

PLAY METER

magazine

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- ▶ **ACME SHOW CHANGES SITES...**Citing an increased demand for exhibit space, officials for the 1991 American Coin Machine Exposition (ACME) have decided to move the Las Vegas show from Bally's Hotel to the new Sands Expo & Convention Center. The dates, however, are still March 22-24. *Play Meter* magazine and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) co-sponsor the show.

Exhibits, seminars, and the All-Show Cocktail Party will be held at the Sands Expo & Convention Center, but ACME will keep its block of hotel rooms at Bally's. Complimentary shuttle bus service will be provided between the two. For more information, contact William T. Glasgow Inc. at (708) 333-9292.
- ▶ **VLC, IGT TO MERGE...**Video Lottery Consultants, based in Bozeman, Mont., has entered into a letter of intent to merge with International Game Technology (IGT) of Reno, Nev., the world's largest manufacturer of gaming equipment. When completed, VLC and IGT will provide advanced video lottery control technology and terminals to the industry world-wide.

VLC offices and manufacturing facilities will remain in Bozeman. Recent expansion efforts have boosted production to 200 video lottery terminals per week, and management expects this trend to continue.

"We are very excited about the marketing and financial opportunities this agreement provides," said Larry Lippon, VLC's chief executive officer. "Our combined resources and technology will allow us to continue to lead the rapidly developing field of electronically controlled lottery systems."
- ▶ **YOUNG APPOINTED IFPA DIRECTOR...**The AMOA-International Flipper Pinball Association (IFPA) has named Doug Young as its executive director, replacing Joe Conway, who served on an interim basis. Young has a successful background in promotion, sales, club management, and organization leadership.

The AMOA-IFPA board of directors wished to thank Conway for his many contributions to the association during its infancy. He will again turn his full attention to the AMOA-National Dart Association, where he's been executive director for three years.

The first IFPA pinball tournament will take place on March 1-3 at the O'Hare Hilton Hotel in Chicago. It is open to AMOA and non-members alike this year; next year, only AMOA members or member-sponsored locations can participate.

For more information about the AMOA-IFPA, contact Young at (414) 263-0233. The address is 141 W. Vine St., Milwaukee, WI 53212.
- ▶ **MONDIAL HIRES GALEB...**Mondial International Corp. has named Fernando Galeb to the position of export sales manager. He comes to Mondial from R&M Distributing Co., where he had the same title.

Galeb will be headquartered at Mondial's executive offices in Pelham Manor, N.Y. He plans to travel extensively to South America, Central America, and the Caribbean.
- ▶ **AMOA CONFERENCE SET FOR MAY...**AMOA will hold its 1991 Government Affairs Conference on May 19-21 at the Capitol Hill Hyatt Regency in Washington, D.C. The conference gives AMOA members a chance to meet their elected representatives and be briefed on government regulations and legislation at the federal level.

Tentative program highlights include sessions on dollar coin legislation, video amusement gaming legislation, a jukebox licensing update, and legislation/regulations affecting tobacco vending; a briefing on key issues by AMOA officers and Robert Wilbur, AMOA's government affairs liaison; and visits with congressional members and their staffs.

The conference's social activities include the Congressional Reception and Congressional Pinball/Basketball/Electronic Dart Tournament, which pits members of Congress and their staffs against one another, along party lines.

In other AMOA news, the association's State Association Committee will sponsor its second winter meeting for state association executives and key officers on Jan. 22-23. The site is the Embassy Suites in Schaumburg, Ill. Among the topics slated for discussion are recruitment, legislative issues, and educational programs. For more information, contact Jim Stansfield, committee chairman, at (608) 782-7181.
- ▶ **GUSTAFSON PROMOTED...**Data East USA has promoted Pete Gustafson to the position of sales manager for the Midwest region. He will represent all three Data East product lines for the Midwest and central Canada.

Gustafson, who will be based out of the pinball facility in Melrose Park, Ill., had been field service manager for Data East Pinball since 1988. He's been in the industry for 10 years.
- ▶ **AMOA-NDA REMINDER...**Electronic darters will be vying for \$50,000 in prize money at the 6th Annual AMOA-National Dart Association (NDA) International Team Championships, set for April 30-May 4 at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas. Last year a record 352 four-person teams competed for \$40,000.

In addition to AMOA, dart manufacturers Merit Industries, Valley Recreation Products, and Arachnid co-sponsor the tournament. They also donate the machines for the event.

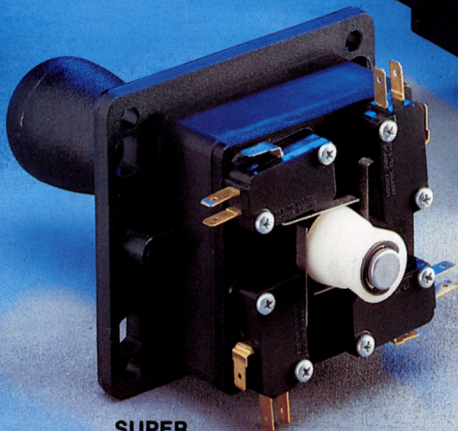
For more information on the association and the tournament, contact Joe Conway, 141 W. Vine St., Milwaukee, WI 53212; (414) 263-2444; FAX (414) 265-9199.
- ▶ **PIONEER NAMES TWO...**Pioneer Laser Entertainment has named David Drouillard and Tony Maniscalco Jr. its Midwestern and Eastern regional sales managers, respectively. They will oversee the sale of PLE's CD and LaserDisc jukeboxes.
- ▶ **SPARTAN MOVES...**Canada's Spartan Vending has relocated to new facilities. The address is 10404 136th Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5E 1W1. The phone number is (403) 477-7881.

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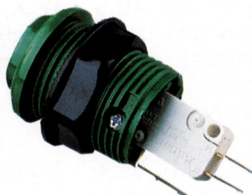
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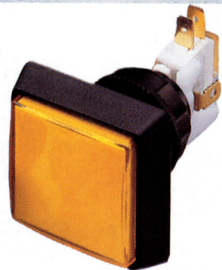
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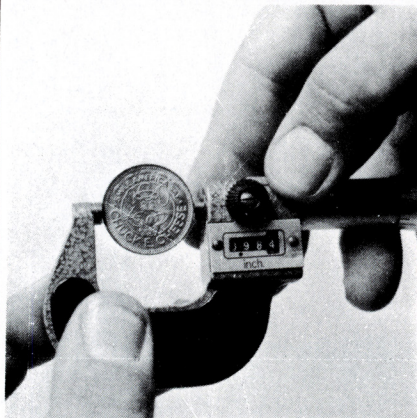
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FEATURES

Transportation **38**

A trio of articles related to transportation cover vehicles ("Which vehicles are tough enough?"), moving equipment ("Why strain yourself?"), and that costly but needed insurance ("Getting insurance for your operation"). Practical suggestions abound, with operator comments.

Coinman **48**

Southern gentleman Jim Overman of Gamemasters Inc. of Baton Rouge, La., discusses his views on today's coin-op condition. Sample subjects: ROI formulas, long-term investments, CD jukebox impact, game depreciation, bar pieces and 45s (or lack of), and a unique collector's incentive plan.

Game Reviews **81**

In response to reader requests for in-depth game reviews, this month we offer a new column, "Prime Time Pinball," in addition to our regular "Player's Perspective." Each is designed to give detailed information on the playability and appeal of currently available games.

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COVER

Arachnid has good reason to be proud after winning the AMOA award for Most Played Dart Game of 1990 for its product, *English Mark Darts*. From left: Marcio Bonilla (holding the plaque), Bill Ward and Sam Zammuto by the 6300T.

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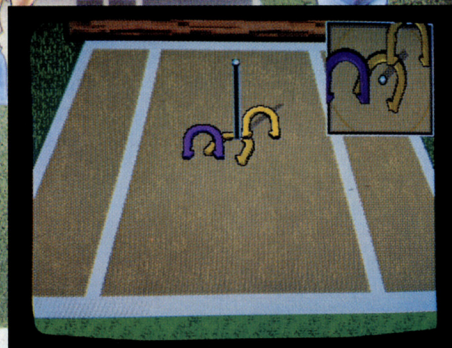
SHUUZ...Betcha can't toss just one!

Available as a universal kit. Includes PCB, trackball and buttons, JAMMA harness and artwork for header, control panel, bezel and side decals.

Up to 4 players can enjoy individual or team play.

A close-up view displays the winning Shuuz!

Optional "Beer Round" for bar and tavern locations.



EQUIPMENT POLL

Buying the right game can be a "make-or-break" proposition for the operator. This chart is based on operator evaluations and is designed to provide information needed to make prudent game purchases. The longevity points indicate a game's staying power.

VIDEO & PINBALL COMBINED

GAME	POINT VALUE	MONTHS ON CHART	MONTHS IN TOP 10
1. Simpsons (<i>Data East</i>)	8.71	2	2
2. Hard Drivin' (<i>Atari</i>)	8.64	21	21
3. Pit-Fighter (<i>Atari</i>)	8.61	3	3
4. Race Drivin' (<i>Atari</i>)	8.43	3	3
5. Final Fight (<i>Capcom</i>)	8.37	11	11
6. Dr. Dude (<i>Bally/Midway</i>)	8.17	2	2
7. TMNT (<i>Konami</i>)	7.93	13	13
8. Final Lap (<i>Atari</i>)	7.84	20	19
9. Elvira (<i>Bally/Midway</i>)	7.76	14	14
10. Four Trax (<i>Atari</i>)	7.63	10	10
11. Whirlwind (<i>Williams</i>)	7.60	11	11
12. Riverboat Gambler (<i>Williams</i>)	7.42	3	3
13. Cyclone (<i>Williams</i>)	7.41	21	21
14. GP Rider (<i>Sega</i>)	7.40	1	1
15. Super Off Road (<i>Leland</i>)	7.38	21	19
16. Turbo Out Run (<i>Sega</i>)	7.38	20	19
17. Ataxx (<i>Leland</i>)	7.33	2	2
18. Cyberball 2072 (<i>Atari</i>)	7.30	14	11
19. Track-Pak (<i>Leland</i>)	7.30	8	7
20. Earthshaker (<i>Williams</i>)	7.29	21	21
21. Police Force (<i>Williams</i>)	7.29	15	14
22. Out Run (<i>Sega</i>)	7.21	21	15
23. Magic Sword (<i>Capcom</i>)	7.21	3	3
24. Rai Den (<i>Fabtek</i>)	7.18	5	4
25. WWF Super Stars (<i>Am. Technos</i>)	7.16	18	17

REDEMPTION

	POINT VALUE		POINT VALUE
ALLEY BOWLERS		NOVELTY REDEMPTION	
1. Skee-Ball (<i>Skee Ball</i>)	8.50	1. Pop-A-Ball (<i>SMS/Coastal</i>)	8.89
BASKETBALL		2. Wacky Gator (<i>Data East</i>)	7.71
1. Hoop Shot! (<i>Doyle</i>)	8.20	3. Rock-N-Bowl (<i>Bromley</i>)	7.57
2. Shoot To Win (<i>Smart</i>)	6.82	4. Whac-A-Mole (<i>Bob's Space Racers</i>)	7.17
3. Championship Basketball (<i>Grayhound</i>)	6.50	5. TMNT Pizza Drop (<i>Capcom</i>)	6.86
4. Hoops (<i>Adastra</i>)	5.60	6. Toss Em (<i>Coin Concepts</i>)	6.83
JR. BASKETBALL		7. Knock Down (<i>Meltec</i>)	6.80
1. Dribbles Jr. Basketball (<i>Betson/Doyle</i>)	8.00	8. Rebound II (<i>Coin Concepts</i>)	6.67
ONE-PLAYER COIN PUSHER		9. Bozo Grand Prize Game (<i>Yankee Games</i>)	6.33
1. Starburst (<i>Coin Concepts</i>)	7.60	10. Can Alley (<i>Bob's Space Racers</i>)	5.80

EQUIPMENT POLL

VIDEO KITS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Final Flight (Capcom)	8.37	529	19. Championship Sprint (Atari)	6.25	55
2. Turbo Out Run (Sega)	7.38	693	20. Cadash (Taito)	6.17	59
3. Ataxx (Leland)	7.33	78	21. Blood Bros. (Fabtek)	6.14	*
4. Cyberball 2072 (Atari)	7.30	405	22. Hammerin' Harry (Fabtek)	6.13	*
5. Track-Pak (Leland)	7.30	222	23. Gate of Doom (Data East)	6.06	*
6. Magic Sword (Capcom)	7.21	99	24. Combatribes (Am. Technos)	6.03	106
7. Rai Den (Fabtek)	7.18	158	25. Capcom Bowling (Capcom)	6.00	150
8. WWF Super Stars (Am. Technos)	7.16	691	26. Double Dragon 3 (Am. Technos)	6.00	*
9. Baseball Stars (SNK)	7.00	81	27. Arch Rivals (Bally/Midway)	5.94	407
10. Champion Wrestler (Taito)	7.00	32	28. Thunder Fox (Taito)	5.91	*
11. All American Football (Leland)	6.94	335	29. Punk Shot (Konami)	5.83	*
12. Tetris (Atari)	6.89	262	30. Strata Bowling (Strata)	5.80	*
13. Super Spy (SNK)	6.88	18	31. Snow Bros. (Romstar)	5.77	3
14. Smash TV (Williams)	6.80	228	32. Out Zone (Romstar)	5.75	*
15. RoadBlasters (Atari)	6.74	212	33. Tecmo World Cup '90 (Tecmo)	5.75	13
16. Hydra (Atari)	6.50	73	34. Crime City (Taito)	5.70	39
17. M.V.P. (Sega)	6.47	163	35. Magician Lord (SNK)	5.56	10
18. Golden Axe (Sega)	6.42	574			

VIDEO DEDICATED

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Hard Drivin' (Atari)	8.64	1,101	9. Out Run (Sega)	7.21	628
2. Pit-Fighter (Atari)	8.61	143	10. Hit the Ice (Williams)	7.09	56
3. Race Drivin' (Atari)	8.43	146	11. Team Quarterback (Leland)	7.08	411
4. TMNT (Konami)	7.93	625	12. Space Gun (Taito)	7.00	21
5. Final Lap (Atari)	7.84	760	13. Chase H.Q. (Taito)	6.82	452
6. Four Trax (Atari)	7.63	389	14. Oper. Thunderbolt (Taito)	6.82	617
7. G P Rider (Sega)	7.40	37	15. G-Loc (Sega)	6.79	227
8. Super Off Road (Leland)	7.38	844			

PINBALLS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. The Simpsons (Data East)	8.71	99	9. Back to the Future (Data East)	6.65	46
2. Dr. Dude (Bally/Midway)	8.17	41	10. Mon. Night F'ball (Data East)	6.65	334
3. Elvira (Bally/Midway)	7.76	577	11. High Speed (Williams)	6.53	247
4. Whirlwind (Williams)	7.60	470	12. Taxi (Williams)	6.48	512
5. Riverboat Gambler (Williams)	7.42	110	13. Pinbot (Williams)	6.46	300
6. Cyclone (Williams)	7.41	755	14. Rollergames (Williams)	6.43	169
7. Earthshaker (Williams)	7.29	894	15. Phantom of the Opera (Data East)	6.39	291
8. Police Force (Williams)	7.29	530			

* New or reappearing games; look for longevity points next month.



FROM THE EDITOR

Down on the vine

I was thinking about the years I lived in the country—way out in the country...in the middle of absolutely nowhere (can't you tell how much I loved it)! One thing I did like about it was our 10 acres with wonderful fruit trees and lots and lots of blackberries.

During the blackberry season we would spend weeks picking those critters off the vines. There were so many that we could never pick them all, even though we gave it our best shot. People passing on the highway would often stop and ask if they could pick a few for themselves. "Yes!" we cried. There were enough blackberries to satisfy every blackberry lover within a 20 mile radius!

I'm sure there were more families than I could count that enjoyed blackberry cobbler, blackberry pancakes, blackberry pie, and canned enough blackberry jam for all of their neighbors' winter because of our blackberry bushes. I know there always came a point when I thought I would go insane if I had to look at another blackberry or pick another seed out of my teeth.

When we sold our house we bragged to the new owners about the blackberries, as well as the persimmon trees that were also irresistible to highway travelers. We were sure they would be pleased when the fruit began to ripen. During the next blackberry

season, we rode by the old homestead secretly hoping to wrangle an invitation to pick a few. We were amazed and certainly disappointed to see our beloved blackberries dying on the vines. We went to the door hoping to hear an explanation. "Oh, we wanted to keep the blackberries for ourselves. Besides, we didn't want strangers trampling around so we put up a fence and some 'keep out' signs," they replied. "It seems you exaggerated about the fruit on those vines, too," they added.

No, we didn't exaggerate at all. What happened was that the more fruit that was picked, the more that grew to replace it. The new owners were greedy and didn't allow anyone to share in the blackberry wealth. Eventually they didn't have enough to enjoy either.

Our industry could dry up and die on the vine if the old is not picked to allow for the new. Operators must be very cautious about buying new equipment, but they must also make sure that they are constantly renewing their routes. Operators must be willing to allow factories to make a profit, which will be reinvested back into product. If manufacturers do not reinvest their profits back into the industry through research and development, then they will soon wither and die.

This industry is a long-term investment. Get greedy and the vine produces for one, two, maybe even three seasons. Then it has nothing to keep it going. It can't grow. It has been strangled by the old not allowing the new to give it life. What we do now will affect the future—the not-so-distant future as well as a future we won't be around to see. If we aren't preparing to take a long-term view, then there won't be a long-term future in coin-op.

But I'm optimistic. A very good industry friend of mine called the other day. In the course of our conversation, he said, "Things are really down."

"So I've heard," I answered, and then asked him: "What do you think is going to happen?" "Oh, everything will be OK. It always is sooner or later!"

Yes, I like the way he thinks. I just wish I had a jar of blackberry jam to give him!

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

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Pinball 2

As the author, I am just as excited about putting "Pinball 2" together as you are eager to read it. Gathering the bits and pieces of history is an adventure unto itself. Every picture has a story. That's where I need your help. Your readers are in the industry, are operators, or are collectors/players. I need their contributions to add pictorial blood to the story.

"Pinball 2" (as well as 3, 4, 5, and beyond) are all blocked out but need picture help. I need photos of games on location, any period, as well as pictures of the key people. Does anyone have a photo of George H. Miner? Or the south side of Chicago near the beer hash house Dave Rockola played games in during lunchtime, giving him the idea for *Jig Saw*?

Who has photos or knowledge of the two guys from Rockford, Ill., who came up with so many game ideas that others used, including the *Rock-Ola World Series*? What about photos of the old factories and games on the production line? Or of Harry Mabs, Bon MacDougall, a young Harry Williams, and others? How about old papers, business letters, stuff like that?

I'll be glad to buy, borrow, or barter. Anything used will be properly credited to its source. Help history, get your name in a book, and aid me with photos and other items if you can.

The environmentalists said it best: Every litter bit helps!

Richard Bueschel
414 No. Prospect Manor Ave.
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056

Editor's note: If you read Dick's first book, "Pinball 1," you know how much work is involved in tracing the machine from its inception. And you know how much fun it is looking at all the photos of the old machines, the factories, and the people who made it happen. Well, it can't be done without a great deal of help from those who have those photos and stories. I remember that Dick took a quote out of one of my editorials to use in the first book and I was flattered and a little excited to be quoted in such a historic book. You'll know that feeling if you get your photos out for him. If you have any questions about what you have, please drop him a line. I'm looking forward to the next book! □

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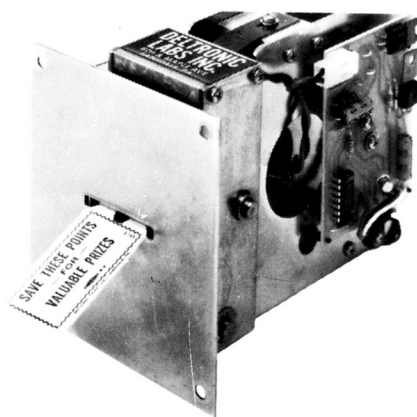
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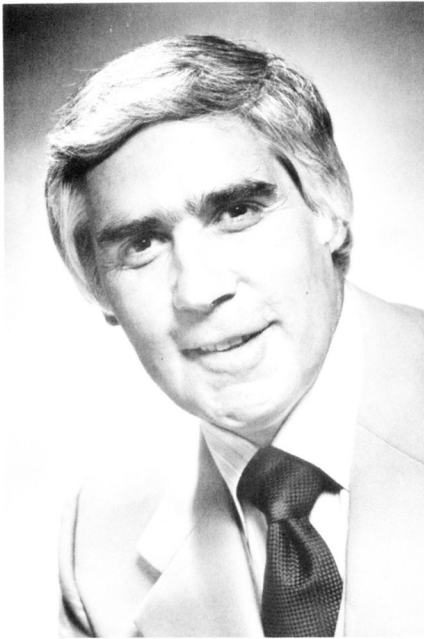
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Ben Rochetti passes away

Ben Rochetti, a fixture in the coin-op amusement industry since the late '60s, passed away on Thanksgiving Day at the age of 57. His family had gathered at his home in Westchester, Ill., for Thanksgiving dinner when, without warning, Rochetti suffered a fatal heart attack.

“Happy people die whole; they have had what they wanted.”

He is survived by his wife, Doris; sons Jeffrey and Rick (the former is vice president of sales for Taito America); daughters Dorann Eick and Patricia Kronk; his mother, Louise Forman; and eight grandchildren.

Rochetti began his coin-op career selling jukeboxes for NSM. He moved on to Empire Distributing, then considered the world's largest distributorship. After spending some 10 years at Empire, Rochetti left to join Stern Electronics.

From there, his career included stops at Wico, Idea Dart, and Cinematronics before hooking up with son Rick at Taito America. During his four years at Taito,

Rochetti served as vice president of manufacturing, overseeing the production of such hits as *Double Dragon*, *Operation Wolf*, and *Chase H.Q.*

He left Taito in January 1990 to form his own company, Double Play. The company sold older Taito games that were still around after the runs were over. It also manufactured small, special runs of particular games when requested.

“Ben was a pleasant man who was always creative and industrious,” said Jerry Marcus of Atlas Distributing, who worked with Rochetti at Empire. “The fact that his funeral drew so many people is testimony to how well-liked Ben was. The industry has lost a good man.”

“It's hard to put into words what I felt about my father,” said Rick Rochetti. “He had the respect of so many people in the business. He taught me everything I know, that's for sure. I owe him a million thanks for so many things.” □

Parallel legislation has exception

The "Red Baron amendment" passed by Congress on Oct. 27 (and signed into law by President Bush on Dec. 1), which legalizes the public performance of parallel video game boards, contains an exception.

According to the exception, which was included on behalf of the recording and motion picture industries, the new law "shall not apply to any work of authorship embodied in the audiovisual game if the copyright owner of the (game) is not also the copyright owner of the work of authorship."

Said AAMA attorney Don Barnes, "Simply stated, if a gray market game contains music or pictures owned (copyrighted) by a third party—not the owner of the copyright in the game itself—the new law does not apply. The music or pictures cannot be publicly performed without the permission of the third-party copyright owner."

Bob Fay, AAMA's executive vice president, said, "This exception would make it illegal to operate parallels for *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, *Moonwalker*, *RoboCop*, and *The Simpsons*. The rights to the characters and music in those games are owned by a company other than the coin-op manufacturer.

"In the future, if there's a licensing agreement involved in a game, the new law won't apply. Operators need to know this before buying parallels. When this exception does apply, the manufacturers should make it clear in their game publicity."

As for challenging the new law before it goes into effect late this year, he added that the AAMA is still considering its "marketing and legislative options."

In a related matter, Fay and Barnes met

with John Reed of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on Dec. 10 to discuss its requirements for parallel board importation. These rules and regulations have been on the books since 1982 but loosely enforced.

According to Reed, who works at the FCC's Technical Standards Branch, Office of Engineering and Technology, those importing parallels must do three things:

1. When importing a parallel, Form 740 must be filled out. The original has to be sent to the FCC, with a copy going to U.S. Customs.

2. The game board, power supply, keypad, and monitor all need to be tested at a properly calibrated test site. Most labs charge between \$1,500 and \$2,000 for the procedure, Reed says. To get guidelines and a list of FCC-approved labs, call (301) 725-1585. To receive this information through a computer link, use a communications program and modem to dial (301) 725-1072; a 1200 baud modem is needed.

3. The game cabinet must be properly labeled, i.e., stating that the game does comply with FCC requirements.

Failure to comply with any of the above could result in a \$10,000 administrative fine levied by the FCC. More severe criminal penalties could flow from non-compliance, Reed added.

"The FCC did a spot check for labels about five months ago," Fay said. "All they did was issue warnings. It was only then that AAMA realized regulations already existed to protect the manufacturers.

"I think it's premature to talk about enforcement. We want to first communicate with AMOA and educate the operators. If violations get out of hand, then we'll have

to begin considering enforcement measures."

AMOA president Jim Trucano, speaking on behalf of the association, had this to say: "AMOA is disappointed that AAMA continues to want to fight the parallel imports war all over again, especially after the Congress overturned the *Red Baron* decision.

"It may be that in certain rare instances there will be some games that use a work of authorship (music and/or characters), with the copyright owned by an entity different from the owner of the game's copyright. But it remains to be seen whether these (third-party copyright owners) will go to the trouble of trying to prevent owners of legitimate parallel games from using them for public performance.

"We are also disappointed that AAMA apparently feels it necessary to go to the FCC to find a basis under FCC regulations to interfere with operators' use of parallel games. After the Congress made clear that it disagreed with the court's decision in *Red Baron*, we in AMOA hoped that no more resources of the operators or equipment manufacturers would have to be used on the parallel board issue.

"It appears that the game manufacturers have not given up on their attempt to discriminate in price against American game operators by resisting the operators' use of parallel boards. AMOA will therefore continue to do everything necessary to protect the interests of its members in being able to purchase legitimate—not counterfeit—parallel boards and take advantage of their substantially lower price. This is particularly important in the current difficult economic conditions."

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GORILLA PLAYS ATAXX™

"Well, I'm not a bit surprised" said noted animal behaviorist, Margret Smead. "Gorillas are very intelligent creatures. Naturally they're attracted to a fun and challenging game like ATAXX™. I believe that any of the higher primates would enjoy playing . . ." (cont'd on pg. 3)



South American Tribesmen Worship A Video Game



**TEXAS MAN
ABDUCTED
BY A UFO!
RETURNED 27
YEARS LATER.**



Three states fail in video poker attempts

Pennsylvania, North Dakota, and Nebraska were all unsuccessful in their bid to have video poker machines legalized in November, though Pennsylvania was at least able to clear the legislative hurdle.

Both houses of the Pennsylvania Legislature voted in favor of the bill, but Gov. Robert Casey vetoed it on Nov. 30.

"I'm not surprised he did that, but we're not giving up," said John Milliron, executive director for the Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Association (PAMMA). "The amount of grass roots support we received in the House and Senate was very encouraging.

"My big concern is that his veto message was philosophical in nature. He feared that legalized pokers would lead to a future expansion of gambling and that family values would be hurt. This makes it hard to address what needs to be changed in the bill we present next."

PAMMA plans to work on a new bill in January and present it to the legislature when it reconvenes on Feb. 2.

In North Dakota, the video poker measure was one of eight items placed on a constitutional referendum on Nov. 6. Sixty-three percent of the voters voted against changing the constitution to allow legalized poker machines.

"I don't think the majority of the voters even read the ballot," said Jim Rader of United Music in Fargo, who served as co-chairman of the Coalition for a Better Chance. This body was composed of the North Dakota Coin Machine Operators Association, the North Dakota Hospitality Association, and the North Dakota Beverage Retailers Association. "Four of the eight items on the ballot were minor. All were voted down significantly, which follows a growing trend in North Dakota of voters going in and voting against everything."

It didn't help, Rader says, that the charitable gaming forces spent major dollars to defeat the measure.

"The issue wasn't whether to legalize video pokers," he said. "The issue was who would run it: private enterprise or the charities. We already have bingo, pull-tabs, and other forms of legalized gaming in North Dakota that are run by them. We told them we wouldn't put them (the charities) out on the street, that we had our own clientele, but they fought us anyway."

Rader added that the association wasn't sure what the next step will be. Part of the uncertainty is rooted in the size of the defeat by voters. "It may be some time

before we try this again," he concluded. "Minnesota will probably get pokers legalized before we do."

Nebraska's video poker referendum was also voted down by about 65 percent of the electorate on Nov. 6. Nebraska Operators Association president Ted Nichols believes many of the voters didn't understand the wording of the measure, while others felt that operators would be the only ones to profit by its passage.

"The state would have received \$2,000 per machine, which wasn't enough to some voters," he said. "We chose to bypass the legislature and go straight to the voters. About four years ago, the legislature voted to legalize pokers on a local-option basis. That lasted almost two years, until they voted to rescind it. There was concern that a video poker bill wouldn't have made it out of the legislature.

"Also, we had opposition from every newspaper and publication in the state. The Omaha paper is the most influential, and it strongly opposed video pokers."

The association was planning to meet about a week after we went to press to discuss the language for a poker bill. Unlike the measure on the ballot, this bill will model South Dakota's legislation. "I think it's best we go that route," Nichols said.

According to Mardy McCullough, the association's executive director, "The constitutional amendment attempt paid off in that it made senators more aware of Video Lottery. Three of them have changed their position from an absolute 'no' to a positive attitude.

"Also in our favor is that newly elected Gov. Ben Nelson, who takes office this month, made a campaign promise for a state lottery. In all likelihood, he will introduce a bill himself. If we can include our planned legislation in that bill, so much the better."

The association has obtained the services of a respected lobbyist to advance its cause. Nebraska's legislative session runs from Jan. 9 to the end of May.

Jukebox benchmark exceeded; fees lowered for 1991

The 1991 music license fees for jukeboxes licensed by the Jukebox License Office (JLO) have been reduced by \$3 per jukebox in all categories. The reduction takes effect because jukebox operators have surpassed the revenue benchmark established for 1991.

The rate schedule for 1991 is \$272 for the first jukebox, \$52 each for jukeboxes two through 10, and \$45 each for 11 or more. Sometime this month, the JLO will mail the revised rate schedule to all operators who obtained license agreements during 1990.

"The operator response was better than

what the actual agreement called for, which is why the fees are being reduced," said AMOA president Jim Trucano. "AMOA is doing all it can to get operators who haven't complied in the past to do so. Operators who know of someone who isn't complying should contact AMOA or their nearest ASCAP or BMI field representative. The better the compliance, the lower we can get those licensing fees."

For more information, or jukebox license registration material, contact the JLO, P.O. Box 5458, New York, NY 10185-0044; (800) 955-5053.



Chuck Milhem

Milhem honored

Valley Recreation Products president Chuck Milhem has been named the reci-

ipient of the Billiard & Bowling Institute of America's Industry Service Award for 1991. He will be honored at a banquet on April 24 as part of BBIA's annual convention in St. Louis.

This award is presented each year for contributions to the promotion of billiards or bowling.

Milhem served for 18 years with Brunswick, where he eventually rose to the position of vice president for the bowling division. He joined Valley in 1979 and went on to found the Valley National 8-Ball Association, which has grown to 40,000 player members.

Milhem's success in expanding Valley's international business culminated in the presentation of the President's "E" Award for export excellence, awarded by the Commerce Department in 1990. Only 30 U.S. companies received this honor last year.

AMOA-NJ elects officers

Frank Seninsky has been elected to a second two-year term as president of AMOA-NJ. The other officers are Joseph Corrao of Wayne Vending, vice president; Ed Silverstein of Cue Vending, vice president; and William Englehard of Bill's Vending Service, secretary/treasurer.

Elected to the board of trustees were James Feinberg of Mannie's Cigarette Service; Irving Green of CIC Corp.; Frank Mandia Jr. of Majestic Amusements; Anthony Storino of Majestic/Coast Amusements; William Treger of Betson Enterprises; John Fisher of Louco Amusements; Rich Goulazian of Royal Vending; Irwin Spinak of Mondial Distributing; Lou Perosi Jr. of Imagine America; and George Hamilton Jr. of Terminal Amusement Co.

AMOA-NJ has recently introduced a video lottery bill and continues with its lawsuit against cigarette machine bans in East Brunswick, N.J.

AMOA relocates

AMOA now has new, more spacious headquarters in Chicago. The address is 401 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611. The association also has new telephone and FAX numbers: (312) 245-1021 and (312) 321-6869, respectively.

AMOA now has three floors of space in its new building, which is located across the river from the old headquarters on East Wacker Drive. Smith, Bucklin & Associates, AMOA's management firm and building-mate, recently moved into the new location, precipitating AMOA's departure.

Great Lakes Dart moves

Great Lakes Dart Distributors has moved into new facilities. The address is 3125 S. 108th St., West Allis, WI 53227. The new telephone numbers are (800) 225-7593 and (414) 543-9773; the FAX is (414) 543-9820.



Members of Valley's Team USA were fortunate to be in Germany during the country's Oktoberfest celebration.

U.S. team takes Valley Cup

As it's done for the last four years, Valley Recreation Products sponsored a U.S. dart squad to fly to Germany in October for competition in the Valley World Cup. Not only did the team—comprised of Jimmy Damore, Brad Halley, Patty Carson, and Jacki Ross—capture first place, but it was given the chance to sample a taste of Germany's rich culture.

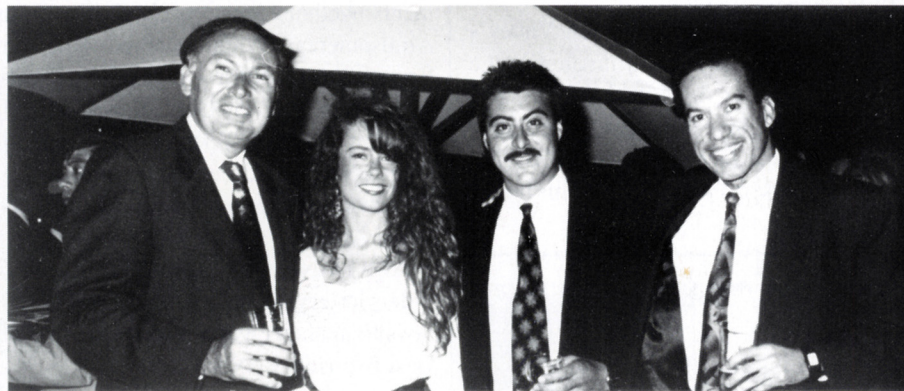
The tour began in the city of Bingen (near Frankfurt), where the team visited NSM/Loewen, Valley's European

distributor. Other highlights included a trip on the Rhine River; a wine tasting; the tour of a castle in southern Bavaria; friendly dart competition with local players; and sampling German beer and music at Munich's famed Oktoberfest.

The 5th Valley Cup will be preceded by the North American Championships in Las Vegas this March. This event will decide who gets selected for Team USA, which travels to Austria in May to compete against the best European teams.



AAMA executive vice president Bob Fay welcomes Charles Gillespie Jr. (l), U.S. Ambassador to Chile, to the AAMA booth. Pictured to the right are Nintendo's Mike Minor and AAMA's Joyce Weller.



From left: Bob Fay, Miss FISA '90, Carlos Colin of James Industries, and Julio Auad of Flipperlandia, a Chilean operator and distributor.

AAMA goes to Chile

AAMA and several of its members took part in the FISA '90 international fair in Santiago, Chile, on Oct. 31-Nov. 11, opening the doors to a large South American market. The FISA show is South America's largest annual trade event, this year drawing some one million visitors. Thirty-four countries and over 50 companies were represented at the U.S. Pavilion.

AAMA and U.S. manufacturers Nintendo, Capcom, Atari, Wico, Konami, James Industries, Williams-Bally/Midway, Taito, Dynamo, NSM, Wells-Gardner, Coin Controls, and Happ Controls exhibited at the show.

"We created new business opportunities for our members in Mexico, and now we're hoping to do the same in South America," said AAMA executive vice president Bob Fay. "Our mission in Chile was to give exposure to the latest coin-operated amusement equipment available

in the United States, and to find operators, distributors, and investors who are interested in importing new product.

"We feel we accomplished our objective in Chile and found much enthusiasm for new product. We sold all the equipment in our booth and were approached by several individuals who wished to upgrade their routes with new equipment. Others, such as resorts and hotels, wanted to purchase equipment for their businesses."

In the coming months, AAMA will be considering the possibility of exhibiting at other shows in South America. The association will also sponsor a series of technical seminars by Randy Fromm in Mexico this year. Additionally, AAMA's 1991 Latin America Expo is slated for the week of July 22 at Mexico City's Sheraton Hotel.

Speaking of dates, AAMA's Washington Conference will take place on May 5-9.

Lynch to hold dart tourney

Lynch Distributing of San Diego will stage "The Soft Touch" dart tournament on Jan. 19-20 to benefit the charity S.O.F.T. (Support Organization for Trisomy 18, 13). Trisomy 18, 13 is a chromosomal disorder.

The tournament, which will take place at VFW Post 2275 in El Cajon, Calif., is a Valley Cougar North American qualifier. The top shooters will win an all-expense-paid trip to Las Vegas on March 23. The winners there will comprise Team USA and represent the United States in the 1991 Valley Cup in Austria.

For tournament information, contact Candy Lynch at (619) 273-1028.

Message to operators of *Final Lap*

Atari Games' *Final Lap* video contains trademarks belonging to cigarette giant Philip Morris Inc., which objects to the inclusion. The company maintains that it is against its policy to feature cigarette trademarks in connection with children's games or other items intended for children.

Namco-America's Kevin Hayes says use of the trademarks was inadvertent. Nevertheless, Namco Ltd., as creator and manufacturer, along with Namco-America and Atari Games, as manufacturer and distributor, take responsibility. Steps have been taken for operators to make the proper adjustments.

Conversion kits consisting of eight Eeproms have been created, with instructions on how to convert existing *Final Laps* into non-infringing games. The kits are free and will be shipped pre-paid.

Operators should contact their distributors to receive a conversion kit for each game that's owned or operated. A \$100 credit will be issued, through distributors, for every game converted. Up to five \$100 credits can be added together and applied to the purchase of each new Namco *Final Lap 2* dedicated game, scheduled for release next month.

2 OR 3 PLAYER CONVERSION KIT

BILLY & JIMMY ARE BACK

THEY'RE BACK WITH MORE DOUBLE DRAGON MAGIC!

Get the game that kids have been waiting for. It's the newest adventure in non-stop action as *Billy*, *Jimmy* and now *Sonny* travel to distant lands packed with excitement. There's more tricks, surprises, and action than ever before.

WE'RE BACK WITH MORE PLAYERS.

Technos built Double Dragon 3 with operators in mind. It's operator-



selectable as either a 2-player or a 3-player game. The choice is yours. A flip of the dipswitch is all it takes.

YOU'LL BE BACK TO THE BANK WITH MORE QUARTERS IN YOUR CASHBOX.

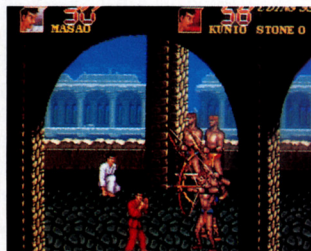
Billy and Jimmy are proven winners and Double Dragon 3 is going to be bigger than ever. This is your chance to cash in on the hottest duo ever to hit the arcade screen.

GAME FEATURES:

- Three Heros: Jimmy, Billy and now Sonny
- 2 or 3 Player Selectable Modes
- Special weapon stores
- Buy-in and continuation feature
- JAMMA Adaptable universal conversion kit
- Horizontal monitor



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Coin Concepts names Warner

Coin Concepts Inc. has appointed Gary Warner, son of company president and founder Art Warner, to the position of sales representative. He will be based at CCI's headquarters in East Brunswick, N.J.

"With the continued growth of our organization, it became imperative that we hire someone with not only expertise in sales, but with a commitment to service," said the proud father. "I didn't have to look far. My son possesses the ideal mix of sales experience and follow-through that will enable us to better serve our clients."

Gary, who holds a bachelor's degree in finance from George Washington University, worked previously as a senior account executive for Airborne Express.



Gary Warner

Fund-raiser set for AMOA-NY

AMOA-NY will host the association's first dinner dance on Feb. 9, with the proceeds going toward funding several projects it's recently undertaken. For a \$100 ticket, attendees get cocktails at the pre-dinner cocktail hour, a gourmet sit-down dinner, assorted pastries and international coffees, and an evening's worth of live music.

This gala event will take place at Leonard's of Great Neck in Great Neck, N.Y. Tickets can be obtained from the association by calling (718) 647-9853. AMOA-NY needs financial assistance to effectively battle higher machine taxes and other governmental threats.



Members of the Air Force preparing MicroProse's *F-15 Strike Eagle* for shipment to the Persian Gulf.

MicroProse sends game to Gulf

F-15 Strike Eagle, the first coin-op video game developed and recently released by MicroProse Software Inc., has been shipped to Air Force troops stationed in the Persian Gulf. The game, a flight simulation of actual military conditions on a bombing raid, ironically includes a Gulf scenario. The one sent to the troops was shipped from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina.

"We are extremely excited to send our first arcade game, *F-15 Strike Eagle*, to our troops in the Middle East," said MicroProse president Bill Stealy, who's also a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserve. "Many military personnel have been long-time MicroProse game players because of the real-life decision-making all of our games bring to the player. We hope this is as close to real action as they get."

Veryfine cited

Fruit juice manufacturer Veryfine Products has been named winner of the 1990 "Audubon A Award," presented by the Massachusetts Audubon Society. It was given in recognition of Veryfine's leadership in the business community on environmental issues.

Specifically, the company was awarded for its environmental program over the past five years, which includes the recycling of solid waste, source reduction/pollution prevention, groundwater protection, water conservation, and employee education.

"We are extremely proud and pleased, as we celebrate our 125th anniversary, to be the only company to receive the Audubon Society's highest environmental award for 1990," said Veryfine vice presi-

dent Samuel Rowse. "It has been our conviction that all manufacturers have a responsibility to protect the environment, and Veryfine has been committed to this effort."



Veryfine's Bernice Burke displays product to be transported to U.S. troops stationed in Saudi Arabia. Veryfine donated 600 cases of juice to Operation Desert Shield, just the remedy for a parched desert throat.



At the Wurlitzer jukebox donation ceremony, (l-r): Chris Witting of WCBS News 88; Brigadier General Richard Schneider of the 50th Army Division, New Jersey National Guard; and Joe Tedeschi of Nelson International's Wurlitzer Division.

Wurlitzer donates to Desert Shield

Nelson International's Wurlitzer division has donated a Wurlitzer *Make My Music* commercial jukebox to the service people of Operation Desert Shield. The jukebox, loaded with hit music and accompanied by letters from elementary school students, was shipped to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, as an early Christmas/Hanukkah gift. The unit will be rotated among 15 base camps.

On Dec. 5, the jukebox was received by the New Jersey National Guard at a Sam Goody record store. The Musicland

Group, parent company of the Sam Goody chain, provided the records for the jukebox.

"We want the courageous people in our armed forces to know that we have not forgotten them at holiday time," said Joe Tedeschi, Nelson's Wurlitzer division president and a former sergeant with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. "A Wurlitzer jukebox can provide a little taste of home for those who can't be with their families this holiday season."

S.O.S. buys line

New York plush manufacturer S.O.S. Good Stuff has purchased the assets of Trudy Corp.'s sports division, thereby giving it the stuffed toy licenses for the NFL, NBA, NHL, major league baseball, and 65 college teams.

"The Trudy sports line is a good strategic fit for our company," said S.O.S. Good Stuff president David Chazen. "This addition to our regular line of stuffed toys is in response to what we

perceive to be a tremendous market demand for sports licenses. Now, by being able to offer bears and other soft toys for all four major sports, we can be a one-stop shop for our customers' licensed sport needs."

For more information, contact Stephen Chernin, crane sales manager, at (718) 937-3333. The FAX number is (718) 937-1037.

Good news from Ohio

After many months of pressure from the coin-op industry, the Columbus, Ohio, City Council, safety director, and licensing administrator all agreed to eliminate licensing fees for videos, pins, mini-bowlers, cranes, and other coin-op games.

The action, approved Nov. 5, does away with the \$15-per-machine fee. However, arcades with four or more amusement machines will still be required to pay \$500 annually.

Operators tour Bally Gaming facility

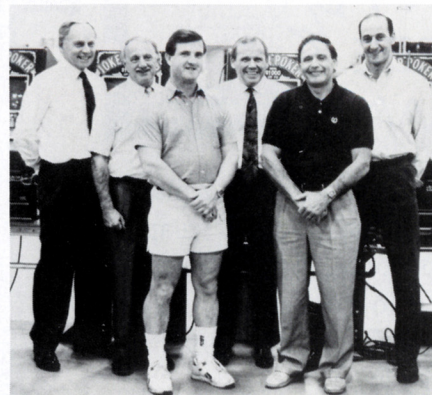
Representatives of the New Brunswick Coin Operators Association toured Bally Gaming Inc.'s new Las Vegas facility on Oct. 29, getting a firsthand look at Video Lottery terminals that can now be operated in the maritime provinces of Canada. Recently passed legislation allows Canada's Atlantic Lottery Corp. to do so.

New Brunswick is the first province to get Video Lottery. All machines will be connected via modem to the Atlantic Lottery's central computer system to ensure accurate accounting and security.

Bally Gaming will market its line of Video Lottery terminal products in New Brunswick through Winning Combinations Inc., an independent distributor. Winning Combinations will sell and service the products in support of local coin machine route operators. In recognition of the growth potential in Canada, Bally Gaming has opened an office in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

The terminals are being manufactured at the recently opened manufacturing and administration headquarters in Las Vegas.

In other news concerning Bally Gaming, the company has awarded an exclusive contract to Haron Ltd. of Missoula, Mont., for sales and distribution of its gaming products to Indian reservations. The contract covers the states of Colorado, Iowa, Montana, North and South Dakota, Oregon, and Washington.



At Bally Gaming's Las Vegas facility, (l-r): Hugh Enns of Bally Gaming in Canada; Leandre Bourque of Winning Combinations Inc.; operator Bryan MacPherson; Lowell Hansen, president of Bally Gaming; and operators Ron Roberts and Ed Cottreau.

NUMBER 1 FOR '91 NEO•GEO MVS-4

SNK Extends The Fall Promotion

SNK has for a short time, extended the fall promotion!

With every purchase of a NEO•GEO MVS-4 cabinet, we will include at NO CHARGE two great earning games, NINJA COMBAT™ and THE SUPER SPY™.



Ninja Combat is a 2 player fighting game. Pick up weapons, throw punches, kick the enemy, even change into a different character! Non-stop action, great graphics and real voice!

The Super Spy allows you to be the hero. 3-D action provides



realistic game play while you go through a 16 story building trying to destroy the terrorists that are building a new "super" bomb.

In addition, SNK is also including 3 NEO•GEO Memory Cards with every purchase of a MVS-4 cabinet



The memory card provides players with the ability to save their game play on any NEO•GEO game. Players can save and store up to 27 different game titles (*when available*).

For more information on the NEO•GEO fall promotion, contact your authorized SNK distributor, or call SNK at (408) 736-8844.

The MVS-2 Performs Well Under The Following Conditions



TAVERNS



AIRPORTS



RESTAURANTS



CONVENIENCE STORES



CAFETERIAS



LOBBIES

SNK's NEO•GEO MVS-2 shares the same great state-of-the-art capabilities as its older brothers, the MVS-4 and the MVS-6, with its superb game graphics and in-depth operator bookkeeping features.

Best of all, the NEO•GEO MVS-2 holds up to 2 great NEO•GEO games at a very affordable price!

With NEO•GEO's great software line-up, you can combine sports games with action, strategy or adventure games to maximize location income.

NEO•GEO games currently available are: Nam-1975, Baseball Stars Professional, Top Player's Golf, Magician Lord, Ninja Combat, Riding Hero, The Super Spy, Cyber-Lip, Puzzled, League Bowling, and Blue's Journey.

SPECIFICATIONS: Height - 63.9", Width - 25.5", Depth - 29.5"

See your authorized SNK Distributor or contact SNK Corporation of America, 246 Sobrante Way, Sunnyvale, California 94086. (408) 736-8844.





Leland's Debbie Austin and Harvey Mandel of the St. Vincent de Paul/Joan Kroc Shelter at the shelter's new game room.

AAMA members donate games

On Nov. 6, four AAMA members donated pieces of coin-op equipment to the St. Vincent de Paul/Joan Kroc Shelter, a San Diego shelter that houses 500 homeless people—about 140 of which are children. The games donated by Fabtek, Dynamo, Leland, and distributor C.A. Robinson—which also donated game tokens—were presented by Leland's Debbie Austin.

"The games are all on token play,"

Austin explained. "Father Joe Carroll, the moving force in establishing the shelter, plans to award tokens to the children for receiving good grades in school, making their beds, and things of that nature."

Added Bob Fay, AAMA's executive vice president and coordinator of the donations, "Everyone I spoke with was eager to give and to have the games delivered to the shelter as soon as possible. It was very exciting to see the enthusiasm."

Sugerman to manage kiddie ride firm

Industry veteran Myron Sugerman has joined Bella Italia Amusements Ltd., a leading international marketer of coin-op kiddie rides. He will serve as general manager of the company and also handle the U.S. phase of a new joint venture bet-

ween Bella Italia and Cimosaka Elettronica, an international manufacturer of kiddie rides. The two companies will combine to market a line of some 40 different models.



Miami Vending Electronics' Frank Dichazi (r) with Randy Collins, the company's newest employee. MVE is a factory-authorized sales and service center for Mars Electronics. With the addition of Collins, MVE can expand its service for coin changers and bill acceptors to Georgia and Alabama (the company was already covering Florida and the Caribbean).



Ruben Reyes of American Imports with his new bride, Carmen. They were married on Oct. 20 and spent their honeymoon in New Orleans, staying in town through the AMOA show. Good timing!

ATEI changing sites for '92

The Amusement Trades Exhibition International (ATEI), among the world's top industry trade shows, will move to a new home in 1992 (this year's event takes place Jan. 7-10 at Olympia in London). The future site will be Earls Court 2, which is set to open in October.

Earls Court 2 is already being touted as one of the most modern facilities in Europe. It boasts 17,000 square meters of exhibition space, along with parking to accommodate 600 cars. Being located in central London is also a plus, offering easy access to London's three airports and British rail stations.

In its new home, the ATEI will also move to a permanent time slot—the first week in February. This will give exhibitors more time after the Christmas holiday.

Monarch goes toll-free

The Monarch Tool & Manufacturing Co., manufacturers of coin devices for amusement and vending machines, has established two toll-free numbers to bolster its customer service efforts. One is a FAX number, (800) 545-6831; the other is a regular toll-free number for Canada, (800) 255-9417.

It's a boy!

Congratulations to Coastal Amusement Distributors' Robert Keelyn and his wife Kathy, who gave birth to Nicholas Robert on Nov. 27. He tipped the scales at 8 pounds, 7 ounces.

Correction

In our December issue, we reported that Drew's Distributing had been granted the exclusive Southeast distributor for Eagle Company Ltd. of Tokyo. Drew's will be selling the Wing W 7 and W 8 games, Lucky 25 poker bingo, and other new lines, but no exclusive territory has yet been set. □

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Europe faces taxes

If the German government has its wish, most of the European coin machine industry is going to be saddled with the new German laws on application of Value Added Tax (VAT) on coin machines.

Germany has just forced on its coin machine industry a regulation under which every coin going into a machine is metered. At the end of an accounting period, the site owner will pay to German Customs and Excise 19 percent—the current German rate of VAT—of the total amount placed into the machine. This would be very damaging to the rest of the industry in Europe, where the majority of countries adopt a system of charging VAT on the net take in the cashbox.

Of the 12 countries in the European Community, only Germany, Britain, Ireland, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, and Holland have slot machines. Until now, the general view has been that while each may have different rates of VAT, it is applied to what's in the cashbox *after* winnings have been paid out. For example, if a gaming machine takes \$100 through its coin mechanism, and \$20 remains after winnings have been paid out, this is the amount upon which VAT is charged.

Under the new German system, coins are metered going in, with VAT paid on each one. Using the same rate of VAT to illustrate the point, the amount due to Customs and Excise would be \$20. If the EC took up the German system, the effect on the industry in each country would be catastrophic. The German government has actually made that proposal to the EC. It wishes to see the whole EC brought in-line in this respect, utilizing its own system.

There will be a great deal of opposition from the industries in each of the other member states, except maybe Holland, which we understand may eventually

follow the German lead. In Spain and Belgium, for example, VAT is not applied to gaming machines at all, so the potential is even more damaging there. The other countries use the same system as the British, making it a post-payout tax.

The arguments are going to be long and loud. The defense by those desperate to avoid such a vicious tax is that the nature of the business in other countries is not the same as in Germany. Therefore, the same consideration cannot be used.

While the change in the way VAT is levied on gaming machines in Germany will not have been welcomed by the German trade, it is at least better-equipped to cope. In Germany there is no third party taking the lion's share of the machines' proceeds, and the take is negotiated between the operator and site owner. At the same time, in Germany payback from machines may be as low as 60 percent. The net effect of this is to give the German operator a far higher income, thus making him better able to cope with what is clearly a punishment imposed by the German government.

In Britain, on the other hand, there is a major third party involved in most gaming machine situations, because most of the pub sites are owned by brewers and run by tenants or managers. The latter also receive a share of the take. Similarly, by law the operators are not permitted to share the proceeds. They must accept a rent that does not fluctuate depending upon the frequency the machine is used. The effect is that only a small proportion of the take goes to the operator.

Also, British machines tend to pay-out between 80 and 90 percent of the take. There is an agreement between the industry and the British Gaming Board that takes will not drop below 73 percent in any case.

Therefore, it is obvious: the German government is attempting to force upon all of Europe a system which is punishing for the German industry. It has scant regard for the fact that this situation may be catastrophic for other countries.

The other major argument is that the system being imposed in Germany is not really the collection of VAT, but rather a sales tax. VAT, it will be argued, is a tax on trading for goods and services. A businessman buying goods for his business offsets the VAT against the tax he charges when selling those goods, giving him an "input vs. output" situation. The tax is finally paid by the end user; it was never intended to inflate the cost of goods going through an industrial process. The tax is representative of the value that's been added to make the raw materials into a saleable commodity.

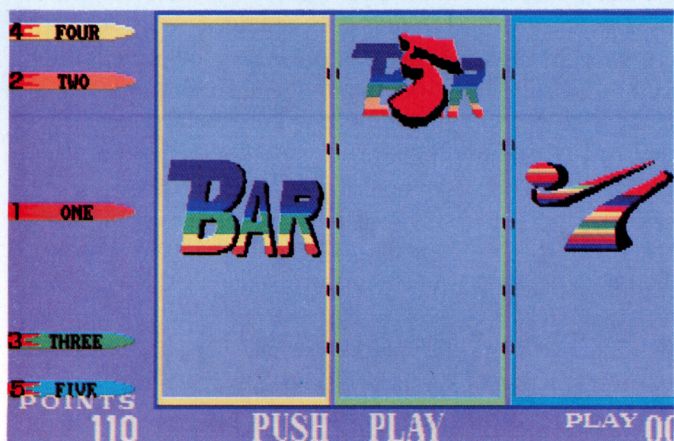
In a machine operation, the operator is providing a service to the public. In encouraging the public to play, the operator incurs a business cost—the prize. When players buy this service, they effectively buy the prize money, too. So the operator should be allowed to offset the VAT with the coins going into the machine and subsequently paid out. That's what happens in Britain, and most other countries with payout equipment take the same view.

It is too early to say how each country's Customs and Excise services—or whoever collects VAT—will view the proposals from Germany. But it is clear that in every case the coin machine industries involved will fight the proposal most vigorously. They will take the view that whatever punishment the German government wishes to impose on its operators, it should not presume that the same circumstances preside in every other country as well. □

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Top 10 list comes to coin-op

Every insomniac is familiar with the TV show "Late Night With David Letterman." You don't really have to have trouble sleeping to watch the program and appreciate Dave's crazy brand of humor. His Top 10 lists are often the zaniest part of the show. He pokes fun at everyone; yet there is a grain of truth behind it all.

The world of coin-op lends itself to a similar treatment, showing both the positive and negative aspects. Since a new year has just begun, it's a perfect time to compile our own Top 10 lists.

First, the Top 10 reasons *not* to be in the coin-op industry:

10. You might have to admit that you are old enough to remember chrome covered jukeboxes that showed the playing mechanism. Worse yet, you have 78 rpm records at home!

9. You might slice up your hands when re-covering a pool table.

8. You don't enjoy hauling around games housed in heavy particle board cabinets that chip on the corners every time you move them.

7. You are allergic to plush toys and break out in hives whenever you are near one.

6. The sight of scantily clad young lovelies at industry trade shows makes your blood pressure rise to unsafe levels.

5. One of your secret desires is to videotape law enforcement officials playing confiscated video poker games at

precinct headquarters.

4. You may suffer severe injury from a stray soft-tip dart that has been "modified" by a trophy-hungry tournament player.

3. You discover that your neighbor's child has just added to his home game library the very same title you purchased last week as a kit for \$1,195.

2. You harbor a love for electromechanical flipper machines and actually loathe all the ramps and gingerbread on the modern pinball games.

1. You may have to actually play video games yourself and prove that you are inept at ninja warrior moves and couldn't save the princess if your life depended on it. (Besides, the princess is usually a squatty little girl with a melon head.)

Now the good news, the Top 10 reasons why you *should* be in the coin-op industry:

10. You enjoy the camaraderie of meeting with fellow operators at state shows and open houses where you can share your experiences and "talk shop."

9. Optimism runs high because new games are always coming to the marketplace.

8. You have a good excuse to act like a kid. (Extensive in-house testing of each new game is a must if you want to understand the play appeal, right?)

7. There's no greater pleasure than taking coins out of the cashbox.

6. The smile on the face of a seven-

year-old who turns in his tickets at the redemption counter and walks out of your location with a prize.

5. The Amusement and Music Operators Association Expo (AMOA) each fall.

4. Witnessing technological advances firsthand, such as the introduction of CDs to jukeboxes.

3. The American Coin Machine Expo (ACME) each spring.

2. Deep friendships developed through years of contact and time spent working to achieve common goals.

1. You are in the entertainment business and are responsible for providing an avenue of good clean fun for every family member, from toddler to senior citizen. Your patrons can forget their worries and enjoy themselves while in your locations.

Now that we've had a laugh and taken a serious look at our industry, let's turn our energies to making 1991 a successful year for operators, distributors, and manufacturers. May all your games draw a loyal audience and your cashboxes be full. □

Bonnie Theard

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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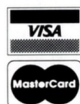
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Award-winning Arachnid not an overnight success

It happens in show business all the time. An actor who has been practicing his craft for two decades is featured in a hit movie and becomes an "overnight success," hailed as a fresh new face in the entertainment world. His family, friends, and peers know the real story: the road to success is a long and bumpy one with many personal sacrifices made along the way. Such is the case with Arachnid, the pioneer electronic dart game manufacturer that received the AMOA Expo '90 "Most Played Dart Game" award for its *English Mark Darts*. The company also received an Award of Excellence at AMOA Expo '89.

A conversation with president Bill Ward, vice president of sales Marcio Bonilla, and vice president of marketing Sam Zammuto, reveals the history behind Arachnid's electronic dart game odyssey.

Mike Tillery, one of the company founders, thought of a coin-op game of darts following a 1971 visit to the colorful pubs in England, where darts enjoy much popularity. After several attempts at a version for the United States, a small team created the first production unit in 1975.

Bonilla, a champion foosball player, was traveling around the country doing foosball exhibitions in 1978-79 when he saw his first electronic dart game in Green Bay, Wis. Zammuto, then stationed overseas in the Air Force, was captain of the U.S. Air Force dart team. Neither man knew his future would be linked to this sport.

The first dart league began in 1977. At the start, it was not a matter of appointing distributors to handle the fledgling pro-



Vice president of marketing Sam Zammuto (l) and tournament director Dave Schultz by the 6300 T Coors Light Edition.



Electrical Engineering, (l-r): Dick Jones, Dana Epperson, Val Hissong, Tom Butler, Gene Harlan, and James Rehwald.

duct, but an uphill battle to convince them to take on the new concept.

By 1979, Bonilla was marketing dart games for Arachnid. Zammuto went on to become sales manager for a machine tool company stateside, but continued his interest in darts by running early dart leagues and teaching players how to perfect their game and promote darts. He joined Arachnid full time in 1982.

Adding Zammuto brought the employee number up to a grand total of five. Today the office, professional, and clerical staff numbers 37 (13 of these are in engineering). The factory staff averages 150-160. Arachnid has been at the same address since 1984 but expanded the facility and added its own plastic molding production site. The recent acquisition of another building across the street brings the company's total space to 102,000 square feet and growing. An option to purchase another building nearby offers potential for the future.

Together, Bonilla and Zammuto have

forged new ground for electronic darts. Ward credits them with building both the player and operator base. "They have worked at this a long time," said Ward. "They do one great job. If the operators were not successful, then we wouldn't be successful."

One factor that has contributed to Arachnid's rise in the coin-op market is the company's willingness to work with operators on two levels: either traveling to the operator's home territory to help in the organization of leagues and the promotion of electronic darts, or physically bringing the operator to company headquarters in Rockford, Ill., to witness established leagues in action and learn how to accomplish the same on his route.

Some operators still need to be convinced that darts offer revenue reliability. How does Arachnid respond to skepticism? "Electronic darts offer longevity," stated Bonilla. "Sooner or later more operators will realize that darts are one of those staple games."

Ward offers these statistics: A survey done by the National Sporting Goods Association indicates that darts is the most popular sport in the state of Wisconsin. During 1987-89 the number of dart players in the United States doubled, going from under nine million up to 18 million. He believes that this jump coincides with the introduction of Arachnid's Super 6 (6000) game.

Dart interest is not confined to Midwestern states, although operators there have been some of the forerunners. Bonilla added that the states of Washington and Illinois are among those with record numbers of league members. Avid players can also be found in Texas, California, Florida, and Arizona.

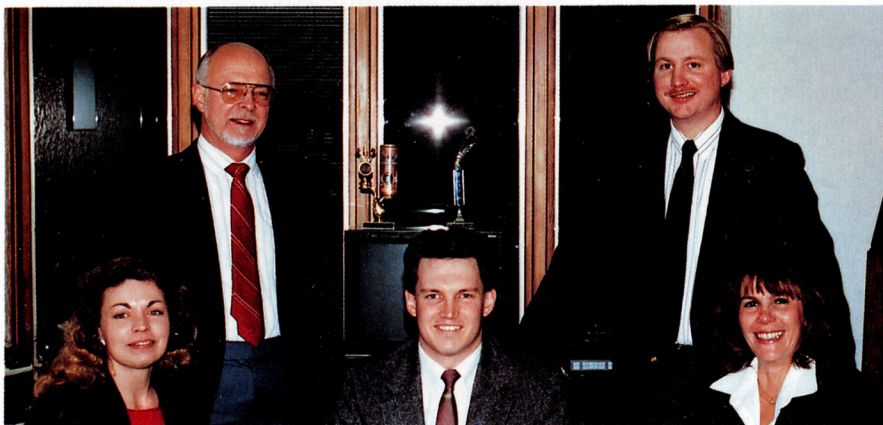
The international dart market is healthy as well. "Europe is the hottest area, especially Spain," advises Ward. "The German market has the biggest installed machine base outside of the United States. Darts are also found in Austria, France, and Belgium. Eastern European countries represent a future market. Dart leagues in Australia and the Scandinavian countries are not growing as fast as their European counterparts."

Export sales are decidedly up and comprised more than 20 percent of Arachnid's sales volume for 1990. The company was named 1988 Illinois Exporter of the Year, an honor for which it was chosen from hundreds of nominees. Today, there is a total of almost 80,000 *English Mark Darts* games out on site; the figure grows daily.

"Darts appeal to everyone," said Ward. "It's just a matter of making the game available to them. We recommend that operators start league programs; that's the foundation. A league is nothing more than an organized challenge. Tournaments are the reward for participating in the league."

The company receives frequent calls from operators who want literature and promotional materials. It has six representatives in the field who lend support to operators.

The search for more tavern-suitable games has led to campaigns for legalized video gaming. Does Ward feel that Video Lottery equipment will adversely affect darts? "When Video Lottery comes into a state, the operators will certainly focus



Accounting, (l-r): Shawn Lenius, Ed Mutchler, Ray Wilson, Jerry French, and Dee Buser.



In the factory, (l-r): Roy Hultstrand, Chris Beard, and Bernie Mundschau of manufacturing, and Owen Anderson of purchasing.

their attention on those machines for a while. Then they will get back to basics.

“We don’t see Video Lottery as a serious challenge. Darts still do well in

areas where there are gray area games. Darts help attract players to taverns; they participate in the league program and play other games at the location. In addition,

dart leagues attract spectators who also play games. All the equipment can complement each other. The end result is an increase in the coin drop.”

Arachnid, which sponsors its own singles and doubles championships in the spring, will host the BullShooter VI at the Hyatt Regency O’Hare on May 26-28. The event will occupy a total of 41,000 square feet of hotel space filled with dart games and enthusiastic players. Over 4,000 entrants competed in BullShooter V last year; more than 5,000 are expected this year.

The company joined the ranks of the Amusement and Music Operators Association-National Dart Association (AMOA-NDA) in 1990 for the team competition, Team Dart V, held in Las Vegas in early May.

Ward feels that the NDA has “unified the whole dart program. It’s been a tremendous effort. The association has been very helpful to the industry.” Added Zammuto, “The NDA has made more operators recognize darts.”

“We think a constant development of the player base is really important for the future of darts,” explained Ward. “The more fun the players have, the more they play the games. That means more quarters going into the machines and that’s good for everyone. We are constantly looking for new areas in which to expand the growth of darts.”

Arachnid’s product line offers variety for operators, from the original *English Mark Darts 4500* to the *Master 7*, *Super 6*, *6300 Super 6 Plus II*, and the *6300 T* with 12-inch overhead display monitor (an industry innovation). Before the *Super 6*, the game of Cricket could not be played on an electronic dart game. Cricket is one of the most popular dart games in the country today.

The *Super 6* (6000) has been the most popular game. Arachnid also offers a conversion kit for its 4500 and 5000 series that turns those games into a 6000. The company believes in this kind of design support for its customers—a chance to upgrade without having to replace entire units.

Bonilla concluded, “We look for nothing but the best to provide operators around the country with quality dart games.” □



Sales, (l-r): Candy Nelson, Luana Pierce, and Ron Bonnell.



Mechanical Engineering, (l-r): Claude Fernandez, Mark Helmer, Connie Reece, and Russell Spickerman.



Advertising, (l-r): Debbie Lamont, Jeanne Penney, and Barry Reithmeier.

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Exhibits abound at IAAPA



Surrounding Nanco's "Lush Plush," (l-r): Karen Nagel and Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega, Stephen Lipkin of Nanco, Mark Whitfield of Six Flags-Astroworld, Mark Brown of Six Flags-Georgia, and Mike Petren of Nanco.



Coin Concepts' Rhonda Fletcher and Jerry Shisler of Cataract Amusements beside *Pig Racer*, a brand new piece from England.

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) bills its convention and trade show as the "world's largest" in the amusement industry. Based on the numbers associated with the most recent show, held Nov. 13-17 at the Washington, D.C., Convention Center, few could disagree.

Some 15,000 people from 15 countries attended the convention, which also offered three dozen workshops. Booths featuring the latest amusement games, plush, rides, robots, food, and high-tech effects were dotted across eight-and-a-half acres of floor space.

Many of the coin-op manufacturers in attendance (chiefly in the redemption

game category) said the IAAPA is "the show" for them. This isn't surprising, considering the buyers at the show are looking for pieces to fill their large arcades and amusement parks.

Said one manufacturer, "When I go to ACME or AMOA, most people will come buy, look at the equipment, and get back to me after the convention. But at IAAPA, they walk right up and place orders. I love this show!" According to another, "I've been to the IAAPA for six years in a row, and it gets bigger each time. For a redemption manufacturer like me, this is the place to be."

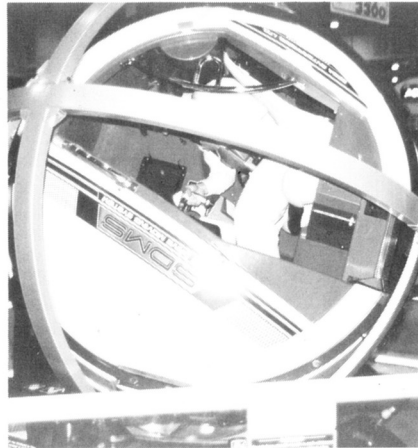
The extensive workshop program focused on such categories as education, finance, games, marketing, merchandis-

ing, ride operations and maintenance, and safety. Some even provided simultaneous interpretation in French, German, Spanish, and Japanese for foreign attendees. The workshops included "Recruiting the MTV Generation," "Getting People Into Your Park," "Media Marketing: An Alternative to Costly Advertising," "Computers for the Terrified," and "Liability: The Amusement Park Nemesis."

The 1991 IAAPA show will be held at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla., on Nov. 13-16. For information on IAAPA, call (703) 671-5800. □



At the AAMA booth, (l-r): AAMA president Gil Pollock (Premier Technology), Alison Quant (Taito America), Jim Newlander (Atari Games), and distributor Steve Koenigsberg (State Sales).



You can't see his face, but that's Greg Engemann of Walt Disney Imagineering in a prototype of Sega's R360 simulator. The player climbs into a cockpit that revolves 360 degrees in all directions. It's designed for theme parks and large arcades.



Massimo Portolani (l) of Italy's Digital Portrait Systems with John Blouin of James Industries. They're standing next to *La Bocca Della Verita*, DPS's fortune-telling machine. The piece, currently on test in California theme parks, will be distributed in America, Canada, and Mexico by James Industries.



Milton (l) and Lenard Brechner of Dan Brechner and Co. with some "Cloud Nine" plush.



Bay-Tek's Lori Treankler with Yow Cheng Lin of Taiwan in front of a battery of the company's games: *The Clown Rolldown*, *Fielder's Choice*, and *Roll Down*.



Mars Electronics' Steve Kinder (l) and Jerry Carr with Diane Seibert of Design Plus Industries.



Jay Foreman (l) and Mark Gawlik of P.M.I. Toys and Novelties with some of the company's amusement park and carnival plush.



Roy Nishi (l) and John McEwan of Meltec with the company's latest redemption piece, *Shoot Out*.



Exidy's Virginia Kauffman shows Brian Leipert of Wild Slides the company's latest, *Campdown Races*.



At the Bonita Marie International booth, (l-r): Bonita's Mike Maresca, George Ritacco, David Katz, and Maggie van Hauter with Jim Casswell of Elitch Gardens.



Flanking GaMCO's *Music Machine*, (l-r): Eric Arendt and Kathleen McCarter of E&R with GaMCO's Emily Simpson and Ron Yaffe.



At the HMS Monaco booth, (l-r): Steve Schulman of HMS, Bill and John Balles of Balles Brothers Inc., and Ira Erstling of HMS.



These players lined up to play Bob's Space Racers' ramped water game, which comes with the rousing "Miami Vice" musical score. The character themes are interchangeable.



SOS Good Stuff's Steve Chernin with Jane Adkins of Take Ten Corp. They're standing in front of SOS's line of NFL-licensed plush.



The Ace Novelty crew in front of its redemption center, (l-r): Rennie Manning (from the British office), Rorie Keller, Benjamin Mayers, Linda Brown, and Ed Plotkin.



Betson's John Margold (l) and Bill Treger with the company's new cover-the-spot game, *Magic Circle*. This single-player piece is manufactured by Crompton. Betson also showed *Variety*, which combines a Crompton pusher and *Magic Circle* within the same unit.



Jack Kelly of ACME Premium Supply Corp. with the company's line of Simpson plush. The items are on test to gauge whether there's public interest, Kelly says. If so, ACME will produce them sometime in 1991.



Lenny Dean (l) of Coastal Amusement Distributors with Harry Levy, designer/manufacture of *Crazy Clown*, a new piece distributed by Coastal.

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Which vehicles are tough enough?

Shopping for a new vehicle ranks about as high on the average person's list of desirable activities as a visit to the dentist for serious mouth reconstruction. No matter which way you approach it, you always come home feeling numb and later sore.

Choosing the right vehicle in the amusement business is critical. There are many aspects to consider. What's the gas mileage and weight limitation? Foreign manufacturer or domestic? Open-back pickup or covered van? How many miles can it be expected to deliver? Operators from both the East Coast and West Coast

shared their experiences with us.

Larry Hilimire
Stanton Automatics Inc.
Auburn, N.Y.

Hilimire's company operates close to 1,000 games: 40 percent video, 15 percent pool tables, 20 percent darts, 15 percent music, and the remaining 10 percent divided among cranes, pinballs, and bowlers. Seven trucks are utilized in the lines of service and equipment moving—two pickups, four mini-vans, and one large covered truck.

"We've been buying GMC or Chevy mini-vans; they've served us well," said

Hilimire. "We can put everything we need in there, including a parts shelf.

"As far as pickups are concerned, we used to buy half-ton capacity, then install racks and a lift gate. Now, we've gone to three-quarter-ton pickups. We also have a large Isuzu NRP covered-back truck. It's practical, holds 15 machines, and has dual wheels in the back.

"The main reason we purchased this vehicle was because it's a diesel and we thought gas mileage would be good. But repair bills have negated its positive aspects."

Hilimire finds the biggest problem with

pickups is that in order to handle the weight of the machines, with the addition of a lift gate (the 1,000 lb. capacity) and other accessories, an eight-cylinder engine is required. In his words, "This means gas mileage is atrocious!"

How do the trucks hold up with the amount of miles Stanton Automatics puts on them annually? Said Hilimire, "We put 35,000 miles on every pickup truck each year. Our 1986 Chevy is still running at 130,000 miles; we replaced the engine at 100,000 miles. Our vans put on 40-50,000 miles per year."

The Isuzu NRP is a 1986 model with 220,000 miles on it. Hilimire said that almost everything has been replaced except the cab and the rear end.

What are his insurance rates these days? "My insurance costs are going through the roof. My insurance company looks at the driving records of every employee and takes that into consideration. It's difficult to have a sterling driving record for everyone in your employ, especially since we traditionally put a lot of miles on our vehicles. Shopping around for better rates takes time away from running your business."

John Gambacorto United Vending Service Syracuse, N.Y.

Not far from Syracuse, John Gambacorto operates a route of 225 games and has two company vehicles—a full-size Chevy van and 14-foot Chevy cube van with a lift gate.

The local weather has influenced Gambacorto's choice of vehicles. "With our weather as unpredictable as it is, covered vehicles keep everything dry, clean, and presentable." His route is comprised of 20 jukeboxes, 30 vending machines (drinks and snacks), 10 pinball games, 10 pool tables, and the remainder all videos. United Vending serves colleges, chain stores, pizza outlets, and mom-and-pop locations.

Does he have any foreign-made vehicles? The response: "For a while the market was flooded with Isuzu. And there are a lot of Iveco trucks in this area. I just buy American because I purchase so many game boards from overseas that the least I can do is buy American-made vehicles. I've had other manufacturers' trucks;

"The biggest problem with pickups is that the combined weight of the machines and a lift gate almost requires an eight cylinder engine."

Chevy is just my personal preference."

Gambacorto's van is a six-cylinder; the cube van is a V-8. Gas prices have affected all operators. "We're at \$1.56 per gallon of regular unleaded," he added.

His best recommendation related to vehicles is to "find a good mechanic. I've been in my new warehouse for a year and am next to the first mechanic I ever trusted. It's made a big difference in down-time for my vehicles."

Mileage for Gambacorto runs about 23,000 annually on the cube van and near that for the smaller van. His dream truck is an Omnivan—a customized vehicle with a pickup front end and a box on the back with all sorts of shelves and doors. "It's the ultimate service vehicle—with a pricetag to match," he comments. But he dreams on nevertheless.

What's turning into a bad dream for Gambacorto and other vending operators in New York is the new canned drink tax of two cents per unit, effective Sept. 31, 1990. "There's no way we can write this off," says Gambacorto. "It's not like a sales tax or can deposit—it just goes directly to the state."

Dave Morgan Supercade Family Amusement Center Stockton, Calif.

Out in California, Dave Morgan manages his 200 game route with one 1986 half-ton Toyota pickup that's equipped with a lift gate. It's nearing the 80,000 mile mark, based on approximately 20,000 miles per year, gathered as Morgan travels his local route of mom-and-pop groceries, laundromats, and pizza outlets. Morgan's arcade is the hub of his business; street locations number 40 stops.

Morgan purchased the Toyota because it offered the biggest payload of the little pickups, and added, "In a pinch we can squeeze four games on the back." Morgan

entered the business in 1980, before the video boom, and hung on during the lean years that followed.

"The longer I was in the business the more I learned the effort I had to put into it," he quipped. "I never wanted a pickup; I wanted a sports car."

Morgan's Toyota has a four-cylinder engine with turbo, an electronically controlled transmission for extra power, plus overdrive. It gets about 17-18 mpg around town and 20-25 mpg on the freeway.

Before the Toyota, Morgan had a Datsun truck that gave him more satisfaction. He said he might consider one of those again if he was in the new truck market, or perhaps a Dodge mid-size truck. He would definitely want a larger vehicle.

"Generally speaking, the small foreign pickups don't have the stamina," stated Morgan. "They're just not tough enough. When you're regularly hauling around 1,000 pounds of equipment in your rear end, that's different than what they show on TV."

According to Morgan, his vehicle insurance includes carrier coverage up to \$6,000; liability is \$1 million. Only one employee and Morgan drive the truck. "I'm not big enough to get a covered truck yet," he said. "A pickup serves me just fine."

Morgan has only a small number of pinball games, air hockey, and pool tables. The lion's share of his route is videos. That being the case, it was natural to veer off the subject of vehicles and into the present state of business, especially video play.

"Overall, most of my locations tell me their business is down," he concluded. "If they don't get the traffic in, I'm not surprised to see my collections down. We're moving games more often than a year ago because that's the only way you can squeeze a few more quarters into the coin box. People are watching that 'disposable income.' Some folks don't have that extra \$5 in their pockets right now."

It's no wonder if business is currently flat, and operators are in the "moving business" more than ever, that vehicle choice and dependability are even more important. Finding the truck that's tough enough for your route can be tricky. Long life on location doesn't just apply to games but to vehicles as well. □

Moving equipment: why strain yourself?

“Here we go, Frank. You got your end?”

“Yeah, I got it. Geez, these games seem to be getting heavier and heavier.”

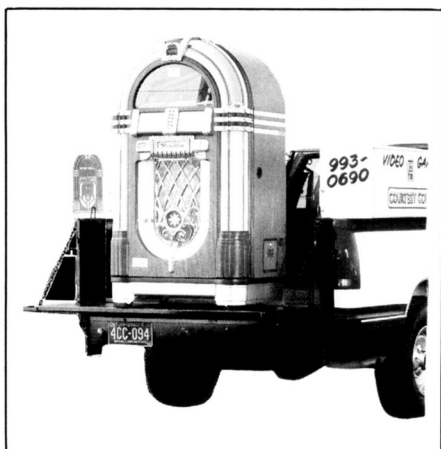
One, two, three—heave! Suddenly Frank howls in pain. His end of the game crashes to the ground.

“Hey Frank, what the hell’s wrong?”

“Ooohh, my back! I think I slipped a disc or snapped a vertebrae! I’ll never walk again!” (Frank’s prone to hysteria.)

Smart music and amusement game operators don’t act out this scenario. That’s because they take advantage of products that do the lifting for them. We spoke to hydraulic lift gate manufacturers Tommy Gate and Eagle Lift, along with “Step and Roll Dolly” manufacturer J.E.R.M. Enterprises, to give operators an idea of the back-saving and hernia-preventing equipment available to them.

Tommy Gate



The Tommy Gate Co. was founded in 1965 by machinist Delbert “Bus” Brown. Its time-honored “Tommy Lift” hydraulic lift gate is manufactured at the company’s plant in Woodbine, Iowa, with the main office located in Scottsdale, Ariz.

“Our vending customers gave us a solid start and are responsible for where we are today.”

“The Tommy Lift was the mother of necessity; Mr. Brown recognized the need for such a machine,” said sales manager Dick Mulno. “The company is still owned by his family.”

Tommy Gate manufactures 68 models for 1,000-, 1,300-, 1,600-, and 2,000-pound capacities. They can be applied to pickup trucks, flat-bed trucks, and enclosed vans. In fact, there are models available for all half-ton and three-quarter-ton pickup trucks currently sold in the United States.

“The models are pretty much self-

contained when the distributor gets it,” Mulno explained. “All a person has to do is slide the lift gate into the opening on the back of the truck (the tail gate and bumper having been removed), mount it to the bracket kit using the bolts provided, and run the power cord up to the battery. If a guy has never put one on before, he should be able to do it in three hours, tops.

“Also, The Tommy Lift is very long-lasting. We’ve got customers who have swapped trucks over a 20-year period and kept the same Tommy Lift.”

Mulno says sales to music and amusement game operators are important to the company. They are the seventh-largest customer base; vending machine operators are even better, accounting for the third-largest total.

“A lot of our customers only buy one unit a year, but they’ve helped us tremendously,” he said. “When we first came out with this product 26 years ago, a lot of people said, ‘It looks good, but does it work?’ The vending customers were the ones who made the company. They gave us a solid start and are responsible for where we are today. Our business got another boost when the video game took off in the early ’80s.”

The advantages of a hydraulic lift gate, Mulno says, are safety- and manpower-related.

“The Tommy Lift pays for itself in no time, when one considers the back injuries it prevents,” he said. “Why lose a guy to a back injury? We have a lot of state workman’s compensation agencies asking

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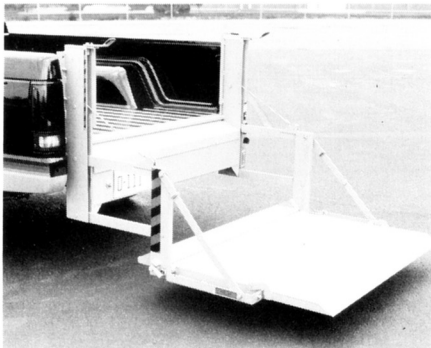
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us how much a lift gate costs. They can release someone back into the work force if he has an aid to help him with his job. They'll buy it in a heartbeat; it's cheaper than keeping him on compensation.

"Besides the safety factor, the Tommy Lift turns a lot of two-man jobs into one-man jobs."

Eagle Lift



Based in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Eagle Lift Co. has been on the scene since November 1986. Its electric, over-hydraulic lift gate fits "everything from small, compact pickup trucks to ton and ton-and-a-half trucks," said Dan Barry, Eagle Lift's inside sales coordinator.

Barry and other company employees have an extensive background in the lift gate industry. He was in Tommy Gate's shipping and receiving department for eight years, and Eagle Lift division manager Jerry Mathison was general manager there in that company's early days. Many other Eagle Lift employees have come from the Tommy Gate factory.

Barry estimates that coin-op operators comprise between 25 to 30 percent of the Eagle Lift market. Within that figure, about 75 percent of the sales are to jukebox operators.

"The food dispensers and other vending machines are getting so large that they require a heavier lift gate than what we're offering right now," Barry said. "As they get bigger, we look to modify our platform dimensions to handle them."

"For amusement games and jukeboxes, we have models that fit all of the full-sized pickup trucks, as well as a model for one-ton, enclosed delivery vans. More and more amusement game operators are us-

ing these vehicles, because they offer the advantage of protecting games from the weather while being hauled. We make approximately 25 different models for various applications."

Why have two men strain themselves, Barry asks, when one man could safely haul a game using an Eagle Lift lift gate?

"We eliminate two-man operations," he said. "Rather than having two men go from location to location, manually lifting machines onto the truck and unloading them again, our lift gates let one man do it. He can get the machine on a dolly, bring it over to the truck, and roll it onto the lift gate platform. Then all you do is turn a switch and watch the lift gate raise it up to the truck."

"It eliminates one person from the operation and prevents back injuries. Even if there's a malfunction, the unit has a built-in safety feature that lets the machine come down slowly."

Eagle Lift is an AMOA member and regular exhibitor at the show.

J.E.R.M. Enterprises



Before forming Niles, Ohio-based J.E.R.M. Enterprises two years ago to manufacture the "Step and Roll Dolly," Raymond Lonsway and Mike Saadeh focused solely on their operating companies—Acme Music & Vending and M & G Services, respectively. Now they've got a hot product to divide their attention.

"Our dolly is designed to move pool tables, in the down-play position, within a location," Lonsway explained. "It has a specialty use; it isn't meant to move tables in and out of locations. The dolly is made for the bar owner, bar maid, patron, etc., to move the pool table from one spot to

another, without having to flip the table or send for the operator."

The device is about 48" x 36" for use on a standard coin-op pool table, though a couple of other sizes are available. It's made of wood and has four casters and four lifting devices. When all four lifters are pushed down, the dolly raises the table about one inch from the ground—which virtually eliminates the chances of getting hurt.

"There's no lifting involved, and you don't have to worry about the table falling," Lonsway said. "The life of the pool table's casters are preserved. Before, you had to take the two casters off before flipping the table, or else they'd bend. The dolly not only prolongs the life of the table; it also saves labor costs, because the location does the work."

He says the Step and Roll Dolly enables operators to set locations that they couldn't before, or satisfy a customer who wants the flexibility of moving the pool table around.

"The dolly stays at the location, rather than with the operator," he said. "Being operators, we know what it's like to get a call from a location that wants something. If a bar location wants to move the pool table on and off the dance floor, it can be done. The same goes for a restaurant owner who wants to move the table to a corner or out of the way. It keeps the operator from having to go over there."

"Also, a lot of operators are using the dolly in the shop to move tables around. It's much easier to use the dolly rather than having four guys flip the table over and carry it."

The product has received an enthusiastic response at various state shows and the recent AMOA Expo. It's something that most pool table operators could use, Lonsway believes.

"It's not like the dolly is necessary for every pool table on an operator's route," he said. "Maybe the figure might only be 10 percent; each location doesn't need the pool tables moved. A guy might only need a couple of them now, with another one down the road when he's trying to save a location or aggressively pursue one. Whatever the case, the dolly is a product that can help operators." □



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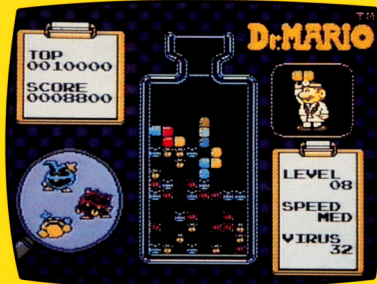


Dr. MARIO

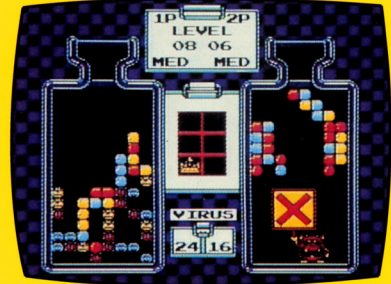
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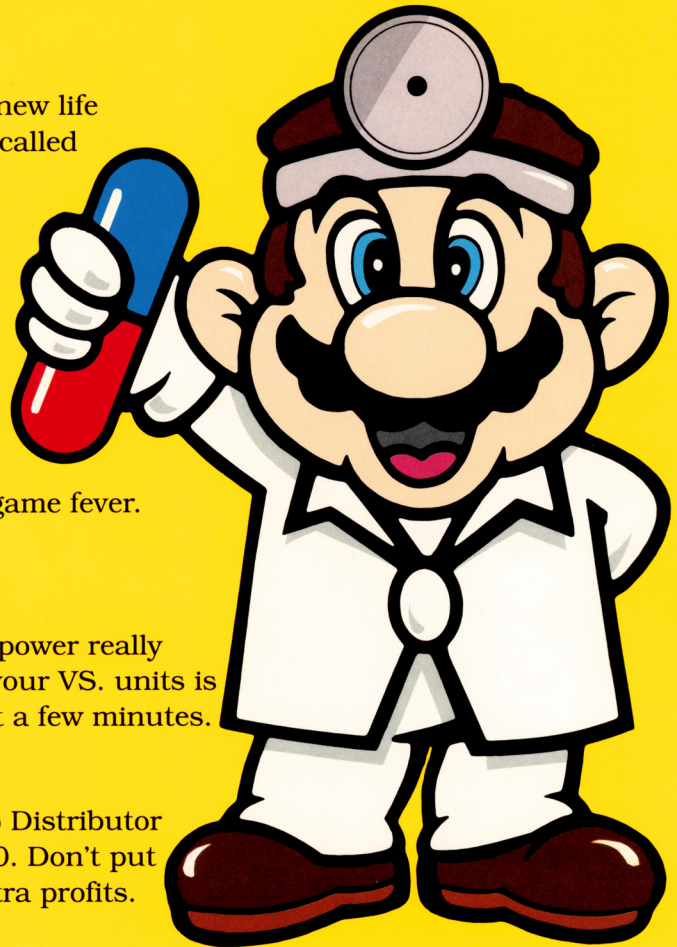
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Operators, contact your authorized Nintendo Distributor or Nintendo of America Inc. at 206/882-2040. Don't put it off. Because early treatment can mean extra profits. Call in Dr. Mario before it's too late.



Getting insurance for your operation

If you're having a hard time getting certain types of insurance for your business, or are unsure of the correct coverage for your situation, maybe firms such as Cohen-Seltzer Inc. and Haas & Wilkerson Insurance can lend a hand. Both are experienced in dealing with the needs of amusement game operators.

Cohen-Seltzer is a 66-year-old, independent insurance agency based in Fort Washington, Pa. (There's also an office in Philadelphia.) In conjunction with The Travelers Insurance Co., Cohen-Seltzer set up an insurance program for AMOA members in May 1988. Vice president Dan Seltzer explained a little about it.

"We believe we have a unique coverage design for operators of arcades and amusement centers, as well as route operators," said Seltzer, who represents the third generation of insurance Seltzers. "Because of the opportunities presented by the size of AMOA's membership, the underwriter understands the need to be competitive in order to attract a large number of these businesses.

"The program was precipitated by the fact that AMOA members were complaining about the inability to purchase liability insurance, along with other forms of insurance, at a reasonable price. We got involved with AMOA to develop this unique insurance facility for its members, one that's available on a long-term basis. A lot of the insurance industry was—and still may be—reluctant to write this type of program for liability coverage. Quite frankly, they were concerned with the quality of the people in the amusement game industry. That's an unfounded fear."

What's available?

There are four separate policies available through the program:

Package policy: The name is misleading, Seltzer says, because it *does not* cover everything. What it does include is property coverage for fire, burglary, or other causes that affect buildings, machinery, inventory, etc.; transit coverage for route operators when moving machines to and from the warehouse and their locations; business interruption coverage; off-premises coverage for damage to machines when they're at a location on a temporary basis; crime coverages, such as employee dishonesty and robbery; and general liability.

Automobile policy: "Some AMOA members have private passenger vehicles, or delivery trucks and vans, that are titled to the company or proprietor," Seltzer said. "This policy covers that exposure."

Workman's compensation policy: This is mandatory in most states. It covers injury to employees during "the due course of employment," Seltzer said. "This coverage is usually required by law."

Umbrella policy: "I don't like this term either, because again, people assume it covers everything," he said. "The umbrella policy is basically a catastrophic liability coverage form that acts, if you will, as the second layer on a chocolate layer cake. It goes over the automobile and general liability limits on those policies."

The Travelers will not write the aforementioned policies for kiddie ride operators. "These rides are a substantially larger risk, but there are specialty insurance companies for this category of operator," Seltzer said. "So when we speak to an AMOA operator that has kiddie ride exposure, we direct him to another source, because The Travelers is not a player."

Safety records are essential

When Cohen-Seltzer quotes automobile coverages to a prospect or client, it asks for such information as name, date of birth, and license number for each of the company's drivers. Cohen-Seltzer will then run Motor Vehicle Reports to see if the drivers have had any moving violations or DWIs, and this information is incorporated into the proposal when the application is submitted to The Travelers.



“Safety records, known as ‘loss runs’ in our business, are absolutely critical,” Seltzer explained. “We often find AMOA members who are good businessmen—who believe they understand the types of insurance they want and need—but don’t have the loss runs.

“A loss run is nothing more than a computer printout from their current insurance company, or previous insurance companies, that shows The Travelers’ underwriter how profitable the account has been. Without that loss information, the underwriter really doesn’t have a complete picture. It would be like going to the bank to get a mortgage on your property without any type of financial information to show your ability to stand up to the debt. The larger the account, the more critical loss runs become.”

Where you live makes a difference

The rates for property, general liability, crime, and other types of coverage differ not only by region. It gets down to state, county, and even township differences, Seltzer says. Also, insurance companies have “a different appetite to aggressively price insurances by state.”

“California is a good example,” he said. “Two or three years ago, it passed a law called Proposition 103. It said that a few months after passing this bill, insurance companies had to roll their rates back 20 percent. Everybody in California thought this was the greatest thing since sliced bread. You know what the insurance companies did? They pulled out of the state!

“What we have now is a lot of rate reform sweeping the country like wildfire. We have big problems in Pennsylvania. Florida and Louisiana are causing big workman’s compensation headaches for the entire insurance industry. So a big insurance company honcho may say, ‘We’re not going to write any workman’s compensation for the next year.’ You see, then, how much things vary from state to state.”

About six months ago, Cohen-Seltzer and The Travelers agreed to open up the insurance program to any Travelers agent in the country.

“We found some reluctance from an operator in Missoula, Mont., say, to do in-

surance business with an insurance broker 2,300 miles away—that he’s never met,” Seltzer said. “Quite frankly, I don’t blame him. I’d like to know who my banker is, who my accountant is, who my lawyer is, and so on. Now, this program is provided to any Travelers agent in the United States. As long as the local agent is licensed by The Travelers, he or she can access the program. Of course, we will still work directly with those who would like to.”

For more information on the program, contact either your local Travelers agent or Denise Costa at Cohen-Seltzer, (800) 545-2667.

“Living in a highly litigious part of the country may mean higher insurance costs, but that doesn’t mean the insurance is difficult to purchase.”

Haas & Wilkerson

Haas & Wilkerson Insurance, which has been in business for 50 years, has offices in St. Louis, Shawnee Mission, Kan., and St. Petersburg, Fla. The firm specializes in insuring the entertainment industry: arcades, amusement parks, circuses, rodeos, and most recently, music (ranging from individual entertainers to the Rolling Stones’ “Steel Wheels” concert tour).

“For liability coverage, arcade operators would commonly need a million-dollar combined, single-limit policy, preferably through a licensed and rated carrier,” said Philip Coulson, one of H & W’s principals. “This would be with whatever deductible they see fit, ranging from nothing to \$500. It should be on an occurrence basis, as opposed to claims made.”

These non-route operators, having a fixed arcade or amusement center, would naturally be less likely to have as many, or

any, company vehicles. Still, auto liability coverage is needed.

“They would need a policy to cover the employees’ vehicles, in conjunction with the business that they’re doing,” Coulson said. “In other words, let’s say an arcade employee was going to pick up a part and had an accident with someone. Through creative litigation, the arcade could be reached for liability. Those with portable operations would certainly need collision and upset coverage.

“The other portions of the insurance program would be for general liability, fire or physical damage to the arcade machines themselves, and workman’s compensation for the employees.”

What if you have to climb inside?

Some pieces of coin-op equipment could prove to be more sticky than others from an insurance standpoint. For example, what risks lurk for a customer playing pinball at an amusement park? But strap that same customer into a simulator such as Sega’s new *R360*, with its circular spinning motion, and an underwriter might get antsy.

“I saw that piece at the recent IAAPA show,” Coulson said. “It’s a little different than simply standing in front of a video game and playing it. It probably wouldn’t have to be insured separately, but some companies or underwriters may feel differently. Our program doesn’t distinguish between arcade games or require notification when new ones are purchased. Actually, the Sega piece is closer to an amusement park ride than an arcade game.”

Coulson says living in highly litigious parts of the country, California and New York, for example, leads to higher insurance costs. “But that doesn’t mean the insurance is difficult to purchase,” he added.

H & W is a regular exhibitor at the IAAPA show and others of that nature. The same cannot be said for the ACME and AMOA shows, but why?

“I’ve attended the AMOA show before, but for some reason insurance was a non-topic,” Coulson said. “As a result, we haven’t felt it pressing to exhibit there. Most people at the IAAPA show come to us with specific insurance needs.” □

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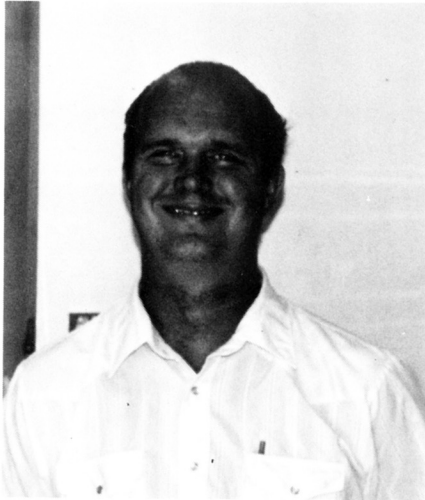
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Jim Overman is a successful operator in Baton Rouge, La. He got into the business along with thousands of other hopefuls just around the time Pac-Man was putting the coin-op industry on the map. But he didn't fall by the wayside when the tough times came. Why? Because he didn't get into it looking for a quick buck. He knew it would be hard work and he was—and still is—willing to do it.

Jim Overman

Jim is somewhat of an inspiration because he never seems to complain. If something isn't going well, he simply finds another way to make a profit. He is doing more than just surviving—he is expanding and watching his business grow.

His first arcade, Sherwood Arcade, was in a subdivision and had about 25 machines. When he sold the arcade, he kept a variety of machines, which he began to place in convenience stores, pizza places, and similar locations. Over the years his route has grown from one location to the 250-plus locations he runs today. Jim has some definite ideas on the industry and we enjoyed hearing them.

Which do you prefer, street locations or arcades?

Three of our locations are arcades. If you are going to be in the business long-term, you have to be full service. That means the bars and taverns as well as arcades. However, we are still weak in bars.

Do you have plans to strengthen your position in bar locations?

CD jukeboxes are letting us get into some locations that we may not have gotten into before. Once we have the jukebox in, we are prepared to add other types of equipment.

Of the equipment that you operate, what percent is video? Will that percent be changing?

Last year we went to a new buying scheme. We are looking at making more long-term investments, buying equipment that holds its value. We bought 38 pool tables and will be buying more CD jukeboxes. These are the backbone of our industry.

We have de-emphasized video games mainly because they aren't producing. About 85 percent of our video purchases are kits. When we go to shows we make a record of all the games and only buy the super-mega conversions.

If it's not the cream of the crop, we'll wait for close-outs. When you are dominant in your area you can wait six months. Unless the kids go to the mall or a major arcade, they will not even know which games are out.

By waiting, we have dropped our average conversion cost to about \$700. And that's for late-model units, not games that are two years old.

Basically, we buy everything at discount, we convert a lot of games, and we usually buy dedicated games second-hand unless they're super-mega hits. We are very conservative.

Do you have a formula for figuring how long a game takes to pay for itself?

We try to work on a 26-week ROI. We take the price of the kit and divide it by 26 weeks. We can then operate it for the rest of the year at a profit. That is why conversions are important to us. We very seldom find a kit that doesn't fit into this formula. With pool tables and jukeboxes we are working more on a 13-month ROI. But the machine holds its value much longer.

You calculate 26 weeks for conversions. How do you figure it on dedicated pieces?

I consider driving game simulators as long-term investments. *Hard Drivin'*, the predecessor of *Race Drivin'*, for example, is still worth \$8,300 and it's almost two

years old. If you have a good product, it will retain its value. Most of the dedicated games that we buy will have a steering wheel or special controls. Otherwise it doesn't justify being a dedicated game.

The best game last year was *Turtles*. Even the best game dropped about 33 percent of its value in one year. If that's the best, think of those that weren't so good. There are some that originally cost \$2,400 and less than a year later are going for \$1,200. If I was a distributor or operator that bought those units, I would be upset. You can't sell it and you've lost a lot of money. We depreciate our dedicated games over seven year's time, so I want games that have retained some of their value over that time. We depreciate all of our software 100 percent in the current year.

Has buying more pool tables opened new locations?

We bought strictly for locations we acquired. We didn't buy them *anticipating* growth; we bought them *because* of growth.

We often hear comments about too few bar pieces. Do you agree?

There were probably five videos at the show [AMOA] that I would classify as tavern pieces. That's plenty since taverns will traditionally be weak video game locations. They are mostly dart, pool, and jukebox locations.

How have CD boxes gotten you into locations you may not have gotten without them?

CD boxes have enabled us to negotiate a contract with many locations. We'll tell them we want a guarantee per week, the CDs come off the top, and we want a two-year contract. If they are willing to sign it, then we are ready to spend the money for the jukebox.

We need that contract. We can take it to the bank to show them that we have a guaranteed two years and they will give us a line of credit to purchase more equipment. Only the better locations are going with the CD boxes. Those that are getting \$60 to \$70 from their vinyl boxes are scared of committing to \$75 per week. The quality locations don't worry because their boxes are already doing \$150. The CD will basically be the same as a 50/50 split.

We also try to get the rest of the equip-



A group of students drop by during lunchtime.

ment in the place. If they own their own pool tables we will abide by that. Once we have the CD box in, it's much easier to approach them about the other equipment.

Have you had any trouble getting 45s?

Of course. Like other operators, we will have to join groups like Record Source International to get them. We're lucky that we only have three vinyl boxes out. We could easily sell off our vinyl boxes and go with all CDs. As of four years ago we owned no pool tables or jukeboxes, only video games. We have the luxury of getting into these areas with the best pool tables and jukeboxes. We don't have to worry about eliminating jukeboxes that are 10 or 15 years old. We are going to do more and more music, but we have to do it a little at a time.

Would you advise that plan for other operators?

Anyone that has a box 10 years old should try to phase it out. The parts become scarce after that long. And yes, they should be replaced with CDs. There are some locations that justify a five-year-old jukebox. Some black locations like the old 45s; they like the old blues and jazz. They don't ask for many records to be changed. So it has to be on a case-by-case basis. There is no doubt that 45s will be much harder to come by.

However, the better the jukebox the better chance you have of staying in a location. Now is the time to be planning for the future.

Do you do much redemption?

We are looking into it. We have an arcade in Baton Rouge by LSU in which we are thinking about doing some sort of redemption. But it is still in the early planning stages.

Were you for or against the legislation to make video poker games legal that recently was voted down in Louisiana?

Being weak in the bar business, I wasn't jumping up and down for them. If they did come into play, we'd have the resources to become a player. If pokers do become legal, there is the question of whether operators will operate them or will the state bring in a major player to run them. In Louisiana's bill it actually said that state representatives and senators had the right to buy these machines, too.

We could be in a lot of trouble as operators if the government has the right to own these machines. Pokers are profitable and very long-term. People that aren't in the business are going to run to try to get into it. It's like in the early '80s, when a lot of people thought they could make a quick buck with video games and ended up losing a lot of money.

It's interesting that you make that comparison, since you were one of those who got into the business in the early '80s. What did you do right when so many dropped out?

Ten years ago I was just out of college. We had other operators supplying us with equipment in our first arcade. Later I bought my first machine, a *Six Million Dollar Man* pinball. Then I began buying games in the \$200 price range.

I think what I did right was not trying to go head-to-head with the local big guys. I went 10 or 15 miles out of town to the little country stores and rural areas that no one else wanted to service. It was more work than being right in town, but I was willing to do it. It has allowed me to grow over a period of nine years to what I am now. We are also in town now, but a lot of those little country stores are still happy with a game that is five years old. Believe me, if you have a game like that making \$60 a week, you've done good.

You are very adamant about the need to rotate games, aren't you?

We have our collectors rotate the machines at the same time that they collect to eliminate backtracking. We rotate games within a route. We might have one game on the truck that morning and it will do a chain reaction of maybe four moves for that day. Our collectors know where each game will be going the next time around. We move an "A" game into another "A" game location. We won't put a "B" game in the place of an "A" game.

Once a game has been rotated, I call the location owner to ask if he is happy about the new game. It gives us a chance to talk. He may bring up any other problems that he has on his mind. By making the call, he feels like he knows me personally even though I may only see him once or twice a year.

I also keep as many facts as I can about him by using a computer program. I'll write down the names of the wife, children, and anything important that happened. I'm interested in knowing them a little better. It's another way of using all resources at our disposal.

How do you pay your collectors?

They are all subcontractors who are paid a commission on what they collect. They generally make eight percent of what

they bring back to us. If they run a rural route, the percentage jumps to 12 percent. Our rural collectors also get paid by the hour for "ride time." Depending on how far the route is from home base, this could be as high as an extra \$25. The higher percentage and the "ride time" money are incentives for them to go to these out-of-the-way locations.

We also pay our men for rotating games. Basically, we pay them a \$2 fee to bring a game into a location. If they have to take a game out of the location, it's another \$2. It adds up. If they rotate five machines a day, that's an extra \$20. I haven't had any complaints from the men that it's not worth \$4 to move a machine in and out of a store.

We have a part timer who works two or three days a week and makes about \$70 per day. Another guy works four days plus he does a little service work; he makes about \$500 per week.

by having them as subcontractors.

How does it work for them to use their own vehicles?

It works out better than most would believe. We normally pay them \$20 to \$30 per day for their vehicles. They have to have their own insurance and take care of all maintenance. We will purchase a liftgate for their vehicle and have it installed with the mutual agreement that if they should leave we get it back.

Did you ever work with company-owned trucks?

Yes. We went through a motor every two years, tires every six months—religiously—and never had a clean truck. You wouldn't believe it, but the trucks are now getting washed! They look great.

We are looking into raising the limit during the gasoline price increases. We're waiting to see where the price settles. We have to pay what our men feel is worth it

"If you are going to be in the business long-term, you have to be full service."

Do you know how that compares to salaries of other collectors in the industry?

I think the average is about \$7 per hour. Our collectors are making more than that. Most operators pay their collectors a salary. There's a competitor in town with a route smaller than ours that has seven employees! By the time you pay Social Security, unemployment, and all the other extras, plus provide a vehicle that they can tear up, I'd rather pay a man more money and let him worry about the workman's comp, etc. If that man has a bad attitude or starts causing trouble with my locations, I can just tell him to pack his bags.

I'd like to warn others that may be tempted to do this. Be sure the employees use their own vehicles, pay on a percentage, and pay them for any extra work they do, like rotating games. If you ever go into a labor board meeting you have prove that they were paid for what they did and that you were not providing office space. If you are going to work this way, you need to make up a contract and have everything written down ahead of time, including the termination rules. You save a lot of money

for them. We hadn't had any complaints until the gas increase. The price of gas went from a dollar a gallon to \$1.38. They have definitely voiced their opinions on that!

Does the same collector work a regular route?

For security reasons and to avoid complaints about someone getting the better area, we have all of our routes on two-week intervals. Collector "A" collects one route; in two weeks the next collector collects that one. They alternate back and forth. In one month each has collected all of the locations. One benefit is that locations don't get too friendly with one collector. A lot of operators have lost a good employee and good locations because that employee took the locations with him when he left to work with another operating company in the area. Our locations don't expect only one man to service them. They are more at ease at seeing a different face every other time.

Do you find that since everyone is collecting all the routes and being paid commission, that they are more involved in the location's

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success?

Employees suggest games to go in certain locations. They might be aware that a certain location owner likes wrestling games, so they will suggest one. We listen very carefully to what our collectors have to say. They are looking at the situation not just as employees but as a way to make more money. We also don't discriminate with our locations. If we have a very good location that needs to be collected every week, I may collect it myself one week but the next time it will be in the regular route. This way they can't claim that I give them only the street locations and keep all the premium locations for myself. All of our routes are a mixture of locations.

“CD jukeboxes are letting us get into some locations that we may not have gotten into before.”

Are you using a computer in your business?

Before I bought any software, I bought demo disks from about three or four different companies. I also looked at the software at shows before I made my decision. There are probably three dominant software manufacturers for our business. The one I have is from E-Soft Systems. One reason is that they had a set price for the software and whenever there were updates, I would get a copy. This software is very quick on entering income. I can enter a location in less than two minutes, from meter readings to whatever. I like it also because it has places for comments. If, for example, a game had a meter discrepancy the time before, I will make a note for the collector to check it the next time.

We keep track of quite a few details about every machine. We know exactly when the inside of the glass (the actual picture tube) was cleaned. We try to do it at least every four months. Also, this program has a rotation advisory. Basically it takes all the data per machine. For example, if it started out at \$100 and worked its way down to \$30, it gets subtraction points up to nine. Then I can go into the program and have a list run out of all the games that have a minus-five. When I'm sitting down with my route schedules I can look at this list and see which games should be mov-

ed. We move machines that do \$100 because when they first came in they did \$200 per week.

Do you have locations requesting certain games?

Not too often. When I got into the business by going after the rural locations, they were happy with older games. The city locations all wanted the same hot games; that's an impossible situation for an operator. It's no wonder a lot of those guys dropped out.

We have found that if we rotate our machines properly, which for us is every nine weeks, the locations don't ask for new games because they know they are going to get one. I can tell a location that we are

going to bring in a new game and they won't even ask what it is. They know that we know what we are doing.

If you rotate your machines enough, you're able to take a game that's not as great as it should be and still make decent money, since it's only going to be in the location about four weeks. Locations usually ask for new games if you are not conscious about rotating your machines.

How long does a game last on your route?

We will rotate a game through one route, which is about 15 locations, then move it to another route where it runs its course. By the time it makes its way back to the warehouse, it's normally three or four years old. It's a good candidate for a conversion or for home sale.

Do you buy all of your equipment through a distributor?

We buy from two distributors in our area. We buy a lot of used dedicated units from New Orleans Novelty, who has the best in the South. Most of our software is bought out of state from kit houses or large operators that convert their own games while they are pretty fresh. All of the games we buy have original graphics and are original boards. We will not put any parallels out.

Even though parallels have been ruled legal?

I think they will be legal as of November 1991. Even then, I doubt we will buy any. The parallel issue will make manufacturers give American operators the choice between kits and dedicated like they have in the rest of the world. We need to be on the same playing field as the rest of the world. But as far as buying parallel boards, I don't see the advantage. There are only so many units sold in the United States. Many top-rate operators buy whatever is new and get out before they get hurt. They will sell to other operators or to the kit houses. So I can buy original boards much cheaper than I can buy a parallel board.

When the parallel issue came up, we were buying the real McCoy cheaper than parallels with junky graphics. We decided then that we don't need parallels. Parallels to me are just a way for the Japanese to take product and dump it on the American market. If they are forced from the get-go to bring it out as a kit—if it justifies a kit—we won't have so much junky product out there. You can't bring a driving game or a game that has phenomenal controls, like *Operation Wolf*, out as a kit. They need to be dedicated units and justify the price tag.

Another thing is that there are already a lot of bad conversions. If some operators buy a board with nothing with it, you can believe we will be seeing even more bad conversions.

Do you have some tips for operators in rural locations?

I've found that many operators operate by the seat of their pants. There is no system of communication. Fred talks to George, who may or may not take care of the problem. There must be communication. We have everything written down so there are no misunderstandings.

Also, if operators have rural routes like we do, it's long distance from many locations. We went through a local carrier and got a "ready line" WATS. It's basically about \$20 per month for the line and about 23 cents per minute. We have that number on everything we have printed, including our machine stickers. A WATS line makes us look professional. The bill may run \$35 or \$45 a month, which is money well spent. Our customers can call to report broken machines. In addition, we have had

calls from other locations that probably wouldn't have spent the money to call long distance to talk to us about placing equipment. If you have more than 15 long distance locations you should consider it. It doesn't cost much, but you could save a location. It's also a selling tool.

Have you taken over smaller routes in your area?

We have bought maybe three competitors in the last two years. It is getting to the point where I wonder if it's better to buy a company instead of just growing naturally. I've talked to competitors in our area who are just surviving. They aren't expanding or growing.

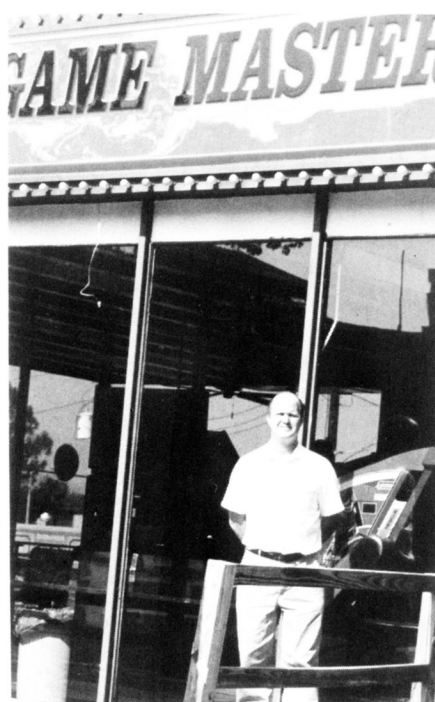
You have to reinvest your money. If you don't you are going to end up with product that is five years old and then when you are forced to reinvest you will make a lot of bad buys.

Do you ever get calls from competitors' locations?

Yes, we do. We will get as much information as possible about what kind of equipment they have in the location. I tell them I will get back to them within 24 hours. Then I'll call the competitor and tell him that he has a problem with his location. Normally, it creates a nice climate because the competition doesn't look at you like you are trying to take their locations. They have a chance to save the location.

But, like I said earlier, if they haven't been reinvesting back into their business, they may not be able to solve the problem. Or there may be a personality conflict. We have lost locations because the location owner had a personality conflict with me or one of my collectors, so he got another operator. He may be the type that won't ever get along with anybody. We just make a note of it in our little black book. When he calls sometime down the road, we will make him sign a contract for so many years.

Another advantage to calling our competitors is that locations can't use us against each other. Sometimes they would go to one operator and tell him that the other guy will give him thus and such. We feel like we are handling the situation the right way, but there are still guys that undermine our efforts. Some will promise new equipment or loan money. Many



Jim by one of his arcades near LSU.

times the promises aren't kept, so we get back the location, but it's made a bad impression.

Do you have contracts on all of your locations?

About 60 percent of them. In Louisiana you can't go into a little country store or mom and pop pizza place and tell them you want a two-year contract. They won't sign it.

Are you satisfied with the jukebox licensing agreement?

We were in a recession when everyone else was in a boom, so you don't push your luck. That's why we don't ask the location to pay the fee. We just pay it and figure it as a part of doing business. I don't check to see if my competitors have them. All I know is that we have them; I'm not really worried about anyone else. I'm not trying to stir up trouble. I think it will help in one respect: if a neighborhood tavern has its own box, they are charged \$275—just like an operator for the first box. They may not be able to justify the expense and will allow an operator to put in the jukebox.

I'd like to say that I think the jukebox licensing people should check all types of music for licenses, not just jukeboxes. If someone is having a record spin or other types of music, they should have to pay a

fee. There are many locations that have record spins, and I'm sure they don't have permits. That hurts operators who are paying the fees. If they are going to enforce one part of it, let them enforce all of it. If they do, there will be more jukeboxes in locations.

What do you see in the future?

I see more and more of the big operators getting bigger. I see the little guy that doesn't take care of the little things in his business dropping by the wayside. If an operator lets a service call go for a day or two, or if he is not buying any new equipment, he is in trouble. The companies that have PR departments or one man that takes care of trying to keep locations happy will be successful. I look for more efficient, bigger companies that handle the little things better than the smaller companies.

I started out small and remember all those little things I did to keep my locations happy. For example, when a game comes into the warehouse, it must be tagged as to why it's there. Our service people are required to check off about 15 things. When it goes back out on a location, we have a better chance of its working than someone who lets the small things go.

Communication is more important than ever to be successful. In a small company you may have two guys. One goes out in the morning, one goes out in the afternoon, and they never talk to each other. How do they know what problem existed? And if they don't know, how will those problems ever be resolved?

Keeping your games clean is also a small detail, but important. Customers really don't know the difference in cabinets, but they do know what looks good and what doesn't. They'll play a game longer if it looks good. I've seen brand new conversions with no decals. How can you expect a player to be attracted to a game that doesn't even have labels on it? With us, we go to a system where we try to make all of our conversions look the same.

You have to set standards; you are never too small or too large to do that. It doesn't cost much to install a system of checks and balances so that things don't go undone.

Once you start letting the little things go undone, then you can start planning on another career; you won't be long in this one. □

Pinballs fight back; hello, Pac-Man

As 1981 began, it was evident that pinball was beginning to be relegated to the back burner in favor of video games. Ralph Lally said in his editorial, "Most people blame the sluggish pinball market on the recent video craze. Instead of upgrading their routes proportionately, operators were buying all the *Asteroids*, *Space Invaders*, and *Galaxians* they could get their hands on. It seems the pinball manufacturers were the worst hit."

But the pinball manufacturers did not take the dismissal lightly. At the AMOA

show at the end of 1980, each manufacturer pulled out the stops. The first multi-level playfields, which would be the first of many, were introduced. "Williams' *Black Knight* and Bally's *Flash Gordon* were undoubtedly the talk of this year's show," said Lally. "Clearly the introduction of these two pinballs marks the beginning of a new era of pinball."

Ironically, when it looked like pinball manufacturers were fighting for their share of players, Play Meter's January 1981 issue focused on coverage of the AMOA show, where a fuzzy little ball was introduced that would change the industry forever. We said of this game: "It's a cute game which appears to grow on players." Of course, it was *Pac-Man*.

Other "picks of the show" that year (along with our comments) were: *Battlezone* ("For most people at the show, *Battlezone* seemed to offer the most potential for the present video market."); *Berzerk* ("It has more to offer than is readily seen."); *Defender* ("It shows signs of being a contender for top video of the year honors—not a bad showing for the company's initial effort into the highly competitive video market."); *Star Castle* ("Attracted sizable crowds and quite a number of votes from industry experts as being the best video at the show."); and *Crazy Climber* ("One of the more curious games at the show.")

It was 10 years ago that Play Meter noted with enthusiasm that the American-designed games were not out of the running. "Just when snide remarks about American ingenuity were becoming all too commonplace, and just when the Japanese lettering on the games was becoming understandable—the likes of American products such as *Battlezone*, *Berzerk*, *Star Castle*, and *Defender* burst onto the scene." But, alas, the rally cries were too


late. *Pac-Man*, a Japanese-developed game, would mark the total dominance of the Japanese in the video game market.

Ten years ago signaled the beginning of what would be termed the controversy over "gray area" games. "Amusement industry people contend that the argument is only for the naive, that the real purpose of the machines is for gambling." This statement was in response to the claims by the manufacturers that the games that offered free plays on card games were for "amusement only." Gray area games were the focus of many articles in Play Meter and today is a top news story.


Industry news 10 years ago included the announcement of Fred Granger's (AMOA's executive director) retirement; D. Gottlieb & Co. announced a licensing agreement with a Japanese company for video games; Gottlieb's first video, *No Man's Land*, had been unveiled at the AMOA show; the first "Play Meter" awards were presented to Williams and Atari; Marshall Caras joined R.H. Belam Co.; Dick Needleman and Howie Rubin joined Atari; Rene Lopez was named field service manager at Taito; Jerry Gordon was promoted to senior vice president of H. Betti Industries; Electro-Sport wanted to make its mark with American-developed video games—the first was *Tomahawk Missile*; Rock-Ola announced its entry into the video game market; and Midway and Universal settled a lawsuit out of court concerning Universal's *Cosmic Alien*.

New games included in the "New Products" section were *Frontier* from Bally, *Polaris* from Taito, *Time Line* from Gottlieb, *Battlezone* from Atari, *Starwood* jukebox from Rowe, *Berzerk* from Stern, *Pac-Man* from Midway, *Tomahawk Missile* from Electro-Sport, *Xenon* from Bally, and *Defender* from Williams. □


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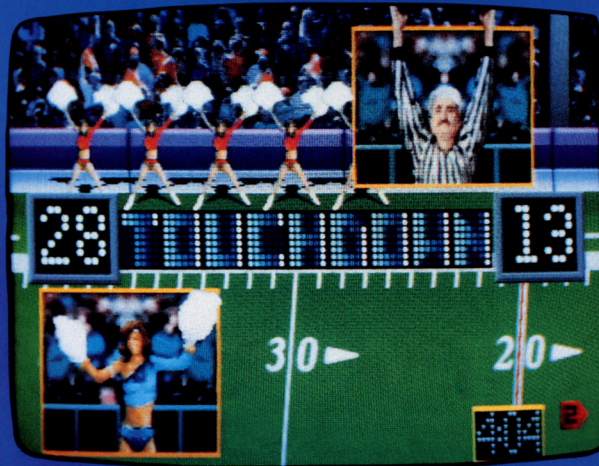
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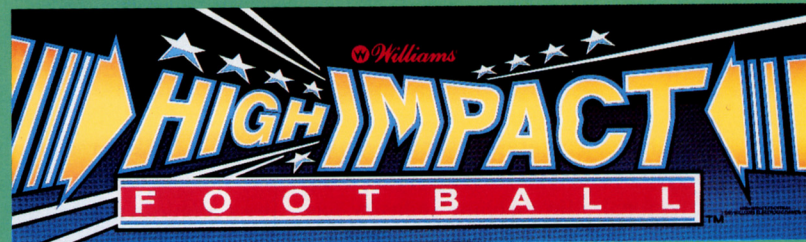
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A whirlwind tour of the European continent



Konami's Steve Bierrum (c), who works out of the London office, with colleague Sue Hatherel and European managing director Mr. Ando.

The Europeans are footsore. A month of international traveling—such as the international coin machine industry has never seen before—was in store in October for those determined to go everywhere and see everything. Never before had the marketplace been faced with so many important overseas shows in one month.

It began with the annual soiree in Tokyo at the beginning of October, but it clashed with the FER exhibition in Barcelona, which was followed within a couple of days by the Enada show in Rome. A

week's breather was given before the Associated Preview in London, followed by a couple of days off and the AMOA Expo in New Orleans.

Were they all of international importance? The organizers certainly thought so, for they were energetically marketed throughout the international press, and most of the exhibitors felt that one of their major pitches was to foreign visitors.

For those, then, who consider that there are too many exhibitions on the international scene, ponder this: as long as the

promoters get exhibitors to fill their halls, they will ignore the complaints about there being too many shows. And as long as the exhibitors can complete a show with a feeling of it having been worthwhile, they'll come back.

The real footsloggers are the main manufacturers and distributors—along with the trade press—who all have an axe to grind. The manufacturers have to support their local distributors, and the foreign distributors are there to see if there is anything new coming out of that market

suitable for their domestic markets—and to talk to those roving manufacturers.

Each show, therefore, becomes its own international event, as much a meeting point for regular negotiations and an exchange of data as for buying and selling. But each exhibition now has its own characteristics, and it must be acknowledged that most are becoming very professional indeed.

No matter how flat the Spanish industry is at present, its exhibition was a brilliantly stage-managed event by Interlalia SA. Similarly, the Italians at SAPAR (the trade association) had overcome the problems of Enada's past, beset with strikes and difficulties, to come up with a most professional show. In London, the talk was all gloom and doom, but Howard and Wikberg Promotions got a record number of visitors through its doors.

Starting in Barcelona

It began with the industry in turmoil in Barcelona. The Palacio Victoria Eugenia was a classical setting, and the display was a brave sight, but there was a distinct lack of enthusiastic buzz to which we have become accustomed in Spain.

The legalized slots in Spain had made for a very wealthy industry, despite some violent spasms. Successive governments overturned each other's machine laws to first ban the industry, then permit it, only to ban it again. This time the contortions were not due to legislative indigestion, but rather fiscal symptoms. The Spanish government has clamped down on the "Type B" machines: low-stake, low-payout slots that effectively form the backbone of the Spanish trade.

The heavy taxation introduced on slots has turned the attention of the trade away from that sector (which may have been the government's intention) and focused it instead on alternative forms of equipment. But it's strictly a "damage limitation exercise," not regarded by anyone as a real attempt at changing the direction or accent of the industry. It is a stop-gap, something to keep factories running while the industry's representatives go back to war with the legislators.

The two supremos of the Spanish trade are Cirsa and Franco, two companies locked in mortal combat for years with

gargantuan slots businesses behind them. Cirsa, through its manufacturing subsidiary Unidesa, can dwarf pretty well anything else on the international coin machine scene. This includes the United Kingdom, the United States, and Japan, but few realize it in other countries. The group displayed equipment more akin to the casino market than anything else—and its direction may not be misguided.

There are over 700 casinos in Europe alone, all rich in big-payout slots, Vegas-style. The market is currently carved up, to a great extent, among Bally, IGT, and Aristocrat. The opening up of the Eastern European countries and their desire for hard currency suggests that they may turn more and more to casinos, which could open the door still further to expansion from anyone keen to get into the race.

"Never before had the marketplace been faced with so many important overseas shows in one month."

Unidesa certainly is, based on the look of its FER stand, and Franco, too, hinted strongly of similar sentiments. Both paid scant lip service to fresh products for their own domestic slots consumption.

Otherwise, electronic darts and jukeboxes formed the basis of the Spanish trade's intentions to keep going no matter what the government does to it, notwithstanding the industry's close attention to the pool table market, currently dominated by British-style tables. Arachnid was out in force with its electronic darts, under the supervision of Einar Askvig, the American company's vice president of marketing for Europe.

"We are actually having to fly in machines to meet the sudden demand," he said. "Electronic dart machines have been classified as sports games by the government, and operators obviously see them as a profitable alternative to slots. We would expect the market to absorb at least 10,000 games by the end of the year."

Importer Diana Marketing has appointed Franco and Miky as subdistributors and aims to capture at least 50 percent of the market. It has already set up a league struc-

ture and organized national dart finals for March, from which the winners will progress to Arachnid's Bullshooter finals in May in Chicago. But Merit, NSM, Valley, and Oper Coin have been joined by HGM SA (the big British-owned pool table manufacturer) in a battle for supremacy in this particular sector of the market.

Jukeboxes were strong with Sound Leisure and HGM SA. They had clearly identified products for the most in-demand sector of Spain's phonograph business: low-cost CD models. A no-frills 12-disc box is ideally suited to small Spanish bars. Also around at the show were NSM, Wurlitzer, Pioneer, and MHG, most of whom were keeping new product under wraps for the AMOA Expo.

The pool scene was dominated by the British HGM SA, with well-organized

leagues designed to promote its extensive range of tables. But the French Rene Pierre made its presence felt, as did Valley through its Spanish distributor and two or three Spanish companies.

Video was dull because FER clashed with the JAMMA show in Tokyo; there was no opportunity to fly in the cream of Japanese technology. But Sega had a big display, and Atari and Taito were on hand to lead the big companies. From the United States came Grand Products, which caused something of a stir in 1989 with *Slick Shot*. This year the company brought *Dyno Bop* as a novelty.

Pinball was subdued, as might be expected, with all of the new equipment under wraps for New Orleans.

On to Italy

And so across the Mediterranean to Rome we went for Enada, the big Italian show. Our Italian readers may forgive us for a somewhat jaundiced eye on their annual jamboree, but it has to be said that in the past Enada has proved to be the epitome of "Il Reepoff."

Scandalous copying has gone on in Italy for years, so much so that outraged

originators have been viewed with something akin to curious, unintelligible nonchalance by the Italian trade. For them, copying is second-nature. This is inevitable in a market cursed by weak passing-off laws.

Some cleaning up has been apparent in recent years, however. The fact that the organizers of the show managed to overcome their almost perennial chaos from strikes and last-minute hitches at least made for pleasant surroundings.

This visit to the Fiera di Roma complex on the outskirts of the capital could never be described as a classic encounter for the intrepid international traveler. But as one of my colleagues commented, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do. If you can't launch a wealth of new equipment on your home soil, then show the world that you're second to none in the cabinet, monitor, and spare parts forum."

The 18th Enada certainly did that if nothing else, with 70 exhibitors showing over 800 machines. It lacked in terms of new and innovative equipment, but it gained in the area of ancillary products. The international visitor doesn't expect to witness a mass of world premieres at Enada. Even video games and pinball, which make up the majority of the Italian market, are launched elsewhere. But early visitors to the show were impressed with the range of new cabinets.

Kiddie rides are an Italian specialty, typified by the products of Cimosake Elettronica. The newcomers from the video game world were displayed by companies like Negro (Taito). The international influence from Italy is certainly provided by Hantarex, the biggest supplier of video game monitors in Europe and one of the largest in the world. It concentrated on the new MTC9300 monitor, but Hantarex doesn't have it all their own way. Domestic rival Selti Elettronica offered monitors ranging in size from 10 to 33 inches.

Coin handling is another Italian specialty, led by Maggi Coniature of Milan. It concentrates on a range of security locks, change machines, security tokens, and its own validators. Competition was provided by Comestero and its new electronic validator.

Cabinets came from numerous suppliers, leading one Italian trade pundit to comment, "The video game market has now settled. Previously, there have been too many dedicated games; now there are fewer, highly selective games, which is better. This leads to more board games and gives business to the cabinet companies." The trade rated Taito's *Super Space Invader '91* highly, as well as its *Annihilator*, which is based on the "Aliens" movie.

force, but without two pennies to rub together for the miserable distributors. High interest rates were not only hitting the lucrative exports business through a too-strong Pound Sterling, but also punishing those companies which over-stretched their borrowing in times of lower rates. It also stopped the average Brit from putting pennies into the slots in his local pubs.

Diminishing returns have made the all-

"There was a distinct lack of enthusiastic buzz to which we have become accustomed in Spain."

But Italy was desperately in need of something new and innovative to boost a tired market, one lacking the spice often added to it by the permissiveness of slots, which many of her neighboring countries enjoy. But slots are not all-and-everything, as Spain demonstrated. Become totally dependent upon them and you're headed for a fall if government takes a dislike to them.

Last stop: London

For all of its super-sophisticated operating systems, heavily into data retrieval and mega-sized operators of over 40,000 units, the annual Associated Leisure Preview in London was all gloom and doom.

It was a complex series of contributing factors which brought the Brits out in

powerful brewery barons unhappy. Their short term solution is to squeeze the operators who obtain a rent for their slots, rather than the criminal-intensive shares system. Austerity therefore steps in.

To add to the misery, the trade campaigned long and hard for a maximum 20-pence stake (40 cents) in slots—doubling the old rates—and got it. This is in addition to a maximum cash payout of 2.40 pounds (\$4.80) or 4.80 pounds (\$9.60) in tokens for their pub slot machines. They got it but badly miscalculated public reaction. The ride has been rocky, to say the least.

So with the backbone of the industry aching severely, the AL Preview, which serves as the traditional fall "fill-in" show between the big ATEI in London each



The improved stand design and exhibition layout of the Enada show in Rome.

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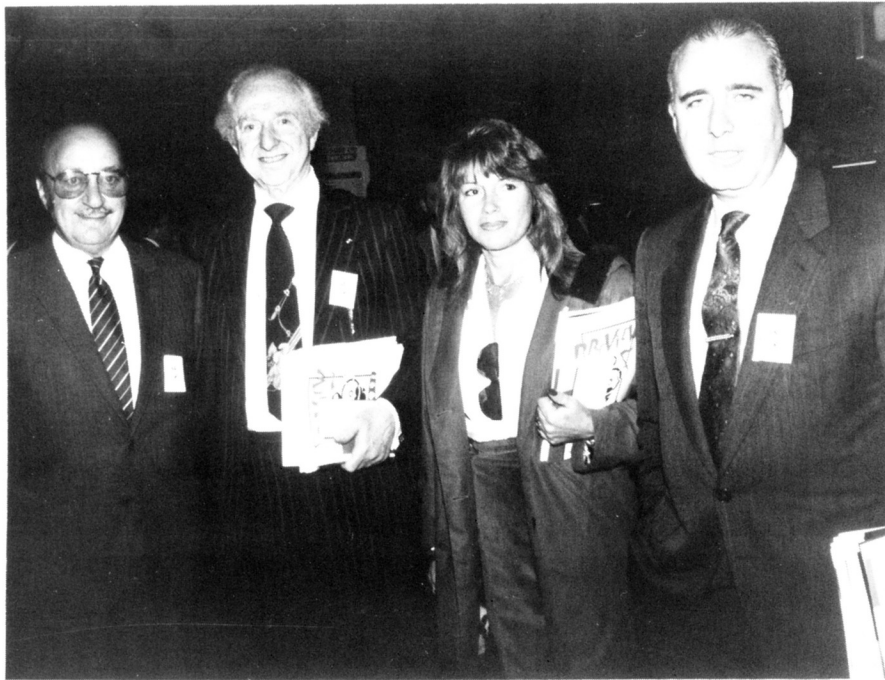
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Marty Bromley of Segasa, Spain (second left) was among the visitors in London, flanked by British trade personality Basil Marks (l) and Eddie Morales of Segasa, Spain and his wife, Araceli.

January, was certainly in the doldrums. Yet curiously, it broke all previous attendance records.

Symptomatic of the problems were the rumors circulating the hall, which had 65 exhibitors. With Deith Leisure's parent company in the hands of receivers, all was speculation on whether Bob Deith could come up with the cash backers to keep him and his group of coin machine companies in business. These included the Deith Leisure distribution set-up, along with Philip Shefras Spares and Suzo of Rotterdam, both major spare parts companies.

Even more interesting was the trickle-down effect, which brought still more speculation. With Deith apparently owing large sums to other major distributors in the United Kingdom, were they inevitably in trouble as well? Main competitor Brent Leisure was having a hard time because of its parent company's cash difficulties, and at least one major British slot machine company was furiously denying rumors in the trade press that it was in trouble.

Against this background, a seriously troubled British coin machine industry went to the Novotel in London's Hammersmith to talk, gossip, and look at what was around. At least this time there had

been the opportunity to fly in some of the key games from the JAMMA show, giving Europe a chance to look at what was new before its American counterparts. But an American import was clearly influential—redemption.

It was exhibited in several forms, and logically there is no reason why redemption shouldn't be effectively utilized in the British market. It probably won't succeed, however, because redemption needs to be operated very professionally, with a great deal of time and trouble being expended in its successful application.

The British lack for nothing in professionalism, but only in their front-line pubs market. The seaside arcades are not in that league at all. The ease with which much of the industry has simply installed slots and video games, keeping them clean and working faultlessly, is as far as most operators will go. They are not mentally attuned to having to put the kind of effort into operating as redemption demands.

In pinball, Premier/Gottlieb had *Deadly Weapon*, Williams its *Riverboat Gambler*, and Bally/Midway its *Dr. Dude*. But Data East probably eclipsed them all with *The Simpsons*, which is by no means as prolifically seen in Europe as it is in America.

It was just as talked about nevertheless.

The video game sector, currently standing at about 125,000 pieces of equipment in the United Kingdom, is the second most important after slots. There was plenty to see. Nintendo, of course, still dominates the pub market with its *PlayChoice-10*, but it is clearly not getting it all its own way these days. A strong challenge is being provided by Sega's *Mega Tech* system and SNK's *Neo-Geo*. Nintendo probably keeps its grip firmly on the industry by using strong advertising programs, something neither of the other companies even attempts to compete with, which is strange.

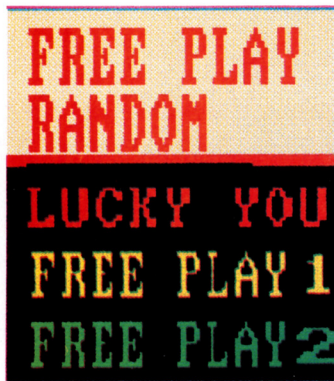
Sega brought its *G P Rider* motorcycle game over from Japan, and Leland's *Ataxx* might at last give it a product to suit Europe. Atari Games' *Pit-Fighter* was impressive, while Taito added to previous successes with *Super Space Invader '91*.

Konami capitalized on *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and energetically marketed *Over Drive*, *Punk Shot*, *New Fantasy Land*, and *Surprise Attack*. Jaleco, which is becoming stronger in Europe because of Norman Leftly and his London office, exhibited *Cisco Heat*. SNK still has a following for *Beast Busters*. Bally/Midway's top game was *Trog*; Williams' was *Smash TV*.

Europe was ready for a breather, a few weeks off after AMOA and before the "biggie" of ATEI. In between was the previously minor distraction of Amusexpo in Paris, as much a trip to see the French capital as it was to inspect what the French trade had to offer. But Amusexpo too has gone sophisticated these days; it's a much more substantial show that should be respected. Many, therefore, were planning a trip to Paris in mid-December, before the festivities, then back to serious work.

For the intrepid traveler, then, it was a period of nursing the blisters, renewing acquaintances with the wife and children, and preparing for round two: ATEI and the big IMA show in Germany. And so it goes, around and around . . . □

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At the American Vending post-AMOA open house, (l-r): Bob Fischer of E&B Amusement, Bob Harzer of SMS Mfg., Adonna Jerman of ICMOA, and Dino Rikos of E&B Amusement. Illinois operators hope to convince legislators to look favorably on a Video Lottery.



Education process may be key in Illinois

The term "Video Lottery" best describes the world of electronic wagering, one that many states around the nation are eager to embrace. It becomes increasingly clear that the term "lottery" is more acceptable in political circles and with the general population. It appears to avoid the negative implications associated with the words "gaming" and "poker." Video Lottery matches the tempo of the times.

This column's purpose is to cover a wide range of topics that fall under the umbrella of the term "video gaming." At the moment, "Video Lottery" is the term used by most states working toward legalization of video gaming equipment.

Illinois

Illinois is one Midwestern state that has been working diligently to pass legislation favoring a Video Lottery. The Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association (IC-

MOA) has done its homework. The operators are well organized and have conducted fund-raising drives to support the Video Lottery effort. The association's Truth in Amusement Committee has been working strictly with operator funds.

the play, and learn about the benefits of a Video Lottery.

A second round in the veto session, held Nov. 28-30, did not result in passage of a Video Lottery bill. Legislators expressed interest but considered the subject matter

dividuals consume less alcohol as they play the games.

It has been suggested to ICMOA that revenues derived from the Video Lottery could be directed to education, rural health services, or additional funds for the extension of McCormick Place and the construction of a domed stadium, McDome.

Illinois has long enjoyed a state Lottery. Other gaming activities include horse racing, off-track betting, jar tabs, bingo, and the recently approved riverboat gambling, set to commence in 1991.

"The Video Lottery provides instant gratification," said Jerman. "Players don't have to wait an extended period of time to find out if they have won. Lottery tickets are not biodegradable; printed tickets from Video Lottery machines are biodegradable." In today's world, the environmental aspects are noteworthy.

Here is a brief outline of the ICMOA plan:

1. The Video Lottery program would be operator-run.
2. Machine placement would be 3-5 machines per location.
3. Machines would be located only in liquor establishments (the legal drinking age is 21).
4. A centralized computer system would be used for complete accountability and security.
5. There would be no vertical integration. In other words, the levels of manufacturer, distributor, and operator would not be intermingled. Each level would be licensed as such; operators could not distribute, manufacturers could not operate, etc.
6. Background checks would be undertaken for each level involved in the Video Lottery.

7. The recommended tax structure would be the same as that in Montana: government to receive 15 percent of the proceeds after customer payouts (5% to the state, 5% to the county, and 5% to the city). This way, areas would benefit directly; funds would be in the hands of local government and used for local needs.

8. After government receives 15%, the location and operator would split the remaining proceeds 50/50. □

"Legislators now realize that this is a legitimate source of tax revenue, a potentially large source, and one that's voluntary."

In addition, ICMOA has enlisted the assistance of two respected state lobbyists, Democrat John O'Connell and Republican Kirk Dillard. Both are attorneys with backgrounds in government.

ICMOA sponsored two days of product demonstrations and receptions for state legislators meeting at a special two-part veto session Nov. 13-14. A veto session occurs when legislation vetoed by the governor is sent back to committee for changes and a possible second try at bill passage.

to require full hearings. The association plans to continue with its effort in the 1991 legislative session, which begins Jan. 14 and concludes June 30.

According to Adonna Jerman, executive director of ICMOA, "Legislators now realize that this is a legitimate source of tax revenue, a potentially large source, and one that's voluntary. Video Lottery is a form of entertainment. People travel great distances for the experience. Why not let the state benefit?" (It's estimated that annually one million citizens leave

"The Video Lottery provides instant gratification. Players don't have to wait an extended period of time to find out if they have won."

ICMOA issued formal invitations to legislators and operators urging their local representatives to attend. Product and personnel from manufacturers Merit Industries, SMS Manufacturing, and IGT were present for the occasion.

The association hopes the impact of the demonstrations will bring the education process full circle, and that legislators will look kindly on the Video Lottery.

ICMOA gave legislators an opportunity to see the sophisticated equipment, hear about the computerized audit trail, sample

Chicago's O'Hare Airport on their way to Las Vegas.)

Immediate tax benefits for the state would include license fees and sales taxes. Jerman sees tax revenues mushrooming, starting with sales taxes on the purchase of games and leading to business-related taxes as operators expand in terms of personnel and vehicles used to service the equipment.

Tavern locations, which have struggled recently to monitor the alcohol consumption levels of patrons, may see these in-

Upcoming merchandise trends

In the several months that I've been writing this column, we've looked at some of the new games that are available. We have profiled a location that's incorporated a redemption center into a complex with go-carts, miniature golf, batting cages, and more.

One idea that's been repeated almost monthly is this: a redemption center can be successful only if the merchandise made available is attractive and appealing to the customers. Unlike a standard video arcade, a redemption center's focus is on merchandise. In this aspect, redemption operators must think like retailers. Successful clothing and department stores put a great deal of effort into attractive window displays.

Also, the merchandise must be up to date. A store will not keep its customers by offering last year's styles. This month, we will look at redemption merchandise trends for the coming months. It isn't possible to know what will be "hot" next season. Since I don't own a crystal ball, I called some industry experts and asked them to shed some light on this topic.

Let's do this alphabetically, starting with David Katz, president of Bonita Marie International. He spends a great deal of time working with arcades that have recently embraced redemption. David believes that these new redemption centers should emphasize "slum" merchandise (from a penny to a dollar) and electronic items in the \$1 to \$15 price range.

Bonita Marie has a large selection of reliable items for under \$15. Clear telephones, nostalgic radios shaped like jukeboxes, and talking calculators are all going to be in demand during 1991, Katz

believes. Some items that cost between \$15 and \$50 should also be displayed for those players willing to save tickets. Bonita Marie features name-brand, dual cassette recorders, telephone answering machines, and other interesting items in this price range with a highly perceived value.

"Having great merchandise is not enough; it must be attractively displayed."

David agrees with the general industry consensus that name-brand items are best. However, he also thinks that a redemption center should offer some off-brand electronics. These items cost less (often due to smaller advertising budgets rather than inferior quality), so the player won't have to wait as long to redeem his tickets. David predicts that pastels will overcome neon as the colors of choice. Finally, he suggests that a redemption arcade start with small quantities of any item; you can always get more.

Next on my list of experts is Jack Kelly of Acme Premium Supply, who believes that licensed items will continue to be the hottest thing going. The phenomenon of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles is not over, Kelly says (perhaps he's had a preview of the next Turtles movie).

Jack also says that Simpson merchandise shall remain at or near the top. When asked for a prediction about colors, he said that neon will stay in vogue for perhaps another six months; pastels will also be back. Items that Jack recommends include snap bracelets, shoestring bracelets, bubble-bottle necklaces, and click sticks.

Our next expert is John Minkove of Ace Novelty, a company heavily involved in licensing. Their new items for 1991 include Tiny Tunes (based on Looney Tune characters) and Barnyard Commandos. Spiderman and Captain America items will be popular in the coming years as well (movies featuring these comic book heroes

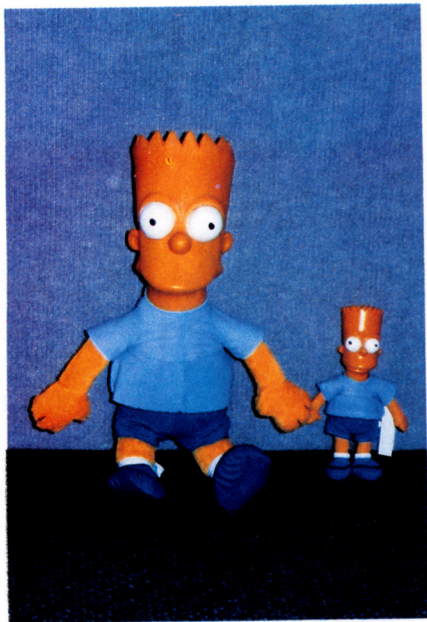
are scheduled for release in 1991). Speaking of movie heroes, we shouldn't forget the TMNT characters.

John told me about another product developed by Ace called the MVP Series. They have taken selected baseball and football stars from the professional leagues and made up a package that includes a lapel pin and collector playing card. Sixty-eight football and 108 baseball stars are offered.

One nice thing about this program is that you don't have to take a general assortment. In minimum quantities of 25, an operator can choose specific players. Jose Canseco may be popular in California, but an arcade in Boston or Chicago would have a tough time moving many Canseco pins! The baseball season will be upon us before too long, so now might be a good time to contact Minkove about the MVP Series.

Our last expert is Steve Schulman. As the sales manager for HMS Monaco, Steve comes into contact with many redemption customers. Like our other experts, he believes that licensed items will continue to be in demand this year. He

reminded me that the Flinstones movie will be premiered in '91, so HMS will feature a line of necklaces and pins with the movie's characters.



Like Minkove, Steve has found major league sports figures to be very popular; he expects the trend to continue. Among fad items, the snap bracelets will continue to be popular. They will have new colors, new designs, and unusual materials—which will entice new and old players alike.

Having the right merchandise is so important to the success of a redemption center. The appeal of winning tickets is only as strong as what the tickets will "buy." However, having great merchandise is still not enough; it must be attractively displayed. Bonita Marie has developed a special jewelry display case that's 30" x 18" x 18". The case revolves, is fully illuminated, and has a locking door. It holds 54 items. Ace Novelty has created exciting neon shelving. This use of special lighting gives a real impact to the products on display.

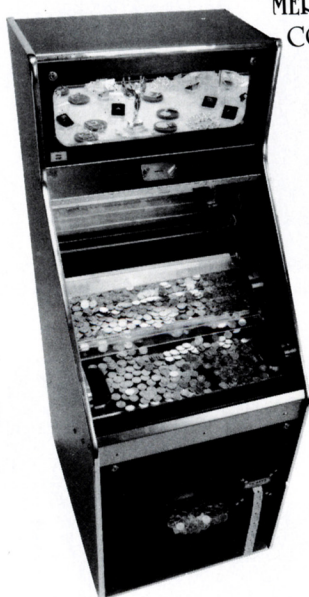
To improve the look of the merchandise on display in your redemption center, con-

tact one of our "experts" for advice. Or get creative and design something that will be uniquely your own. The results will be worth the effort. □



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AVS's Frank Gumma Sr. (l) with Coin Concepts' Joe Tunney.



Design Plus's Mike and Diane Seibert.



Frank Happ (l) and James Perales of Happ Controls.



From left: Wico's Mike Rudowicz, John Poulos of Galaxy Game Centers, and Paul Bella of F.A.B. Electronics.



Mike Holl (r) with Carol, Rudy, and Evelyn Kit.



From left: California operator Tony Parina (in town on pinball business), David Swearingen of Blackhawk Music, Rowe's Joel Friedman, and Don Hesch of A.H. Entertainers.

DISTRIBUTOR OPEN HOUSE



From left: Renee Colley (AVS), John Margold (Betson), Tracy Tate (SNK), Vince Gumma (AVS), Frank Gumma (AVS), Leo Finn (AVS), Jim Chapman (Sega), and Nick Cosentino (AVS).



Premier's Dan Clarton and Sharon Harris of Stan Harris & Co. in Philadelphia.



Sam Kim playing his *Putting Challenge* golf game.



Fabtek's Steve Blattspieler (l) with Pat McMahon (r) and Jimmy Neville (son of AVS's John).



From left: Bob Harzer of SMS, Bob Fischer and Dino Rikos of E and B Amusement, and Bob Keelyn of Coastal Amusements.



David Thiel of Strata pulls a winning ticket for one of the many door prizes.

Lots of Action at Active Amusement



Rock-Ola's Bob Hesch (l) with Atari's Jim Newlander.



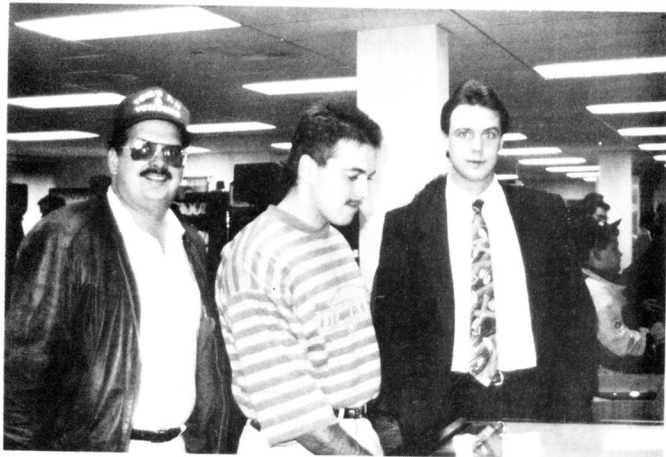
Nintendo's *PlayChoice* has its loyal fans.



Dynamo's Mark Robbins (c) with air hockey players Tim Weissman and Andy Yevish (r).



Active's Richard Sukinik (l) with Sega's John Hill.



Thomas and David Bartal play *Rock-N-Bowl* as Joey Bundra (r) looks on.

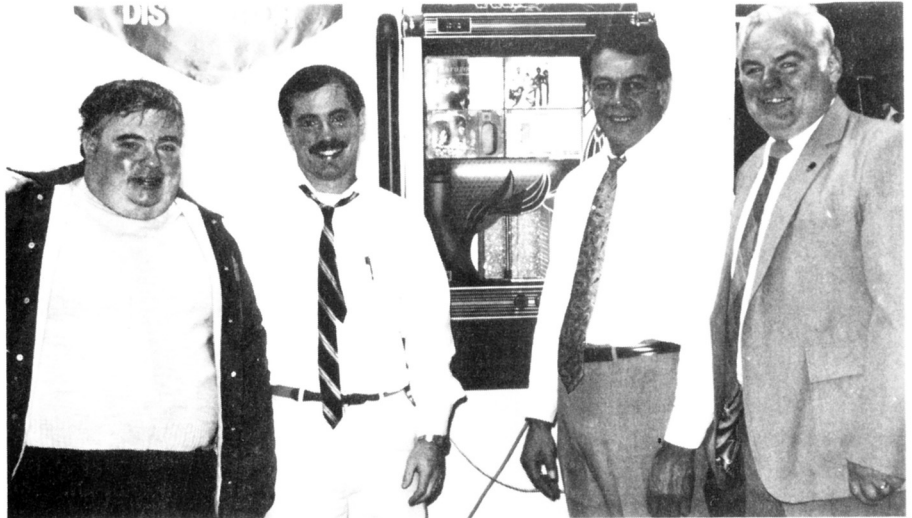


Active's Paul Russell with his wife Myra and daughter Jenna.

DISTRIBUTOR OPEN HOUSE



Edwina Spinak with Nintendo's Chuck Arnold.



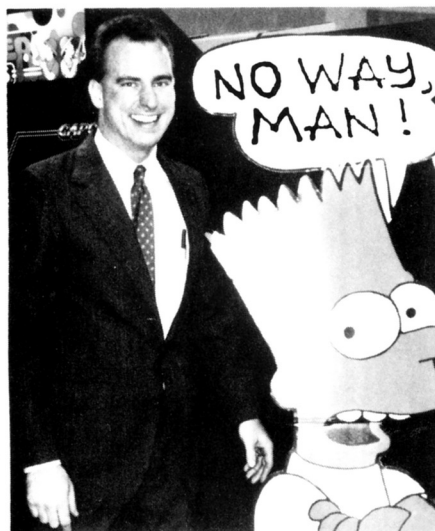
From left: Howard and Alan Rosenberg of Progressive Amusements, Phil Calla of Capital Vending, and Gerry Boyle of Active.



Leland's Brian Kope tries out one of the competition's games.



From left: Pat Walton of Capcom, brother Steve of Data East, and Mike Kubin of Konami.



I don't know who is cuter, Data East's Pete Gustafson or Bart Simpson.

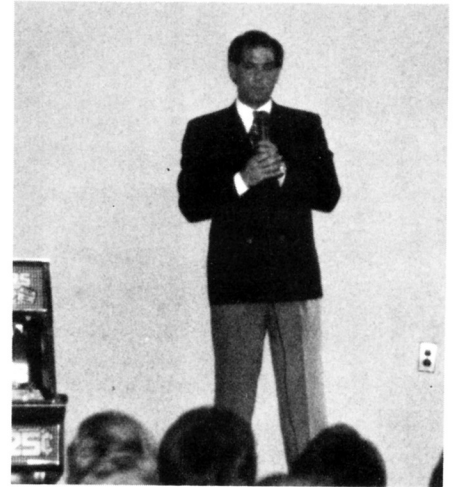


From left: Arachnid's Bob Mills and Active's Chris Vecchione with Sandy, Samantha, and Morgan Weiner.

Movin' at Mondial



Capcom's Paul Wiederaenders (l) with Glen and Nick from Century Amusements.



Sal Mirando discusses video poker machines.



Atari's Jim Newlander (l) with Mondial's Tony Yula Sr.



Fabtek's Steve Blattspieler (l) with Frank "The Crank" Seninsky.

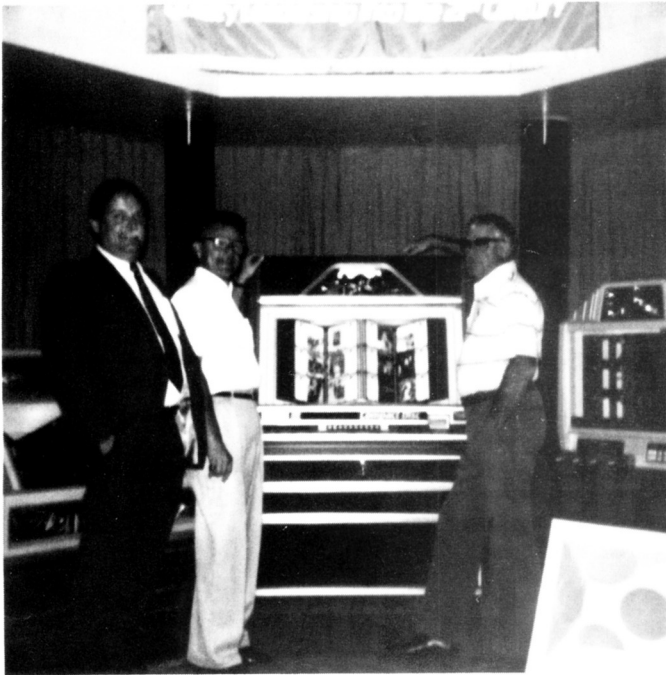


The New York "Giants" Fearsome Foursome!



The event drew over 250 operators.

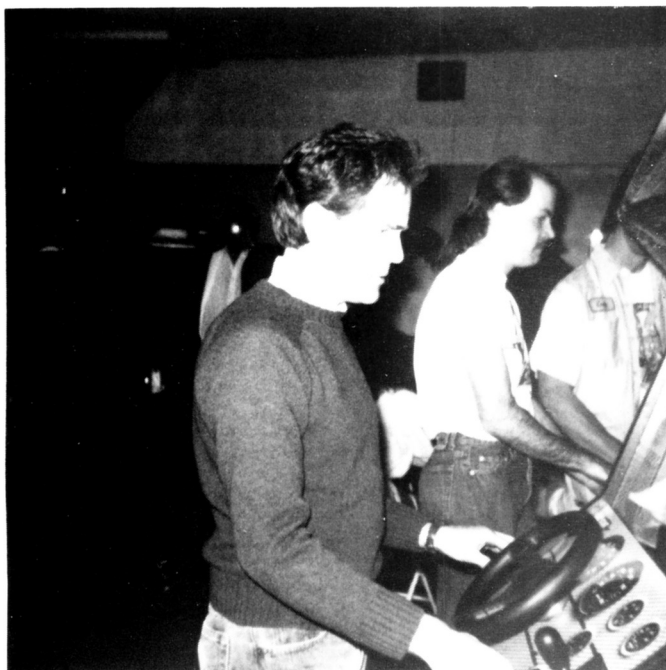
Groovy at Struve



Jay Hum of Rowe (l) with Kent and Stan Larsen of Struve.



Darlene Kindler of Irem with Bill Bailey of TATAKA.

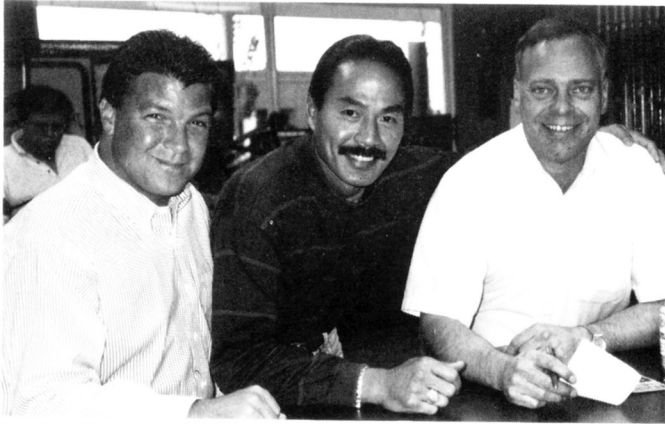


Roger Durst of Knudson Amusement absorbed in playing a game.

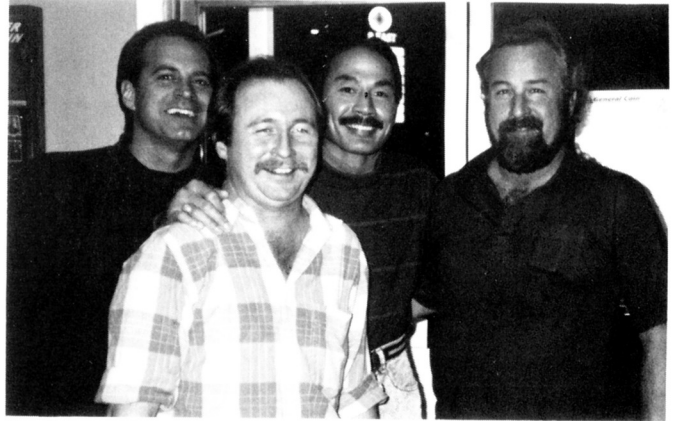


Bob Snyder of Plaza Amusement checks out *Hit the Ice*.

“Western Days” at General Coin



From left: Data East's Jolly Backer, General Coin's Mark Chan, and Hit Parade's Kenn Hague.



From left: Doug Gemma of Dosh Amusement, Kelly Thompson of Metro Amusement, Mark Chan of General Coin, and Richard Rowe of Courtesy Coin-Op.



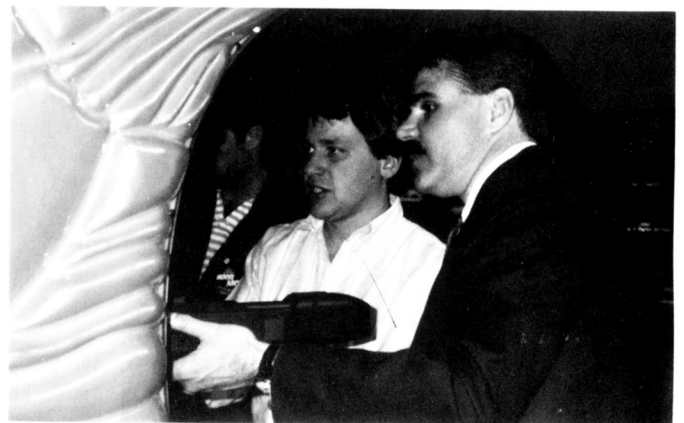
With their golf awards, (l-r): Jim Anderson of Anderson Vending, Bob Woynowski of Pacific Amusement, and Gary Lewis of General Coin.



Back row: Rick Rochetti (Taito), Mark Chan (General Coin), Jolly Backer (Data East), Mike McWilliams (General Coin), Jerry Momoda (Atari), Jim Chapman (Sega), Faye McWilliams (General Coin), Tim Jackson (Romstar), and Jerry Sheaks and Tony Maniscalco (Pioneer). Front row: Bill Ward (Arachnid), Gregg Perrie (Skill Games), Larry King (Veryfine), and Darus Pfiefer (Performance Brokers).



From left: John Rourke of Diamond M, Faye McWilliams of General Coin, and Jim Chapman of Sega.



Taito's Rick Rochetti (r) demonstrates *Space Gun* to Tim Beckett of Great Western Games.

Darting with Merit in New England



Open Doubles Cricket champs Joe Futima (l) and Chet Caron.



Pub Time Darts' Howard Smoyer (l) and Joe Naclerio of the Waterbury Operators Association with Lisa Reardon (second from left) and Debbie Martino, second place finishers in Women's Doubles.

Merit's World Series of Darts tour paid a visit to the Northeast on Nov. 16-18, pulling into Meriden, Conn., for the Second Colonial Classic. The tournament was co-sponsored by Pub Time Darts, Betson, the Waterbury Operators Association, Days Inn (the site), and Star Distributing (representing Miller Beer).

Twenty-four *Pub Time Premier* dart machines, with the new "Scorpion" target, were used for the event. Many traditional steel-dart players took part in this soft-tip tournament (the area has a heavy concentration of steel shooters). The Waterbury Operators Association and Pub Time Darts are credited with building a league program of some 100 teams, quite a feat when one realizes that soft-tip darts have only been in the state for 18 months.

The Open Singles 501 division pitted soft-tipper D.J. Asselin against steel-darter Joe Futima. Though it went to a tiebreaker, Futima emerged the champion. He was also the tournament MVP, finishing first in Mixed Triples, Open Doubles, and Four-Person.

Other results include:

Women's Singles: 1st place: Marilyn Popp; 2nd place: Linda Spratley; 3rd place: Kim Valentino.

Men's Doubles: 1st place: Joe Futima and Chet Caron; 2nd place: Jack Revallo and Butch Brewer; 3rd place: Chuck Cirnigliano and Bob Fazekas.

Women's Doubles: 1st place: Linda Spratley and Maria Popielarczyk; 2nd place: Vickie Asselin and Marie Clackerty; 3rd place: Lisa Reardon and Debbie

Martino.

Mixed Triples: 1st place: Joe Futima, Chet Caron, and Marie Clackerty; 2nd place: Jack Revallo, Butch Brewer, and Kathy LeBlanc; 3rd place: Wayne and Linda Spratley, John Derck.

Four-Person: 1st place: Dan Sequin, Mike Whitcomb, Joe Futima, and Chet Caron; 2nd place: Butch Brewer, Jack Revallo, D.J. Asselin, and Glenn Remick; 3rd place: John Derck, Wayne Spratley, Steve Myers, and Rich Popielarczyk.

Special thanks go to Steve Tobin of On Target Enterprises in Massachusetts for a series of special events which helped raise \$600 for The Curtis Home, a facility for needy children and the elderly. □

Merit dart tour stops in West, Midwest

Merit Industries' World Series of Darts tour continued in September and October with stops in California, Colorado, and Iowa.

The \$5,000 California Classic, held in San Diego on Oct. 5-7, had a special flavor this year. It was devoted to the memory of John Timothy Harris, a long-time member of the B & D Darts team who died earlier this year in a motorcycle accident. Al and Margie Rawlin of B & D Darts were the tournament's co-sponsors.

The John Timothy Harris Trophy for outstanding sportsmanship and dedication to darts was awarded to Russ Bates, a close friend and teammate of Harris.

The winners in the various categories were:

Men's Four-Player: 1st place: Tom Trimmer, Fred Aguero, Craig Belardes, and Tom Tanberg; 2nd place: Mike Christian, Brian Howes, Larry Markin, and Eric Stevenson; 3rd place: Mike Walton, Pat Smith, Dave Hammond, and Mike

Kilby.

Mixed Triples: 1st place: Tom Trimmer, Fred and Gina Aguero; 2nd place: Roxanne and John Ericson, Joe Fawaz; 3rd place: Jackie Ross, Craig Belardes, and Lin Laney.

Women's Doubles: 1st place: Jackie Ross and Margie Rawlin; 2nd place: Connie Horner and Roxanne Ericson; 3rd place: Sandy Frantz and Chris Martikan.

Women's Singles: 1st place: Sandy Frantz; 2nd place: Gina Aguero; 3rd



Placing third in the Colorado tournament's Mixed Triples category, (l-r): Gary Schmidt, Jackie Schmidt, and Duane Hanke.



Third place finishers in the California Classic's Mixed Triples event, (l-r): Lin Laney, Jackie Ross, and Craig Belardes.

place: Roxanne Ericson.

Men's Doubles: 1st place: Craig Belardes and Tom Tanberg; 2nd place: Eric Stevenson and Larry Markin; 3rd place: Pat Smith and Dave Hammond.

Men's Singles: 1st place: Chris Cooksey; 2nd place: Mark Evan; 3rd place: Tom Trimmer.

Merit's Second Colorado Classic was held in Pueblo, Colo., on Sept. 28-30. The \$3,000 tournament, co-sponsored by Jack and Sandy Moore of Soaring Darts, drew over 300 entrants. Among the winners were:

Draw Doubles: 1st place: Doug Martin and John Prado; 2nd place: Ribbs Martinez and Mike Stabler; 3rd place: Dave Jackson and Jim Brake.

Mixed Triples: 1st place: Roger and Lori Pfannenschmid, Doug Martin; 2nd place: Jerry Feathers, Leed Devlin, and Barbara Andrews; 3rd place: Gary and Jackie Schmidt, Duane Hanke.

Men's Singles: 1st place: Lee Devlin; 2nd place: Doug Martin; 3rd place: Ken Long.

Women's Singles: 1st place: Tammy Legan; 2nd place: Shelli Frankmore; 3rd place: Barbara Andrews.

Women's Draw: 1st place: Tammy Legan and Shelli Frankmore; 2nd place: Irene Dollar and Vikki Torres; 3rd place: Linda Romero and Jessica Chavez.

Merit's Fourth World Series of Darts tournament series opened with the \$5,000 Midwest Open in Des Moines, Iowa, on Sept. 21-23. It was co-sponsored by the Iowa Electronic Dart Association.

A charity event marked the debut of Merit's *Solo Challenger* machine, now a fixture at its tournaments. Players engage in a game of "one-on-one" against the *Solo Challenger* at various skill levels. Over \$350 was raised for the Ronald McDonald House charity.

The list of tournament winners includes the following:

Cricket Singles: 1st place: Bill Miller; 2nd place: Ray Terronez; 3rd place: Dave Hunt.

Men's Singles: 1st place: Dave Hunt; 2nd place: Ray Terronez; 3rd place: Ken Kaiser.

Women's Singles: 1st place: Sharon Saniuk; 2nd place: Julie Sanderson; 3rd place: Robyn Batye.

Mixed Triples: 1st place: Ron Lindberger, John Parker, and Laurie Reed;

2nd place: Bob Carroll, John Huxford, and Robin Batye; 3rd place: Rick and Karen Bianchi, Bill Gay. □

A MESSAGE TO OPERATORS OF ATARI FINAL LAP VIDEO GAMES FROM NAMCO AND ATARI

The Atari Final Lap Video Game includes trademarks belonging to Philip Morris Incorporated. Upon learning of our use of their trademarks, Philip Morris raised objections. They do not want children to smoke. They have stated it is against their policy for any of their cigarette trademarks to be used on or in connection with children's games or other items intended for children.

Although our use of the trademarks was inadvertent, Namco Limited, as creator and manufacturer, Namco-America Inc., and Atari Games Corporation, as manufacturer and distributor of the game, take responsibility for such use. Accordingly, we have made up conversion kits consisting of 8 Eproms with instructions for you to convert existing games into non-infringing games. The kits are free and will be shipped to you pre-paid.

Please contact your distributor to receive a conversion kit for each Atari Final Lap game that you own or operate. You will receive a \$100 credit from Namco-America Inc. through your distributor for each game you convert, upon our receipt of the original chip sets. Up to five \$100 credits can be added together and applied to the purchase of each new Namco Final Lap 2 dedicated game, which is scheduled for introduction February, 1991.

Namco, Namco-America and Atari join Philip Morris in urging you to cooperate with us in making the conversions. This will guarantee your ability to continue using the Atari Final Lap video game and the \$100 credits will enable you to obtain new Namco Final Lap 2 dedicated video games at substantial savings.

Arachnid makes two stops on its BullShooter tour

Niagara Falls, N.Y., wasn't just a hot spot for newlyweds on Oct. 12-14. Darters converged there to participate in a qualifying tournament on Arachnid's BullShooter tour; it was co-sponsored by T.O.P. Distributing.

Over \$5,000 in prize money was awarded for the eight events, which included Pro Singles, Women's Singles, Cricket Singles, Open Singles, Women's Doubles, Men's Doubles, Cricket Mixed Doubles, and Mixed Doubles. Another new event was added—the High Noon Sharp Shooter—that saw players shoot underhanded, opposite-handed, blindfolded, and while sitting in a chair. Jim Lawlor of Watertown, N.Y., was the winner.

Competitors came from New York, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Canada.

The weekend's big winner was Walter "Hots" Pankow of Lackawanna, N.Y. He took first in Pro Singles and Men's Doubles, teaming with Rocko Wojnowski of Buffalo, N.Y. Pankow also placed second in Cricket Singles and Mixed Cricket with Buffalo's Sandy Sullivan.

Arachnid's other October tour stop was in Portland, Ore., for the third English Mark Darts \$5,000 Regional, held Oct. 26-28. General Coin co-sponsored the tournament. Players from Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho took part.

Mike Randall of Vancouver, Wash., won the Pro Singles event. He also placed fourth in Cricket Singles, seventh in Mixed Doubles with Lori Christal, and third in Mixed Cricket with Paige

Tibbetts.

Two youngsters also had admirable showings. Twelve-year-old Kevin Luke celebrated his birthday by finishing third in 501 Open Singles and seventh in Mixed Cricket with Diana Giles—all against veteran players. Not to be outdone, 15-year-old Albert Mendoza took *second* in Pro Singles.

Arachnid's *English Mark Darts* machines were used for both events. In each, those players finishing first through third in any of the eight main categories qualified for free entry into the BullShooter VI championship finals, which will be held in Chicago over the Memorial Day weekend. Over \$40,000 will be up for grabs. □



At the Niagara Falls tournament, (l-r): Walter "Hots" Pankow, Arachnid's Tom Pace, and Sandy Sullivan.



Mike Randall, Pro Singles winner at the tournament in Portland.

AND NOW . . .

A WORD FROM OUR READERS!!!

An operator challenged us to provide space and invite everyone in the coin machine business to write about what is right, wrong, or can be corrected within the industry. OK, here's the space. Now it's up to all of you to fill it with comments on the industry. We will not print your name if you so request, but we will print your comments just as you have them. The operator suggested running the page for three issues, but we will leave it indefinitely if you continue to send your opinions.

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OPERATORS: *This column is devoted to you. It is your chance to have your voice heard on the state of the industry. We welcome all complaints, compliments, and comments. We will print your letters as received, when possible. We would appreciate it if you would refrain from sending a scathing letter about a specific manufacturer. Instead, we would like your general observations on the industry. Your name will not be used if you prefer. Take a few moments to share your thoughts with the rest of the coin-operated entertainment industry. There is a self-addressed sheet waiting for you to fill out and return to us.*

Times are changing

Times are changing and so is technology. Advancement in the home market is definitely challenging the arcade market. Redemption is a good addition, but players still crave the diversity of video.

There will always be games that have similar counterparts that even play and feel the same. The idea is to get an atmosphere with diversity and fair prices.

As videos go, simulators are extremely hard to duplicate. I would like to encourage manufacturers to produce low-cost, long-lasting, and amusing high-tech simulators. What an audience prefers is good control, simple rules, rich graphics, large screens, and low cost.

What the operator seems to prefer is a piece that has low cost, easy access, easy care, and long ROI. A lot of operators also prefer the choice of a normal sized cabinet for those small locations. I'd like to identify Sega as a manufacturer that has done a great deal to bring us these qualities in most of their games.

Another thing we need is a way to inform the public of our industry. I realize that there is a new show out called "Video Power," but out here on the East Coast the show comes on

too early for barely anyone to see it. It comes on at 6:30, just before the majority of the public is up. However, they have time to watch it in the morning if they happen to be up.

Hopefully, the advancement in CD and laser disc technology can be used when information can be accessed quicker. As you might already know, the home video business is now being exposed to this medium.

P.S. Please extend the "Cover Story" coverage.

Gene Gaudreault
Relax Entertainment
Danbury, CT

A word about kits

I would like to address the subject of kits. Some kits come with good quality button and joystick controls. *Most do not.* Most kits have button switch assemblies that have no points—only dimples in the metal switch leaves. Ditto for the joystick controls. Operators know immediately when they see this that it will be trouble down the road. It's hard to believe that the manufacturers don't realize this.

I have a suggestion for the manufacturers: ship kits with only the

board, header sheet, and monitor plexi (if necessary). This should enable them to reduce the price substantially and they would sell more kits.

Since the JAMMA harness is almost standard we can use the old harness or purchase them very cheaply. Even empty cabinets come with JAMMA harnesses, power supply, and monitor. We seldom use the controls that come with the kits. You cannot operate a game on location with them without experiencing problems.

Manufacturers have an "arcade" mentality. They seem to feel that the companies buying the games don't have anything better to do than sit with them all day so "little problems" with poor quality controls give the arcade owner "something to do."

Arcades are a small part of our business. Our games are spread over four counties and two states. There are **no** little problems for us. And we have plenty to do, thank you, without fixing controls that should have been better to begin with.

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TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES?



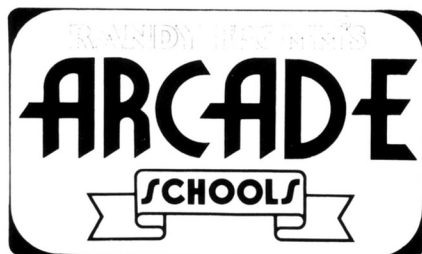
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Fun House, The Simpsons:

games
that
live
up to
their
names

Williams has done it again. Not every game it turns out is a winner, but you always know that if you wait long enough, the company will come up with a doozy. Its latest pinball, *Fun House*, is probably the best example of this principle. In fact, I liked this game so much that I'm moved to call it the best game of the year. Why make such a fuss? Let me explain.

Stepping inside

Just standing in front of this game, even powered-down, is enough to clue you in that *something* is special about it. The backglass artwork is slightly surrealistic and evocative of those old mystery and horror films that took place at carnivals. But if you look closely, you'll see a clue hidden among the myriad details: a ride banner with the name "Whirlwind." That name is a clue because, if this game borrows from any other, it is that other Williams classic. *Whirlwind* still ranks high on my list of favorites, so I'm not bothered that Williams set out to match or outdo it.

On the playfield, the first thing you (or anyone with eyes) will notice is another Williams first. It's something that looks like a doll's head, mounted right on the playfield (see the photos). But this is less a lifeless doll than a somewhat possessed ventriloquist's dummy. Its master is nowhere in sight, but Rudy the Dummy blinks, moves his eyes, and *talks*. His eyelids and eyeballs are driven by solenoids (a bit noisy and jerky), but his mouth moves under motor control. The result is much greater articulation, for which the programmers deserve some kind of award.

Instead of flapping his mouth fully open and shut with every word, the software moves it in degrees according to what's being said. I don't know if it's an accident or not, but the motion is very believable. Endowed with a voice that's a cross between Bugs Bunny and Curly the Stooge, Rudy is certainly the star of *Fun House*. Stardom has its price, though, because the plot of the game involves handing the little dummy more than his share of abuse.

The game's general layout is far from typical; Rudy is only the beginning. It

starts with three flippers (the third is mounted at the upper left) and *two plungers* (another Williams first?).

The launch sends the ball around the orbit track toward the upper flipper. There is a secret passage, Rudy's Hideout, behind Rudy's head. This launch skill-shot is such that a medium pull will collect the Hideout value. A kicker then sends the ball to the upper flipper. Too soft a pull will send the ball down the right side of the game, into the bumpers and possibly under the playfield. This, too, can be a skill-shot when it is the desired target.

"The game was obviously laid out by people who love pinball and want to give maximum entertainment for the money."

The playfield has three alternate ball paths. The first, over the playfield, is supported by a set of wire tubes that are entered via a ramp placed left of center, near the top. A diverter routes the ball to either the left plunger bay or the left return lane. The second alternate path is under the playfield—entered through the Mystery Mirror to the right of the ramp—one of the two holes cut above the right slingshot, or the Trap Door (more on that shortly). The third path is an orbit shot (left and right Gangway), which is entered at the left by making a shot past the upper flipper, and at the right by going through an arch positioned about halfway up, over the right flipper. The orbit track can also be joined by making a shot up the trap door's driveway while the door is closed. The ball continues on to the upper flipper.

The left plunger releases the ball into a three-tiered Crazy Steps skill-shot, which awards 500,000 points, lights an extra ball shot, or lights the Fun House Frenzy shot. Making the shot involves hitting the correct notch on an inclined ramp, which returns the ball to play. A feature is only awarded if it is lit (at least one always is).

Rudy himself is a target. The upper flipper can send the ball up a short driveway to Rudy's jaw, causing him to respond with a loud "Ow!" and sometimes a dejected "That was *no* accident." Little

touches like that run throughout, but Rudy's personality was not as well-developed or compelling as it could have been. That's virtually the only criticism I have of the game. As it is, he is special by virtue of being the first of his kind, not because the Williams designers have given him a believable script.

There is a second driveway, also available to the upper flipper, which contains the Trap Door. This rectangular door, cut into the playfield, opens in certain feature modes. Sending the ball up that driveway causes the ball to fall into the

under-playfield lattice.

There are three bumpers, which are hard to see in the photograph because they are mounted above and to the right of the right slingshot. These are clustered in a typical formation but aren't as commonly hit as most bumpers.

What you *don't* find in this game's assortment of gadgetry is as notable as what is there. There are no drop targets, no spinners, no kicker holes, and no entrance lanes. The game has seven contact targets, and only three of them are grouped together. Even these are placed to be an awkward shot. The area from the flippers to about three-fifths of the way up is mostly clear, but *Fun House* does not play slow. There's lots of extra rubber, and the contact targets are placed so that missed skill shots will come back at you with some speed. Despite appearances, nearly every shot hits *something*, even in the random play typical of inexperienced players.

A few final words on the playfield before I move on. There is some imaginative work here, from the artwork and Rudy to the placement of skill-shot ramps and upper flipper targets. This is one game that would survive very nicely if you stripped away the paint and sound. You would still be left with what makes *Fun House* really special: it's a *player's* game. That might seem absurd (aren't all games for

the players?), but serious players know the difference and vote with their quarters. *Fun House* was obviously laid out by people who love pinball and want to give maximum entertainment for the money. That bodes well for operators, as does the game's software (which I'll discuss next).

Finding your way around

From a player's point of view, playing *Fun House* could become a career. There are so many rewards, so many feature modes, that describing them all would be a fool's chore. I'll hit on the high points and leave you to figure the rest out for yourself.

Rudy runs the Fun House and has instructions to close it promptly at midnight. You, being the mischievous cuss that you are, want to sneak in after closing and raise a little hell. The clock in the middle of the playfield starts at a pre-determined time (a settable option), and you advance it toward midnight by hitting various targets. The ramp shot, for instance, is worth 15 minutes. The bumpers are good for 0-10 minutes each, depending on how they're lit.

When the clock gets to 11:30, a lock shot lights to the right of the Mystery Mirror, located at the top-center of the playfield. This arcs around to a holding area; a new ball is then put on the playfield. Locking another ball advances to midnight. An ominous bell rings and Rudy falls asleep in full comic animation style. He even snores!

Once Rudy is sleeping, the player launches the third ball into play and aims for Rudy. Shooting this ball into Rudy's open mouth starts multiball in a farcical way: Rudy wakes up, makes a few gagging noises, and "pukes" his ball onto the playfield (complete with sound effects). The other two balls are then released from the holding area, starting multiball play.

A written description of the glee one feels at making multiball on *Fun House* does it no justice. The first time anyone hears and sees Rudy spit the ball out usually causes hysterical laughter. The sounds are comical—not disgusting—and this feature alone makes the game worth playing for a lot of people.

The "big shot" during multiball (every game must have one) is Million Plus.

Shooting a ball into the trap door during multiball scores two million points. The door then closes but can be re-opened by a ramp shot. Each successive trap door hit during multiball scores one million more than the last time. This keeps the tension level high—and keeps players coming back. The best features are those which have no ceiling, because once a player has hit that ceiling, he may not come back. *Fun House* imposes virtually no limit on the number of huge awards that can be collected by the expert player.

"A written description of the glee one feels at making multiball on Fun House does it no justice."

Of course, in keeping with Williams' style, there is more to *Fun House* than multiball. The Mystery Mirror is the game's mystery feature. A blinking light on the mirror highlights the current selection (it is advanced by the bumpers), and a rollover activates a timer. Making the mirror shot before the timer expires awards the lit value, which will either light extra ball, light the million shot (on Rudy's jaw), light quick multiball, start the Superdog bonus, start Jet Bumpers at maximum, or open the left plunger gate.

The Superdog bonus is a timed feature that makes every hit on the trio of contact targets worth 200,000 points. The left plunger gate, when open, diverts the ball from the left outlane to the left plunger skill-shot.

One of the awards on the left plunger skill-shot is Funhouse Frenzy. In this mode, sinking a ball in the open Trap Door starts a timer. Until it expires, each contact of the ball with any playfield device is good for 50,000 points (accumulated and awarded at the end of the ball). There is also a Super Frenzy, activated by collecting all six features of the Mystery Mirror. This is the same as Frenzy, but point values are higher.

One remarkable thing about Williams' game software is that feature modes can overlap. You can, for example, activate Frenzy, Superdog, or any other feature during multiball. My own tests proved the software to be exceedingly smart about overlapping conditions. This pleases

players who are frustrated when feature modes are cancelled before the timer expires.

The play's the thing

Earlier, I called this a "player's game," and I think I should qualify that statement a bit. I give *Fun House* that title because a player at any level can enjoy playing the game and activate at least a few of its features by accident. That's important for attracting new players to pinball—and keeping them. If a game is too hard to play, those who are less than expert will give up

after a few humiliating attempts. *Fun House* humiliates no one. You don't have to get up to a certain level before Rudy speaks to you, and many playfield awards are available to even the worst players.

For those who are more experienced, *Fun House* is a delightful shooter's game. I counted eight skill shots (and I may have missed a few) that hot players can practice lining up, and every one is worth hitting if you activate the right features. Because there are so many feature modes, and so many timed shots, the player can try for different features each game. That keeps things fresh and keeps customers spending money.

Because the potential for big scores is there, I recommend unveiling the game with the first replay/extra ball at three-and-a-half to four million points. Also, decide, based on your traffic, whether to enable the auto percentaging (which raises and lowers the replay level based on scoring patterns).

This game should be in a visible location. The backglass artwork, while appealing, is not really a drawing card. The playfield is the game's selling point, and anyone who sees it will probably play. You might even want to snap a picture of Rudy (while he's awake) and make a couple of posters pointing the way, inviting patrons to "visit your Fun House." The game's theme makes all kinds of promotions possible.

If you buy one or two pinballs a year, *Fun House* should be one of them. If you

skip it, you may as well write checks to your competition. This is one of the few games good enough to draw new traffic into your location if you play it right. That means keeping the game clean, keeping the adjustments moderate so that features and matches get paid out “often enough,” and making sure every light and rubber on the playfield is replaced when needed.

I’m shouting my “buy” recommendation for this game. This one goes almost across the board, with one exception: *Fun House* will inspire rowdy play (Rudy even rewards tilts with a pithy phrase—I wonder if that’s a mistake), so convenience stores and other locations that thrive on quiet may have to pass. Aside from that, its appeal will cross all boundaries of age and expertise. *Fun House* will be a hit.

“Since the majority of the game’s appeal is visual, it is important that you keep it clean.”

Data East Pinball’s *The Simpsons*

What a job. Imagine coming to work every day with the task of finding the latest entertainment blockbuster, the quintessential hit that spawns trends in everything from bumper stickers to hairstyles—then figuring out how to turn it into a **pinball!**

That’s this outsider’s view of life at Data East Pinball, where designers regularly apply their imaginations to create pinball machines out of concepts that already own a willing audience. In its four-year history, Data East has produced nine games, the last five of which have been based on licensed themes: *Playboy*, *Monday Night Football*, *Robocop*, *Phantom of the Opera*, and *Back to the Future*.

Its tenth game is no different, except that this time Data East has really hit pay dirt: *The Simpsons*. While Bart’s hairdo has hardly inspired others to copy it (must be a lack of head-sized cheese graters around), the Simpsons are now, unarguably, a national treasure. Matt Groening’s weekly animated portrait of the typical (heaven help us) American family has put the Fox TV network on the map. It may do the same for Data East, which has hardly been struggling but still

does not have the recognition that Williams-Bally/Midway enjoys.

This was no half-hearted venture. The music is adapted from the show, the voices are digital recordings of the original cast (made specially for Data East), and the machine’s artwork was revised and blessed by Groening himself. The machine itself is positively gorgeous, from its mirrored backglass (a pain to photograph, but without equal for visual impact) to its intricately drawn playfield.

Fans of the Simpsons will delight in staring at the artwork for hours, and deservedly so. The artists and musicians who worked to capture the spirit of the Simpsons are the real stars of this game, and I think they hit the nail right on the head. Seen from any distance, this pinball is irresistible, and I hope it sets a standard for artistic

quality that others will follow.

Is beauty only skin-deep?

If the art and music are so stunning, how does the rest of the machine fare? Pretty well, but I wasn’t blown away. Except for the sounds and artwork, the game play has very little to do with the Simpsons. In fact, if you stripped away the art, and replaced the music and voices with some less-recognizable replacements, you’d be left with a solid, but not spellbinding, pinball design. Is that a slam? Hardly—I liked *The Simpsons* very much—but without all the Simpson trappings, this game wouldn’t attract nearly as much attention.

Across the top of the playfield, there are three entrance lanes which serve the familiar function of advancing the bonus (er, excuse me, I meant to say “donut”) multiplier, and also spot a letter in millions. I was pleased to find that advancing the multiplier “over the top” (to 6x) wasn’t just ignored—it lit up an Extra Ball light. I’d like to see that become commonplace in other games.

The game’s big payoff, and its main skill shot, is the somewhat overnamed Ultimate Behemoth ramp. This spots a letter in millions (complete with a simple, but cute,

scoreboard display). When the last letter is lit, the ramp shot becomes worth one million points. The duration of the million shot is operator-adjustable from 10 to 18 seconds (the factory setting is 14).

One thing which the Data East engineers excel in is making a fuss over the rewards. The game makes it worth the player’s while to try to activate the various features; even the simplest ones are met with some pleasing combination of lights and sounds.

The Behemoth ramp also activates the machine’s “mystery” feature when shot twice in rapid succession. The backglass spins among 500,000 points, catch-up, bonus hold plus 100,000, extra ball, 5x donut multiplier, and double your score. These are mighty payoffs, the kind that attract and keep players. Luckily, there are adjustable options that let you prevent a player from playing all day on one credit. You should take caution in doing this, however. The ramp is not an easy shot to make, and in general, it is not a high-scoring game.

The bottom one-third of the playfield is pretty barren, possibly to make room for the portrait of the entire Simpson family. As a result, game play is not fast. Winning *The Simpsons* is mostly a matter of learning to hit the ramp whenever you wish and locking the balls for multiball play. That makes it a shooter’s game, a quality which tends to draw experienced players.

Inexperienced players who just shoot randomly won’t score much but will be regaled with Simpson voices and music. The game is also fun to watch, with its Ultimate Behemoth ramp and left and center ball locks. These capture-holes return the ball by kicking it vertically into colorful wire tubes.

The most worthwhile feature is a combination of the ramp and multiball. Multiball is almost ridiculously simple to activate: knock down three drop targets and lock one ball. The challenge, then, is to lock *both* the balls in play, which activates three-ball multiball. During three-ball play, dumping the drop targets activates a climbing jackpot on the ramp—the longer you wait, the more it’s worth.

Buy the game, man!

For the operator, *The Simpsons* is almost a sure thing. New players will be



attracted by the artwork and sounds. They will probably keep playing just to find out what the machine will say next. The Simpsons are big business everywhere, and no visible location should be without this game. But since the majority of the game's appeal is visual, it is important that you keep it clean.

It is endowed with two lights under the start button. One tells you it's time to clean the game; the other indicates that the machine needs servicing. You shouldn't view these indicators as an annoyance, but rather as profit protectors. It's best to obey them.

Experienced players should also frequent the game because it is so challenging—even frustrating. It is not easy to play, and the only way to get a decent score is to concentrate and develop those skill-shots.

Because the game is hard, expect play

durations to be brief and scores to be fairly low. Setting the initial replay/extra ball at around three-and-a-half million points will keep the majority of players from cashing in. I'd recommend setting it lower to start with, perhaps as low as two or two-and-a-half million, particularly if you're in a location that doesn't have a lot of experienced players. I'd also tend toward the "easy" settings, since even "moderate" places the most interesting features out of reach for average or lesser players.

I'm as certain as I can be that this game will make a lot of money for the operators who can get them. You should be as shameless in using the Simpsons imagery to your advantage as Data East was. If you're in a street location, make the game visible from the outside, if possible. If you do that, be prepared for traffic from the younger set. If you have a tavern or other adult location, don't let the cartoons fool

you into thinking that this is strictly a kid's game. Matt Groening's drawings were best-sellers long before the Simpsons hit TV, and a considerable share of the audience for the Fox cartoon series is made up of adults.

Bart's irreverent humor ("Eat my shorts") is one of the most common phrases) and Homer's buffoonish voicings help make the game a gas to play. Your patrons will be introducing this game to their friends just to watch their faces as the speakers let loose with some wisecrack.

This game is destined to be a smash. I'll admit that I don't think the playfield design is Data East's best work (the as-yet-unreleased *Checkpoint* gets my nod for that title). But if making money is the name of the game, then *The Simpsons* is poised for enormous success. □

HOT SINGLES

TITLE Label & Number/Distributing Label	ARTIST
1. Because I Love You LMR 2724/RCA	Stevie B*
2. I'm Your Baby Tonight Arista 2108	Whitney Houston*
3. From A Distance Atlantic 4-87820	Bette Midler*
4. Something To Believe In Enigma 44617/Capitol	Poison
5. Love Takes Time Columbia 38-73455	Mariah Carey*
6. Groove Is In The Heart Elektra 4-64934	Deee-Lite
7. Impulsive SBK 07337	Wilson Phillips
8. The Way You Do The Things You Do Virgin 4-98978	UB40
9. Tom's Diner A&M 1529	DNA/Suzanne Vega
10. Justify My Love Sire 4-19485/Warner Bros.	Madonna*
11. High Enough Warner Bros. 4-19595	Damn Yankees*
12. Freedom Columbia 38-73559	George Michael*
13. Stranded Capitol 44621	Heart
14. Feels Good Wing 877 436-4/Polydor	Tony! Toni! Tone!*
15. So Close Arista 2085	Hall and Oates*
16. More Than Words Can Say EMI 50324	Alias
17. Wiggle It Cutting 4-98887	2 In A Room
18. Miracle Mercury 878 392-4	Jon Bon Jovi*
19. Sensitivity MCA 53932	Ralph Tresvant*
20. Ice Ice Baby SBK 07335	Vanilla Ice

* available on vinyl

COMPACT DISCS

TITLE Label & Number/Distributing Label	ARTIST
1. To The Extreme SBK 95325	Vanilla Ice
2. Please Hammer, Don't Hurt 'Em Capitol C2-92857	M.C. Hammer
3. I'm Your Baby Tonight Arista 8616	Whitney Houston
4. Mariah Carey Columbia 45202	Mariah Carey
5. Rhythm Of The Saints Warner Bros. 26098	Paul Simon
6. Recycler Warner Bros. 26265	ZZ Top
7. The Razor's Edge ATCO 91413	AC/DC
8. Wilson Phillips SBK 93745	Wilson Phillips
9. Some People's Lives Atlantic 82129	Bette Midler
10. Listen Without Prejudice Columbia 46896	George Michael
11. Vol. 3 Wilbury 26324/Warner Bros.	Traveling Wilburys
12. The Immaculate Collection Sire 26440/Warner Bros.	Madonna
13. Flesh And Blood Enigma 91813/Capitol	Poison
14. Poison MCA 6387	Bell Biv Devoe
15. Mixed Up Elektra 60978	The Cure
16. Serious Hits...Live! Atlantic 82157	Phil Collins
17. No Fences Capitol 93866	Garth Brooks
18. Put Yourself In My Shoes RCA 2372	Clint Black
19. X Atlantic 82140	INXS
20. Family Style Associated 46225/Epic	Vaughan Brothers

Bill,

I need to know ...

1. Should I rotate the Double Dragon at Quick Mart?
2. Did you want to put another machine into Zak's Pizza?
3. Should we sell one of our Main Events?
4. Do you want me to pull everything from Video Theatre this week?
5. Does Hilda have my collection reports ready for tomorrow?

Charles

The PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM is computer software that takes control of all your amusement or vending equipment. Here is software for your microcomputer that calculates and delivers profits to your bottom line. It is not a general accounting package; it's a system for you if you manage revenue-producing equipment (arcade or route). It makes every machine and every location a profit center and focuses on profits, ROI, collection histories, transfer dates, and meter readings.

And getting the answers to your questions is no great effort; our 70+ page instruction manual explains THE PROFIT CONTROL SYSTEM in detail. Installation is quick and using the program is easy. Entering collections is simple; equipment transfers, different token rates, and minimums are no problem. And, you never have to write another collection ticket by hand.

Here are the details. MS/DOS compatible for popular systems like IBM, Compaq, Tandy, etc. based on 8086, 80286, or 80386 microprocessors. Operating System: MS/DOS (or PC/DOS) 2.0 or higher. Language: Compiled QuickBasic by Microsoft. Memory Requirement: Minimum 256k with two disks or harddisk. Printer Requirements: 132 characters per line capacity in standard or compressed print, continuous paper feed recommended. Equipment Capacity: Limited only by disk storage space. Practical limits are 50 to 5000 pieces of equipment. Disk Format: All orders include both 3-1/2" and 5-1/4" disk formats.

HOW TO ORDER

Call (512)425-1918 to place your order. Give your name, address, and telephone number and we'll ship COD, or FAX your order to our FAX number (512) 423-6661 and we will ship COD. You may also mail the order form along with your check for \$195.00 plus \$4.00 postage (\$199.00)

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
 COLLECTION REPORT FOR: 278 -- VIDEO THEATRE -- 4587 Windsor Road
 LAST COLLECTION DATE: 09/05/89
 DATE PRINTED: 09/06/89
 COLLECTION DATE: / /

ASSET NO.	EQUIP NAME	TYPE	LOC	REVENUE	DAYS	08/29/89	08/22/89	08/15/89	08/07/89	PTD CUM	PERM CUM	PCT +/-	LAST LOC.
59	Operation Ball	vid	278	60.25	7	70.00	82.50	88.50	80.25	381.50	381.50	-13.93	
62	Superman	vid	278	53.25	7	48.50	44.50	47.75	56.00	250.50	250.50	10.82	
ALL LOCATION INCLUDED				113.50	14	118.50	127.00	136.25	136.25	632.00	632.00		

REVENUE COLLECTED	2407.25	(#)	
LESS: Cost of Goods	100.00		
GROSS PROFIT	11.69	0.48	
Location Commissions	2395.76	99.52	
Collection Costs	449.77	18.68	
Administrative Overhead	512.07	22.10	
Depreciation Expenses	214.79	8.92	
TOTAL EXPENSES	470.72	19.55	
NET PROFIT BEFORE TAXES	1667.34	69.26	
ANNUALIZED RETURN ON INVESTMENT	728.40	30.26	
TOTAL ASSET VALUE	43.918	37842.91	

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
 PROFIT REPORT FOR: 101 -- QUICK MART -- 123 N. Main
 LAST COLLECTION DATE: 08/07/89
 DATE PRINTED: 08/15/89

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	LOCATION	CURRENT REVENUE	COGS	GROSS PROFIT	SPLIT TO LOCATION COST	COLLECTION EXPENSE	OVERHEAD EXPENSE	DEPREC. EXPENSE	NET PROFIT	ROI	ASSET VALUE
23	Double Dragon	vid	101	48.25	0.00	48.25	24.13	1.17	6.71	9.33	6.91	45.06	800
24	Rolling Thunder	vid	101	31.50	0.00	31.50	15.75	1.17	6.71	13.42	-5.55	-25.14	1150
GLOBAL SEARCH FOR EQUIPMENT WITH NEGATIVE CASH FLOW (e.g. MFDICE (10))				78.75	0.00	78.75	40.88	2.34	13.42	22.75	1.36	-19.67	950

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	LOCATION	CURRENT REVENUE	COGS	GROSS PROFIT	SPLIT TO LOCATION COST	COLLECTION EXPENSE	OVERHEAD EXPENSE	DEPREC. EXPENSE	NET PROFIT	ROI	ASSET VALUE
45	Centipede	vid	101	13.00	0.00	13.00	0.00	35.09	6.71	1.17	-2.55	-53.10	250
		vid	174	37.50	0.00	37.50	0.00	35.09	6.71	12.25	-16.55	-115.07	750
		vid	174	41.50	0.00	41.50	0.00	35.09	6.71	7.00	-7.30	-63.45	600

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
 PROFIT REPORT FOR: 135 -- ZAK'S PIZZA -- Dayland Mall
 LAST COLLECTION DATE: 08/15/89
 DATE PRINTED: 08/16/89

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	LOCATION	CURRENT REVENUE	COGS	GROSS PROFIT	SPLIT TO LOCATION COST	COLLECTION EXPENSE	OVERHEAD EXPENSE	DEPREC. EXPENSE	NET PROFIT	ROI	ASSET VALUE
53	Pole Position	vid	135	34.00	0.00	34.00	17.00	3.50	6.71	4.20	2.59	29.98	450
55	Taxi	pin	135	88.00	0.00	88.00	44.00	3.50	6.71	15.17	18.62	74.69	1300
ALL LOCATION INCLUDED				122.00	0.00	122.00	61.00	7.00	13.42	19.87	22.21	104.67	1750

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
 PROFIT REPORT FOR: 174 -- SILVER DOLLAR ARCADE -- South Pines Mall
 LAST COLLECTION DATE: 08/07/89
 DATE PRINTED: 08/15/89

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	LOCATION	CURRENT REVENUE	COGS	GROSS PROFIT	SPLIT TO LOCATION COST	COLLECTION EXPENSE	OVERHEAD EXPENSE	DEPREC. EXPENSE	NET PROFIT	ROI	ASSET VALUE
13	Main Event	vid	174	35.00	0.00	35.00	0.00	35.09	6.71	12.25	-19.05	-132.45	750
15	Cyberball	vid	174	175.50	0.00	175.50	0.00	35.09	6.71	18.67	115.03	249.91	2000
ALL LOCATION INCLUDED				210.50	0.00	210.50	0.00	70.18	13.42	30.92	96.88	249.91	2750

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
 REVENUE REPORT FOR: 278 -- VIDEO THEATRE -- 4587 Windsor Road
 LAST COLLECTION DATE: 09/05/89
 DATE PRINTED: 09/06/89

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	LOC	REVENUE	DAYS	08/29/89	08/22/89	08/15/89	08/07/89	PTD CUM	PERM CUM	PCT +/-	LAST LOC.
59	Operation Ball	vid	278	60.25	7	70.00	82.50	88.50	80.25	381.50	381.50	-13.93	
62	Superman	vid	278	53.25	7	48.50	44.50	47.75	56.00	250.50	250.50	10.82	
ALL LOCATION INCLUDED				113.50	14	118.50	127.00	136.25	136.25	632.00	632.00		

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 Harlingen, Texas 78550

Two pins from Premier, a video from Williams



Looking back at AMOA '90 and Pinball Expo '90, there was very little good product. A player's advice to operators—hang tough and keep older games working properly!

Premier is producing a more classic-styled product in an attempt to make its games trouble-free. The playfield styling tries to eliminate ball hang-ups. A spokesman for Premier explains that operators will have fewer service calls related to the complex plastic on the playfield.

The new System 90 seems to be an excellent improvement over the System 80 series. To solve the problem of games "cooking" themselves to death on location, System 90 has a re-designed power supply and logic design. This power supply problem was apparent in hits like *Genesis*, *Gold Wings*, *Alien Star*, and *Monte Carlo*. The sound system is still due for an upgrade, but I understand that improvement is not in sight.

The latest releases from Premier are *Deadly Weapon*, a low-run export which may be difficult to find; *Tile Fight*, a good single-level pinball with backglass animation; and *Car Hop*, with good initial collection reports that could see the ROI of *Silver Slugger*.



Deadly Weapon is a take-off of the movie "Lethal Weapon," which starred Mel Gibson. The game features a police chase theme that shows a crime scene in action. The player's job is to get bad guys by making "arrests" to score extra balls and specials. For big points a player must complete "SUPERCOP" and "WEAPON" to get the game into a bonus round mode called "RIOT."

The way this plays may sound confusing; that's because it is. However, once you get into the "RIOT" mode you can score big points. Point awards on this game are difficult to describe. I learned recently that European game players enjoy the more sophisticated game rules in pinball; I think *Deadly Weapon* goes a little overboard.

There is interesting play with "PIK-5," which is similar to "select-a-feature." It offers the player a choice of "five arrests," "instant multi-ball," "one million points," etc. The game also offers a sequential shot called "SQUAD CARS," where the player can add badges for extra balls and replays.

The lower portion of the playfield near the flippers is very unconventional, having no drain on the right side but a large drain on the left side with a ball-saver kicker that is timed. The timed ball-saver post was not fun at all and was too difficult on the game I played. This made the game too difficult to play on the left side of the playboard and relatively easy on the right.

The art on the game is too violent, depicting a kidnapping in progress. The overall package of this game really doesn't excite the American player but is getting much favored reviews in Europe. I'll give this game a #-1/2 for play appeal and looks.

Title Fight is a single-level boxing game, introduced at AMOA and shown at Pinball Expo. It uses lightbox animation—similar to that found on *Lights, Camera, Action*—for a knockout bout. "Ready, set, ...BOX," speaks the machine. The interactive play feature is a novel skill shot that loses its novelty quickly.

An upper playfield serves as the boxing ring, where players complete five drop-targets to defeat boxers and score big

points. After the round is over on the upper playfield, the player falls into a kick-out hole for the knockout bout.

On the right side of the playfield is a roundhouse shot that the player shoots in loops, similar to *Black Knight 2000*. It's not quite as smooth a shot, but it's fun. Achieving multi-ball is randomly selected—not by skill. This was unusual designing; I did not care for it. Multi-ball is fun when it is activated, but you never know when it is going to happen on this game.

"In fact, I thought that the hockey realism of this game was as good as the arcade game CHEXX and much better than the Bally/Sente Hat Trick."

During multi-ball, completing the 10 targets in the main area of the playfield scores a "mini jackpot." Otherwise, these 10 targets are just something to bat the ball at. The special on this game is achieved by shooting the captive-ball targets to advance the TKO special when flashing. Every time you hit these targets the machine says, "That's a ball buster" in a referee's voice. This special is not very well marked out on the playfield—just like the 10 multi-ball targets. Overall, the game rules are unclear; play strategies are shooting for the roundhouse and boxing right. When multi-ball starts, you must work to complete the flashing one through 10 targets.

Artwork on *Title Fight* is fair. As an overall package I find the game more attractive than *Deadly Weapon*. This game rates a ## and will be appealing to children and unskilled players. This is a reasonably good street game, but avoid placing it in competition with a full-feature hit like *Whirlwind* if you want to maximize earnings.

Overall, Premier needs to clear up the game rules by doing a better job of marking out targets for sequences in addition to making the instruction card clearer. Operators may want to pass on these two Premier games and wait for *Car Hop*.

Williams has been building good product, even in the current recessionary market. Its new video, *Hit the Ice*, is no exception. It's had good player response and should be as good as the basketball hit, *Arch Rivals*.

Playing *Hit the Ice*, a follow-up to the football game *Pigskin* by Midway, is fun for two or four players in a more realistic package. Williams claims that *Hit the Ice* "delivers all of the power play excitement of the Video Hockey League."

The game offers slashing, spearing, fighting, and fancy skating and shooting. In fact, I thought that the hockey realism of this game was as good as the arcade game *CHEXX* and much better than the Bally/Sente *Hat Trick* of a few years ago. The players and the referee have their own personalities and play characteristics. Playing well requires all of the skills needed in standard ice hockey. This game gives approximately one-and-a-half minutes per player in a three-period hockey game. So two players can easily spend five dollars each if they play to completion and buy-in the "Power Drinks" to enhance their player.

This game features a large 25-inch monitor, enabling bystanders to view the game while it's being played. Also, it is possible to buy into the game once play action has started.

The net result to the operator should be a very good ROI. The graphics are very good and the game plays well. I expect this game to be a spring and summer hit in arcade locations and sports bars. However, it should be noted that the game is not likely to appeal to women. Rate this Williams game ### for a good overall package.

I will keep looking for video games that will make money for the operators. In the meantime, manufacturers must work a little harder to protect operators. Releasing games for the home market before or at the same time it is released for coin-op use is breaking operators' backs! □



You can always have the right pinball coil

When I used to do route service, my main priority was getting all my games up and running before I went home for the day. Somehow, it always dragged into the early evening hours. If I wanted to get home, having the right parts in the van was an absolute necessity.

Having the right pinball coil doesn't mean carrying every possible coil. It means using what's learned about electricity in school and adapting that to any given situation, which often means modifying a spare coil.

Basic solenoid theory

When electric current flows through a coil of wire, magnetic "lines of force" are produced. The lines of force form complete loops flowing through the center of the coil, around and back again (see Figure 1).

The strength of a solenoid depends on the number of magnetic lines generated. The number of magnetic lines is determined by several factors:

1. **The amount of current (amps) flowing through the coil.** This depends on the supply voltage and the resistance of

the coil. *Ohms Law: Amps = volts/ohms.*

2. **The number of turns of wire in the coil.** More turns mean more magnetic lines but also more coil resistance (more length of wire). A solenoid with more turns of wire of the same thickness may not necessarily be stronger than one with fewer turns if the relative increase in resistance (due to the added length of wire) is more than the relative increase in the number of turns.

"Having the right pinball coil doesn't mean carrying every possible coil. It often means modifying a spare coil."

A significant increase in strength can only be achieved by increasing the thickness of the wire as well, to balance the increase in coil resistance.

3. **The magnetic properties of the material forming the loop where the magnetic lines pass.** On a typical solenoid, the loop consists of the coil slug, coil stop, mounting bracket base, and the

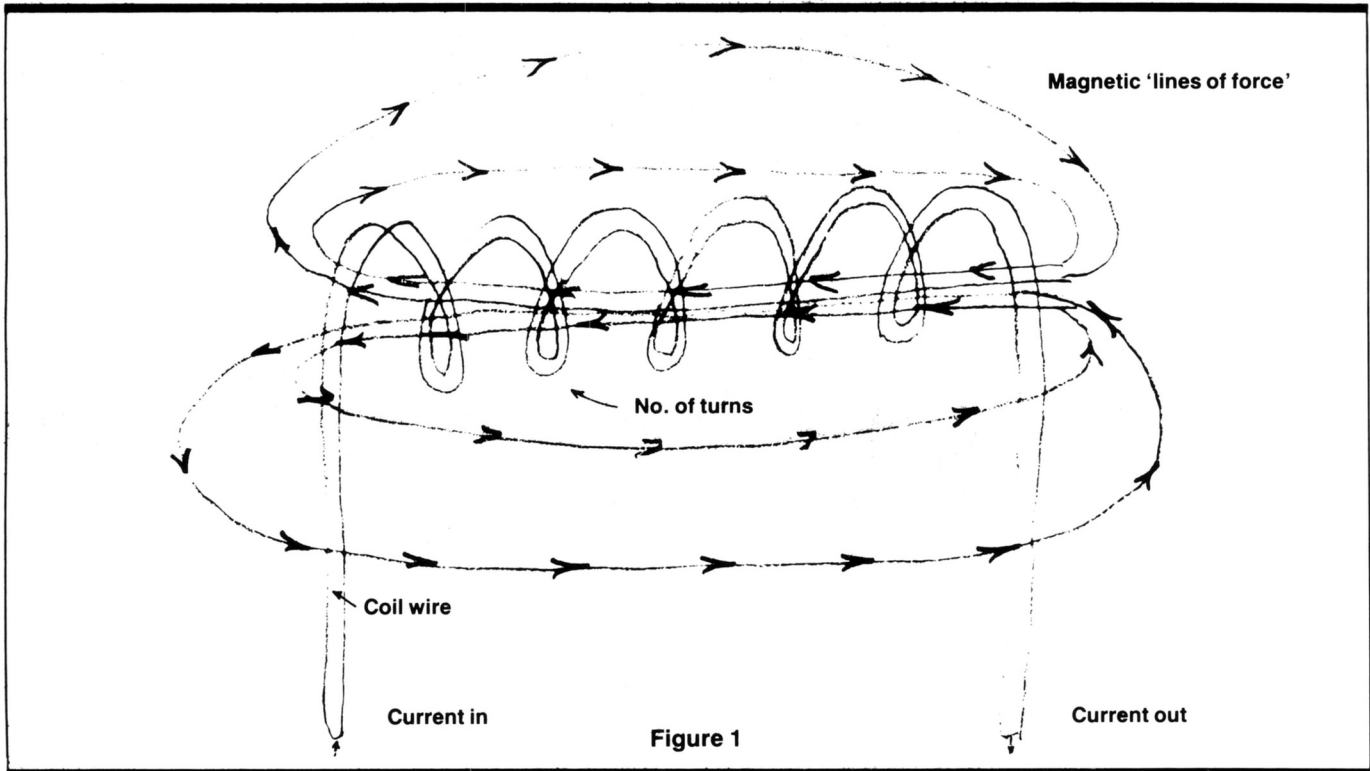
bracket at the other end of the solenoid.

All of these are made of iron because iron is one of the best conductors of magnetic lines of force and also very strong. On a crane claw coil, for example, one wonders about the purpose of that half-moon-shaped metal plate on top of the coil. Its purpose is to help complete the magnetic path from the walls of the metal cylindrical housing to the slug at the center of the coil. Without it, the magnetic lines

would have to cross through the one-half-inch air gap, which would result in less magnetic lines and reduced claw strength.

The amount of magnetic (magneto-motive) force is measured in "ampere-turns" and follows Ohms Law. Here are two extreme examples:

A 100 turn coil with one amp current in it should have the same strength as a one



turn coil with 100 amps of current going through it (theoretically, if all other factors are equal). In practice, it is impossible to keep other factors equal because the one turn coil would have to be made of extremely thick wire with a much shorter axial length.

Coil specification

Williams specifies its coils by the wire gauge number (thickness) and the number of turns. A 23/800 coil means it's made of 23-gauge wire and has 800 turns. The lower the gauge number the thicker the wire.

Gottlieb, for an unknown reason, uses its part numbers. The gauge number and turns can be obtained from the Gottlieb coil chart. An A-1496 coil is actually a 23/635.

If you run into a situation where you need an A-1496 coil for a Gottlieb pin and all you have is a 23/800 Williams coil, you can just remove 165 turns from the Williams coil. You don't even have to be exact; if you are off by as much as 20 turns it shouldn't really be a problem.

If you think for a few seconds, there is no limit to the types of coils you can make up just from your parts box of old coils.

This should really impress the boss and eliminate a trip back for the right coil!

A-5194: 5.33 amps x 780 turns = 4,157 amp turns.

“The amount of magnetic force is measured in ‘ampere-turns’ and follows Ohms Law.”

Sample case

Which of the following coils is the strongest? Which is the weakest?

A-1496 (23/635) 2.95 ohms

A-4893 (22/535) 2.10 ohms

A-5194 (24/780) 4.50 ohms

All three coils are supposed to work at 24 volts DC. Based on this, the current through each coil by Ohms Law is:

A-1496: 24 volts/2.95 ohms = 8.3 amps

A-4893: 24 volts/2.10 ohms = 11.42 amps

A-5194: 24 volts/4.50 ohms = 5.33 amps

The ampere-turns (how we measure coil strength) for each is:

A-1496: 8.13 amps x 635 turns = 5,162 amp-turns

A-4893: 11.42 amps x 535 turns = 6,109 amp-turns

The A-4893 coil will be the strongest and A-5194 will be the weakest.

It's a bit harder to add turns to a coil than remove them. When splicing coil wire to the end of a coil, remember to make the connection outside of the coil wires. Be careful to check the added length of wire to be sure there aren't any sections where the insulation has been rubbed away as you wind the additional loops around the coil.

Note: Williams' coils do not specify resistance; Gottlieb coils do. You can measure coil resistance by using your meter, after first removing the diode (across the coil base) from the circuit.

As always...keep cranking!

LJ-V66 LaserDisc

Pioneer Laser Entertainment introduces the *LJ-V66 LaserDisc* video jukebox that combines digital high-fidelity technology with music video entertainment.

The *LJ-V66* plays two 30-song laser discs with CD-quality sound and a picture that is 60 percent sharper than videocassette tape. A large screen monitor or TV for viewing can be placed in a variety of locations, including the top of the unit.

An LED display identifies the selection in play and a maximum of 99 requested music videos. Pioneer offers a monthly compilation disc with the latest hit music videos to provide operators with a constant flow of current music.

Convenience features include memory play of up to 99 selections; a best hits function that plays the unit's top 10 requested songs; random play for the top five requested songs and random album play; and a wired remote control that allows location owners to control volume level and song cancel functions.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Pioneer Laser Entertainment, 2265 East 220th St., Long Beach, CA 90810; (213) PIONEER; FAX (213) 816-5111.



OmniFlex, VariFlex Cabinets

Williams Electronics Games and Midway Manufacturing are debuting universal video game cabinets—the *OmniFlex* and *VariFlex*, respectively.

The Williams *OmniFlex* offers four-player/two-player optional control panel design, vertical and horizontal 25-inch monitor mounting, and bass-reflex tuned port speaker system.

The Midway *VariFlex* cabinet features a control panel for two-player stations and an adjustable-viewing, angled 25-inch monitor.

Although each unit has a different exterior design, several interior features are shared by both: front access slide-out, vertical-mounted electronics tray; chip-

resistant, vinyl-coated, plywood cabinet construction; 1/16" clear Lexan control panel overlay; industry standard over/under coin door; and contoured marquee with standard fluorescent fixture.

Both models are totally JAMMA compatible and offer four leg levelers, cabinet wheels for easy transporting, front-mounted monitor controls, and precision silk-screened graphics.

For more information, or distributor referral, write either Williams Electronics Games or Midway Manufacturing, 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240; FAX (312) 267-8435.

Mega Man III

He's back! And in an all-new adventure with his trusty pet dog RC. The hero in question? Mega Man, a world traveler who reaches hair-raising heights in *Mega Man III* by Nintendo of America. The game is designed for the PlayChoice system.

Mega Man and RC (who is

known for carrying our hero across lava pits and other unsavory spots) must travel through various game stages to battle and defeat the Robo-Boss and obtain new weapons. Once all eight weapons are his, Mega Man must journey through an additional four stages. This means that four more Robo-

Bosses must be eliminated.

But the action doesn't stop there. After their defeat, Mega Man enters the dreaded Dr. Wiley stage, where he faces his most dangerous challenge—Dr. Wiley himself. The road is long and full of untold dangers. Can he make it? Doesn't good *always* triumph over evil?

Will Mega Man live to return in yet another outrageous adventure?

For more information, or distributor referral, write Nintendo of America Inc., 4820 150th Ave. NE, Redmond, WA 98052; (800) 633-3236 or (206) 882-2040; FAX (206) 882-3585.

Ziggy the Talking Clown

Mayoni Enterprises introduces a new and improved *Ziggy the Talking Clown* toy and capsule vendor that features increased product capacity.



The new unit is the result of input from satisfied customers and Mayoni's engineering and product development departments.

Changes include a new happy clown figure under a mini circus big top, new artwork and colors, and improved voice with microchip, all solid-state audio. In addition, there's all new electronics, front loading of product, and front removal of coins.

Mayoni maintains the standard anti-jamming feature and the ability to dispense any size capsule on the market today (with minor adjustments). Mayoni has a one-year limited warranty on parts and labor.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Mayoni Enterprises, 10340 Glenoaks Blvd., Pacoima, CA 91331; (800) 345-1183 or (818) 899-248; FAX (818) 899-0152.

The Simpsons

The irascible Bart Simpson has jumped from the small screen to the pinball playfield in Data East's newest outing, *The Simpsons*, a pinball game.

No explanations are necessary when it comes to this famous family of misguided misfits. The game's backglass brings all the well-known characters in to play.

Here's a sample of the action: ride the Ultimate Behemoth Ramp twice in a row to pull down a mystery bonus that ranges from 500,000 points to double-your-score, or spell SIMPSONS and ride the ramp for a cool million points.

Multiball play can bring players two or three balls on the playfield at any time—just bowl a strike and lock 'em up. In three-ball play, knock down the bowling pins to light up the Ultimate



Behemoth for the Nuclear Jackpot.

There's lots more in store, such as Doughnut Multipliers, Extraball, Nuclear Power Value, Bonus Hold, Hot Reactor Points, and Cooling Towers.

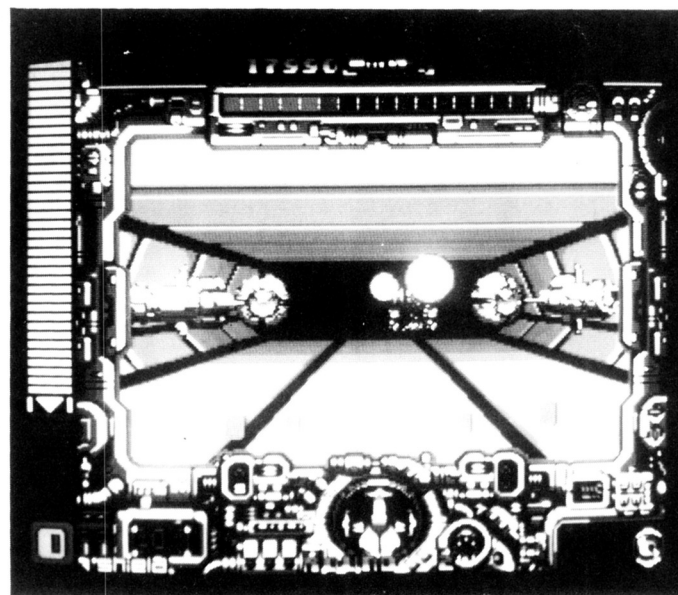
For more information, or distributor referral, write Data East USA Inc., 1850 Little Orchard Drive, San Jose, CA 95125; (408) 286-7074; FAX (408) 971-0722.

Aurail

Sega debuts a 3-D, 360-degree rapid fire conversion kit in *Aurail*, a game that challenges player skills on a variety of levels.

A horizontal one- or two-player (alternating) game, *Aurail* uses a joystick and three buttons to aid the player in defending the onslaught of enemy fire.

There are 16 stages to complete, each with a different dimension. Power-up items can be picked up along the way to increase player fire power. Of special note is the kite power-up item; by sending out a robotic kite players



can eliminate oncoming enemies from the air.

The game's 360-degree mobility means players can change direction to any angle needed. Players can pass the enemy, then change direction and fire at the opponent's weak side.

Features such as continue play and buy-in means non-stop action.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Sega Enterprises Inc. USA, 2149 Paragon Drive, San Jose, CA 95161; (408) 435-0201; FAX (408) 435-0294.

Classic CD

Golden Age Jukebox offers a 60-disc-capacity jukebox with a nostalgic look in its *Classic CD*. The easy-to-read title cards afford full artist graphics.

Among the features are all-aluminum, cast metal trim; hand polished, triple-plated chrome; user-friendly push button operation; built-in disc management system; unlimited track selections; eight bubble tubes; and 200 watts of music power.

The disc management system allows maximum flexibility when changing discs; this can be done by the "least

popular" method, individually as required, or as part of a full change.

There's also a computerized readout of foreground plays, cashbox take, and individual disc plays. The \$1/\$5 bill validator with stacker is standard. Also available: kits for P.A., four-channel independent sound, and remote volume control cancel and mute.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Golden Age Jukebox, 650 Cochran St. #1, Simi Valley, CA 93065; (805) 584-0515; FAX (805) 584-2536.



Title Fight

Premier Technology introduces another Gottlieb pinball, *Title Fight*, a game that features animated boxing characters in the lightbox.

Title Fight encourages competitive play by offering secondary scoring for punches landed. Consecutive roundhouse blows that land in the right spot via the Roundhouse Ramp will bring up the score. Extra rounds are awarded for a series of uppercuts.

Title Fight challenges the player to land the highest number of punches to become

a top contender or world champion.

The playfield is dotted with boxing gloves and boxing characters, such as "Rock," "Bull," "Kid," and "Hammer." The five flippers keep players alert. The game's dimensions are 77 inches high, 27 inches wide, and 52 inches deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Premier Technology, 759 Industrial Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106; (708) 350-0400; FAX (708) 350-1097.

Hammerin' Harry

Irem brings an imaginative adventure game to the video screen with *Hammerin' Harry*, a horizontal kit suitable for cocktail conversions.

In *Hammerin' Harry*, players become the central character, Harry, who raises

havoc with a construction crew that tears down his house.

To stop him in his tracks (not likely), the workers throw such items as bags of cement in his path. Undaunted, Harry clears the way with a huge mallet. All

players can identify with Harry's frustration.

Controls include a joystick and buttons to help Harry in his quest for satisfaction. Shovels fly along with other tools in this fast-action, high-energy game with a touch of humor.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Irem America Corp., 8335 154th Ave. NE, Redmond, WA 98052; (206) 882-1093; FAX (206) 883-8038.

Mighty Mack

B & B Sales has developed the *Mighty Mack*, a USA-made "digger" game for children that's reminiscent of hand-crank cranes of yesteryear.

Mighty Mack features include a heavy-duty, all-metal cabinet with Lexan windows; storage space for extra toys; optional alarm system; and one-year warranty on parts.

The game is completely mechanical, directed by "player power." Dimensions are 27 inches wide, 21 inches

deep, and 60 inches high.

Mighty Mack is easy to adjust (no technician required), maintenance free, and operates on 25-cent play. Appropriately-sized toys are available from B & B in a pre-packaged assortment.

For more information, or distributor referral, write B & B Sales Co., 7710 Summer Glen, Houston, TX 77027; (800) 367-2706, (713) 498-5977, or (713) 879-6515.



Dino-Roll

Seidel Amusement debuts a new roll down in *Dino-Roll*, a prehistoric-themed redemption game with bright purple lanes and colorful cartoon dinosaur graphics.

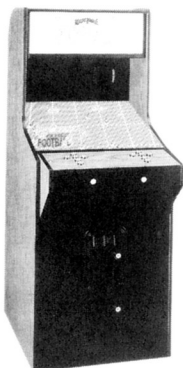
Standard features include ticket dispensers, digital sound effects and voice, front drawer access for easy maintenance, playfield lighting, advanced microprocessor technology, electromechanical score display, rotating winner beacon and bell, and

operator-programmable pricing, scoring, tickets and credits.

In addition, there are a host of options, including upholstered stools with a chrome base, a modular steel game stand with bench seat, and a spare logic board.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Seidel Amusement Machine Co. Inc., 412 Juan Tabo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87192; (505) 298-6994; FAX (505) 291-0052.

MicroLeague Football



Quantum Industries' latest product is *MicroLeague Football*, a video that issues a "coach's challenge" to all those Monday morning quarterbacks.

This video, available in dedicated system upright with 25-inch monitor or universal horizontal conversion kit, features 20 pro football rosters with real NFL players

and their statistics, plus gridiron heroes from the past and present.

Players control the teams (both offense and defense) and all the action, based on actual season stats and performances from real players and teams.

Players can "guard against the run," "rush the passer," "blitz," or "go man to

man." Competitive two-player action is possible, or one player can challenge the computer. Team customizing is possible through a player draft.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Quantum Industries Inc., 336 Stamm Road, Newington, CT 06111; (203) 667-7655; FAX (203) 666-8767.

Player's Touch

SMS Mfg. introduces the *Player's Touch* multiple-game, touch screen unit for legal video gaming and Indian reservations.



Player's Touch offers game choices of Jacks or Better, Aces or Better, Joker Poker, and Keno. The machine is housed in a casino-style, all-metal cabinet the same size as the company's *South Dakota Draw Poker*. Buttons indicate ticket, menu, bet plus, and bet minus.

In addition, there is a special model for Canada which shows all instructions, pay tables, and the drinking age (19 in Canada) in both English and French. Eight credits are allowed in South Dakota, 10 in Canada. An optional stand is available with cup holder and ash tray.

Standard equipment includes a Mars \$1-5-10-20 bill acceptor with 1,000 capacity stacker, a bubble light on the top, and a visual display that reminds players they must be of legal drinking age.

For more information, or distributor referral, write SMS Mfg., 601 Prospect St., Lakewood, NJ; (800) 221-0138 or (908) 370-3030; FAX (908) 363-6329.



New Orleans CD

Wurlitzer debuts the *New Orleans CD* laser jukebox with three-dimensional graphics and 50-disc capacity.

Discs are stored vertically; six CDs can be viewed at a time. Other features include four-digit LED display for the disc and track number, microprocessor control, play stimulator, and plug connectors for an auxiliary

amplifier. Dimensions are 50.8 inches high, 34.6 inches wide, and 21.7 inches deep.

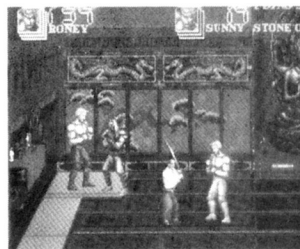
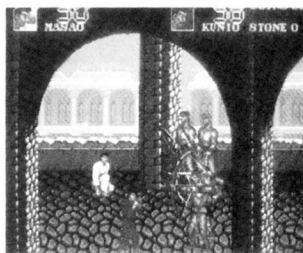
For more information, or distributor referral, write either Nelson International, 30-55 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11102; (718) 721-4000; FAX (718) 626-1163; or Southern Music (407) 843-4302; FAX (407) 849-1315.

Double Dragon 3

The double dragons are back in another video adventure, *Double Dragon 3, The Rosetta Stone*, from American Technos.

This second sequel to the immensely popular original *Double Dragon* finds heroes Jimmy and Billy joined by newcomer Sonny on another journey to distant lands.

Features include two- or three-player selectable modes, special weapons stores, buy-in, and game con-



tinuation. The game is a JAMMA adaptable universal conversion kit.

In this outing, our heroes encounter Egyptian mummies, Roman archers, and Samurai swordsmen.

For more information, or distributor referral, write American Technos Inc., 4805 S.W. Griffith Drive, Beaverton, OR 97005; (503) 643-9768; FAX (503) 644-1482.

Majestic-12

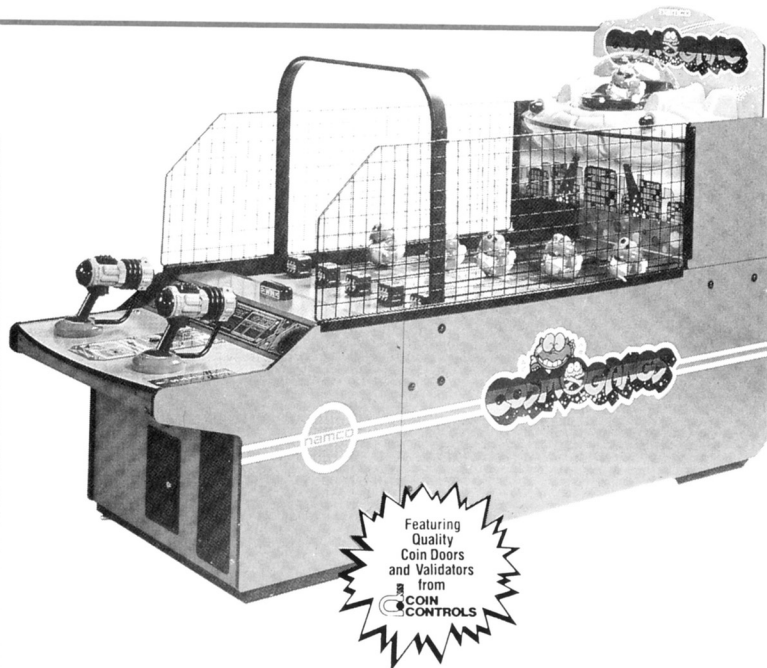
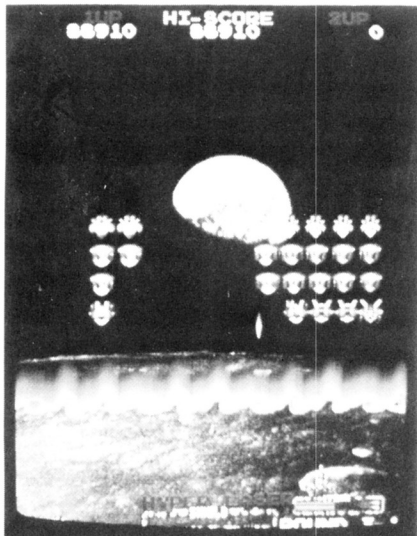
The "invaders" are back in *Majestic-12*, a stirring space adventure video from Taito.

Here's the game scenario: In 1991 the MJ-12 file is reopened after disturbing reports of injuries inflicted by evil aliens. Players must implement orders to bring harmony back to the planet by battling the army of UFO invaders.

Features include 3-D images and sound effects in 11

exciting rounds of play. Players must face enemy bosses who constantly emerge. During the adventure, they must collect all eight super bonus items, including shield up. The game is a one- or two-player interactive video kit.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Taito America Corp., 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090; (708) 520-9280; FAX (708) 520-1309.



Cosmo Gangs

Data East brings a new redemption unit to the marketplace with *Cosmo Gangs*, a bright and splashy game with "so ugly they're cute" extraterrestrial characters on the playfield.

The object of the game is to prevent the little aliens from stealing energy cubes; space guns aimed at a strategic spot can accomplish the goal.

Cosmo Gangs is a team game for two players who work together for a combined

score and ticket payout. Game features include a plexiglass top, two ticket dispensers, and an access panel on the side. The game has been licensed from Namco. Dimensions are 10 feet long by three feet wide.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Data East USA Inc., 1856 Little Orchard St., San Jose, CA 95125; (408) 286-7074; FAX (408) 971-0722.

Putting Challenge

Innovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE) is marketing *Putting Challenge*, a mini golf game that offers 18 different greens in one machine.

One to four players can compete in the game, which offers a choice of three game modes: 1) total strokes game that shows average and total putting, 2) hole-in-one game, and 3) pick-a-putt practice green where players can choose any hole from 18 dif-



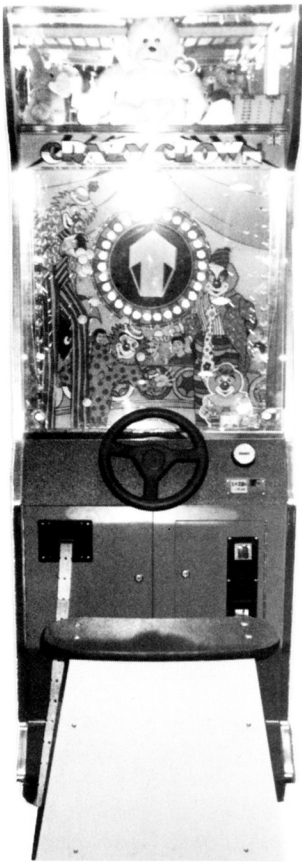
ferent configurations.

Game dimensions are six feet wide by 11 feet long. Options include an operator-adjustable ticket dispenser and \$1-5-10-20 bill acceptor. The game has been licensed from G.L. Technology Inc.

For more information, or distributor referral, write ICE Inc., 1501 Kensington Ave., Buffalo, NY 14215; (800) 342-3433 or (716) 833-0481; FAX (716) 833-1342.

Crazy Clown

Coastal Amusement introduces a simple and fun redemption game, *Crazy Clown*, which features a cir-

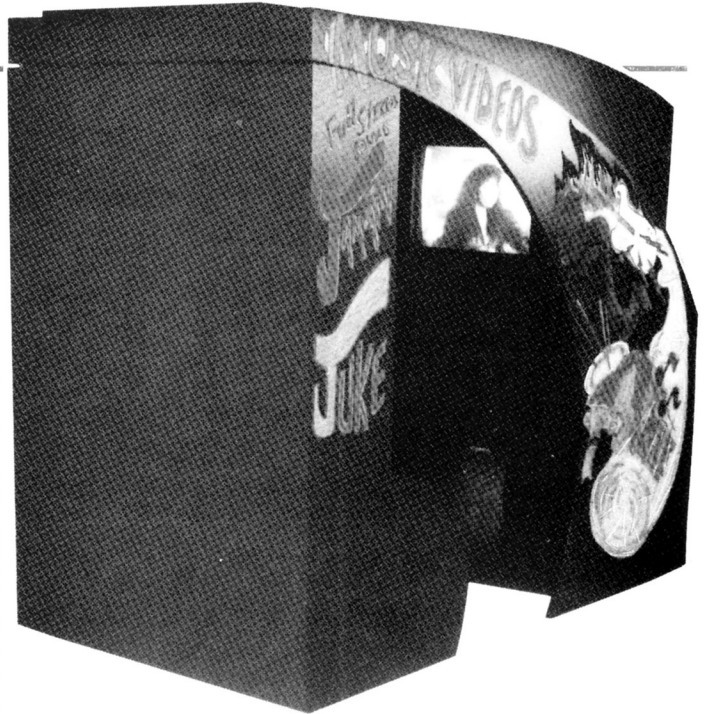


cus theme and steering wheel control.

The game is reminiscent of a segment on "Beat the Clock." Within a certain time frame (operator-adjustable from 15 seconds up to three minutes), players move a colorful clown across the playfield trying to catch colored balls as they drop from above through a pachinko-type board. Every ball caught registers on a circle of lights; tickets are awarded based on success.

The *Crazy Clown* cabinet is bright yellow formica over plywood with playful clown graphics on each side. Standard equipment includes ticket dispenser and attached seat. Dimensions are 76 inches tall, 33 inches wide, and 26 inches deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Coastal Amusement Distributors, 6091 Prospect St., Lakewood, NJ 08701; (908) 905-6663; FAX (908) 363-6329.



Jammin' Juke

A new concept comes to the world of music with the *Jammin' Juke* from Music Videos. A true entertainment center, the unit allows patrons to enjoy chosen music videos in a personalized enclosure.

Volume control rests in the hands of the customer. One or two people can sit in the machine to enjoy selections from a list of 40. Other features include monthly updating of music videos, selec-

tion by membrane keypad, and electrical components protected by dust filters.

The unit measures 5.5 feet high, 5.5 feet long, and 40 inches wide. *Jammin' Juke* accepts multiple coins or \$1 and \$5 bills.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Music Videos, 14 Scott Court, Suite A-1, Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660; (201) 641-4017.

Magic Circle

Betson introduces a magician-themed "cover the spot" redemption game in *Magic Circle*, a colorful one-player game.

Players are challenged to cover certain spots such as the white rabbit, top hat, or dove on the playfield. Ticket percentage can be adjusted by the operator.

Magic Circle is designed by Crompton and features the same solid cabinet construction that has become synonymous with that com-



pany. Dimensions are 63 inches high, 31 inches wide, and 26 inches deep.

The backglass features a magician with wand in hand and female assistant alongside. Colors are bright red, yellow, and blue; cabinet trim is silver.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Betson Enterprises, 6 Empire Blvd., Moonachie, NJ 07074; (800) 524-2343; FAX (201) 440-4463.

Little Slugger

American Sammy has developed a baseball-themed, child's redemption game with *Little Slugger*. Flashing lights and digitized sound effects



bring out the excitement of a baseball park.

Players insert a coin and press the pitch button, then swing at the pitched ball with a bat (flipper). Spaces light up on a baseball diamond at the top of the game to register "hit," "run," or "out." A "foul" ball can be replayed.

The game is over when a player gets three outs or scores four runs. High scores result in ticket awards. There are two coin mechs on the unit; the cabinet is white, blue, and orange. The game is targeted for children ages four years and up; it measures 48 inches tall, 18 inches wide, and 18 inches deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write American Sammy, 2421 205th St., Suite D-104, Torrance, CA 90501; (213) 320-7167; FAX (213) 320-2597.



Talking Fortune Teller

Mr. Vend debuts the *Talking Fortune Teller* that features a Gypsy called Madam Esmeralda.

The front panel has a raised special effects crystal ball with a spectrum of colored lights, display screen, and six-category flashing LED

bar graph.

When the player touches the crystal ball, the Gypsy asks for a quarter, saying "I love quarters." There's continual interaction with the Gypsy, who then says, "Thanks dearie, now put your hand on my crystal ball. Look into my eyes." The Gypsy's eyes light up as the fortune is displayed.

A customized voice message is available; the unit is covered by a one-year limited warranty. Dimensions are 68 inches high, 15-1/2 inches deep, and 16 inches wide. The cabinet is made of solid oak with cast aluminum feet.

Although nostalgic-looking on the outside, the interior houses computer microprocessors and digital voice microchips. Also available: *Match Maker*.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Mr. Vend, 9588 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Chatsworth, CA 91311; (818) 718-6061; FAX (818) 718-0712.

Floating Flowers

Floating Flowers, a balloon distributor in 40 states, has developed the *Floating Flowers* balloon vending machine that enlarges the scope of normal bulk vending.

The unit features helium balloons dispensed from a free-standing machine that looks like a traditional bulk vendor on top. It's child-proof and meets all safety requirements. Helium will not burn and is safe to breathe. There are no electrical hazards since the system



operates on a lantern battery.

Parallel advertising potential is there for the imaginative operator and location owner who could include coupons or product discounts in the balloons to keep customers coming back.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Floating Flowers, a division of God's Little Gift Inc., 12615 Steele Creek Road, P.O. Box 410667, Charlotte, NC 28241-0667; (704) 588-4358.



Kiddie Rides

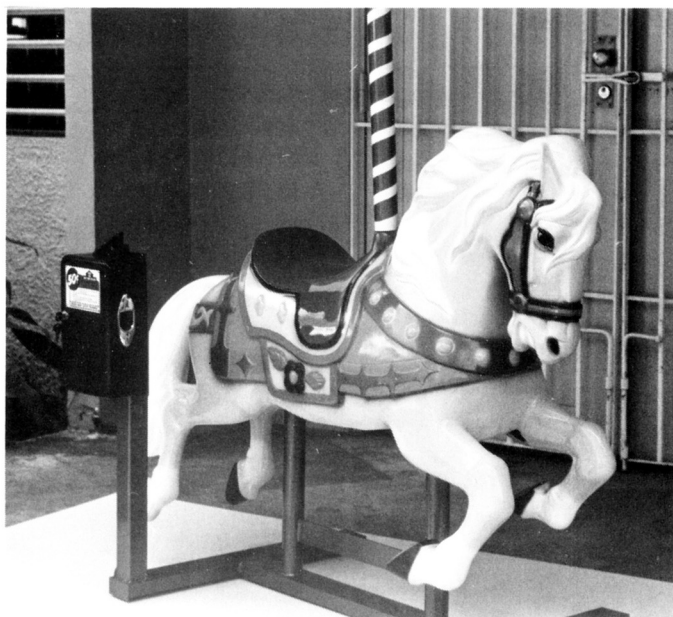
Kiddie's Manufacturing introduces several new kiddie rides to add to its burgeoning list of amusement rides for the younger set.

Among the new additions are a pastel-colored horse, a yellow and black jeep with oversized tires, and a futuristic jet fighter trimmed in red, white, and blue.

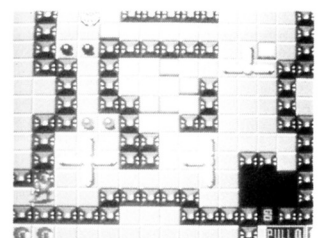
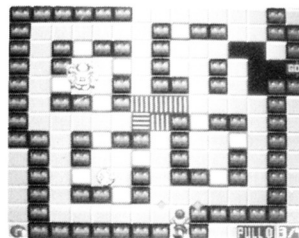
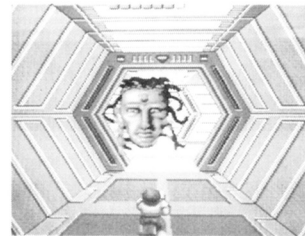
Kiddie's plans to introduce more new rides in the next

three months and offer a whole new line by July 1991. High-end units and economical units are both on the drawing board.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Kiddie's Manufacturing, P.O. Box 1146, Lares, Puerto Rico 00669; (809) 897-3180 or (809) 897-3605; FAX (809) 897-337.



Pushman, Gomorrah



American Sammy brings two new horizontal kits to the video screen with *Pushman* and *Gomorrah*.

Pushman is a one- or two-player interactive puzzle game that features 40 different stages. Players are asked to arrange blocks in various patterns before proceeding to the next level.

Features include stage selection, game continuation, and boss stages. The game is simple to learn but difficult to master—a good combination for the slightly older player.

Gomorrah is a one- or two-player interactive space adventure game that features space battleship fighting. A unique cursor fighting system keeps the action constantly moving; the computer adjusts to player skill levels. Innovative firepower includes AutoBeam and MonsterShot.

For more information, or distributor referral, write American Sammy Corp., 2421 205th St., Suite D-104; Torrance, CA 90501; (213) 320-7167; FAX (213) 320-2597.

Super-Bowl

Imagination Leisure debuts a computerized bowling game in the new *Super-Bowl*, which can accommodate from one to six players.

Features include a mica cabinet, automatic 26-inch video screen scoring, exciting display graphics, multi-machine banking, 4-1/2-inch balls, and six different game choices.

Super-Bowl also offers variable sizing with lanes

14-, 18-, and 22-feet long. Each unit measures 29-1/2 inches wide. Options include a dollar bill validator and ticket redemption (the electronics are built right in). The game is designed for sports bars but fits in almost any location.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Imagination Leisure Inc., 251 Dixon Ave., Amityville, NY 11701; (516) 842-4242; FAX (516) 842-0532.

Board tester

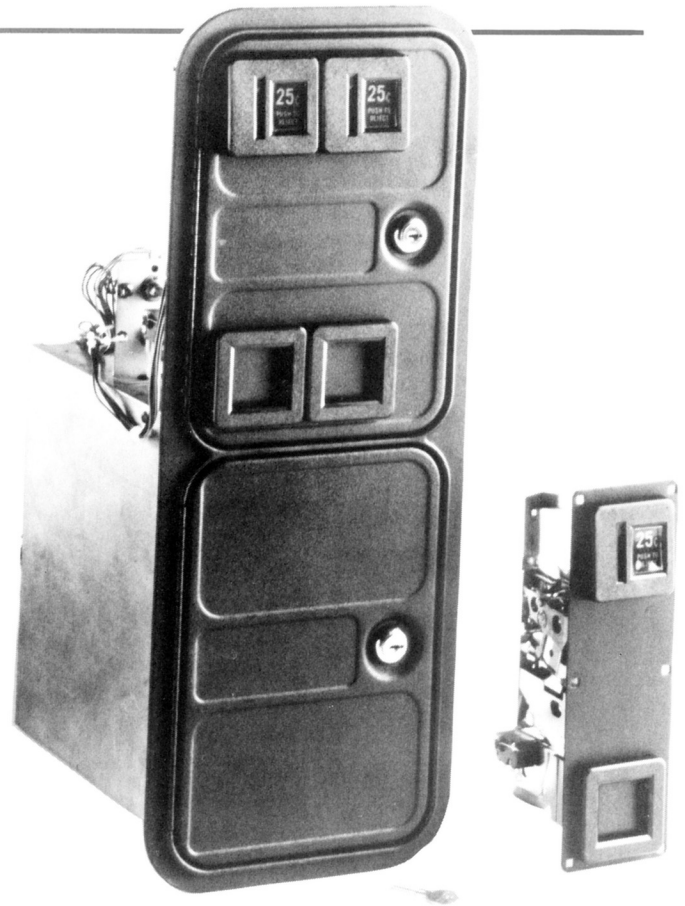
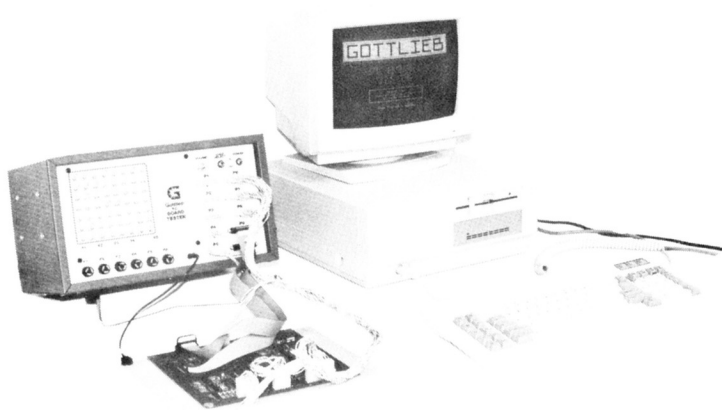
New from Premier Technology is the "Gottlieb System 3" P.C. board tester, which installs onto any IBM-compatible computer running DOS 2.1 or higher. (It also requires one full-sized expansion slot in the computer.)

Supported System 3 boards can be tested by attaching them via an adapter cable to the test box. This allows for easy-to-install updates when testing future boards. User-friendly software allows for use without having to constantly refer to the instruction manual. The system sets up

static conditions on some boards to allow for easier troubleshooting.

The System 3 package includes a test box, line cord, 96-channel I/O board, anti-static mat with grounding cable, control board test cable and test prom, display board test cable, driver board test cable, test program on a floppy diskette, and instruction manual.

For more information, contact Premier Technology, 759 Industrial Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106; (708) 350-0400.



Coin doors

Happ Controls has introduced "over/under" coin doors that feature solid construction and a functional design. They are made of heavy-duty, 16-gauge steel; the metal frame is one piece. All the necessary mounting hardware is included.

The doors are available with suspended cashbox or full-metal cashbox enclosures. Optional equip-

ment includes a large-capacity cashbox and shroud, coin counter, custom wire harness, and foreign and token metal coin mechanisms.

For more information, or to send the specifications of your equipment, contact Happ Controls Inc., 106 Garlisch Drive, Elk Grove, IL 60007; (708) 593-6130; FAX (708) 593-6137.

Coin dispensers

ABC Coin Sorting & Counting Co. has introduced a complete line of coin dispensers that only require thumb movement to release multiple coins. The 25-cent releases four quarters, the 10-cent releases five dimes,

and the five-cent releases five nickels.

These "Kwik-Koin" dispensers can be purchased to mount in a single-hole base or up to a five-hole base. They are detachable from the base with a simple turn of a

lever. This allows for quick re-arranging to meet individual needs.

The 25-cent dispenser holds coins in two sizes: the \$30 or \$50 tube. The 10-cent dispenser has a \$20 capacity, while the five-cent can ac-

commodate \$8.

For more information, contact Marcia Steffen, ABC Coin, 2839 Biscayne, Plano, TX 75075; (214) 596-1212; FAX (214) 867-8119.

Repair kits

Automated Production Equipment Corp. (A.P.E.) has a host of circuit repair kits available in an assortment of sizes. For example, the company's Combat Circuit Repair Kit is designed for facilities that are isolated from normal supply routes.

This 43-piece kit includes everything required to repair, network, modify, and install engineering changes to circuit boards—including multi-layer and multi-wire boards. A.P.E. calls this PC board repair kit system the "most extensive in the world."

The company's Deluxe Master Track Repair Kit in-

cludes everything in the Combat Circuit Repair Kit, less the power supply, circuit saw, quick plate kit, therm-tool kit, miniature circuit table saw, drill kit, cutters and pliers, vice, and soldering iron. It's ideal for facilities that have full repair and rework systems available.

A.P.E.'s catalog also lists numerous other kits and products for varied needs. For more information, contact A.P.E. Corp., 142 Peconic Ave., Medford, NY 11763; (516) 654-197; FAX (516) 289-4735.



Epoxy system

Master Bond Inc. has introduced a one-component, high-performance epoxy system, called Master Bond EP36, that's ideal for electrical potting and encapsulation, baked coating, and adhesive applications. It features a combination of properties, including high-temperature stabilities up to

500 degrees Fahrenheit, thermal shock resistance over the wide temperature range of +500 to -80 degrees, and superior physical strength.

This epoxy compound has excellent adhesion to both metallic and non-metallic substrates, a high degree of chemical resistance, and good insulation

characteristics. It fully meets Class H service requirements for insulation, successfully withstanding more than 1,000 hours of service at temperatures as high as 500 degrees.

Master Bond EP36 is available in pint, quart, gallon, five-gallon, and drum containers. It can be color-

coded to best meet the requirements of a particular application.

For more information, contact James Brenner, Master Bond Inc., 154 Hobart St., Hackensack, NJ 07601; (201) 343-8983; FAX (201) 343-2132. □



Storage shelves

The Bernard Franklin Co. has unveiled all-purpose steel storage shelves that are ideal for assorted types of merchandise. Called "Rivet-Rax," this steel and wood combination shelving system provides low-cost storage in warehouses, factories, offices, and stores.

Only two basic parts are needed—beams and uprights. Assembly of the 14-gauge beams and uprights is easy: rivets on the end of each beam wedge into slots in the uprights, without the use of bolts, nuts, or clips. All that's left to do is drop in the wood or metal shelf deck. Clear

shelf openings allow for four-way entry on the shelves.

"Rivet-Rax" components are available in a wide range of sizes. The beams hold up to 2,000 pounds per shelf deck level, depending on the widths. Accessories include particleboard or steel decking, support channels, front-to-back ties, row spacers, and splice plates. A gray, baked enamel finish is standard.

For more information, contact the Bernard Franklin Co., 4055 Torresdale Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19124; (215) 744-9300; FAX (215) 533-1460.



International Flipper Pinball Association

presents

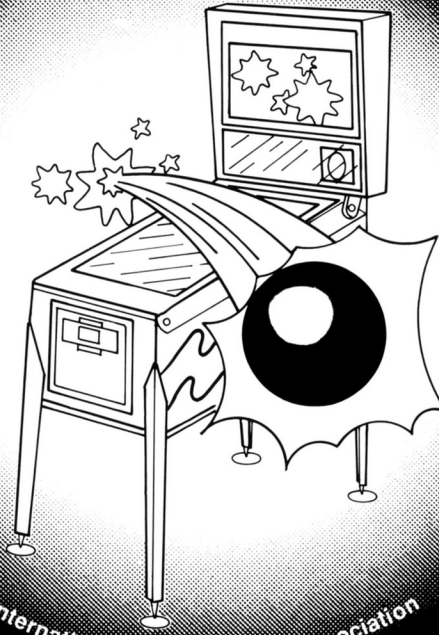
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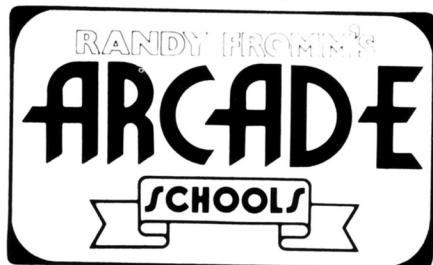
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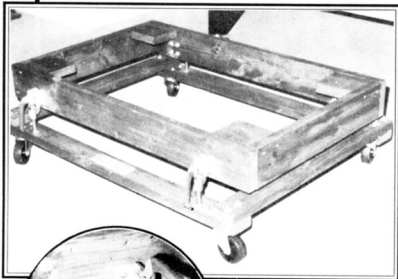
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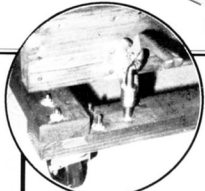
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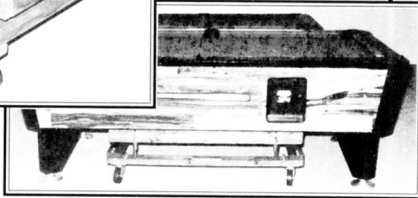
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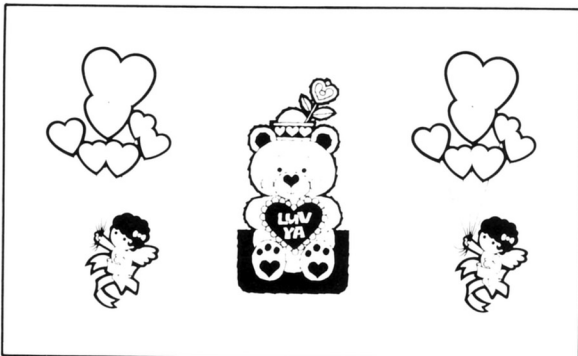
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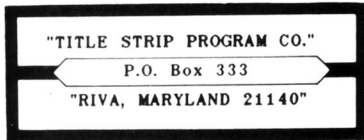
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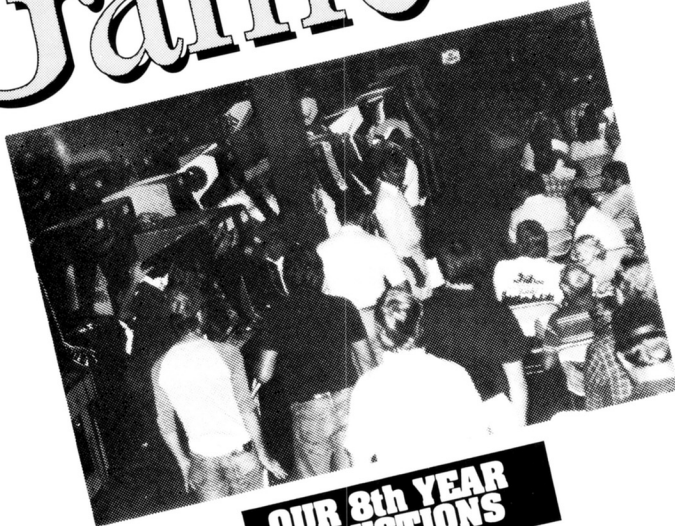
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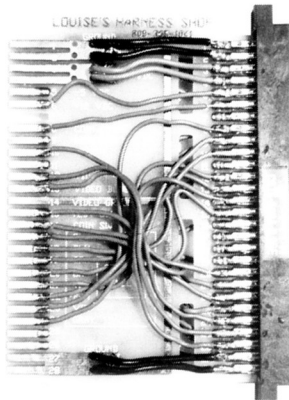
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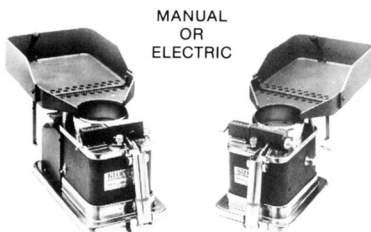
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Program #2 Semiconductors - Approximately 30 minutes

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Program #3 Power Supplies - Approximately 60 minutes

Power supplies are easy to understand and repair. This two part lesson covers linear power supplies and voltage regulators in detail. This program is a recommended prerequisite for those wishing to learn to repair videogame monitors as many monitor problems can be traced to a power supply failure. - **\$49.95**

Program #4 Raster Scan Monitors - Approximately 60 minutes

The popularity of conversion kits means that videogame monitors must be kept operating longer than ever before. This lesson details the operation of monitors and outlines many of the common problems you can expect to encounter. Monitor safety is also covered in this lesson. - **\$49.95**

Program #5 The Digital Multimeter - Approximately 30 minutes

The DMM is the single most important piece of test equipment you can use on your route. This lesson shows you how to use the meter to make all the tests and measurements necessary for repairing games. - **\$29.95**

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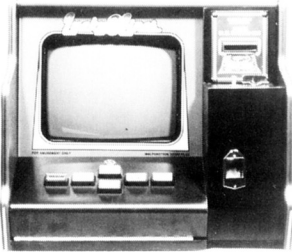
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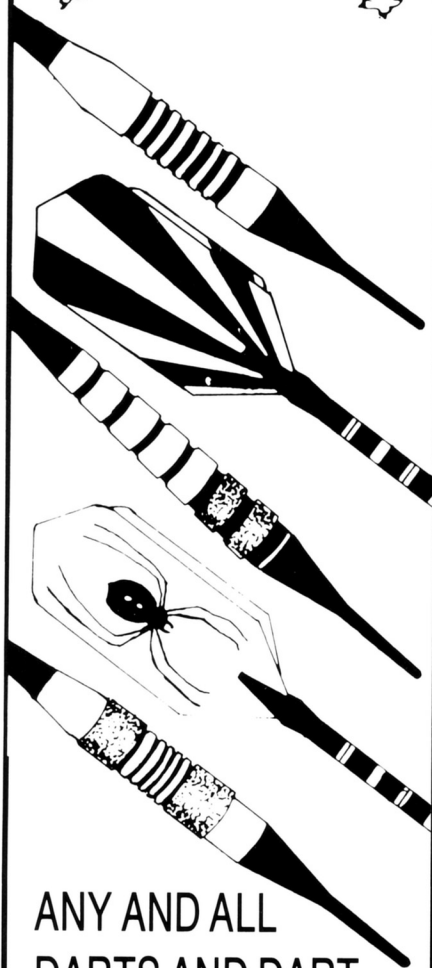


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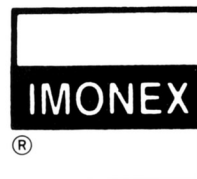
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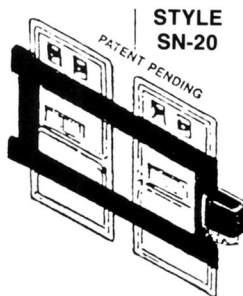
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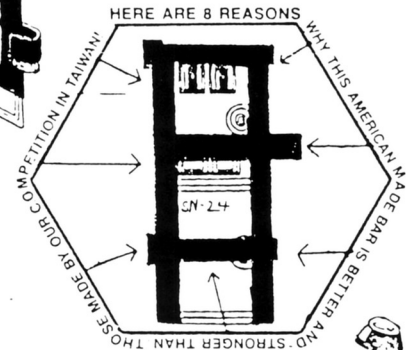
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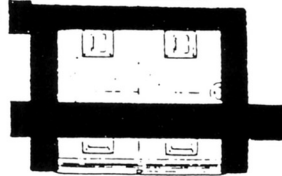
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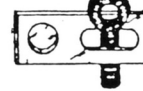
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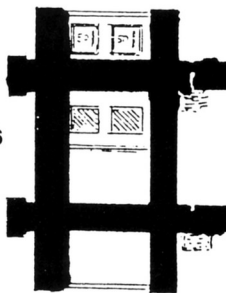


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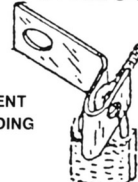
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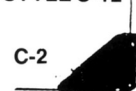


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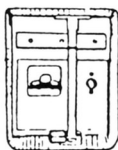


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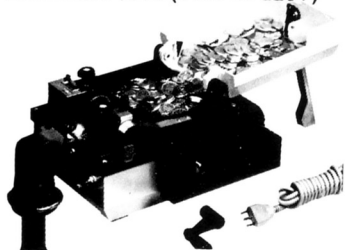
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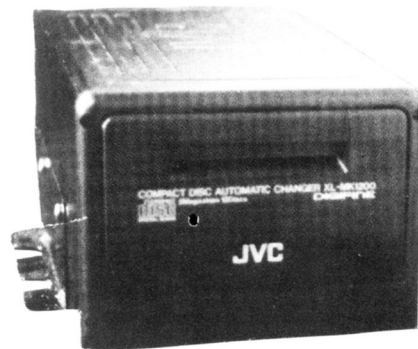
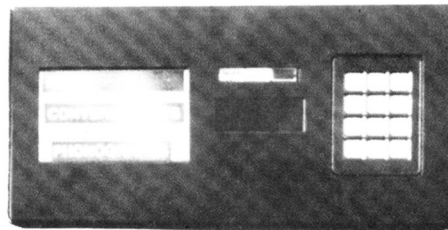
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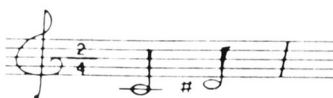
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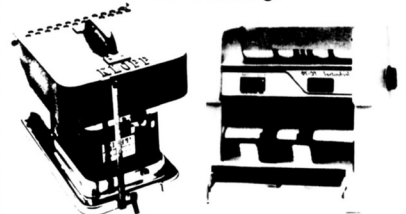
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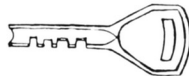
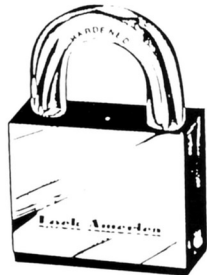
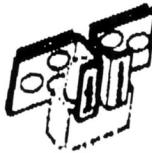
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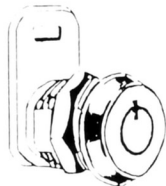
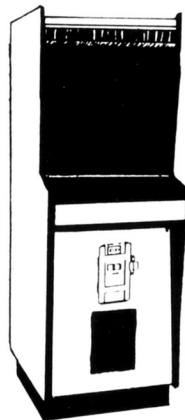


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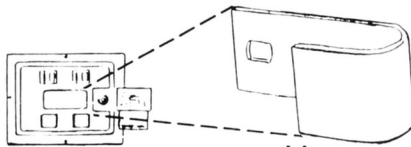


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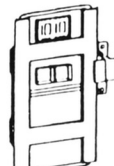


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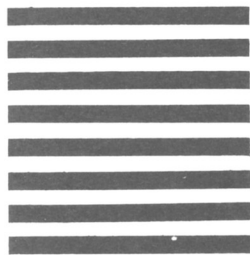
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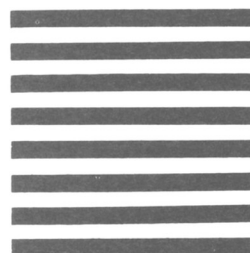
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For more information check article
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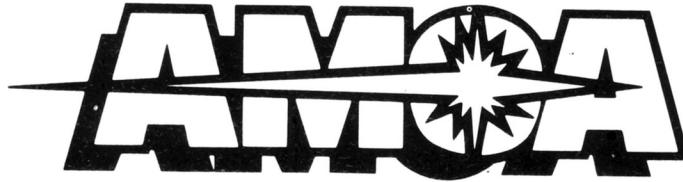
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For more information contact:

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1991

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Florida Amusement and Vending Association (FAVA) Vending and Machinery Show, Orlando Centroplex, Orlando, Fla. Contact FAVA (407) 898-3451.

January 18-20

Tornado \$10,000 Texas State Foosball Championship, Dallas. Contact Dave Courington (713) 920-2643.

February 10-12

Night Club and Bar Hotel/Restaurant/Beverage Show, Tampa Convention Center, Tampa, Fla. Call (800) 247-3881.

February 15-17

Tornado \$30,000 1991 SpringTour Kickoff, Houston. Contact Dave Courington (713) 920-2643.

February 22-24

South Carolina Coin Operators Association (SCCOA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Columbia, S.C., Sheraton Hotel at I-20 and Bush River Road. Contact Helen Sikes (803) 345-2048 or (803) 779-2498.

March 1-3

World Championships of Flipper/Pinball, sponsored by the AMOA/International Flipper Pinball Association (IFPA), Chicago O'Hare Hilton. Contact Joe Conway (414) 263-0233.

March 22-24

American Coin Machine Expo (ACME), Sands Expo and Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact Bill Glasgow Inc. (708) 333-9292.

April 12-13

Minnesota Operators of Music and Amusements (MOMA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, St. Paul Hotel, St. Paul, Minn. Contact Hy Sandler (612) 927-6662.

April 12-14

National Amusement and Vending Expo, Louisville, Ky. Contact Andry Montgomery and Associates Inc., (502) 473-1992; FAX (502) 473-1999.

April 19-21

Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association (GAMOA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Evergreen Conference Center in Stone Mountain Park, Atlanta. Contact GAMOA (404) 972-7445.

April 19-21

National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) Western Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. Contact NAMA headquarters (312) 346-0370; FAX (312) 704-4140.

April 30-May 3

Amusement and Music Operators Association-National Dart Association (AMOA-NDA) Team Dart VI International Team Championship, Sahara Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas. Contact Joe Conway (414) 263-2444.

May 16-18

Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Country Inn Resort, Pewaukee, Wis. (near Milwaukee). Contact WAMO (414) 529-4704.

May 18-22

Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Government Affairs Conference, Hyatt Regency, Washington, D.C. Contact AMOA (312) 644-6610 or (312) 565-4602.

May 25-June 1

11th Annual Valley National 8-Ball League Association (VNEA) International Singles and Team Championship, Riviera Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas. Contact Gregg Elliott (517) 893-1800.

May 31-June 1

Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA) Annual Trade Show and Convention, Radisson Airport Hotel and Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio. Contact OCMA (614) 486-8677.

September 12-14

Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Expo, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact AMOA (312) 644-6610 or (312) 565-4602.

October 3-6

National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) National Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, McCormick Place, Chicago, Ill. Contact NAMA headquarters (312) 346-0370; FAX (312) 704-4140.

International 1991

January 7-11

Amusement Trades Exhibition International (ATEI), Grand Hall Gallery, Olympia, London. Contact Margaret Turner, Malcolm McIntyre Consultancy, Crusader House, 14 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5LU, Tel. 071-839-1461; FAX 071-925-2206

January 23-26

IMA '91, International Trade Fair for Amusement and Vending Machines, Frankfurt/Main Fairgrounds, Frankfurt, Germany. Contact Heckmann GMBH, Kapellenstr. 47, D-6200 Wiesbaden. Phone (061 21) 58-4-0; Telex 4186 518; FAX (061 21) 5804-17.

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THE LAST WORD

Do you have this policy?

According to the learned insurance executives I spoke with for this month's story on proper insurance coverages, arcades and amusement parks should carry general liability, auto, property, fire, crime, and workman's compensation. That just about covers all the bases, right? Nope. There's still exposure.

See, when I was younger, I could've nailed a couple of amusement parks with a fat civil lawsuit. The specific insurance coverage that they would've needed didn't exist then, and I doubt it exists today. What I refer to is "traumatic humiliation" coverage. I'll explain.

I must have been nine years old when the first incident happened. One summer day, my parents brought me, my brother, and two of our cousins to the Mississippi Gulf Coast—Biloxi, as I recall. We went to a place called "Six Flags over Mississippi," or something like that.

This amusement park had outdoor rides, rifle games, bumper cars, *Skee-Ball*, and assorted other diversions for bratty kids. Not being a bratty kid, I asked instead to see—or did they make me go?—to the "fawn petting" attraction. It was there that children could feed the baby deer, pet them, and generally commune with nature.

My mother handed me a block of hard fawn food, a substance smelly to humans but highly regarded in deer gastronomy. "Go feed that one over there," she in-

structed. What happened next is still a blur. Apparently the entire brood got wind of the plot and wanted a fair share. About eight of them suddenly ambushed me, nipping frantically at my hands and legs. It was like a scene from a Hitchcock film.

I burst into tears and ran away from the menacing pack, the sound of uproarious laughter ringing in my ears. Had my father been on his toes, we could have slapped the owners with a hefty lawsuit. Not having "traumatic humiliation" coverage, the amusement park would have been forced to shut its doors. Come to think of it, the place *is* closed down—due to bloodthirsty fawn attacks on other children, no doubt.

By the time I entered seventh grade, the emotional scars from this experience had healed. I was starting to pay closer attention to the babes in my class, who were merely thought of as "stupid girls" in grades five and six. I had the hots for two of them in particular.

Early that year, the school staged its annual outing at Pontchartrain Beach, a giant amusement park located on the lakefront before it was sadly torn down. Being the social event of the season, I was fully prepared to turn on the charm for my two prospective girlfriends. As luck would have it, *both* of them ended up in our group—unattached!

After riding a handful of midway pieces, the group suggested we go on the

one ride that I had heretofore refused to enter. Being highly susceptible to motion sickness, I said, "No, the rest of you go. I'll watch." They insisted, I declined, they insisted, I declined...until the Love Honeys spoke up. "Come on, Chris, you can sit between *us*," one of them purred. "You're not afraid, are you?" asked the other. What choice did I have?

In I went, assuming an air of coolness that only seventh graders can muster. The ride was called "The Spinning Top," if I remember correctly. I know what you're thinking; it didn't take but a few minutes. I vomited all over my silk shirt and bell-bottomed jeans. Needless to say, I was a pariah for the rest of the night. Both girls ignored me for the remainder of the school year. I hear they married two guys with iron stomachs.

Again, my non-litigious parents missed a golden opportunity to crucify Pontchartrain Beach for not having a "traumatic humiliation" policy. The injury to my psyche was more painful than falling from a carousel horse.

Ask your insurance agent about this coverage. In our lawsuit-happy society, can you afford to remain unprotected? □

Christopher Caire

Christopher Caire
News Editor

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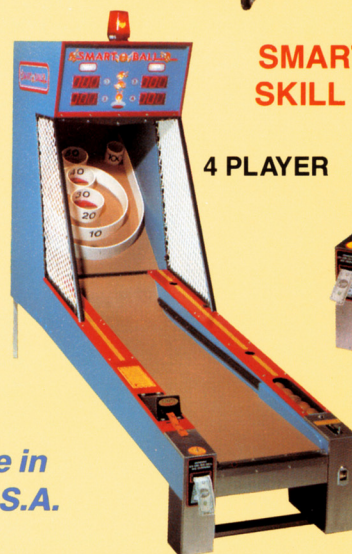
STW JR. (CHUCKLES THE CLOWN)



4 PLAYER

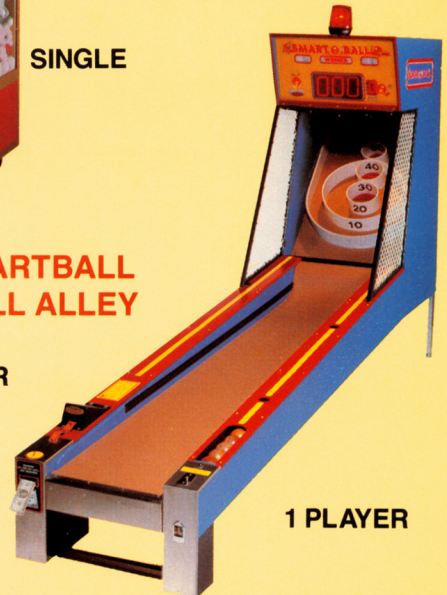
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