year. It's a legal battle regarding a regulation

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promulgated by the Copyright Royalty Tribunal requiring operators to submit to the federal agency a list of their jukebox locations. And right now that battle is going in favor of the Copyright Royalty Tribunal.

Of course, the AMOA feels that this regulation serves no purpose. The CRT doesn't need a list of everybody's locations. In the early part of this year, we were before the U.S. District Court of Appeals and got a hearing before a three-judge panel. But they basically ruled that the AMOA should not be there with that case. It was something like saying we were in the right church but in the wrong pew. Their ruling was like that. It was to the effect that they said we came in the wrong door.

That's an unusual situation to be in because our attorneys did an awful lot of research, and you've got to realize this is a new law and a new regulation, and if you want your day in court you have to pursue the matter in the way you think is right. Our attorneys felt they had done that; but, as I said, the three-judge panel ruled that we came in the wrong door. After that decision, the attorneys asked for a new hearing before the whole six-judge court, but we were denied that re-hearing. So our only relief now is to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, and that is exactly what is happening right now. Our attorneys are presently finalizing their brief for the U.S. Supreme Court.

PLAY METER: What are the feelings of the AMOA's Governmental Relations Committee as far as the AMOA's chances of getting this matter decided before the Supreme Court?

NIMS: I really wouldn't like to speculate on that. The only thing I can say is our attorneys have been doing research in this area, claiming that we were denied a re-hearing on the matter. But the Government Relations Committee has felt right from the beginning when we got involved in this battle that this matter would have to go to the Supreme Court because no matter who would win, the ultimate decision would have to be made by the U.S. Supreme Court. That's one of the major reasons for the legal action fund. We've been more or less committed to this action. And our attorneys, to answer your question, have found numerous favorable prededents for our case. Of course, we can expect our opposition to cite a number of precedents that would not favor us.

PLAY METER: As you have pointed out, this location list battle has been costly. Now, assuming the worst—that the CRT ruling is upheld and the AMOA's case is rejected by the Supreme Court—what can we expect the AMOA to do at that point?

NIMS: I don't know what you can do after the Supreme Court. Of course, we have never at any time taken the position that our industry should not comply with the law. You have to understand that when the CRT made this regulation they did not have the knowledge and understanding of our business that they presently have.

You've got to realize this is a new agency. The commissioners did not have a knowledge of our

industry, and so one of the first things they had to do was promulgate regulations. They had to make regulations concerning an industry that they, by their own admission, did not have a great deal of knowledge about. Since that time, they have gone out into the field and have really endeavored to learn more about our business. I feel that they have a greater insight into our business at this time than when they made this ruling. So, in my opinion, if they had all the knowledge that they have now, they would not have promulgated this regulation. I don't know if it serves any purpose for them or for anyone.

The Tribunal, I think, understands that our list of locations is just as confidential to us as a list of clients is to an attorney or a list of patients is to a doctor or a psychiatrist. This is very guarded and select information that is part of our business.

PLAY METER: But if the CRT ruling is upheld in the courts, can we expect the AMOA to go back to Congress to get a new law passed?

NIMS: I really don't feel this location list regulation would in itself determine whether we go back to Congress. What would determine that is the law itself. The law is not a popular one, and the reason that it is not popular is not because jukebox operators want to deny copyright owners what they have coming to them. It's unpopular because of the methodology of how this royalty compensation is accomplished. There are certain things in the law which I feel are very difficult to comply with, and I'm sure most operators feel the same way, and this is what they oppose more than the law itself.

The fact that you must have this license posted on each and every jukebox, and that that license stay on that jukebox, is very difficult to comply with. First of all, no jukebox provides a place for the licenses to be displayed; so since the licenses were made to fit into the title strips, it means we have to remove four record selections. So if you have a 160-selection phonograph, for instance, automatically it's now only 156. Of course, you have to keep records in those slots because if anybody should accidentally press that number and there's no record in there, your box would be out of order. So it's little things like that that add up to make for big problems.

Also, unfortunately, in most cases, it's not the owner who puts the licenses on the jukeboxes, it's an employee. Any many employees see this as more work for them, and they really don't bother about whether it gets put on the right phonograph or not.

And licensing jukeboxes is difficult, too, because all jukeboxes you buy have to have licenses. And depending upon the number of jukeboxes you replace in a given year, you have to overbuy the number of licenses you need. If you don't buy a jukebox during the year, then you end up buying licenses for 100 percent of your jukeboxes. But if you replace thirty percent of the jukeboxes on your route, you end up having to buy licenses for 130 percent of your jukeboxes, and that's not fair.

So relief from this law could be accomplished by going back to Congress or by the copyright owners and the Tribunal getting a better understanding of

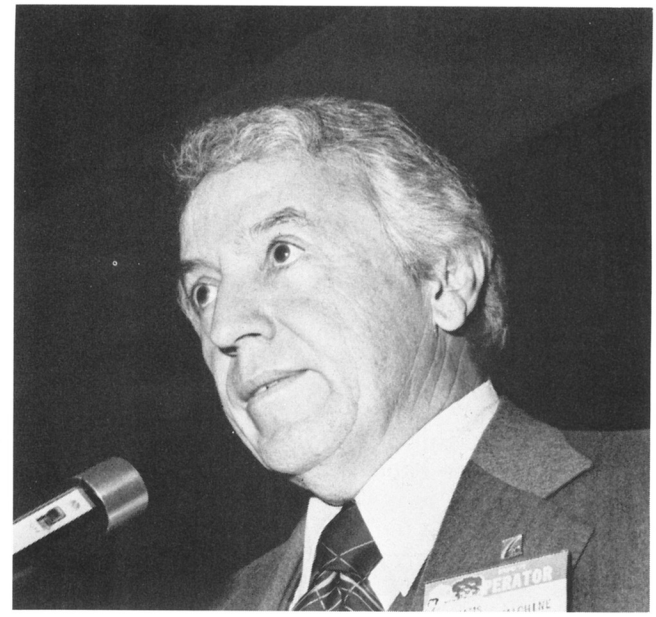
our business. What would be better would be to propose joint legislation by the proponents as well as the opponents that could solve a lot of these problems that make this law unpopular and difficult to comply with. The law is unpopular not because operators want to avoid paying. It's unpopular because it's very unwieldy and difficult to comply with. So the law should be amended to make it more workable.

PLAY METER: Have the performing rights societies indicated they would like to go back to Congress and, together with the AMOA, work to get a more workable law passed?
NIMS: No. I would also like to say that prior to this law going into effect, the AMOA met separately with BMI, ASCAP, and SESAC and at that time sought to have a meeting of the minds so as to see how we could make the law more workable. Unfortunately, we could not reach a satisfactory conclusion for all parties. But, as time goes by, I think there will be a better understanding by everyone on both sides of the problem, and eventually there will be some changes made to correct the situation.

But our attorneys feel that legally the only way some of these problems can be corrected is at the Congressional level. You can't change the law; the only thing left is to go back to Congress and get a new one.

PLAY METER: To fight the location list requirement, the AMOA created a legal action fund. Can we expect a second legal action fund collection if the AMOA were to go back to Congress for a new law?
NIMS: First of all, as far as our expenditures, I think you'll find that we have over-expended our legal action fund collections as far as the location list fight and the royalty rate review, far in excess of the money we have collected via the legal action fund. So, we still need industry support and contributions to the legal action fund.

But as far as going back to Congress for a more workable law, I do not see at this particular time where that would present any extraordinary costs that would require us to go to the membership or to the industry for additional financial support. At the Congressional level, you're in a different area. Naturally, you do have expenditures, and you do have costs, but the extremely costly battle is in the courts. There are a lot of requirements that call for a lot of money. And there is no allocation for that in the AMOA. We were not prepared to fight that



The AMOA president has been well traveled since the 1979 show. Nims is almost constantly visiting operators groups and other arms of the industry.

battle with the particular dues structure we have. But the dues structure we do have is one that we do feel will allow us to go to Congress. I really can't see where we would need any support from any type of special fund for that.

PLAY METER: Now, what is happening as far as the mechanical royalty review?
NIMS: This is also up before the CRT, though many people seem to have overlooked it. The mechanical royalty review appears to have taken a back seat in operators' eyes to the per-box assessment rate hearings, but this is also an important matter. The mechanical royalty is the royalty fee you pay on a per-record basis. Presently that's 2¾ cents per side or 5.5 cents per record.

PLAY METER: And, ironically, the record companies have ended up siding with the AMOA on this issue. Isn't that correct?
NIMS: Yes, that's right. Our opponents in the Danielson Bill are our allies in the mechanical royalty fight because they see where any increase on the royalty rate on a per-record basis would further hinder the sales of their records. The record companies are arguing that such an increse is inflationary, that there is no need for the increase, that the songwriters are already compensated for their work at the present time, that the

stambouli brothers (u.s.a) corporation
soon in the Empire State Building, New-York

songwriters did not show a need for an increase, and that many record companies are presently on hard times and any increase in the cost of the records would jeopardize these businesses.

PLAY METER: And the fourth battle is the big fight over the per-jukebox rate review hearings. What can you tell us about this battle?
NIMS: First off, it's important that everyone in this industry—and that doesn't mean just jukebox operators and jukebox manufacturers—realize the importance of our battles. What people in this industry have got to realize is that anything that affects a part of this industry affects the whole. Unfortunately many operators think that if they're operating, say, 200 pieces and 190 of them are games, it doesn't really matter what happens. They think "So what? If the license fee is increased too high, I'll just say 'To hell with it' and sell the jukeboxes to my locations." That's a very poor outlook to take because if this trend continues it could take in pool tables and so on, and the operator would find that he's out of business. And manufacturers would find that they don't have any customers.

Now, as far as the per-jukebox rate review hearings, the performing rights societies presented a case that was based on values. What I mean by that is they compared the eight-dollar jukebox fee with what is being charged for live entertainment and background music. And they also brought up the matter of foreign royalty fees, more particularly European royalties. But this isn't really an adequate comparison because these royalty fees are assessed in countries that are not really free market places. Their economies are not the same as ours. And they failed to point out that our immediate neighbors to the north and to the south—Canada and Mexico—as well as many other countries, don't even have a royalty fee. And Canada's economy is the closest to ours. So we feel their comparisons are not really valid.

Also, their position seems to be one that is very negative. One of the main thrusts of their case was to try to discredit our witnesses, even if that meant using questionable means. One of the questionable methods they used, in fact, was that since they knew who our witnesses were going to be in advance, they pulled Dun & Bradstreet reports on them and questioned those witnesses from the Dun & Bradstreet reports.

PLAY METER: One last question, you mentioned the record companies argued during the mechanical rate hearings that the performing rights societies did not show a need for an increased royalty. Did ASCAP and the others attempt to show such a need?
NIMS: Not only did they not show a need, but their position was that there was no reason for them to show a need. ASCAP's attorney even said that if every member of its organization was a millionaire it would make no difference as to the fact that the jukebox operators should pay the license fee they requested. He said it was nothing that CRT should even consider. •

AMOA Preview

The Great Chicago Sell-out: Coinmen Gather for the Big One

It's something of a cliche to say the AMOA Show is expected to break attendance and exhibitor records this year. It does that every year. So let's just focus in on what last year's records were—an attendance of 7,130 people, 131 exhibitors, utilizing 318 booths.

The exhibit space has been sold out for months, and there has been a waiting list for any space as it comes open. Attendance can only be expected to keep on climbing.

Seminars

The AMOA Show at the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago October 31 through November 2, will rely on last year's format again this year as far as exhibit and seminar hours. The keynote speaker will be Robert M. Bleiberg, editor of Barron's National Business and Financial Weekly. Bleiberg's industry seminar will start at 9 a.m. Friday.

Following Bleiberg's address, there will be a 30-minute film entitled "Robbie," which is about a pinball tournament for handicapped people. Among other things, the film shows what a pinball buff was able to accomplish for handicapped people.

The innovation was featured in the September 15, 1980 issue of PLAY METER in an article by Richard S. Greenberg entitled "Pinball Made Easy for Handicapped Enthusiasts." Along these lines, PLAY METER's technical editor, Randy Fromm, this issue, offers some more interesting thoughts on the matter of designing pinballs for handicapped people.

The second part of the All-Industry Seminar begins at 10:30 a.m. Friday and will feature U.S. Congressman Carroll Campbell and Robert Latz, attorney for the Music Operators of Minnesota, in a Presentation called "Grassroots Politics and You." Moderator for the seminar will be Norman Pink of Minnesota.

The Saturday morning seminar is scheduled to run from 8:30 to 10 a.m. with Carol Kantor and Dick Hawkins discussing "Increasing Your Profits Through Promotion."

1980 AMOA Schedule of Events

Thursday, October 30

3 p.m. Conference of State Associations

Friday, October 31

9 a.m.-12 noon Industry Seminar
12:30 p.m. Ladies Luncheon & Program
12 noon-6 p.m. Exhibit Hours

Saturday, November 1

8:30 a.m.-10 a.m. Mini-Seminar
11:30 a.m. Membership Luncheon Meeting & Program
10 a.m.-6 p.m. Exhibit Hours

Sunday, November 2

8:30 a.m.-10 a.m. Mini-Seminar
10 a.m.-4 p.m. Exhibit Hours
6 p.m. Cocktail Party
7 p.m. Gala Banquet & Stage Show

The Sunday morning seminar at 10:30 will feature Jack Kerner and Len Hornstein of "New Techniques, Operation, and Cash Control." Moderator for this seminar will be Fred Collins, Jr.

Once again, the AMOA will provide a Ladies' Luncheon on Friday at 12:30 p.m. The Pollays, two talented singers, will present a program of music and talk.

The Annual Membership Luncheon is scheduled for Saturday, starting at 11:30 a.m.

And closing out the 1980 show will be the annual banquet and stage show. The Ted Weems Orchestra, under the direction of Tommy Wills, be part of the show. Gene Watson, a country singer, will also be performing, but other names were not available at this issue's presstime.

Exhibit hours for the three-day show are from 12 noon to 6 p.m. on Friday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Exhibition

There'll be smiles on the faces of the exhibitors at the AMOA Show this year, just as in years past; but, if you look closely, you'll see many of those smiles are tense and strained this time around.

That's because of the strange twist this industry took in 1980. Phenomenal video game collections spurred some fever buying during the year, and the result was a depressed market for pinballs, pool tables, and phonographs.

Video collections skyrocketed to a 59 percent increase in collections during the year, according to PLAY METER's 1980 operator survey (November, 1980 PLAY METER), and some of that gain was pure cannibalism. Pinballs and phonographs both registered collection decreases for the year—reflecting that video took the money away from these other coin-op diversions. Still operators responded to the trend by investing in the video game phenomenon and forsaking their pinball and phonograph standards.

So the war is on, and everyone is out to regain what he feels if his fair share of the market—even if that means making video games. And

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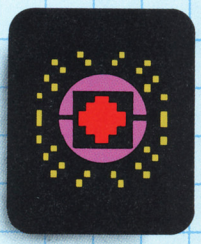

ZUPUS
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HELICON
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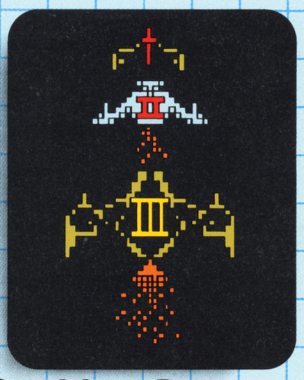
MERCATOR
60 Pts.

TAURIDS
200 Pts.

TITAN
100 Pts.

Plan of Attack:

Rocket I must destroy regiments of the Zupus and Helicon craft to reach first docking station. Docking bonus points are scored as the docking ship is linked with the Mother Craft in the shortest possible time. Pilot maneuvers rockets using port-starboard directional controls. Descent can be slowed by firing retro-rocket control. Docking must be completed within 30 seconds! The highest bonus is achieved by docking in the shortest time. Failure to dock results in the loss of all bonus points. A crash during this phase destroys the docking rocket. When docking sequence is completed successfully, Rockets I and II join forces for triple firing power to combat the Mercator craft. As the last of the Mercator vessels are eliminated, RED ALERT! Be prepared for a cross-fire of Taurids meteor showers! Pilot must command Rockets I and II through meteors before attempting link-up with Rocket III at second docking station. As Rockets I and II dock with Rocket III, firing capability is combined for MULTI-FIRE power!



Docking Sequence

The three-stage rocket now beams five lasers at the oncoming Titan missiles. When the last of these craft are destroyed, Flight Plan Moon Cresta is re-activated for increased challenge and fun.

SPECIFICATIONS:

UPRIGHT

25½" W x 67" H x 28" D
64.77 cm W x 170.18 cm H x 71.12 cm D
290 lbs./132 Kg

The MOON CRESTA game is manufactured by Gremlin Industries under license from Nihon Bussan Co., Ltd., Osaka, Japan.

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The pinball manufacturers are coming with some big guns this time around

those who have been making videos are trying to come up with some new quarter grabbers that will strengthen their hold on the operator's purchasing dollar.

Pinball

Pinball was probably hardest hit by the video surge, simply because it invites the most direct comparison. And the Chicago silver ball manufacturers, not accustomed to having the number two game type in the industry, have been gritting their teeth through the long spring and summer season.

And the word is out—the pinball manufacturers are coming with some big guns this time around. A lackluster crop of pinballs this time around, the realize, would be very damaging to pinball for a long time to come.

So, while in the past the pinball manufacturers were content to churn out games that offered little or nothing new as play features, we can expect to see a whole lot of new features this time around. Multi-level, multi-ball playfields, talking machines, games based on time rather than per-ball play—the pinball manufacturers definitely are not holding anything back this time around. They can't afford to.

Gottlieb, which is showing signs of returning to form, is banking heavily on the time element of pinball. *James Bond* and *Time Line*, a couple of four-player pingames, are designed to change significantly the way people play the game. And, returning to its one-player game concept again, the Northlake, Illinois manufacturer is also offering *Asteroid Annie*, which should attract its share of interest at the show.

And, just to hedge its bet, Gottlieb will be diversifying itself somewhat with its initial entry into the video game market, *No Man's Land.*

Bally, trying to break out of a lackluster string, will be exhibiting at least three flippers—*Xenon, Frontier, and Skateball.* Of the three, rumors have it the *Xenon* has some very interesting and different play featurers to offer.

Also, Bally can be expected to exhibit a bingo pin or two, as well as its newest offerings in slot machines.

Stern has been showing some surprising resiliency during these hard times for pinball, but has weathered that storm not only by diversifying itself into videos but also by turning out some very promising pinballs. *Flight 2000*, which has been registering some outstanding collection reports, and *Nine-Ball*, a narrow body, multi-ball game, should both keep Stern in the thick of the race and add to pinball's chances of coming back strong.

And Stern can also be counted on to show its newest video offerings. *Astro Invaders*, Stern's first entry into the video game field, will be on display in both cocktail and upright configurations; and the company's newest offering, *Berserk*, which reportedly sucks up quarters because of the fast play action of the game, will be on display, too.

Williams, the pinball company that probably suffered the least during the past year (a fact attributable to two outstanding pins, *Firepower* and *Gorgar*), will be out to establish itself as the prime producer of pinballs

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This year's video crop will probably see our third straight wave of 'Space Invader'-type games

again this year. Williams will be showing off four pinballs—*Alien Poker*, *Algar*, *Scorpion*, and *Black Knight*. Of the four, the multi-faceted *Black Knight* promises to be the biggest draw.

Williams, which has been making overtures of getting into the video market, will probably unveil its initial entry into the TV game sweepstakes, *Defender*.

Game Plan, the fifth pinball game manufacturer, will be showing off its *Lizard* and *Global Warfare* pins, as well as two upright videos, *Tora Tora* and *Intruder* (a new space-theme game). Game Plan can also be counted on to show off its latest slot machine equipment at the show.

Videos

Atari, which turned out the super sensational *Asteroids* last year, and which has since released its *Missile Command*, will release *Battle Zone*, a land war game, and will be showing that, as well as *Missile Command* in the upright, cocktail and cabaret forms. The Sunnyvale, California firm may be going against the grain. While the pinball manufacturers are getting into videos, there exists the possibility that Atari may test the pinball waters again, but at press-time this possibility seemed remote.

Midway, the American licensee of the game that started all the video fever, *Space Invaders*, will be showing a reflex game called *Space Zap* in three configurations (cocktail, upright, and Mini-Myte).

The Chicago video game manufacturer will also be showing its newest baseball game, *Extra Bases*, in both upright and cocktail configurations. Also, there's a chance that Midway will be showing still another game licensed from a Japanese firm it has done business with in the past.

Gremlin, which last year introduced two new video game concepts, the Mini Video and Dual game versions, has hooked onto two games that have been getting rave reviews in Japan. *Moon Cresta*, for which Gremlin holds exclusive marketing licenses on the upright configuration in the United States and Canada, is licensed by Nihon Bussan of Tokyo. And Gremlin has reportedly landed the exclusive license to manufacture and market in the United States, Nintendo's *Space Firebird*.

Additionally, Gremlin should be showing off a new swivel video screen game design—not to mention a rather marked departure from its past exhibit booth displays. And, still more, Gremlin will still be showing its mid-summer hit, *Carnival*.

Cinematronics, on the heels of the outstanding success of its *Rip Off* video, will be showing off still another video game offering, *Star Castle*, which reportedly introduces color play to the Vector monitor.

Exidy is still riding the success of its science fiction/fantasy video hit, *Targ*, and a company spokesman reported that the success of that piece may hold up the introduction of other Exidy pieces at the show.

Centuri, formerly Allied Leisure, will be showing off a host of new videos, many of them licensed from American or Japanese companies. Among Centuri's offerings will be *Rip Off* in an updated cocktail version, *Targ* in the cocktail version,

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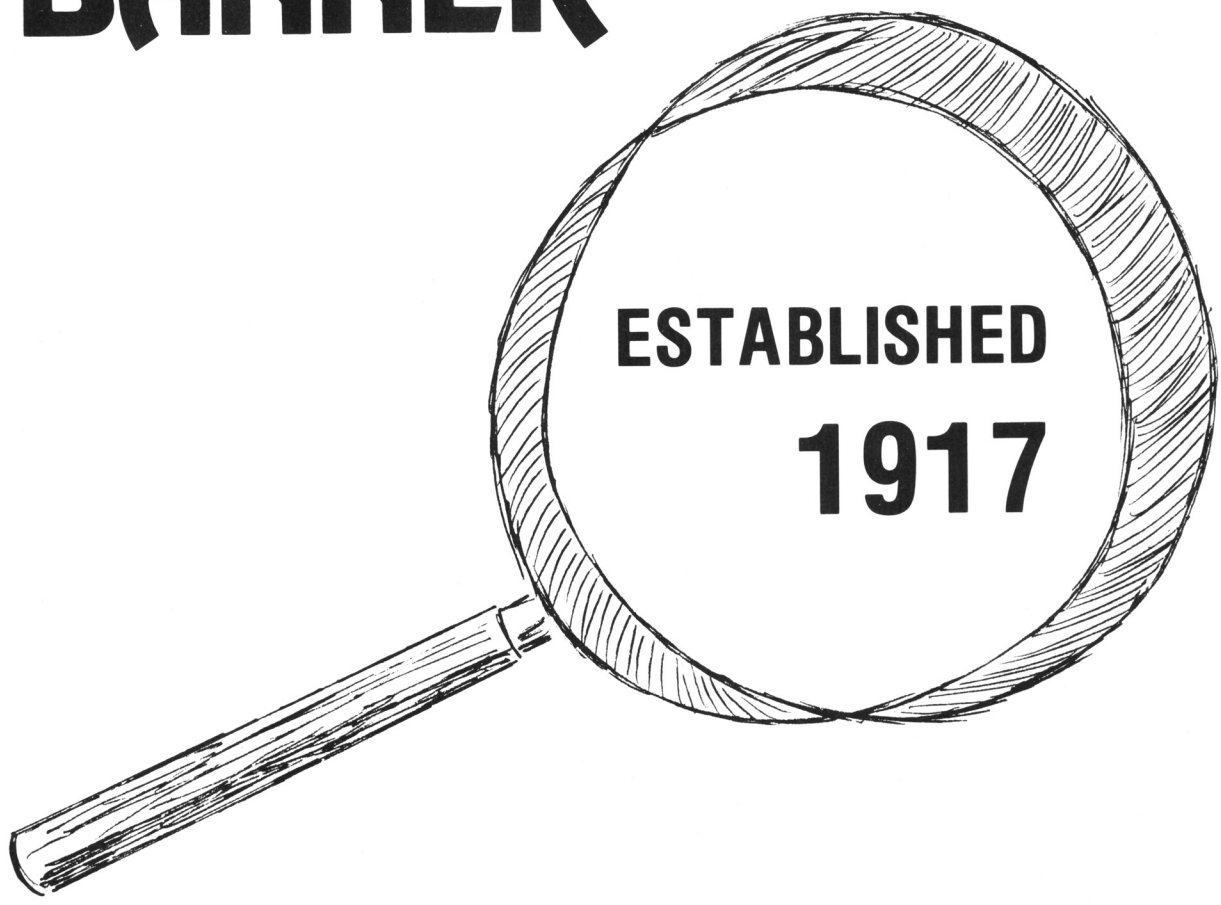

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Eagle in both upright and cocktail versions, *Killer Comet*, and possibly still another video draw.

Also, Centuri, out to make a name for itself in a hurry, will be introducing a phonograph (see New Products section, this issue).

Universal plans to unveil its *Magical Spot*. Taito will be showing off its talking video, *Stratovox*. And Nanao (still another name from Japan but marketed from Georgia) will be showing off an upright game called *Space Beam* and an electronic horoscope called *Astrocraft*.

Besides this, Nihon Bussan will be showing possibly three games, *Crazy Climber*, *Moon Trek*, and *Moon Pulser*.

No word at presstime out of Tokyo as the what Namco, creators of *Galaxian*, were planning for this year's show, but many eyes will be focused on them, of course.

Additionally, we can expect a whole host of Japanese video game companies exhibiting a new wave of space theme video games.

The only problem with all this—and it's not restricted to just the video games coming out of Japan—is that this year's video crop will probably be our third straight wave of *Space Invader*-type games. Where will it end?

But, on the other hand, as long as it's raking in the quarters, what does it matter?

Phonographs

The phonograph manufacturers have been growing rather accustomed in recent years to tightening their belts and extra notch or two. Such has been the sad shape of coin-operated music in recent memory but still we can expect quite a bit of activity simply because of all the contestants this time around.

The newest entry into the jukebox manufacturing business is Centuri, which is also showing off some pretty strong videos. This Florida-based company sees a potential market for its new phongraph offering, the *Centuri 2001*, and just by the brashness of such a move, the company should be able to draw quite a bit of attention to itself.

Along Phonograph Row, there will be some new faces manning the Seeburg booth, but a familiar jukebox will be on display. After financial problems forced Seeburg into declaring bankruptcy this past year, Stern Electronics came to the rescue and breathed new life into the once faltering jukebox line.

Rowe, Rock-Ola, NSM, and Wurlitzer, fresh from distributor presentations and new product introductions, will be showing their new phonograph offerings for the year.

Gaming equipment

Once again this year the AMOA will allow gaming equipment to be exhibited at the show. But the equipment will be displayed under severe restrictions — restrictions which many foreign visitors criticize. But the gaming exhibit concession is itself a compromise to accommodate the growing number of foreign visitors to the show.

The AMOA Show regulations concerning gaming remain the same as last year. Among those restrictions are that only coin-op gaming equipment can be exhibited, only tokens can be used to demonstrate the machines, and only one token can be dispensed with each vend.

Also a special exhibit floor committee will monitor the gaming equipment display to make sure there is absolutely no aspect of gaming. (Kinda takes all the fun out of watching the rolling drums.)

There must be something with a coin slot on the floor for everyone. •

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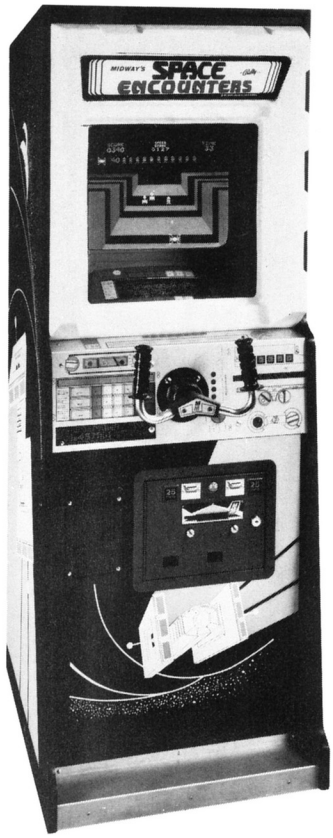

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Message from Officers:

The Director's Report

The Future of AMOA

"Since its founding 32 years ago, AMOA has been growing and developing as a national trade association. If it continues to operate wisely, which is to say with a proper balance between elected leadership and executive staff, and if it continues to render needed services to the membership, then it will continue on its upward path. In a larger sense—and because of long experience and an ever growing following—AMOA is in the best possible position to help the entire industry by giving it purpose and direction. It is essential, of course, that AMOA retain control of its activities. And in whatever it does, its leaders must always seek quality, pursue excellence and set only the highest standards. In this way, AMOA will be assured of a bright future.

In January we added a second experienced and well educated association executive to the AMOA staff. Leo A. Droste, our new assistant executive vice president, has already brought his expertise to bear on AMOA activities. He is a professional in the best sense of the word. I am sure that everyone joins me in welcoming Leo to AMOA and the industry. The office staff will also be increased and reorganized in order to handle more efficiently a steadily increasing workload. Membership, trade shows, and services have all increased beyond what anyone would have thought possible just a few years ago.

The man who led AMOA this year was president Robert E. Nims, a veteran of 36 years in the business and 14 years on the AMOA board of directors. Bob has been a dedicated and hard working president who, among other things, has devoted a great amount of time and effort on all aspects of the copyright royalty problem, a matter of paramount importance to all operators. We all owe president Bob Nims a vote of thanks for his dedicated service to AMOA."

Frederick M. Granger
Executive Vice President

The President's Report

The AMOA in Action

"It has been a real privilege for me to serve as your president during this past year. It has also been a valuable learning experience, and I would like to share some of that experience with you, the members of AMOA.

We have continued our efforts to remove a regulation of the Copyright Royalty Tribunal requiring music operators to submit lists of locations. We have fought this regulation through the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia and the U.S. Court of Appeals where our petitions have been rejected. In September of this year we instructed our attorney to petition the U.S. Supreme Court. From January to mid-September, we also participated in the jukebox royalty rate review before the Copyright Royalty Tribunal. AMOA vigorously opposed efforts of the performing rights societies to increase the $8 jukebox royalty fee to $70 per jukebox. A final decision is expected by the end of the year. Our legal counsel will report in detail on these matters at the General Membership Meeting. This seemingly unending battle is expensive and we still need financial help. If you have not contributed to the AMOA Legal Action Fund, I urge you to do so now.

Our educational services are constantly being upgraded, and I urge every member to take advantage of them. The AMOA-Notre Dame Seminar held in Chicago last March was considered by those who attended as the best to date. Another is scheduled for next year. You can get details at the membership desk. Schools for coin machine technicians continued throughout the year, and new courses are being developed for future schools.

The Exposition seminar this year focuses on two subjects of interest to operators: economics and grassroots politics. Robert Bleiberg, editor of Barron's National Business and Financial Weekly, will discuss the all-important subject of today's economy. U.S. Congressman Carroll Campbell of South Carolina will lead a panel on "Grassroots Politics and You," There will be a film on a pinball tournament for the handicapped. We also continue the highly successful mini-seminars on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

AMOA is always ready to help states to organize associations, and I urge operators in every state to do so. I want to thank existing associations for their strong support of AMOA. Without this support AMOA would not be the success it is today. My visits to state association conventions during the year have revealed to me that these associations are not only well organized, but they do an able and effective job of representing the members to their respective government agencies and legislatures. There is no question but what a state association means better public relations and a better industry image. I also take this opportunity to thank the trade publications serving the industry for keeping us all so well informed throughout the year.

I wish to express my deep appreciation to the members

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Robert E. Nims
National President

The Committee's Report

A Packed Program

❝ This year we have the greatest array of exhibitors in the history of the association. We are using more exhibit space this year than ever before. By mid-June all space in the East, West, and Continental rooms had been sold out. We then added exhibit booths in the lower lobby area to satisfy the need for more space.

We urge you to work this show systematically in order to get the most out of it. Consult the directory of exhibitors for booth numbers, product information, personnel, addresses. In the directory of exhibitors is a floor plan of the exhibit rooms and registration area. The directory and floor plan will help you find your way around this fascinating show of coin-operated games and music. We also suggest that you read the show issues of the various trade publications which contain a wealth of detailed information about the show. The Press Lounge is located in the West Room where you will find trade publications represented.

Do not leave a stone unturned to get the most out of this great once-a-year event.

Besides the exhibits, we urge you to take advantage of the Exposition services. There is a Conference of State Associations on Thursday afternoon. Friday morning is the Exposition Seminar with Carroll A. Campbell, U.S. Congressman; and Robert M. Bleiberg, Editor of Barron's National Business and Financial Weekly. For the ladies there is a luncheon and program at 12:30. On Saturday there is a mini-seminar in the morning. The General Membership Meeting Brunch is at 11:30. There is another mini-seminar on Sunday morning. Sunday night is the Gala Banquet and Stage Show.

Work the show carefully. Take advantage of all that it has to offer. Make every hour of every day count by seeing and learning from one of the greatest shows of its kind in the world today. ❞

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The video-and-pin bout comes to Chicago

Quality will determine success

An Analysis / By Zac Oliver

Chicago once more, at the Conrad Hilton. The upcoming AMOA Show will probably become the most important event in the amusement game industry for the next few years. Will the Show introduce a new generation of super video games or will it display only copies of current models? And if that is so, will we see a pinball comeback?

Since the Show last year, the industry as we know it, has gone into a shifting change in the balance between the two major types of amusement games. The video craze, or fever, or whatever it is called, revolutionized many sectors of the industry, with pinball being the most negatively affected. Enough said!

Pong by Atari generated a similar uproar in 1973. Today the situation is not the same, but there are some similarities in the changes today and the ones of almost a decade ago.

Other more conventional industries also go into periodical changes, when new products are released to replace current lines. The coin operated amusement game industry has a distinct internal mechanism all its own, by which changes in product lines appear in a fast rate. So, are the changes we are now going through in direct relationship with these periodic increase in growth common to other industries, or a true revolution developed by *Space Invaders*?

Actually, the answer is more complex than it seems because a sum of factors points up to what we see happening all over the U.S. and some other countries, in an intrinsic relation to the world's socio-economic and political situation.

Pinball as we know it has lost its position as a chief representative of the industry. It ranks behind the new video games and will remain there unless pinball manufacturers take innovative approaches to the game play.

By innovation I mean not a radical change, but a better link with modern and future players and their desires. And at the same time, the producers should maintain what is so important about pinball, its old-fashioned wonder that has been with us and our children, and hopefully will be with their children: the magic of the physical exchange and the tridimensional sighting of the movements by the steel ball.

The ever-increasing number of players attracted to the games at the present is still discovering space-theme videos. All other outstanding games on the market are yet to be discovered by this large mass of people. These games will hold new players' attention for long months still, unless new games overshadow them.

If the video game industry does not keep its present standard of interesting and challenging games, and a high technical reliability, then...pinball may return.

The fate of the market?

With so many video manufacturers coming into the market (including the pinball greats) the present standard has very few possibilities of continuation. We would fall then into the same vicious cycle that slowed the video industry before and was one of the causes for the downfall of the flipper game.

The fast development of new models without proper play and marketing research will flood the market and eventually turn the players off. The increasing sophistication of the player will push the video manufacturers into maintaining the same quality output, at least some of them. Otherwise, the players that are now discovering the world of coin-operated amusement games will find, in the pinball game, the thrills and excitement that the video game theme alone cannot provide.

Product quality—technical reliability associated with a better interrelation among manufacturers, distributors, and operators—will play a definite part in the success of the new games. The industry has been invaded by a horde of products from the East. Some are excellent games, but there is very little back-up, especially technical, by the distributors of these games. These machines, as any other equipment, will break down. Therefore, technical support is not only necessary, it is profitable.

This year's AMOA Show will display it all. Shopping for new products will require more attention this time as one strolls amidst the fanfare and excitement that happens every year at the Hilton.

One value, as it always has, will still predominate: long lasting play appeal. We will be looking for it! •

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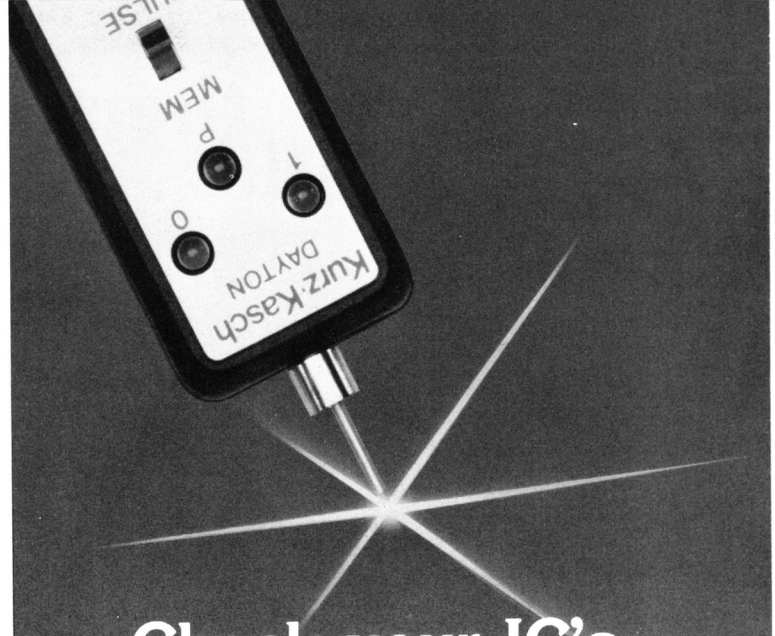

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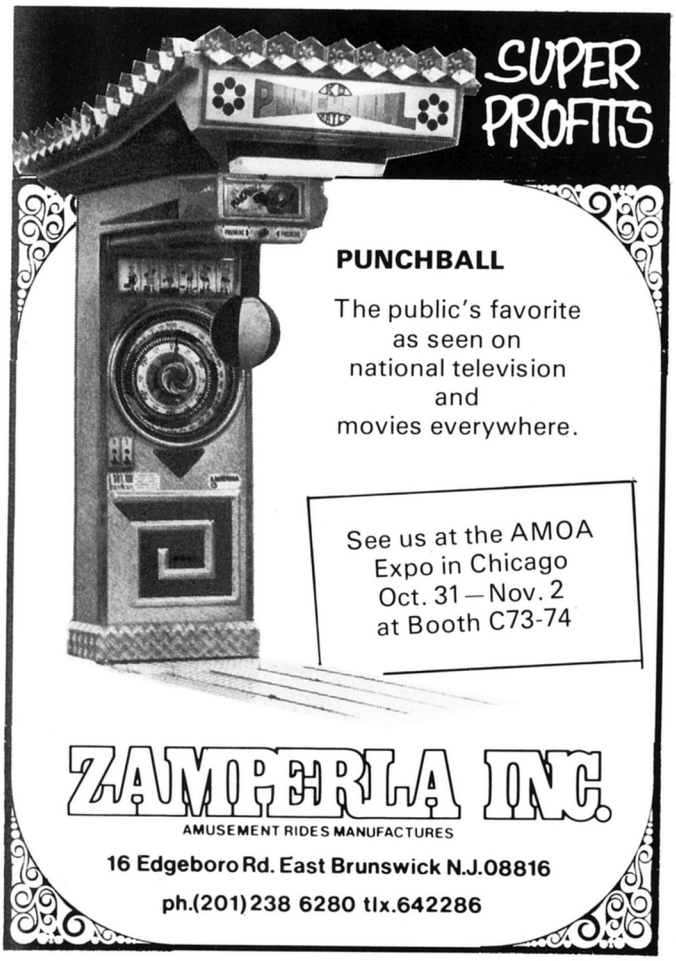

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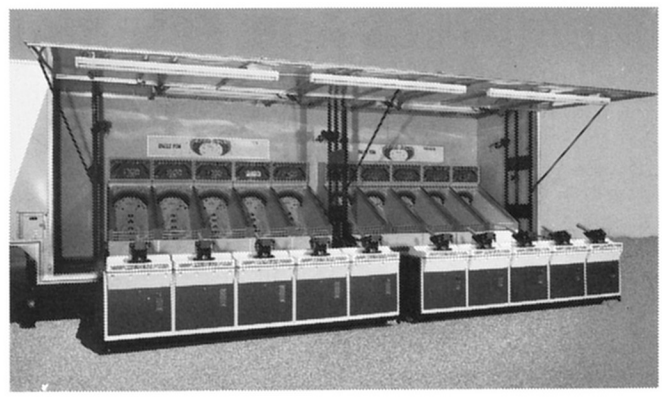

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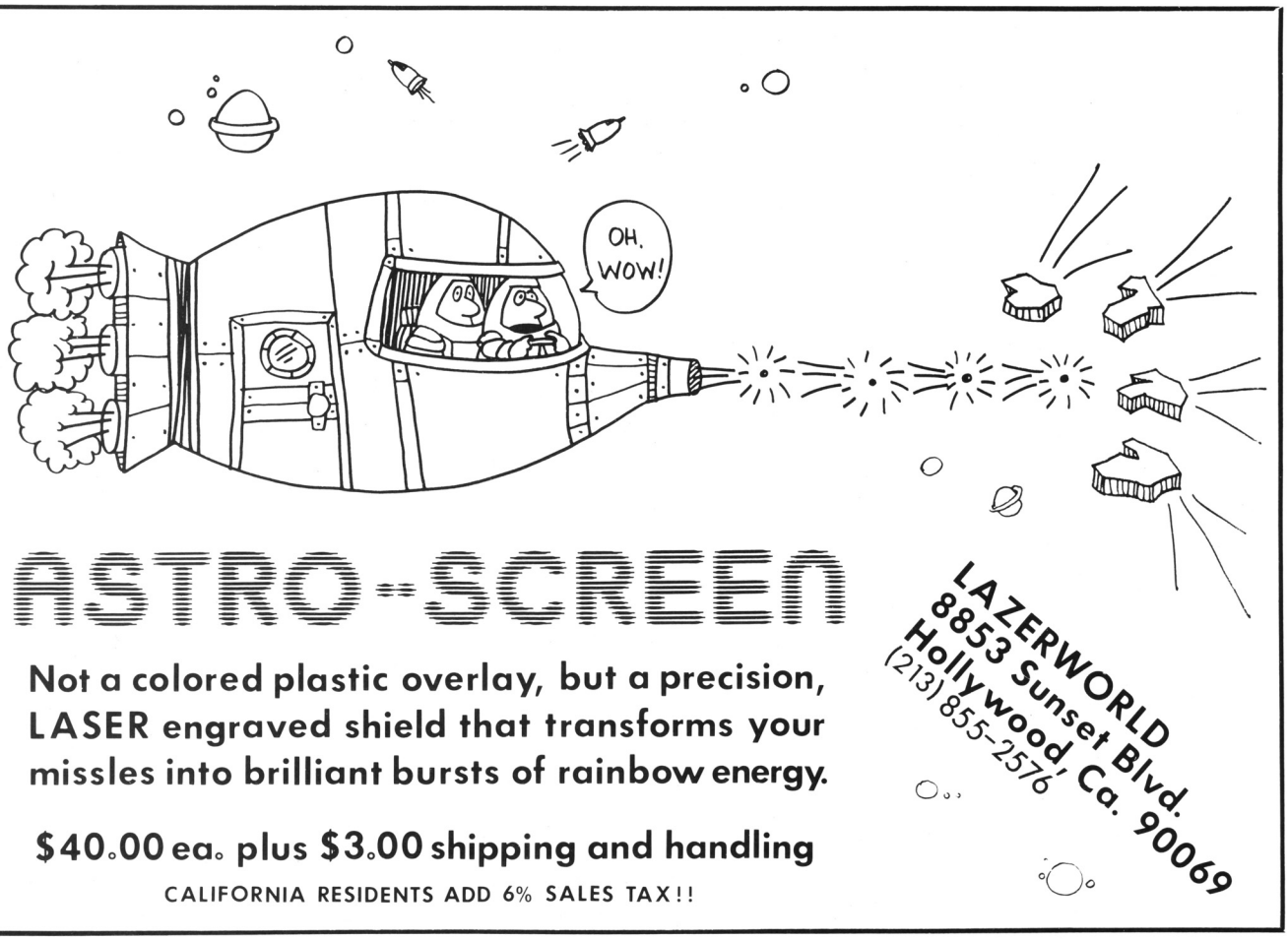

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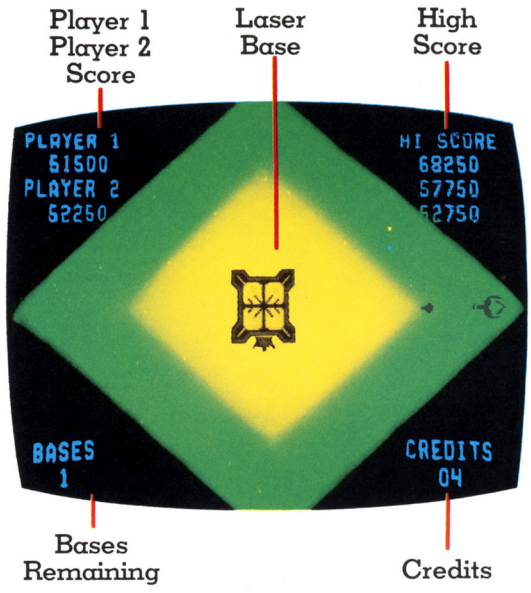

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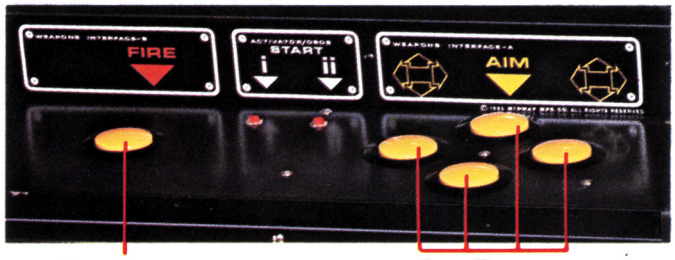

The Laser Base is the target of Space Mines fired from alien Space Ships which attack at random from four directions — North, South, East and West. A successful hit by a Space Mine causes the explosive destruction of the Laser Base. At unexpected intervals, the aliens launch an Attack Satellite that orbits the Laser Base and strikes without warning from any direction.

The player defends the Laser Base with multi-directional fire power. He presses the Aim Buttons to direct his laser, and with the other hand, he presses the Fire Button to leash destruction on the attackers. Greater concentration and eye/hand coordination are required as the alien attack speeds up.

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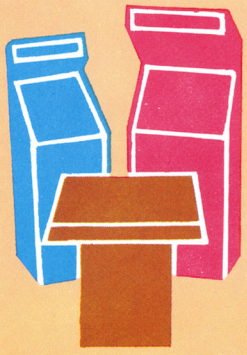

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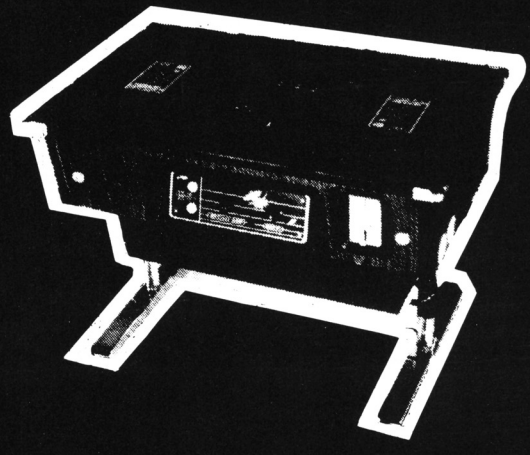

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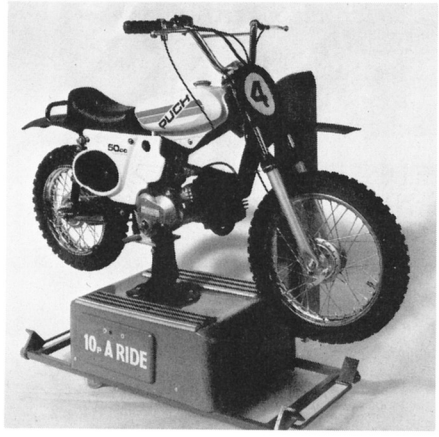

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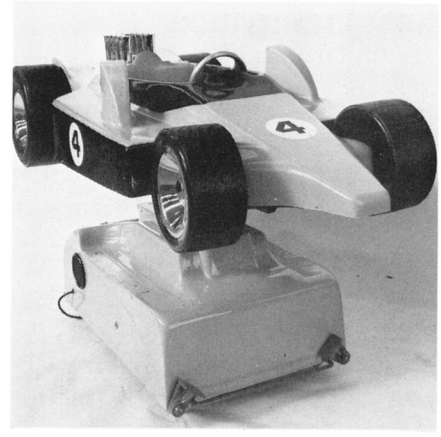

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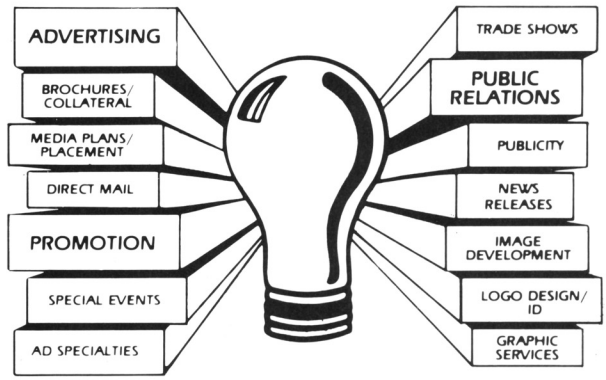

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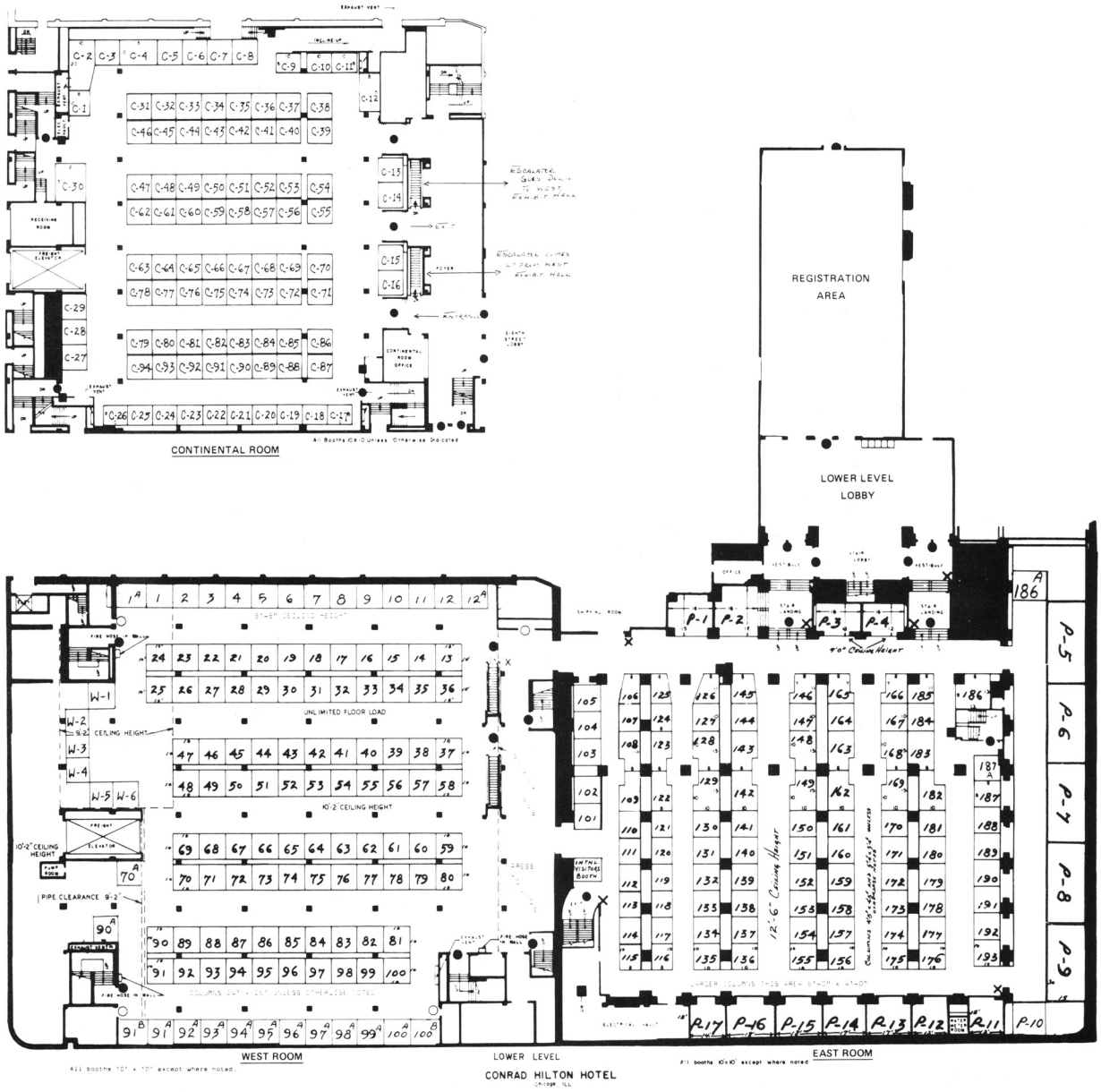

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AMOA's International Trade Show for Coin-Operated Games, Music and Allied Products

Our house historian goes through archives, turns up a few skeletons

"AMOA Shows of the Past"

by dick welu

The AMOA convention, a gathering of the rich and the near rich, the domestic and the foreign, the lame and the halt, the movers and shakers, the media and the normal people, has often been nothing but a blase affair notable only for machines displayed and deals conceived. But like any panoramic event, behind the scenes highlights have occured to make certain conventions stand out. Let's review some of these famous moments from the past:

1920. Johann Sebastian Wuerlitzer unveiled at the AMOA his revolutionary and eye-popping new jukebox model, "The Clydesdale." Hailing his invention as a breakthrough to usher in the "Golden Age of Phonograph Music," Johann Sebastian pointed proudly to his use of a single record, six feet across, and the fact that the jukebox could be used even in rural areas devoid of electricity since power was supplied by a team of six draft horses plodding about a turnstyle. Though the machine stirred much excited comment, its popularity proved short-lived as many bartenders in locations were reluctant to add manure clean-up to their closing chores.

1925. The game that everyone was talking about at this show was "Al Capone—One on One." Produced by a small Chicago firm call The Enforcers, Inc., the game was a fast draw attraction where the customer dropped in a quarter and tried to shoot the gangster-garbed mannequin in the machine before the mannequin fired its Thompson .38 calibre machine gun. To heighten the excitement, the mannequin used real bullets. Crowds gathered quickly at The Enforcer's booth, but they melted away shortly since the Thompson tended to spray a bit. The game had few repeat players.

1929. The year of the Wall Street crash inspired a wall dart game called, "Drill Your Broker." It wasn't a pretty sight so I won't elaborate except to tell you it featured live targets. Volunteers!

1930. The mood turned ugly at this AMOA convention as a huge riot broke out in the basement of the Conrad Hilton as the hotel set up its first lunch line. An enraged operator and former sparring partner for Two-Ton Tony Galento from New Jersey started the ruckus when, after having passed through the cafeteria-style line, he discovered that he was being charged 15 cents for a cold hot dog, 10 cents for a cold brownie, and 5 cents for a cold cup of coffee. Yelling, "Bloodsucking thieves," the New Jersey operator proceeded to cart all the remaining food in the direction of Lake Michigan. Gleeful fellow operators joined in and a company of police arrived to quell the uprising. The Hilton management mollified the operators by promising more reasonable future prices.

1935. A year in which many personal and industry-wide records were established at the AMOA. Fred Coggins, a Michigan operator, set a new personal, seasonal, and convention high by trucking home 27 free T-shirts, 19 of which he collected from the Bottom Line Mfg. Co. (which went into receivership following the Expo). Darnell Hillman's performance—eating twelve Wico apples in an hour—set a standard for many future challengers, and in the all-events category, everyone's hat was off to Barney Ragsnuffle, a friend of a friend of a repairman from Cuba City, Wisconsin, who amassed 67 fliers, 15 T-shirts, 8 pens, 6 bottles of cleaning samples, 2 shopping bags, 3 dozen Tootsie Pops, 14 metal buttons, 6 straw hats, and a brassiere. We're not sure where Barney came by the brassiere, but his record still stands in tribute to one man's greed.

1941. A singular game machine made its debut, "The Fuhrer," in which a figure with drooping black hair and a stringy mustache fired upon passing targets labeled, "Poland," "Hungary," "Czechoslovakia," "Austria," and "The Netherlands."

"The Fuhrer" became the first machine manufactured never to collect a single quarter. However, as is customary in the machine business, a number of copycat games followed, the most successful of which was, "Kill the #&*'Z/!†, a game containing gun positions named, "Poland," "Hungary," etc. fired upon a replica of Adolf Hitler. A bonus shooter named Anne Frank periodically jumped up to karate Adolf's head. A popular feature was the fact that you couldn't miss.

1946. WWII being over, Japanese game machines were admitted to the exposition for the first time. Convention goers spent their time turning over the games to read the label,

1941: 'Der Fuhrer' was the first game machine ever made—that never collected one single quarter

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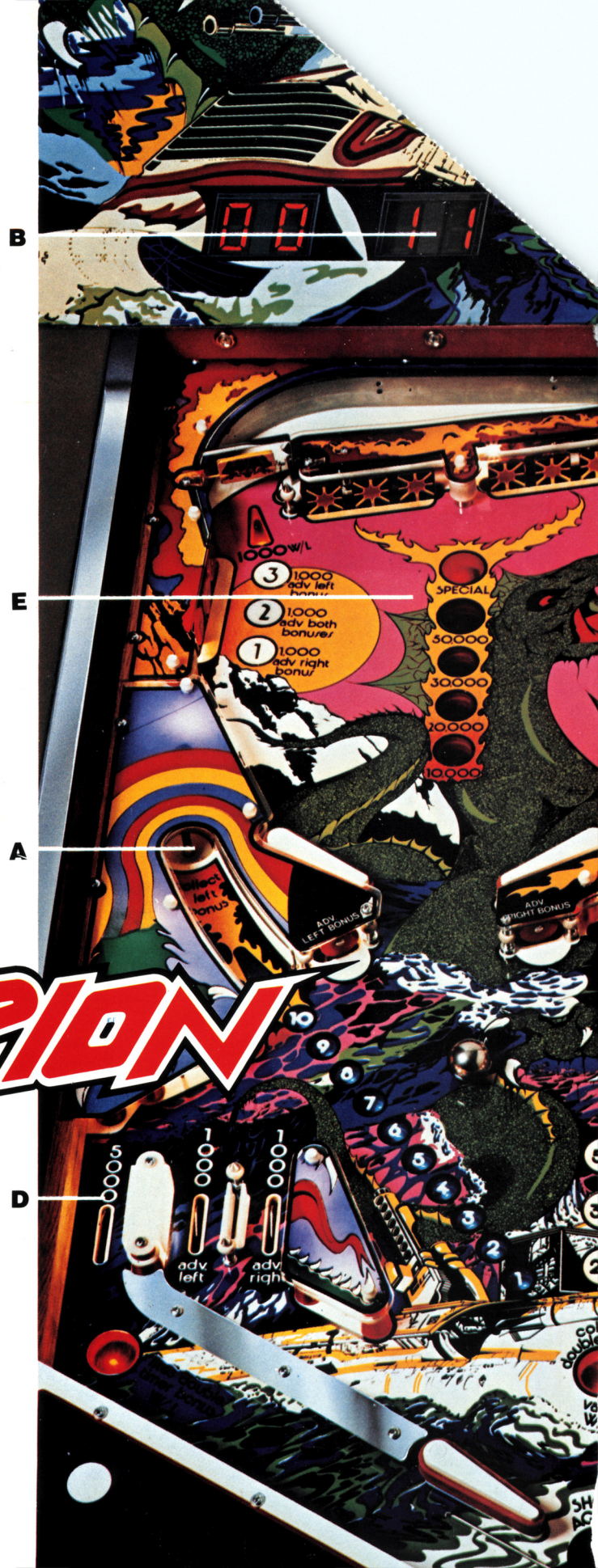

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"Made in Occupied Japan," and dismissed the imports as "cheaply made imitations" of American workmanship.

"The Japanese have no future in the American market," sniffed one American manufacturing exec. Mercifully, we withhold his name, but he is presently employed at the Chrysler Corporation.

1952. Homer T. Shafly from Cleveland Coin in Cleveland, Ohio, received a commemorative plaque as the 1,000th conventioneer to get lost for over an hour while trying to find the registration area of the East Room at the Hilton. Also of interest to '52 guests was the re-decoration of the display facilities in the latest popular color, cement gray.

1956. Seminars were introduced at this AMOA convention. Among the speakers invited were Woody Hayes, Ohio State University, who spoke on, "How to Secure New Locations with a Left Hook;" Richard Nixon, lawyer, who covered the topic, "Honesty is the Best Policy;" and T. Howard Steinmetz, Notre Dame, who discussed, "Electro-mechanical Games Are Here To Stay."

1959. The exposition floor was rudely disrupted by an unwarranted intrusion of boisterous Chicago baseball fans. White Sox backers, delerious over their team's appearance in the just concluded World Series, carried signs which read, "The White Sox Dynasty—How Long Will It Last?"

Cub fans, unhappy at not having won anything since 1945, waved placards which stated, "How Long Will We Have To Wait?"

We know the answer to both of those questions now: "not long" and "a hell of a long time."

1971. Dr. T. Howard Steinmetz, Notre Dame, returned to highlight the convention seminar program when he addressed the operators on: "Video Games—A Passing Fad."

1973. Dick Welu, newcomer to the coin-op business, drove to Chicago to attend his first AMOA convention, and after parking on famed Michigan Avenue and entering the imposing doorway of the historical Conrad Hilton, he turned to the resplendently dressed doorman and uttered those famous words, "Hey, Mac, which way's the restroom?" Dick, incidentally, fell one T-shirt short of topping Fred Coggins' 1935 record when he ripped his leisure suit trousers while trying to leap a Brunswick pool table on his final trip to the Williams booth before the Expo hall closed.

1978. Dr. T. Howard Steinmetz, Notre Dame, kept his record intact. His seminar topic that year was, "Space Invaders—A Concept Doomed to Failure."

1979. A raid by the vice squad at the Playboy Towers the night preceding the convention netted the entire PLAY METER staff swimming in the altogether at Hugh Hefner's glass-walled pool with a bevy of bunnies. While posting bail, Ralph Lally II protested his innocence but did concede he had mooned an arresting officer. David Pierson, feeling no pain, would only say that he was auditioning for the centerfold.

An eyewitness to the spectacle said the most disgusting scene was Roger Sharpe's walrus imitation complete with sifting swizzle sticks and olives from the water with his mustache. A very tacky episode in AMOA history, but who knows what 1980 will bring?

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What *else* to do in the Windy City?

Unbelievably it's that time of year again and a chance for me to once more give some tips and suggestions for surviving and enjoying the Second City. In fact, this upcoming return home for this writer was enhanced last night just by the sight of Walter "Sweetness" Payton and his fellow Bears shutting out Tampa Bay and, fortunately, shutting up Howard Cosell, who obviously doesn't appreciate the subtleties of Chicago-style football and complained most of this particular night.

But no matter, Chicago sports are back and although the weekend of the show, the Bears won't be at home, they will be on Monday Night Football against Cleveland (November 3rd) and if you're around for the next week and can get tickets, on the 9th they'll be back at the friendly confines of Soldier's Field.

But you say you're not crazy about football, you say the Bears don't really turn you on, well, if that's your feeling Bunky, then the sports scene in the Windy City has other delights to offer you. How about those surprising Black Hawks—that's hockey for those of you who haven't seen a puck since the days of Chicago Coin's *Goalie*. And, of course, there is this writer's favorite team, the battling Chicago Bulls, coached by Jerry Sloan and led by a new cast of characters and some old familiar favorites including Artis Gilmore, Reggie Theus, Larry Kenon, Dave Greenwood, Ronnie Lester, and the usual rough-tough style of play one has become accustomed to at Chicago Stadium.

But, admittedly, your stay in Chicago may indeed be only the convention weekend, or a strictly business adventure, visiting the booths and either before or after the show, and visiting some of the factories. Well, if that's the case, there are some annual pointers I always try to provide, plus some new stuff this year on other leisure time activities you might want to try if you get tired of the banquets, private parties, and general flow of being around the same people twenty hours or more every day for three days.

First off, the show is once again at the Conrad Hilton, a condition that will be changing before we may realize it, and most of the activities and even hotel accomodations for the majority of people, possibly yourself included, will be around the Carlton, Continental Plaza and the like further north. (A good point to remember when in Chicago is that the lake, that's Lake Michigan, is always "east" so that if it's on your right, you're traveling north and if it's on your left, you're traveling south. Oh, and if it's behind you, take care and write from Iowa when you get the chance. But seriously, this point of reference may help you get a sense of direction in the daily shuttle.)

An important tip for those just traveling back and forth from hotel to convention and dependent upon cabs for transportation—the early mornings shouldn't be that bad on Michigan Avenue, but at night, expecially when the show ends on Friday and Saturday, if you're heading back up north to the various festivities, you're going to be much better off telling the cab driver to head up on Wabash. If you find that the traffic is really backed up by the time you pass the Art Institute, only a couple of blocks north of the Hilton, just tell the cabbie how you want him to go and he'll probably take you for a native who doesn't want to sit in traffic and listen to the meter tick off valuable arcade spending money, let alone coins for room service you'll need later. Don't let him bamboozle you into going via the Outer Drive, since normally on Friday and Saturday this will be a slow route at best. By going up Wabash you can circumvent much of this and travel past Wacker Drive and past Marina Towers (the twin, circular apartment buildings) by going parallel to Michigan Avenue before you cut off at Chicago Avenue and into the thick of things. Even if you've rented a car, this path will probably do you best and all you need to know is that Wabash is one block west of Michigan Avenue.

As to parking if you are driving, everybody and their uncle is going to be lined up at the lots next to the Hilton and across the street. If you're running late, it's okay as a last resort, but if you've gotten an early start in the morning and want a place that's infinitely cheaper and just as convenient, try the Grant Park underground parking with access points off of Michigan Avenue. All you have to do is park in an area as far south as you possibly can and you'll probably be walking up out of an exit that should be close to the Art Institute and only two blocks from the Hilton. So keep this in mind if you don't want to hassle the lines at the ordinary lots.

Restaurants

For lunch meetings and just getting away from the show during the course of the day, for going over business or whatever, there are a number of restaurants other than the Haymarket and the few other dining areas at the Hilton, which are normally slow on service and not that great in terms of food.

Walk over to Wabash Avenue (just make a left out that side door of the hotel) and head over to the next block, then make a right and keep walking to find such spots suitable for a sandwich or cup of coffee. Even Michigan Avenue will offer some spots as you walk north a few blocks. And for a real treat I have to once again recommend a personal favorite just across the street from the Medinah Temple on North Wabash, called Pizzeria Due, where you can get probably the best deep dish pizza anywhere. Whatever your time schedule, try to make a visit to this local favorite, that's open well into the early morning hours.

As for breaks from the action, you might want to take a drive along the Gold Coast, just past the Continental Plaza and heading north along the lake and by the high rise buildings that have made Chicago a special place architecturally from any other in the world.

If you're shopping, the Water Tower Place interior mall between the Ritz Carlton and Hancock buildings should be more than ample for any souveniers or gifts you might want to take back home, although, a better bet might be any of the shops along the "magnificient mile," known as Michigan Avenue from Wacker Drive and the Wrigley Building up to the original Water Tower and Chicago Avenue. There are a variety of book stores, specialty shops,

—Roger Sharpe's guide to Chicago

clothing stores for both men and women and a number of good little restaurants off on the side streets, no matter what type of cuisine you might like.

The big thing is to try to make the trip as complete as you possibly can, without having it be totally work. In fact, in the evening, whatever your mood elevator might be, once you're set to take on the town, head over to Rush Street and the bars and singles spots that are on every block. If you're not tied into the vicinity of the Continental Plaza, and have your own car, you might want to take in the new places along Broadway in New Town beginning up around Diversey and Broadway (or about 2800 north) and heading up to about Addision (or 3600 north).

Or you might want to try that stretch of late time night spots along Clark that begins at about Lincoln Avenue and takes you past the famous Biograph Theatre (featured in that old Bally favorite, *Old Chicago*) and more so by the fact that that's where Dillinger found there were no "free plays" in the city.

Art and more

On the whole, Chicago has much to offer and appreciate, other than the fact that it's the home of pinball. Unfortunately, you'll be missing Artsweek which takes place from October 4th to the 12th, but much of the sculpture is still visible and accesible for any scenic shots you might feel like taking. Just ahead over to the new State Street Mall, an attempt to salvage and upgrade the downtown shopping area.

In the loop alone you can take a Sunday afternoon walking tour after the show to see such sights as Alexander Calder's "Flamingo" which is in the plaza at the Federal Center at Adams and Dearborn, or Calder's "Universe" in the lobby of the Sears Tower, the world's tallest building, over by Wacker Drive.

As for other things, you might want to take in the Frank Lloyd Wright studio and home at 951 Chicago Avenue or even the Art Institute you've been passing by every day. And for a very special adventure, try heading south to the Museum of Science and Industry which is just off the lake at about 5500 south, or any of the museums or planetariums on the Outer Drive just north of Soldier's Field.

There's a helluva lot to do, besides the show and *its* sights, but if you have to take a break, know that there's much within striking distance and more than enough to entertain you while you're out at night.

Just try to enjoy part of the city—even the Lincoln Park Zoo is close by in the near north side just off the lake—and you might be able to combine some pleasure with the business of business. See you there. (By the way, I'll be the one parking in the underground, driving along Wabash Avenue and rooting for the Bulls.) Take Care.

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The Press Is Looking at Coin-ops

How will you use the publicity?

AN ANALYSIS/By Ray E. Tilley

"Good press": It's the thing that Anderson, Carter, and Reagan presidential campaigners would trade an evening with Bo Derek for. Publicity, in the positive sense, is what every major business concern from Exxon to AT&T strives to produce in its favor, to ennoble its public image.

In the industry of amusement games, "good press" is no less important. And it is perhaps only now that a wave of positive news stories have hit the pages of national media in force.

The star of all this recent coverage is most often *Space Invaders* in its spur of the video market. The game was so well-recognized that it made news in at least three major newspapers' feature articles that *Space Invaders* had held the No. 1 place in the PLAY METER Equipment Poll—then dropped behind *Asteroids* in July.

In one treatment, The Washington Star noted "talk in Washington of organizing a pentathlon competition featuring *Space Invaders, Galaxian, Asteroids, Astro Fighter,* and *Rip Off*—but they have taken their toll on the grandfather of them all. This month *Asteroids* replaced *Space Invaders* at the top of the Play Meter chart."

This was within a 43-inch article (July 27) by John Tierney, who also devoted 18 inches of type to a side piece featuring tips from "How to Play Space Invaders," the booklet offered by Taito America.

New York Times New Service in an August 27 dispatch, "Atari, Bally Shooting It Out," took the approach of "It all started with *Pong,* and now the war's in full swing." The exact emphasis here, as in much other media coverage, was on the business of coin-op games' sales. A "games analyst" with an investment brokerage firm was quoted to say that "video games are the leading sellers in a market estimated to gross more than $50 million a year." Pinball is still doing well, he said, but video games had gained by a 60/40 ratio.

The theme played behind the crisp-sounding business data, however, had to do with the *image* of the games in the public's eye. "Video games have not only successfully infiltrated the arcade business, according to several analysts. They have also endowed the once 'sleazy reputation' of the pinball and slot machine halls with a more respectable image," The New York Times related.

In big-media print, the question of why pinball should be connected with 'sleaziness' is not approached, as one might expect it would not. But the resulting benefit of the new-found publicity is clear: here is a form of leisure play that is respectable; and (if not *because*) it is producing large revenues.

New territory

Respectability comes about when a fashion visits the haunts of the respectable. Just as jeans and motorcycles are no longer "subculture" items but the choices of many in the upwardly-mobile middle class—so are pinball and video machines moving into new and previously forbidden territory "at a tremendous pace," noticed Advertising Age, a magazine for media people. The locations being claimed in the name of coin-op include theaters, health clubs, restaurants, and other reputable spots—where a lot of people bring a lot of cash.

The media writers realize that arcade operators are enriching their cash boxes because of both the "video craze" and the fact that "the adult has taken the arcade away from the kid, and adults can spend as much money as they want," as Advertising Age observed (May 12).

The New York Daily News also quotes PLAY METER's annual survey* in finding videos' cashbox revenues up at least 50 percent this year. This was in a front-page feature in the newspaper's Manhattan tabloid (September 11) centers on the white collar aspect of "The Games Commuters Play." The writer, Roger Director, focuses on the Station-Break Family Amusement Center in Penn Station, New York City. Its manager says businessmen account for at least 40 percent of his business, more at rush hour.

So, cash revenue is at the root of the games' popular acceptance. With the new respectability comes a new set of clothes. Director reports that the Station-Break arcade "is dimly lit and comfortably carpeted. Overhead hang signs prohibiting loitering, smoking, eating, or drinking. Floor attendants, dressed in blue security guard outfits, walk about making change. There are about 75 pieces of pinball and video game equipment scattered about in two rooms."

This spic-and-span palace is patronized at railroad rush hour by "young men in suits and loosened ties, a paper in one hand and a briefcase in another," mingling like British Army officers with the common man.

Newspapers and popular magazines are not bringing on all of this change, of course. They are merely reporting it. But there is a snowballing effect when the media pick up on an idea, person, or event and give a front-page or evening-news treatment. There are many examples but, for one: Five years ago, the majority of Americans said "Jimmy Who?" when Carter's name was mentioned, and the Georgia governor beat the "What's My Line?" panel, who failed to identify the present president.

At this point, a man from a rural county is the 1976-elected chief executive—and coin-operated games, incidentally, are "sweeping the country," in the Wall Street Journal's phrase. Neither fact is news anymore.

Publicity, however, is not the same thing as news. Bell Telephone Co. does not merely leave it to your desire and need to use the phone: it advertises and publicizes its wires at a high cost and with a large staff of publicists.

"Making" news

At no cost to the operator is the current "news" interest in amusement games. Free publicity is the best kind—when it is favorable.

* November, 1980 PLAY METER State of the Industry Issue.

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The operator has been so long accustomed to "bad" publicity that he may shun any kind of attention from the press. This is known in public relations circles as a "mistake."

Newspapers from Key West to Anchorage have large space waiting for their daily fill of print. The pages are as innocent as a bare wall, which can either be filled with graffiti obscenities—or a plea for aid to an orphans' home.

Newspapermen, in other words, have open minds. Except for the commandment that the news pages must be filled, the news director is open to either pulse-pounding sensationalism, tear-jerking human interest items, or plain "bad news."

The colleagues of Lou Grant are not waiting to pounce on a story such as "Children waste hundreds of dollars in coin-op games." They are equally—or more—open to articles such as "Coin-op Instructive Games" (elsewhere is this issue).

It is up to the coin operator, however, to be agressive in planting a feature story or news idea in the press.

Here is an example, submitted by Carol Kantor of Business Builders, about how Alan R. Segal of Republic Vending Corp., Chicago, responded to an editorial in the business publication "Inc."

Segal wrote the publication: "An item in ...the December issue was headlined 'Okay to kick vending machines.' Having been in the business for over 35 years, we feel it is *not* OK to kick vending machines, and take exception to the NLRB position that implies all vending machines are imperfect and are always kicked when they do malfunction..."

As Ms. Kantor notes, Segal's letter went on into a "calm, straightforward reply. He pointed out that most of the malfunctions of vending machines are in fact due to consumer abuse. The response also noted that one of the major problems is foreign objects in the coin chutes."

Seek good publicity

An operator's problem of "bad press" may otherwise amount to such as a write-up on loitering around amusement arcades in his River City. The operator can retaliate in several ways open to him. A letter to the editor of the River City Press is one. Possibly more effectively, he can contact that news editor and ask to have a reporter come check out his operation as a model in contrast to the 'sleazy' dives. If that article hits the press, the River City parents are likely to steer their kids away from the dives and into our operator's arcade, the parents realizing that kids love the pins and videos and should go to the arcade that has better surroundings.

The coin operator does not have to wait to be put in a defensive posture, furthermore. We've said that the news editor is itching to fill all that white space with print. With the current growing fondness for coin-op games, the editor can have a story right here in River City on the latest amusement games. On these, the operator is an expert, and what newsmen call a "news source."

A phone call to the local Lou Grant can plant some ideas for such a story: "Mr. Grant, you should see all the people—youngsters and businessmen—playing *Moon Devils* video games at my place on Elm Street." Or, "Have you heard a singing pinball machine? Well, you should see this one. Do you have a reporter available?"

He always has a reporter available. Do not rush the news editor, though, but be open for an interview at a time he can set up for the reporter and photographer to come over and check this thing out.

The result is likely to be "good press."

And the operator can sagely say to the newsman: "They're writing up the new games in the Denver Post, Washington Star, Houston Post, New York Daily News..." •

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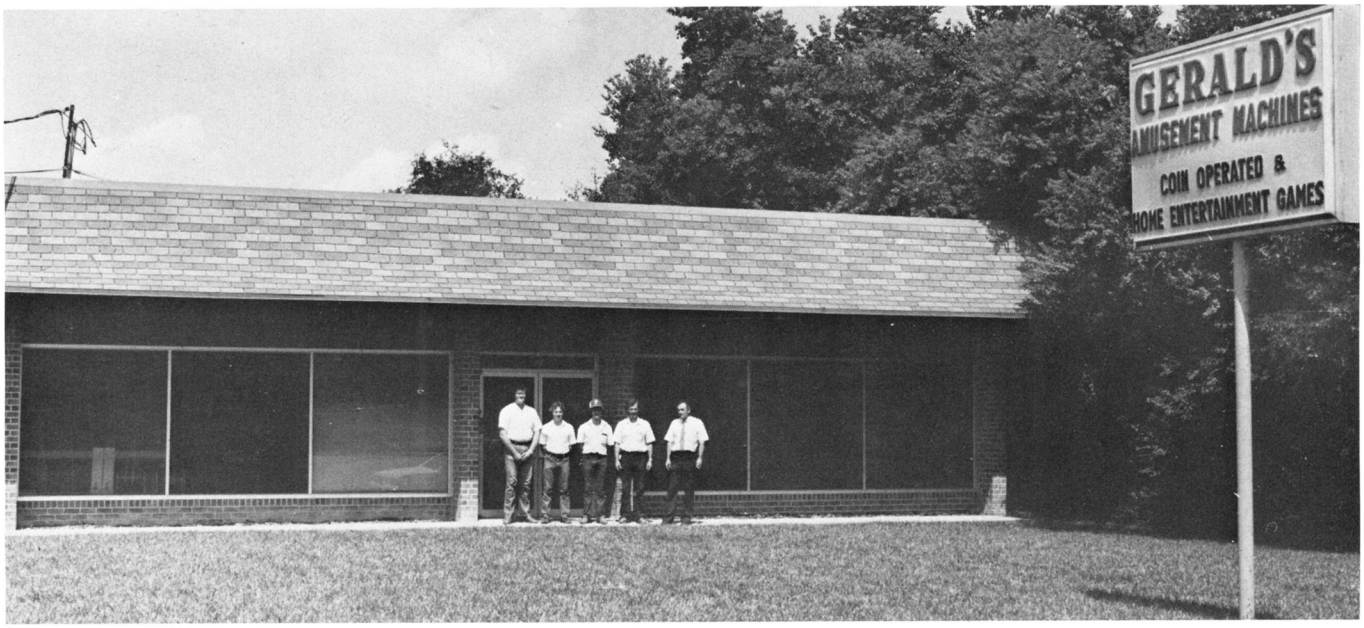


Example of publicity: The games operator can be displayed in local newspaper's business pages. Here, Gerald Goodeau of Lafayette, La. stands with his crew at his new operation headquarters. News angle: Goodeau's sons (from right) David, Guy, and Jonathan work with him. At far left is the operation's crack technician, Barney LeJeune. The operator is a business, and the papers need such items. Result: 'good press.'

A year ago, the press took notes...

Editor's Note: One year ago, at the time of the AMOA Show, the press was taking note of the developments in coin-operated amusement games. Excerpted here is a dispatch on the Reuter's wire service from Tony Licata, following the 1979 Chicago show. The story went around the world—as far as Singapore and Hong Kong on the wire.

What does the Incredible Hulk have in common with singer Dolly Parton and Muhammed Ali?

They're the latest in pinball machines.

The voluptuous figure of Dolly adorns the latest Amrican electronic pinball machine. Dropping in a coin produces the opening bars of her hit song, "Here You Come Again."

Flipping the ball against bosomy *Dolly*'s "bumpers" rings up the highest score.

The *Incredible Hulk* machine grunts like American television's frightening, expanding monster.

How the Hulk will match up against Muhammed Ali remains to be seen. The retired world heavyweight boxing champion has just signed a contract to put himself on a machine. But it has yet to enter the ring.

Pinball machines, long popular in the U.S.A., are now a pinging, flashing, clicking craze.

Some 6,000 members of the Amusement and Music Operators Association rolled into Chicago the other day to show off their latest electronic wizardry.

Trade experts estimate there are 2,500,000 to 3 million pinball machines in the United States—a million of them in traditional amusement arcades.

As many others are in hotels, restaurants, bars, bowling alleys, and a variety of other public places including train and bus stations.

Addicts

And there are also pinball machines in the homes of at least 100,000 addicts of the game.

Roger C. Sharpe, who wrote the book "Pinball!" estimates that U.S. manufacturers will turn out 250,000 machines this year, double the number five years ago.

Sharpe credits the film "Tommy," the story of a blind, deaf, and dumb pinball player, with boosting the popularity of pinball machines over the last four years.

Pinball first appeared in the United States more than 50 years ago. Today the machines of the '30s are valuble collectors' items.

Pinball makers haven't limited their innovations to celebrities. "The name only draws the first coin. After that, the game has to play well to be a success," says Gary Stern, president of Stern Electronics, who landed the Ali contract.

The big hit of the AMOA trade exposition was a machine called *Gorgar*—because the creature speaks.

Gorgar has a short vocabulary. If he beats the player, a voice booms out "Me—got—you!"

Groans

But if the player scores 50,000 points or more, Gorgar groans "Me—hurt," terse but eloquent, in its way.

The conventional pinball machines are meeting stiff competition from the new video games. Space age technology has enabled menufacturers to come up with an intriguing variety of games hooked into television screens.

But Harry Williams, a pinball pioneer, insists the computerized video games will never pulverize pinball. "The TV games eat up ideas like crazy," he adds in tones of sympathy and sorrow.

But Mr. Williams, who invented the "tilt" mechanism now standard in pinball machines, says pinball designers have not yet learned how to use the computer to enhance their own games.

While designers may still have much to learn, they are preparing greater challenges for the skill of pinball players.

Eventually they could turn pinball into a professional game, some of the cognoscenti feel. •

Jukebox fight funds low

The AMOA's appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court to hear the contested issue of jukebox location list requirements signals another costly round of legal battling, AMOA officials said.

The Legal Action Fund for fighting the location lists requirement and for negotiations before the Copyright Royalty Tribunal on per-machine fees to pay copyright owners was nearly depleted at early October. Of approximately $97,000 collected for legal fees, $15,000 was left, said Executive Director Fred Granger.

That remainder was with some attorney fees outstanding, said AMOA President Robert Nims. Nims estimated that the fund would be some $5,000 in the red after paying legal costs prior to any hearing before the Supreme Court.

At press time for this issue of PLAY METER, the high court had not yet accepted or denied hearing an appeal from the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling in Washington, D.C. which had upheld the location lists requirement.

No estimate of the Supreme Court legal costs were made, but Granger said, "I think they'll continue the fight. We still have contributions coming in, but only a minority of members have contributed," he added.

For the costs of going to the Supreme Court, "we are going to have to go into another fundraising drive," said Granger. In the past, he noted, some legal costs have been paid from the AMOA general treasury. But the high cost of legal talent for the federal court arena apparently could not be borne indefinitely by the general fund, officials indicated.

For further discussion of the AMOA's battle for jukebox operators and the cost involved, see the Coinman interview, this issue.

Nanao Corp. down South

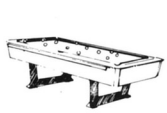
Nanao Corporation, a Japanese developer and maker of video products for more than three decades, has opened a distribution and marketing facility in Marietta, Georgia, an Atlanta suburb.

This facility, located at 1148 Franklin Road, S.E., Marietta 30067, will put Nanao in "a better position to offer effective service to the U.S. amusement video game industry," said Joseph Alterescu, vice president of the Video Product Division.

The telephone for Alterescu's division is: 404/952-9777.

Nanoa will exhibit at the AMOA Show, booths C-19 and C-20 in the Continental Room, Conrad Hilton, Chicago.

The newly developed, exclusive *Astrocraft* will be shown in the United States for the first time. (See the New Products section, this issue).



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Edward Schmidt

Bally transfers Schmidt

Edward Schmidt has been appointed to the Bally Pinball Division marketing field service department, announced Tom Nieman, Bally vice president for marketing.

In Schmidt's 11 years with Bally, he has been the corporate test engineering manager, corporate life laboratory manager, corporate quality analysis manager, and, most recently, director of quality engineering in the Pinball Division.

In addition, Schmidt has served as an instructor to train Bally employees in basic electronic, mechanical, and technical repair.

His position in the marketing field service department was expected "to be excellent assistance to the technicians requiring assistance in the field," said Nieman. "We welcome Ed into the marketing department and trust customers will benefit from his vast experience and knowledge."

Schmidt was in the military, 1963-1966, then took a position as a technical writer for fabrication computer systems with the Seeburg Corporation. In 1967, he reentered technical school and graduated in 1969 from Coyne Electronics Institute of Technology, coming to work for Bally that year.

Droste heads exec group

Leo A. Droste, assistant executive vice president of the Amusement and Music Operators Association, has been elected president of the Chicago Society of Association Executives.

Droste joined AMOA in January of 1980. He has formerly been executive vice president of the Shoe Service Institute of America.

An AMOA officer said, "Droste is a man well respected by his colleagues in association management. We in AMOA are proud of the work he is doing for the profession in Chicago."

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Operators' choice in excellence produces 'The Play Meter' award

The coin-operated amusement industry has a new landmark by which to recognize excellence—"The Play Meter," which is awarded for the first time on the occasion of the 1980 AMOA Exposition.

Play Meter Publisher Ralph C. Lally explained: "Motion pictures have their 'Oscars;' television has its ratings and the 'Emmy' Awards; radio has its Top Ten; and so forth across the entertainment industries. At this show, a new award for excellence, 'The Play Meter' will be presented to two manufacturers."

Lally said, "This industry has needed to have a means for recognition of outstanding coin-operated amusement machines. This award is based on the judgement of operators in the largest independent sampling of this industry to obtain the information on what are the best-earning pinballs and video games."

The results of the annual industry survey were published in the November issue of this magazine—and on the basis of those results, "The Play Meter" is being awarded to Williams Electronics, Inc. and to Atari, Inc. for their production, respectively, of the best-earning pingame *Firepower* and the best-earning video *Asteroids* during 1980.

"We commence with the 1980 presentation," said Lally, "after long viewing the need for saluting quality and play appeal. We hope to continue each year to recognize excellence in this way, and the award may branch out to encompass other areas of the coin industry."

He stressed that "the judgement of the operators is most important in drawing the line of excellence. The industry's growth called for such a 'medal of honor.' But the measure of a superior game is its results in the coin box. By their numbers, operators told us that, far and away from the pack of other fine games, these two were the top acts in their fields," said Lally.

Asteroids and *Firepower* clearly led the two categories of balloting in the annual poll. The complete list of standings appear in the November "State of the Industry" issue of PLAY METER. This magazine has, since June 1979, polled subscribers monthly on their best-earning pieces. The annual operators poll, which has been made each year since 1976, this fall reflected independently the playing "pull" of the two games awarded first with "The Play Meter."

Lally expressed appreciation to the operators who responded to the annual survey, which produced business data about routes and arcades with widely varying numbers of equipment pieces.

"The only input we relied upon was the candid response of the operator, and we thank all for participating," he said.

"The magazine has editorially supported review, evaluation, and even reward for new games on the market," Lally added. "Systematic review takes the operator out of the dark when he is buying product." •

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PlayMeter Equipment Poll

THIS MONTH		LAST MONTH
1.	FIREPOWER/Williams	1
2.	GORGAR/Williams	3
3.	SPACE INVADERS/Bally	2
4.	SILVERBALL MANIA/Bally	4
5.	BLACKOUT/Williams	15
6.	FLASH/Williams	5
7.	BIG GAME/Stern	8
8.	SEA WITCH/Stern	12
9.	STELLAR WARS/Williams	9
10.	LASER BALL/Williams	11

THIS MONTH		LAST MONTH
11.	[tie] SPIDER-MAN/Gottlieb	10
	[tie] GALAXY/Stern	7
13.	METEOR/Stern	6
14.	SCORPION/Williams	–
15.	SUPERMAN/Atari	–
16.	COUNTERFORCE/Gottlieb	–
17.	PLAYBOY/Bally	–
18.	KISS/Bally	16
19.	STAR TREK/Bally	–
20.	BUCK ROGERS/Gottlieb	–

THIS MONTH		LAST MONTH
1.	ASTEROIDS/Atari	1
2.	GALAXIAN/Midway	2
3.	MISSILE COMMAND/Atari	5
4.	SPACE INVADERS/Midway	3
5.	ASTRO FIGHTER/Gremlin&Data East	4

THIS MONTH		LAST MONTH
6.	RIP OFF/Cinematronics	7
7.	MONACO G.P./Gremlin	6
8.	TARG/Exidy	8
9.	SPRINT II/Atari	10
10.	SPACE ENCOUNTERS/Midway	–

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

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1980 Jukebox Awards winners

The 1980 AMOA Jukebox Awards, based on member operators' ballots, gave four major prizes to Kenny Rogers.

Artists who can take home the award from a banquet at the AMOA also: Linda Ronstadt, Billy Joel, Crystal Gayle, Christopher Cross, Bob Segar, Michael Jackson, and Donna Summer.

Of the fifteen awards last year, Summer received three while Rogers was tapped for four.

The 1980 balloting was the highest in number of responses in the history of the Jukebox Awards, said Leo Droste, assistant executive vice president of AMOA, adding: "We're very pleased with the response of the members."

Winners were as follows: most promising new talent of the year—Christopher Cross, Warner Brothers Records; pop record of the year—"Against the Wind," Bob Segar, Capitol; pop male artist of the year—Billy Joel, Columbia; pop female artist of the year—Linda Ronstadt, Asylum Records; country record of the year—"Coward of the County," Kenny Rogers, United Artists.

Country male artist of the year was voted to Kenny Rogers, and country female artist of the year was bestowed on Crystal Gayle (United Artists)—both of whom won those titles in 1979.

Rock's best record of the year went to Pink Floyd (Columbia Records) for "Another Brick in the Wall;" rock artist of the year—Bob Segar, Capitol.

Soul record of the year went to Lipps, Inc. for "Funkytown" (Casablanca Records); soul male artist of the year—Michael Jackson, Epic; soul female artist of the year—Donna Summer, Casablanca, who took the honor in 1979 also.

Record of the year, all categories, was awarded to "Coward of the County," giving Kenny Rogers another record of the year prize to go with "The Gambler" of 1979.

And for artist of the year, all categories, Rogers has his fourth AMOA award for 1980—only leaving him short of the pop male artist of the year award he was presented last November.

Elvis Presley was selected best all time favorite artist for 1980 by AMOA members.

Awards will be presented in the closing banquet of the AMOA Exposition.

Results were tabulated by the certified public accounting firm Walter Hughes & Associates, Chicago.

The AMOA has announced that it has "no connection with a possible or proposed television show" regarding jukebox awards this year. A ballot connected to an awards program slated for Las Vegas in November was mailed last summer without AMOA authorization, its officers said.

The AMOA Jukebox Awards last year were videotaped at the Hilton for a television showing in January 1980.

FAVA plans tax seminar & a lobbying fight

The Florida Amusement/Vending Association plans a seminar on taxation for its members, who with other coin-ops are facing hiked taxes on their businesses.

FAVA Executive Director Bob Rhinehart explained that his association is "working with the state department of revenue, the department of beverages, tax assessors, and tax collectors. This seminar, to be held in the fall, will provide members with information on how taxes will affect the industry." Knowing the tax laws will ultimately save the operators a lot of money, he said.

A bill was recently passed in the Florida legislature which would give each municipality in the state the option of raising the ceiling on taxes within its jurisdiction.

That includes the state's occupational license tax, required of businesses in Forida. Rhinehart said, "In effect, a municipality could raise the tax 100 percent if it cared to.

"We are in contact with the incoming speaker of the House, Ralph Habin, who has agreed to take a second look at this bill," said Rhinehart.

A fight against the bill has been joined by the lobbying efforts of other industries besides coin-ops, he said.

Amusement Supply adds to sales staff

Amusement Supply, Inc. of Dallas has appointed two new sales persons, Drayton Riddick and Charlie Cullen.

Mickey Parson, president, said: "With Riddick's sales experience in the industry and Cullen's inventory management expertise, we think we'll be able to continue to provide a good quality service to our customers."

Amusement Supply, in business over three years, handles all supplies and as a main line has the Universal "B" cue ball. Located at 10911 Dennis Road, Suite 401, the company provides the toll-free numbers 800/527-0518 and (in Texas) 800/442-3726. A new 46-page supplies catalog is available at no cost.

Bally to operate slots at Reno airport

Bally Distributing Co. has been awarded a seven-year contract by the Washoe Airport Authority to operate the slot machine concession at Cannon International Airport, Reno, Nevada.

The contract provides for the airport to take 76.25 percent of the gross revenue, or $2.1 million, whichever is higher, for the first 18 months. After that time, Bally Distributing will pay the airport authority 75 percent of gross revenues, with this percentage figured on the revenues of the preceding 12 months.

New book on videos

In preparation now is a new book expected to be introduced this winter season, focusing on video games. The book will cover basic information: description and use of tools and components, materials, and assemblies used on coin-operated games. Emphasis will be given to troubleshooting procedures, and it will be oriented to technicians at all levels in the industry. The material presented has been compiled, written, and revised by competent, experienced field repair personnel within the video game industry. It will definitely be welcomed to the coin machine industry library.

For further details, check the Technical Topics section of future issues of PLAY METER. *Zac Oliver*

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Gottlieb's traveling sales shows give distributors a peek

Early September marked a whirlwind series of regional Gottlieb distributor meetings conducted by the company's executive and management group. The meetings were held at airport hotels in Chicago, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and San Francisco. Attending the huddles, from the Northlake, Illinois pinball manufacturer were Alvin Gottlieb, chairman; Bob Bloom, company president; George Simkowski, Gottlieb marketing vice president; Tom Herrick, vice president; and Sandy Leight, marketing assistant.

The confabs were attended largely by Gottlieb U.S. and Canadian distributor management and marketing people.

The purpose of the meetings generally was to introduce new Gottlieb products, detail new marketing programs and to provide an on-the-spot dialogue between Gottlieb management and its distributors.

"We couldn't have been happier with the results," said Simkowski in commenting on the meetings. "Our distributors did as much or more talking as we—and that was a major reason for the meetings. We called them 'Communications Seminars' and that's exactly what they were. We got some flak, a lot of good suggestions, a lot of field information and even a few compliments—and our distributors loved it!"

Promotions planned

"Several new promotion programs were detailed, including a concentrated advertising compaign directed at the college market," said company vice president Tom Herrick. "We also revealed our plans for the forthcoming AMOA Show.

"Our distributors applauded the introduction of a new System 80 Emergency First Aid Repair Kit. This package of small electronic components and spare parts will enable the operator to handle 90 percent of any game maintenance problems right at the location. The components are packed in a convenient carrying case that the service man can easily carry with him on his route. Also, the price represents a substantial savings in relation to the prices of the individual components," Herrick said.

Alvin Gottlieb, son of the company's founder and sole remaining family member, regaled the firm's distributors with reminiscences of the pinball industry and parallel historical situations relative to the current flipper business.

Bob Bloom, president and CEO commented that "the Regional Sales Meeting is probably the best communications format we've ever employed. We met all of our distributors in a matter of a few days. The two-way dialogue between distributor principals and our factory traveling team produced a great number of solid ideas that will soon be reflected in our future products and merchandising programs.

"We expect that a great deal of what we discussed will be evident to operators later this month at AMOA," said Bloom.

One Gottlieb distributor stated, "Gottlieb has truly let us into their kitchen. I can only see great things coming from their new management team."

Gottlieb's Simkowski, Bloom, and Herrick (left to right) tell handlers of the line-up the company is turning out this season. Input from the distributors was welcomed, said Gottlieb officials, in multi-city meetings.

Sarazen elected president, CEO of XCOR

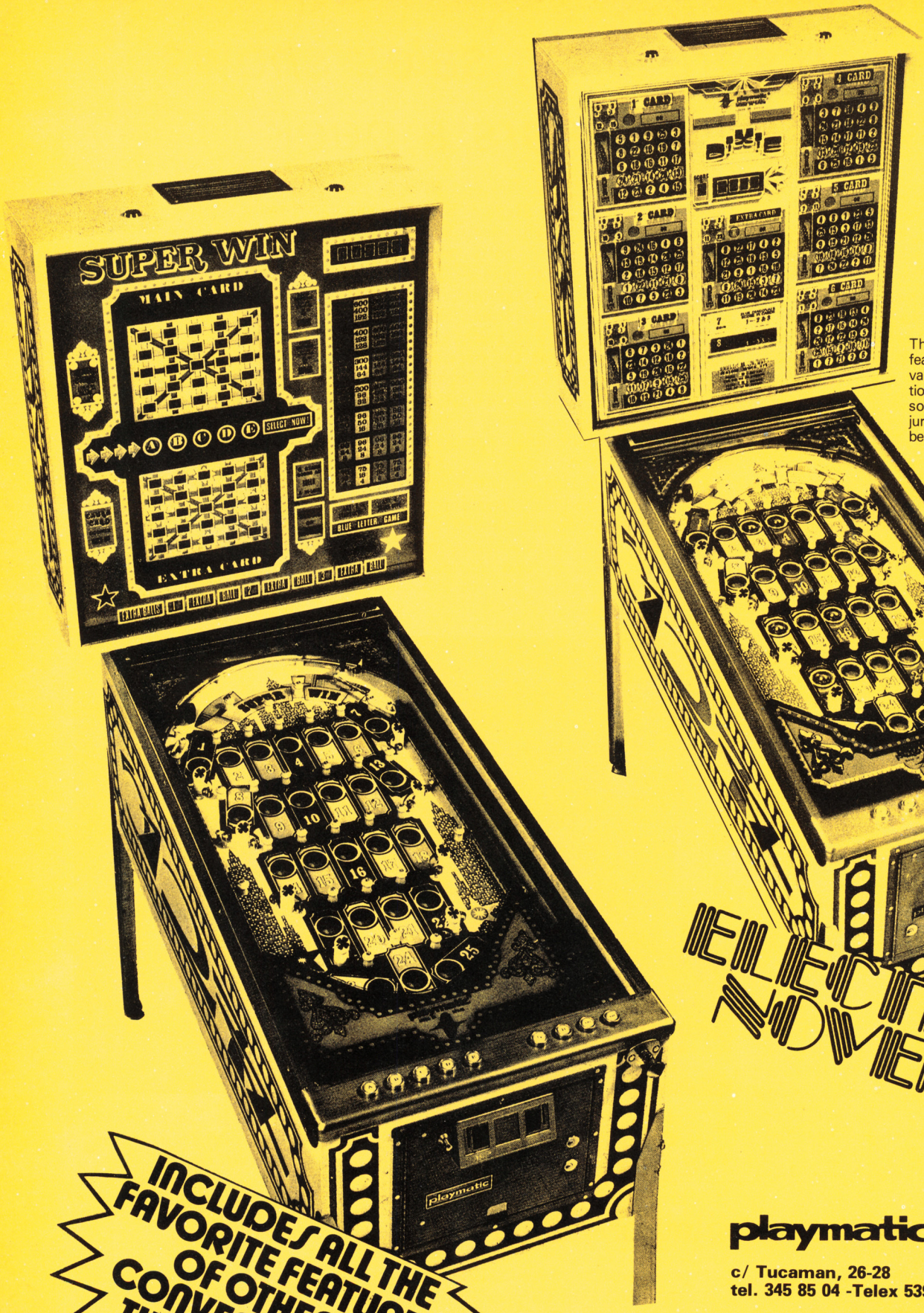
Louis J. Nicastro, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of XCOR International, Inc. (OTC), announced the election October 1 of Richard A. Sarazen as president and chief operating officer of XCOR and its principal subsidiary, XCOR Corporation.

It was anticipated that Sarazen, who was to join XCOR on November 1, 1980, will also be elected a director of XCOR and XCOR Corporation.

Sarazen has served since 1974 as executive vice president/finance of News America Publishing Inc., publishers of the New York Post, New York Magazine, and other newspapers.

Sarazen, a certified public accountant, previously served as managing partner of the Pittsburgh and Los Angeles offices of Alexander Grant and Company, certified public accountants.

XCOR International, Inc. is a diversified manufacturing and servicing company, which, through its subsidiaries, manufactures vending machines, amusement games, musical instruments and hearing aids.



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The last separate Carolina show: 'success'

NCCOA, the North Carolina Coin Operators Association, held its annual meeting and exposition in Charlotte, N.C. the weekend of September 19-21. The event, termed a success, was held at the Charlotte Civic Center, located adjacent to the Raddison Hotel.

From North Carolina and the surrounding states, the event attracted 145 operators. The exhibit area featured the latest in coin-operated equipment displayed in a total of 38 booths. Social events included a golf tournament and a gala banquet.

Five new directors were elected at the meeting of NCCOA. They are: Jim Thorpe, Emmitt Williams, Hal Huggins, Fred Ayers, Jr., and Knappe Brabble.

New officers were also elected. They are: Jimmy Watkins, Watkins Music Co., president; Bunky Brown, Bunky the Jukebox Man, first vice president; Bobby Earp, Bulington Amusement, second vice president; Jim Smith, S & F Amusement, treasurer; and Milton Hobbs, secretary.

This year marks the end of North Carolina and South Carolina coin-op associations holding conventions separately. Beginning next year, the Carolinas meeting will be a combined event—which will take place September 12 in Columbia, S.C. at the Carolin Inn. The combined show will then alternate sites between North and South Carolina every year thereafter.

NCCOA Secretary Hobbs has pointed out that members of both groups attend each other's conventions, and that was a deciding factor in holding a joint show.

Moreover, the joint effort was aimed at generating more interest on the part of manufacturers in a state trade presentation. Hobbs presented the idea for a joint convention in 1978 when a cutback in manufacturer participation in various regions was noted, in a trend seen as selectivity in the producers' deciding which shows to participate in.

Interscience buys Nevada units

Nevada Gaming Schools, Inc. and Nevada Gaming Graphics, Las Vegas, have been acquired by Interscience Systems Inc., Van Nuys, California.

Nevada Gaming Schools trains specialists for coin-operated amusement and gaming devices. Nevada Gaming Graphics supplies graphic arts products to the gaming industry.

Through its majority-owned subsidiary, Summit Systems Inc., and a joint venture with Elsinore Corporation, Interscience has entered the microprocessor-based slot machine business.

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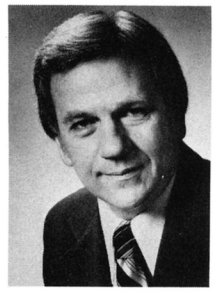
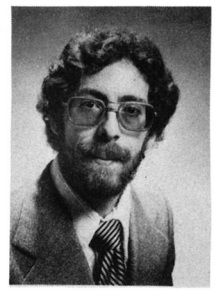


Garvin



Rudolph

Stern expands field service staff with 2

Stern Electronics, Inc. has expanded its field service departments with the appointment of field engineers Sam Garvin and Lou Rudolph.

Sam Garvin, formerly a technician with Araven Services, Inc., Fresno, Calif., and field engineer with Seeburg Corp./Music division, has joined the Stern field service department. Garvin will conduct service school seminars nationwide for both Stern amusement game and the newly formed Seeburg phonograph division product lines. He will assist in administration of Stern's toll-free service "hotline" in Chicago.

Garvin and his wife will reside on Chicago's North Side.

Lou Rudolph, also named as a field engineer for Stern Electronics, will conduct service schools for Stern product lines nationwide and assist in administration of the toll-free service "hotline." Prior to joining Stern, Rudolph served as a game technician with Aladdin's Castle, Inc., Chicago, and manager of electronic services with Empire Distributing Co.

He is a native of Chicago and resides in the Albany Park area of the city.

Tom Campbell, director of marketing for Stern Electronics, announced the new appointments and said, "The addition of experienced industry veterans to our expanding service team guarantees continued quality service to all Stern and new Seeburg division customers."

Vending 'talk'

"Thanks for buying" or "How about a snack with your cold drink?" Someday soon, the vending machine may be equipped to "talk" to your customers.

A manufacturer has already developed the technology which can reconstruct a human voice from data stored on a single silicon chip, it has been reported. •

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Market tested in several U.S. areas and locations, side by side with the toughest competition.

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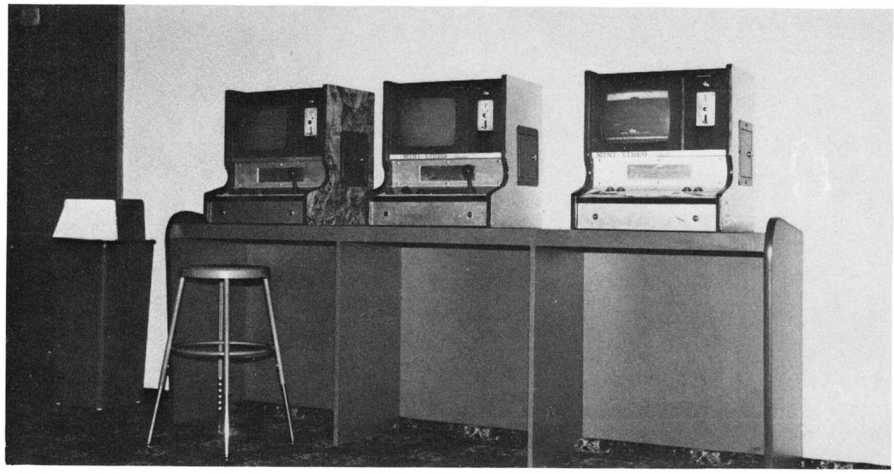

Arcade provides for the wheelchair-confined player. See also Technical Topics, *this issue.*

Multifaceted amusement center

By RANDY FROMM

United Artists Theatre Amusements Inc. (subsidiary of United Artists Theatre Circuit) has opened the latest "Electronic Experience" amusement center in San Diego, California, announced company president Jon Daugherty. Located in the College Grove shopping center in east San Diego and two miles south of the campus of San Diego State College, this store is a break from the way the other Electronic Experience centers are set up, explained Daugherty.

"Since we have around 3,000 square feet to work with, we have divided the center, and devoted one part to the arcade itself, and the other part to sales and service. We are offering reconditioned pinball machines to the public, as well as stocking replacement parts for the local operators."

Also featured is a "wheelchair video" table that enables people in wheelchairs to play along with everyone else. Three Gremlin Mini-video games were provided by Gremlin/Sega Industries of San Diego as a service to the chair-bound minority that are otherwise restricted by the design of an upright video game.

"A special panel has been designed for the pinball machines, that allows any machine to be used by the handicapped player," said Daugherty. "The device attaches to the machine with magnets and activates the flipper buttons by a remote control panel which can be held in the player's lap. A "Wheelchair Video" and a "Wheelchair Pinball" symbols have been developed by our art department following the international symbol used to designate parking and other facilities for the handicapped." said Daugherty.

Other Electronic Experience centers are located in Muncy, Pennsylvania, Rockford, Illinois, Denton, Texas, and Newport Beach, California. New centers are planned for Toledo, Ohio, and Schuylkill, Pennsylvania.

A.V.A. holds its first service class

Audio Visual Amusements held its first service school covering the Cinematronics Vector Generated Monitor. Field service technician Don Wright conducted the course on August 21, 1980. Reports coming back to Pete Entringer, A.V.A. president, from the various operating companies in attendance that this was one of the best schools their personnel had attended. Among those in attendance were:

John Wilkins, Wonder Novelty, St. Louis, MO; Mark Hoffman, Key Vending, Farmington, MO; Jerry Crumley, Morris Novelty, St. Louis, MO; Mike Obrecht and Gene Rodebaugh, Auto Amusement Systems, St. Louis, MO; Jim Shea, Dennis Hellebusch, Kirk Clemens, Dave Theel, Jim Purcell, all from Six Flags, Eureka, MO; Richrd Raaf, J.S. Morris & Sons, St. Louis, MO; David King, Lemons Coin Machines, St. Louis, MO; Mel Cooper, Dale Dlugosh, Parliament Productions, Osage Beach, MO; Richard Sholar, Hawk Amusement, Alton, ILL; Dan and John Zitta, Zitta Amusement, Highland, ILL; and Terry Clark, Sam Westgate, and Stan Williams, Williams Amusement, Enfield, MO.

When the name of the game is profit, the name of the slot is *now* GDI!

See GDI at AMOA, Booth 186.

a Williams Slot Division

The sale or operation of these slots may be restricted by state and/or local laws or regulations. This is no way intended to solicit the sale or operation of these games where such is unlawful.

Five years ago in Play Meter....

December, 1975

The focus in PLAY METER was on phonographs: new and antique—like those belonging to Kurt Ebers of Covington, Louisiana, whose collection graced these pages in a pictorial history of those marvelous musical devices.

The same issue held a historical perspective on pinballs also—via the collector of vintage games, John Osborne.

Rolling into 1976 were these new boxes: NSM's *Consul 160D*, Rock-Ola's *Model 464*, Rowe's *Fleetwood/R-80*, the Seeburg quadraphonic *Entertainer* phonograph, and Wurlitzer's *X2*—all featured that month in PLAY METER.

In the news pages: Paul Jacobs (now an executive of Universal USA) was appointed director of European sales for Chicago Coin; Ken Anderson (now with Game Plan, Inc.) was given responsibility for ChiCoin's foreign and domestic marketing; and Trudy Nie was taking on the role of export sales manager of the Chicago company.

Donald C. Rockola was named president of the phonograph manufacturing firm. Milton Greenman was appointed marketing director of Sega of America.

Mirco Incorporated (now Amstar) was expanding its plant in Phoenix, Arizona.

In New York, we reported, Patrick "Spiderman" Wolff, a collegian in Maryland, had won the $5,000 scholarship purse of the Second National Air-Hockey Game Tourney at the Statler Hilton.

New products in these pages five years ago: included *Steeplechase*, and *Crash 'N' Score* from Atari; *Jet Fighter* from Kee Games; *Soccer Trio* cocktail from World Wide Video Enterprises; *Maneater* from Project Support Engineering; and the *Bullet Mark* shooting game from Sega.

With the December, 1975 issue, PLAY METER was 12 issues old and growing.

Stern buys cabinetmaking concern

August J. Johnson Co., a Bensenville, Illinois-based cabinet manufacturer, has been purchased by Stern Industries, parent company of Stern Electronics, Inc., Chicago, a major manufacturer of coin-operated amusement games.

As a member of the Stern family of companies, the Johnson company will maintain its 31,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in suburban Bensenville and will provide cabinets for Stern pinball and video games.

The acquisition, according to Stern officials, will facilitate delivery of Stern products to the marketplace.

Terms of the sale were not disclosed.

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Play My Tune adds to countertop line

Computer Kinetics Corporation has recently introduced another game, *Play My Tune*, into its expanding line of counter top computer machines.

Play My Tune is an exciting and addictive one- or two-player game. The player must repeat an ever lengthing sequence of colored lights and tones. Each correct play adds points to the score; a complete sequence is further rewarded by the playing of a popular song. Three skill levels allows beginners as well as pros to be challenged. Separate high game scores are kept for each level, to allow competition among equals.

When a mistake is made during a sequence, the player hears the "razzberries" sound and a witty message is displayed on the screen.

A smoothly moving banner message on the display advertises and explains the game's functions. When the game is turned on, it has been programmed to extensively test its major components and to actually "tell" the location of a specific faulty part.

Play My Tune comes in the same compact size cabinet as the company's *Vega 21* and *Draw 5* games: 17" square and 9½" high. A built-in security fastener, which attaches to the machine's internal steel frame, allows the unit to be chained on location.

Export models are available that operate on various voltages and coins of the world. Electronic coin detector, re-keyable vault door, and modular service units are standard. An optional coin counter is also available.

A boom in microcomputers

The market for microcomputer devices incorporated into consumer products, an output of 43 million units worldwide in 1979, will nearly double to reach 80 million units this year—and 41 million units is estimated to be the number utilized in toys and games including videos and pinballs.

So reports a new 155-page study by Frost & Sullivan Inc., which covers technical and industrial fields, entitled "The Consumer Microcomputer Market."

The number of microcomputer units in use is projected to reach 208 million in 1984, by which time 70 million will be used in games and toys, according to the study's findings.

The pressure to save energy alone, the study continues, will proliferate single-chip microcomputers in automobiles and appliances and will lead to a host of new products such as the "intelligent thermostat." In addition, the "micro" will work its way into intelligent telephones, home security systems, personal medical products, and other areas, said the study.

Presently, the micro's largest volume application is represented in hand-held electric toys, programmable and "dedicated" video games, electronic learning aides, language translators, chess sets, and pinball machines—amusement devices and toys in general.

"The stakes are high," Frost & Sullivan comments. At Milton Bradley, for example, electronic games account for nearly 50 percent of the company's total revenues, up from 10 percent in 1976. At Parker Brothers, sales of microcomputer-based games jumped tenfold in 1978 alone.

Certain trends must be watched carefully, the study warns. The era of dedicated games based on a single custom micro is coming to an end, F&S says. In addition, voice and sound output will become an increasing market necessity.

Further information on the study is available from: Frost & Sullivan, Inc., Customer Service, 106 Fulton Street, New York, NY 10038.

Centuri sampling *Targ* cocktail

Centuri, Inc. is finishing the first samples of its new cocktail table version of the *Targ* video game under a licensing agreement from Exidy, Inc., of Sunnyvale, California.

"The *Targ* cocktail table features 'surface graphics' around the video screen to create a total visual environment for added player enjoyment," explained Centuri Marketing Manager Ivan Rothstein, "and a wide base for solid cabinet support."

In the new cocktail-table format, the adjustable-height base can be set for sit-down play by one or two players, or for bar-level competition by the same number.

Table measurements are 35½" wide and 26" deep, providing greater player comfort. The base is adjustable to five heights, from sit-down to 39" at the option of the operator.

There have been no software changes in the new format.

Centuri entered into the licensing agreement with Exidy to manufacture and market the cocktail table version of the game on an exclusive international basis.

"We are very pleased to have a licensing agreement with Exidy," said Ed Miller, Centuri president, "and look forward to a mutually satisfying relationship with this company."

Seeburg distrib network forms

Stern Electronics, Inc., has begun formation of an international network of distributors to represent the company's new Seeburg phonograph line, scheduled for delivery in late 1980.

Tom Campbell, director of marketing, announces two new distributors: Dons Vending Limited of 7121 104th St., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; owned and operated by Stanley Dons. Telephone is 403/434-2433.

Statewide Distributing Co. of 3850 W. Van Buren, Phoenix, AZ 85009; owned and operated by Sam Pacino. Telephone is 602/269-8292.

Stern Electronics, a major manufacturer of solid-state pinball and video games and other coin-operated amusement machines, expected to begin production of Seeburg phonographs in November. The company plans to market the new product line worldwide.

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A. It gives you 5 levels of speed each and every game. The speed changes with time (operator adjustable).

Q. WHAT EFFECT WILL IT HAVE ON MY 'ASTEROIDS' PLAYERS?
A. The play will remain the same for beginners. But the expert players will be challenged with an increasingly more difficult game.

Q. CAN'T I SPEED UP THE GAME WITHOUT THIS MODIFICATION?
A. Sure, if you want simply to speed up the game, you can clip a pin and be done with it, but that will eventually kill the game. Our modification doesn't just speed up the game, it makes 'Asteroids' more challenging.

'Asteroids' Modification Kit *$94.94*
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Rock-Ola new boxes on show to distribs;

By RAY E. TILLEY

Rock-Ola's U.S., Canadian, and South American distributors viewed the 1981 phonograph line September 29 in a new product introduction called "A Star is Born." In old-time moviehouse style—the hi-fi soundtrack a part of the dimly lit atmosphere in the Lincolnshire, Illinois Marriott Resort Hotel—the Rock-Ola products were presented.

The multi-media display unveiled the "stars" themselves: the new *484*, *Grand Salon II*, *507* wallbox, compact *508* wallbox, and the *Max 2* upright compact.

Rock-Ola officials promised "substantial untapped locations" for the *508* wallbox—which has a depth of only 6½ inches, height of 22 inches, and width of 42 inches, weighing less than 77 pounds.

"Superstar" was the billing given to the *484*, successor to Rock-Ola's *Techna*, after a $1 million technical program was undertaken to eliminate static on the box, said company president Donald C. Rockola. With its wrap-around color effect, the theme of "Star Wars" was hinted at. It was suggested that the *484* would have a place on a "Star Wars" movie ste. "A space-age marvel like R2-D2" (the robot of that movie) are the phonograph's Profit Tracker and Hit Tracker system, Donald Rockola said.

The compact phonograph successor to the *Max*, due for introduction in 1981 is the *Max 2*. Its upper dome carries a four-color repetition of the name logo. Its "celestial blue" grille panels have horizontal lines creating the illusion of infinity, Rock-Ola officials pointed out.

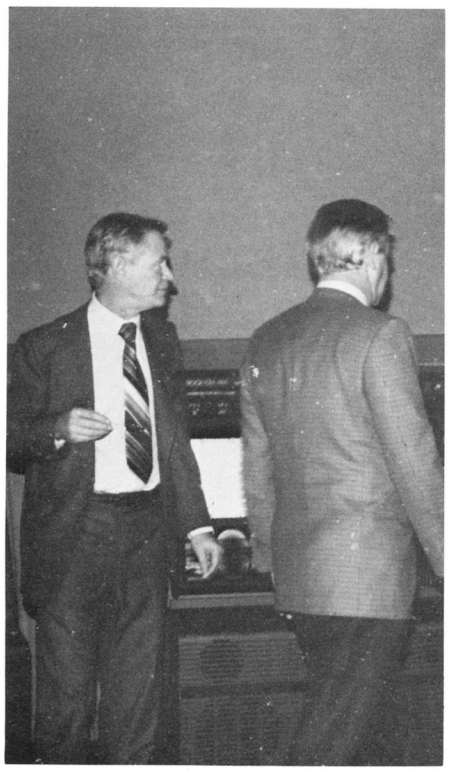
Max 2 has a bonus play feature formerly included only on deluxe models.

In other announcements at the distributors' meeting and luncheon, the seven-year warranty on the *507* wallbox was stressed as the first in the industry of that duration.

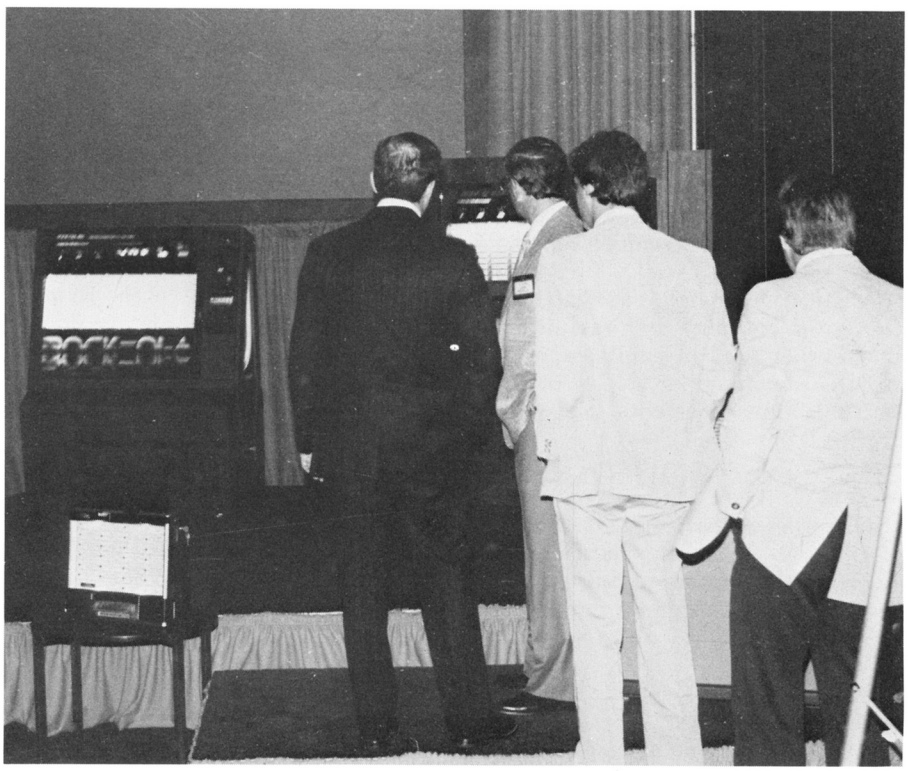
Ed Doris, executive vice president, spoke on the theme of change in the history and the technology of phonographs. "Do we react, or do we act? Rock-Ola is determined to act. We will continue as the stars of the coin-operated phonographs industry," he vowed. He noted also the improvements in Rock-Ola's beverage vending machines, for example: the capability to mix soda pop and juice of varying sizes.

He asked distributors to "overlook the temptation to resist phonograph orders." If phonograph production has to be cut, product development will suffer, Doris said.

"Properly operated phonographs continue to be a profitable investment," he said, pointing to Rowe sales, Stern Electronics' entry into the market with Seeburg boxes, and a new company entering the market—apparently referring to Centuri, Inc.



Donald Rockola (left) and David Rockola lead distributors and guests to the phonographs for '81.



Handlers including a large contingent from Empire Distributing show interest in the boxes. To left is the 484, *successor to Rock-Ola's* Techna. *A large budget went into de-bugging the new machines, officials said.*

videos on the back burner

Doris and other officials stressed Rock-Ola "reliability and integrity," from the family management to the distributor network.

Hugh Gorman, vice president/sales, said that in the 1930s, when Rock-Ola was in pingame and jukebox production, a complete machine was finished every 1½ minutes—or 700 units a day. That soon doubled to 1500 machines per day, and that level of production is possible in the '80s, he maintained.

Dr. David R. Rockola, vice president/vending sales, detailed the technical improvements in the new line during the presentation. Those included perfection of a new set of printed circuit boards and stringent tests for static in the boards. "The result will be enhanced reliability and service ease," he said.

"We are energetically seeking new features never seen before," said Dr. Rockola.

Video marketing mapped

Rock-Ola Manufacturing Corp. has considered three approaches to entering the coin-op video games market, but the signal for launching prior to the 1980 AMOA show was "no go," officials said.

One option actively pursued by Rock-Ola at late September was a purchase into an existing video manufacturing concern.

The phonograph manufacturer had, in the past several months, "field tested" the play appeal of 11 game units Rock-Ola had considered licensing from a reputable supplier, said Gorman.

Income from the two upright versions and one cocktail table were reportedly "average" and below standards set by the Chicago firm in earlier huddles with its distributors. "We said, 'What does it take to make a winner?' And they set up a criterion," a Rock-Ola spokesman told PLAY METER,

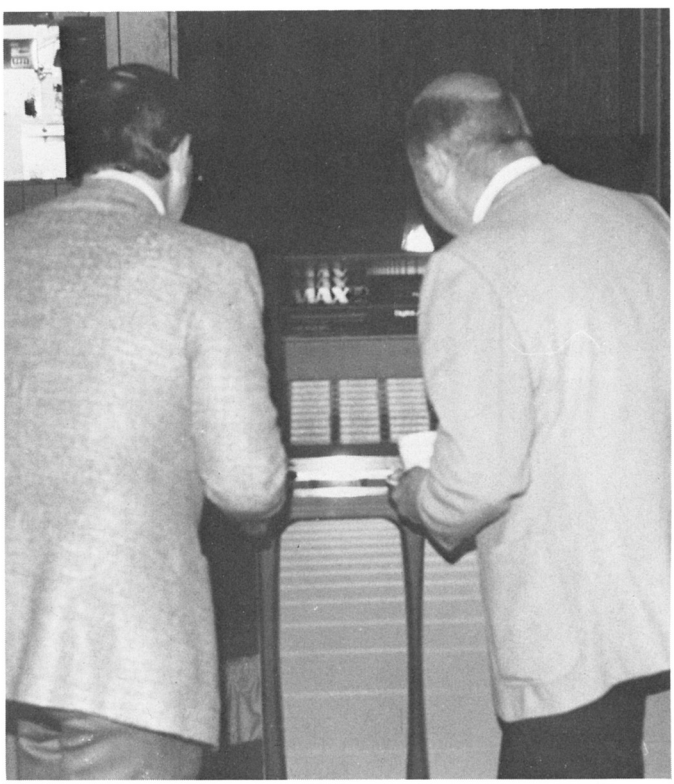
By contrast to the projected image of corporate experience over five decades and of reliability in product development, Rock-Ola saw the video market as "wild and wooly," in Gorman's terms. And a conservative stance was taken, with the aim of eventually producing a game piece that would have high play appeal and a desired level of income.

It is "very possible" that Rock-Ola will acquire "a fully-integrated video game producer in the near future," said Gorman. Negotiations were under way in September with companies "primed and ready for acquisition."

The company will also consider the alternatives of selling licensed machines that are viable in America, or building licensed games in its factory. Company vice president Dr. rockola would make contacts on these options in Japan, said Gorman.

"Soon we will announce our new video game line," Gorman added.

The Max 2 *drew a touch or two to its grillework, as well as glances at the dazzling color effects.*



John Nevill (left) of Empire and Richard Peterson, Peterson Coin/Houston, check out the playboard on Max 2.

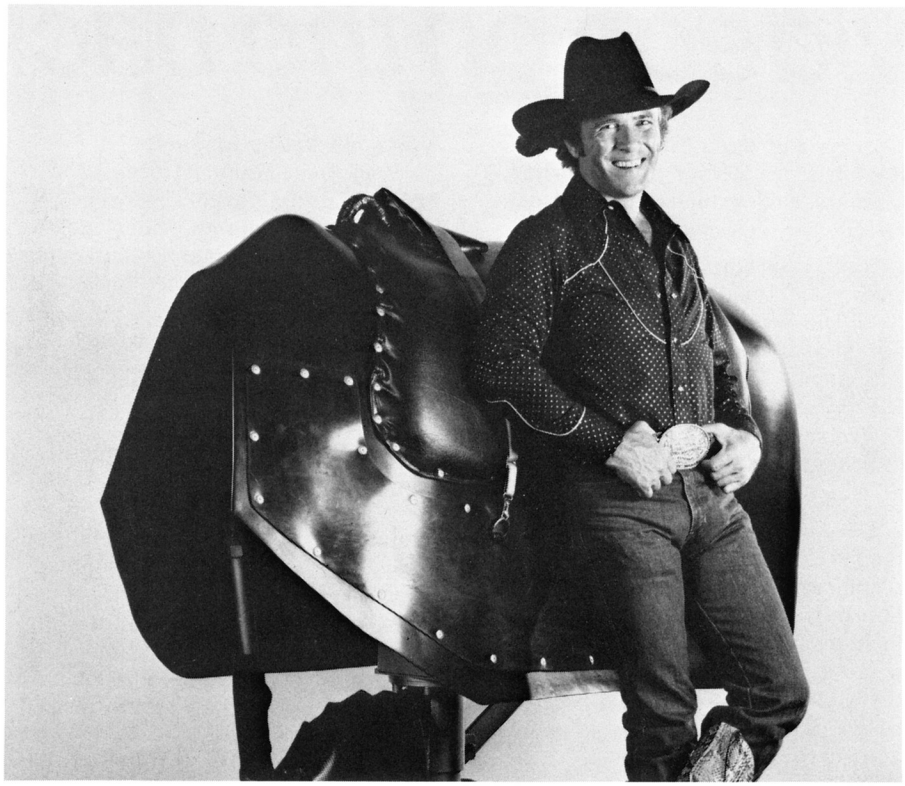
Showing the *Buck'N-Bull*

F.W. & Associates, Inc. has introduced a new mechanical bull. Styled and programmed by Larry Mahan, six times World's Champion All-Round Cowboy, the *Buck'N-Bull* is called "the best buckin' money-maker ever built."

The rider can select 10 of rodeo's toughest bulls, plus six bucking speeds and six spin speeds. "That's 360 bulls in one bull," said the manufacturer. The *Buck'N-Bull* has an automatic safety shut-off mechanism. When a rider is thrown, the *Buck'N-Bull* stops cold within one second. It won't keep spinning when the rider is down.

F.W. & Associates, Inc. will be showing their bull at the AMOA show in Chicago. Their booth number is L-2 (lobby area.) Larry Mahan will be on hand Friday, October 31, to explain the features.

For brochures or the name of the distributor nearest you, contact Ed Fochtman at F.W. & Associates, Inc., 2605 W. First Street, Tempe, Arizona 85281.



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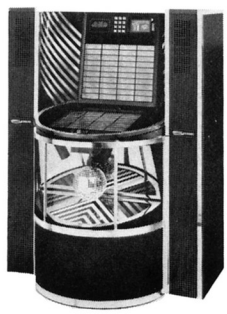

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Gottlieb lines up pins, a video

Introduction of its own video game will be among D. Gottlieb & Company's ambitious plans for the 1980 AMOA Show, which will include exhibit of the Chicago manufacturer's new four-player pins, *James Bond* and *Time Line*, the experimental solid-state single-player *Asteroid Annie*, a revolutionary new molded cabinet, and the traditional Gottlieb "Service Center."

The games and their follow-up marketing programs were outlined to PLAY METER recently by Gottlieb officials. George R. Simkowski marketing vice president of the company, said a full compliment of twelve or more Gottlieb people, including Chairman Alvin Gottlieb and President Robert W. Bloom will man the exhibit during the three-day affair.

Highlighting the Gottlieb display will be the company's new video game *No Man's Land*, in upright and cocktail table configurations, two new four-player pins, *James Bond* and *Time Line*, an experimental solid state single-player, *Asteroid Annie*, a revolutionary new molded cabinet and the traditional Gottlieb "Service Center."

James Bond is Gottlieb's new "Time Machine" in which the player attempts to "beat the clock" and ultimately earn a virtually unlimited number of balls in relation to his skill. *Time Line*, the company's current test game features an absorbing variation of the "game-within-a-game" feature. *Asteroid Annie* is a single-player pin game based on a Gottlieb card-playing specialty.

Simkowski indicated that the company was not going to release specific details about the new cabinet makeup and design until show time but did offer some general information. The cabinet's material is a molded synthetic, as opposed to traditional plywood construction. The configuration is strikingly contemporary in design, and the cabinet is stronger, exceptionally durable, and has a new design twist which makes it unnecessary to disassemble the game when taking it on or off location, he said, add: "It's experimental, but it's terrific."

A key attention-getter, according to Simkowski, will be that section of the Gottlieb display devoted to the company's new video game, *No Man's Land*. The licensed Gottlieb game will be featured in both upright and cocktail table design.

Service training tape

The amusement game firm promises to show a professionally produced Service Clinic video tape for use as on-the-spot training for operator service technicians. Commented George Offshack, Gottlieb technical services manager, "Although we conduct distributor/operator service schools throughout the year on a regular basis, we usually visit each distributor only once a year on an average.

"In the meantime," he continued, "Hundreds of service people may have missed a school and would have been forced to wait another year. This video presentation can be viewed in a one-hour private showing which hits the high spots of the more formalized Gottlieb schools. It will be an invaluable tool for Gottlieb distributors," he concluded.

Also on display in the Gottlieb "Service Center" will be a newly developed handy compact Emergency First Aid Parts Kit composed of an assortment of the most frequently required solid state component parts. The objective is to put in the hands of the operator field service men an assortment of parts that accomodates 80 to 90 percent of his needs in repairing gottlieb equipment in the field. The parts are compartmentalized in a sturdy but lightweight high-strength cardboard carrying case.

Gottlieb's new management team headed by CEO and president Bob Bloom, chairman Alvin Gottlieb, marketing vice president George Simkowski, and vice president Tom Herrick will be on the floor of the show to meet operators and distributors and detail new company programs and products.

Herrick promised a host of promotional items will be available at the Gottlieb booths including game posters, buttons, show bags listing company distributorships, Gottlieb note-holders, and service pens.

There will also be a Service Center where technical personnel will be available to answer technical questions as well as a booth hospitality area for meetings.

Visitors to the Gottlieb booth will also be aware of a newly designed company logo in contemporary design proclaiming "Gottlieb Amusement Games" to emphasize Gottlieb's expansion into video and other amusement game formats.

The exporter's dilemma

We export distributors had enough problems selecting good reliable manufacturers with successful models among the parade of corporations rising and then fading away, and now—another problem: We must decipher who is entitled and authorized to sell what and where in the export market.

The problem is compounded by the fact that the same model is available in the upright cabinet, cocktail table and kits which represent a substantial share of the export market.

If we add to the above copies, copies of copies, and similarities thrown on the market under various names and pretences, the situation becomes absolutely hairy.

We, as export distributors, desiring to abide by our commitments to the manufacturers we deal with, are constantly afraid to infringe upon the both written and unwritten agreements negotiated among developer manufacturers and licensed manufacturers as to who sells what, where—and when!

A recent release from a developer-manufacturer from Japan, for instance, was quite puzzling.

In fact, they were to sell a finished product to one distributor, the same finished product in a different cabinet to another group of distributors, their kits of the same model available to any other bona fide exporter, and last but not least a licensing arrangement with a fourth group which conceivably could have its version exported.

By the time we can tread our way within this maze, a fifth group which I would rather call a fifth column, spirited away some units and starts manufacturing its own version.

So I ask: Who's who??

—By Morris B. Nahum, president, Amico Marketing Corp.

PINBALL PLAYFIELD DESIGNER

We have an excellent opportunity for a qualified individual in our Pinball Game Design Department.

An understanding of plane geometry, a familiarity with the principles of electro-mechanical devices, and the ability to incorporate original creative concepts into working prototypes are essential qualifications.

Experience in computer programming is a definite plus. Excellent salary and benefits package. For appointment, send your resume along with salary history, in confidence to:

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Harris named manager

Lee J. Harris has been named manager of O.E.M. sales at URL, Inc., Elk Grove Villiage, Illinois, the subsidiary company that provides solid-state assemblies to Chicago amusement games manufacturer Stern Electronics, Inc.

Harris will supervise formation of an O.E.M. contract sales department and will recruit and appoint sales representatives nationwide. He formerly served as a sales manager at S&R Corp., Arlington Heights, Illinois, and a sales engineer at Allied Electronics, Elgin.

A graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology, Harris resides with his wife and children in suburban Buffalo Grove.

Harris' appointment was announced by Ed Polanek, president of URL, Inc. Polanek said the company's recent relocation to a larger 42,000-square-foot facility and reinvestment in extensive engineering hardware and software development, will enable URL to step-up its sales program and bolster its position in the O.E.M. contracts market.

Fukumoto picked

Cinematronics, Inc. of El Cajon, California has announced the appointment of Fred S. Fukumoto as vice president of finance. The appointment was effective September 22.

Prior to the Cinematronics appointment, Fukumoto spent four year with XCOR International, rising to the position of treasurer. A graduate of Northwestern University, he has also worked with Quasar Electronics and Arthur Anderson and Company.

"We are extremely pleased to acquire a man of Fred's caliber," said Cinematronics president Jim Pierce. "His vast knowledge of the amusement industry, along with his expertise in the field of finance, makes Fred a very welcome member to the staff of our growing company."

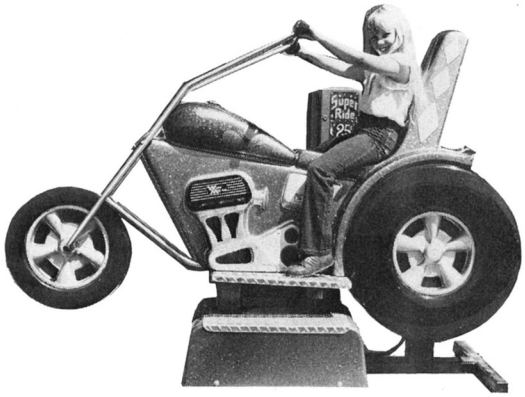
Noparstak appointed

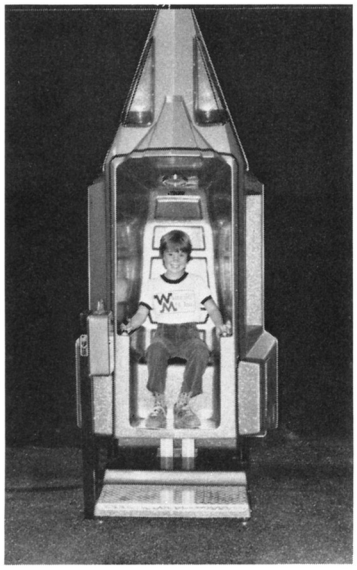
Wico announced the appointment of Arthur Noparstak as director of marketing, distribution.

Noparstak previously served as Wico's purchasing manager. In his new position, Noparstak will lead all purchasing, advertising, promotion, and trade show activities.

Where are the coin-op players of tomorrow?

On the most profitable kiddie rides of today!





All rides feature electronic sound effects. They also accept from 1 to 9 quarters for adjustable ride cycles, allowing for maximum profitability.

Distributor inquiries welcome

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Visit our AMOA Exhibit, Booths 99A, 100A, 100B in the West Room

By Pat Matthews

Program/Music Director WQUE New Orleans

When times get tough

Well, 1981 is almost here and what do we have to show for it? Musically, it's been a year of surprises. Major artists change labels, always in search for that better deal. That probably says it all for 1980. Economics, or better yet, the economy in general has dictated what went down in every walk of life. Maybe things will get better in the year to come. It certainly doesn't need to get worse.

LADY—KENNY ROGERS—Liberty/UA-X1380-Y

When was the last time you saw anyone on Liberty Records? I can't remember anyone on it since the era of Gary Lewis & The Playboys. Nevertheless, it's back, and has kicked off the label comeback with a great single. Kenny Rogers is in his "almost can't hit the high notes" form in this Lionel Ritchie, Jr. (of the Commodores) composition. It's a beautiful ballad with an excellent string arrangement and is going to climb to the top quickly. Crossover country and eash listening, too: *10 out of 10* on every chart.

DEEP INSIDE MY HEART—RANDY MEISNER—Epic/9-50939

Here's a roadie for the Eagles who is an accomplished musician, too. If you have the soundtrack, you'll know he had a couple of tunes in the movie "FM". This time it's apparently an honest effort at stardom for Randy. This debut single is a rocker with rather slick vocals that beckon visions of Jackson Browne, Eagles, et al. Meisner also lays down some nice guitar riffs. Nice record for a debut effort. The album "One More Song" should do well, too. With proper exposure, could go as high as *8 out of 10.*

CELEBRATION—KOOL & THE GANG—DeLite Records/DE 807

In typical fine funk fashion, it's the innovators of late '79 and early '80 with an almost formula sound. It's from a new lp, but relies on the sound of the "Ladies Night" albun to attract attention. At any rate, this one's danceable, has a happy sound and theme. Come to think of it, it may be just the inspiration needed to get 1981 off to a good start. Will do extremely well in R&B circles, but may need a shove to get it rolling: *9 out of 10* on highest chart.

SATURDAY NIGHT—NIGEL OLSSON—Bang/ZS9 4814

All Nigel Olsson album covers look somewhat alike, but then we all know it's what's inside that counts. And this particular cut from the new "Changing Tides" lp sounds like his former cohort, Elton John at his rockingest best. Of course, Nigel is a drummer and that means there's nothing lacking in the percussion department. The vocals are excellent, the use of the horns is very effective and the guitar work stands out. The song is just straight ahead rock n' roll and could be what we need right now. The title has been overworked, however. Even by Elton. *7 out of 10,* maybe.

A LITTLE IS ENOUGH—PETE TOWNSHEND—ATCO/7312

From an album ("Empty Glass") which is full of potential single hits comes the logical choice for a follow-up to "Let My Love Open The Door". This time the instrumentation takes a back seat to the lyrics and the way they are sung by one of the true prolific songwriters of our age. The presentation is awesome: Townshend gets the point across and then it's done. The theme of the lyric must reflect something very important to him—like his shaky marital situation, maybe? *9 out of 10* potential.

CRY LIKE A BABY—KIM CARNES—EMI America/P-8058

After having suffered for so many years in obscurity, then finally striking it big this year with "More Love", Kim is back with a remake of the old Boxtops

The 1st talking video game!

Cries of stranded astronauts, haunting the darkness, defying the forces of evil. Echoing throughout the vast galaxy . . . and throughout the video game industry!

These are the voices of "STRATOVOX"

T.M.

Score 50 or 100 points when you explode an alien ship into smithereens as you dodge lethal showers of enemy rockets! Score 100, 500 or 1000 points when you rescue a stranded astronaut from the clutches of the evil aliens and return him to his crew! The faster the ship tries to escape with its prisoner, the more points you tally when you destroy it!

As action continues and skill builds, the alien attack becomes progressively harder to repel! Several squads can now attack together and make off with more than one astronaut!

When your photon rocket is blasted by a direct alien hit, the planet surface ruptures into explosive booms and triggers a prism run of flashing colors throughout the galaxy!

The mission ends when all 10 astronauts are carried off or when all 3 (operator adjustable bonus rocket) of your photon rockets are destroyed!

1 or 2 player upright:

Dimensions:

Height	Width	Depth
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68″	24″	35″

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hit from the mid-sixties. The arrangement is a little different than the original, but a good song is a good song. And besides, there are more people who know of Kim Carnes now than remember the Boxtops. Gutsy vocals carry this one through. A *10 out of 10* possibility.

EVERYBODY'S GOT TO LEARN SOMETIME—THE KORGIS—Asylum/E-47055-A

When this two man New Wave act first "emerged" (maybe "submerged" would be more appropriate) on the scene, they couldn't get anyone to listen to their records. Now, with a new lp and a definite change in direction, musically, they could be the talk of the music world. The sound is not indescribable, just "tasty"—almost Lennon-ish, if you will. Using synthesizers to their definite advantage, the Korgis are a happening act, to be sure. Pretty music can always find a place on a playlist. Crossover to easy listening this one should go to at least *7 out of 10.*

GET WELL SOON—STEVE FORBERT—Nemperor Records/ZS9 7535-3

Steve Forbert finally grabbed the attention he deserves with "Romeo's Tune" and now the pride of Meridian, Mississippi has just released his third lp, "Little Stevie Orbit" and with it this debut single. It's definitely in the Bob Dylan mold and relies heavily on percussion to get the point across. It doesn't have all the obvious hooks of "Romeo's Tune", but could be a "sleeper". Besides, you could always send it to a friend who is ill. *7 our of 10 or more.*

HOLD ON—KANSAS—Kirschner/ZS9 4291

It's the kings of American classical rock back on the scene with this medieval sounding tune that recalls earlier acoustical efforts. Though this time the keyboards are not in the forefront and basically are sparingly used. Nice production work and syrical content, as usual, highlight this pure Kansas sound. Album Radio should be on this even before release of the album, "Audio Visions". Score *7 out of 10* or better.

PLAY METER HOT STUFF

WOMAN IN LOVE – BARBRA STREISAND—Columbia ***
REAL LOVE—DOOBIE BROTHERS—Warner Brothers ***
ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST—QUEEN—Elektra
JESSE—CARLY SIMON—Warner Brothers ***
HE'S SO SHY—POINTER SISTERS—Planet ***
THE WANDERER—DONNA SUMMER—Geffen ***
NEVER KNEW LOVE LIKE THIS BEFORE—STEPHANIE MILLS—20th Century Fox ***
DREAMING—CLIFF RICHARD—EMI America ***
MIDNIGHT ROCKS—AL STEWART—Arista ***
WHO'LL BE THE FOOL TONIGHT—LARSEN-FEITEN BAND—Warner Brothers ***
DREAMER—SUPERTRAMP—A & M ***
ON THE ROAD AGAIN—WILLIE NELSON—Columbia ***
NO NIGHT SO LONG—DIONNE WARWICK—Arista ***
WHIP IT—DEVO—Warner Brothers ***
LOVELY ONE—JACKSONS—Epic ***
YOU'VE LOST THAT LOVIN' FEELIN'—HALL & OATES—RCA ***
SHE'S SO COLD—ROLLING STONES—Rolling Stones Records
MORE THAN I CAN SAY—LEO SAYER—Warner Brothers ***
SOMETIMES A FANTASY—BILLY JOEL—Columbia
NEVER BE THE SAME—CHRISTOPHER CROSS—Warner Brothers
HOW DO I SURVIVE—AMY HOLLAND—Capitol
UPSIDE DOWN—DIANA ROSS—Motown ***
XANADU—OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN & ELO—MCA ***
LET ME BE YOUR ANGEL—STACY LATTISAW—Cotillion

PLAY METER PICKIN' & GRINNIN'

THEME FROM DUKES OF HAZZARD—WAYLON JENNINGS—RCA ***
YESTERDAY ONCE MORE—MOE BANDY—Columbia
I'M NOT READY YET—GEORGE JONES—Epic ***
WOMEN GET LONELY—CHARLY MCCLAIN—Epic
STEPPIN' OUT—MEL TILLIS—Elektra
HARD TIMES—LACY J. DALTON—Columbia
ON THE ROAD AGAIN—WILLIE NELSON—Columbia ***
PECOS PROMENADE—TANYA TUCKER—MCA
TAKE ME TO YOUR LOVIN' PLACE—LARRY GATLIN—Columbia
YOU ALMOST SLIPPED MY MIND—CHARLEY PRIDE—RCA
THE BOXER—EMMYLOU HARRIS—Warner Brothers
IF YOU EVER CHANGE YOUR MIND—CRYSTAL GAYLE—Columbia

PLAY METER FUNKIFIED

MASTER BLASTER [JAMMIN']—STEVIE WONDER—Tamla
NEVER KNEW LOVE LIKE THIS BEFORE—STEPHANIE MILLS—20th Century Fox ***
LET ME BE YOUR ANGEL—STACY LATTISAW—Cotillion
LET ME TALK—EARTH, WIND & FIRE—ARC/Columbia ***
LOVELY ONE—JACKSONS—Epic ***
MORE BOUNCE TO THE OUNCE—ZAPP—Warner Brothers
FUNKIN' FOR JAMAICA [NY]—TOM BROWNE—GRP/Arista
I'M COMING OUT—DIANA ROSS—Motown ***
ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST—QUEEN—Elektra
FREEDOM—GRANDMASTER FLASH—Sugar Hill
MY PRAYER—RAY, GOODMAN, & BROWN—Polydor ***
WIDE RECEIVER—MICHAEL HENDERSON—Buddah ***

****denotes records previously reviewed by PLAY METER.*

British take a new crop to New Orleans' Parks Expo

Bafco Formula One *coin-operated car with sound effects: to be in show*

The ten company group of British exhibitors at this year's IAAPA exhibition plans to launch a whole new crop of products ranging from the latest in coin-operated amusement rides for children to radio-controlled cars and coin sorting equipment.

The International Outdoor Amusement Expo will be held in New Orleans' Rivergate complex, November 22-24.

The new amusement rides come from two manufacturers. R.J. Newborough and Co.'s new tank model designed for kids to sit inside, produces its own sound effects. The colored glass-fiber body is mounted on a tubular steel chassis—a feature also of the firm's other exhibits which include a hydraulic jet, a bulldozer, a "First World War Red Baron" fighter aircraft, a cartoon machine, and a variety of animals. BAFCO, newcomer to the exhibition, specializes in amusement rides offering realistic detail, multi-directional movement and electronically-generated sound effects. It expects to launch a new hydraulic ride and to show a motorcycle, Formula One racing car, and bulldozer from its existing range.

Tornado Model Products, an IAAPA award winner last year, plans to introduce a radio-controlled fun buggy and a range of radio-controlled model racing cars. The buggy, a one-eighth scale 15" long model, is free-running and suitable for any flat board surface. The cars, also free-running, are in two sizes, 15" and 29" long. Radio-controlled boats, cars, and tanks will also be on show.

A new 6-foot-long motor launch for amusement parks will be introduced by first-time exhibitor, O'Neills Amusements. The boat is operated from the side of the pool by a closed-loop remote control system.

Mar-Matic Sales, a company specializing in coin handling equipment, will show a new coin sorting machine developed specially for the U.S. market, hopper pay-out machines, and a portable dial-a-coin change-giving machine. Also promoting a range of change-makers will be Tormen Sheet Metal Co.

Inflatable play structures will be shown by two firms: first-time exhibitor Supa-Bounce Inflatables, and International Fun UK, which will also exhibit remote-control model boats and tanks.

Completing the group are Kentucky Derby with its well-known horse racing games, and *World's Fair* newspaper making its third appearance at IAAPA.

British exhibitors:

BAFCO LTD., Unit 2A, Clover Trading Complex, Clover Road, Willoughby, Alford, Lincolnshire.
Booth: 1001

INTERNATIONAL FUN [UK] LTD. The Old School, Loughborough Road, Leicester LE4 5PJ. *U.S. Office:* International Fun, 227 75th Avenue, St. Petersburg Beach, FL 33076. Tel: (813)367-4082.
Booth: 1113

KENTUCKY DERBY LTD., 6 West Parade, Wakefield, Yorkshire.
Booth: 1013

MAR-MATIC SALES LTD., Unit 2, White Hart Road, Plumstead, London SE18. *U.S. Company:* Mar-Matic Sales Co. Inc., 1140 East Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore, MD 21239. Tel: (301)435-1477.
Booth: 1011

R.J. NEWBOROUGH AND CO. LTD., Vale Industrial Estate, Spilsby, Lincolnshire PE23 5HE. *U.S. Associate Co.:* Universal Visual Audiotronics Corp., 604 Mail Street, Davenport, IA 52803. Tel: (319)326-6467.
Booth: 1111

O'NEILLS AMUSEMENTS LTD., 4 Glentrammon Road, Farnborough, Kent.
Booth: 1009

SUPA-BOUNCE INFLATABLES, Newton Road, Harrowbrooke Industrial Estate, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 3DS.
Booth: 1001

TORMEN SHEET METAL CO., Booth Hill Lane, Oldham OL1 2PH, Lancaster. *U.S. agent:* Universe Affiliated International, UAI Building, 314 First Avenue, Rosello, NJ 07203. Tel: (201)245-4222.
Booth: 1105

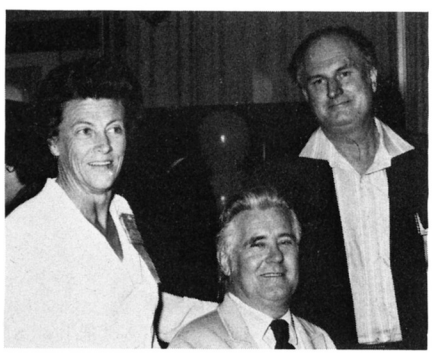
TORNADO MODEL PRODUCTS LTD., 35 Blackpool Road, Ribbleton, Lancs. PR2 6BT. *U.S. agent:* Bill Alter, Suite 201, 808 Mountain Road, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417. Tel: (201)891-6160.
Booth: 1005

WORLD'S FAIR LTD., Daltry Street, Shaw Road, Oldham OL1 4BB, Lancs.
Booth: 1109

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions is headquartered at 7222 W. Cermak Road, North Riverside, Illinois. Tel: (312)442-5866.

Pinballs, videos, beauty queens highlight Australian show

Rachael Hocking is congratulated as Miss Pinball...by Michael Solomon of Leisure & Allied Industries.



George Campbell, chairman of the convention, flanked by Hale Anderson of the Queensland association and Mrs. Barbara Anderson.

BRISBANE—Judging and crowning of Australia's first Miss Pinball was one of the highlights of the 1980 Amusement Machine Operators Association of Australia Convention at the Gold Coast of Queensland.

The convention was well-attended with distributors representing a wide range of equipment from both domestic and overseas manufacturers. More than thirty exhibitors showed coin-operated amusement machines and associated equipment during July 16-18 at the Chevron Paradise Hotel.

Winning the title of Miss Pinball for beauty and poise was Miss Rachael Hocking, 18 years old, from Brisbane, Queensland and sponsored by Leisure & Allied Industries—Australia's largest importer, manufacturer, distributor, and operator of coin machines. Miss Hocking's prize in the AMOA contest was a trophy and a two-week vacation—which she donated to her parents.

Overseas visitors included Shane Breaks and Sue Elliott of Atari, Stephen Kaufman of Stern Electronics, and Kenji Tsumura of Irem Japan.

Breaks, director of international marketing for Atari addressed the Australian AMOA group at a breakfast meeting on the first day of the show. Speaking on "The Growing Role of Video Games in the Amusement Industry," he stressed the increasing popularity of video and Atari's role in the industry.

Commenting on the show, Ms. Elliott, Atari international sales manager, said: "The show was small but quite enthusiastic. Operators had an excellent opportunity to play the latest games and products from many of the world's manufacturers."

She noted Atari's *Asteroids* was "the hot game" in Australia at the time of the convention.

Atari's distributor, Leisure & Allied, occupied over half of the available exhibition space.

Ms. Elliott said, "Leisure & Allied also exhibited new *Missile Command* to the Australian trade for the first time. The reception was excellent. We anticipate this game will be another big success for all our Australian distributors."

Organizing the show at Surfers Paradise was a committee under George Campbell, AMOA president and chairman of the convention.

Coin-op ban ends

BRITAIN—A 20-year ban on coin-op games ended at Lincolnshire's largest Autumn Fair, when Lincoln City Council agreed to allow arcades into the event on an experimental basis.

The decision taken earlier this year followed pressure from showmen who had campaigned to bring the automatics to the city's council-controlled fairs for a long period.

The ban started in the late 1950s when some councilors expressed concern at seeing youngsters putting money into machines.

But any fears that the action would lead to the Autumn Fair being over-run with coin-ops proved unfounded.

THE IDEA BANK

Package the positive points of operating *professionally*

By David Pierson

Patriotism, someone once said, is the last refuge for a scoundrel. In the same regard, it could be pointed out that price is the last refuge for those who peddle inferior products or services.

The principle of selling the price of something, rather than the product or the service itself, is manifest throughout the coin-operated amusement industry, though sometimes it manifests itself in far more subtler ways than we would suppose.

Obviously, it's not hard to find less expensive equipment which does not carry as good a warranty or as good a parts backup or does not have play appeal as high-priced quality equipment.

But what may not be as obvious is that location loans, liberal commission splits, and equipment rentals are themselves trademarks in operating circles of those who are laboring under this same inferiority complex. Yet operators oftentimes feel compelled to throw in these little extras (which, when analyzed, are shown to be merely price breaks) not because their service is necessarily inferior but because they have been unable to articulate what it is they have to offer a location that's better than what the next guy has to offer.

For despite the large number of pieces of equipment an operator deals with—pinballs, phonographs, videos, pool tables, and so on—many operators really see no difference between what they have to offer a location and what a competitor can offer. After all, they figure, a competing operator can argue that he has the very same equipment to offer, so where's the difference?

Following this line of thinking, we can see why the competition for locations often degenerates into a price war of sorts where exorbitant cash gifts and low interest loans are bandied about. The problem in such cases isn't with the location owners, even if they initiate the bidding. The problem is with the operators; for, by becoming a party to such practices, an operator is saying, in effect, that he feels he has nothing better to offer a location than the next guy. So to gain the edge, he feels he has to resort to some sort of giveaway.

The real problem with all these outlandish bidding practices is that often an operator is selling himself short. He's assuming he and his competitor run identical operations simply because they operate the same type of equipment and buy the same equipment brands. But, normally, it isn't the quality of the equipment which separates operating firms (though that does separate those low budget companies that are trying to get by on cheaper equipment from bona fide operating firms that operate the best available equipment).

By and large, the quality of the equipment separates the manufacturing companies from one another, not the operating firms. What separates operating companies from one another is the intangible, service. Service is really what an operator has to offer. It's the one thing he has to offer that is bound to be different from what anyone else has to offer.

So it follows that the operator who thinks he is merely offering equipment to a location is a victim of his own self-limitations, and it is easy to see why such an operator feels compelled to sweeten the pot a little with unsound business deals, such as location loans or commission splits of better than fifty percent to the location.

But wouldn't you know it? Here you are with all those pinballs and videos, with all those company vehicles and test equipment, with that enormous outlay of capital, and then the whole thing comes down to some damn intangible! How can you show a location owner that your intangible is better than someone else's intangible?

But this is exactly where you're in luck, if you're willing to market your company properly. Chances are your competition isn't thinking along these marketing terms. That's why they're offering location loans and sixty percent commissions to locations. So if in some way you can market your intangible, your service capability, you'll have a leg up on the competition.

This is why you need a professional presentation.

A professional presentation can take many forms, but for our purposes let's consider two possible methods—a portfolio presentation and a brochure handout. Actually, a combination of the two would probably be the most effective.

Since you're dealing with an intangible, you can't actually show service. So in your presentation, what you have to depict are the service *capabilities* of your company—this includes how you are staffed, the number of vehicles you employ, a picture of your shop area, your dispatching practices and capabilities, and so on. These are the earmarks of how you plan to back up your promise for timely service of your equipment. Such a presentation should show that you are equipped, staffed, and geared to perform the services you say you will provide.

Photos help greatly

Now what you're looking for here isn't just a scrapbook showing everyone standing out in front of your company's building. Instead, try to get pictures of your employees at work, in action—your dispatcher at his desk, assigning a service call to

Look for a HANSON Dist. Co. representative at these booths at the 1980 AMOA show:

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And ask about our Eazy Leveler

one of your vehicles, for instance; or your servicemen in the shop, busily repairing boards or cleaning machines; or your record programmer, referring to his neatly filed library of records for a location request; or your routeman, checking his call list before getting into his truck. The list can go on.

Pictures are better than words for all this, since pictures will show that your company is equipped and staffed to follow through on any promises you made as far as service.

Also, there's nothing wrong with showing people at work in your warehouse, your "den of horrors," working on games that have become dust collectors because of repair problems or obsolescence. For one thing, such a picture will show that you've been in business for awhile, that you've made a substantial investment in your business and so you are probably planning to stay around a little while. This is important to the location owner.

For another thing, it'll show a prospective location owner that you've got product inventory so that he'll always have a pinball even if the one you give him has to be removed. It doesn't matter that he won't get one of those in that picture, what matters is that he sees you have product inventory.

One final note on all this. Pictures of empty warehouses and unpeopled motor pools, and vacant office buildings is not what will convey the sense of activity you want to convey. First and foremost with any company is its people. Your employees are your most important business asset. You must be able to show that you are staffed to carry through on all your promises. Besides, people add dramatic content to such photographic presentations; they add life to the pictures.

Do not try to handle the photography yourself, unless you just so happen to be an expert photographer in your won right. It is far better for you to employ the services of a professional photographer who you can count on to provide you with crisp, clear, pictures with good composition. Do not be pennywise in this area because if you do a shoddy job of this presentation, it'll reflect poorly on your operation. On the other hand, if you try to make your presentation package as professionally looking as possible, it has got to reflect favorably on your operation.

One idea as far as saving some money along these lines, however, might be to check with the newspaper photographers in your area. Oftentimes the prices they'll quote you for such a job will be lower that what you'll get from regular studio photographers. Also, a newspaper photographer will probably be able to help as far as posing your employees to get the most dramatic but natural poses possible for each picture (especially in light of the fact that a news photographer is more accustomed to action photography).

Now before you start showing your photographer around the office to snap his pictures you should sit down with him and explain exactly what it is you're trying to achieve. That way he can help you as much as possible and offer ideas of his own.

As for captioning the photographs, it is best not to refer to anyone in the pictures by name since, obviously people come and go. Instead, stick with generalities, such as "our servicemen" and our "our routemen."

Package your presentation

Probably the best presentation would be to have a portfolio which would provide a rather complete picture of your company. In addition, you could have a handout, possibly a brochure of some sort, which the location owner could hold onto, which could include a couple of the key pictures and captions on it. Also, it would be a good idea to include on this brochure your company's service number, your office number, your service hours, maybe even a little map of the geographical area your operation covers.

All this will go a long way to show that you are a professional service company, without your having to say it.

If you've got only three vehicles, and you feel that maybe you should have four or five, don't hide it, flaunt it. Show them that you have three vehicles to service their needs. Accent your positive side. What we are dealing with here is advertising, the marketing of your company.

Right now you are probably asking yourself what's the big bother with such an effort. Isn't this all just a needless expense?

Not really when you consider the nature of a human being. We are all pretty much narrow-minded individuals, although we may not admit it. Our view of the universe is restricted very much by our environment. The same thing applies to location owners, who just so happen to be

human beings also.

To them, your whole operation is no bigger than the man you send into their establishments to empty the cashboxes or service the machines. They really have no idea of how big or how small an operation you have, and they really don't care.

But if you can show them there's more to your operation than somebody in a truck who stops by once a week to take half of the money in the cashbox, you'll have gone a long way toward establishing your company as a professional operation in those location owners' eyes. It'll remind them of the obvious, that when they do business with you, they are doing business with a solid business concern which is geared to meet their equipment and service needs.

A presentation such as this has the effect of widening the universe for a location owner so that he knows there's more to your operation than what he sees coming through his door. With such a presentation, you can effectively ignore your competition, even though they may have a similar or even better setup, because by your own initiative you have been able to *show* the intangible while your competitor has not been able to do that.

If you insist on your professional standing, the location owners will see your business as being above such unbusinesslike transactions as low interest loans. And this has to be in your favor. Such a presentation has the psychological effect on the location owner that you are, in effect, throwing open the doors of your operation for inspection.

By contrast, if you resort to location loans and other such bad business practices, you are throwing a dark shadow over your entire company. Such practices convey to potential clients that you run a shady business. They suggest hidden cash reserves, just the sort of thing that robs you of any professional standing with a potential client.

And the professional standing translates into more money for you. It means, obviously, that your capital won't be tied up in non-revenue producing loans. It means you are standing in a better position to negotiate a better commission arrangement than your competitors, or a guaranteed weekly minimum for your equipment, because you'll have accomplished the most difficult task.

You'll have shown there's a world of difference between the way you do business and the way your so-called competitors do business.•

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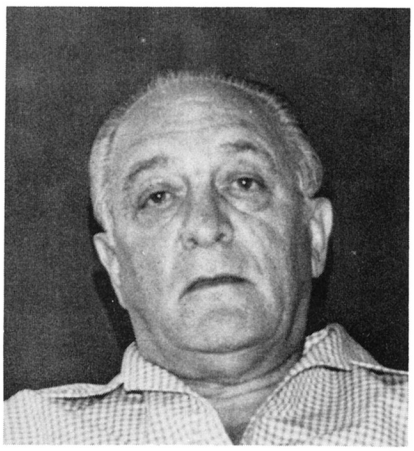
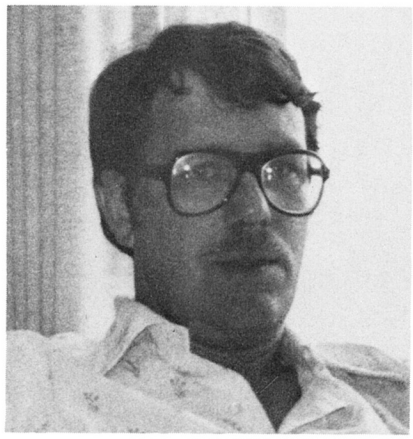
Five decades in coin machines:

Bally is

Marketing VP Tom Nieman



Sales Director Paul Calamari



Chief Field Service Manager Powers

Bally Manufacturing Corporation began as a manufacturer of pinball machines in 1931. The first game was *Ballyhoo*, among the first of its kind and selling then for the princely unit price of $19.95.

Bally today, an international and multi-armed enterprise, would have to produce quite a few of those small, table-top devices to take in its annual revenue—$386,303,000 last year. It doesn't produce any.

But that little non-electrical machine has a place in the company today. An original *Ballyhoo* sits in the corporate office of William T. O'Donnell, Jr., president of the Bally Pinball Division. The machine, looking quaint now but all the rage in the early '30s had been fashioned with legs and a protective clear top, and it in fact serves as a coffee table now.

It resembles a cocktail table game, especially to one one who is in the coin machine amusement business. And that symbolizes the integration of its manufacturer into an industry, 50 years later, which encompasses electronic circuits and distributing networks and arcade operations and casinos—but which still makes a steel ball game.

No small thing is the steel ball revenue, still. Bally's pinball games outstripped all its other amusement interest in revenue for 1979, bringing in $127,500,000 of the corporate pie. That was almost six times the Bally intake from pin production and distribution in 1975 (a year in which German gaming, or "wall", machines took in more than pins did for Bally Corp.). The pin revenue in '79 was more than double the next largest revenue producer for the group, amusement arcade machines, and was four times the German games' revenue for the company last year.

You don't get an impression of things standing still. At the 90 O'Leary Drive, Bensenville, Illinois plant and offices, people are in motion. During a visit by PLAY METER, Paul Calamari, director of pinball sales, talked—when the phone wasn't ringing with distributor contacts, or a buyer (on the day of our visit) from Central America wasn't asking about delivery dates.

"Pinballs have been the backbone of the coin-operated industry since 1929," said Calamari, who has been connected with the company long enough to know: since 1937.

In reference to the sharp competition from videos in the past two years, he said: "When *Pong* came out, the pingames took the back seat. Today, as far as Bally is concerned, we have things on the board to put pingames back on top of the industry."

The sum of his experience with the coin industry, he indicated, is that "if a game appeals to the player, that manufacturer will get his fair share."

Bally people radiate confidence in their product, not a hustle to get toward an imaginary 100-yard line. Tom Nieman, Bally vice president for marketing, told us in mid-summer that a "digging-in" by pinball manufacturers should produce a better product out of seemingly hard times for sales of the game. "Sitting, saying our time will come again, is a bad approach. You can aggressively affect those cycles (between competing kinds of games). If the pinball business is to heat up again, it is up to us to do it," said Nieman.

On display

Here's some of what Bally Pinball is doing at present. On display at the AMOA Show will be the introduction of Bally's voice package in a pingame. The "voice," you will notice, is "predominately female," as Nieman describes it. "It's a helluva lot more difficult to produce a female quality in voice, and it's an alluring quality in a game."

The game is *Xenon*, a futurist

'on the ball'

By Ray E. Tilley

graphic design, to be offered in a French language version, and "probably to be the focal point" of Bally's display at AMOA.

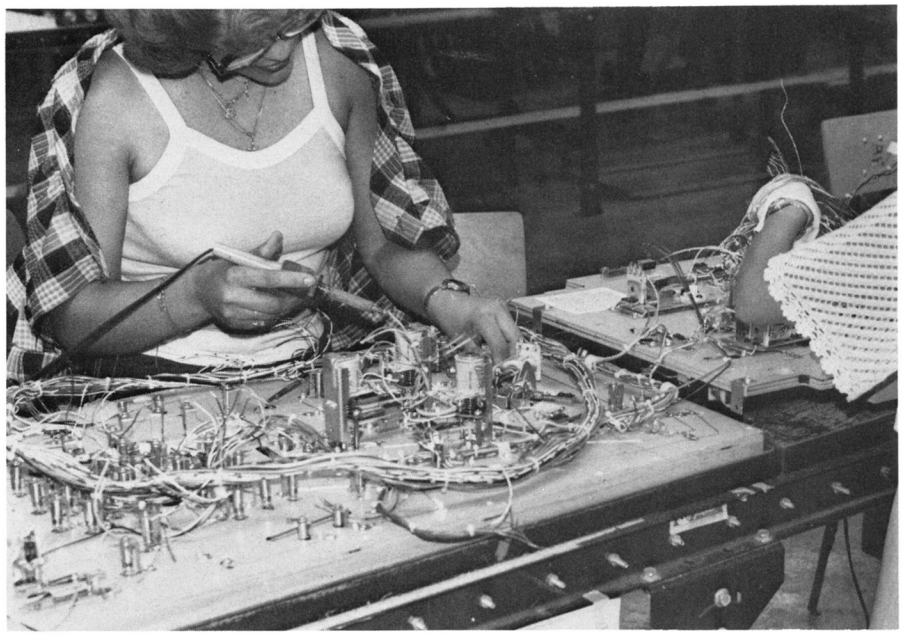
The details of play will be described more fully by a certain critic of pinball in PLAY METER's pages—but its features otherwise include the "transport tube" goal from the left flippers; the infinity backbox introduced effectively on Bally's *Space Invaders* pingame; lights "moving" in synch with background sounds, both original to *Xenon* and variations of earlier Bally effects; its multi-ball feature; and conventional size body.

This prototype will be on show along with another, *Frontier*, whose outdoors sound effects are "so perfect that I can imagine people in bars looking around for the crickets," said Nieman—who describes each pin as so appealing that the listener feels like a kid being told what his birthday present is, but he can't open it until October 31st.

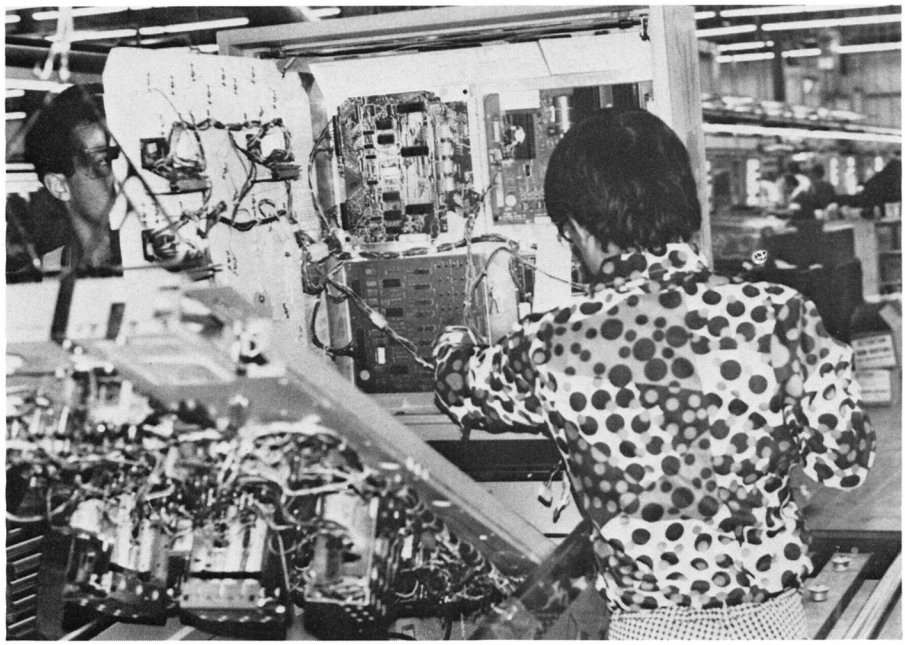
Prototypes have been on view at key points before the show opened, naturally. Nieman credited Bally's success in the marketplace to its ability to "read" that market. The prototype program, giving the division its reading with a good lead lime to any production run, is therefore important. That tracking comes through a network of 300 distributors worldwide, through which the prototypes are tested.

Bally will market about ten pins by this year's end. Since 1963, it has tested 130 prototypes pingames, and of those games, no more than five were held out of production after the field test reading.

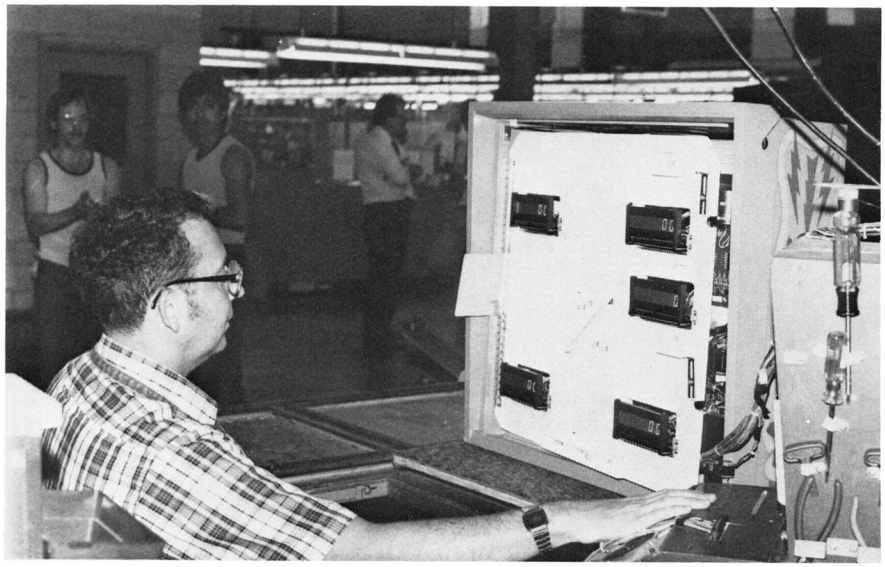
The first Ball all-electronic production run was on *Evel Knievel* in 1976. Previously there had been a partly electronic, partly electro-mechanical run of *Freedom* pins. In '76, however, the market was convinced of "the way to go" with solid state, as



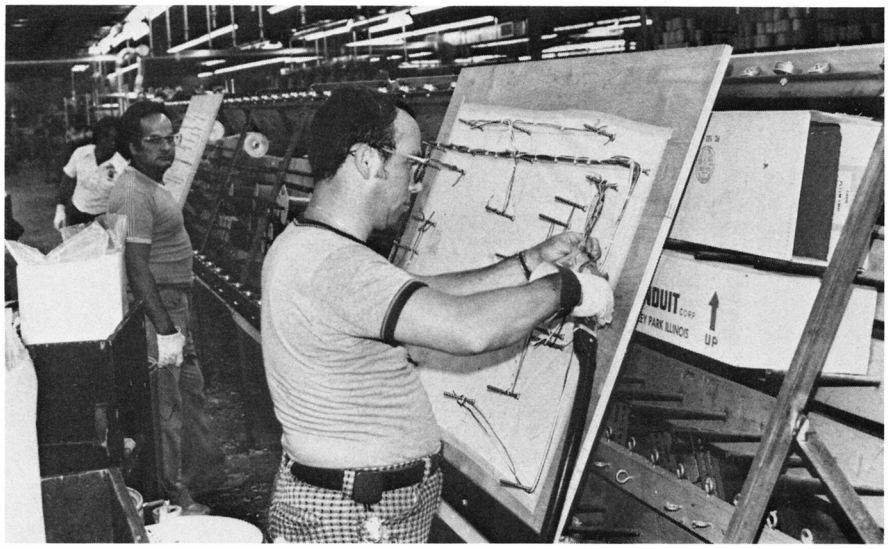
In the Bally plant: Doris Santana performs a soldering operation on the playfield assembly line, where all mechanical assemblies, bulbs, and cable harnesses are installed.



Sung Sik Hahn inserts game connectors to the backbox: The final game-stuffing area, where playfield, backbox, and cabinet are put together. The plant's total area is some 200,000 square feet.



Ed Theesfield tests the displays of the completed assembly off the backbox assembly line. Responsibility for testing the game's P.C. boards is here.



Wire is strung into a single cable for each major component of the game on the cable assembly line. Baldassare Maggio, here, does a final step before installation of terminals and test of the cable.

The final-testing area where the entire game is completely checked for malfunctions due to assembly of the three major componments. Wilson Panakal goes through a check list to evaluate any possible problems.

Calamari explained, and Bally was up with the market.

Eight Ball, the first Bally pin with memory and recall, went into production in September 1977. Bally workers were still turning out the pingame with the "Fonzie"-like character on the backglass, five months and 21,230 machines later. It was the largest single pinball production run by any coin-op manufacturer in modern times, said Calamari.

(As the sales director spoke, a customer from Argentina came in to sign an agreement for delivery of games.)

On down the hall at Bensenville's 155,000-square-foot Bally plant, the visitor can find the technical staff and the design group working on the "white boards" of another coming Bally pingame. The pilot game doesn't have a name at this stage; the marketing circle at 90 O'Leary Drive will decide on a theme after the last drop target has been installed on the "pilot" model in its pristine state, most likely. Separately, the art group works on graphics that will entrance the player toward the game, to feel its play, and to drop his quarters time and again.

Bally led the pinball manufacturers in hiring in 1968 and in-house art staff, the director of which is the acclaimed Paul Faris. His treatment of light and shadow are well known via the games *Paragon*, *Lost World*, and (the masterpiece?) *Space Invaders*.

Use of celebrity tie-ins was also innovated by Bally. *Pinball Wizard* in May 1975 made opulent use of Ann-Margret's image, followed soon by *Capt. Fantastic* and the visage of Elton John. This year's successor in "celebrity pins" at Bally is *Rolling Stones*—again a Faris art treatment.

The technical corps

As the Pinball Division rolls along, Nieman says he is "greatly looking forward to this year's AMOA Show, not only for displaying our wares, but to see what others are doing."

There is definitely harder competition for pinball makers this year, he acknowledged, "not only from the video standpoint but within pinball."

Just as a V-8 auto engine in 1980 does not have a chassis that's heavy with chrome and fins, what is "under the hood" of the pingame is packaged with subtlety—and high technology. In 1977 the microprocessor was a step into space-age technology for the coin industry. Now, a new product is created from the exterior

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inward, so to speak. "A better use of technology" benefits the games operator, Nieman stated, because the improved quality of design and better reliability produces "more appeal to the end user, the player."

Towards the bottom-line result of a better return on investment, said the marketing director, "Bally is making as strong an effort as we have ever made.

"After the show it will be apparent that the pinball manufacturers went back (from the competitive arena) and said, 'What can we do from a technical standpoint to recoup the enthusiastic play of video?'"

He referred, for example, to the strategy of a competitor, D. Gottlieb & Co., "a very conservative manufacturer," in dealing with time of the game with its *James Bond* machine.

With the technical improvements on a game played actively, like pinball, there are complications. How to keep the game running at maximum with a minimum of downtime?

B.M. Powers, chief field service manager for Bally, related, "We were the pioneers in having field service departments and publishing technical information for the trade worldwide." Prior to the introduction of solid state into the game of pinball, only Bally, its sister producer Midway Manufacturing, and Rock-Ola were providing systematic schools, he commented.

Bally now has field service personnel to train distributor staff in 16 nations.

Posture in the '80s

In the scheme of things for world wide coin-op games, pinball clearly has a prominent place. Definitely so at Bally, even though it is acknowledged as the largest manufacturer of pure gaming devices in the world. The Pinball Division, now headed by 31-year-old O'Donnell, was created last year by the corporation to consolidate fast-growing pinball operations at its Chicago base of operations.

The facility to house the Division and its plant was occupied in later 1979 on 11 developed acres of 21 acres south of the O'Hare hub of Chicago. This will allow Bally to have expanded manufacturing capabilities and more flexibility in satisfying market demand, the company predicts.

The plant itself is capable of producing three pin types at the same time: wide bodies, the conventional size, and a prototype model. Entire assembly is done at Bensenville, with everything from the cabinet to the steel ball being put together after Midway supplies the needed electronic components from nearby in Chicago.

In addition to the company's four manufacturing facilities in the Chicago area, Bally manufactures in Dublin and West Berlin plants. Bensenville is still the keystone, however, since the facility takes 200,000 square feet of floor space, and the combined manufacturing space of Bally in all plants in 850,000 square feet

Bally Corp. claims a "tightly controlled" production efficiency, and this is not hard to accept on a casual visit to the Bensenville plant. While the visitor may be snowed under the terms he hears for the work on the assembly line, he will hear "final check" mentioned at every stage of the assembly, backbox assembly to game "stuffing;" playfield assembly to the placement of wiring clipped from endless miles of cable in the production area; to Final Test, where the entire game is checked through and through for possible malfunctions that could have occurred during assembly of the three major components—backglass, cabinet, and playfield.

It has been a long, electrically-lighted, and finally, computerized trail from 1931, when the company was founded as Lion Manufacturing Co. Bill O'Donnell's father, who was president and chairman, started with Lion as a salesman, and O'Donnell Senior and an associate bought the company in 1962, after Lion's founder, Raymond Moloney, had died. The firm made its initial public offering in 1969 as a corporation.

Ballyhoo, the little 1930s countertop pingame, has thus spawned a corporation producing nearly a third of a billion dollars in revenue last year.

Obviously, some development of the amusement game has come about. Its cost: Last year Bally spent $8.6 million on product research and development, according to the company's 1979 annual report to stockholders. Employed in R&D are about 200 engineers, technicians, and draftsmen.

Much has happened in the 50 years since *Ballyhoo* and seven balls for one cent play.

As the marketing staff talk over the tactics of promoting 50-cent play on a pingame, the quaint little board, no longer than a cocktail table, stands nearby in its honored place of retirement. Its actual pin-sized baffles stand geometrically in semi-circles within its true wood frame.

Ballyhoo seems to smile. It knows the route. •

A sub-assembly production line: front door assembly is shown. Test sets check coin switches and coin lock-out coils mounted on the front door.

On another sub-assembly line, Vito Anazolone and Elizabeth Newkirk assemble a drop target unit. Safety glasses are mandatory on the busy plant floor.

For the next generation:

Coin-operated *instructive* games

By Steven N. Czetli

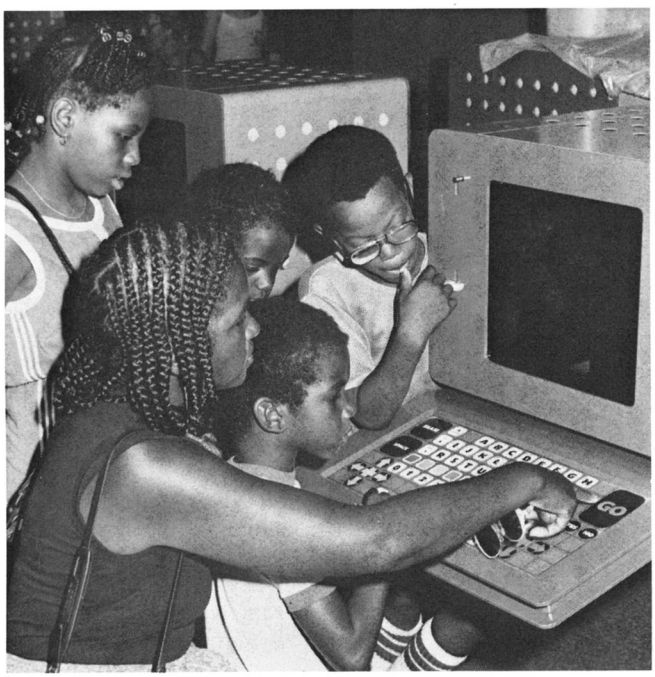
The Busch Entertainment Corp. and Children's Television Workshop, creators of Sesame Street, have bet $10 million that the arcade game of the future will rely more on mental acrobatics than eye/hand reflexes.

And given the financial resources and expertise of Busch (developer and operator of The Old Country in Williamsburg, Va. and The Dark Continent in Tampa, Fla.), and the awesome influence on today's youth wielded by CTW, their entry into the arcade industry is not likely to be misdirected.

In fact, the pair has already set about weaning the next generation of arcade players on state-of-the-art computer games—an undertaking that could drastically alter the expectations and sophistication of a whole generation of game players as they mature from the Busch/CTW target of 3 to 13 years old, and move into adolescence—into your arcade.

Moreover, the breakthroughs in computer technology and software evolving from the Busch/CTW venture could in themselves have wide-ranging effects on the types and styles of games available from manufacturers.

The site for this pilot program is Sesame Place, a 15-acre park its creators bill as a "21st century playground." Located about ten



Youngsters can indulge in a number of play elements in the multi-phase 'Sesame Place.'

In the computer gallery: Instruction in physics and other fields—in the form of video games.

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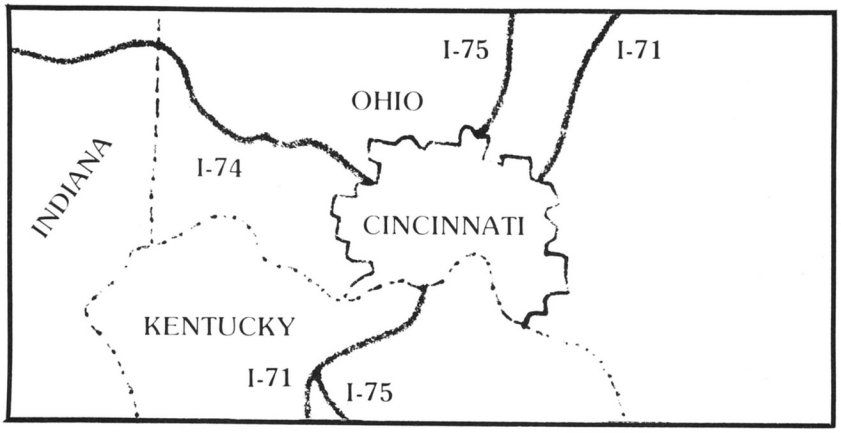

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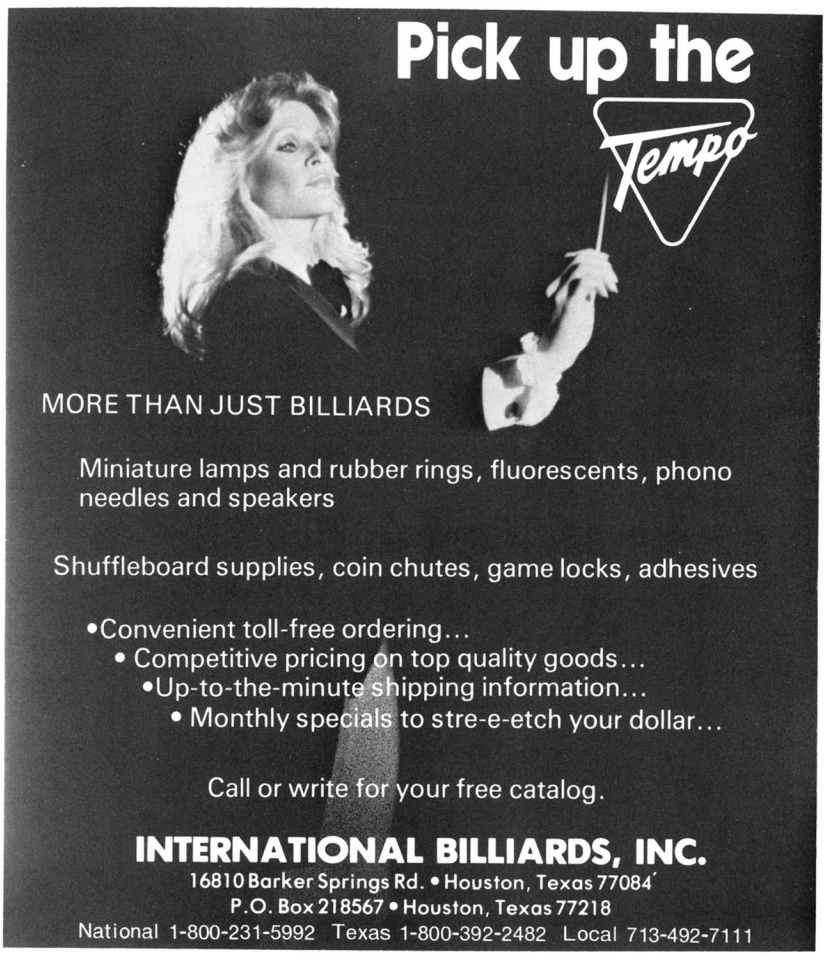

miles north of Philadelphia, Sesame Place offers youngsters the opportunity to indulge their youthful energies and imaginations in a diverse set of play elements. These range from climbing cargo nets three stories up to punching, pushing, and shouldering through a forest of six-foot punching bags. This child can climb inside a huge rubber band and bang himself around or climb, crawl, swin, and otherwise negotiate 80,000 plastic balls in The Count's Ball Room, the most popular element. In all, there are 40 outdoor challenges, all requiring a lot of kid power and offering gains in strength, coordination and confidence.

The park consists of three other major components: the computer gallery, the science studio, and the food factory. The food factory is a family-style fast-food restaurant where parent and child can feast on guilt-free popular foods. The menu includes such things as pizza made from whole grain unbleached flour and bran, enriched with high protein malt and topped with cheese and low acid plum tomatoes. Philadelphia style soft pretzels are made from the same dough, but topped with sesame seeds instead of salt. Hot dogs? Yes, but they're low in nitrate and wrapped in a healthful blanket of whole grain dough.

The science studio contains a working replica of the Sesame Street set where young fans will find television's Big Bird, Oscar, Cookie Monster, Grover, and other Sesame Street regulars. They can also explore physics with light and sound science exhibits or light up a display by pumping a bike. Another exhibit converts their voice into digital impulses displayed as colored shapes and patterns on a television monitor.

That's Sesame Place. Like its television forerunner, wholesome, fanciful, healthy, fun, and above all, instructive. Nowhere is this more true than in the computer gallery, the park's arcade component and the area where game operators may glimpse new directions for their own industry.

Token-operated instruction

The setting is a well-lighted, two-level, rectangular building near the park entrance. Some 50 steel-encased video consoles line one wall on both levels, while on the ground floor they front each other down the middle and occupy an outside wall as well.

Each console comes with a cube-like carpeted stool or two, big

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enough for parent or child. Half the upstairs is given over to a winding ramp that runs the length of the building and connects the two levels.

The facility is monitored by two or three park staffers who also sell tokens. One dollar buys three, and each token is good for about four minutes of playing time.

Joyce Hakansson, computer games coordinator, described the computer gallery's educational thrust as two-fold: "One is just learning to use the computer," she said. "The other is the learning that goes on within the game format. But we've also tried to insure that the amusement quality is very high."

Hakansson is the former computer education coordinator at the University of California's Lawrence Hall of Science where she supervised courses and workshops to introduce computers to more than 30,000 Californians.

Dennis Sullivan, director of computer programming, described one function of the games as offering children a practical grasp of abstract concepts. A law of physics, for example, is observed at the same time it is employed to accomplish a task.

"The child is getting an intuitive feel for the principles in addition to an intellectual grasp," Sullivan explained.

While accessibility and the amusement value have ranked high in the designers' goals—frustration, confusion, and disappointment have been kept to a minimum.

The computers, for instance, are designed to allow youngsters to operate them with a minimum of instruction. Toward this end, such accommodations as a simplified keyboard arranged alphabetically the way children have learned their letters have been made. To allow the child to operate the computers immediately, instructions have been integrated sequentially into the game.

Instead of learning to play before he begins, directions appear on the screen as the child needs them. Some directions appear only when required, such as due to an error by the operator.

"Why confuse him with instructions he may not even need to know?" Sullivan said.

To achieve a sense of completion, the programs allow the operator to come to a reasonable stopping point before shutting down. This could mean as much extra playing time as today's typical arcade game offers for a whole cycle.

Another aim of the programmers has been to keep the frustration level low by offering a clear explanation on the screen as to why a program was terminated when it was due to faulty manipulation by the operator. In other words, there are no 'Tilts' at Sesame Place unless the operator knows why.

The games themselves are as fetching as they are varied. Some employ eye/hand coordination more than others, but all have a reasoning aspect to them. Sophisticated animation and up to six colors—not to mention frequent appearances by Muppet characters—all add to the games' charm.

Some samples:

Layer Cake—Children solve an ancient Oriental puzzle in a modern setting by successfully transferring a cake too large for its plate to one of two larger ones by moving the layers in the right sequence.

Reflect—The youngster tries to bounce a beam of light off a mirror at exactly the right angle to illuminate an object such as a rosebud. If successful, the flower blossoms.

Lemonade—A young entrepreneur simulates the operation of a

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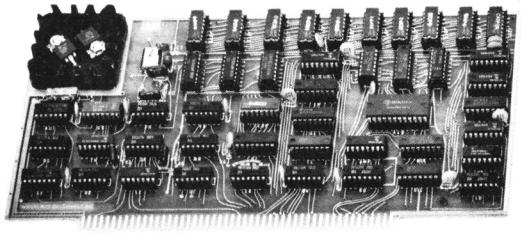

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Players win the first round by eliminating all targets. Extra points are scored for each bullet remaining at the end of a round.

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

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

As an additional incentive for players to strive for top score billing, bonus bullet boxes cross the screen at random intervals. And if a player hits all the target letters to spell BONUS, he may well be on his way to a record score.

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lemonade stand, making the crucial decisions necessary to stay in business and make a profit.

Paddle Tennis—The child in this three-dimensional game elects to play with or without gravity. Its creators call it "a fast-moving, compelling game that challenges the player's eye/hand coordination and also illustrates the impact of gravity on the ball's flight."

Art Beams—The player aims a handheld electronic pointer at a video screen to generate a design in any combination of six colors. The design can then be expanded, stretched, squeezed, set on a slant, or turned completely around to display its mirror image.

A few standard arcade games like *Space Invaders* also will be found in the gallery, insuring amusement for everyone. The gallery also houses a few science exhibits, like a bicycle tire gyroscope.

Sesame Place has been catering to near capacity crowds since its opening July 30, and the computer gallery has shared a like popularity.

Ripples widening?

As Sullivan noted, "Right now people run up to a machine and put a token in before they even know what it does." The real test of the computer games' appeal must await the repeat business upon which Sesame Place will depend.

"It will take a while," said Sullivan. "It will be interesting to see if the games with more logic prove popular. Those which combine eye/hand coordination and logic will probably be the quickest to catch on."

In the meantime, Busch/CTW are considering several other markets for their novel games including other parks like Sesame Place somewhere in the sunbelt, in or after 1982; shopping center locations (sites are currently being scouted); and the home video market (a fairly imminent prospect).

Asked if Busch/CTW would sell the games for distribution, Sullivan was doubtful. Hakansson was even more adament. "Busch Entertainment Corp. and the Children's Television Workshop would want to create the environment," she said. "They wouldn't be distributed the way arcade games are."

Even so, the widespread success of Sesame Place would send more than ripples through the arcade industry. Not only would it eventually alter adolescent expectations of arcades, but the breakthroughs in computer hardware and software will probably find their way into the arcade of tomorrow with or without Sesame Street values and Muppet characters.

"I think you'll see other people developing these style games," said Sullivan. "And if they're successful, I expect you'll see the people who manufacture today's arcade games picking up on it." •

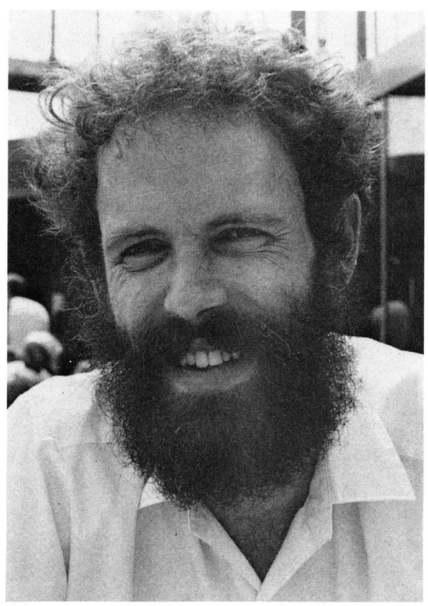
Behind Sesame Place's computer gallery

The problems confronted by the Children's Television Workshop in developing the hardware to serve 3-to-13-year-olds and the software to snare and keep them coming back were as formidable as their goal of simultaneously entertaining and instructing.

From a design standpoint, accessibility and durability had to be confronted. In other words, the intimidation level of the computer had to be lowered while the abuse level of the machine was raised. Since the venture was experimental, flexibility of machine use was also given a high priority. It was decided early on to make the computer gallery software-intensive, allowing for maximum tinkering with the individual games in the event they caused confusion or proved unpopular.

The units are identical: steel encased video consoles from Sony, each with its own Apple microprocessor. Programs are stored on hard discs in a Nestar System and loaded into each games' memory daily through cables. Two backup systems are available in the event of a breakdown.

Programming is flexible. If a game generates too many perplexed faces, it can be trundled back to New York for revision while a new game is loaded into the same unit. On the other hand, a particularly popular game can be loaded into more than one unit.



Dennis Sullivan, program director

To make computers less intimidating, new colorful, pressure sensitive keyboards were designed by Unicorn Engineering of California. They consist of two sheets of plastic with grids attached to facing sides. Letters are arranged alphabetically and set in colorful one-inch squares with a quarter-inch between each.

The diverse game requirements—including complex animations—called for sophisticated, state-of-the-art programming as well as certain hardware accommodations in microprocessors and screen selection.

Since the games require reasoning and not strictly reflex, playing time averages four minutes. In addition to the charge of $3.95 to enter the park, players then buy tokens at three for $1 to operate the games.

To avoid creating a sense of frustration and failure, the programs are designed with about 90 seconds of flexibility in playing time, allowing the child to come to a reasonable stopping point before shutting down.

In addition to new games—one upcoming offering will teach physical laws in the context of video pool—CTW continues to work toward increasingly sophisticated technology. For instance, visitors to Sesame Place can expect to soon see units that can be operated in tandem. Each player would have a keyboard.

The cost for the hardware alone is about $4,000 per game, according to Dennis Sullivan, director of computer programming. The cost of the programs vary too greatly to estimate, he said, but are expected to be defrayed as the machines find their way into other parks, shopping center locations and the home video market. —*Steven Czetli*

HOLOGRAPHY:

Amazing optics will enhance coin-op games

By Mary Claire Blakeman

Whatever happened to holograms? Most manufacturers contacted by PLAY METER agreed that in the game business, the concept of holography had been put on the shelf. One even said that joining holograms with video screen would be like mixing oil and water.

But—while many in the industry looked to Japan for the new ideas—two young enterprising Californians were cooking up a unique blend of coin-op games and holograms.

The two men themselves, John Foy and Avery Petty, represent an alliance between the business of games and the three-dimensional art of holograms. Foy, president of Lazerworld in Hollywood, Ca., has worked with holograms for more than a decade. "Now I can get just about any hologram done," Foy says. "I know who can do it and how long it takes." Petty, who owns Avery's Mobile Game Repair in Los Angeles, has more than even years experience with games. "I'm trying to bring holography to the game industry because now is the time I feel we need that boost," says Petty.

While working in the business, Petty came across the manufacturers of a type of plastic that creates holographic images. Looking through the plastic at games in an arcade, Petty become intrigued with the possibilities and the manufacturer sent him to see John Foy.

"The outstanding thing about the plastic is that pinpoint light affects it, and video games are full of pinpoint light," Petty says. "John and I took the material to an arcade and put it over a game(*Asteroids*) to see what it could do."

The screen exploded with starbursts of rainbow colors and the partners knew the idea was worth pursuing. Countless experiments later, they came up with a holographic overlay that can be used on a number of video games, and they are bringing those overlays to the AMOA convention.

"It took a lot of research and development," Foy says, "because we had to get the intensity of the overlay to match the brightness of the monitor in the tube. We don't want the game to be confusing to people. The overlay makes the game challenging."

Using the overlay, any time a player makes a shot on a vector tube game, the "bullet" will explode in a burst of colors and will have a three-dimensional effect rather than a flat one. While this feature is entertaining to the player, it is also enticing to onlookers and passers-by Because of the nature of holography, the colors move in different planes when the light source changes—so those looking on from the sidelines will see the colors from different angles.

To John Foy, this ability of the holographic overlays to lure people to games is more than just hype. "Once at Pizza Time Theatre, I was talking to a young lady, and Avery turned on a machine with the overlay. I was in mid-sentence and she just walked right over to the game," Foy says with a laugh. "I guess it blew my act for a moment, but who can compete with a rainbow?"

The overlays are only one project developed by Foy and Petty.

Another one which they are bringing to the AMOA is pinball glasses—and they could take Elton John's pinball wizard shades into a whole new dimension. The pinball glasses use the same type of rainbow plastic as the video overlays and they too are adusted to enhance player appeal rather than just dazzle the eyes. In addition, the wings of the glasses, which are made of cardboard, will provide a space for the location or arcade name, a natural advertising opportunity. Special vending machines will dispense the glasses to players for $2 a pair. The dispenser for the glasses will also feature rainbow mirrors around its exterior.

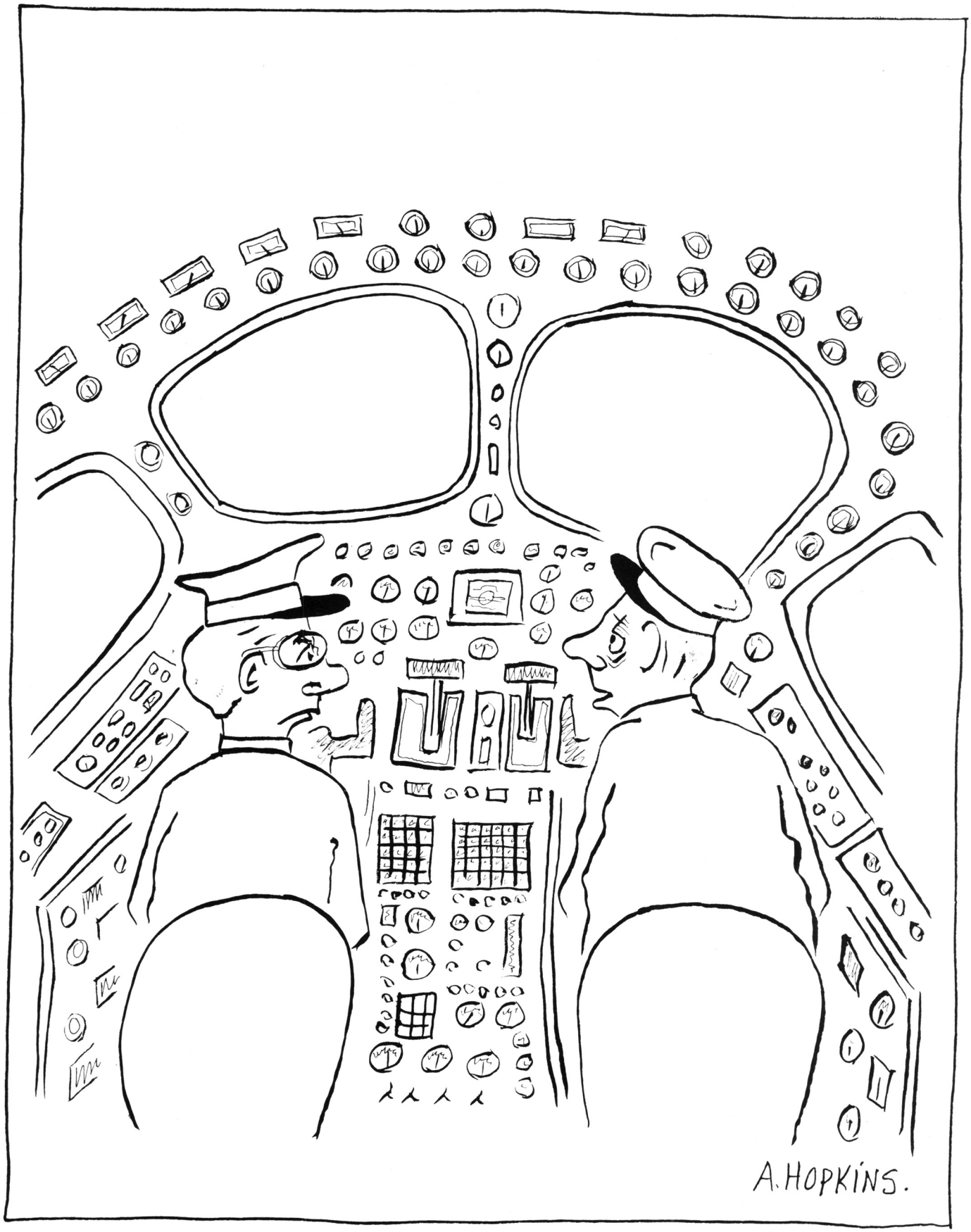
Foy has been selling holographic "Rainbow Glasses," similar to sunglasses, for four years. The "Rainbow Glasses" are brighter than the new ones for pinball players. "Every pair of glasses can reach a hundred people," Foy says. When someone is wearing them, people will ask where they got them, and the person can say the glasses came from such and such an arcade. Then, when they go to check out the glasses they'll probably drop a few quarters at the arcade."

For Avery Petty, who has watched the evolution of the game industry in recent years, the new glasses offer a shot in the arm to pinball operators. "I saw how pinballs were going down while video games were coming up," he says. "People in the business were screaming about how to bring pinballs back up. I think now is the time for this in the game business."

The pinball glasses should not be confused with the 3-D movie glasses of the 1950's. The old 3-Ds used a red lens for one eye and a blue lens for the other. Film in the 3-D movies was also split into two different pictures—one red, one blue—and without the glasses, the movie looked blurred. By contrast, the pinball glasses have similar lenses for both eyes and they create a rainbow spectrum similar to the kind of colors formed by a glass prism.

Rainbow of applications

For Petty and Foy, the glasses and overlays are just the beginning of numerous possibilities for applying holograms to games. But while looking toward the furture, they realize that they will have to overcome some of the difficulties of



'Got four quarters, Fred? The mechanic's made the starter coin-operated.'

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the past.

One of the few games to employ holograms previously was Midway's *Top Gun*, in 1976. "That game wasn't as successful as it could have been," Petty says, "because the operators got their hands on the hologram when opening the machine."

The video overlays will avoid that particular problem and, Petty adds, "This special laser etching (on the overlays) is the cheapest and most spectaular way to go."

Foy's perspective on holograms could help prevent other problems in the future. While microprocessor chips can be programmed to behave in certain ways, holograms are usually produced by a variety of formulas and experimentation. A pitfall of the past, Foy says, was the industry's refusal to listen to holographers. "It's one thing to hire technology," he says, "It's another thing to hire inventors.

"Holography wasn't invented by big research labs," he continues. "It was developed by private individuals who worked in kitchens and garages. It was inspired, curious technicians and chemists who said 'I'll do it my way.' It's been a long struggle and has taken some hard work."

Foy remembers the days in his mative Salt Lake City when he and other holographers used to tape themselves into rooms so no light could get in. "We'd shine a laser light on an object and it was incredible," he recalls. "I could follow the explanations enough to know they could do it, but little did I know it would take 10 years."

Holography has actually been around longer than 10 years. In 1947, Dr. Dennis Gabor discovered the technique and received the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1971 for invention. Gabor's theories were the biggest breakthrough in the field until 1962 when Drs. Emmet Leith and Juris Upatnieks at the University of Michigan combined the image making of holography with the laser.

By 1967, holographs could be produced on any clear, non-porous surface because of the development of a dichromated gelatin as a medium for recording images. Later, in 1972, Lloyd Cross combined the process with cinematography and created moving holograms which can be seen in white light. Though not strictly holographic, the scenes in "Star Wars" depicting the message transmissions by Princess Leia, resemble a moving hologram.

Most of the patenting of holograms began with the work at the University of Michigan in the early '60s. From that time, hologram patents have travelled a winding road which turned up in the games industry.

Dave Schmidt, a holographer in southern California, has patents of his own and has observed the business over the years. Schmidt is opening a laboratory in back of the Odyssey Image Center, a holographic gallery next door to John Foy's Lazerworld. "I believe the first patents were owned by Holotron, a non-profit organization," Schmidt says. "Later, DuPont and Bettel Memorial bought them. Then they sold them out to Holosonics. I also think Canon got Japanese and some European rights to the patents."

Entry into coin-op

Holosonics purchased Meadows Games in Sunnyvale, California during 1978, but by 1979, the parent company declared bankruptcy. While the courts sort out the claims of creditors and stockholders, the fate of the patents is still unknown. Those involved in solving the problems of Holosonics offer only "no comment" on the situation.

It is believed, however, that the patents are for sale. "I've heard four miles of rumors,"Dave Schmidt says.

Schmidt explains that the patents owned by Holosonics were "the largest single portfolio of holographic patents...but there are many different types of holograms."

Dr. Emmet Leith, who did pioneering work in the field at Michigan, concurs in the opinion that the patents may expire in the near future. "Patents run for 17 years," he says, "so I guess in about 5 years, they will run out."

Leith, professor of electrical engineering at the Ann Arbor, Michigan campus, also clarified the speculation that the patents could fall into the public domain. "It's true that much of the work was supported by the Department of Defense," he says, "but patents are not in the public domain. If they were, they wouldn't be patents. In this case, the government can use the patents without a royalty fee, but non-government people do not get a royalty-free license."

The material in the new holographic glasses and overlays is copyrighted and, Dr. Leith says, the patents would not apply to the substance unless it were strictly used to make a hologram.

But the question of patents may be one more piece of the past which

could cast a shadow on the promising future of holograms. Those who dealt with Holosonics may be hesitant about the whole notion.

"Every time they (Holosonics) would split or do revisions in a patent, developments were made by other people independently before Holosonics put theirs in," Dave Schmidt says.

"They've been claiming that they cover everything," he continues. "I would ask them what specific claims I might have infringed upon and they'd go away and not come back. Then, in a few years I'd hear from them again. In the meantime, they'd go to our customers and tell everybody they had the patents. To me, that's restraint of trade.

"There was a lot of ridiculousness in the whole thing," he adds.

While the dispute over the patents is settled by the bankers and/or the judges, the potential of holograms remains a tantalizing subject for speculation.

Holographic computers are one of the ultimate applications of the process. "A hologram the size of a pendant could hold all the information in the Library of Congress," John Foy says.

Holograms can be used to make optical memories for computers. Such a use would probably be enhanced by the ability of holograms to project a whole picture from any part. If a hologram is cut into pieces or smashed, each piece will still contain the whole picture, even though the picture will be smaller.

Mimic of thought

Some in the field theorize that holography is actually closer to the way we think rather than the way we see. When looking at a laser transmission hologram, objects are luminous, shimmering, elusive—like thoughts passing by.

Rosemary Jackson, director of the Museum of Holography in New York City, explains that "because holography records reality as a total three-dimensional volume of 'activity,' it has the effect of encapsulating time. It is as if a hologram is a record of a space of time, or a time in space: a precise moment which can be recalled exactly as it existed when the recording of it took place—when it 'happened.' Many people believe that holography is the brain's memory storage mechanism."

While work on holographic computers is taking place, Dr. Leith sees more activity in another application of holograms. "A greater part of the development is taking place in the heads-up display device in airplanes," he says. "With a holographic display for aircraft, the pilot can be simultaneously looking out a window and still be seeing the instrument panel."

The broad possibilities of holograms may not be fully realized in the game business. But just as the industry has been on the cutting edge of microprocessor development, it could also lead the way in the application of holograms.

"I think the game business might be the next big splash for holograms," John Foy says. "That's where the public will take notice. It might be the first time Mon and Pop will see a hologram when they take the kids to the arcade."

Foy traces the development of technology through three stages which have also been reflected in the game business: "First there was mechanics, then electronics and now *photonics*—light waves."

Whether the industry pushes this new science to its fullest potential or not remains to be seen. Holography itself seems to be limited only by the imagination of the user.

And, Avery Petty adds, "I only hope the game industry sees this opportunity and seizes this opportunity. That's really all I want to see happen." •

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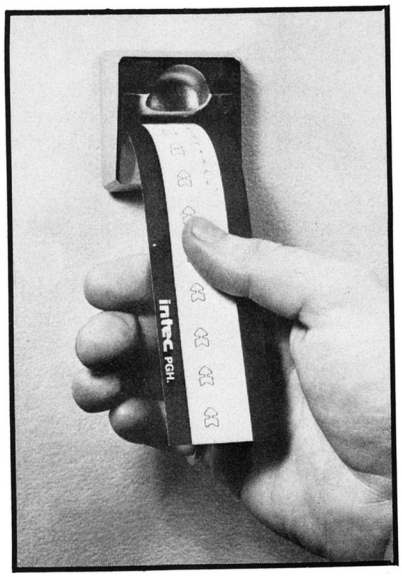

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Troubleshooting:

Williams drop targets

By ZAC OLIVER

Recently, I received a technical bulletin from Williams Electronics. It was handed to me from a distributor in the Southeast and was dated May 23, 1980. The bulletin reports Williams' solution to their most recurrect pinball problem: the breaking of the wiper blades in their drop targets.

I myself have been haunted by the problem for months and the solutions I found were not easy to apply.

The proper operation of the drop targets is fundamental in some of the Williams flipper games (*Flash, Laser Ball,* etc.). Therefore, this bulletin is very important. Almost five months after it was issued it finally came to my hands, and I know that it will take even longer to reach other interested people.

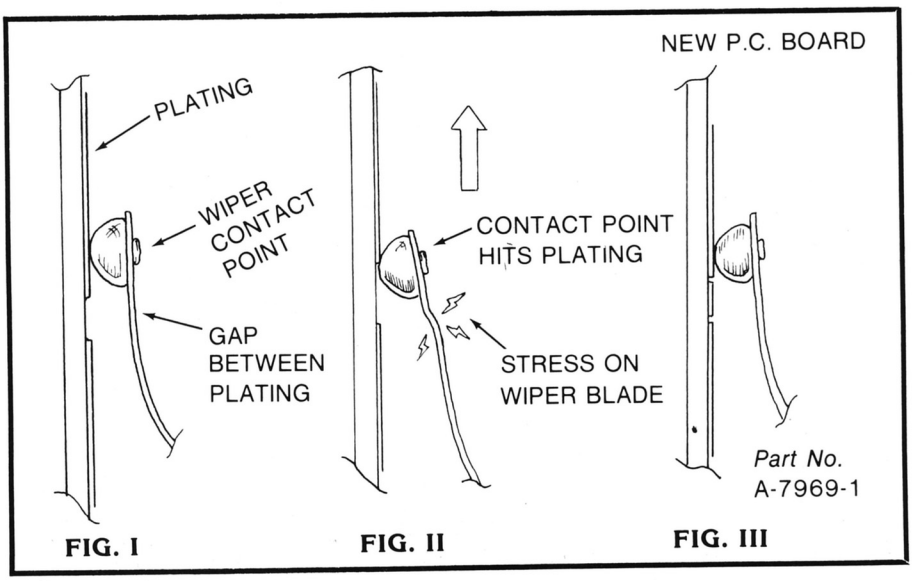
This inefficient and typically "I don't care, 'cause nobody else cares" communication among the different parties in our industry makes Williams' praised effort almost unimportant. Down the line, the operator wonders why is it that players stopped playing that particular *Flash!*

Manufacturers do put out service bulletins with solutions for the difficulties found in the field, but these bulletins seldom reach the operator. And when they do, it is lost or forgotten before applied to the original problem. Since the final equation is more or less quarters or tokens in the cashbox, the importance of communication is vital.

Anyway, as some of us knew, Williams found that the premature wear of the contact points, caused by the abrasive action of the gap between the plating on the P.C. Board (Fig. I) and the resulting flattening of the points could eventually cause the contact to catch on the edge of the foil resulting in damage to the blades (Fig. II). Williams' immediate solution is a new P.C. Board with a gap between plating of only 0.012 inches which should eliminate contact wear (Fig. III). Williams also recommends a *light* film of coin machine lubricant to be applied to the P.C. Board to assure long, trouble free, reliable operation.

Although it is one of the best drop targets in the flipper games playfield, its above problem and the breaking of the reset plate made the Williams drop target design very unpopular among operators and technicians. Well, good news: Williams is redesigning its unit with a better approach, more in line with the other manufacturers.

The new part number: P.C. Board Assy. A-7969-1.



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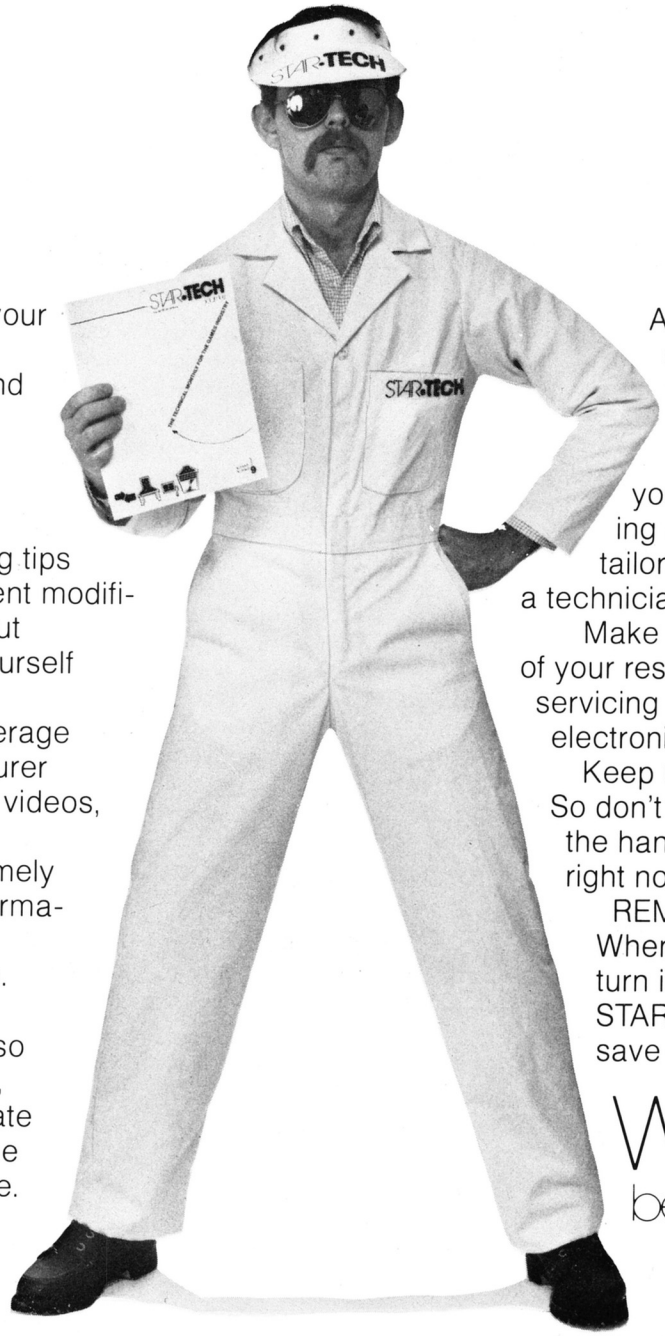

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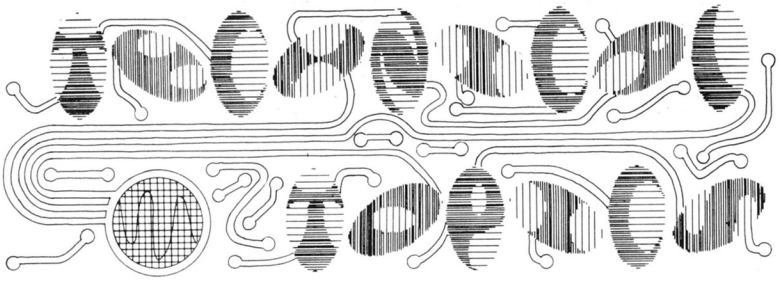


By Randy Fromm

Game play mechanisms for the handicapped

I had the opportunity to be the "mechanic in charge" of an arcade at the San Diego County Fair this year. We had all the latest equipment there. Ten *Asteroids*, eight *Astro Fighters*, eight *Mini-Monaco GPs*, four *Galaxians*, two *Clay Champs*, and two *Arm Wrestler* machines, all crowded into a bright blue and white striped tent without an inch to spare. It was a really great experience. My wife and I rented an apartment on the beach, and she got a great tan while I slaved away in a hot tent! Actually, apart from replacing a bad microprocessor in a *Galaxian*, and swapping a power supply in a *Clay Champ*, I had little to do but watch the people have a lot of fun playing the games.

Sign indicates aid to handicapped

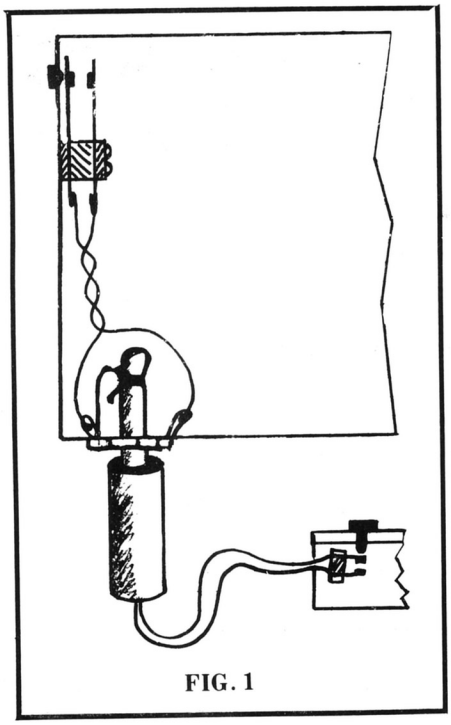


FIG. 1

One day, a young boy wheeled through the arcade. I had honestly not given it any thought, but I suddenly realized that there wasn't anything in the arcade for him to play. I was operating all the latest stuff, and a person in a wheelchair was restricted from playing any of the games; not because they lacked the physical ability to press the buttons to play, but because the buttons were out of their reach or they couldn't see the screen. He didn't seem to mind, though. His face really lit up as he watched the cars whiz by on the color screen of the *Monaco GP*. I guess he had reconciled to himself that playing games is just another one of those things that handicapped people don't get to do.

He would be wrong, of course. The "new wave" of acceptance of cocktail table videos allows a person in a wheelchair to play video games, provided he has the ability to reach out and press the buttons, or move a lever back and forth. Many arcades, such as the Electronic Experience chain have included cocktail table "parlors" into the arcade layout, so handicapped patrons can play. (See related story, this issue.) Gremlin "Mini-videos" are used at one arcade, placed on a specially contructed table that is high enough and wide enough to accomadate wheelchairs. Stools are provided so that other players can use the game as well as those in wheelchairs.

But what about pinball? If you've ever tried playing pinball while sitting in a wheelchair, you'll know it's not too easy. If you have limited use of your arms, it's damned near impossible! The flipper buttons are just too far up there to reach. You can see the playfield, but you can't play the game.

One arcade has solved the problem in a pretty unique way. Jack thomas, manager of the Aztec Game Room in San Diego, has modified a pinball for a handicapped student who likes to play.

Jack has a special panel for use by handicapped people that connects to the flippers by way of some small nails driven through the bottom of the pinball cabinet. On the inside of the cabinet, the points of the nails are soldered to wires that connect to the flipper button switches. The panel is connected to the game with alligator clips, connected to the heads of the nails. The pinball can be played by pressing on the buttons on the panel, which can be held on your lap. A hook and a fob are used to allow the handicapped player to launch the ball by pulling the ball shooter back with the teeth and letting go.

I am sure that other arcades around the country are doing similar things to allow handicapped people to play their games. But like so many other good things that members of the coin amusement industry do for the community, those are done for personal satisfaction, not public recognition.

Special modifications

Here are three more ways to allow handicapped people to play pinball, provided, of course, that they have the ability to press the buttons on the panel. (For further information on pinball for the handicapped, see PLAY METER, September 15).

The first set-up is the same one that Jack used for his games. (See Figure 1.) Instead of nails, a phono jack is used to connect each one of

the flipper buttons with the button on the panel. It's a simple process to mount a jack on the bottom of each side of the pinball cabinet. The handicapped player can wheel up to the modified game, and insert the plugs (or have an attendant insert them) to connect the lap panel to the flippers.

This is a very good method of allowing handicapped people to play pinball, but it does require that the pinball be modified before the panel can be used.

A second method is to build the "remote flipper actuator" unit (See Figures 2 & 3). The idea for this unit was given to me by the same young man that plays at the Aztec Game Room. He wanted someone to develop a unit that could attach to the stainless steel strip on the side of the pinball machine with magnets, and actuate the flipper buttons from the outside without having to modify the game. I thought it was a really great idea, so I built the thing. Equipped with the "remote flipper actuator", a handicapped player can wheel up to any pinball, slap the two units over each of the flipper buttons, and play away!

The project had to be one that could be made with commonly available parts, so I naturally turned to the four sources that most of us have at hand: electro-mechanical pinball machines, Radio Shack, Wico, and a hardware store. The unit is quite simple: a Gottlieb knocker coil and plunger mounted in a small plastic Radio Shack box. The Box has magnetic cabinet latches screwed to the sides, to attach it to the medal strip on the sides of the game. The control panel is a small box that houses the battery pack and has the two control buttons mounted on it. Because of the fairly heavy current drain of the two solenoids—even when operated on 12 volts, the coils draw 2.6 amps each—a rechargable battery pack is a must. The prototype control unit used two battery packs of four D cells each. Even with Duracells, the unit went dead after just a few hours use.

The latest step in the design is to use two motorcycle batteries in parallel. One battery would actually be more than sufficient, but the batteries are heavy, and must be kept upright. Rather than have an unbalanced control panel, the design worked to an advantage in that the panel fits well on the lap, and provides enough juice to allow the most avid of pinball enthusiasts to play as long as he wishes. A standard battery charger can be used to recharge the battery pack. Naturally, one of the batteries can be eliminated if the unit is too heavy for the person using it to lift.

The third design is merely the same "remote flipper actuator" unit, powered by the battery in the electric wheelchair that many people have. Instead of having a separate battery pack, the unit can be easily connected to the large battery that powers the chair, eliminating the need for a heavy battery pack in the player's lap.

I have drawn a special "wheelchair pinball" symbol that can be posted in the front of your arcade, so you can let people know that you are providing the service for those who need it.

Feel free to copy and use this symbol as you need it. Larger copies can be optained by writing to me at PLAY METER. •

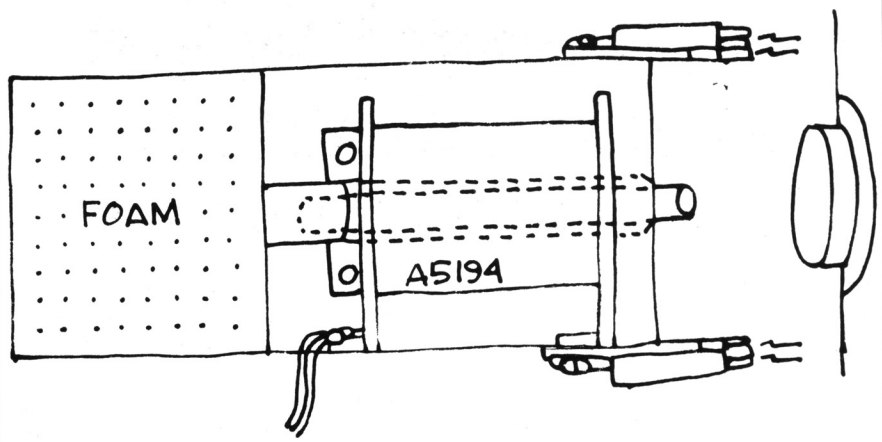


FIG. 2

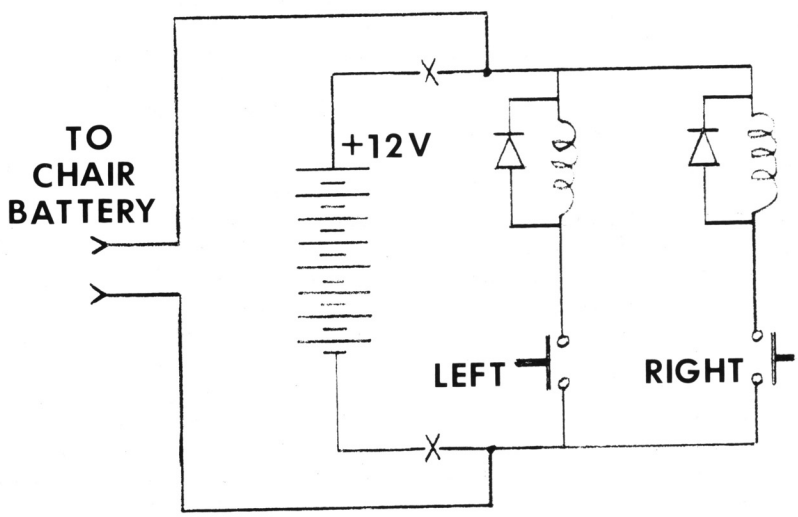


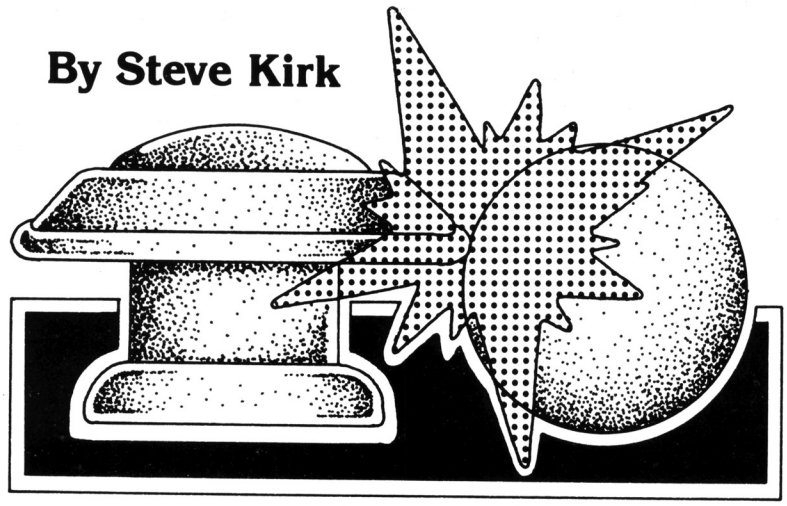
FIG. 3

The "Remote Flipper Actuator" unit may be powered by an internal battery pack or by breaking the circuit at 'X' and connecting the unit to an electric wheelchair's internal battery pack. *A 12-volt battery must be used.* —*R.F.*

PARTS LIST

Housing: Experimenter Box, Radio Shack part number 270-231
Coil (2 required): Gottlieb A 5194
Magnetic Cabinet Latches — 4 required
Diodes (2 required): 1N4004
Button Assembly (2 required): WICO number 15-0520-01
Flipper Button Holder & Switch with mounting bracket (2 required): WICO number 15-0499-01
Battery Pack: 12-volt motorcycle battery.

By Steve Kirk



SPECIAL WHEN LIT
By way of introduction

Reviewer Steve Kirk has twice been PLAY METER Coinman of the Month, February of 1978 and September of 1979. He is co-author of the book, "All About Pinball" and president of the Pinball Association of America, Inc.

Kirk is an independent game designer whose previous pingames include Stars *and* Meteors, *and whose current game is* 9-Ball *by Stern Electronics.*

A Chicago resident, he is currently researching material for a book about video games.

I can remember the first pinball I ever played, and I remember it fondly. I never forget a friendly face. But the first video game I ever played must not have impressed me much because I can't even remember it's name. Like many die-hard pinball players I played a couple of times as a curiosity, but I didn't really like it a whole lot. To a certain extent I think I resented this new form of coin operated game and perceived it as an intruder on the sacred domain of pinball.

The first video that I got emotionally involved with was Nutting *Computer Space*, and the term "hyperspace" was forever etched in my mind. I always felt that *Computer Space* was just too far ahead.

Then came Atari *Tank*, and I was starting to like video. But the first video to really get me "hooked" was Chicago Coin's *Demolition Derby*. *Demo Derby* was a devious little game where the object was to smash into as many robot cars as possible. You could play the game as a single player against the machine or you could play with two people competing against each other. If you were nasty and could build up a few points in the lead, you could smash into your opponent's car so he couldn't go anywhere, and therefore could not score any points. No cries of "fair play" here— *this was war!*

Atari *Breakout* was the first game I can remember playing where the game was not on a fixed time basis. Up to this point all the video games I had played had given X amount of time for my quarter, and when the time ran out that was the end of the game. *Breakout* was a whole new breed of video. Instead of a fixed time length the game was over when you lost all three "balls." My first game lasted 15 seconds! My reaction was as if the machine had taken a slap across my face and stuck out its tongue. "What a ripoff!" I mumbled and started to walk away. But then it sunk in...was I going to let this silly little video game insult me like that? No way. I dropped in another quarter. This time the game lasted 30 seconds, not exactly an overwhelming victory for me. I played it again...and again...and again. For one hour straight I swore I'd get the stupid thing down pat but this game was truly difficult. Never again would I walk by a video without at least a trial.

Cinematronics' *Space Wars* was another progression in video games, in that you could buy an infinite amount of time for EACH game that you played. The game was over only after the money ran out, but more money could be inserted at any time up to the final seconds, to extend the

continued on page 131

The Game Reviews:

Following are my first reviews of video games. The main purpose of my reviews is *to make you money.*

Since I have the opportunity to often see various games substantially ahead of production, I hope to be able to give you some advance insight to games you may have just become aware of.

Atari's MISSILE COMMAND

Asteroids has continued to dominate most collection reports that I have seen in the last year, so it is then with signigicant interest that all of us waited for the next Atari video.

Missile Command was billed as Atari's first 50 cent-play video. On that note it has not been an overwhelming success, with most operators pricing the game at a quarter. This has a lot to do with location competition but some of it has to do with the nature of the game.

Unlike *Asteroids*, which had a super strong initial appeal, *Missile Command* seems to be a game that builds its appeal slowly. I have to admit I was quite eager to play this game before I had seen it, based on the 50 cents-a-play hype. "Could this game be so good it is worth 50 cents?," I asked myself. After my first play, my reaction was "This is it? This is the big 50 cent game?" I was quite disappointed. Maybe I was expecting too much. I played it a second time...kind of difficult, I thought.

I have not been a big fan of most roll-the-ball games, finding that the amount of work required to continually spin the ball took away from my enjoyment. But one of the first things I noticed about *Missile Command* was that the amount of ball movement required to move the crosshair on the screen was much less than previous games: a definite improvement.

Missile Command did not win me over on my initial play but yet there was something kind of neat about it. I decided to try again the next day. I

About 'Missile Command'--

'Missile Command' and 'Moon Cresta'-- recommended

liked it a little more after a few more plays. I noticed the colors on the screen changed as I progressed.

The object of *Missile Command* is to defend six cities at the bottom of the screen. This is done by shooting your missiles at the attacking missiles. The player has 30 missiles and the ball is used to "aim." By pressing one of the three launch buttons a player missile will go to the position on the screen where he had moved the crosshair. When the player uses all of his missiles, any remaining attacking missiles will continue down to destroy cities.

Each time I go back to *Missile Command*, I find the game more interesting. One of the lures of this game is the color changes that accompany the advancing multiplier. After the first few changes go by you start to wonder what color is next, in fact you become determined to find out. The multiplier advances and the color changes after defending against two complete sets of attacking missiles.

The progressions in this game are significant. First, after each attack is successfully defended the next attack will have faster oncoming missiles. There are also an airplane and a satellite that travel across the screen horizontally and, at the most inopportune moment for the player, will drop one or more additional missiles. Then there are the smart missiles, and I do mean smart—little diamond shaped demons that can change direction, hover, even rise back up slightly, and then continue to drop on your city.

At first I thought it was impossible to defend against the smart missiles, but experience has shown it can be done. However, the skill necessary to get them is not easily obtained, which means more money in the cash box. When you finally start hitting them they get even smarter.

Finally there is the reward of "bonus cities" which occur at regular point intervals (determined by the operator). If you operate this game on quarter play I recommend that the bonus city score be set at 15,000 points, not 10,000 as recommended by Atari. My reason is that I feel players get bonus cities so easily that they start to lose their signigicance, when set at 10,000. Remember, a player wins a city for EACH 10,000 or whatever score you set it at. An expert score is anything over 100,000.

My conclusion about this game is that it is a much better game than it first appears. Because it does not hook all of the players right away, your collections may drop slightly after the first couple of weeks of curiosity play. But in the following weeks as its appeal grows with play experience, *Missile Command* should be a top game in any arcade and most street locations.

ANALYSIS

VISUAL DISPLAYS:	*Very Good*
PROGRESSIONS:	*Excellent*
SOUNDS:	*Good*
INITIAL APPEAL:	*Good*
ESTIMATED LONG TERM APPEAL:	*Very Good*
HIGH SCORES POSTED?	*Yes.*
[Shows top 7 with initials.]	
RECOMMENDED OPTIONS:	*Start 6 cities. Bonus-15,000*

MOON CRESTA — Nichibutsu, Gremlin/Sega, Amstar.
EAGLE—Centuri

I cannot recall any game that has created such *visual* appeal as this one. People love to watch this game while they wait to play it.

Moon Cresta first appeared in the U.S. as an import from Japan's Nichibutsu. Gremlin/Sega has been licensed by Nichibutsu (Nihon Bussan Co., Ltd.) for the upright model of *Moon Cresta* to be manufactured and sold in the United States and Canada. Amstar Electronics of Phoenix (formerly Mirco) is licensed to market the cocktail version.

Centuri's *Eagle* is basically the same game as *Moon Cresta*, except the visuals are slightly different.

Moon Cresta starts with four sunflower-type objects bursting from the middle of the screen almost as if they were a fireworks display. These colorful sunflowers fly around in a jerky orbit overhead while the player attempts to shoot them. When hit, only one half of the sunflower disappears and the player must hit the second half as well to eliminate that sunflower from the screen.

After the first four hits the sunflowers start flying all over the place and dive towards the bottom. Sometimes they will come back from the bottom for another attack, or if not hit they will reappear from the center of the screen.

The player starts with the top stage of a three stage rocket for his firepower. After completing the first four sunflowers, another set appears but they are different colors. The third set is more sophisticated, yet with eight flying objects that I can find no adequate description for.

After the fourth set, the player's first stage rocket moves up to mid-screen and the second stage appears in the center bottom of the screen. At this point the player attempts to "dock" the first stage on top of the second stage by lowering gently. The left-right buttons control horizontal movement and the fire button controls thrust for vertical movement. It is like a quick game of Atari's *Lunar Lander*. Once docked, the player has the firepower of the first stage, one missile in the middle, plus the firepower of the second stage, two missiles on the side. By pressing the fire button rapidly the player in effect gets three shots covering a wider area.

After the sixth set of still undescribable objects, the player is suddenly confronted by giant me-

continued on page 131

"It is a much better game than it first appears"

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Introduction continued

Continued from page 128

game. It was also the first game with play variations that the player could pick. Nine different speeds with any combination of five modifications made the game truly customized for each player.

The negative part about *Space Wars* was that it was *only* a two-player game. One night a friend and I played one game to 150 points. The total cost was $15 for that one game! Several people who had to wait were less than pleased.

These few games I had liked, had kept my interest in video—but nothing had prepared me for my meeting with Midway *Space Invaders*. I had dropped by the local Aladdin's Castle to look at a new pinball and I noticed *Space Invaders* as I walked in. I watched it being played for about 15 seconds and then walked away to the pinballs. An hour later as I was leaving I noticed the game again and I decided to play it once to see if it was at all interesting. It didn't look that spectacular but I had to play it once to be sure.

My first game lasted at least 10 seconds. "Oh no, not another *Breakout*," I sighed. The second quarter lasted about 45 seconds, a substantial improvement. "Well, it won't take that long to get *this* game down," I thought, and I reached for another quarter. Realizing I had no more change, I left to the bill changer. Returning, another player was on the machine and so I waited. I watched as he shot down invader after invader and continued to play until the entire rack of invaders was cleared. Finally, during the second rack he bit the dust and I stepped up to play. I decided that I would be satisfied to get just one complete rack.

Ten dollars later I decided I would postpone my objective so I could buy enough gas to go home.

Space Invaders started appearing everywhere, and I found one near my home. I started spending $5—$10 a night on the game. I had finally become *a video junkie!* Not satisfied with spending all of *my* money I had to get *others* to spend all of their money, too. There was a sense of satisfaction each time you could get another friend hooked into the game. It tended to justify to me that it was really OK to be this crazy, after all they were doing the same thing.

A year went by and none of the videos seemed to have the appeal I was now craving for. Then came the 1979 AMOA show, and Atari *Asteroids*. While designing the pinball game *Meteor*, I had toyed with the idea of a *Meteor* video. Remembering on *Space Wars* a little meteor that constantly was flying around, I had been contemplating a video with lots of little meteors to shoot. When I saw *Asteroids*, I knew right away I was interested. I waited for the game and waited, and waited, and waited. All these little kids were tying up the game. Why are all the kids allowed at the AMOA anyway? At least they should be confined to the last day.

Finally I got to play the game and that afternoon I made a note to order an *Asteroids* for the arcade I was now involved with in Chicago.

In November we finally got our *Asteroids*, and I was totally overcome with a compulsion to play this machine. Many nights I would stay at the arcade late, and instead of getting my work done I would be sitting there playing until 7 or 8 a.m...I was caught in the "I'm only going to play one more time" syndrome.

As each new video arrived, I started to analyze what, in my opinion, made it interesting or dull. As I suspected, I found that although video games were a different presentation visually, the basic appeals were the same as in pinball or any other game.

Game reviews continued

Continued from page 129

teors zooming diagonally across the screen. About 95 percent of first-time players get killed at this point. The rocks appear so suddenly that the player must move to the extreme side immediately upon completing the sixth set or his ship will be hit. The meteors are valuable points, so one gets up the guts to venture out and take a shot or two at them.

After the meteors comes a second opportunity to dock on to the third stage for even more firepower.

After the second docking, comes what could probably be described as "rocking carrot bombs." You have to see them to understand. They sway and rock at the top of the screen and then suddenly fall like rocks on top of you. If you shoot all of them, another set of these bombs appears.

After you have completed all of this the game starts over again but the sunflowers and the rest of the objects are faster and more devious.

Moon Cresta is highly recommended. It has super visuals, it is fun to play, and it progresses to signigicant difficulty; all of which make it a top game.

My only real objection to this game are the sounds. They are at times harsh and the "tunes" are too repetitive and simple. A good sound system would have been all this game needed.

There is only one operator option other than coin control. I recommend that the game be set at 50,000 instead of 30,000 for the high score award. When the player achieves this score, he is awarded additional rocket stages. Putting the game on the 50,000 setting not only raises the score to beat, but the game play is a little more difficult.

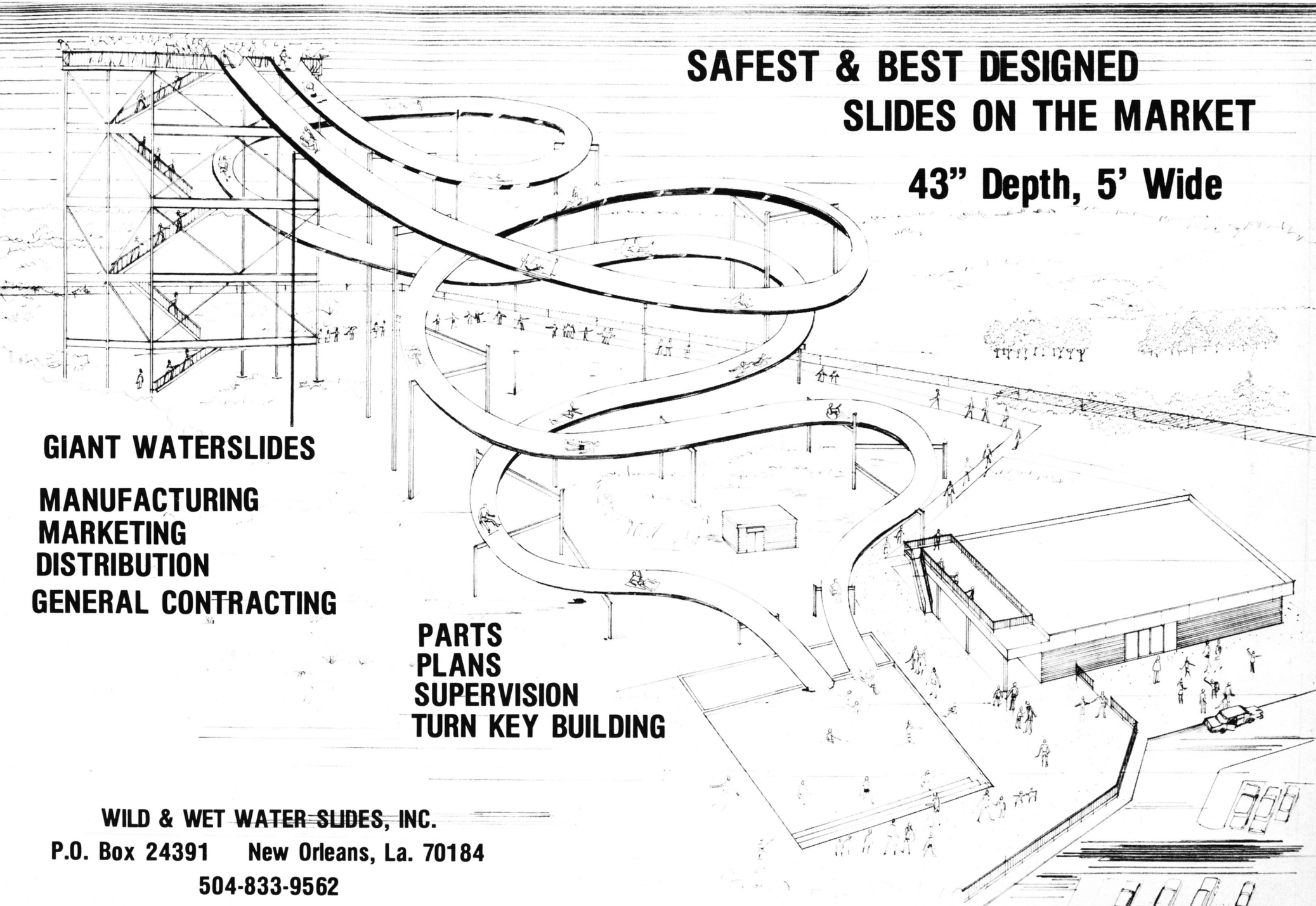
ANALYSIS

VISUAL DISPLAY:	*Excellent*
PROGRESSIONS:	*Excellent*
SOUNDS:	*Fair*
INITIAL APPEAL:	*Excellent*
ESTIMATED LONG TERM APPEAL	*Very Good*
HIGH SCORES POSTED?	*Yes.*
[Shows top 5 with initials.]	
RECOMMENDED OPTIONS	*50,000*
[sw. #1-on]	

‡ ‡ ‡

I would appreciate hearing any comments you might have about these reviews, positive or negative. It will probably take a little while for me to find the best format and I am certainly open to suggestions. What information do you want to know? You can write me direct at Box 496, Park Ridge, Illinois 60068 or through PLAY METER. •

'Moon Cresta'--
"Fun... progresses to significant difficulty"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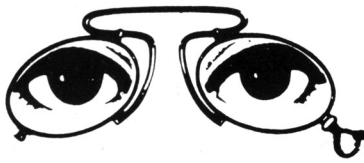

Critic's Corner

By Roger C. Sharpe

Pinball emphasis to throw attention off video

Well, here you are reading this in Fargo, North Dakota or your home town or in some strange hotel room in Chicago. You've already traveled the floor of the show either today or yesterday and you're ready to read what you've seen or heard about. As anyone can imagine, whether you can visit the show itself or must rely on the trade press to fill you in, this is a very critical year for the coin-machine business. Undoubtedly, although there will be some very substantial pinball machines unveiled (more on these later), the fact remains that everyone is looking to video to supply the profit punch alloperators are looking for.

And the list of the possible stars for 1981 are many and varied with some surprises thrown in; not the least of which is Gottlieb's break from tradition, with the introduction of their first video machine. You're going to find new cabinet shapes for the hoped-for new locations being opened up around the world, and such names as *Eagle*, *Magical Spot*, *Stratovox* (the first video with speech), *Space Firebird*, and others hoping to knock *Asteroids* and *Galaxian* off the top of the mountain.

Interestingly, even the pinball machines are overshadowed by the manufacturers of the steel ball bringing their own video versions into the forefront, including Gottlieb, Stern, and the much-awaited Williams effort. And Bally, with their Midway company always a force to be reckoned with, still churns out new games. All in all, the excitement is around the TV screen once again—and the look for the novel breakthrough that some foreign company may be willing to license to some other enterprise willing to take a shot at it. But more and more, developement and innovation is also coming back to these shores regarding video, in the hopes of stealing away some of Japan's thunder.

However, this is still a column for pinball machines and now with the addition of PLAY METER's video reviews, you'll undoubtedly get a fairly good view of video, as well as a critic's personal ratings of those marvels of electronics.

As for pinball and those still in love with the games, all is not lost. In fact, this year's show should be fairly exciting for those looking to see the next generation of pin games. You're going to be seeing "new levels of excitement," to paraphrase someone in the industry, as well as some timely departures from the old standards of pinball play.

Most of all, though, you're going to see, and have been seeing, a further tightening up of individual company philosophy and direction regarding programming and innovative design in trying to stem the tide away from pinball and getting the balance back to coin-machines in general. For the most part, the pins have something to offer everyone: admittedly, some efforts fall far short of the mark, but at least the attempts are being made to travel new roads and offer new intricacies to pinball play.

On the floor and in the news will be Bally's parade of hoped-for hits led by *Skateball* (reviewed this time around) as well as *Frontier* and the much-anticipated *Xenon*. Look for some new wrinkles here on this company's machines, including some new playfield designs, a further integration of memory and the addition of a new voice to talking games. And, as always, for sure there will be some other surprises up the sleeves of this dynamic manufacturer as it hopes to recapture some of the market it has lost to its competition over the last couple of years.

Gottlieb brings in some news with their turning to time and the introduction of *James Bond* (also in this column this month) as well as some offerings such as a one-player pinball and a new time-factor pinball machine, which they hope will have people lining up. Game Plan, at this point of writing, is still an unknown factor, although, hopefully, one and all will get the opportunity to try out their big pin game *Global Warfare*. And as for Atari, speculation still runs rampant that they'll be showing at least two pinballs at the show, although this writer isn't holding his breath to see them, thinking that the return to pinball is still some time away for this very successful video games manufacturer.

Moving on to Stern, after you've looked at their video line-up and the much talked about *Flight 2000* (read about it in a bit), check out *Nine Ball*

Roger's Ratings At-A-Glance

Bally's SKATEBALL..... ### **Stern's FLIGHT 2000**..... ####

Gottlieb's JAMES BOND..... ##

their next multi-ball game and Steve Kirk's third effort for the company, which has a little bit for everyone.

But, for many, the news will still be at Williams, which has been on such a hot streak. Their new *Alien Poker* shows that basic pinball strategy and design can be still as successful as all the gimmicks in the world, and looks to be a world-beater unto itself, along with the much anticipated Steve Richie effort—the multi-level, multi-faceted *Black Knight*, along with some other exciting things bound to bring in the crowds.

On the whole, one can see the directions and thought all the companies are seemingly taking to keep pinball a viable entry in the cashbox sweepstakes. And this show probably reflects the mood more than any other since the days of the late thirties and the scramble for a still-infant industry's dollars and *sense*. Also, one hopes that the foreign manufacturers won't be scared off by what's happening domestically and will also be a factor at the show, whether it be some of the novel approaches found last year or just your old basic flipper and steel ball variety pinball machine. Time will tell.

As for this month's games, here's three which will be at the show for some close-up inspection by all of you who have not yet encountered them on distributors floors or locations. Each has something going for it and should prove interesting on a couple of different levels as to the general reaction to them and what they're all about. So let's take a look.

Bally's SKATEBALL

No *Flash*-in-the-pan is this newest effort from the folks at Bensenville, who are trying to break away from what they've been introducing of late.

PLAYFIELD: The action begins with a center access shooter that leads to a top three lanes (1-2-3). Just at the sides and below this entry are a right side spinner, a left side three-drop-target bank as well as a top left flipper and a center three thumper bumper area. Move down, and in the middle are another three drop targets and a left side five bank with a complementary right side flipper and recessed kick-out hole. The bottom offers a bit of a variation with a left lane (A) leading down and over toward the flipper as well as a post separating yet another lane and death straight down, although there are some nudging possibilities. The right side is a roll-over lane (B) to the flipper with a rebounding rubber in front for shades of some old Gottlieb designs.

ANALYSIS: *Skateball* may offer some "deja vu" for those who haven't forgotten that Williams blockbuster *Flash*. In fact, one of the comments I heard from a player was whether Williams minded their basic design being imitated and whether it had ever been done before. Well, I suppose the answers are probably yes and definitely yes.

But there have been some modifications and updating, including a right flipper lane-change feature, although it's not pointed out anywhere and an additional flipper and set of drop targets, as well as some other nuances such as at the bottom of the field. The game is basically one where the top lanes out mean bonus multiplier up to 5X, as well as the possiblity of getting it from the top three drops at the left when lit. The middle three targets offer their own values up to 100,000 points and the left side drops (S-K-A-T-E) step up the right side kick-out hole values, similar to *Flash* with a potential extra ball value and a countdown

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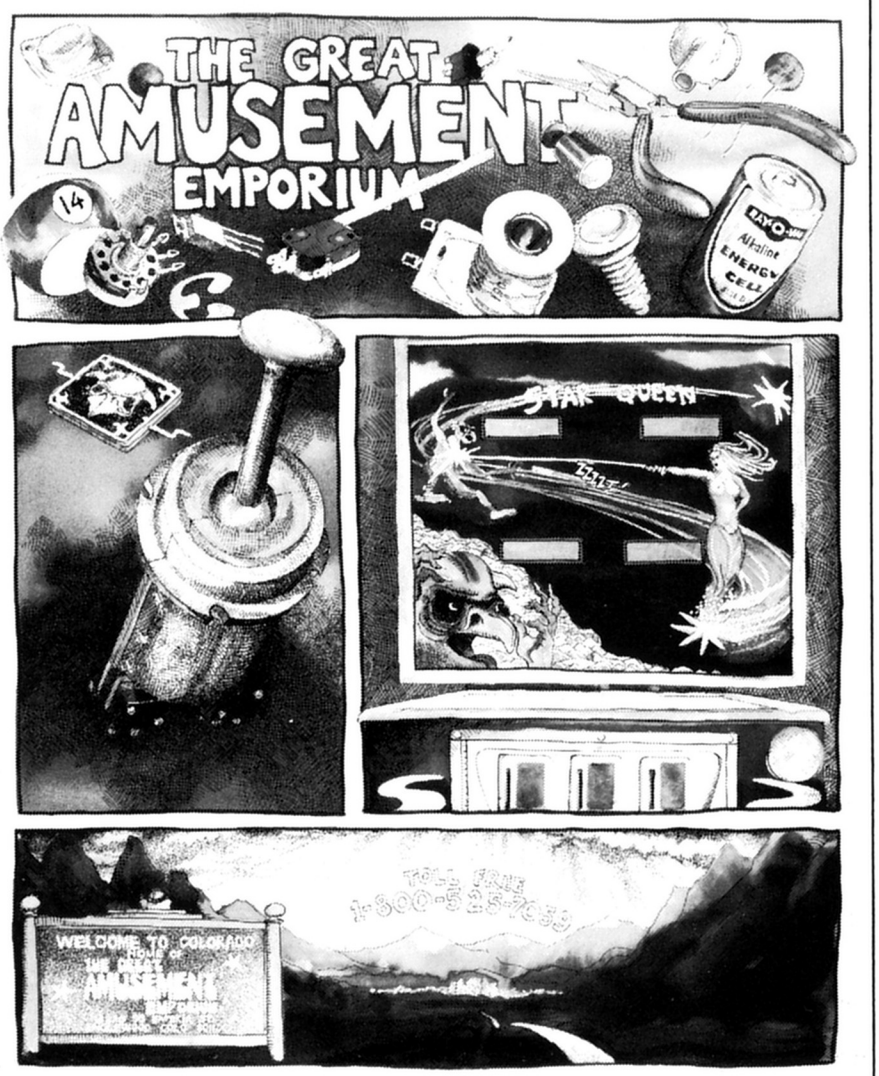

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feature. There's also the addition of out-hole bonus build-ups holding over at 20,000 points up to 40,000 and 60,000 and special value.

All in all, the scoring is ample for Bally's first production model seven-digit scoring game (complete with a very nice touch, commas). The shots for the most part are Flashian with some good sweeps from that top right flipper as well as some good activity from that top left little flipper. On the bottom, the movement is basically left-to-right and right-to-left although there are some nice reverses back up through the spinner and over to the targets.

GRAPHICS: Thank goodness we've gotten a break from space as Bally forgoes the norm and once again gives us a lively and colorful theme in their unique style. Skateboards are still hot, especially on the West Coast —and the motif here is faithful to those helmeted, padded youths who can make their way down the highways and byways without falling off. There's striking color everywhere and it's good eye-catching treatment.

PLAY: The scoring on *Skateball*, as I mentioned, is into the seven-digit range, without being hyped to do so; and limits should be set accordingly. For three-ball play in extra ball areas you might want to recognize the building quality of the playfield and set a first limit of about 400,000 points followed by about 800,000 and 2,000,000 points. For free play you should be okay by raising these levels by anywhere from 200,000 to 400,000 each depending upon the caliber of play at the location.

PROS & CONS: I suppose that the majority of comments I've heard at location level is the fact that the game is a re-done *Flash*, which can be taken as a positive as well as a negative. For those who loved the former and haven't tired of its basic play, here's the chance to get back into it, but for those who had enough, the other additions to this version may not be enough to sustain their interest over the long haul.

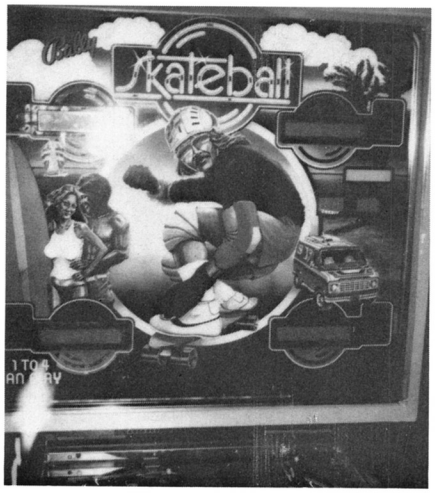
As to the merits of the game itself, it is a nice playing machine with many different things for any player to get involved with, as well as a heap of strategy in building up out-hole bonus points alone as well as that right side kick-out hole. But hopefully, for the future, Bally will show a bit more completeness in orginality, although imitation is the greatest form of flattery. Maybe *Sharpshooter* can resurface as well by somebody's design. But seriously, *Skateball* itself is a solid game that's far more intricate and exciting than some of their previous entries.

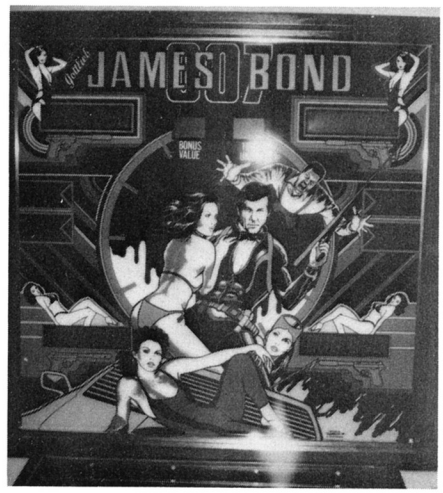
RATING: ###

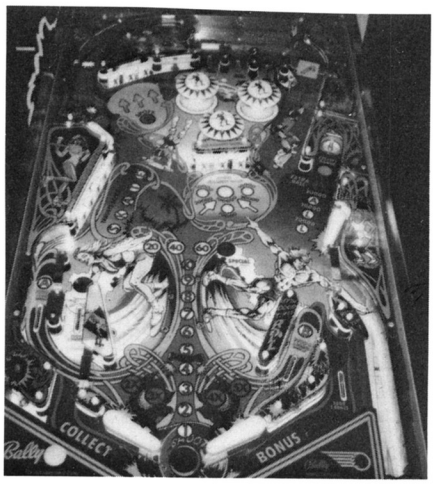
Stern's FLIGHT 2000

The next Harry Williams extravaganza from Stern is truly an imaginative game that should prove to be a big winner for this company that has garnered some incredible success over the past few years. Multi-ball, seven-digit, and speech—the whole ball of wax is here.

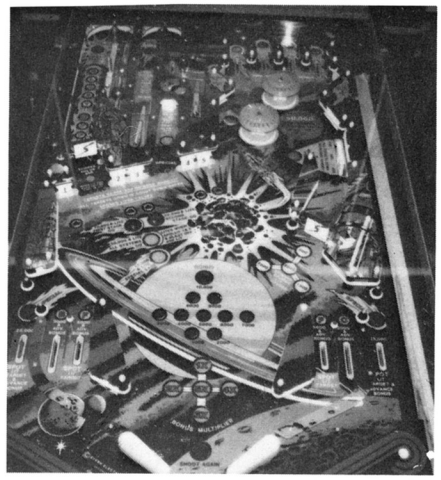
PLAYFIELD: This big game size machine begins with four right side lanes (L-A-S-T) and leads down to two side targets with the left providing B, in a spelling out endeavor. Move down, and two thumper bumpers and to a right side bank of three-drop-targets are separated by the major part of the field



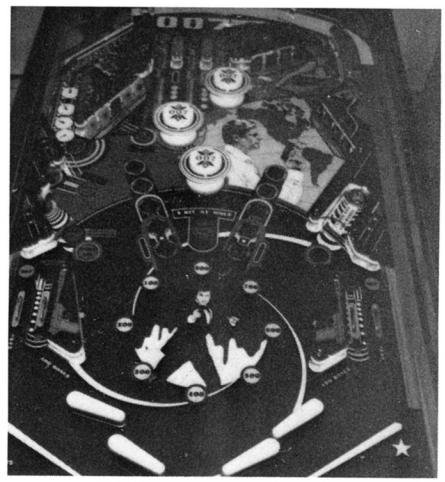




Bally's SKATEBOARD



Stern's FLIGHT 2000



Gottlieb's JAMES BOND

by a long rubber and a lower spinner entry. Back at mid-field there is a two bank set-up reading right to left (5-4); in between is a deep recessed target for special value as well as increased points and multiplier. Next to this are another two-drop-targets (3-2) and then a spinner lane and a lone right side target (1).

That spinner lane leads up to a launching maze for captive balls and a kick-up to a kick-up and back up to the top of the field. The bottom borrows heavily from *Cheetah* with the double lanes leading down to the flippers and a center post and also supplies some missing letters in completing O-F-F and a chance for multi-ball play.

ANALYSIS: With speech and all the rest, *Flight 2000* has much to offer with those three-drop-targets at the right also supplying bonus multiplier up to a max of 15X, which isn't that easy to accomplish. The basic play, however, is to spell out B-L-A-S-T O-F-F and to then hit down those 1 through 5 drop targets in reverse order and sequence to complete the countdown and get to "all systems go". It's an exciting board and offers a novel way to utilize the space of the field as well as the multiple ball play with the balls traveling back up to the top after being systematically released, rather than coming down to the flippers directly from a variety of angles.

The key shots are that long spinner through the maze, which is makeable from the left flipper on a reverse but is far better from the right flipper, as well as that short right side spinner from the left flipper for copping those three-drop-targets in one fell swoop, which sometimes means an extra 50,000 points as well as multiplier. The rebounding and nudging are all there —and there are some good shots to those sequence drop targets and more than enough variations on the theme to have the machine being many games in one: going for multiplier, spelling out letters, and ultimately getting to that multi-ball play.

GRAPHICS: Rocket ships flying away from or to an exploding planet with blues and a bit of silver make *Flight 2000* an attractive package although we're still locked into that space theme. But it is a striking game and with Stern's flashing lights and seven-digit scoring (which isn't abused here) as well as the utilization of speech, this may be a machine whose time has indeed come, given the action it also provides.

PLAY: Scoring is ample and the extra digit gives you some play in setting the game. For extra ball areas and the stacking ability Stern is featuring, you might want to consider a 600,000 point start followed by 1,200,000 and 2,400,000 points. As for free play you should be able to get away with increase to these limits of about 200,000 to 400,000 points each.

PROS & CONS: It's just a super effort blemished by the fact that the lower guides to the flippers aren't wire forms, but rather the same as *Cheetah* with the plastic overlay supposedly offering the sturdiness as it rests on its posts. But the ball has a tendency to bounce over this configuration if the velocity is too great and really can take away from the basic play of the game. Hopefully, this can be rectified on future games or models the company introduces.

But still and all, the basic play of the game is sound, with some very good build ups that should keep players interested and coming back for more in trying to master the game.

RATING: ####

Gottlieb's JAMES BOND

Not overdoing the celebrity tie-in motif, this company has chosen a rather sound personage to grace its newest entry which may be remembered more for what it offers rather than who it offers: no knock to Roger Moore.

PLAYFIELD: The Dimension 80 playfield begins with a center three 007 lanes and leads down to a drop target bank of five on the left, over to a four drop target bank at the top right and a center area of three thumper bumpers. Move down to the right and there's another four drop target bank while over at the left are two targets and an alley way back up to the top that's balanced by a large opening at the top right for access back to the top. Move down to the right and there's a recessed target, and the bottom is a steep conventional wire form and lane set up leading down to a set of double flippers.

ANAYLSIS: The big news about *James Bond* is that it may usher in the future of pinball since it takes an old idea of play based on time, previously tried on an old Williams *Travel Time* and holds out the hope that the time has come for both operator and player to set a game in

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play where a player might have one ball or many, many more depending upon how he can build up time units or drain them down. The basic play is in the drop target banks with the three banks being color coded (the top left is yellow with a center purple target; the top right is green and the side right is red). Any time two targets are hit at once, the time units are increased and can subsequently light those left side targets and alley way for increased values of time along with bonus multiplier from the lower left target. Complete appropriate banks and the "clock" stops; don't and you'll get ticked off literally and figuratively. Get the yellow bank down and leave the purple for last and even that offers more time units, while getting out the top three 007 lanes means a momentary stop to the ticking off of not seconds but, rather time units.

And that's the game with a flipper set-up that offers not only scissoring but also some decent reverses and long shots around the board. And when the clock goes down to zero there is still some hope from that right side recessed target for an incremental increase of 20 bonus time units.

GRAPHICS: A lot of black, some scantily clad girls, Jaws himself and the ever-present Roger Moore get across the message and the recognizability that is sure to follow wherever this game is placed, although it's a shame there isn't a new Bond movie scheduled to hit this holiday season.

PLAY: Well, fun seekers, *Jame Bond* isn't free play or extra ball, only *time* and because of that, forget the limits and this part of the review, unless there's a way to increase the timer in the program beyond the 50 limit. If it's possible do it; the games I've played at various locations only goes to a max of 50, which means if a player has gotten up to the high 40's and then collects more, the game will only go up to 50. Also, after every ball, an additional 5 time units are taken away unless the clock has been stopped before going out.

PROS & CONS: Has the time come for a game based totally on time? Probably, although this effort might not be the best utilization and integration of the method. Obviously, everyone is toying around with time as witnessed by its popping up from almost every manufacturer in some way, shape or form, but on *James Bond* the process fails for the most part because of the board. As one person said to me, "the geometry is all wrong for the size of the game; in fact, given what the game offers in terms of features, they probably could have done a better job proportionately on a conventional-size game and not had all the wasted space." And there are some death-defying drains from that left side roll-down as well as that top right opening.

Or, said another person, "this may set time machines back in time". One of the basic problems is that, compared to *Travel Time* this machine has the player playing *against* time rather that *with* it. And there's a big difference. On the old *Travel Time*, time as a concept was integrated into the play of the game where you could start and stop the clock depending upon features that you hit around the board, and the basic play of the game was such that it wasn't cut-throat about offering a player a chance for real build-ups in time units.

Here it's different, with many of the shots being far too difficult to warrant the scanty amount of time units a player is rewarded. Obviously, you don't want a player to play for time on end, but even the idea of losing those 5 time units after every ball is kind of a slap in the face for most players. Ideally, this first attempt will mean future improvements on an approach destined to be the format for pinball to come, but here it falls short of the mark not only in terms of how it's used but also because of the design.

The one saving point is that in extra ball areas the game is going to be received probably far better than free play areas where players like to rack up specials, and that's too bad for them (being an extra ball player myself), but beyond that is the layout of the board, making this effort infinitely far better for home use, rather than the arcade.

RATING: ##

Well, there you have it and maybe, if you're at the show, you've been making your own judgements as to the respective machines. You'll probably let me know as I walk around the show floor anyway, but apart from these three, next month I'll recap the show and what was previewed as well as, hopefully, give a look at any of the foreign models ready to break on these shores.

Arcade and Amusement Tokens

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There seem to be as many reasons for reading Play Meter as there are readers.

PLAY METER

Space dodge

The first product to be introduced in America by Nanao Corporation will be *Space Beam*, a new coin-operated video game engineered to appeal to distributors and operators as much as to the game-playing public.

Space Beam, with a 19" full color monitor, has been designed specifically for ease of operation and servicing, featuring heavy-duty rubberized casters and a built-in hand grip to enable movement from location to location by a single person.

For the player, *Space Beam* offers six separate programs which increase in difficulty, adding to the challenge which faces the player or players.

The object of the game is to destroy the Alien Space Ship with the beam from the player's ship. The beams, both alien and friendly, are governed by the ships' fuel levels, shown on separate multi-colored fluid-type bar graphs. With each shot, fuel is depleted and must build up again before maximum firing range is attained, so the player is called upon to use hands, eyes, and brain simultaneously to dodge the skittish Alien when fuel is low, then to search him out and fire at just the right moment before he is fired upon.

Check counter

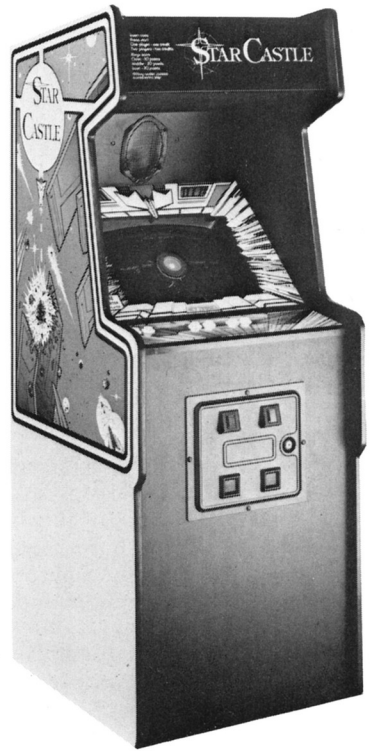
A bulk check counter is now available for Abbott's versatile *Exacta DC 900* document processing machine.

Designed for preparation of statements for bulk-filed checks, the option permits an operator to key-in the number of checks listed on statements; the *DC 900* then automatically counts out that number and stops to facilitate check/statement verification.

"With this new bulk counter, we've expanded the *DC 900*'s ability to support the broad variety of document processing jobs performed by our customers," said Allen W. Merrell, Jr., regional sales manager for Abbott Coin Counter Co.

The electronic *DC 900* automatically counts, batches, endorses, and cancels documents and currency. Capable of handling up to 1200 items per minute, it is recommended for use by banks, retailers, and other operations which process brick and fit or unfit currency or paper documents such as checks and coupons.

The *Exacta DC 900* is available through district representatives of Abbott, Stamford Connecticut. Abott, manufacturer of money handling equipment since 1911, is a full service supplier of coin, currency, and document counting systems as well as bill and coin wrapping materials and related products.



Breaking through

Cinematronics, Inc. announced the debut of its latest space action game, *Star Castle*. A one or two player game, *Star Castle* features the patented Vectorbeam monitor.

The object of the game is to fly a space ship around the screen and shoot your way through the Star Castle's walls to get at the energy cannon in the center.

Exploding the energy cannon give the player an extra ship. But the player must beware—when he has a shot at the cannon, the cannon also has a shot at him.

Like Cinematronics' previous hit, *Rip Off*, *Star Castle* features progressive levels of difficulty. This gives the player increasing challenge as the score goes higher. There is also a new, easier-to-service cabinet design. And a 90-day warranty is given on all major components.

A two-bit fortune teller

"The world's most advanced fortune-telling machine" will be exhibited by Nanao Corporation at the AMOA Exposition in Chicago October 31 through November 2.

Called *Astrocraft*, the sophisticated device is a coin-operated computer, programmed to furnish astrological readings or horoscopes, and is very simple to operate.

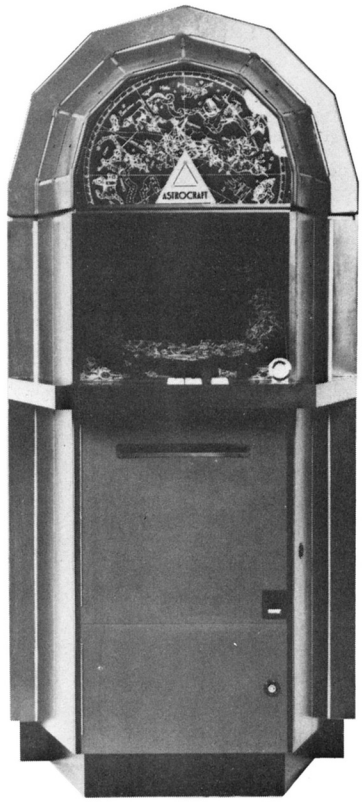
Using a color video monitor and a keyboard, the participant inputs birthday, time of birth, birthplace, name, sex, and category of interest.

In a matter of minutes, *Astrocraft* furnishes the horoscope for either the birthdate or any future date the participant selects.

The categories of interest are love, marriage, money, lifework, health, intelligence, and circumstances. Each of the categories can be rendered for both the birthdate and future date.

Astrocraft affords both a readout on the cathode ray tube and a printout that the participant may keep. The information provided would require several hours of work by a professional astrologer. Yet it is furnished in minutes by *Astrocraft* at a fraction of the cost that would normally be paid.

Nanao Corporation will display two versions of *Astrocraft* at the AMOA in booths C-19 and C-20 in the Continental Room of the Conrad Hilton. Visitors will have the opportunity to see their own horoscopes generated by *Astrocraft* free of charge.



Zapped in Space

"Midway's new *Space Zap* is the first game concept that is available in all three of our models aimed to open more locations and reach a new range of players," says Stan Jarocki, vice president of marketing for Midway Manufacturing Company. "It's one or two player video game that challenges all comers to test their concentration and reaction."

Space Zap is made in a standard arcade model, a cocktail table model and the new Midway "Mini-Myte" cabinet size and style that takes up little space and produces income from limited areas. All tests have proved this game is a real winner, said Jarocki.

The action of this game features a Laser Base that is the target of Space Mines fired from alien Space Ships which attack at random from four directions—north, south, east, and west. A successful hit by a Space Mine causes the explosive destruction of the Laser Base. At unexpected intervals, the aliens launch an Attack Satellite that orbits the Laser Base and strikes without warning from any direction.

The player defends the Laser Base with multi-directional fire power. He presses the Aim buttons to direct his laser and with the other hand, he presses the Fire button to leash destruction on the attackers. Greater concentration and eye/hand coordination are demanded as the alien attack speeds up.

Space Zap features sonic battle sounds, laser blasts, flashing lights—adding extra excitement to the game challenge.

The "Mini-Myte" model measures 58½" in height, 19½" in width, and 24" in depth. The cocktail table model measures 29" by 32" by 22". The standard arcade model measures 73" by 26½" by 34" in depth.

Reflex action

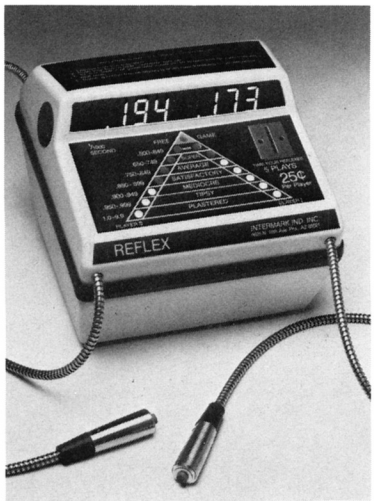
Intermark Industries, Inc., announced the introduction of a new counter-top two-player game, *Reflex*.

"The game has been successfully tested in Phoenix and Chicago," Intermark president John Walsh said. "The operator's return based on his investment has truly been phenomenal." For 50 cents for two players, or 25 cents per player, you can test your reflex skill on a five try play. "Microprocessor based circuitry offers added reliability," said Walsh. "The game features an electronic coin meter with digital readout for effective control and a battery back-up memory for coin readout rentention if the unit is unplugged. Backlighted LEDs electronically display the player's game skill level on the face of the unit.

"The compact and modular game comes with a large capacity locked cashbox with a metal door. An additional lock system shipped with the game fastens the unit to a bar with armored cables used to protec the wiring."

The game's dimensions are: height—6 5/16", width—7 3/4", depth—7 1/2", and weight—3 1/2 pounds. The game comes with 50/60 Hz and 115/200 VAC.

For information contact Intermark Industries, Inc., 8625 North 19th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85021, (602)944-9315; or at the 1980 Expo, Booth P-12, East Room, Conrad Hilton, Chicago.



A new name in phonos

Centuri, Inc.'s "2001" phonograph utilizes advanced technology and a streamlined, compact mechanism manufactured with components on precision Swiss tooling, and the Hialeah, Florida producer.

Contemporary styling of "2001" is enhanced with a title display that presents decorative graphics.

A special display area is allocated for latest hits. The operator can highlight this feature with location favorites, top vocalist of the week, seasonal tunes, or ethnic favorites.

The sound system is fine-tuned, using the latest in high-fidelity stereophonic technology.

There is also a programmable Top Ten selector button by which a player can buy the top hits for one operator-adjustable price.

The Centuri *"2001"* will be shipped from the factory set for 200 plus 10 (the Top Ten) selections. The unit is convertible to 160 plus 10, or 100 plus 10 selections. Swiss mechanism makes the phonograph compact and able to be manufactured at a lower cost, said the Hialeah firm.

Shipping is expected to start during the first quarter of 1981.

High-speed car chase

Mad Alien is the new high-speed car chase video game from Data East. The color screen features "driving" by day and night through streets and dark tunnels.

Obstacle cars swerve in front of the player's car, and "mad aliens" turn back to attack, shooting as they come.

A lever on the game moves the player's car to the left or right and a button unleashes "fire" on the attackers. Points are awarded depending on whether troops, subleader, or leader are hit, and on whether the aliens are in formation or attack positions. Double points are awarded for hitting a mad alien when he turns back to attack the car.

Operator's options include the number of cars (three to six) given the player before the game is over.

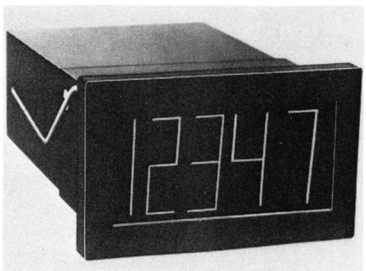
Mad Alien is available in mini-upright or upright stand from Data East.

Electronic totalizer

The *AC 5* electronic totalizer is designed to replace older electro-mechanical counters in applications such as dispensing where higher speeds now require electronics.

The *AC 5* from Kessler-Ellis Products features five bright, .375 inch high displays, accepts AC or DC pulses and features a unique built-in "Beeper" for audibly monitoring the counter's operation.

Other standard features such as "times 2" multiplier, decimal point locations and battery standby are also edge connector selectable. The *AC 5* is a fully C/MOS "state of the art" instrument, handsomely packaged in a UL-listed 2" x 1" plastic frame.



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Fighting battalions

The first *Moon Cresta* video upright games have rolled off the Gremlin/Sega line and are on their way into distributor showrooms. Operators in the United States and Canada expect to cash in on the success *Moon Cresta* is experiencing in Japan and Europe, said the manufacturer.

Moon Cresta offers players the opportunity to pilot a triad of space ships through the unknown elements of the universe. Each *Moon Cresta* ship is challenged by battalions of the moon-based Zupus, Helicon, Mercator, Taurids, and Titan craft in a space galaxy combat zone. The pilot's aim is to increase defense by docking all three *Moon Cresta* ships together for maximum firing power.

Bob Harmon, director of marketing, said *Moon Cresta* is a natural addition to the Gremlin/Sega game line. It combines all the elements essential to a great game: continuous action, exciting sound effects, the use of color, and challenge that tempts players to come back for more."

Gremlin/Sega has the exclusive license to manufacture and sell the *Moon Cresta* upright video game in the United States and Canada, said the San Diego manufacturer.

A cue rack that can't miss

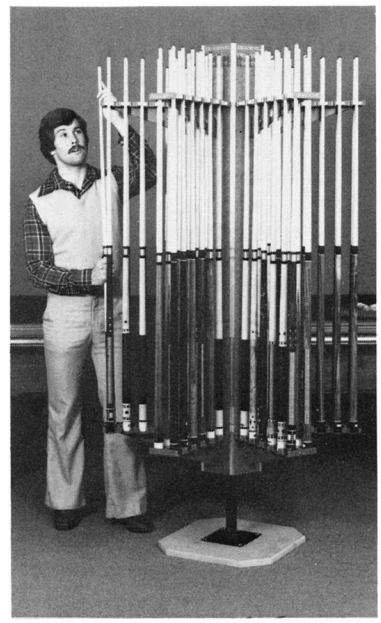
The Deadeye Cue Rack displays 72 cues in a space 3 feet square. The rack is portable allowing placement near pool tables or in any chosen traffic area.

It rotates 360 degrees for convenient cue and accessory selection. The Deadeye Cue Rack is manufactured by Insport Inc., a national wholesaler of billiard and coin-op supplies.

Insport offers the rack separately or packaged with an assortment of domestic or imported cues and a full line of Deadeye accessories, blister packed for sporting goods stores.

For more information about the Deadeye Cue Rack, call Doug Stewart toll free at 1-800-426-4740, or 1-800-562-4710 (Wa).

The Deadeye Cue and Accessory Display Rack can be seen at the AMOA Show, booths 58-59.



Pinball punctuation

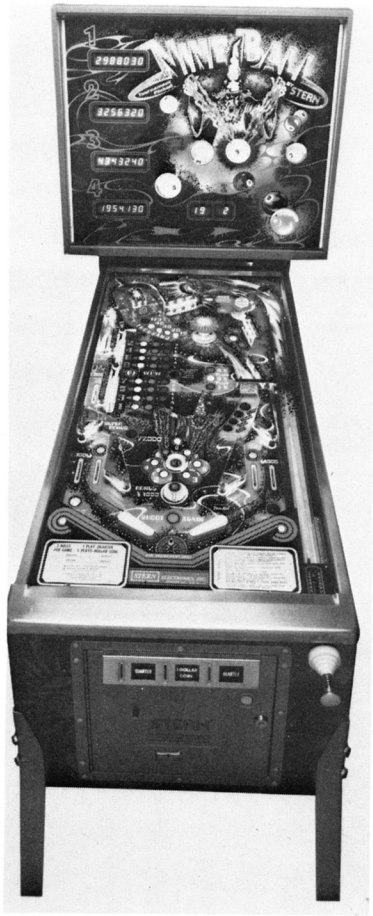
Skateball, the newest 4-player release and the first with 7-digit scoring with commas from Bally Pinball Division, features the feeling of playfield dominance with the new lane-control button. The right flipper button rotates the top playfield 1-2-3 ball lanes lights for player lane-control.

The S-K-A-T-E drop targets and A-B rollovers combine to advance the saucer values. The first completion of the skate sequence lights the saucer for 50K, the skate targets for 10,000 points each, and one top rollover button for bonus. The second completion lites the saucer for 100K and the other top button for bonus; the third lights the saucer for extra ball; and the fourth lights the outlane rollover special. Making A-B lights spinner for 1,000 points and the saucer extra ball light after the first completion of skate.

Another feature is the center set of drop-targets. Only the flashing value can be collected from these, alternating between 10,000 and 20,000 points. The 100,000-point light comes on after the second set of 20,000 are completed and can only be collected by knocking down all 3 drop-targets with the ball in play.

Along with these, Bally has also included some new operator features including new "tuck-away" fold-down backbox; improved bookkeeping functions that calculate replay percentages automatically; adjustable balls from 2, 3, 4, or 5; and adjustable award combinations for points and specials. Bally has also included a new, 4-quarter coin handling that will award the same bonus pricing as is given for one Susan B. Anthony dollar.

Skateball, Bally's newest flipper is colorful, timely, innovative, and exciting—as well as profit-promising.



Pinball game of pool

Stern Electronics, Inc. will premiere its latest solid state four-player pinball game, *9 Ball*, at the Amusement and Music Operators Association Exposition,. opening October 31 in Chicago.

Designed by Steve Kirk, *9 Ball* is programmed for quick playfield action and features an innovative series of new skill shots. Fast game action is complemented by a playfield light show and brightly colored backglass of bold, contemporary design.

Like pocket billiards, *9 Ball* is a game of skill. Incorporating the latest pinball technology, the new game boasts a number of innovative scoring features, among them:

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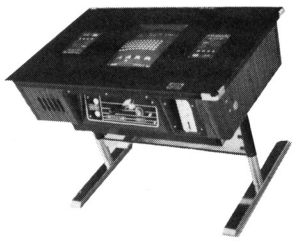

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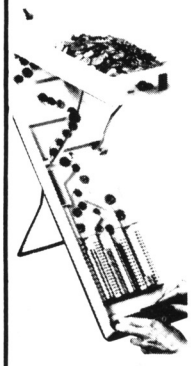

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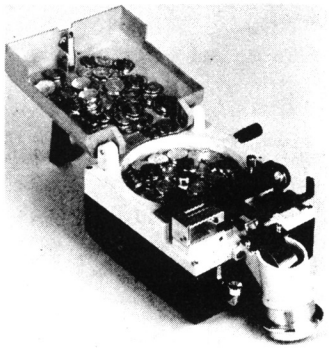

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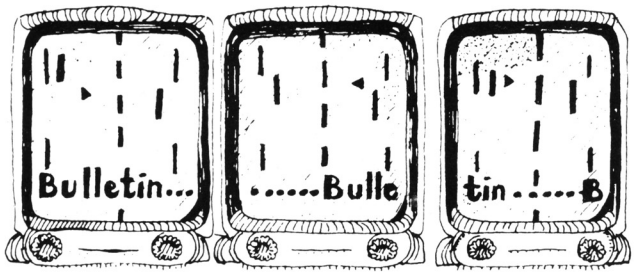


NEWS BRIEFS

. . . . The New Jersey Casino Control Commission has approved a three-month extension of Bally's temporary casino permit to operate Park Place in Atlantic City. This will allow operation at least through December 29. Hearings on a permanent license are expected to be completed by that date. The state's gaming enforcement division had recommended denial of a permanent license for Bally--which has a $300 million investment in the 83 percent owned casino and hotel. Bally officials have said they are confident that the allegations shadowing the permit will be dispelled.....

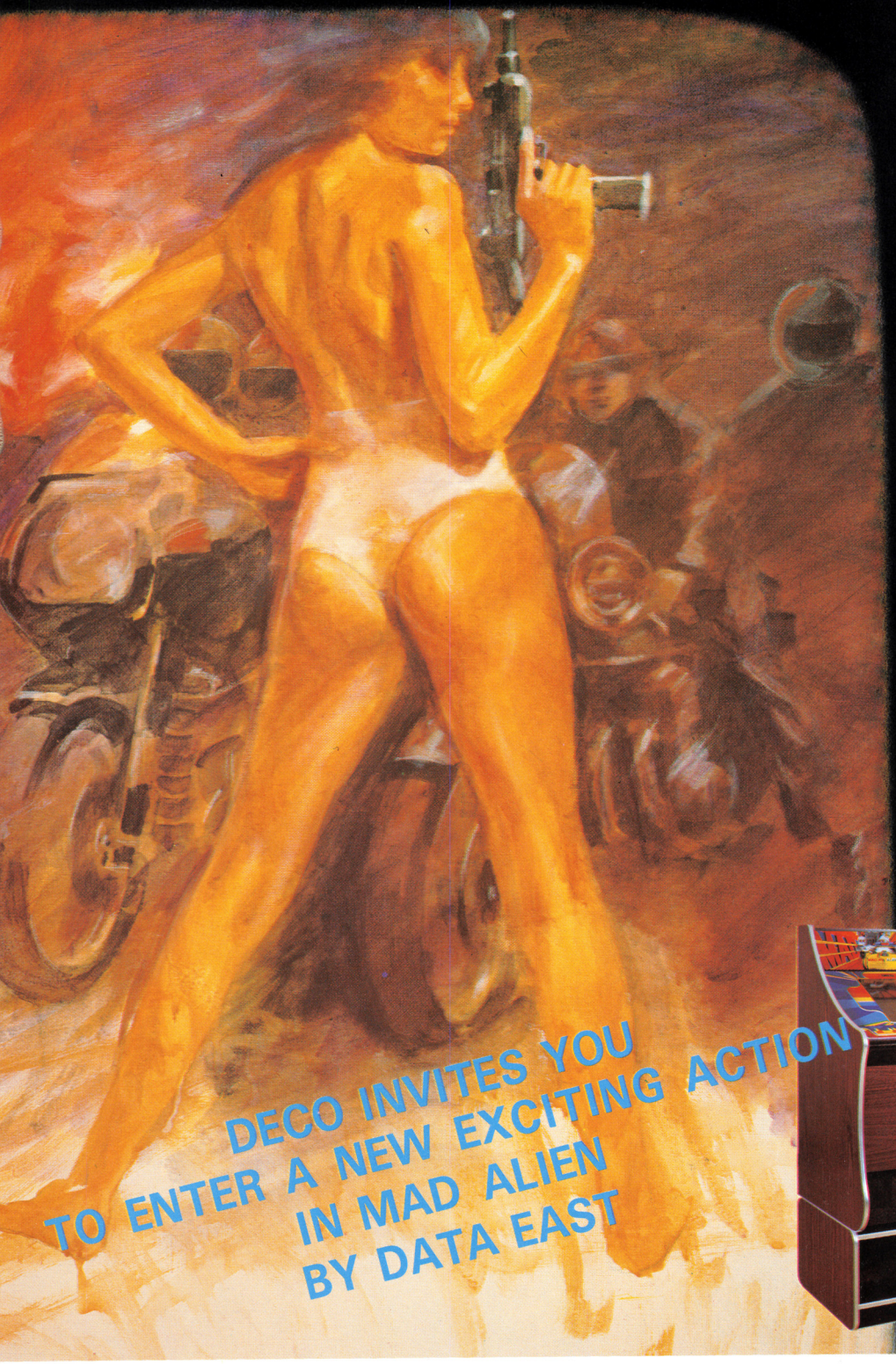
. . . . Michigan operators faced the threat of a 4 percent sales tax on amusement machines in the state government's new fiscal year beginning in October. A financial crunch on the state treasury was leading the legislators to consider new sources of needed revenues. An end to sales tax exemption on services was one alternative--and that would entail the application of 4 percent tax on amusement machines. The Music Operators of Michigan (MOM) association was gathering steam for a lobbying action but advised members against contacting legislators now....

. . . .Sparky Electronics has a new address and a new, larger facility at 64-62 Dry Harbor Road, Middle Village, New York 11378. The service firm sells its own video overlay and modifications for Space Invaders and Asteroids. In an open house October 5, Sparky showed off a Galaxian modification and advised that a Missile Command modification kit may be coming out shortly. The new quarters at Middle Village provide ample space for research and development expansion, manufacturing, and production, said Sparky. Telephone: (212)459-0950. .....

. . . . IAAPA now has an office in the nation's capital. The association's new Government Relations office is located at 1025 Vermont Ave., Suite 330, Washington, D.C. 20007. John Graff, a specialist in government affairs and association work, is the full-time counsel and director of IAAPA government relations. .....

. . . .Game-A-Tron is moving toward a stronger position in the gaming devices industries, said Irv Jeffries, sales manager. It became a public company in July and sought larger production facilities. New games from the New Britain, Connecticut firm are Cosmickaze, Stage 4, and Asteroid Express. These, plus its video game Zap and gaming machines Blackjack, Draw Poker, and Thoroughbred Derby, will be on show at the AMOA convention in Chicago. "Soon we'll be number 2," Jeffries vowed.....

MAD ALIEN



DECO INVITES YOU
TO ENTER A NEW EXCITING ACTION
IN MAD ALIEN
BY DATA EAST

THE GAME

- A THRILLING HIGH SPEED CAR CHASE AFTER A GROUP OF MAD RIDING ALIENS.
- YOU WILL BE DRIVING BY DAY AND BY NIGHT, THROUGH CITY STREETS AND DARK TUNNELS.
- OBSTACLE CARS WILL SWERVE IN FRONT OF YOU AND MAD ALIENS WILL TURN BACK TO ATTACK YOU SHOOTING AS THEY COME.

TO PLAY

- INSERT YOUR COIN AND PRESS THE ONE PLAYER OR TWO PLAYERS BUTTON TO START.
- USE THE LEVER ON THE LEFT TO MOVE YOUR CAR TO LEFT OR RIGHT.
- LIGHTLY PRESS THE BUTTON ON THE RIGHT TO FIRE.
- IF YOU LOSE ALL YOUR CARS THE GAME IS OVER.

POINTS

	FORMATION	ATTACK
TROOPS	20	40
SUB-LEADER	40	80
LEADER	80	160 OR MYSTERY

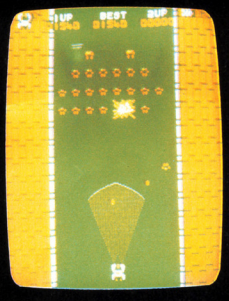
- YOU WILL RECIEVE DOUBLE POINTS IF YOU HIT A MAD-ALIEN WHEN HE TURNS BACK TO ATTACK YOU.
- DON'T FORGET YOUVE A CHANCE TO WIN MYSTERY POINTS.

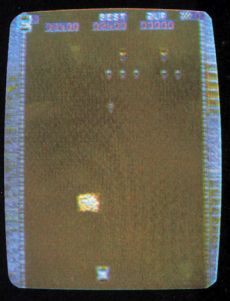
OPERATOR'S DIP SWITCH OPTIONS INCLUDE

- POINTS FOR BONUS MAD-ALIEN.
  3000, 5000, 7000, Nil
- GAME CHARGE

1COIN	1COIN	2COINS
1PLAY	2PLAYS	1PLAY

- NUMBER OF CARS PER PLAY
  3, 4, 5, 6,





FEATURES

- MINI-UPRIGHT

POWER SUPPLY	AC 115, 220, 240 ±10%
POWER CONSUMPTION	95W
DIMENSIONS (mm)	W×D×H=570×595×910
WEIGHT (kg)	45
CRT	14" COLOUR

- STAND

DIMENSIONS (mm)	W×D×H=570×595×300
WEIGHT (kg)	10

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Gottlieb

AMUSEMENT GAMES

The future is already here at Gottlieb

Visit us at the 1980 AMOA Show
Booth C81-C86 Conrad Hilton Hotel Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 1980