VOLUME 18, No. 5 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY APRIL 1992

PLAY METER magazine

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NEWS BULLETIN

► **FLORIDA TAX UPDATE...** Manley Lawson, chairman of the Florida Amusement & Vending Association's (FAVA) legislative committee, reports that on March 13, minutes before convening, the Legislature passed a bill more crippling than the gross receipts tax law now in effect.

Senate Bill 918 imposes a $100 per machine annual license fee for locations with five machines or less, $250 per machine for six or more. It makes the location owner responsible for the license but places "difficult and costly reporting requirements on the machine owner," Lawson said.

In commenting on the bill, he said it "simply sacrifices almost the entire industry to provide windfall tax savings to a few of the very large arcade chains in the state. In over 10 years of monitoring the Legislature, this is the most blatant example of how money can influence legislation that only benefits the very few, with no regard for logic, fairness, how others are hurt, or even the overall interests of the state."

However, if a compromise cannot be reached during the legislative special session, promises have been made to revert back to the 7.81 percent gross receipts tax law. FAVA president-elect Steve Piantieri says even that despised law is preferable to the annual license fee. We'll outline the whole Florida situation in a May report from the FAVA show.

► **SCARE IN NEW YORK...** The New York General Assembly and Gov. Mario Cuomo were uncomfortably close to bringing sole-source video lottery to the state in late March, but the New York State Coin Machine Association (NYSCMA) was able to quash it in time.

Association president Ralph Ceraldi said things had been on track toward operator-involved video lottery when, during the last weekend in March, a push for sole-source came from out of the blue. Lawmakers, with Cuomo's blessing, were prepared to include video lottery proceeds in the April 1 budget (the beginning of the new fiscal year). But operators mobilized and knocked the proposal out.

"Now that it's not in the budget, we'll have time to educate lawmakers and show them that we're legitimate businessmen, not members of organized crime," Ceraldi said. "We can point to safeguards in the bill and ease their minds, as well as point out the benefits of operator-involved video lottery. I'm confident that this extra time will help us get in there. But I'll tell you, it's been a roller-coaster ride."

He wanted to give special thanks to association lobbyist James Faraldi & Associates and operators Frank Calland and Jerry Respoli, all of whom have helped Ceraldi immeasurably from day one to the latest battles.

► **OREGON HAS FITFUL VLT START...** State-run video lottery got off to a troubled start in Oregon when communications stalled between terminals and the central computer system on March 23. Five of six pilot locations were involved in the test start-up. Dedicated phone line problems were blamed for the less-than-smooth debut of the program, which is expected to enroll 3,300 terminals in 750 taverns and restaurants throughout the state.

► **GAMBLING MEASURES DIE IN WISCONSIN...** Despite recommendations from the governor's blue ribbon task force favoring expanded gambling activities, legislators failed to approve separate bills proposing video lottery, riverboat gambling, and dog track casinos in the legislative session that ended in March. The video lottery issue in particular became a political "hot potato" once Gov. Tommy Thompson proposed his own bill seeking 45 percent of video lottery proceeds for the state. Look for more in May, once the dust clears on this one.

► **KAMA VISITS LEGISLATORS...** Thirty-three members of the Kansas Automatic Merchandising Association spent March 24 at the state capital contacting legislators and gaining support for video lottery. Over 200 contacts were made as operators strive to legalize video gaming under a tightly regulated program administered by the Kansas Lottery with coin machine operator involvement.

► **CHICAGO CASINO PROPOSED...** Circus Circus Enterprises, Hilton Hotels, and Caesar's World—three giant hotel/casino corporations—have joined together to propose a Las Vegas-style gambling and entertainment complex on 100 acres in downtown Chicago.

Mayor Richard Daley, a former opponent to gambling in the city, confessed to being excited about the proposition. In the March 25 edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, he said, "Face reality. People need jobs." An estimated 10,000 construction jobs and at least 15,000 to 20,000 permanent jobs could be created, as well as a steady stream of tax revenue. Gov. Jim Edgar, however, has reservations about expanding gambling activities beyond the current slate of riverboats, race tracks, and a state lottery.

The project would include entertainment choices of four casinos, a high-tech theme park, and a performing arts center.

► **SUSPECTED COUNTERFEITERS ARRESTED...** The New York State Police arrested Chang Yong Lee of Blue Bell, Pa., on Feb. 26 for allegedly importing counterfeit printed circuit boards into the United States, according to Bill Kidwell, AAMA director of enforcement. The arrest was based on a U.S. Customs seizure of U.S. counterfeit *Street Fighter II*s.

In another development, six operators in the Ottawa, Ontario, area have been charged with copyright violations. Multiple charges were filed against the six by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police after completion of its investigation, which began in December 1991. They made their initial court appearances on April 2.

Kidwell warned those attempting to import counterfeits that AAMA and its members are aggressively working with U.S. and Canadian law enforcement agencies to prevent copyright and trademark violations. Operators who are not sure whether a game they're considering is counterfeit can call Kidwell at (319) 337-9618 for assistance.

► **ATLAS BUYS MONROE ASSETS...** Atlas Distributing has purchased the assets of Monroe Distributing's Cincinnati office, effective March 16, according to an announcement by Atlas' Jerry Marcus and Ed Pellegrini.

The new Atlas branch will continue under the direction of branch manager Jerry Grotjan. Randy Cesco and all other Monroe Cincinnati personnel will remain in their current positions; in short, there won't be any changes at the branch. "The office has always done well under Jerry Grotjan, and we see no reason for that to change," Marcus said.

The office will remain at 297 Northland Blvd., Cincinnati, OH 45246. Atlas, based in Chicago, has other branches in Indianapolis and Grand Rapids, Mich.

► **ANDERSON TO SEGA...** Ken Anderson has been named director of sales and marketing, coin-op division, for Sega Enterprises USA. He has 25 years of experience in the industry, having worked most recently for Data East USA and also Leland, Game Plan, Chicago Coin, and Wurlitzer. "I am so pleased to have such a well experienced and highly enthusiastic sales executive leading our coin-op efforts," said president Tom Petit.

► **RUMBLINGS IN MICHIGAN...** On March 18, Michigan Gov. John Engler signed an executive order banning all smoking on state property and in state buildings, as well as the sale of tobacco and placement of cigarette vending machines. It also prohibits Michigan prisoners from making cigarettes in prison, which was previously allowed, though they can be brought in.

Candace Super, executive director of the Michigan Coin Machine Operators Association, says it is unclear how the Legislature will react to Engler's actions. It has kicked around various bills restricting cigarette machines, but no final action has yet been taken. Engler, unfortunately, has made it clear that he will sign any restrictive bill that reaches his desk, including a total ban. Stay tuned.

► **GERMAN DISTRIBUTION FOR PREMIER...** Premier Technology has signed a deal with German distributor Tuning Electronic to handle Gottlieb pins for the German and Austrian markets. Said Tuning head Reymond Safft, "We are proud of signing a long-term contract with a company that has built successful pinballs for more than 60 years. Since the introduction of its System 3 hardware almost two years ago, the flippers of Gottlieb have improved so much."

► **SAYERS JOINS WILLIAMS-BALLY/MIDWAY...** Lenore Sayers, who worked most recently as director of marketing for Sega Enterprises USA, has been named West Coast regional sales manager for Williams-Bally/Midway.

"We are indeed fortunate to be able to add Lenore to the Williams-Bally/Midway family," said vice president of sales Joe Dillon. "For almost 20 years, Lenore has proven that she knows the game business and, most importantly, that she understands the needs of distributors and their customers."

► **COULDN'T QUITE FIT...** The distributor turnout for this issue's cover photograph, being greater than anticipated, resulted in some not making it into the final frame. Play Meter and Williams-Bally/Midway apologize to those left out; maybe next time we can do a pull-out spread.

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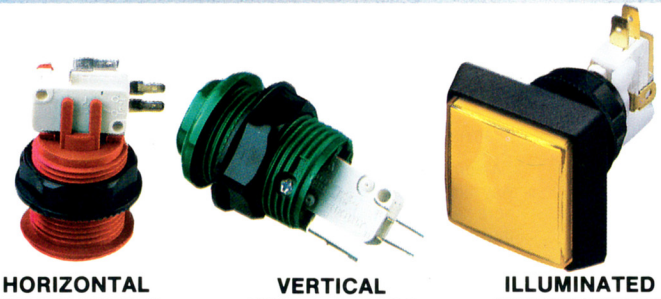

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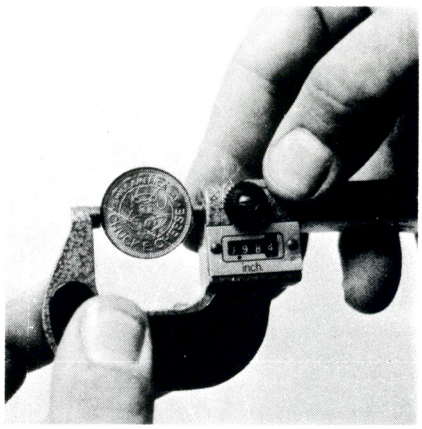

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Special ACME Section A-1
All the sights, sounds, and stories from ACME '92 come alive in our special 60-page section. Look for operator comments, game scenarios, game picks by Frank Seninsky and John Margold, Play Meter and AAMA award presentations, and coverage of the banquet honoring Chuck Milhem.

Interview: David Peretz on lazer game systems 66
Entertainment complexes with interactive lazer game systems are a phenomenon of the '80s and '90s. Peretz, of Starbase Omega in Orlando, Fla., describes the special appeal of such games and details some of the common problems.

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COVER

Williams Electronics Games chose a unique way to salute a solid distributor network. The company gathered its distributors together at ACME '92 for a group photo and a well-deserved, featured spot on this month's cover.

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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	MFG.	POINT VALUE	MONTHS ON CHART	MONTHS IN TOP 10
1.	Terminator 2	(*Midway*)	9.25	6	6
2.	The Addams Family	(*Bally*)	9.09	2	2
3.	Terminator 2	(*Williams*)	8.95	9	9
4.	Street Fighter II	(*Capcom*)	8.94	13	13
5.	Race Drivin' Panorama	(*Atari*)	8.25	10	8
6.	Steel Talons	(*Atari*)	8.17	7	7
7.	Final Lap II	(*Namco*)	8.14	14	14
8.	Race Drivin'	(*Atari*)	8.12	18	18
9.	Star Trek	(*Data East*)	8.00	4	4
10.	Hard Drivin'	(*Atari*)	7.97	36	35
11.	Hurricane	(*Williams*)	7.97	4	4
12.	WWF Wrestle Fest	(*Am. Technos*)	7.96	8	8
13.	Gilligan's Island	(*Bally*)	7.90	10	10
14.	X-Men	(*Konami*)	7.90	1	1
15.	Fun House	(*Williams*)	7.89	15	15
16.	Road Riot	(*Atari*)	7.70	8	8
17.	Super High Impact	(*Midway*)	7.69	7	5
18.	Captain America	(*Data East*)	7.62	6	6
19.	The Machine	(*Williams*)	7.53	11	11
20.	Sunset Riders	(*Konami*)	7.36	6	3
21.	Mad Dog McCree	(*Betson*)	7.36	12	2
22.	Fatal Fury	(*SNK*)	7.18	3	3
23.	TMNT II	(*Konami*)	7.10	2	2
24.	B.O.T.S.S.	(*Jaleco*)	7.10	2	0
25.	Four Trax	(*Atari*)	7.09	24	14

REDEMPTION

ALLEY BOWLERS

		POINT VALUE
1.	Skee-Ball (*SkeeBall*)	7.18
2.	Smartball (*Smart*)	5.80
3.	Bowlingo (*Capcom*)	5.67

SPORTS GAMES

		POINT VALUE
1.	UB-QB (*Nat'l Sports*)	7.43
2.	Hoop Shot (*Doyle*)	7.13
3.	Shoot to Win (*Smart*)	6.85
4.	Putting Challenge (*ICE*)	6.60
5.	Super Pro Q-back (*Smart*)	6.33
6.	Championship Basketball (*Grayhound*)	6.29
7.	Slugfest (*Williams*)	5.83
8.	Bull Pen (*Doyle*)	5.43
9.	Batter Up! (*Doyle*)	5.00
10.	Panda Pitch (*Doyle*)	4.67
11.	Pro Pitch (*Doyle*)	4.50

SINGLE COIN PUSHERS

		POINT VALUE
1.	Rock N' Roll (*Betson*)	7.40
2.	Wedges/Ledges (*Betson*)	7.20
3.	Klondike (*Betson*)	7.13
4.	Starburst (*CCI*)	6.63
5.	Clown Around (*Betson*)	5.67

SINGLE CRANES

		POINT VALUE
1.	Big Choice (*Betson*)	7.24
2.	Skill Crane (*Grayhound*)	7.14

SINGLE CRANES (cont.)

		POINT VALUE
3.	Clean Sweep (*Smart*)	6.80
4.	Action Claw (*Betson*)	6.57
5.	Hollywood Crane (*Maxwell*)	6.18
6.	Top Choice (*Betson*)	5.67
7.	Jumbo Crane (*Grayhound*)	5.40
8.	Tiger Paw (*Drews*)	5.00
9.	Challenger (*Wedges/Ledges*)	4.67
10.	Kramer Krane (*Kramer*)	4.25

JR. BASKETBALL

		POINT VALUE
1.	Shoot To Win Jr. (*Smart*)	6.43
2.	Bozo (*Design Plus*)	6.25
3.	Lil' Hoop Shot (*Doyle*)	6.00
4.	Jr. All American (*CCI*)	6.00

ROLL DOWNS

		POINT VALUE
1.	Clown Rolldown (*Bay Tek*)	5.33
2.	Quackers (*Seidel*)	5.00
3.	Roll Down (*Bay Tek*)	5.00
4.	Fielder's Choice (*Bay Tek*)	4.33
5.	Poker Roll (*Coastal*)	4.33

NOVELTY

		POINT VALUE
1.	Rock-N-Bowl (*Bromley*)	7.60
2.	Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe (*Data East*)	7.07

NOVELTY (cont.)

		POINT VALUE
3.	Toss Em (*CCI*)	6.60
4.	Sonic Blast Man (*Taito*)	6.50
5.	Wacky Gator (*Data East*)	6.44
6.	Skee Toss B.C. (*Betson/Skee-Ball*)	6.17
7.	Pop-A-Ball (*Coastal*)	6.00
8.	Whac-A-Mole (*Bob's Space*)	5.75
9.	Knock Down (*Meltec*)	5.63
10.	Dump the Ump (*Doyle*)	5.57
11.	Cosmo Gang (*Data East*)	5.50
12.	Big Mouth (*Meltec*)	5.50
13.	Bank It (*Capcom*)	5.33
14.	Fire Fighter (*CCI*)	5.33
15.	TMNT Pizza Drop (*Capcom*)	5.00
16.	Hungry Hippos (*ICE*)	5.00
17.	Bozo Prize (*Exit*)	4.75
18.	Boom Ball (*Meltec*)	4.67
19.	Bowler Roller (*Bob's Space*)	4.60
20.	Rebound (*CCI*)	4.60
21.	Reel Poker (*Betson*)	4.50
22.	Ghost Town (*Bromley*)	4.40
23.	Five Card Draw (*CCI*)	4.40
24.	Gumball Rally (*Atari*)	4.25

VIDEO KITS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS		GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Street Fighter II (*Capcom*)	8.94	720	17.	Cyberball 2072 (*Atari*)	5.97	510
2.	WWF Wrestle Fest (*Am. Technos*)	7.96	408	18.	Clutch Hitter (*Sega*)	5.97	354
				19.	King of Dragons (*Romstar*)	5.92	28
3.	Captain America (*Data East*)	7.62	309	20.	Sengoku (*SNK*)	5.91	186
				21.	King of the Monsters (*SNK*)	5.86	204
4.	Fatal Fury (*SNK*)	7.18	107	22.	Hydra (*Atari*)	5.74	5
5.	TMNT II (*Konami*)	7.10	68	23.	Smash TV (*Midway*)	5.72	*
6.	Track-Pak (*Leland*)	6.65	528	24.	WWF Super Stars (*Am. Technos*)	5.69	870
7.	Rim Rockin' Basketball (*Strata*)	6.57	92				
				25.	Magic Sword (*Capcom*)	5.67	226
8.	Spider-Man (*Sega*)	6.52	137	26.	Crossed Swords (*SNK*)	5.64	74
9.	Rai Den (*Fabtek*)	6.45	564	27.	Tetris (*Atari*)	5.60	*
10.	Turbo Out Run (*Sega*)	6.44	1,062	28.	Carrier Airwing (*Capcom*)	5.56	27
11.	Final Fight (*Capcom*)	6.42	1,037	29.	Baseball Stars (*SNK*)	5.52	2
12.	Super Baseball 2020 (*SNK*)	6.35	188	30.	Cyberlip (*SNK*)	5.50	*
13.	Burning Fight (*SNK*)	6.22	179	31.	Football Frenzy (*SNK*)	5.46	6
14.	High Impact Football (*Midway*)	6.18	561	32.	Trog (*Midway*)	5.42	56
				33.	Caveman Ninja (*Data East*)	5.33	*
15.	Capcom Bowling (*Capcom*)	6.00	7	34.	Strike Force (*Midway*)	5.30	*
16.	Pit-Fighter (*Atari*)	5.98	557	35.	Gals Panic (*Kaneko*)	5.25	20

VIDEO DEDICATED

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS		GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Terminator 2 (*Midway*)	9.25	346	9.	Super High Impact (*Midway*)	7.69	325
2.	Race Drivin' Panorama (*Atari*)	8.25	437				
				10.	Sunset Riders (*Konami*)	7.36	226
3.	Steel Talons (*Atari*)	8.17	377	11.	Mad Dog McCree (*Betson*)	7.36	407
4.	Final Lap II (*Namco*)	8.14	658				
5.	Race Drivin' (*Atari*)	8.12	939	12.	B.O.T.S.S. (*Jaleco*)	7.10	60
6.	Hard Drivin' (*Atari*)	7.97	1,737	13.	Four Trax (*Atari*)	7.09	819
7.	X-Men (*Konami*)	7.90	47	14.	Total Carnage (*Midway*)	7.00	33
8.	Road Riot (*Atari*)	7.70	421	15.	Final Lap (*Atari*)	6.95	1,373

PINBALLS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS		GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	The Addams Family (*Bally*)	9.09	116	8.	Batman (*Data East*)	7.04	185
				9.	Party Zone (*Bally*)	7.00	247
2.	Terminator 2 (*Williams*)	8.95	517	10.	Whirlwind (*Williams*)	6.79	977
3.	Star Trek (*Data East*)	8.00	176	11.	Elvira (*Midway*)	6.78	1,089
4.	Hurricane (*Williams*)	7.97	190	12.	Earthshaker (*Williams*)	6.65	1,340
5.	Gilligan's Island (*Bally*)	7.90	437	13.	Hook (*Data East*)	6.60	22
6.	Fun House (*Williams*)	7.89	775	14.	Surf 'N Safari (*Premier*)	6.54	49
7.	The Machine (*Williams*)	7.53	540	15.	Dr. Dude (*Bally*)	6.43	407

* New or reappearing games.

FROM THE EDITOR

Mistakes are as certain as death and taxes

We've known since we were small that there are two things in life we can count on: death and taxes. But there's something else just as certain, but we don't talk about it as much. It's that we all have and will make mistakes. It's inevitable. If you think you are an exception, forget it, because you will make a mistake, guaranteed.

There are different degrees of mistakes, from talking about your coworker before finding out he's standing behind you, to forgetting to do something vitally important. And just as there are numerous types of mistakes, there are also different ways of handling those mistakes. Some ways are obviously better than others.

Do you remember the last time something went wrong and you knew all too well that it was your fault? What did you do? Was it fairly easy to blame someone else? After all, if *someone else* would have reminded me, not left work early, or not left more work on top of what I was doing, the mistake wouldn't have happened. Of course, you know in your heart of hearts that it wasn't their fault. But if you could just convince those around you, you'd be off the hook.

Boy, it is really easy to blame someone else. Just think, there are millions of people in the world. But that's a little extreme. There are at least a handful of people you work or live with. They're all perfect scapegoats. I remember a recent incident when I blamed my son for losing my keys. When I realized I'd made a mistake blaming him, it wasn't very easy to admit I'd made a mistake.

And that's the point I'm coming to. Once we realize we've made a mistake, we sometimes find it too difficult to get those two little words—"I'm sorry"—out of our repentant mouths. Why is that? Maybe it's the times. We're all looking for perfection in our health, bodies, kids, spouses, jobs, etc. Admitting to mistakes is like confessing that we aren't perfect, even though everyone else already knows it anyway.

I believe that no one can be as mad at us as we can be at ourselves. Even the smallest mistakes can send us reeling with guilt and anger—at ourselves. Surely this is the major reason for not wanting to own up to our mistakes. Our industry is unique in some ways because it's small and we deal with many of the same people on a regular basis. There are also unique opportunities to make mistakes. A manufacturer comes out with a game that he feels will revolutionize the industry. It bombs and the company realizes it made a mistake. What an opportunity to handle a situation. They can blame operators (they aren't smart enough to know a good game when they see it), blame distributors (they didn't try hard enough to convince their customers how good it was), or blame the players (what do they know anyway?).

Although rare, I've seen manufacturers admit a game wasn't up to snuff and then offer a replacement kit to those that bought the original game. Admitting their mistake and then doing something about it gives them a lot of credibility. I'd feel pretty confident about dealing with them in the future.

In our end of the business—a trade publication—you can be sure that there will be times we make mistakes. Perhaps it's spelling someone's name wrong, having a typo in an ad, or publishing the wrong date for an event. We'll admit our mistake and try to make up for it; it's all we can do.

But we all run across that horse's hindquarters that can't let it go. They will hold a mistake against you forever. No matter what you do, no matter how sorry you are, they will not let it go. If you can honestly say that you have done all you can to make up for your mistake against them, forget it. You can hope for the day that they make a mistake and are treated as unfairly. Don't worry, it *will* happen.

Last month, Reader's Digest ran an article, "When You've Done Wrong" by Mary Murray. I wish I could reprint the entire article, but since that's impossible, here's a few pointers mentioned for handling the inevitable mistake: air the details because it may take more than a quick apology; show your true feelings and don't be too reserved in your feelings; don't look for excuses like blaming someone else; make restitution if necessary; and give a nod to fate and forgive yourself.

But the most important, positive aspect of handling mistakes, according to the article, is that it will make you stronger. Ms. Murray quoted William Shakespeare from "Measure for Measure": "They say the best men are molded out of faults, and for the most, become much more the better for being a little bad."

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

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Dynamo sponsors Grand Slam Tour

Dynamo Home Products will continue its sponsorship of shuffleboard's Grand Slam National Tour, according to a recent announcement by the Shuffleboard Federation. Dynamo began working with the Federation in 1990 when it debuted its shuffleboard table at the North American Shuffleboard Championships.

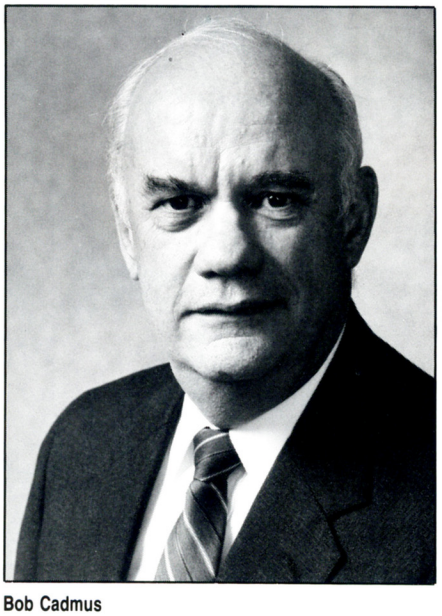
The relationship carried on with Dynamo's sponsorship of the Federation's 1991 Grand Slam. Each of the Grand Slam tournaments includes eight to 10 different events and three divisions, as well as a National Amateur Shuffleboard League regional tournament. The 1992 Grand Slam kicks off with the Michigan Open in Grayling, Mich., on May 20-25, and concludes with the North American Shuffleboard Championships in Reno on Nov. 10-15.

Speaking about the favorable comments players have made concerning the Dynamo table, Federation vice president Cheryl Collins said, "In five years we have promoted more than 35 national events, and one thing we have learned is that our participants are not shy when it comes to voicing their opinions. The high praise they had for the Dynamo shuffleboard table is a credit to Dynamo's efforts to deliver a first-rate product."

For a list of the 1992 Grand Slam tournament schedule, or other information, contact the Shuffleboard Federation, 41761 Onaway Drive, Northville, MI; (313) 380-9300.

Merit names three executives

Frank Skilton



Bob Cadmus

Jack Sullivan

Merit Industries has filled three key positions with the following gentlemen: Frank Skilton, director of finance and chief financial officer; Bob Cadmus, vice president of operations and chief operating officer; and Jack Sullivan, regional sales manager for the East Coast.

Skilton has 22 years of experience in building professional financial organizations and improving profitability. Prior to joining Merit, he worked for Laser Magnetic Storage International Co. and Burroughs Corp. Skilton's main goal at Merit is to "assist in the achievement of significantly improved profit objectives that are well within Merit's potential to achieve."

Cadmus, a 33-year veteran of the electronics industry, was most recently employed by Superior Electric Co. as vice president of manufacturing. He previously held similar positions with Commodore Business Machines, Decision Data Computer Corp., Datamedia Corp., and Burroughs Corp. His main concern is to "continuously improve the quality and reliability of Merit's products to a level second to none."

Sullivan has been in the coin-op industry for 11 years, beginning his career with Merit in 1981. He served as customer service representative and field engineer during his previous tenure at Merit, proving instrumental in developing the company's training programs for technical seminars. Sullivan was most recently employed by Tekbilt as its general manager.

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Newton thanks operators

It's good to know that some celebrities stop and thank those who helped them get where they are. One such person is Las Vegas mega-star Wayne Newton, who recently sent the following letter to Rowe International's Joel Friedman:

"I've been a big fan of the jukebox and appreciate the support that (jukebox operators) have given to me over the years with 'Danke Schoen' and 'Daddy Don't You Walk So Fast.' You and jukeboxes have been there when I needed you most. It's always been like coming home, which is why I'm so excited about the release of my new CD album, *Moods and Moments*. I know it will be a big hit on jukeboxes. I would really appreciate it if you would distribute the enclosed CDs to Rowe jukebox operators as a small token of my esteem and appreciation."

Friedman granted Newton his request and sent copies of *Moods and Moments* to operators across the country. His prediction? "It's going to be a smash hit."

Wayne Newton and Joel Friedman.

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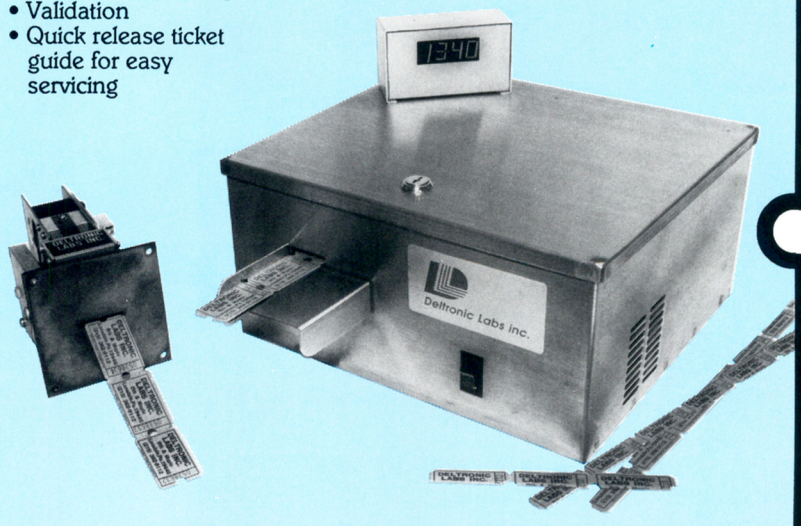

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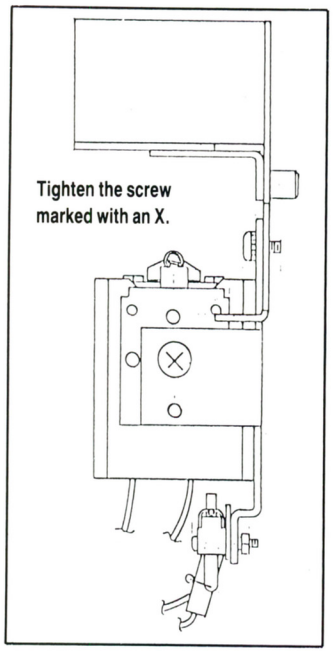
Data East Pinball service bulletin

The Data East Pinball service department has issued the following service bulletin for *Star Trek*'s ramp-up mechanism:

Symptom: The up/down ramp doesn't always come back down.

Solution: Check the ramp-up switch to ensure that it is closed when the ramp is up. If the switch is functioning properly, check to make sure that the coil bobbin screw on the latching mechanism is secured. A limited number of games did not have loctite applied. We suggest you tighten and loctite the bobbin screw on your next maintenance service call.



Back to school

No matter how skilled a technician is, there's always something new to be learned. This group of technicians (top) was recently treated to the technical wizardry of Randy Fromm at a service school hosted by Coast To Coast Amusement Game & Plush Distributors of Roseville, Calif. At bottom, technicians learn the finer points of the Rowe *CD-100* at a service school hosted by A.M.A. Distributors of Metairie, La.

Heightened awareness

What are these five lovely ladies with the 10 obvious attributes doing inside the pages of Play Meter? "They're looking for any reason to peddle flesh and boost circulation," a cynical observer might say. Not true; the only thing boosted was Ron Kogos' blood pressure. No, the *real* news is that *Playboy*, in its January issue, selected Antique Apparatus' *CD-91* countertop jukebox as its lead product for the "Playboy Collection" section. Congratulations for the increased—ahem—exposure.

Silver appointed

The National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) has hired Sheldon Silver to replace David Stone as its director of communications. Stone left the association to pursue other interests.

Silver comes to NAMA from ServiceMaster Co. LP, where he acted as director of marketing services for its Food Management Services division. He worked previously at Canteen Co. in the same capacity.

"We are pleased that Sheldon has joined NAMA," said association president James Rost. "He brings more than 20 years of experience in marketing, advertising, and public relations to NAMA, and has spent the last 14 years with major foodservice and vending companies."

Sheldon Silver

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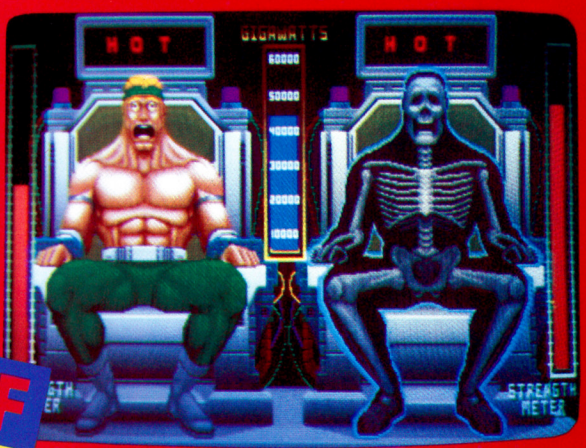

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Star★ Tech adds seminar dates

New Montana dates have been added for StarTech Journal's seminar program, "Repair & Troubleshooting VLC and Electro-Sport Video Lottery Terminals." They are as follows: April 25 in Missoula, May 16 in Helena, and June 6 in Billings.

The seminar outline for VLC includes touch-screens, NCR printers, dollar bill units, I/O boards, main logic, power section, and monitors. The Electro-Sport portion will consist of main logic, Star printers, monitors, power supplies, Mars bill acceptors, and Montana modifications. Class hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with a break in the middle of the day. Don Prince, who has over 10 years experience in troubleshooting and repairing VLTs, is the instructor.

The course is intended for route personnel and field service people. Students should be familiar with coin-op games and equipment, but prior electronics training is needed. The cost is $195 for those who have pre-registered, $225 for walk-ups. A 15 percent discount is given for multiple registrations from the same company.

For more information, contact James Calore at (609) 662-1080; the FAX is (609) 662-0537.

Adding to the mix

Batter up! Alan Deutschmann, president of A.L.D. Services and all-around sports enthusiast, announces that after months of preparation, his company is introducing the "Sports Pack." He describes it as "a very diversified mix of sports-related craneable items with infinite longevity." Call (800) 77PLUSH for more information on this assortment.

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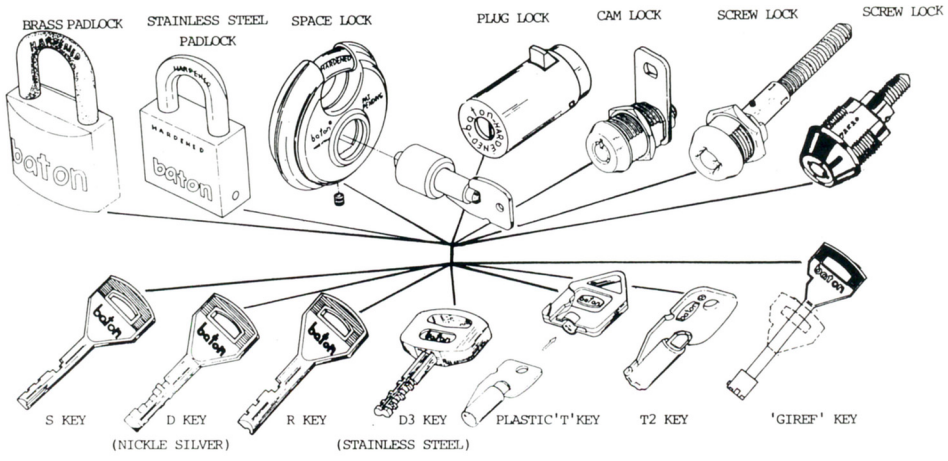

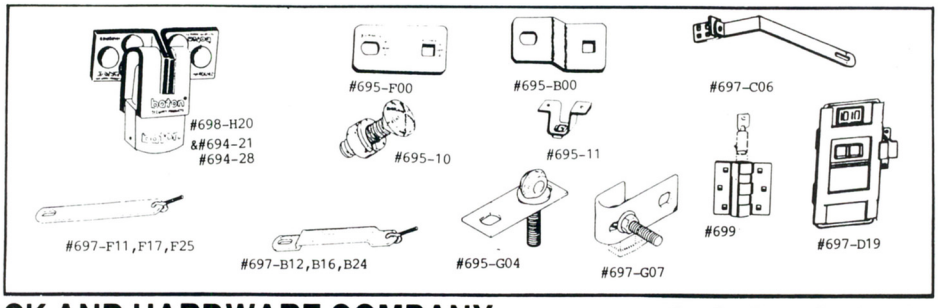

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New York cigarette, video lottery update

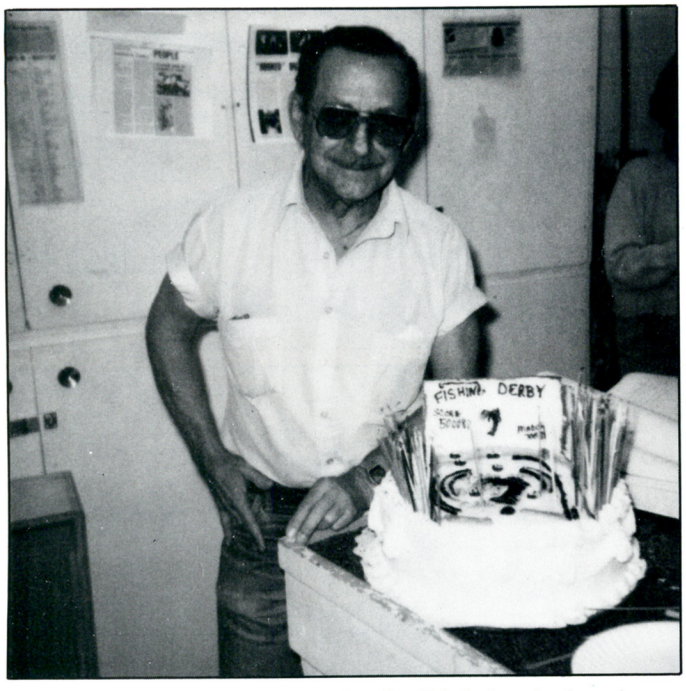
Ralph Ceraldi, president of the New York State Coin Machine Association (NYSCMA), reports that a temporary restraining order has been secured against New York City to prevent it from enforcing a tough cigarette vending ordinance. The law, which went into effect Jan. 1, bans cigarette machines from all locations except taverns, and there they must be 25 feet from any doorway.

The restraining order expires on or about April 1, at which time a decision will have to be made as to the ordinance's future. The city asked that the restraining order only be extended to those involved in the litigation—members of AMOA-NYC—and a judge granted the request.

On the video lottery front, Senate Bill 7030 has been filed in the New York Legislature. Assemblymen Stafford and Velella are the co-sponsors. The bill calls for the state to receive 25 percent of the revenue initially, with it going up to 33 percent later. Allowing operators to have a larger percentage at the outset will help them pay back the cost of the VLTs more quickly.

"We tried to do things a little differently than other states," Ceraldi said. "Many states announced everything they wanted to do right from the start, but we decided to keep things quiet. The idea was to get legislative support first, behind the scenes, before introducing the bill. We've gotten a lot of positive feedback from legislators so far. When they tackle the budget and see how desperately the state needs money, it should work to our benefit."

Happy 70th, Ed



When Ed Cebula, director of engineering for Data East Pinball, showed up for work on Feb. 22, he didn't know the surprise his colleagues had in store. They helped Cebula usher in his 70th birthday with a party, replete with a pinball-shaped cake. A coin-op veteran of 50 years, Cebula has no sudden retirement plans. Expect to see his work in the year 2002!

Edison appoints two

Edison Brothers Mall Entertainment, a division of Edison Brothers Stores Inc., has named Andrew Hanshew and John Hayes assistant vice presidents. Both are divisional sales managers for the Time-Out and Spaceport family entertainment centers.

AMOA nominates officers

The following officers were nominated by the AMOA board at its Orlando meeting on Feb. 19-22: Craig Johnson of Tataka, president; R.A. Green III of Rosemary Coin Machines, first vice president; Tami Norberg-Paulsen of C & N Sales, treasurer; and Randy Chilton of Chilton Vending, secretary. Three new directors were also nominated: Bob Herman of Ace Amusement; Gene Winstead of American Amusement Arcades, and Ted Furkin of Allstar Music. They will be officially installed at the AMOA show in Nashville on Oct. 1-3.

The board also announced that 39 Hesch Scholarships, valued at $1,000 each, will be awarded for the 1992-93 school year. That's quite an increase from the last few years, when some 20 scholarships were awarded annually.

Bally Gaming hires Wright

Bally Gaming Inc. has named Mike Wright to the position of director of distribution. He will be responsible for the development of a national distribution network, as well as the expansion of customer service.

Wright has an extensive background in the coin-operated amusement game industry, having previously served in executive capacities with domestic and international companies.

"Mike's extensive experience in manufacturing, distribution, and operation of coin-operated machines will be a valuable asset to Bally, as more and more gaming markets open up across the nation," said company president Alan Maiss.

Mike Wright

Tying the knot

Congratulations to U.S. Games president Mike Pace, seen here celebrating his surprise proposal of marriage to Amanda Matthews at the London Hard Rock Cafe. By the way, she *did* say yes!

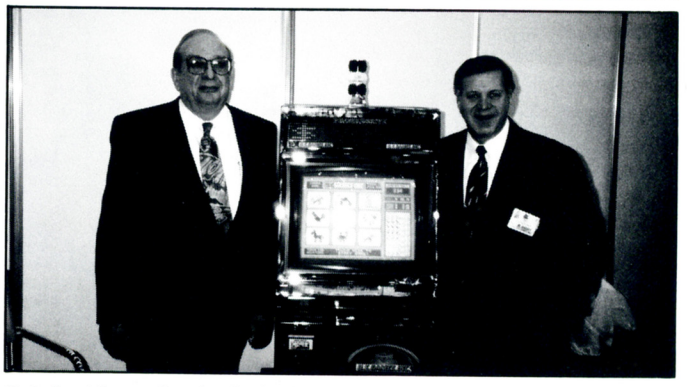
Pioneer names Carney to new position

Pioneer Laser Entertainment has created a new position, vice president of administration, and filled it with Carlos Carney, a certified public accountant. He will be responsible for all administrative functions within the company, including finance, computers, sales and distribution, order processing, human resources, and general administration.

"As PLE continues to grow, we need to hire highly qualified people with superior credentials like Carlos to help manage our growth and direction," said PLE president Ted Karasawa. Added Carney, "The broad range of responsibilities associated with this position allows me to utilize my background in finance and administration. Pioneer's creativity and its uncompromising standards for quality products and service will provide an exciting and challenging environment."

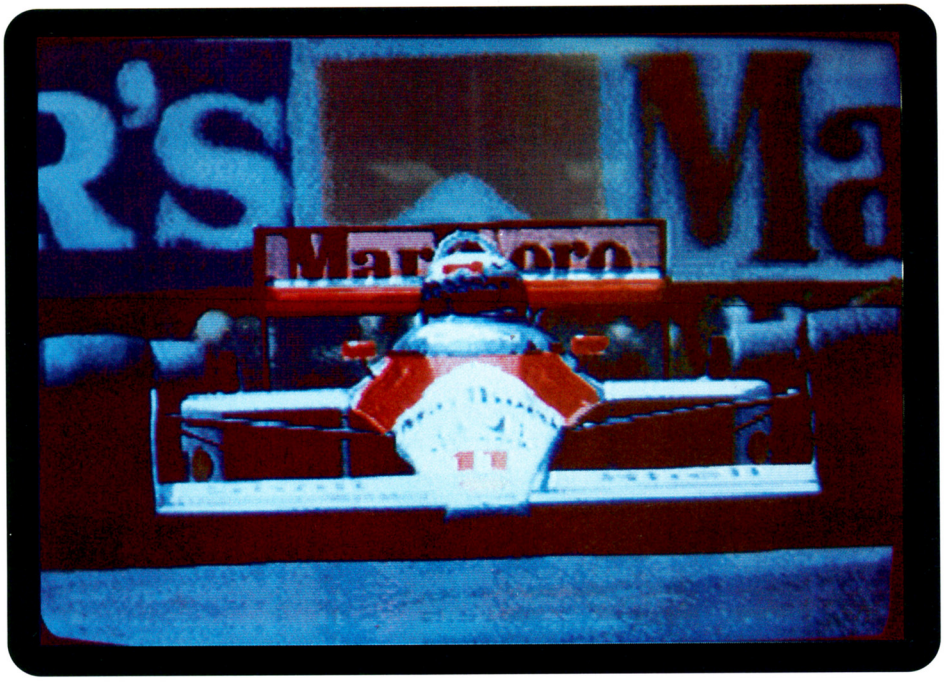
Carlos Carney

U.S. Games in London



Earls Court 2 served as the site for the ATEI show, held in London on Feb. 4-6. Pictured at the U.S. Games booth are Lou Singer (l) of Central Distributing and U.S. Games' Mort Ansky with the company's new touchscreen, casino-style machine. □

Attention: Super Monaco GP™ Operators



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* Game serial number will be required and electronic verification of returned EPROMs will be strictly enforced

Puritan goals not practical

Perhaps we have our Puritan ancestors to thank for our hang-ups about gambling. Or maybe its roots are to be found in religion, although bingo games flourish in church basements. How can we embrace one form of gambling and refuse another? I'm plainly perplexed at the double-standard.

Why the uproar over video gaming when most states already offer several gambling choices, such as the lottery, horse racing, and dog racing? Folks, this is gambling. Elderly ladies walking knee-deep in pull-tabs at charitable bingo halls are gambling. They're not playing just for the heck of it. Everyone wants to win; that's why they play in the first place. Lotteries dangle those million dollar jackpots before us to sell tickets, not for humanitarian reasons. Just because lotteries have existed throughout history, long before electronic poker games, doesn't make them any less a gambling forum. If the goal is "no gambling" on moral grounds, then eliminate *all forms of gambling* and let's be done with it.

The gambling issue aside, here's another topic of national and local significance: the goal of a "smokeless society." Commendable. One of the first plans of attack to reach this goal appears to be imposing restrictions or outright bans on cigarette vending machines. That way, no teenagers can get their hands on those cancer sticks, right?

Statistics prove that teens have easy access to cigarettes. Although posted signs in C-stores and groceries say "No cigarettes sold to minors," this is clearly not enforced. Teens can sneak them at home if their parents smoke, or get them from friends who have parents who smoke. If teens want to be "cool" and imitate what they consider to be adult behavior, there are easier ways than searching out cigarette vending machines that are not located in places where teens usually congregate.

If we really want to do what it takes to achieve that smokeless society, attack the problem at its roots: outlaw growing tobacco, producing cigarettes, and marketing them. End of temptation. Not so fast; the powerful tobacco lobby in Washington, D.C., would stop that move in its tracks. It's impractical. The tobacco industry would disappear, meaning lost jobs and a catastrophic impact on the economies of tobacco-producing states and companies founded on cigarette production.

It's easier to look at cigarette vending machines and tell ourselves that teens will be saved from cigarettes if only those blasted machines weren't around. Once you are no longer a minor, you play in the major leagues. Adults who jeopardize their health with cigarettes can get them any place they want.

Restrictions on smoking in restaurants and on airplanes has not turned smokers into nonsmokers. It's only limited the time and place for smoking; the habit persists. Despite all available information, a conscious choice is made to bet against the odds that smoking will damage your health. The thinking is: "Ill be the one who's not affected. I might give up all the things I like and be hit by a truck tomorrow."

I haven't heard of any efforts to restrict the placement of vending machines that dispense chocolate candy bars, to help achieve the goal of a "cholesterol-free society." Also commendable but impractical. Vending machines aren't the problem; their elimination is not the cure.□

Bonnie Theard

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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Williams salutes

Clockwise from top left:

Ken Fedesna (Williams)

John Gatens (Southgate)

Marv Galante (Music-Vend)

Jon Brady (Brady)

Joe Dillon (Williams)

Frank Gumma (American Vending)

Joe Cirillo (Betson)

Hans Rosenzweig (Nova)

the middleman

Most companies adorning our front cover are proud to display their latest product or top personnel. While Williams would have no problem finding either of these assets to feature on this month's cover, the company chose instead to give credit to its distributors, who get far too little praise for the challenging job they do.

Williams has a long, rich history spanning nearly half a century, when the legendary Harry Williams began the tradition of superior pinballs. Through changes, growth, and maturing, Williams has maintained its reputation for games that generate money for operators.

But as Joe Dillon, vice president of sales, is quick to point out, "That's not really the story here. What we want to focus on is the tremendous job our distributors are doing in these tough times."

Dillon reminds us that distributors in the United States have a very tough, demanding job. They are the middle in what sometimes seems like a tug-of-war between operators and manufacturers. They must be best friends with operators and also the manufacturers' confidants. A distributor's job is to give sound advice to his operator customers and be able to answer their questions honestly, fix their games, offer the best product available, and stock thousands of parts.

The distributor must also must be the conduit between the manufacturers and operators, two groups who often don't see eye to eye. It's a tricky role, one that requires constant attention. Dillon explains that Williams has been trying to work with its distributors, going back to what he calls traditional distribution. "We chose distributors that are well-capitalized, have adequate service capabilities, carry most of the major lines, and have good reputations. We have supported them, and the real story here is the way they have supported each other by doing things right."

Dillon continued, "Williams' support includes extensive testing before a game is released. Distributors have four weeks to test the game before committing with orders. That way, we are basing our production on orders, not, as some others do, basing orders on what they have to sell. Our belief is that the market is helped by not forcing bad product on an unsuspecting industry."

An example of this philosophy was acted out with a game called *Trog*. It was introduced with much fanfare and hype at one of the shows. However, after further study, Williams realized that the game wasn't quite up to standard, so it was not introduced as planned.

Williams prides itself on its design teams, who have been together a long time. Dillon gives high praise to Ken Fedesna, who was vice president of engineering before being promoted to vice president/general manager. "Ken knows the ups and downs and the ins and outs because he's been there. He deserves a lot of credit for the tremendous job he has done at Williams."

Dillon added, "We're proud to be an American company dedicated to making good games for the world market. Our design teams challenge each other, know the American market, and are experts at what makes people want to play games. We focus on what we know. We wouldn't presume to design a pachinko game for the Japanese market, for example, because we don't know and haven't lived that market. Similarly, it's this very reason that many Japanese games don't make it here; the designers don't really know the American market.

"We've got the people to design the best product possible, but we need the middleman. If we were suddenly faced with no distributors, there's no way we could establish quality relationships with the thousands of operators across the country. No one expects to deal with Ford Motor Co. if there's a problem with their new car. No, they would call their local dealership and expect satisfaction. Distributors are the same vital link in our industry. We salute those gallant men who value the industry and who have worked to make it better." □

Dave Stubblefield

Can video meet changing global market needs?

In videoland we've truly entered the arena of the world market, where the stakes are high and the battles are as fierce as those portrayed by the games themselves. New competition from home units, and a host of economic changes, are the furnaces forging a more dynamic marketplace. Reading Alvin Toffler's book "Power Shift" helps grasp the structure of the changing global market.

Almost every game was a hit in the early days of coin-op video. But it was true for only a few years. Since then the industry in this country has pulled in its horns and become more conservative.

Let's start at the beginning with *Pong*, a game that would herald the dawn of a new age and a new industry. In 1972 Nolan Bushnell fathered this new phenomenon. He started us down the road to the industry as we know it today. Bushnell is still a powerful force for the advancement of interactive computer products.

Pong rapidly led to a series of games with improved graphic and audio capabilities. The makers of these early games went as far as available technology could take them. The primary points of concern seemed to be better graphics, smoother action, and improved sound, often pursued without considering if the games were fun to play or not.

> ***"As early as 1970, when American business leaders still thought their smokestack world secure, Japan's business leaders, and even the general public, were being bombarded by books, newspaper articles, and television programs heralding the arrival of the 'information age' and focusing on the 21st century. While the end-of-industrialism concept was dismissed with a shrug in the United States, it was welcomed and embraced by Japanese decision-makers in business, politics, and the media. Knowledge, they concluded, was the key to economic growth in the 21st century.***
>
> ***"It was hardly surprising, therefore, that even though the United States started computerizing earlier, Japan moved more quickly to substitute the knowledge-based technology of the Third Wave for the brute muscle technologies of the Second Wave past.***
>
> ***"Robots proliferated, sophisticated manufacturing methods, heavily depending on computers and information, began turning out products whose quality could not be easily matched in the world markets. Moreover, recognizing that its old smokestack technologies were ultimately doomed, Japan took steps to facilitate the transition to the new and to buffer itself against the dislocations entailed in such a strategy. The contrast with General Motors and American policy in general could not have been sharper."***
>
> ***Excerpt from "Power Shift" by Alvin Toffler***

Games of today

Graphics and programming in today's games are interrelated and stored in solid-state computer memory. The games use silicon-based graphics, which means the images are held in memory IC chips that are programmed at the factory. The IC chips contain the 1s and 0s that represent the pictures. These numbers must be processed by the unit's computer chip(s) before they can be displayed on the game screen.

This is where we find the main limitation of standard systems. The computer chips can either make pictures that are very detailed (and move slowly), or images made of little squares of color that appear coarse (and move rapidly).

These problems can be overcome with very fast computers and high speed memory arrays. Solutions are expensive to develop and manufacture. These chips have, by nature, several limitations and create games which are difficult to upgrade in the field.

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"PLAY METER MAGAZINE"

New laser disc units

Current games using some of the potential of available technology include Betson's *Mad Dog McCree* and *Who Shot Johnny Rock?*, Leland's *Dragon's Lair II*, and Sega's *Time Traveler*. All employ a laser disc player for the graphics. In *Dragon's Lair II* the graphics are real animation from the disc player. Kramer's trivia game *Vision Quest* has the latest disc player; new discs are promised every six to nine months.

All of the above games still use only a small percentage of the power locked in the systems. The manufacturers did a very good job in unknown territory, but there are alternatives that offer exciting advantages for the future. The real level of results that can be achieved with this media has not yet been approached. With better techniques in video, and the ability to put programs on discs (such as the MagicVision system), possibilities are overwhelming.

The use of a graphics storage system that does not require image processing from a computer will improve graphic ability in both speed and resolution. The laser disc, as a video source, can produce real-time graphic results with a television-quality picture. This video source requires of the computer only that it be told which point on the disc to play from. The computer then makes the variable images such as shot marks, scores, etc. These visual effects are the ones produced in response to the player's actions.

"We've entered the arena of the world market, where the stakes are high and the battles are as fierce as those portrayed in the games themselves."

What lies ahead

With the use of a laser disc player as the primary video source, you can make each single event in your game have a beginning and an end. Then you provide on disc, as parallel islands, all the possible outcomes. If this process is thought through clearly you can utilize a single scene several times in the same game.

You can also use still frames that increase usable disc space. In this way the computer sees each single action or set of actions as a block. It then stacks these

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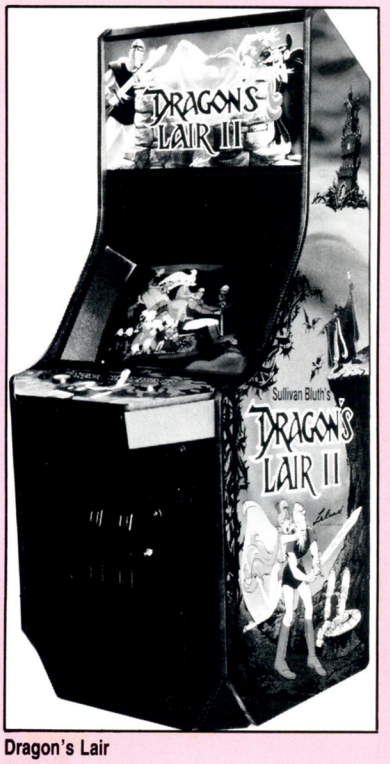
Mad Dog McCree



Dragon's Lair

blocks in a new order each time the game is played. Also possible: a game with variable levels of play to accommodate the novice, as well as the expert, and everyone in-between. The benefit is that your player will neither be confused by a high level of difficulty, nor figure out the game quickly and become bored with it. The longer the playing time, the more money you make.

When using a laser disc player you can employ a cost-effective video source, such as an Amiga toaster or a MacIntosh animation package. Speed is no longer a consideration when you use the laser disc. It will take slowly produced graphics and play them back at real-time speed. There is even a new board which allows direct translation between MacIntosh and Commodore. This means an economic use of high-resolution graphic images moving in real-time, and programs from both sources.

The other computer graphics you need can be inserted into the laser disc picture before it reaches the screen. These are small and can be easily generated in real-time by a cost-effective computer board. With the proper considerations for formatting the disc and writing the program, the net results can be beyond all current arcade equipment.

There's even a unit that contains the entire program on the video laser disc itself. This will have no effect on either the video or the audio quality. These systems can contain dozens of standard video games on a single disc, or a game of real-time NTSC (television picture standard) video/graphics/program. Upgrading is achieved by changing the disc and cabinet artwork.

Projected costs for these new single-piece systems is very low. They will include the computer, laser disc player, and video and audio components as a self-contained, stand-alone unit. The only missing items will be the monitor, front panel, coin/bill acceptor, and cabinet. The result: a complete and upgradable unit for an amazing price. I predict this to be the largest growth segment of the video game industry in the immediate future.

With a blend of high-resolution graphics, real video, proper formatting, and good programming, you can attain unparalleled results. Utilize the technique of video masking (covering part of the primary video image with an image taken from the disc's video and held in memory until needed) and you can use the same set of video events in both one- and two-player scenarios.

The technique can also be used to make games that are easily linked with minimal programming and interfacing considerations. Combine it all with a few other techno-tricks and a *truly fun game scenario* and you could have a rash of hits on your hands. Designing successful games—it's a dirty job, but someone's got to do it.

I wish you all good games and big profits!□

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Lazer-Tron's rise to the top

The concept of Lazer-Tron began as an offshoot of an electro-optical engineering project conducted at San Diego State University by Bryan Kelly and Jorge Fernandes. The result of this project was Lazer Maze, a lazer interactive technology product, which allowed players to run through a darkened maze while shooting laser guns at targets along the way. The goal: to be the player with the fastest time through the maze. The response was enthusiastic when Lazer Maze was introduced during SDSU's homecoming festivities. As a result it was nationally televised on MTV and ABC.

With the success of the project, Bryan and Jorge approached Bryan's brothers Mark and Matt in 1987 to design, market, and produce similar products. The Lazer-Tron *Haunted House* became their first collaboration and was introduced in 1989 at the IAAPA trade show in Dallas. Production began soon after on the large, 15-gun amusement park and carnival-style shooting galleries.

Although the units were impressive and fun to play, minor design flaws soon surfaced. The inexperience of the personnel was blamed, considering the oldest was just shy of 30 and the others were in their early 20s. Admitting their inexperience, they'll tell you that at their first ACME show in Reno, Nev., they had never even heard of a ticket dispenser!

Matt Kelly (l) and Norm Petermeier.

Ron Carrara with production manager Victoria Krenz.

But they didn't give up and viewed this as a challenge. The game was redesigned and new manufacturing processes were implemented, resulting in a trouble-free production unit.

To implement the improvements necessary and expand the company, Norman Petermeier was brought on as president in 1989. He had the experience necessary in electronic design, manufacturing, and management. Under his leadership, the *Shuttle Launch* was introduced in 1990 and has continued to be successful. Located in many miniature golf courses and family-oriented spots like Chuck E. Cheese, it has been Lazer-Tron's bread and butter product for the last two years.

In 1991 Lazer-Tron developed *Hop-a-Tic-Tac-Toe* and licensed it to Data East. It's been accepted as

Innovators in Redemption

LAZER-TRON *has been providing new and innovative ideas for ticket redemption facilities since 1988. Quality high earning games and great service are our commitment to operators. Our games are built fully adjustable to fill all your redemption needs. Contact Lazer–Tron for game consulting and for the distributor nearest you.*

- Coin catapult basketball game
- Fast, easy to understand
- 100% skill shooter with pusher playfield as a second chance to win
- Exciting double value Bonus Round
- Family oriented graphics and sound package

BANK–IT™

Players win tickets by tossing their coins through the baskets located inside the cabinet. Each coin will then fall onto the pusher playfield where players have a second chance of winning tickets.

- A game for all ages
- Bouncing balls grab players attention
- Great sound and graphics package
- Exciting Bonus Jackpots

HOP–A–TIC–TAC–TOE™

Players bounce balls around the playfield trying to make Tic–Tac–Toes to win tickets. This popular and easy to understand theme make this a game with universal play appeal. A special colored ball enables players to win bonus tickets on certain Tic–Tac–Toes.

- Great Attraction
- Exciting laser gun shooting gallery
- Haunted house theming package included
- 6 , 9 and 12 player models available
- Custom themes available

LAZER–TRON HAUNTED HOUSE

This exciting shooting gallery will be the center piece of your arcade. Players shoot their laser guns at the ghostly targets that light up along the backwall to score points and win tickets.

- Exciting laser gun race game, with moving space shuttles
- A proven winner !
- Great for family entertainment centers
- 2 player units may be banked together

SHUTTLE LAUNCH™

Players will enjoy the excitement of racing their space shuttles into orbit in this exciting laser race game. Every target the player hits will cause the players shuttle to race up the track. The first player to reach the top of the track is the winner.

LAZER-TRON

Innovators in Redemption

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Pleasanton, CA 94588
Phone: (510) 460-0873
Fax: (510) 460-0365

Bank–It was designed and developed by Lazer–Tron.
It is exclusively distributed by Capcom USA.
Hop a Tic–Toe–Toe was designed and developed by Lazer–Tron.
It is exclusively distributed by Data East USA.
Patented & Patents applied for

one of the best redemption pieces in the market. The appeal lies in its simple concept with player interaction.

Bank-It, a coin toss basketball game, was introduced at the most recent AMOA show in Las Vegas and received a tremendous amount of attention. John Margold called it the best new game at the show in his review of redemption equipment for Play Meter.

Lazer-Tron licensed *Bank-It* to Capcom, makers of the phenomenal *Street Fighter*. Like *Hop-a-Tic-Tac-Toe*, it is rising to the top of the redemption earning charts.

"Operators actually tell us what they want in our games. They are our toughest critics as well as our best friends."

ACME show attendees got a chance to view some hot, newly upgraded versions of *Shuttle Launch* and *Haunted House*. New sounds and graphics give them both a new look and feel, while retaining the basic concepts of fun play and interaction. "People who have existing games or those who had not seen it before were amazed at the difference," said Matt Kelly, vice president of marketing.

Besides his duties in marketing, Matt is responsible for new product development. "Although we now have a few years experience, we continuously talk to operators, distributors, and technicians. They are the ones who actually tell us what they want in our games. They are our toughest critics as well as our best friends. Without them none of our products would have been possible. Whatever the feedback—negative or positive—it helps us design and build the best products possible," said Matt. He added that *Bank-It* was the result of a concept brought to Lazer-Tron by a very good industry friend.

Bryan Kelly is the vice president of engineering, heading up a department of four full-time and five consulting engineers to work on new product development. Bryan believes being near the Silicon Valley is a tremendous asset because of the availability of outstanding engineers and new technology. "We hope to keep our game designs in front of our competitors with simple concepts, yet sophisticated designs," he said.

Ron Carrara joined Lazer-Tron about a year ago, but is no stranger to the coin-op industry. His 18 years experience with Bally and Betson make him a cornerstone of Lazer-Tron's future. Ron explains, "I saw how the market was moving toward redemption games, and after talking with Lazer-Tron I felt that they had the products in development that were very unique and exciting to me. I believe we will have the finest line of redemption equipment available in the next year with the addition of some outstanding new products we are bringing out this summer."

Everyone at Lazer-Tron is excited about the future of the ticket-redemption market. They believe that more non-arcade centers like bowling alleys, pizza parlors, night clubs, and movie theaters will be converting over to ticket-redemption games. New methods of operating this type of game are being refined now and should be available in the next few months. □

Bryan Kelly (r) and Armando Pereira in engineering.

Lazer-Tron's office building.

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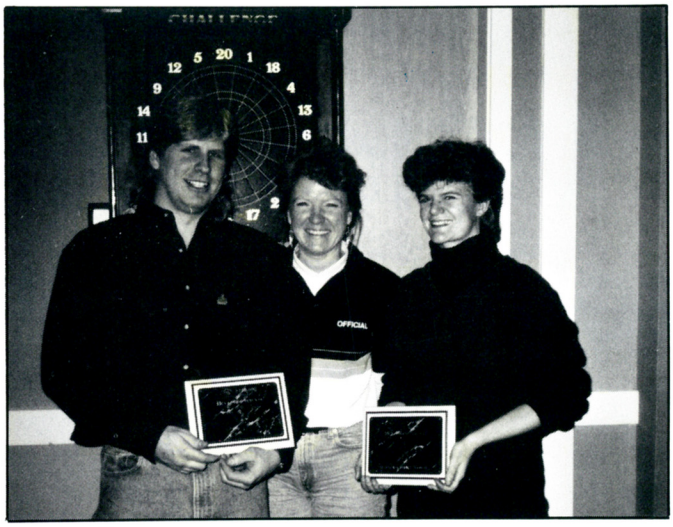
Gary Kaufhold (l) with Arachnid "A-Team" member Steve Johnson.



A-Team member Shelly Gale (c) with Terry Newberry and Stacy Hill.

Darting in the Rockies

Arachnid's BullShooter regional dart tour made its eleventh stop in Colorado Springs, Colo., on Jan. 17-19. The event was co-sponsored by Colorado Game Exchange and Mountain Coin Machine. Players from Colorado, Utah, and Kansas competed on *English Mark Darts Galaxy* machines, their goal being a spot in the BullShooter Finals over Memorial Day weekend.

On the women's side, Stacy Hill and Tammy Legan experienced success in numerous categories. Hill finished first in Mixed Cricket Doubles with Terry Newberry, second in Women's Doubles with Lisa Halpin, third in Women's Singles, and fourth in Mixed Triples with Newberry and Gregg Larmer. Legan, meanwhile, captured first in Women's Singles, first in Mixed Triples with Ken Long and Doug Martin, and fourth in Mixed Cricket Doubles with Martin.

As for the men, Gary Kaufhold won the Pro Singles 301 Double In/Double Out title. He and partner Lowell Kaufhold then posted a third place finish in Open Doubles Cricket and a fourth in Men's Doubles. Lee Devlin and Clint Ownes teamed for the top spot in Men's Doubles, besting Doug Martin and Robert Martinez. Devlin also grabbed a third in Mixed Cricket Doubles with partner Sally Munson.

All first through third place finishers qualified for the Chicago finals. □

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Valley dart qualifiers held throughout America

Buck Weidell (l) and Wayne Brinkman are heading to Las Vegas as a result of their play in the Minnesota qualifier.

Debbie Mazurkiewicz (l) and Michelle Schlecht will also take part in the Valley North American Championships.

Valley Recreation Products recently staged a series of qualifying dart tournaments in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Florida, with the winners earning a free trip to the 6th North American Championships and free accommodations. That event takes place March 21 at the Las Vegas Sahara Hotel and Casino.

The $6,000 Holiday Dart Classic, sponsored by Madison Coin Machine, was contested on 20 *Cougar Dart* machines. Joe Beecroft and Karen Zimmerman won the Men's and Women's Divisions. They will join Madison Coin league tournament winners Tom Jacobson and Lynn Moller at the Las Vegas finals.

Here are the other qualifying tournaments and the winners who captured trips to Las Vegas:

- Qualifier in Hudson, Wis. (sponsored by Twin States Music): Jody Sather and Sharron Teat.
- Qualifier in Janesville, Wis. (sponsored by Bullseye Games): Ray Terronez and Natalie Hanson.
- Qualifier in Maplewood, Minn. (sponsored by Dahlco Music & Vending): Buck Weidell, Wayne Brinkman, Michelle Schlecht, and Debbie Mazurkiewicz.
- Qualifier in Tampa, Fla. (sponsored by 301 Vending): Bryan Carroll, Robbie Harris, Yvonne Aubel, and Theresa Seabrook.

The top finishers at the North American Championships will comprise Team USA and represent America at the sixth Valley World Cup International Championships. The Valley Cup takes place in London on June 18-21.□

OPERATORS WHO KNOW SAY,

"Your income goes up in *any* location with Valley Cougar Darts and Leagues!"

Gary Benson
High Country Games
Fort Collins, Colorado

"If the operator really wants to increase coin game income the secret is in Valley COUGAR DART games leagues. No question about it. We are only in our second league year and we already have 50 teams playing regularly. But even with such a small number our income is up more than 60 percent on those machines where leagues are in action. It's hard to see how any operator can survive without them.

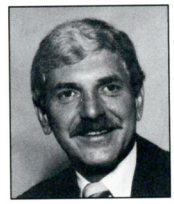
"But in spite of this increased play on those Valley COUGAR DART games, we have heard nothing but good about them — no negative feedback whatever. In fact, when players go to other places that do not have Valley COUGAR DART games, they come back and tell us what great games we have in our locations. They almost always mention they prefer Valley's thin-line target and how they appreciate how seldom a dart will drop out as compared with those other games. These Valleys are really user friendly.

"With such state-of-the-art machines, it's hard to see what might be done to improve them. Beyond cosmetic changes, that is. We now have about 40 dart games in play — all Valleys — and expect we'll have twice as many in two or three years.

"As we said, the future of darts is in leagues. But for the full potential to be reached, the games have to stand up to continuous hard play. Valley COUGAR DART games certainly do. They need such little service that it does not even come into play. Once in a while we may need a part or something and Valley's response is excellent — every time. We can actually count on having the part the next day.

"Our in-service record is so good — right up there with Valley pool tables — that if it weren't for those two games we wouldn't be in the business anymore!"

Valley COUGAR DARTS looks like the one you've needed . . . plays like the one you've wanted. Players and operators alike say, "Here's the real thing". . . Valley COUGAR DARTS!



Gary Green
Green Amusement
Louisville, Kentucky

"Whether you look at Valley COUGAR DART games from the operator's or the player's standpoint the response is the same — other darts games just don't have it!

"For the operator, the game's reliability is outstanding. It excels all expectations. The need for maintenance is as low as we hoped it would be. The over-all appearance of Valley COUGAR DART games is important, too. It looks quality, with its design and color scheme...so much more attractive than those other games. It just doesn't look like a toy. Valley always backs us up well, too. Customer service personnel do an excellent job of handling our problems and questions. No 'lip service' there!

"As far as the players are concerned, they really like the accurate scoring and the overhead scoring display is a big favorite. And they appreciate how well the player change works. They seem to find the playing instructions clear and understandable, too.

"Our leagues — both darts and pool — are critical to our operation. We have 13 darts leagues now running. We find that, generally, darts turn the quarters over faster than pool because darts takes less time to play. A game of darts takes about five minutes tops, while a game of pool runs from 15 to 20 minutes. This means that a league pool match can take as long as two hours, while darts takes only about one and one-half hours. But the two work well together. We find that after playing pool, the shooter will walk right over and play darts.

"We now have 200 darts games and 75 percent are Valleys. They stay in play so much longer than other electronic games. We have been in darts for eight or nine years and we don't have any video games as old as those darts games. We see nothing but growth in our darts games business."

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HOW TO PLAY RRESS START BUTTON AFTER BET. THE REELS WILL SPIN. STOP THE REELS THRU THE FOLLOWING METHODS WHEN "STOP" SIGN APPEARS. (TO STOP ALL REELS AT ONE TIME = PRESS START BUTTON. TO STOP THE REELS IN ROTATION FROM LEFTHAND SIDE = PRESS BET BUTTON. TO STOP ONLY THE REELS DESIRED ONE BY ONE = PRESS STOP / HOLD BUTTON). WHEN THE REELS STOPPED, HOLD THE REELS DESIRED, THEN PRESS START BUTTON SO AS TO SPIN OTHER REELS AND USE SAME METHOD TO STOP THESE REELS. WIN WILL BE DECIDED UPON THE REELS ARE STOPPED.

SPECS ODDS TABLE CAN BE SEEN IF PRESS ODDS BUTTON DURING THE PLAY. ANY NUMBERS ON THE BINGO TABLES HELD WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED. WHEN GET A "BINGO", THE NUMBERS ON THE CARDS WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED IN GOLDEN COLOR. WHEN GET A "POKER", THE CARDS WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED IN PINK COLOR. BOTH, "SKILL STOP" AND "AUTO STOP" ARE AVAILABLE (DIP SW). "LOVE CHANCE" DOUBLE UP GAME IS ADOPTED (DIP SW). 4 TYPES OF PAY MODES INCLUDING "HIGH SCORE" FEATURE ARE ADOPTED. PRINTER CAN BE LOADED FOR AUDIT AND CASH TICKETING (OPTION).

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Scott Wolf

What this column is all about

First off, let's get one thing straight. I've heard that many people don't read game reviews because they claim that the manufacturers have "bought and paid for" them, insuring favorable and enthusiastic reviews. I can't speak for anyone else, but as far as this weasel is concerned, it's a lie! I write about video games because I *like* video games.

It works like this: I go out into the world and visit arcades that feature new releases and test pieces. I call Valerie and tell her what I've seen, liked, and want to review. Valerie says, "Wonderful! Do whatever you want to because, in my eyes, you can do no wrong!" [Although my memory is not what it should be, I don't remember putting it *exactly* like that!...Ed.] Then I call the manufacturers and ask for as much information as possible. Sometimes the game is only on test and they ask me not to say anything about it yet, so I don't. Sometimes an on-the-ball P.R. person will call and invite me to preview an upcoming title and meet the team responsible for the product. This is great but does not insure a favorable review. Of course the really-on-the-ball P.R. people only show me what they know I'll like.

On rare occasions, Valerie will suggest a game that I may not have heard about. I check it out and if I think it's lame I tell her that I'd rather not review it. I don't like giving bad reviews—they're no fun for me and they're certainly no fun for the manufacturers. In a worst case scenario, where I can't avoid reviewing a game that's not my style, I at least try to stay objective about whatever good points the game does have.

"First of all, the graphics are so pretty that they're downright distracting."

Bought and paid for? Not bloody likely! And do you know why? Because I'm not just a weasel, I'm a gentleman. Because I've got standards and principles. I will not be pushed, filed, stamped, indexed, briefed, debriefed, or numbered. My life is my own. And besides, so far no one's really made me a decent offer.

Example #1: I'm invited

Jaleco's *Grand Prix Star*—The folks at Jaleco let me know they were just finishing up a new Formula 1 racing game and invited me to have a look at the prototype. Now, automobile racing games are always reliable earners, so what makes *Grand Prix Star* a contender? First of all, the graphics are so pretty that they're downright distracting. The side-by-side, two-player cabinet features an attract mode that utilizes both monitors to display cinemascope-like images. The scenery along the three championship circuits (Germany, Monaco, and Japan) is lushly textured, and keeping your eyes on the road as cotton candy clouds go rolling by is an exercise in driving discipline. Sightseeing at 360 kmph is a dubious pleasure.

On the hardware side, *Grand Prix Star* features a new steering assembly that mimics the feel of rack and pinion steering, providing better feedback to players and reducing the tendency to oversteer. There is also a vibrating thingie in the seats that, along with the whine of the well-tuned engines, provides a real sense of road contact and speed.

Example #2: I stumble across one

Konami's *X-Men*—On one of my excursions into the real world, I

International Press Release

San Antonio, Texas, MARCH 1992

ROWE/AMI WINS AGAIN OPERATORS SELECT LASERSTAR® AS "THE BEST" ONCE AGAIN

Jerry Gordon, Sr. VP-Distributor Sales and Joel Friedman, Sr. VP-Music/Currency Group

Like Yogi Berra said, "It's deja vu, all over again." Rowe/AMI has received both major American jukebox awards. At the ACME Show, Rowe/AMI's LaserStar® CD-100 received the 1991 Play Meter Magazine Award of Excellence, being voted "The Best Jukebox Of The Year" by American operators. Just last October at the AMOA show, the LaserStar® was voted by American Operators as the "Most Played Jukebox" for 1991.

There have been 4 awards given by American Operators for CD jukeboxes: 2 for "Best Jukebox of the Year" and 2 for "Most Played Jukebox", and the Rowe/AMI LaserStar® has won them all.

Joel Friedman, Sr. VP - Music/Currency Group, said in a recent interview, "I want to thank the operators for putting their trust and confidence in the people and the products of Rowe/AMI. These are exciting times for us. We're proud to be making a quality product with real value. We will continue to build jukeboxes that operators can depend on for a strong and profitable future."

Artist's rendering of the Rowe/AMI Plant #1 Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

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"We will continue to build jukeboxes that operators can depend on for a strong and profitable future."

As the leader in the worldwide jukebox market, Rowe/AMI is making additional advances overseas. "We have a very strong and steadily growing distributor network internationally," says Jerry Gordon, Sr. VP-Distributor Sales. "Like American operators, many European operators are telling us that the LaserStar® is superbly engineered, beautifully designed and a most reliable machine."

Rowe/AMI's success is the result of a rock-solid game plan that emphasizes traditional American values. According to Friedman, "Our strategy is simple: make the best product, provide the best value and support our operators and distributors with an all out effort all of the time. Sometimes I feel we're like the Green Bay Packers during the great years of Vince Lombardi: Block, tackle and give 110%.

"We're in this business together with our distributors and operators for the long run."

Build a strong foundation, stick to the fundamentals, constantly strive to be the best and never take anything for granted."

These awards won't go to the heads of the people at Rowe/AMI. "It's great to be recognized as the best," says Friedman. "We're in this business together with our distributors and operators for the long run. We all need each other. We pledge continued dedication to the music operators and we at Rowe/AMI are committed to their success."

LaserStar Patriot® CD-100 B

spotted the huge six-player, dual-monitored cabinet of Konami's *X-Men*. Joining the swelling ranks of licensed Marvel Superheroes, the Uncanny X-Men star in another action fighting game. Gosh, I only hope that there'll be innumerable cloned evil mutants, quarter-eating boss enemies, and an evil leader, whose ambition is to destroy mankind and—dare I say it—rule the world! (Does this sound bought and paid for yet?)

Tried-and-true formula aside, even I cannot dismiss *X-Men* so easily. First of all, there is the ability to play any one of six, yes six, Marvel mutants—Cyclops, who blasts enemies with his optic force beam; Colossus, who changes his flesh to steel for virtual invulnerability (but still gets pretty soundly thrashed); Wolverine, possessor of an unbreakable adamantium skeleton, retractable claws and a pen that even writes upside down; Storm, the mysterious African princess, who controls the weather with just a thought (she must live in Chicago); Nightcrawler, the former circus acrobat with an understandable fear of fishermen; and Dazzler, the beautiful actress who blinds opponents with her pearly white teeth (Cut it out!...Ed.), er, I mean who converts sound into sonic light blasts. Their mission—does it really matter?—is to find the kidnapped Professor X and wipe out Magneto and his evil mutants.

"I write about video games because I like video games."

X-Men features dual 25-inch monitors across which the action takes place in a widescreen format. The sound and graphics are excellent and for what might possibly be the first time for me, the characters actually seem to be responding logically to my commands.

Example #3: The distributor's gambit

Namco's *Golly! Ghost!*—Now here's a novel redemption piece that was pointed out to me at Atlas Distributing Inc. It's a two-player interactive game that displays goofy ghosts, supernaturally imposed over a diorama of a haunted mansion contained in the cabinet. The players, named Zip and Zap, are armed with rapid-fire antiectoplasm guns and must clear four levels of playful poltergeists as

Skee-Ball fills all the bases for you with fun games for all ages

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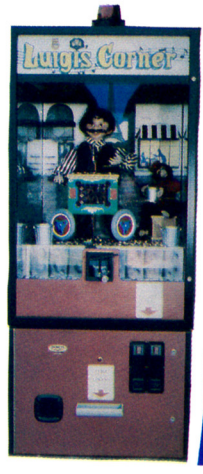

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they fly from room to room, opening and closing doors and even materializing from out of the toilet. Tickets are dispensed during the game according to score.

This is really a neat little game and one that does not suffer by being an obvious *Ghostbuster* derivation.

Example #4: Schwing!

Namco's *Starblade*—*Starblade* has been out for some months now, but I've only just had the opportunity to play it. Sell my guitars, I've gone to heaven! This is it! Playing *Starblade* is like being part of the best special effects sequences in the "Star Wars" trilogy. This has got to be the smoothest, most breathtaking use of 3-D polygon technology outside of a multimillion dollar military flight trainer. Using quadrophonic sound and a 42-inch, parabolic mirror to enlarge the actual 25-inch monitor display, *Starblade* envelops you in nonstop spacefighter action.

Climb into the gaudy but comfortable sitdown cabinet and you become the U.G.S.F.'s top gunner aboard the flagship "Geosword". From the very moment you launch, you are under constant attack by the forces of the mechanized planet Red Eye. Remember the scene in "The Empire Strikes Back," where the Millennium Falcon winds its way between massive star destroyers and leads enemy fighters through an asteroid field? Well, wake up, it's your turn! Suddenly they break off and hyperspace back to protect their home planet. You give chase and must punch your way through Red Eye's vast defense system to destroy the planet's power reactor. Every hit you take depletes your shield energy and rocks your seat with a surprisingly convincing subtlety.

The only fault I can find with *Starblade* is its "greased rail" approach. You don't actually fly your ship, its vectors having been preprogrammed so that you can concentrate on shooting up everything in sight. You're basically riding shotgun through the magnificent illusion of endless space, colossal spacecraft, and wave after wave of totally awesome enemy firepower. What *Starblade* lacks in depth of game play, it makes up for in its dramatic presentation. Only the new *Virtuality* system could possibly hope to outdo the technological achievement on display here.

Bought and paid for, indeed. □

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Neutral state looks at VLT situation

Picture the scene: a man and his family settle into their theater seats on a Saturday evening to watch the controversial, yet heralded film, "JFK." Ten minutes into the movie his beeper goes off. The emergency: a dollar bill jam in a jukebox. He immediately leaves the theater to handle the problem.

This is not a typical businessman. This is a coin machine operator who knows that neither he nor his location can afford to have that jukebox down for the duration of the movie. He does what the rank-and-file in the industry do best—provide entertainment and service at all hours.

Can the state find employees with the same interest to administer a state-run video lottery program? Employees who know what it's like to deal with location owners and game players? Employees who properly display and promote the games, penetrate the market, and provide a thorough follow-up?

The scene at the opening of this article is not fictitious. It really happened to Chris Wilson of Sound Entertainment in Phoenix, Arizona. Wilson also serves as president of the 10-year-old state association, the Arizona Coin Machine Council.

Chris Wilson of Sound Entertainment in Phoenix, Ariz., by one of the many CD jukeboxes on the company's route.

Arizona is in the minority as far as video lottery is concerned; there is no effort underway to pass legislation favoring legalized video gaming. The state association has no war chest, but recently hired a lobbyist to monitor any pertinent legislative activity.

When asked about Arizona's pulse on video lottery, Wilson said, "Right now our eyes and ears are wide open. We have a lot of long-term operators who have colleagues in other parts of the country. We don't have a particular agenda right now, but we want to be prepared. We don't want to be blindsided."

Arizona's legislature reconvened on Jan. 13 and heard a bleak State of the State speech from Gov. Fife Symington. He wants to reduce taxes and free up some

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VIDEO GAMING OUTLOOK

money, but it means cutting back on a number of budgets for state departments. Arizona is in the same predicament as many other states: it's time to tighten the belt and it's not an appealing proposition. The scenario is a familiar one of increased taxes and decreased government spending. The search is on for the least painful way of balancing the budget.

Arizona operators want to stay tuned with video lottery developments. "Iowa and Oregon got our attention last year," commented Wilson. "We need to know what's working, where and why. If video lottery came to pass we'd like an opportunity to participate."

Wilson feels that Gov. Symington is for small business, saying, "He understands that viable small businesses need to exist and that we must attract more of them. A sole-source situation in any state means one segment of commerce would slap those ideals in the face.

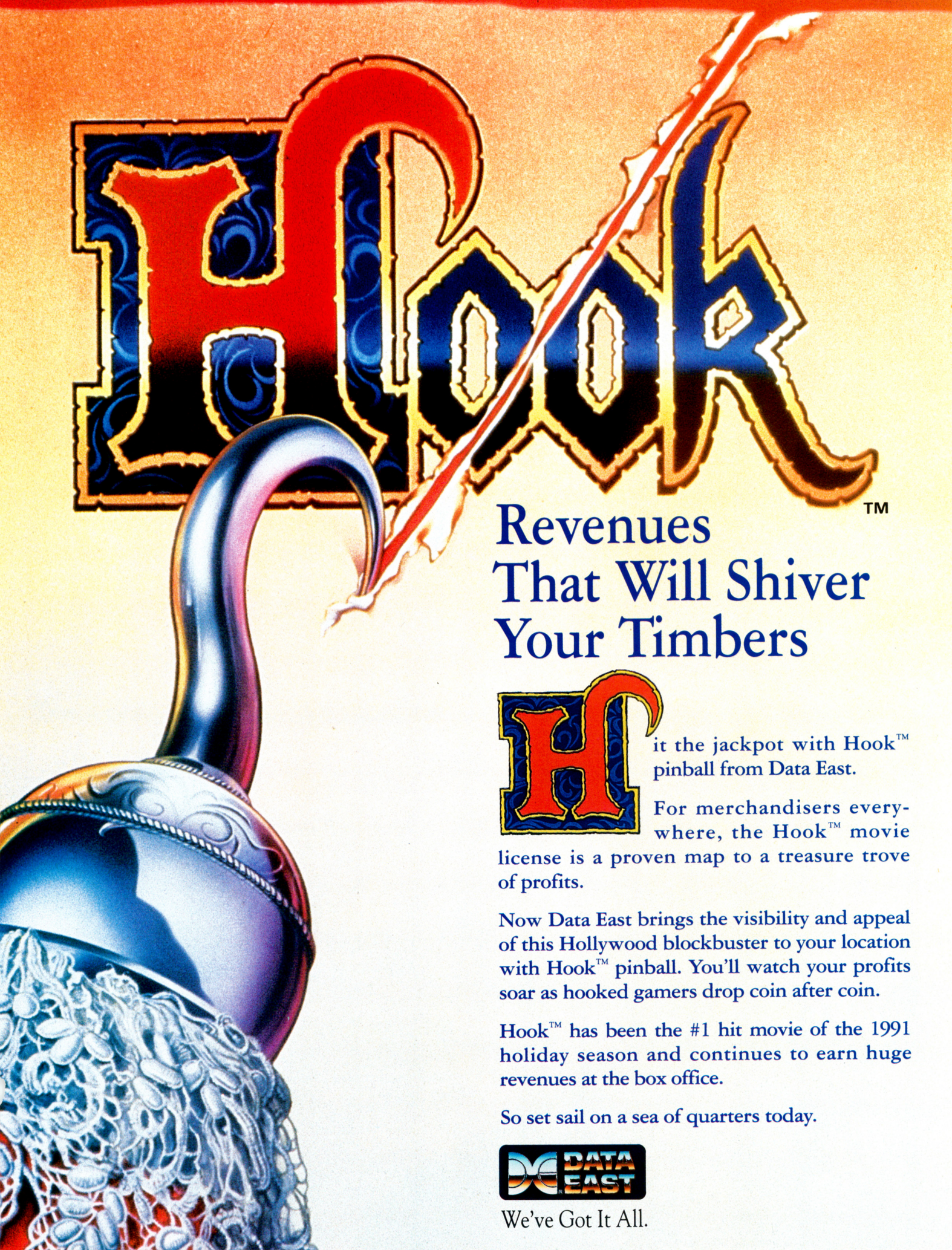
"What scares us as operators," continued Wilson, "is any sole-source arrangement. We feel this is an end-run around an operator's market. Why would states want to put coin-op gaming equipment in taverns when they didn't want to do that with *Pac-Man*? We're concerned that a sole-source situation would cause our amusement game revenues to fall right off the chart. When an operator spends $4,000 for a video game, and the state puts a poker game next to it, I have a pretty good idea of which game patrons are going to play.

"A video gaming device is a coin-operated amusement machine. The state doesn't operate vending machines or pool tables. If the reason behind sole-source is management, then operators would have to adhere to the same safeguards and controls the state would employ if they operated the machines. If a state wants background checks, we welcome them."

What does Wilson have to say about that old notion of the coin machine business being unsavory? "The checks we mail for sales taxes, county taxes, state taxes, and income taxes aren't considered unsavory. If someone thinks there's something shady going on, and a George Raft-type character from the movies will break their knees, then we welcome them to come in and prove it. We don't operate that way. We fix our machines and stick to our agreements with locations. We have implied or written contracts and provide equipment that works. If we don't perform, we're out of business.

"Whether video lottery is on the table or not, education is important. The perception that some people have of our industry is not always accurate."

"We don't make phenomenal amounts of money. We are impacted by interest rates and the economy the same as anyone else. Some of our locations have gone out of business because of the recession. The fact remains that there are new pieces of equipment coming out all the time. We have to decide which ones to purchase. The operators who get the accounts and keep them are the operators who don't 'over promise' and 'under deliver.' We're just business people. There's a demand for the products we provide. Tavern owners don't want to recover pool tables or program



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jukeboxes. We provide that service. We're 100 percent service.

"If video lottery comes in and coin machine operators can't participate at a financial level profitable for operators, locations, and the state, then regular video games will become the buggy whip of the '90s. Perhaps states considering sole-source should check with the local better business bureaus to see which types of businesses have more complaints. Are coin-op companies in that number, or are used car dealers, body shops, gyms, and spas?"

"The checks we mail for taxes aren't considered unsavory. This is not a back room, greasy business."

There's no doubt that our industry has an image problem that needs to be corrected. Said Wilson, "Whether video lottery is on the table or not, education is important. The perception some people have of our industry is not always accurate. An AMOA Expo or ACME is a pretty good indicator that this is not a back room, greasy business."

Arizona has been a very conservative state, one with significant growth levels in the '60s and '70s. That growth has tapered off. Copper and cattle were once the mainstays; now electronics and tourism represent a significant part of the state's commerce.

Citizens who wish to find gaming equipment can find it just six hours away in Las Vegas, Nev., or four hours away in Laughlin, Nev. It is unsure if the political climate is such that legislators would embrace additional gambling activities since there already is a state lottery, dog and horse race tracks, and games on Indian reservations.

"It depends on the extent you want to raise revenues for the state," said Wilson. "There would have to be a lot of soul searching. Whether you call it video lottery or not, semantics aren't going to change it. It's video gambling. If the electorate thought it was a pill worth swallowing to gain revenue, then the Arizona Coin Machine Council would like to have the option to be a part of it. If things never change in Arizona it would be fine with everyone. If things do change, we'd like to be invited to the party.

"Every state could use the revenue from these games. Each state must decide for itself. Right now the Arizona Coin Machine Council has an agenda that includes keeping track of how we are being taxed and licensed. We want to have a good working relationship with each other and the state. Let's not give the state any reasons to throw stones in our direction."

Wilson conducts his daily business in the same straightforward manner he approached the VLT conversation. The man who left "JFK" for a jukebox jam is also the man who searched out a CD copy of "Auld Lang Syne" on New Year's Eve to fulfill a very late location request.

"This business can't be run on an eight-to-five basis," explained Wilson. "It's not a transactional business where you don't see the buyer or seller again. It's a labor intensive service business. We have a close, ongoing relationship with our clients. You meet a lot of nice people in this business." We just did. Thanks, Chris. □

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Pac-Man stops production at nearly 100,000 units

Would you believe that it was just 10 years ago that Nintendo was making plans to move from New York to its present Seattle location? It had only 22,000 square feet of space ready for the move, with another 30,000 square feet in the works. Mr. Arakawa was optimistic about Nintendo's future. He had these prophetic words about home games, "We are thinking of home video, but have no particular plan yet." The company was readying its first two coin-op games to be introduced at AOE.

Roger Sharpe wrote an article titled "The Spotlight's on Video and All is Not Well." In it he talked about how the industry was coming under intense scrutiny because of video games. And it was not all favorable, as we were all finding out.

Time and *Newsweek* said video games heralded a revolution that far surpassed anything that had ever occurred in the history of the industry. Ronnie Lamm, a mother and president of her PTA, hit the airwaves on the Phil Donahue and Today shows with a crusade to get rid of game rooms completely. She tried to convince the world that video games were dangerous for children and that there were serious sociological concerns as well.

The top videos appearing on Play Meter's Equipment Poll were *Donkey Kong, Stargate, Ms. Pac-Man, Galaga, Tempest, Centipede, Pac-Man, Frogger, Qix, Defender, Kick-Man, Mousetrap*, and *Omega Race*.

The top pinballs on the poll included *Haunted House, Centaur, Black Hole, Eight-Ball Deluxe*, and *Elektra*.

In other news 10 years ago, Bally received the Supreme Court's decision to remand the *City of Mesquite vs. Aladdin's Castle* case back to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals; Midway was granted an injunction against 25 companies, restraining them from using, buying, or selling copies of *Pac-Man, Rally-X*, and *Galaxians*; in a *New York Times* story, Midway's Stan Jarocki said that *Pac-Man* production had ended at 96,000 units and nearly 30 companies had signed licensing agreements for the familiar character; Bally/Midway also broke ground for its new headquarters in Franklin Park, Ill.; AMOA set up a committee to study gray area games; Centuri joined the ranks of video game companies offering their games for the home market; a proposal to ban coin-op games in a small Connecticut town was disposed of after a public hearing, when 300 people showed up protesting the ban; and Chuck Arnold was named president of Bally Northeast Distributing.

New products introduced in the April 1982 issue were *Got Ya* and *Dambusters* by Game-a-Tron, *Devil Fish* by Artic, *Space Duel* by Atari, *Robotron 2084* by Williams, and *Zaxxon* by Sega. □

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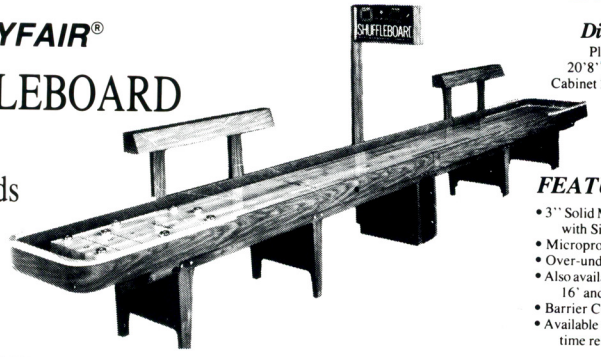

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IGT briefs operators on system, validation

Eddie Matthews (l) and Stephen Genco (c) of Genco's Amusement in Bogalusa with John Baker of IGT.

From left: Frank Lopiccolo of South-West Utilities, Al Huffine of B.A.G. Amusement in Harahan, Joe Guidry of Rallo Amusement in Chalmette, Robert Buse of Automatic Coin in Metairie, and Abe Pereira of Lafourche Novelty in Raceland.

Potential video poker machine owners in Louisiana attended a trio of operator/distributor briefings on March 10 (Shreveport) and March 11 (New Orleans and Baton Rouge). International Game Technology sponsored the event for its Louisiana distributor, Delta Gaming (an affiliate of Imperial Trading Co.). The briefings were designed to shed light on the central computer system and ticket validation equipment used in the new legal video gaming program.

IGT was awarded the central computer system contract for Louisiana in January. The system will link up an estimated 25,000 video poker machines in nearly 5,000 locations. The program is set to start on July 1.

IGT speakers included Bob McMonigle, executive vice president of sales; Kit Hall-Johnston, director at large; John Baker, systems operations manager; Walt Hawkins, regional sales manager; and Kerry Reppert, sales manager (video sales). Also on the agenda were John Georges, president of Delta Gaming, and Frank Lopiccolo, president of South-West Utilities.

Among the topics covered were the bid process and system overview, installation and maintenance of equipment, phone line requirements, and both the location control terminal (LCT) and the clerk validation terminal (CVT).

The La. State Police, the regulatory body for the new program, at first required a ticket validation system but later made it optional. Although many coin machine operators in the state feel that fraudulent tickets will not be a problem, the state police wants the most secure system possible. The CVT is seen as the best method of protecting the device owners and

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locations from sophisticated photocopied tickets, altered tickets, or tickets issued on machines other than those in an establishment.

In simple terms, here's how the system works:

The central computer will be located at La. State Police headquarters in the state capital, Baton Rouge. The computer will "dial-up" or poll video poker machines daily across the state for data on all game activities (money wagered, tickets paid out, etc.).

The computer communicates with the machines through a modem at the computer front end. It connects to machines in the liquor-licensed establishments via regular voice telephone lines—one dedicated line per location used only for this purpose.

The phone line connects with either the LCT or the CVT. The difference is that the LCT is required to communicate with the central computer. It stores data but is not interactive. The CVT validates tickets and provides daily activity summaries (accessed by a key that rests in the care of the device owner). The central system will provide printed reports for device owners, but not on a daily basis.

As Baker explains it: "There are no hello's or how-are-you's. Just give me your data, goodbye. The CVT stores all pertinent data until the prime controller asks for it. The computer knows the address and serial number of each machine, type of game by manufacturer, and game choices on each machine. All this data is available to the device owner at the CVT." According to Baker, no special phone lines are needed. The line is only used when the computer front end talks to the machines, otherwise it is dead. Polling takes only six to eight seconds.

"The CVT is seen as the best method of protecting the device owners and locations from sophisticated photocopied tickets, altered tickets, or tickets issued on machines other than those in an establishment."

Baker also discussed the fiber optic cable, which is required in the IGT system. All IGT machines and other manufacturer's machines will use fiber optic cable. Although more expensive than conventional copper wiring, fiber optic is lightweight, requires no soldering, does not pick up static, is flexible and easy to work with, and is immune to electromechanical interference. It was noted that certain ceiling

SUNDAY VOL. 1 — A.L.D. Services, Inc. Tribune — SECTION A

Sports Packs

BLAIR WINS GOLD MEDAL

Bonnie Blair wins 2nd successive gold medal in 500 meter speed skating for United States.

A.L.D. NO. 1 IN THE POLLS WITH NEW SPORTS PACKS

Sports Packs move A.L.D. Services, Inc. to the No. 1 ranking as the league's top power.

ST. LOUIS PICKED FOR '92 PENNANT

The St. Louis Cardinals have been predicted as pennant winners in the National League for 1992.

GAMES 1992 SUPPORTER

A.L.D. WINS ON GRAND SLAM

A.L.D. Services, Inc. hits a Grand Slam to win the conference title again in Crane Merchandising.

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- SPORTS PACKS WIN CRANE BOWL!
- BOWLING PACKS ROLL TO VICTORY LANE!
- PACKS BEAT BULK!
- A.L.D. SERVICES, INC. DRAFTS SPORTS PACKS

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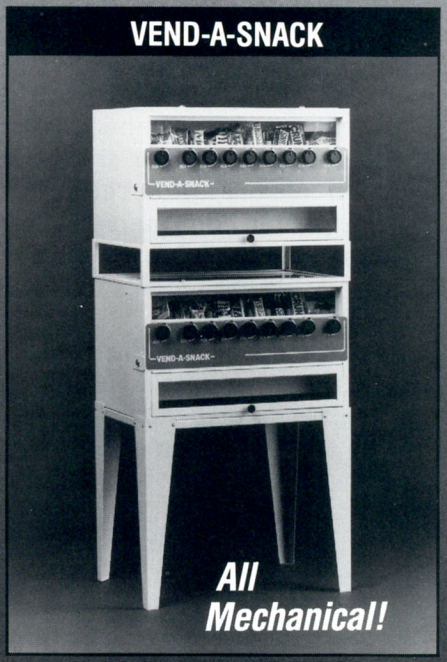

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Mayoni Enterprises

Walt Hawkins of IGT answers questions about the clerk validation terminal.

IGT's Kerry Reppert (l) with Felix Canova, Roland Brannon, and John Dubois of Morgan City.

configurations may dictate the use of glass cable.

Lopiccolo's detailed the video poker network service offered by his company, South-West Utilities. South-West recently completed installing thousands of on-line Lotto game terminals for the Louisiana Lottery. He encouraged operators to deal with experienced phone line contractors. For their part, South-West stands ready as a resource for coin machine operators in the state. It's not too early to make arrangements for phone line installations.

Hawkins then demonstrated the CVT, which measures 16" long by 7" high and weighs 10 pounds. Said Hawkins, "It's a small box of hi-tech wizardry. It not only validates tickets, but indicates any problems with the machines, from printer to touch-screen to open doors." When the alarm goes off the location knows there's a problem instantly. The CVT constantly validates tickets; other data can only be obtained by the device owner with the key.

Louisiana operators must purchase either an LCT or a CVT for each location. Up to 64 machines can be connected to either unit. Pricing until June 14 is $475 for the LCT and $595 for the CVT. After June 14 pricing will be $495 for the LCT and $795 for the CVT.

The LCT and CVT are being priced at manufacturer cost, says IGT. An ample supply will be available at all distributorships in the state. The first shipment is expected to arrive by May 1. A 90-day warranty comes on both products.

Said Reppert, "We think the CVT is to everyone's benefit and want to keep the price low for the initial period. We have to be pro-active. We should all want nothing but the most secure system." □

Surprise! The clerk validation terminal (CVT) is not a mysterious "black box." It's actually a white box with blue and orange buttons, a display screen, and a microprocessor inside. It can validate tickets plus print out other important data.

Bonnie Theard

Trade show burnout? Have a laugh on us

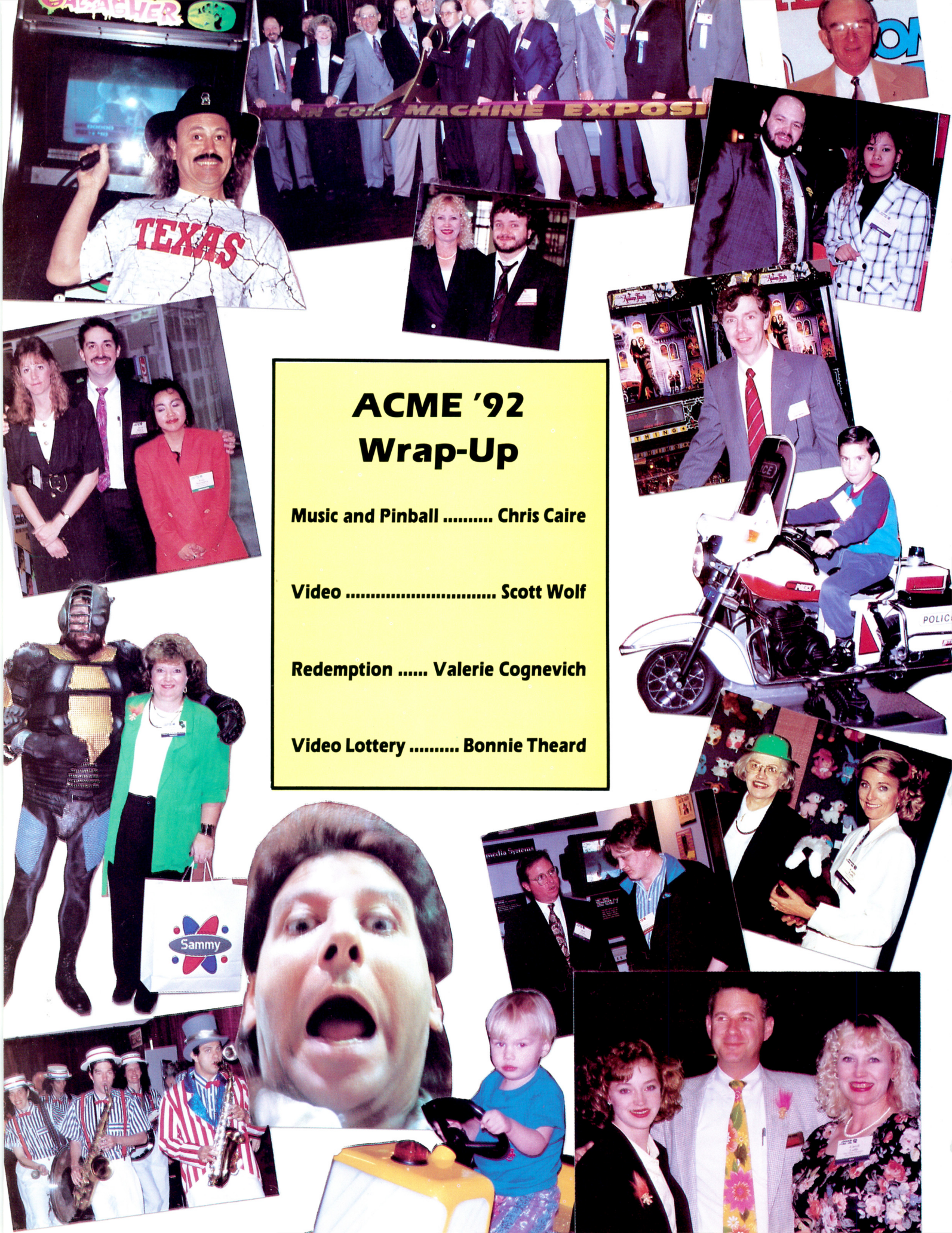
You've returned from the American Coin Machine Expo and are settling back into your normal routine. Your head is swimming with details of all the videos, pinballs, and novelty/redemption games you saw on the show floor.

The following questionnaire might put things back into perspective for you. At the least, it will bring a smile to your face. Circle the answer that best fits your circumstances.

1. On the opening day of ACME I was
   a) in the Bahamas
   b) reading *Sports Illustrated*
   c) at Randy Fromm and Vic Fortenbach's technical seminar
2. When I attended ACME I stayed at
   a) the most expensive hotel ('91 was a good year)
   b) the cheapest hotel (dictated by ROI)
   c) the nearest hotel (hang the cost, I didn't want to walk very far)
3. When listening to new game hype I decided to
   a) pull out my airline barf bag
   b) take it for what it was worth (not much)
   c) play the game, talk to other operators to see what they thought, and consider my player base
4. At novelty/redemption game booths I
   a) dismissed the games as suitable only for fiddlebrains
   b) threw the ball so hard at one target that it fell over into the next booth
   c) observed children playing the games to see reactions
5. My most valuable reading material during the show was
   a) the swimsuit edition of *Pizza Today*
   b) Stephen King's newest horror epic
   c) the latest copy of *Play Meter*
6. I'll never attend another trade show without (there is no wrong answer here)
   a) enough antacids to float a battleship
   b) my wife/husband
   c) a comfortable pair of shoes
7. I took advantage of hospitality suites to
   a) consume as many hors d'oeuvres as possible
   b) build a scale model of the Taj Mahal with pretzels
   c) candidly talk over industry concerns away from the bright lights of the show floor
8. After attending the CD jukebox seminar I
   a) wondered if I could get Xavier Cougat's "Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White" on CD
   b) became convinced I should invest in CD units
   c) wanted to rush back to the shop and program my CD jukeboxes
9. In order to keep track of games and features I
   a) took notes on cocktail napkins
   b) wrote in the margins of my program book
   c) brought along a clipboard or notebook with charts for rating games
10. When I returned home my suitcase was filled with
    a) all the free posters, pens, and hats I could get my hands on
    b) menus from every Mexican restaurant in San Antonio
    c) business cards of new acquaintances and contacts that will prove helpful in the future

For every letter C chosen, give yourself 10 points. There are no points for letter B; take away five points for letter A. The perfect score is 100.

Bonus: if you can produce the original schematics of *High Speed* add 100 points—you're one heck of an operator. Whatever your score, thanks for attending ACME. We'll see you again next year. P.S. Don't forget the comfortable shoes!□



ACME '92 Wrap-Up

Music and Pinball ..... Chris Caire

Video ..... Scott Wolf

Redemption ..... Valerie Cognevich

Video Lottery ..... Bonnie Theard

It all came together for a fantastic show

The ACME show, sponsored by Play Meter Magazine and AAMA, was held in San Antonio on March 15-17. The ninth largest city in the United States was a pleasing host for this annual event, which drew nearly 6,000 attendees. There were a record-setting 770 booths holding more than 210 companies.

Route operators grumbled that there were not enough street pieces for their typical locations. They said they felt slighted by the dominance of redemption and the larger arcade games. There was a subtle shift from shows held for the past decade that were rated simply by how good the videos were. This show was dominated by redemption equipment, the goodies to go with them, and perhaps to a lesser extent, video lottery equipment. In fact, the two highest-attended seminars were on redemption and video lottery.

Operators knew going into the show that Capcom would be showing its newest *Street Fighter II, The Champion Edition* video. One exhibitor said that he would probably be directing operators over to the Capcom booth.

Operators gushed over the new pinballs. One operator said he never thought he'd be around long enough to see pinball this popular again. Even though South Dakota, Montana, and Louisiana are the only states approved to legally operate video lottery machines, many others are involved in the the lengthy process of seeing a bill passed. Over a dozen companies had their video lottery equipment on display.

"Route operators grumbled that there were not enough street pieces for their typical locations."

Redemption and Novelty

Over 40 companies offered redemption and novelty games for all age groups. Redemption games ran the gamut from haunted houses to ducks, and many used ping pong balls. There were more ping pong balls on the ACME show floor than at a ping pong tournament, used to knock down, hit, fill up—you name it.

Those who have predicted the popularity of redemption were certainly right. Nevertheless, there were those who questioned the feasibility of getting into it. "I'm a video game operator basically, and I'm not even sure how to go about getting into redemption," noted one operator.

Another pointed out that this is a common complaint and that there are many operators who would get into redemption if they just knew how. "You never get enough education on the subject," he said. "With redemption it's a whole new ball game. You're in the retail business and you have to learn that business. You have to watch inventory, know how to dispose of used tickets, and many other things not a part of operating games."

One New England operator pointed out that in the next two years the country will see the lowest number of teens than it's seen in a long time. The video game industry depends primarily on teenage males that simply won't be there. In that case, he added, operators will have to find other ways to fill the void. How? They will have to cater to the younger

ACME '92

Robert Russell and Jim Counts of Williams Enterprises play *B Rap Boys* by Kaneko.

At the SMK booth, (l-r): Joe Baggett of Players Amusement, Ronald Payne of Laser Amusement, and Cliff Dodge of SMK by the *American Classics Draw Poker*.

Brad Brown of Higbee Enterprises and nephew Bradley Flume of San Antonio on opening day.

From left: Gene Harlan and Candy Nelson of Arachnid, Sharon Harris of Stan Harris & Co., and Sam Zammuto of Arachnid next to the *Super 6 Plus II*.

Simon Deith (l) with Mike Druss of M.D. Game Sales.

Checking out the new *Sex Trivia* and *Dynasty*, (l-r): Jay Roffeld of Jay's Vending and Dan Dinnebiel and Tom Ricci of Grayhound.

ACME '92

At the Romstar booth, (l-r): Mike Robinson and Paul Horning of Century Vending with Romstar's Heh-Kyu Lee, Rene Lopez, Tim Jackson, and Joyce Kahler.

At the Rosette booth, lovely ladies Bonnie Cappetta (l) of Bonita Marie and Marion Paul of Walkin' Charlies are flanked by Hal (l) and Phil Steinberg.

At the Bob's Space Racers booth, (l-r): Larry Glick of Just Games, Bob's Ted Sloan, Terry Gald of Just Games, and Bob's Sandy Mendes.

At the crowded King Plush booth, (l-r): King Plush's Chuck Thurber, Patrick Klasno, and Phil Lotich with Amusements 'R Us's Eugene Ashman, Wendy Lord of King Plush and Steve DeWitt of Amusements 'R Us.

At the SNK booth, (l-r): The company's Neal Zook, Jim Chapman, Sue Jarocki, and John Barone.

From left: Ace Novelty's Charles Dubose and Berta Herrera with the Fernandez family: Romelia, Victor, and little Marielle of Group Maquinas Mechanics.

and older groups of players.

Pool, darts, music, video poker games, and countertops are the drawing power for the older, more mature player—they always have been. Kiddie rides have provided the very young with quite fun entertainment since the first penny horse ride. But now there's a need—no, a demand—for another category of entertainment, which could very well be filled by redemption. According to statistics, there were more babies born in 1990—4.2 million—than there has been in 28 years. These babies are being labeled the second baby boom, and as was the case after World War II, society will be catering to these boomers. Our industry will watch them grow and must be prepared to meet their entertainment needs.

Adults and children will be playing together more than ever in amusement centers catering to a family experience with inexpensive entertainment. There's a delicate balance in providing both parents and children entertainment while providing a value. The focus today is on the recession, a shaky economy, and saving money. Looking for that little extra has become the great American pastime. Winning a prize or redeeming tickets is a value-added consideration. Offering fun, exciting equipment may not be quite enough anymore. Offering your customers something in addition is an attractive proposition.

There was a healthy selection of redemption pieces aimed at young children, for those a little older, and even some designed with adults in mind. Smart Industries' *Big Bertha* or *Buddy Bear* appealed to children, while receiving an approving nod from parents. You couldn't have been too young or too old to take a thrill in watching the hefty lady devour balls and gain 25 lbs. for each one. Young and old alike chuckled when her dress popped up, revealing her yellow bloomers. *Buddy Bear* played a pretty good game of catch and talked to you besides.

For the very young, Fabtek showed a game developed by Partec called *Jungle Jogger* that had the attention grabbing graphics adored by kids. The company also showed *The Farm Yard*, a ball-throwing game decorated with adorable farm animals. It was designed by Dave Stubben, a former design engineer with Atari.

"Licensed goods are sizzling. Characters from cartoons, movies, TV, music, and sports were at nearly every booth."

Other appealing kiddie games shown were *Froggy*, Ol' McDonald, and *Cat 'n' Mouse* from Coin Concepts; *The Simpsons Cupcake Contest* from Bromley; *Can Alley* from Bob's Space Racers; *The Great Frog Race* from Meltec; *Barnyard Babies*, a version designed by Skee-Ball for kids; and *Quackers*, a rolldown with ducks, and *Dino Roll*, with dinosaurs, from Seidel Amusements.

If you're old enough to remember the allure of the so-ugly-they're-cute troll dolls, then you weren't surprised to see them resurface on *Troll* from Exidy. It's bound to be an attention-getter wherever it's placed. Apparently, the munchkins are making a comeback all over. *Melody Mouse* from Coastal, with cute, appealing graphics, challenges players to get consecutive tubes filled with falling ping pong balls.

For the not-quite-as-young generation, perhaps pre-teens, there were some enticing offerings: *Fireball* from Alter Enterprises, *Circus Rolldown* from Bay-Tek, *Sidewinder* from Bob's Space Racers, *Shooting Star* from Bundra/Adastra, *Robo Bop* and *Crazy Clown* from Coastal, *Wacky Gator* from Data East, *Hungry Hungry Hippos* from I.C.E., and *Cracky Crab* from Namco.

Then there's games for adults. Sega had a fascinating game called *Speed Shot*. The player controls either a red or green LED light with a track ball. When the ping pong ball lands in the lighted spot, the player hits the shoot button, propelling the ball toward his competitor's goal. It seems to have all the appeal of air hockey or foosball, but with a technologically advanced flair. This would be ideal for parents and children to enjoy together.

I.C.E. has a tremendous hit with *Putting Challenge*, which brings out the best golfer in each of us. The course changes and the challenges get tougher. Some other games that appeal to adults were the pitching games, of which there were several variations. Adastra/Bundra's version challenges players to hit a lighted number on the back wall, and Na-

ACME '92

From left: Play Meter's "Ticket Vic" Fortenbach with United Theater Amusements' Wesley Clark and Jon Kingston.

At the Imperial International booth, (l-r): Lou and Bonnie Gourgues of B&L Amusements and Imperial's Steve Russel and Paul Cardea.

The Bettelman family of C.A. Robinson & Co. pay a visit to the Play Meter booth, (l-r): Play Meter's Chris Caire, Ira and Leah (Mrs. B) Bettelman, Play Meter's Ron Kogos, and Adrea and Sandy Bettelman.

J-S Sales' Don Shimel (l) and Jeff Blackoff (r) with Jerry Schweigel of Active West.

Hamilton Scale's James Nesmith (l) and Ken Bowersox talk with J.K.'s Amusement's Gary Calhoun.

Checking out the parts at Wico, (l-r): Act III Theater's Peter A. Von Petrzeuka, Bob Murray (Wico), Paul H. Vonpe (Act III), and Steve Butler (Wico).

tional Sports Games' *Pinch Hitter* offered a game on a playfield with correct throws.

Bromley Inc., the company that has given us remakes of popular games like *Ghost Town* and *Rock 'N' Bowl*, tantalized us at the last show with a prototype of *Hawk Avenger*, affectionately referred to as "The Helicopter Game." It's finally finished and looks like its appeal will be universal, from young to old.

Many redemption games have a common attraction with the concept of interaction. Rather than standing still, as you would a video game, some redemption pieces encourage interaction with others or the game itself. Lazer-Tron, the company that gave us *Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe* and *Bank-It*, offered a selection of interactive games. *Haunted House* and the newest *Vine Climb* offer a competitive challenge to players.

The show floor was alive with operators asking pertinent questions about getting into redemption and seeking advice from those already established. One redemption veteran had these words of wisdom: "If you are considering redemption, you can't expect to do business the same way you are now. To be successful you must do research and attend as many seminars as you can. If you pick up just one idea or advice about equipment, you'll agree it was well worth it."

Redemption Merchandise

What's hot and what's not in plush and redemption merchandise? The answer depends on who you ask. Nevertheless, as evidenced by the wares shown by the plush and redemption merchandise firms, there most definitely are trends in merchandise.

The most obvious? Sports! Sports! And more sports! Seasonal sports items, like sports cards, are definitely hot. Several firms—Asahi-Seiko USA, Grayhound Electronics, Play Ball! Cards and Novelties, and Smart Industries—are marketing dispensing units to vend cards directly from games. Many of the merchandise supply companies are selling the cards and related items. A.L.D. Services is marketing a special "Sports Pack," and Prizes! has a separate division called Sports Caps with helmets stuffed with card packs for cranes.

> **"Many operators may be tempted to look at pricing only. That's not a good philosophy."**

Larry Morris of Laramie Interests says, "Licensed sports in plush or redemption is a must." David Katz of Bonita Marie agreed, adding that his firm will localize its sports items for the nearest professional team.

Another trend is toward bigger, softer, and more expensive. Acme Premium's Jack Kelly said his customers are looking for retail quality plush. "They want name brands like Applause, Dakin, and Ross Berry on the label." King Plush's Patrick Klasno predicted, "The 25 cents per play crane will soon be history; 50-cent and $1 jumbo cranes will be the standard."

He added, "We are selling more jumbo mixes than we are standard ones. That wasn't the case six months ago." Laramie Interests' Larry Morris echoed this prediction: "High-end plush is needed as a teaser in any crane mix if you want to maximize revenue."

Licensed goods are sizzling. Characters from cartoons, movies, TV, music, and sports were at nearly every booth. There were "Terminator 2," "Wayne's World," "Beverly Hills 90210," "The Simpsons," and major league sports teams on a wide assortment of items. However, Jack Kelly of Acme Premium said his company is moving away from licensed products. He explained, "Generic items like trolls can be in as much demand and offer more merchandise for the money, since no licensing fee is involved."

Electronic goods are proving to be popular for mid- and high-end redemption. Headphone radios, clocks, boom-boxes, telephones, and TVs were shown by firms like RMK, who specialize in electronics and add-ons to the product line-up of companies like Bonita Marie and Acme Premium.

David Katz of Bonita Marie gave this advice for buying crane and redemption merchandise: "Be conservative; no one—not the redemption supplier or redemption center owner or operator—knows for sure what will appeal to the player. Buy a little of any one item, and if it moves, buy more!"

Video Gaming Equipment

Before ACME '92 started it was dubbed "the Louisiana show" because Louisiana operators would have their first chance at

ACME '92

D&R Industries' Lynn Ruber (l) chats with Richard Delfino of American Shuffleboard.

At the Smart booth, (l-r): Matt Tarantelli of T.O.P., Jeff Smart, Ed Singley and Michael Lucido of Diversified Coin, and Gordon Smart.

At the Dan Brechner booth, Lee Batson (l) of Sunshine Enterprises visits with Brechner's Mark Rasnow.

At the Betson booth, (l-r): Jerry Johnston of H.A. Franz, Betson's John Margold, and Joe Franz and Floyd Taylor of H.A. Franz.

Standard Changemaker's Barry O'Brien talks shop with Nickels and Dimes' David Roberts.

At the Taito booth, (l-r): Taito's Emilio Cabrera, Marty Shumsky and Cindy Bozman of Reno Game Sales, and Taito's Rick Rochetti and Natalie Kulig.

hands-on experience with legal video gaming equipment. While other states struggle with stalled legislative efforts, Louisiana looks forward to start-up on July 1.

Eight months have passed and machines are not yet in place. The process of passing legislation may take as long as four years. Even after success is achieved it takes about a year for the structure to be in place, rules and regulations to be formulated, games to be approved, and background checks to be completed before licensing begins.

Although the law establishing legal pokers was signed on July 30, 1991, no machines have been allowed in the state for demonstration. Trade shows, direct visits to factories, and scouting trips to Montana and South Dakota have provided the only access to the machines. Many Louisiana operators have done all three.

In addition, smart operators attended every meeting or hearing related to the proposed rules and regulations, sending their comments and suggestions in writing to the La. State Police. Seminars hosted by distributors and manufacturers maintained the enthusiasm and afforded valuable data.

"The more informed the better," said one Louisiana attendee. "That's why I'm here. I can't afford to miss a scrap of information. Now I finally have the chance to sample the games for myself at my leisure. Questions that accumulated can now be answered."

And what are those nagging questions? For starters: which games will be the most popular, and is touch-screen or button the way to go?

Said one Louisiana service entity: "Most pokers are basically the same. The important factors are service and dependability. We can't compare Louisiana to South Dakota or even Las Vegas. It's a different type of player. We don't know which games will have the most player appeal. The player will dictate which machines will be most popular."

"If operators would take as much time trying to run their current businesses as they are worrying about getting into video poker, then the whole industry wouldn't be so down."

Many operators may be tempted to look at pricing only. "That's not a good philosophy," said the same individual. "A few hundred dollars more at the start may mean the difference between staying in business a short time or a long time."

How many different manufacturer's machines will an operator buy? The answer hovered at two. "Some people will hit it lucky with the first type of machine they put out, but who knows?" was one comment.

Then there's the sticky dilemma of choosing between casino-style or upright machines. Several attendees felt that the casino models have the greatest eye appeal and really look like something new in a location. Location and patron preference, if researched beforehand, will help determine the models purchased.

There is a bit of controversy raging over touch-screen vs. button model machines. "Some people just love to slap those buttons," said one manufacturer. "Some of the older players will want that same sensation with the new equipment."

In South Dakota the touch-screen models appear to be leading the pack in game revenues. Apparently, players make a quick adjustment to touch-screen with no problems. It's a faster game and experienced card players like that aspect. It's no secret that the company with the first touch-screen models has the biggest market share in South Dakota. Most manufacturers offer both button and touch-screen models. There are no instances of touch-screen games in South Dakota being replaced by button models. It could be compared to CD jukeboxes—touch-screen representing the wave of the future.

One Southwestern Louisiana operator said he wanted to go with touch-screen models in all his locations, citing the dismal prospect of having a competitor offer touch-screen machines while his locations didn't have any. "Go with the most advanced technology possible," was his credo. "Offer the locations and players the best equipment you can. This applies to all areas of our business, not just video poker games."

ACME '92

Rod and Marilyn Kruse of Nebraska Technical Services with Mort Ansky of U.S. Games and the *Pot-O-Gold* upright and *Bar Brain* bartop.

By the Arachnid *Lucky Touch* (l-r): D.W. Morton of SPR Inc., Don Williams and Lamara Ozley Jr. of O.M. Investors, and Tony Beyer of Arachnid.

Kerry Reppert (l) of IGT shows the *Player's Choice* to David Baye of A-Ace Video Gaming.

The Merit clan in front of *Scorpion* darts, (l-r): Howard Smoyer, Lane Helgeson (dart champ), John Nolder (Tri Vending), Lamar Forque, Bob Wiles, and Dave Rubenstein.

Playing Konami's *G.I. Joe*, (l-r): Harvey Weingarten, Steve Pullen, and Jay Waldman of Kentucky Coin.

Larry Potashnick (l) and Barry Schraier of Warehouse of Vending & Games play *X-Men* by Konami.

A touch-screen company's representative put it this way: "The other aspects of speed, etc., are nice. But the two most important elements to consider are game revenue and multiple game flexibility. If Louisiana operators choose the wrong machine they will have an upgrade problem. If they choose the right hardware they know they can easily upgrade."

All manufacturers showing video gaming equipment reported high interest at their booths, noting that many attendees made the rounds and came back for a second look. All these interested parties are not from Louisiana alone. Increased interest in video gaming around the country has created a heightened awareness of gaming and all its implications.

Not everyone was happy with all the hurrah over gaming. Said one Midwesterner: "If operators would take as much time trying to run their current businesses as they are worrying about getting into video poker, then the whole industry wouldn't be so down."

This view was shared by another Midwestern operator. Recounting the time already expended away from his company in pursuit of legal pokers, he said, "We have a vending business to run here too. We can't lose sight of that fact."

In Wisconsin, where media reporting on a proposed video lottery program has released the proverbial "can of worms," the matter has simply turned ugly. A Wisconsin operator said regretfully: "I personally think we'd all be better off if it was never proposed in our state."

A Southern operator said it's no longer a matter of taking a neutral position. States starved for revenue are looking into video gaming and if operators don't get active it might pass without their input. Oregon's state-run program will not escape the notice of any entity looking into video gaming.

An even more pessimistic view was expressed by a distributor in Illinois: "Video lottery could spell the end of the industry as we know it. It's not the same as operating other games, no matter what anyone says."

"Considering the difficult task at hand, and the need for a unified effort, it seems an odd irony that many state association-sponsored efforts are fragmented."

Many companies not normally producing video gaming devices had a prototype unit in their booths. One operator was decidedly confused and alarmed, stating, "Everyone and his brother is making a machine and that scares the hell out of me. There will be a lot of operators who will get burned on equipment."

Other questions on the minds of attendees were: Where will all the manufacturers be in the next five years? What are the company track records? How do the companies handle old customers who don't represent new sales? Are we going to be "sold" and abandoned?

The "me too" syndrome is reminiscent of the crane explosion in the mid-1980s. Where are most of those companies today? How about all the companies that made telephones or condom vending machines?

Aside from the evaluation of manufacturers and product, one vital fact remains: the push for legalizing video gaming is in full swing. State governments have made a decision to consider underwriting gaming. The numbers generated from this adult form of entertainment cannot be ignored. Coin machine operators have to fight to be a part of it, calling attention to their contributions to their communities and proving themselves worthy of inclusion.

Considering the difficult task at hand, and the need for a unified effort, it seems an odd irony that many state association-sponsored efforts are fragmented. Sometimes the problems start within an organization itself. Said one showgoer: "If operators in a state can't work out their own differences, I'd like to know how they think legislators feel about their ability to run a multimillion dollar video lottery."

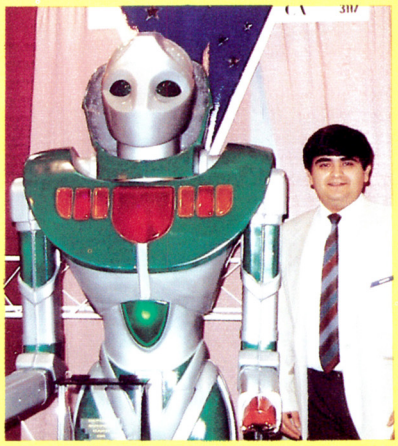
Considering the emphasis on video gaming, it was not surprising to see a dramatic decline in amusement poker games on the show floor. Operators seriously pursuing legalized video gaming are advising their peers to get out of the gray area games and concentrate on what they feel is the future of the business.

Pinballs

Ah, pinballs. Like cats and broc-

ACME '92

Don Ball & Associates' Don Ball (c) and Carol Meserole watch Thomas Myers play a game of *SuperStar Golf*.



Alfonso Alcaraz of Cofusa with the *Kola Kron* vending robot.

At GaMCO's booth, (l-r): John Mellor of Euro Slot and Coin Slot, Mike Laing of Southern Sales, GaMCO's Emily and Ron Yaffe, and Paul Savage of CMS.

Tom Leon and Jeff Berg of Amusement Equipment Exchange were pleased to highlight their miniature train.

Southland Investment's Don Hanson (l) and Jeff Seligman (c) with Jaleco's Larry Berke by the *Grand Prix Star*.

Shelly Brown of Music-Vend/Dunis Distributing and Jerry Johnston of Amusement Unlimited Inc. play Data East's *Nitroball*.

coli, operators either love pinball machines or hate them; there is no middle ground. Many gush that pinball is in the midst of a renaissance, excitedly declaring that there's never been so much good product available. Others pooh-pooh that notion, pointing out that their older pins earn comparably to newer ones—why spend the money? And please, can we talk about the constant breakdowns!

Compare, for example, the following statements, made about the same game within the span of 20 minutes:

"*The Addams Family* is my number one pin on location right now. Before that, it was *Terminator 2*. I never used to be a big fan of pinballs, but they're outearning all but my best driving games. I have no choice but to buy them."

Then again...

"I'm not buying *The Addams Family*. I take that back; I have bought one. But I placed it beside a *High Speed*, and after two weeks they earned almost the same. I'm not saying it isn't a good pin. Let's just say I can do without it and all the other licensed pins the manufacturers are giving us."

Most, though, shared the opinion of the first respondent. The Bally pinball from Midway Mfg. has earned well for the majority of operators polled. Designer Pat Lawlor says *The Addams Family* is so loaded with features that it's able to do well long after the film has left theatres.

"The tie-in with the movie gets players in there for the first few weeks after its release," he said. "Then you'd better have a darned good game if you expect it to earn weeks and weeks later."

Williams' *The Getaway: High Speed II*, a Steve Ritchie game, was described by more than one operator as "solid." Said the owner of a pinball-laden arcade, "It's no *T2*, but how many of those do you run across? I expect *The Getaway* to be a solid earner—nothing record-setting, but no dog, either. Players will be attracted to the 'Supercharger' feature most of all."

A West Coast operator was more enthusiastic: "I *love* this game! If I didn't know better I'd think he designed it just for me. I predict it will do very well out here."

> ***"I never used to be a big fan of pinballs, but they're outearning all but my best driving games. I have no choice but to buy them."***

Data East Pinball brought its licensed movie tie-in *Hook* to ACME '92. The company has been actively pursuing licenses for its games, and it's paid off—for them and operators of their pins. In fact, Data East Pinball has broken all previous company sales records with *Hook*, reports design director Joe Kaminkow.

"We're just doing better with each pin," he said. "I think people are starting to recognize the innovations that we've brought to pinball: the dot-matrix on *Checkpoint*, the music in *Back to the Future*, the solid-state flipper. We're really excited about our future." (The future, by the way, is *Lethal Weapon*, which was previewed in the Data East suite.)

Getting back to *Hook*, this operator quote was representative of most: "I like the fact that Data East has been tying its games in with a license. They seem to catch the player's eye more than a game without one. *Hook* follows a string of good Data East licenses, and I hope they keep it up."

Premier Technology introduced *Operation Thunder* at ACME. Feelings were mixed: "It's not as strong as *Surfin' Safari*. I'm not sure if I'll buy any," said one operator. Another, though, was more complimentary, saying, "I've got some locations that would probably embrace a pin like *Operation Thunder*. I've been giving Premier another look lately. They've been on the right road with *Cactus Jack's* and *Surfin' Safari*."

Premier will enter the licensing fray with its next pin, *Super Mario Brothers*. We'll feature it in the near future.

Lastly, Alvin G. & Co. (the "G" stands for Gottlieb, by the way) debuted a game that borders on the pinball/novelty categories. Called *A.G. Soccer-Ball* (*A.G. Football* for the European market), the two-ended game features head-to-head competition, though a single-player mode is available. A female respondent called it "loads of fun," while her gender-opposite competitor labeled it "a nice departure from conventional pinball machines."

An operator said the price needed to be brought down before he'd buy *Soccer-Ball*, but another said it was "where it should be." (Do

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Delta Gaming's crew and celebrity visitor, (l-r): Aubrey Windstein, Val Haydel, Joe Theisman, John Georges, Bob Pierpoint, and Bill Hall of TLC Novelty.

Jim Gentile of Midway joins young Joey Franta of Just for Fun as he plays *Total Carnage*.

Carlos Lozano (r) of VLC greets Larry Turner of Mountain Coin/Phoenix. The game is a VLC upright model.

Bob Harzer of Premier (c) shows the *Player's Touch* to Albert Desnoyers (l) and Norman Bomhower of Amusements D'Iberville.

In front of *Lott-O-Luck* and *Fortune's Favor*, (l-r): Vince Kyle of Big Ten, Lou and Bonnie Gourgues of B & L Amusement Co., and Frank Mauberret of Gaming Management.

By the new *Cougar Wall Mount*, (l-r): Robert Pomes Sr. of R & S Amusement, Lou Theriot of L & M Amusement, and Melody Sutkowi of Valley.

operators agree on anything?) Whatever the case, production for the game is set for the end of June.

Table Games

One doesn't look to the table game category for "what's hot," because here it's steady, long-term earnings that count, not flash. Those strolling the aisles of ACME '92 in search of solid product, however, didn't leave disappointed.

Valley Recreation Products continues to offer operators a varied choice of billiard tables with the *Cougar ZD-4, The Leopard*, and *Bumper Pool*. Dynamo does likewise with its *Dyna Pool* bumper, standard *Dynamo Pool Table*, and the top-of-the-line *Excaliber*. American Shuffleboard checked in with its *Bumpa Pool* and *Classic* (as well as the line of shuffleboards), while Great American Billiards, a new coin-op billiards company, made its debut with an attractive table.

The company with the most unique table, though, was 8-Pocket Right Angle Billiards. The table is shaped just like the name says, with eight pockets in heretofore unseen positions. For those afraid that it might not fit through location doorways, the company has a model available that allows the portion jutting out to be removed.

Imagination Leisure showed an improved *SST* air hockey table; it now comes with over-the-top scoring. The company also exhibited its *Super-Bowl* bowler. Dynamo's standard and deluxe air hockey tables continue to draw operator bravos, and it covers all bases with the Dynamo soccer table. Stella International again showed its glow-in-the-dark *Disco Taifun* air hockey.

Tornado Table Soccer exhibited its tried-and-true *Tornado 2000* foosball table, while Imperial International offered operators its long-time *Premier Championship* soccer table.

Finally, Williams displayed its high-tech *Strike Master* shuffle alley, complete with dot-matrix display and varied strike values.

"If I didn't know better I'd think he designed that game just for me."

Music

For you vinyl holdouts who've waited and waited for this "CD thing" to pass, it's time to throw in the towel and face up to reality: if you want to be a jukebox operator in the '90s, CD is the only way to go. Oh sure, you can still get your hands on 45 rpm boxes, and certainly some locations don't warrant a sparkling 100-CD beauty. But the jukebox manufacturers exhibiting at ACME '92 made it clear through their product offerings that CD is the road ahead; vinyl is a glance in the rearview mirror.

For those trying to choose which jukebox to buy, the decision can be daunting—especially with so much good product available. The numbers show that most operators have been picking the Rowe *LaserStar*, and they chose it the "Jukebox of the Year" in Play Meter award balloting. But who knows why? Vice president of music Joel Friedman does.

"Our jukeboxes have the most presence, by far, of any on the market," he said. "They have the rapid title display and are user-friendly, which gets the customer to spend his money quickly. That's the bottom line—the cashbox. Our jukeboxes earn better for the operator than anybody else's. It's proven."

Other factors in the Rowe formula for success, Friedman says, are the jukeboxes' long-term reliability and profitability, the "great distribution network," and the attitude of not resting on the company's laurels.

"When you put all that together, you can see why this American company and this American product is growing in overseas markets, despite many of them having high tariffs," Friedman said. "Rowe jukeboxes are in 54 countries all over the world. Twenty-two of them were represented at a distributor meeting we had at the ATEI show in London. They know we're sincerely trying to build the best jukebox we can."

The latest entry from Rowe is the *LaserStar CD Wallette*, a smaller unit designed to work with a *CD Hideaway* or *LaserStar CD-100*. Friedman says it's already receiving a "fantastic response" from operators using it in truck stops, diners, and other such locations. As for future plans, Friedman hinted that Rowe is "working on several new products that will knock operators out."

NSM-America's booth featured a replica of a souped-up Indy car. Was it another vehicle-meets-jukebox creation from Paul Harmon, formerly of Carson City Mfg. and now with NSM? No, the "High Performance Machine" sign hanging over the Indy car referred to

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At the Namco booth are Shane Breaks (l) and Mr. Nakamura.

Wurlitzer's Jerry Reeves (l) and Steven Frischknecht by the *New York, New York*.

Darlene Kindler between Irem's latest products.

By the *CJ-V77 LaserJuke*, (l-r): Pioneer's Tony Maniscalco, Ted Karasawa, and Dave Drouillard.

Capcom's Brian Duke and wife Emi with their daughter Brianna.

Surrounding Rock-Ola's *Trilogy* jukebox, (l-r): Rock-Ola's Shuja Haque, Stephen Genco of Genco Amusement Co., and Rock-Ola's Frank Schulz and Al Pickert.

NSM's jukeboxes, which are loved by enough operators to place NSM-America in a solid second position behind Rowe in the U.S. marketplace.

"Operators are attracted to the 'Quick Change Artist,' the CD changing mechanism that changes discs faster than any other jukebox built today," said George Haydocy, NSM-America's national sales manager. "They also know that we stand behind our product. (National training manager) Keith White travels to distributorships all over the country to conduct service schools. So operators know that their distributors really understand how to service NSM jukeboxes.

"We're really excited about our growth. I see us getting more and more of the marketplace, and it's happening because of the quality product and the service to back it up. We owe a lot of our recent success to our distributors, who've been just fantastic."

NSM is currently marketing its 100-CD *Performer-Grand* jukebox, the first in an upcoming series of *Performer* models. Haydocy says that by this fall's AMOA show, look for the *Performer Classic* and *Performer Wall*, along with the "ES-V" system, a technological step up from the existing ES-IV. "This will all be part of the *Performer* family of jukeboxes, which will have different applications for an operator's varied needs," Haydocy said.

Pioneer Laser Entertainment exhibited its *CD LaserJuke* models, the *CJ-V99* and *V-77*. To attract operator interest in these sleek black beauties, Pioneer has gone incentive-crazy: zero percent financing, through Firestone Financial, on the purchase of any jukebox before April 30. First-time buyers also get a free pair of speakers (a $360 retail value), and those who spring for three or more boxes receive a free service kit.

"I was already close to buying a few Pioneer jukeboxes, but this makes my mind up for me," said one operator. "I think it's really nice of Pioneer to help operators out like that."

"Rowe jukeboxes earn better for the operator than anyone else's. It's proven."

PLE president Ted Karasawa says he's happy with the company's steady growth and present market position, considering it's only been in the jukebox arena for less than three years. "I'm pleased with a lot of the young, aggressive operators," Karasawa said. "They're the ones showing the most interest in our CD jukeboxes."

Pioneer's jukebox program with Burger King, begun last fall, has been temporarily suspended. A survey of franchise owners is being taken to see if they want to continue the program, which also involves a partial distribution of proceeds to Cities in Schools. The corporate-owned stores, on the other hand, like it and will continue onward. (Note: Rowe has a similar jukebox program with other Burger King franchise owners.)

One area that's ripe for explosive growth, Karasawa feels, is Pioneer's *Laser Karaoke* sing-along system. There are 600,000 Karaoke locations in Japan, with 4,000 songs available; here the numbers are 6,000 and 1,200, respectively. He expects 16,000 total locations in America by March 1993.

After being absent at AMOA '91, Seeburg International returned at ACME '92 with a new management team and a new jukebox, *The Skyline*. The unit, a facelifted Seeburg *Model D* with assorted improvements, is available for shipping in mid-May. Mindful of Seeburg's recently sullied reputation, new president Tom Hacker is still hopeful that former Seeburg operators can be brought back into the fold.

"We're slowly coming back; our distribution network is being built again, and operators have come by the booth to check out the new Seeburg," Hacker said. "They're giving us another chance, and we're responding with what Seeburg has always done best: providing the finest-sounding CD jukeboxes in the business. There's definitely a niche out there for us."

The Skyline holds 60 CDs, and future models will offer a higher and lower number to give the company a varied product line, Hacker added. One operator summed up the Seeburg situation this way: "They were the first ones involved in CD jukeboxes, and they earned well for me until they hit that bad stretch. I'm willing to give the new guys (management) one more chance."

Wurlitzer's *New York, NY* continues to draw praise from operators, who are impressed with its beautiful rendering of the New York City skyline and the sound emanating from its six speakers.

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Charlotte Reid (c) of Action Lighting shows lighting strips to Bill Lautenbach (l) and Javier Gordillo.

As always, Ted Furkin drew a crowd interested in his Silent Partner software.

Play Meter's Valerie Cognevich with Chris (l) and Paul Beall.

R & M staffers Claudia Pachon, Mario Briceno, Christine Kadletz, and Steve Yanosik had only good things to say about ACME '92.

Denise Pullen polishes the shoes of Feature Electronics Ltd.'s Noel Mercer while Ed Singley of Diversified Coin looks on.

Greg Pesina (l) and Donald Russell (c) visit Bill Beckham at his Red Baron booth.

Said one operator, "I hope Wurlitzer keeps giving us jukeboxes like *New York, NY*. Having good product, plus the fact that they've opened an office in New York City, makes me believe Wurlitzer is serious about competing in the American jukebox market."

Rock-Ola was the last jukebox manufacturer to produce a dedicated CD unit. The result, *Trilogy*, has been hailed by Rock-Ola adherents as being able to compete with the best CD boxes on the market. Said a particularly confident operator of Rock-Ola's *Trilogy*, "Close your eyes and listen to this box compared to a Rowe or an NSM. You'll pick the *Trilogy* every time."

Two companies also exhibited CD conversion kits for operators not wanting to buy new CD units. Digital Disc America has expanded beyond its regular conversion kit by now offering a hideaway unit called the "DJ 2000," to be teamed up with a wallbox. It boasts "the world's fastest music-to-music feature"; as one disc fades out, it's immediately replaced by another one. Flipping pages is another new option.

Besides the regular kit and the hideaway/wallbox, DDA has a dedicated unit called *Super Cougar*. It contains the regular CD kit, holds 100 CDs, and has flipping pages available.

The CD Jukebox Kit Co. debuted its new 50-disc conversion kit, complete with programmable pricing, bookkeeping functions, attract modes, the ability to program out unwanted songs, and a 12-month warranty on the CPU and disc player.

Finally, Hot Hits' Bill Guler announced that his company now has pop *and* rock discs available. A new 14-song disc will be released every six to seven weeks, with country discs coming out every month.

"Operators are giving the new Seeburg another chance. There's definitely a niche out there for us."

Darts

Valley, Arachnid, and Merit, the big three of the dart world, displayed their newest products at the show. Valley Recreation took the occasion to introduce the new *Cougar Wall Mount*, which offers all the same quality components as the company's free-standing games. Features include the T-60/30 target; American size target standard (interchangeable with the International size); Valley's selectable, patented double bulls-eye; nylon target segments; and high quality matrix that accepts any soft tip dart up to 30 grams in weight. In addition, there's overhead scoring with four-player Cricket standard, 16 game selections, and multiple dip switches for operator-controlled options.

Arachnid offered a host of units, most notably its *Galaxy* darts with DartMan II software that sorts and calculates all league information recorded on the game. Features include a super "spider" with thin-rib construction, square entry holes, flush surface, and missed dart detector. The game also allows the retrieval of league information through a modem.

Merit Industries showcased its *Scorpion* darts, a unit that incorporates the company's Solo Challenger feature, which enables the player to compete one-on-one against the game's built-in challenger with four selectable skill levels. *Scorpion* has a linear power supply, over/under cash box door, drop-down front service door, operator-adjustable options, and built-in diagnostics and bookkeeping.

All three companies feature an extensive lineup of dart games to suit a particular operator's needs. Newcomers to the dart league and tournament concepts will be happy to know that Valley, Arachnid, and Merit offer operator assistance in the start-up stages of new programs. Extensive written materials are provided, as well as on-the-scene help from field representatives.

Video Games

The name's Wolf, Scott Wolf. Some people call me The Video Weasel. Of course some people also believe that Dan Quayle has a functioning brain. It takes all kinds, I guess. Instead of a badge I carry a flimsy business card with the wrong address and phone number and rather than a gun I carry a ballpoint pen. OK, so I carry a gun, too, but it's only illegal if I'm caught.

Anyway, I found myself on assignment at something called the ACME '92 show, apparently a showcase for the latest in coin-op technology. One operator said that to be successful, you must be at the shows to see what is out there. Boy, did I get an eyeful, and I'm not just talkin' about the video games.

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Jess Thornhill of Thornhill Enterprises (l) and Sebastian Juarez of CD Kit Co. by the company's new dedicated unit.

Donald King with *RoboPitch*.

By Seeburg's new jukebox, *The Skyline*, (l-r): Seeburg's John Chapin, Bob Breither, and Ed Blankenbeckler, Phil Roth of Roth Distributing, and Seeburg president Tom Hacker.

John Hill of Sega loves his company's *Speed Shot* as much as we do.

Digital Disc America's Rich Grant (l) and Bruce Earnhart (r) with Miguel and Oscar Duran of D&D Amusements.

Alan Bruck (l) paid a visit to old friends, here with Atari's Jim Newlander.

ACME '92

Here's what I saw, if I can just read my own notes: lots of action fighting games. As most of you recall, these are not my favorite, but there is no doubt they are the most popular video games out right now.

For those operators looking for video games to add to their street routes, there seemed to be a variety. However, comments from street operators seemed to indicate otherwise. It was obvious from comments that operators were searching the aisles for equipment that would last longer than they have come to expect from video games.

As was expected going into the show, Capcom's *Street Fighter II: Champion Edition* drew quite a bit of attention. And Namco made a huge impact with its larger-than-life selection, from video to redemption. While major trade shows seem to be judged on video alone, this show had much more. Redemption overshadowed video. But many operators view redemption as being out of reach for the average street operator. If you study the game listings, you'll see a healthy line-up of video with a variety of themes.

"I see NSM getting more and more of the jukebox marketplace. It's happening because of the quality product and the quality service to back it up."

Before dragging your weary bones over to that list and deciding what your route can't do without, I have a few general observations from the 1992 ACME show that I would like to share with you in typical David Letterman style:

10. Wile E. Coyote's obvious disappointment at lack of jet powered roadrunner catching equipment.

9. So many 'action fighting' games that you couldn't swing a cat without hitting one.

8. Cher look-alike already 'spoken for'.

7. Dearth of plush Wolf toys.

6. Woolworth's conveniently located directly across from the Alamo.

5. Local arcades featuring 'New Games!' from as recent as 1989.

4. Topless dancers not allowed to date customers.

3. Plastic brochure bags more fashionable than ever.

2. Except for the cowboy hats, Texas looks just like Illinois.

1. Absence of leggy 'booth babes' forces attendees to actually pay attention to product. □

ACME '92

At the Doyle booth, Sondra Doyle chats with Ted Sloan of Bob's Space Racers.

Imagination Leisure's Richard Simon, Jim Fish, and Richard McGrath.

At the Fabtek booth, (l-r): Chuck Lischer and David Stubben, co-developers of *The Farm Yard.*

At the Bundra Games/Adastra booth, Frank Bundra (r) and Foster Brashear (c) show a customer their latest products.

At the Meltec booth (l-r): The company's Michael McEwan and Roy Nishi, a customer, and John McEwan.

At the Lazer-Tron booth, (l-r): The company's Matt Kelly, Ron Carrara, and Norman Petermeier.

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Data East Pinball's Neil Falconer (l) and Joe Kaminkow by *Hook*.

Kimberly Maillete of 8-Pocket Right Angle Billiards shows customers the company's unique billiard table.

Dynamo's Chris Brady (l) and Damon Paramore (r) flank Atlas Distributors' Lou Larson in front of the company's new 50-inch monitor.

Rowe's Joel Friedman (l) and Joe Krestakos by the new *CD Wallette*. Krestakos has been designing Rowe jukeboxes since 1946.

Scott Nelson of Hanson Distributing with Tornado Table Soccer's Dave Courington.

At the NSM-America booth, (l-r): NSM's Mike Jablonski, Jim Roberts of James Industries, Brad Weiss of Canadian Amusement Game Supplies, Marty Smith and John Coble of SunBelt, Carlos Colin of James Industries, and three-quarters of NSM's George Haydocy (sorry George).

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From left: Robert Fuentes Jr. of Strata, Oscar Sanchez of Yud in Mexico, and Ralph Melgosa of Strata by the *Lucky Bucks* video poker game.

Lenny Dean (r) of Coastal demonstrates *Top Gun* for David Bishop of Namco Operations.

At the Bally Gaming booth, (l-r): Chris Tanfield of Worldwide Gaming and Julie Mottes and Alan Maiss of Bally Gaming with the *Maverick Joker Poker*.

By Premier's *Operation Thunder*, (l-r): Jeanine Mitchell, Mike Vrettos, and Connie Mitchell.

Gathering at the Tekbilt booth, (l-r): Wayne Bozeman, Buzz Bruner, and Stephen Kinder of Tekbilt with Bill Douba of James Industries.

Diane and Stan Jarocki by the American Laser Games' *Gallagher's Gallery*.

New games at a glance

VIDEO GAMING MACHINES

AMERICAN SAMMY

• **Lucky Joker**—A video poker game with touch-screen technology, housed in an upright woodgrain cabinet with single coin slot and $1-5-10-20 bill acceptor.

ARACHNID

• **Lucky Touch**—Digitally processed graphics with casino sound effects, 19" touch-screen monitor, reliable 16-bit IBM AT platform, multi-game capability, NCR printer, and Mars bill acceptor with 1000 count downstacker.

BALLY GAMING

• **Maverick Joker Poker**—Classic casino-style cabinet with 13" monitor, side-mount bill acceptor, button controls, two "winner" songs, coin-in and game-in-progress sounds, and printer mechanism with built-in cutter.

• **Joker Poker**—Shown in an arcade floor model cabinet, this button control game features single board technology, high-speed printer, built-in game diagnostics and game security, dual coin comparitors, and menu-controlled set-up.

BIG TEN ELECTRONICS

• **Fortune's Favor**—Three game choices in an upright model with 13" or 19" monitor, button controls, *help* and *raise* features, different card faces and backs, 25-cent or 5-cent versions, and programmable features. Also shown: *Lott-O-Luck*, a new casino-style unit for the legal gaming market.

DYNAMO

• **Draw Poker Casino Style**—Available with either 19" or 13" monitor. The 19" screen is strictly touch-screen, the 13" screen offers touch-screen or button controls. Other features: Star Micronics printer, three games (Aces or Better, Jacks or Better, Joker Poker), Mars or Tekbilt bill acceptors, and all-metal cabinet.

• **Draw Poker Upright**—A metal and wood cabinet with 19" monitor, button controls, multi-game choices, and Mars or Tekbilt bill acceptors with 1000 bill stacker.

GAMMA INTERNATIONAL

• **One at a Time Poker**—Made by J & T Mfg. with software by Cardco, the unit features button controls, an 80286 main board with 14" monitor, and self-contained management system that provides hundreds of statistics. A variety of games are available.

GAME SALES MARKETING

• **Ante Up Bingo**—A bingo machine designed for use on Indian reservations and in all legal bingo markets. The mother unit, equipped with two outside mount bill acceptors, can connect to nearly 200 additional units. The monitor is an RGB 13", the cabinet is all-metal.

INTERNATIONAL GAME TECHNOLOGY

• **Player's Choice Classic Combo**—A unit that offers players the choice of touch-screen or button controls in one casino-style cabinet. Features include multi-game capability, outside mount JCM bill acceptor with 1000 bill stacker, and Star Micronics printer.

• **Player's Choice Classic Touch-Screen**—For those desiring a casino-style dedicated touch-screen game that offers a wide range of game software variations, this unit offers all the standard IGT features.

• **Player's Choice Arcade**—Choose from either touch-screen or button controls in an upright cabinet with all standard features of the *Player's Choice* line. Also available: a slant-top model, *The Bar Machine*.

MERIT INDUSTRIES

• **Superstar 2000**—Multiple game unit available with either touch-screen or button controls. Features include 13" monitor with front controls, enclosed NCR printer with quick reload, heavy chrome all-steel door, and selectable background colors.

PARS ELECTRONICS

• **Golden Touch**—Touch-screen technology with 13" monitor, all-steel cabinet, NCR ticket printer, Mars GL-5 bill acceptor (optional) or VFM-5 (standard), and multiple game capability.

• **Golden Paradise**—Button model unit with corresponding features found in the *Golden Touch*. The super VGA flat screen affords extra-sharp graphics.

PREMIER TECHNOLOGY

• **Player's Touch**—Available in touch-screen or button-style all-metal cabinet with 13" or 19" front control monitor, fingerprint-resistant finish, multiple game selections, four card graphics, paper level indicator, and *help* screens with large type.

• **The Vault**—An all-metal upright with the same features found in the *Player's Touch*. Look for advanced screen statistics with detailed auditing, standard 40-column printer, volume control, and 5-setting adjustable deal speed.

SMK CORP.

• **American Classics Draw Poker**—Features include 13" Ceronix monitor, all-steel cabinet, operator-selectable game speed, button controls, three poker game options, and Mars VFM-5 bill acceptor with 400 bill downstacker.

STELLA INTERNATIONAL

• **Star Lotto**—A free-standing, touch-screen unit in a black and purple cabinet with 19" Ceronix monitor, bill acceptor, and built-in ash tray for player comfort.

• **Casino-style Poker**—An all-metal cabinet with traditional casino styling, 19" Ceronix monitor, bill acceptor, and touch-screen technology.

STRATA GROUP

• **Lucky Bucks**—Cabaret-size unit with single PC board system, diagnostics and accounting, 13" Wells-Gardner touch-screen monitor, game variations, Star Micronics printer, and choice of card back design for added player interest.

U.S. GAMES

• **Pot-O-Gold**—New casino-style metal cabinet with 19" touch-screen monitor, player-selectable games, magnetic card reader, separate front door access for bill acceptor/stacker, and two-color, 40-column line printer.

• **Pot-O-Gold Upright**—Touch-screen model with 13" monitor and all the same features as the casino-style. Also has padded armrest, solid brass footrail, and optional debit/credit system with player tracking.

•**Pot-O-Gold Pulltab**—Upright model with woodgrain cabinet and solid brass footrail, high-impact button panel, 13" monitor, external key switch for operator menu, and two-color printer with built-in audit journal copy.

VIDEO GAMING TECHNOLOGY

• **VGT Gold**—Numerous card decks are available in this touch-screen unit with cartridge-slot design that translates to future game expansion. Available in an all-metal casino-style cabinet or upright woodgrain cabinet with 13" or 19" monitor.

VIDEO LOTTERY CONSULTANTS

• **Video Gaming Terminal**—New casino-style, touch-screen unit with 19" monitor, multi-color graphics, multi-denominational bill acceptor, programmable scrolling banner, and on-screen accounting, audit, diagnostic, and game statistics.

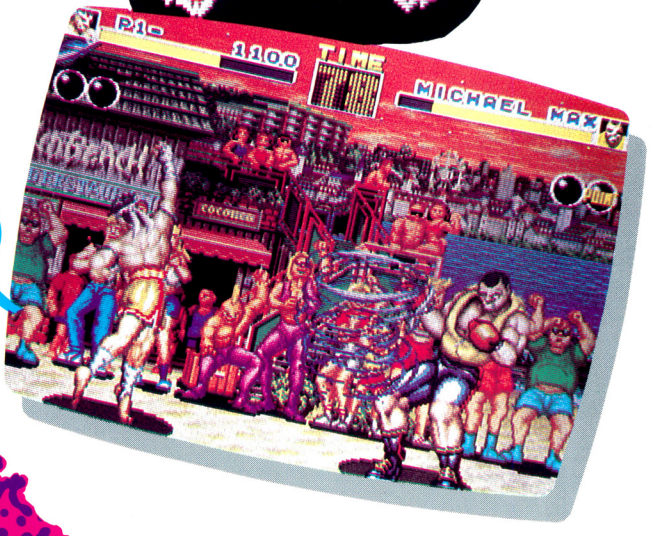
• **Video Gaming Terminal**—Upright, all-metal unit with 19" monitor and all the same features as the casino-style. Included in both are a variety of special game features to assist players and speed play.

WMS GAMING

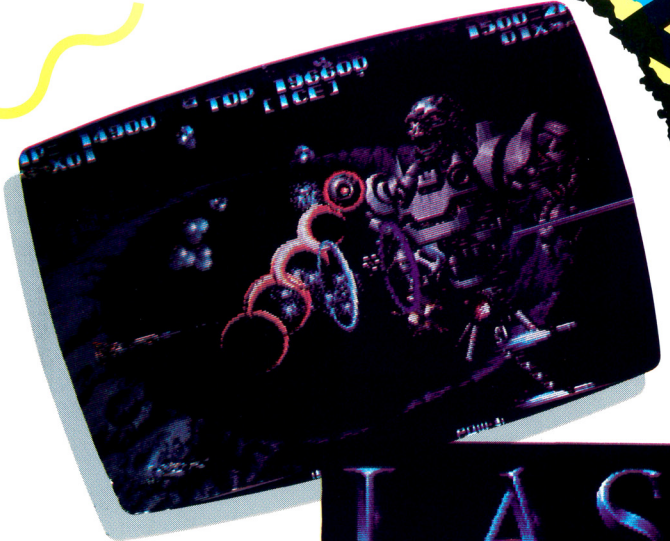
• **Midas Touch**—Touch-screen, multi-game capability, and single board electronics in a casino-style cabinet. Player-selectable game library, Star Micronics printer, multi-bill validator with 1000 bill stacker; in gold or silver finish.

NEO·GEO®

FATAL FURY™



Airplane fighting action! This two-player simultaneous airplane shooting game allows you to pick up bonus items such as homing missiles, ground missiles and lasers for added attack features. Fight enemies in the air and on the ground. Save up energy for a stronger attack.



Use your fighting instincts to defeat the fiercest tough guys! Choose your character and then master the numerous deathblow techniques. One-player action, or co-operative play that requires two players' teamwork. Then it's head-to-head two-player confrontation after defeating each enemy! Seven stages with player buy-in and continue features.

PRESENTS

LAST RESORT™

SNK Corporation of America
20603 Earl Street, Torrance, CA 90503 • Phone (310) 371-7100 • Fax (310) 371-0969

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SNK

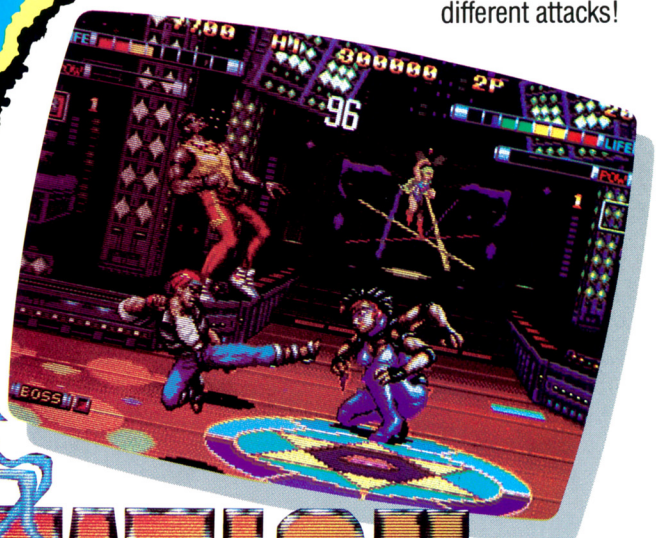
NEO·GEO®

PRESENTS

If you liked Baseball Stars Professional... You'll love Baseball Stars 2!

Choose your team. One player against the computer or two players against each-other. Announcer's voice calls the plays and adds to the non-stop sports action!

Exciting action! The slum is overrun by people transformed into horrible mutant creatures by genetic experiments. Use the lethal blow to destroy them! Two-player simultaneous play. Player buy-in and continue options. Six stages of fighting. Combine buttons and joystick for continuous attack. Use lethal blow and four different attacks!



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COUNTERTOP CARD GAMES

MERIT INDUSTRIES

• **Superstar Pit Boss II**—New trivia and sex trivia questions are offered in addition to a line-up of poker games and word games that total 15 choices. It provides for up to 12 optional keyboard-entry screens for operator/location customized advertising messages.

MICRO MANUFACTURING

• **Turbo Poker II**—Features include a raise after deal, bonus jackpot, hi-lo bonus hand, extra cards, low pairs win, and automatic draw, deal, and bet.

U.S. GAMES

• **Bar Brain**—A UPS-shippable bartop unit with 25 game choices: card games, action games, trivia, word games. Front coin drop, large cash box, 9" color monitor, all-steel cabinet, bill acceptor optional, and 15 screens of advertising with optional keyboard.

8-LINE GAMES/ AMUSEMENT POKER

DREW'S

• **Bingo Series**—Choose from three new bingo games: *Jackpot Bingo/Lucky Bingo, Bingo Quartet*, and *Royal Bingo*, the last game being a combination poker and bingo unit.

GRAYHOUND

• **Dynasty**—An 8-line game with bingo feature, multi-bonus features, and 16 ways to play. Option: Grayhound card dispenser.

• **Tomahawk**—A game designed for Indian reservations but available for all markets. It offers features similar to the *El Dorado*. Option: Grayhound card dispenser.

LEISURE ENTERTAINMENT

• **The Aladdin**—Features include skill stop, all stop, center joker 7 bonus, jackpot stage, three corner challenge, and four-corner challenge. The game is by Dyna.

MICRO MANUFACTURING

• **Lucky Star**—A new game from Wing, featuring two types of double-up, bell fever, free play, and pool point bonus. The game is available in 19" upright, 13" or 9" countertop, and kits. Also shown: *Skill Chance* and *Draw 8 Lines*.

SHARP IMAGE

• **Double 8 Line**—A second 8-line is offered in this unit that features a main game and double-up game. Look for a respin function, second 8-line function, fever game, and alternate strip.

T & M DISTRIBUTORS

• **Georgia Belle**—A Yamate game, approved in Georgia, for redemption purposes only. Success and ticket awards are based on skillfully stopping the lines in this non-credit accumulating unit.

• **Casino Strip**—A strip poker game featuring two 13" monitors. The model displayed allowed players to choose from six female characters and two male characters (12 different discs are available for operator-selectable character combinations). Characters disrobe based on poker hand success.

PINBALLS

ALVIN G. & CO.

• **A.G. Soccer-Ball**—The "A.G." stands for Alvin Gottlieb, who designed this unique two-ended pinball game. Two players can play simultaneously, or one person can play by himself against the computer. Also features a patented "switch flipper" that tells the machine which player hit the ball.

BALLY/MIDWAY

• **The Addams Family**—This pin, a licensed tie-in with the motion picture, features a dot-matrix display, speech by Raul Julia and Anjelica Huston, numerous playfield surprises, awards aplenty, and a "Tru-Pitch" leveling system.

DATA EAST PINBALL

• **Hook**—This swashbuckling pin, a licensed tie-in with the film starring Robin Williams and Dustin Hoffman, features a journey to Pirate Town, jackpot-filled ramps, a dot-matrix display, digitized character speech, an expanded playfield, and solid-state flippers with never-wear rubber.

ACME '92

At the Coin Controls booth, (l-r): The company's James Brendel, Kelly Jankovec, Michael Meisinger with Denny Nicholson of James Industries.

Larry Thatcher (l) and Tom Kane at the Vari-Tech booth.

Ted Furkin (l) and Len Smikun of The Silent Partner flank Thomas Rowan of Thomas Rowan and Sons.

Playing *Super Sonic Blastman*, (l-r): Robert Hall, Brian Tomkins, and Steven Polasek.

At the AmeriCorp booth, Nancie, Ron, and Ronika Siller with Kurt Tompkins (r).

Williams' Ken Fedesna with mother, wife, and daughter.

PREMIER TECHNOLOGY

• **Operation Thunder**—Players fly through mountainous terrain and myriad explosions on the way to completing their combat missions. Play begins as the ball enters a spinning disc inside the domed power plant. A key feature is the "Smart Switch," which eliminates old mechanical switch problems.

WILLIAMS ELECTRONICS

• **The Getaway: High Speed II**—An actual gear shift launches the ball onto the playfield to begin play. Balls entering the "Supercharger" magnetic ball accelerator are spun at breakneck speed. During a video sequence on the dot-matrix display, the car is steered left and right using the flipper buttons.

JUKEBOXES

NSM-AMERICA

• **Performer Grand**—This is the first in an upcoming series of *Performer* jukeboxes. It holds 100 CDs, and the mechanism is visible and presented in a collage of mirrors, with colored lights directed through the plane of mirrored plexiglass. Still specially featured, though, are the HyperBeam system and "Quick Change Artist" CD changing mechanism.

• **The Wizard**—This is essentially a *Fire* jukebox with a new front. Available in Europe now, it's being tested in America on a trial basis.

PIONEER LASER ENTERTAINMENT

• **Model CJ-V99**—This sleek black jukebox with a stainless-steel cabinet packs 390 watts of total power. It has two CD autochangers and three six-disc magazines, for an initial capacity of 18 discs. Background music is automatically played when no selections are made.

• **Model CJ-V77**—Same standard features as the V-99, except that it has one autochanger instead of two.

ROCK-OLA

• **Trilogy**—The unit holds 100 CDs and delivers 280 watts of power. A 10-band equalizer is acoustically adjustable to the surroundings. Other features include a six-speaker, three-way sound system; a data retrieval system that gives audit information instantly; and an eye-level $1/$5 bill acceptor.

ROWE

• **LaserStar Patriot Glory CD-100**—This version of the award-winning LaserStar CD-100 accommodates 12 full-size CD jackets. The title strips are highly visible and highlighted by theatrical, step-framed halo lighting. Three brightly lit CDs rotate above the title display. The cabinet is colored blue.

• **LaserStar Patriot Gold CD-100**—This is the same unit as the *Patriot Glory*, except that it comes in an earthtone and gold cabinet. Other features not mentioned above include an amplifier with 250 watts RMS Dual 7-band equalizer and an autoplay mode.

• **LaserStar CD-51**—This jukebox offers all the advantages of the *LaserStar*, but in a more compact package. It holds 51 CDs and is ideal for those locations where space constraints are a problem.

• **LaserStar CD Wallette**—Rowe's latest offering is designed to work with a *CD Hideaway* or *LaserStar*; it will fit most existing brackets. The jukebox is polar gray and black and designed to match any decor. A mechanical nickel, dime, and quarter acceptor is standard. An LED readout above the keyboard indicates the selection being made, playing, and remaining.

SEEBURG

• **The Skyline**—Seeburg reenters the jukebox fray with this 60-CD unit, which boasts such features as 200 peak watts per channel; colored light beams in the front panel; an eye-level title display; a "Triple-Beam Laser Reader" disc player; and system software logic that automatically locks out faulty disc tracks.

WURLITZER

• **New York, NY**—This unit combines an eye-catching design with sparkling mirrors and glittering chrome trim. It holds 100 CDs and contains six loudspeakers in three-way technology. Special features include vertical, protected storage of the CDs and an electronic service program/popularity counter.

ACME '92

Pictured at the U.S. Amusement Auction booth, (l-r): the company's Ric Stephan and Jeff Schwartz, Gene Maule of Kemco, and auctioneer Bill Mendor.

Angela Bearden of Telco International with operator Richard Willis.

Lauran Bromley with her dad Martin and new game *Hawk Avenger*.

Brian Swanson and Jeff Parrish of Daemco enjoyed the response from operators to their kiddie rides.

At the Eygo booth, (l-r): Venancio Tapia, Jaime Villegas Martinez, Mauricio Vieyra, Jose Luis Leal of William Rivero, and Albert Chien.

D'Vorah Hasheeve of Odds R questions Muncie's Bob Broyles about his tickets.

• **New Orleans**—A 3-D-styled jukebox with 50-disc capacity. Also available from Wurlitzer are the CD and vinyl versions of *One More Time*, the classic Wurlitzer 1015.

REDEMPTION AND NOVELTY GAMES

ADASTRA

• **Shooting Star**—Joint venture with Bundra Games. Enjoy the thrill of aiming a realistic rifle, but with a twist—no violence. Player aims at a blinking star appearing randomly across the screen.

ALTER ENTERPRISES

• **Fireball**—Shown previously. Guide a rapid stream of hollow plastic balls at changing targets to stop the enemy aircraft.

BAY-TEK

• **Rolldown**—Shown previously. Comes in three versions: Fielders Choice (baseball theme), Clown Rolldown (circus theme), and Rolldown.

BETSON

• **Clown Around**—Combines a coin pusher with a skill shooter game. Aim where to shoot with a pinball-type plunger.

• **Rock 'N' Roll**—A 1-, 3-, 4-, or 6-player coin pusher.

BOB'S SPACE RACERS

• **Sidewinder**—Wind a ball down the curves of a spring-mounted playing table, using a steering wheel to tilt the table to the right and left to control the ball.

• **Can Alley**—Shown previously. Clever alley cats peek out of opening and closing garbage can lids, while players throw as many balls as they can into the cans.

• **Whac-A-Mole**—Shown previously. Even after more than a decade, this game continues to prove itself over and over. Players whack pesky moles as they pop out of holes.

• **Bowler Roller**—Shown previously. Players must push a bowling ball just hard enough to make it over a track of steel pipes to land at the end without returning to the beginning.

• **Super Shifter**—Shown previously. Drag stip theme with appropriate sounds as players race to the finish line.

• **Arcade Roll-A-Ball**—Shown previously. Roll a ball into one of several holes to advance your fighter pilot plane to the finish line.

• **Arcade Water Game**—Shown previously. Skillfully shoot a stream of water at a target to advance your way-cool bear to the finish line ahead of the competition.

BROMLEY

• **Hawk Avenger**—"The Helicopter Game," with three-dimensional playfield and colorful, moving targets.

• **The Simpsons Cupcake Contest**—Shown previously. Two players compete to roll the "cupcake" (ping pong ball) into the mouths of our favorite cartoon characters, Bart and Homer Simpson.

• **Ghost Town and Rock 'N Bowl**—Shown previously.

BUNDRA GAMES

• **Shooting Star**—Enjoy the thrill of aiming a realistic rifle, but with a twist—no violence. Player aims at a blinking star appearing randomly across the screen.

• **Crusher**—Made into a redemption piece aimed at the smaller folk. Player grabs a "can" and tests his skill and strength in crushing it.

CAPCOM

• **Bank-It**—Licensed from Lazer-Tron. Players toss coins through baskets inside cabinet. Coins fall onto the pusher playfield, giving players a second chance at winning.

• **Instant Memories 2000**—An instant photo booth with an attractive price tag.

COASTAL

• **Mardi Gras**—A new Harry Levy-developed coin pusher with all the color of Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

• **Top Gun**—A Harry Levy design. Players control a firing joystick to hit lighted targets as they view a simulation fighter pilot cockpit.

• **Melody Mouse**—A Harry Levy-developed game of skill. Player must release rolling balls into a row of tubes at just the right time to fill consecutive tubes.

• **Roosta Shoota**—Shown previously. Shoot balls at targets decorated with taunting chickens. Shoot at sheriff targets on the Sheriff Shoota version.

ACME '92

Cher look-alike Ruth Hill with Bill Guler at the Hot Hits booth.

Lynn Hancock of Galaxy Games plays Sega's *Invaders 2000*.

Tecmo's Gina Hernandez by the company's new video, *Saboten Bombers*.

Mc O'River president Mitsuo Kimura and Peter Thomson of Video Connection by Mc O'River's *Aero Fighters*.

Leprechaun's LeRoy Hancuff (l) and Paul Wiederaenders by Irem's *Hill Climber*.

At the Great American Billiard Co. booth, (l-r): Great American's David Celani and Carolyn Spano, Aaron Btesh of Video Bay Amusements.

• **Robo-Bop**—Shown previously. Players strike a striker pad with a padded hammer and watch lights illuminate on the way up to the final score on this robotic-looking machine.

• **Crazy Clown**—Shown previously. Equipped with a steering wheel for the player to guide the clown character away from falling ping pong balls; adjustable lighted rotating timer.

• **Jungle Jive**—A new 4-player Harry Levy coin pusher with family-oriented, cartoonish jungle graphics and adjustable playfield channels.

• **Pop-a-Tac-Toe**—Shown previously. Players line up balls and watch the results tic-tac-toe style on a video screen.

• **Pop-a-Ball**—Shown previously. Still a favorite.

• **Pop-a-Slot**—Players "pop" balls that land randomly and their positions are shown on a video monitor. Player then selects to hold or try another pop for higher score.

COIN CONCEPTS

• **Starburst**—A coin pusher available as a one-player single cabinet or up to 6-player carousel style.

• **Flamingo**—A 3- or 6-player pusher with rotating top sign. Comes in a carousel style or rectangular cabinet.

• **Pig Racing**—Shown previously. Up to four players control bicycle-riding pigs in a competitive race.

• **Kiddie games**—Shown previously. Toss 'Em and Jr. All American.

• **Five Card Draw**—Shown previously. A skill-stop card game that allows players a second card draw to win tickets or tokens.

• **Around the World**—A basketball throwing game with five challenging hoops and various skill levels.

• **Body Match**—Win tickets or tokens by matching heads, torsos, and legs on six different characters.

• **Froggy**—Shown previously. From Sound Leisure. Feed the hungry frog by throwing plastic balls between passing butterflies and into Froggy's gulping mouth.

• **Ol' McDonald's**—Players steer the farmer, helping him collect eggs as they tumble down the playfield. Available as sit-down or upright.

• **Cat 'n' Mouse**—Shown previously. Choice of two games, Noughts & Crosses and Cat & Mouse. Designed by Coin Developments specifically for kids.

• **Fire Fighter**—Shown previously. Player hits the target with a stream of water to advance his fireman character up the ladder of the burning building.

• **Power House**—Are you a man or a mouse? Find out on this strength tester.

• **Luigi's Corner**—Old favorite with a puppet of Luigi greeting customers.

COFUSA

• **Kola-Kron**—Shown previously. Robotic soft drink dispensing system.

• **Kron Duel**—Shown previously. Players compete with robotic characters on a pool table-sized playfield.

DATA EAST

• **Wacky Gator**—Shown previously. Players can't seem to pound enough of those nasty gators.

• **Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe**—Shown previously. Was the winner of a Play Meter award at ACME.

• **Lippy the Clown**—Take aim with balls at the giant teeth of Lippy the Clown.

• **Lizzard Command**—A one- or two-player tank-themed game. Players shoot ping pong balls at lizard targets.

• **Cosmo Gang**—Shown previously. Player shoots a "laser" gun at five cute, colorful aliens out to capture the earth.

DESIGN PLUS

• **Bozo Basketball**—Shown previously. Youth-sized basketball throwing game, featuring the most popular clown of all time.

DON BALL & ASSOCIATES

• **SuperStar Golf**—Realistic play with course changes and adjustable game speed.

DOYLE

• **Hoop Shot, Pro Pitch, Batter Up, Bull Pen, and Lil' Hoop Shot.** All shown previously, but still favorites.

EXIDY

• **Troll**—Featuring possibly the cutest characters at the show. Players take aim at the very popular, lovable-looking trolls with a semi-automatic rifle armed with ping pong balls.

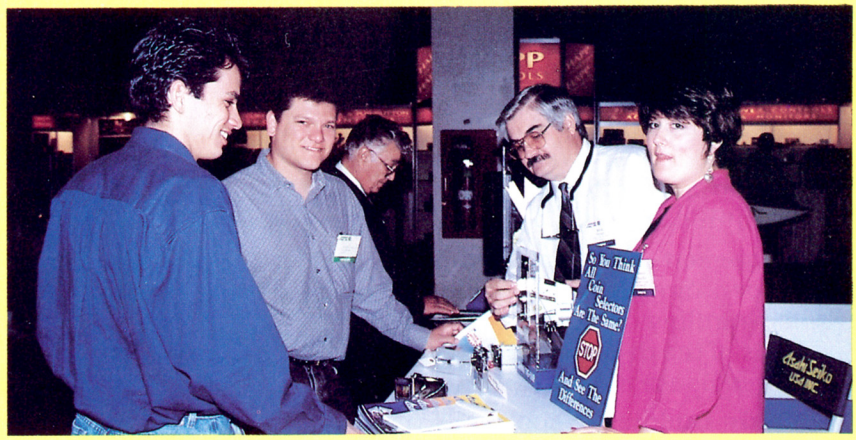
• **Bigfoot Piano**—A piano keyboard that players stand on to play a tune. (Tom Hanks played a tune on one in the movie "Big".)

ACME '92

Coin-Op Amusement's Larry and Diane Slavin visit Jack Kelly at the Acme Premium Supply booth.

The Bonita Marie crew, (l-r): Mike Maresca, George Ritacco, Margaret Mitchell, Melody Music's Tommy Hayes, and David Katz.

At the Seidel Amusement booth, Putt 'N Hoops' Don Wollan (l) and John Pennant with Phyllis Seidel.



Talking coin equipment are, (l-r): G&S Video Game's Juan Antonio Salazar and Jose Gonzales Valides with Asahi-Seiko's Rick Mines and Pamela Schaffer.

Sharpe Image's Ron Clapper (l) talks monitors with Game Sales' Richard Anthony and Cecil Stephans of Signal Peak.

At the Nancy Sales/NANCO booth, the company's Robert Gayle (l) and George Smith flank Super Track's Steven Vincent, Patty Lamastus, and Philip Vincent.

FABTEK

• **The Farm Yard**—Designed for the 3-13 age group. Players toss balls and hit cute farm animals for high scores.

• **Jungle Jogger**—Designed by Partec especially for youngsters. Player chooses a number, then pops a ping pong ball up the screen, trying to hit the chosen number to win tickets. Colorful, appealing graphics.

GaMCO

• **The "2001" merchandising coin pusher**—Shown previously. Tokens or quarters (where legal) in and out; sliding coin entry; 4-tiered coin drop.

• **The Entertainer**—A video redemption with two games, trivia and connect four with protocol EPROMS available.

• **Boogiemen**—Shoot balls into the open mouths of horrible, blood-curdling creatures to the sounds of the death march and haunted house music.

• **Fuddy Duddies**—Shoot balls into the open mouths of zany characters to the sounds of Keystone Cops music.

• **Lotto Picks**—Models for every state lottery. Numbered balls bounce around before popping into columns for suggestions on lottery picks.

GRAYHOUND

• **Jumbo Skill Crane**—New modern design with chaser lights.

• **Kiddie Crane** — Smaller cabinet design with chaser lights.

• **Grayhound Basketball**—One- or two-player basketball throwing game.

Also available is the new electronic sports card dispenser. It is an option on all of the above mentioned games.

• **Wrist Shot Hockey**—Shown previously. One- or two-player hockey-themed game. Players shoot "hockey pucks" (soft balls) with a real hockey stick.

I.C.E.

• **Hungry Hungry Hippos**—Shown previously. The board game of the same name come to life.

• **Putting Challenge**—Shown previously. Shoot golf balls on an ever-changing, innovative green. Winner of a Play Meter award at ACME.

• **Super Chexx**—Hockey-themed game played on a covered playfield.

IMAGINATION LEISURE

• **Super-Bowl**—Big ball bowling game.

IREM

• **Hill Climber**—Parallel steel paths move up and down as player uses a steering wheel to guide a steel ball to the finish line.

IMAGEWARE/PEOPLE POSTCARDS

• **People Postcards**—Photo booth that puts customer in front of various backgrounds to make a personalized postcard.

JOHNSTON PRODUCTS

• **Kick 'N Catch**—Shown previously. Vends candy, gum, superballs, toy capsules. Also available in adult capsule version.

• **Silver Dollar Saloon**—Shown previously. Candy vendor gun game.

LAZER-TRON

• **Bank-It**—Developed by Lazer-Tron, licensed to Capcom. Players toss coins through baskets inside cabinet. Coins fall onto the pusher playfield, giving players a second chance at winning.

• **Haunted House**—Shown previously. In this 6-, 9-, or 12-player shooting gallery, players shoot laser guns at the ghostly targets that light up along the back wall to score points. Also available in these themes: underwater, circus, star wars, and Western train.

• **Shuttle Launch**—Shown previously. Players race their space shuttles into orbit by hitting targets with realistic laser guns to advance the vehicles.

• **Vine Climb**—The newest addition to this company's line-up. Players shoot at targets to advance the monkey up the vine.

LEPRECHAUN

• **Hill Climber**—Developed by Leprechaun. Also sold by Irem. Parallel steel paths move up and down as player uses a steering wheel to guide a steel ball to the finish line.

• **Tumble Pop**—A video game that can be converted to redemption with an add-on board.

MAXIMA ENTERTAINMENT

• **Jumbo Crane**—Comes in various models, including the Mini Jumbo, Wide Mini Jumbo, Wide Jumbo, Wide Super Jumbo, and the Wide Maxi Jumbo, all with an assortment of options.

ACME '92

H.A. Devlin of PARS Electronics shows off the *Golden Paradise* to Mike O'Brien and Kevin Fullerton of Game Sales Marketing.

Mark Struhs (l) and Bill Rickett of Dynamo are proud of their *Draw Poker*.

By *Melody Mouse*, (l-r): Robert Parrow of Just Games, Murray Panitz of Just Fun, and Bob Keelyn of Coastal.

WMS Gaming staffers by the *Midas Touch*, (l-r): Robin Seaver, John Nicastro, and Rick Currie.

Dawn Franta of Just for Fun plays *Slugfest* while Mark Ritchie of Williams looks on.

Andrea Schatz (l) of Stella International and Kay Whitaker of Ceronix by the *Star Lotto*.

MELTEC

• **Boom Ball**—Shown previously. An old favorite has players hitting numbered targets with a ball popped out of a boom gun.

• **Great Frog Race**—Shoot balls into the giant frog's mouth. Hitting his wagging tongue makes him hop even faster.

NAMCO

• **Cracky Crab**—Crazy crabs move from side to side, evading blows from the player.

NATIONAL SPORTS GAMES

• **UB QB**—Players become quarterbacks, throwing footballs through holes for completions.

• **Super Shot**—Rugged double version basketball game.

• **Pinch Hitter**—Throw balls into specifically marked holes to play a game of baseball on a playfield.

NOEL INDUSTRIES

• **LAX**—Four-player rotary merchandiser.

PREMIER

• **Bell Ringer and Nudge-It**—One with a circus theme, the other with outdoor graphics. Adjustable legs for use in kiddie locations; operator adjustable number of balls and tickets.

QUICK SILVER

• **Awesome Maze**—Interchangeable game boards and graphics. Available in four themes: The Edge, Rat, Loop, and Hi-Tension.

SEGA

• **Speed Shot**—Great fun on an air hockey-sized table. Red and green LED colors light up, controlled by the player with a track ball indicating field position. When the ball lands on the lighted hole, player must press a button to propel it towards opponent's goal.

SEIDEL AMUSEMENT MACHINE CO.

• **Lite-A-Line/Bing-O-Rama**—New version of classic '40s game with multiple coin play and a variety of improvements.

• **Quackers**—A roll down with cartoon character ducks. Also available as Dino Roll with a dinosaur theme.

SKEE-BALL

• **Skee-Ball Alley**—Shown previously. The famous alley roller. Players roll wooden balls into numbered ringed circles for high scores. Also available in a mini version.

• **Barnyard Babies**—For the younger set. Players toss balls into targets decorated with cute farm animal babies.

SMART INDUSTRIES

• **Big Bertha**—"The eating wonder of the world." Player throws as many balls as possible into her mouth. She goes from 200 lbs. and gains 25 lbs. with each ball going into her mouth. Her dress lifts up each time a ball goes in her mouth. Great for kids if you can keep the adults away!

• **Buddy Bear**—Players throw balls at this friendly bear's glove in a game of catch. Buddy Bear talks and moves.

• **Skull Alley**—Another version of Smartball. It features scarey characters and spooky music. An optional smoke machine for atmosphere.

• **Super Pro Quarterback**—Players throw footballs through a moving lexan target while passing against a timer. Also available in a junior model.

• **Jackpot**—Prize redemption with automatic prize loader system.

• **Shoot to Win**—A basketball throwing favorite in a variety of configurations.

• **Smartball Skill Alley**—Pitch balls into ringed targets for high scores.

• **Classic Jumbo and Clean Sweep**—Single and double skill cranes.

STAR MANUFACTURING

• **Star Skill Crane**—Large capacity crane.

• **Clown Around**—A circus theme with "pop gun" rapid-firing ping pong balls.

• **Master-Shot and Double Shot**—Basketball shooting in single or double formats.

• **Beat the Pro**—Shown previously. Golf putting game.

TAITO

• **Super Sonic Blastman**—Shown previously. Don a real boxing glove for three chances at punching a padded target. Play five rounds of boxing shown on a video screen.

VARI-TECH

• **Step-A-Side, Wiggle Wire, and Pop Gun Kit**—Countertop or optional stands on all.

• **Jumbo Circus Hi-Rise**—Strike the pad and wait for the column of lights to show you how strong you really are.

• **Treasure Hunt**—Shown previously. With his hand, the player tries to hit buttons on the treasure map as they light up.

• **Kiddie games available**—Shown previously. Space Shapes, Circus Hi-Rise, and Bee Ware.

• **Hot Shots**—The popular, improved basketball throwing game.

ACME '92

At the Star Track Plush booth, (l-r): Ann Trusty and Brenda Crittenden of Silverball with Star Track's Bob Ingenito, Danny Wilkenson, and Roxanne Wilkenson.

Here's a group Sam Walton would be proud of, (l-r): Just Kiddie Rides' Michael Reda, Kiddie Manufacturing's Eric Torres, and JKR's Jerry Reda and Ron Rollins next to their new Wal-Mart 18-wheeler.

From left: Bart Posey, Kevin Sharp, and Rodney Lockhart of Kevin Sharp Enterprises, Kelly Huppertz of Micatech Industries, and "Pinball" Mike of Pinball Game Sales.

At the Star Cap booth, (l-r): Tom Portale, Greg Heer of Yellow Brick Road, Bob Portale, David Stroud, and Manuel Alvarez of Yellow Brick Road.

At the Dart World booth, (l-r): Dart World's Mark Amirault and Eddie Deschene with Fred Boyd and James Cason of Fred's Amusements.

T&M Distributing's Dan (l) and Mike Riquier display their new four-player conversion cabinet to Firestone Financial's Ed Yaffe (r).

VIDEO GAMES

AMERI CORP.

• **Ameri-Darts**—The perennial video darts favorite, controlled with a trackball and a "set" button.

AMERICAN LASER GAMES

• **Gallagher**—Although displayed alongside the other laserdisc shoot-em-up's licensed to Betson, this one belongs to American Laser Games. Basically, it's a shooting gallery with the balding comedian providing all sorts of wacky targets, but mostly people seemed to enjoy plugging Gallagher's ugly mug every time he popped up onscreen.

ATARI

• **Relief Pitcher**—The Great American pastime. A 2-player baseball game viewed from behind home plate. Controls for each player include a joystick and 3-way "cluster" button. Very nice graphics.

• **Road Riot 4WD**—Now available as a Universal one-player kit, this proven off-road racer can now be fitted to virtually any driving game cabinet. A link kit is also available for head to head competition.

BETSON

• **Mad Dog McCree**—An oldie but a goodie. Set in the old west, you must rescue the mayor or his daughter or something. Mostly you just get to shoot stuff.

• **Who Shot Johnny Rock?**—An update for the Mad Dog cabinet. Set in the gangster era of the 30's or 40's—what do I look like, a calendar?—you must solve the mystery of who killed Johnny Rock, whoever the heck he was. Anyway, you get to shoot a lot of people, and, as Dirty Harry said, "There's nothing wrong with shooting as long as the right people get shot".

• **Space Pirates**—Another Mad Dog cabinet update but with a much cooler gun. Same plot—kill the bad guys, rescue the hostages—although in my opinion, the hostages are so lame they deserve to die.

CAPCOM

• **Knights of the Round**—Remember Golden Axe? Here it is again, only this time featuring three of the Knights of the Round Table: Arthur, Lancelot, and Perceval. A 3-player medieval fighting game, ideal for Mercs conversion.

• **Street Fighter II, Champion Edition**—You thought you'd seen it all, thought there was no more to learn—HA! How about 50 new match ups, 46 brand new fighting strategies. Same Character vs. Same Character! Fight as a Boss! Four new characters as well as the original eight.

• **X the Ball**—Actually a redemption piece, X the Ball shows you a digitized still photo from a soccer match minus, of course, the ball. Using a trackball to move an X-shaped cursor you must try to guess where the ball would be in the photo. Tickets are dispensed for correct guesses and after five wrong guesses you are executed by firing squad (just kidding).

CATALINA

• **Cool Pool**—This really is a cool twist on video pool. A trackball changes your perspective of the table and once satisfied with cue angle a quick press of the "set" button changes the trackball to a shot power control, all the while with your choice of a rock or jazz soundtrack selected from a jukebox against the the wall.

DATA EAST

• **Nitro Ball**—Strange but pleasingly violent futuristic football played on a vertically scrolling field.

• **Rohga**—Horizontally scrolling flying shoot'em'up.

• **Wizard Fire**—Another multiple player barbarian fighting game rendered in a 3-D isometric view. Prettier than most.

• **Hook**—So it's not a video game—it's a pinball game, but I like it. So sue me.

FABTEK

• **Legionnaire**—A 2-player fighting game with a choice of three characters and an increasingly popular feature—a female fighting hero! Graphic animation is a bit crude.

GRAYHOUND

• **Sex Trivia**—New video trivia with Grayhound card dispenser that awards "fantasy" cards of attractive ladies. Available in countertop, upright, or kit. Cards can be ordered through the company.

ACME '92

At the VGT booth, (l-r): Jon Yarbrough, Tom Ryan, and Larry Macaluso with the *VGT Gold*.

Attendees enjoyed playing something different—*A.G. Soccer-Ball* from Alvin Gottlieb & Co.

Jack Walker (l) and Chuck Lunsford (c) of Walker Amusement with American Shuffleboard's Sol Lipkin.

At the Micro Mfg. booth and the *Cherry Bonus III*, (l-r): John Abbott IV and John Abbott III of Abbott Amusement and David Beasley of Micro.

From left: Steve Epstein of The Broadway Arcade, Pat Lawlor and John Krutsch of Midway Mfg.

Bob Whitehead of Kramer Mfg. demonstrates *Visionquest* to Doug Wilson (c) and Rick Anderson of Commercial Distributing.

ACME '92

IREM

• **Undercover Cops**—A 2- or 3-player horizontal fighting game kit. Once again—choice of a female hero. Once again again, animation is not very smooth.

JALECO

• **B.O.T.S.S.**—Just read my review in my column in Play Meter, Feb. '92. From the cockpit of your towering Warbot you must reclaim your captured solar system from the Vandarians. This game blows Battletech away.

• **Grand Prix Star**—A beautiful 2-player Formula 1 race game. An exterior view of your car as it screams through the turns of three international circuits. A "rumbler" in the seat adds realism.

KANEKO

• **B.Rap Boys**—Finally a fighting game with a difference—it's geared for younger players. The heroes ride bikes and skateboards to the constant accompaniment of a rap soundtrack.

• **Blazeon**—A 2-player horizontal flying shoot'em'up.

• **Gals Panic II**—Once again, try and fill the Qix-like playfield for the privilege of seeing fetching young Oriental babes in various stages of undress.

KONAMI

• **X-Men**—Two side-by-side monitors, brilliant graphics and excellent sonix make this 'action fighter' OK, even to a crab like me.

• **G.I. Joe**—A 1- to 4-player kit game. The threat of world domination rears it's ugly head once again! Charge into the screen blowing away the bad guys and join the ranks of the fearless G.I. Joe team!

• **Turtles in Time**—The Turtles are back in this kit or dedicated amphibian adventure. Krang and Shredder have stolen the Statue of Liberty and the evil Krang has sent the shell-dwellers back through time in a vain attempt to prevent their meddling in his plan to, dare I say it, rule the world! The Turtles must fight their way back to the future through the Prehistoric Era, as swashbuckling pirates, through the Old West, and then on to the years 2020 and 2100—where no turtle has gone before. It's a beat'em'up, but hey, it's the Turtles, dude!

KRAMER MFG.

• **Visionquest**—Now here's a funny kind of a duck—a 4-player laser disc based audio/visual trivia-quiz game. You're shown an image or played a snippet of music and then you must correctly select the appropriate answer. An incorrect answer kills you instantly with a cloud of poison gas (just kidding).

Mc O'RIVER

• **Aero Fighters**—The ever-popular vertical scrolling flying shoot'em' up. Nice opening shot of an F/A 18 Hornet getting set for a cat shot.

• **F1 Grand Prix**—Overhead bird's eye view of a Formula 1 race.

MP GAME TECHNOLOGY

• **Tank**—I love these guys. They never fail to produce exactly the type of game that sets my heart pounding. In the beginning there was F-15 Strike Eagle. There is no finer kind of game than the combat flight simulator, especially rendered in super-smooth 3-D polygons. Then there was B.O.T.S.S. (refer to the Jaleco piece up a few paragraphs). Now there's Tank. Although not yet finished, Tank is a 4-player tank game (surprise, surprise), which pits you against four other players, human or computer controlled, with no particular objective other than to annihilate the other players. No word yet as to who will be distributing it.

NAMCO

• **Suzuka 8 Hours**— A 2- to 4-player motorcycle race on Japan's famed Suzuka race course. Reminiscent of Super Hang-On and GP Rider, Suzuka 8 Hours is a beautiful motorcycle simulation.

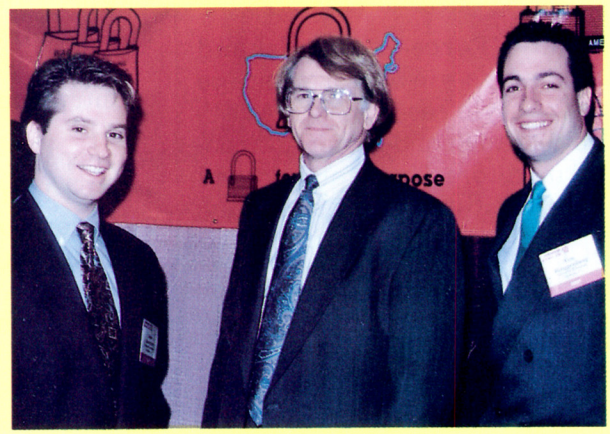
• **Driver's Eyes**—Just this past weekend Driver's Eyes and I were married. I love it that much. The cockpit is modeled after an actual formula 1 racer with it's extra-tight fit, slim accelerator, clutch and brake pedals, and the shrimpy gear shift knob. Three monitors give the illusion of total peripheral vision (a la Race Drivin' Panaorama) and if you're an antisocial misfit like me, you can spin your car around, drive in the wrong direction and smash head-on into the competition. I miss the fiery crashes, though. Totally excellent!

ACME '92

At the Nintendo booth, (l-r): Donna Hogin, Al Stone, Kris Holley, Chuck Arnold, Mario, Linda Weber, Mike Minor, and Art Gallagher.

Kiddie Rides USA's Joe De Marsico (second from l) and Stuart Heller flank Southgate Amusement's Dina Aitken while daughter Katy has all the fun.

Faith and Stan Pierson (c) demonstrate their systems to Agustin Gutierrez of Mr. Export Co.



Frank Minelli (c) of Lock America with Robert Storment (l) of Advanced Marketing Systems and Tim Ringgenberg of Advanced Auctioneers & Liquidators.

With Exidy's Virginia Kaufman, (l-r): Jim Riolo of Grand Prix, Craig Platt of Excalibur, and Ron Lieberman.

With Bay-Tek's Lori Treankler, (l-r): Steve DeWitt, Gene Ashman, and Marty Ashman of Amusements 'R Us.

• **Starblade**—Another beauty piece (reviewed in Play Meter, April '92). One suggestion—It should be emphasized that the player is not actually piloting the ship but is merely manning the weapon system.

• **Steel Gunner 2**—A conversion kit for Operation Thunderbolt that takes full advantage of its resemblence to Williams' Terminator 2: Judgement Day. A very cool game made even cooler if you choose to purchase the Steel Gunner 2 guns to replace the aging MAC 10s.

• **Tank Force**—An overhead bird's eye view of a 48-stage maze-style tank game. Available as an Econo-Kit for horizontal monitors. Up to four players with buy in and continuous play.

•**Cosmo Gang-The Video**—A vertical scrolling Econo-Kit for vertical monitors. Cosmo Gang is a comical shooting game in the style of Galaxian, Galaga, and, yes, even Space Invaders. There are over 40 stages with plenty of special weapons added to increase player excitement.

NINTENDO SUPER SYSTEM

• **Super Mario World**—Run! Jump! Collect! A decent race game set in the 26th century, piloting high speed hovercrafts.

• **Super Tennis**—If you've ever wanted to play tennis on a two dimensional cathode ray tube using joypads instead of proper tennis rackets, this one's for you.

OCEAN

• **The Addams Family**—A horizontally scrolling adventure for the Nintendo Super System having very little to do with the film of the same name.

• **Robocop 3**—Another horizontal tally scrolling shoot'em'up for the Nintendo Super system featuring loads of killing, which is just fine with me.

PREMIER

• **Operation Thunder**—Another pinball, this time featuring F-15 Eagles and F-117 Stealth Fighters on daring raids into some unnamed Middle Eastern country (wink wink).

ROMSTAR

• **The King of Dragons**—A 3-player conversion kit with custom control panels available for Mercs and Bad Dudes cabinets, as well as Dynamo HS2, HS5, HS8 & HS9. Also available as a universal kit. One of those 3-player horizontal action fighting games that I love so much. Not.

• **Skeet Shot**—Pick up your shotgun and blast away at targets on a 50- or 70-inch monitor. Go ahead, I won't tell.

• **Pop Shot**—Another shooting gallery, this time killing cutsey critters like fish, gophers, mice and penguins. Can be fitted into Skeet Shot cabinet.

• **Pipi & Bibi**—An Elevator Action-style game whose objective seems to be awarding a glimpse of a scantily clad babe. Heck with the game—just show me the babes!

• **Varth-Operation Thunderstorm**—Vertical scrolling aeriel shoot'em' up. Pretty but tough.

SEGA

• **AIR RESCUE**—You just can't have enough helicopter games. Air Rescue picks up where ThunderBlade left off. Not only do you you have to annihilate every enemy installation, but the rescue of P.O.W.s is of paramount importance. This 2-player deluxe cabinet features moving seats and realistic helicopter control. Be a hero in a Huey or a Blackhawk, but make it back to base in one piece!

• **Exhaust Note**—This 2-player sit-down cabinet is another first rate Formula 1 racing simulation. Compete against another player or test your mettle against yourself. Just shut up and drive!

• **Arabian Fight**—Conversion kit for 1-4 players. Rescue the abducted Princess Lurana in this action fighting game with an Arabian flair.

•**Holosseum**—Only about 30 percent complete at showtime, Sega continues to develop software which utilizes its "hologram" system.

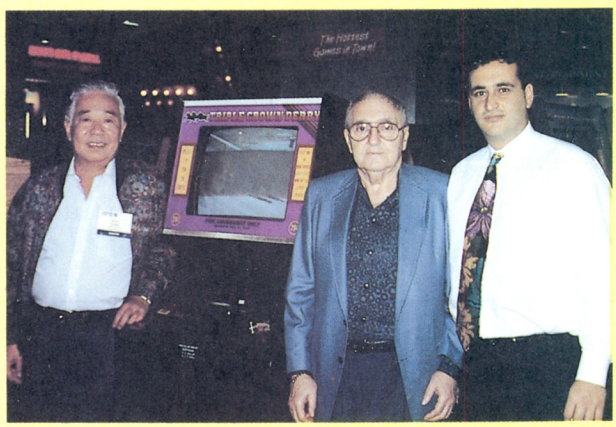
• **Invaders 2000**—Again utilizing the "hologram" hardware system, Invaders 2000 shows promise (it's a space fighting game less than 10 percent completed). Sega needs to develop more violently hard-core software to make the most of this system.

ACME '92

Talking bulk vending, (l-r): Machine-O-Matic's Bernice Heenan, Leonie Breeze and Rick Caldweld of Video Round-Up, Jack Hooper of J&R Vending, and Josie Schwarzli of Machine-O-Matic.

Gallagher, he of Sledge-O-Matic fame, and Mexican TV star Chabello flank Laramie Interests' Melanie Morris and mother Tami.

Roberto Gonzales of Mexico's Magic Place (second from l) visits Tom Portale (l), Jack Rand, and Jerry Rush of Prizes!



At the Leisure Entertainment booth, (l-r): Mr. Noma, David Foreman, and Mosche Yeshaya with the new *Triple Crown Derby*.

"Baseball have been berry, berry good to me!" says ALD Services' Alan Deutschmann (r) as he and Allen Justice (r) show the new "Sports Pack" to Pedro Mendoza of Cofusa Enterprises.

Joe Zuckerman of Games People Play (third from l) gets the full plush treatment from Plush-4-Play's Joe Bates, Kathy Askew, Georgia Orozco, Juan Garcia, and Toni Endoso.

SNK—NEO-GEO

• **Fatal Fury**—King of Fighters, Fatal Fury is a one-on-one fighter.

• **Football Frenzy**—Horizontal scrolling gridiron glory.

• **Soccer Brawl**—No holds barred futuristic soccer (a la Speedball).

• **Mutation Nation**—Yet another fighting game, this time against punks, mutants,and radioactive newts (just kidding).

• **Last Resort**—A very pretty horizontally scrolling shoot'em' up.

• **Baseball Stars 2**—Not as nice as Relief Pitcher, but baseball is baseball.

• **Ninja Commando**—Alert the media! A fighting game that I don't despise! This one scrolls vertically upward and features a female hero. Not bad, not bad at all!

• **View Point**—A very attractive Zaxxon-style isometric scrolling flying shoot'em'up.

STRATA

• **Rim Rockin' Basketball**—Fast-paced multi-player action, 5-on-5 full-court games with official NBA rules. Digitized animation and sound. Horizontal monitor kit fits 2-, 3-, and 4-player cabinets.

• **Golden Tee Golf II**—Three complete new courses and improved screen update. Available with trackball or joystick.

• **Bowling**—Hey, It's bowling! Roll the ball and knock down the pins! What are you, goofy?

TAITO

• **Silent Dragon**—Another action fighting game.Stop the Evil Schemes of Dr. Bio! Choose from 4 unique characters. There's a girl in there somewhere; someone's sister or girlfriend, I don't know. Just remember to bring a bunch of quarters for the Bosses.

WILLIAMS

• **Total Carnage**—If you didn't read my review of Total Carnage in the ACME '92 issue of Play Meter, you don't know what you're in for. I'll sum it up in ten words: Beyond Smash T.V. — blood, devastation, death, war, and horror. There is no excuse to pass this by.

Pongansen en Fila y en Ritmo con la Industria

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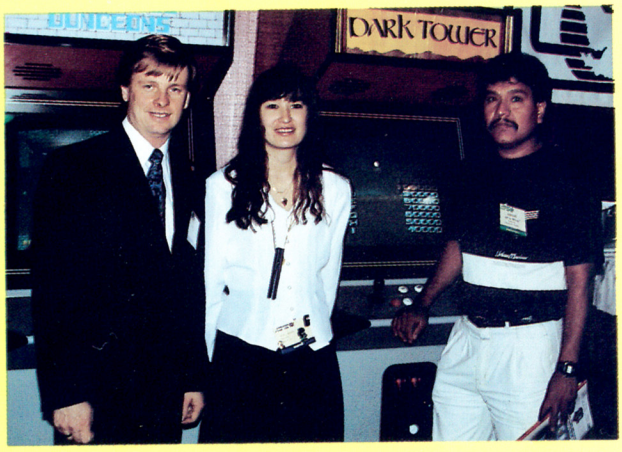
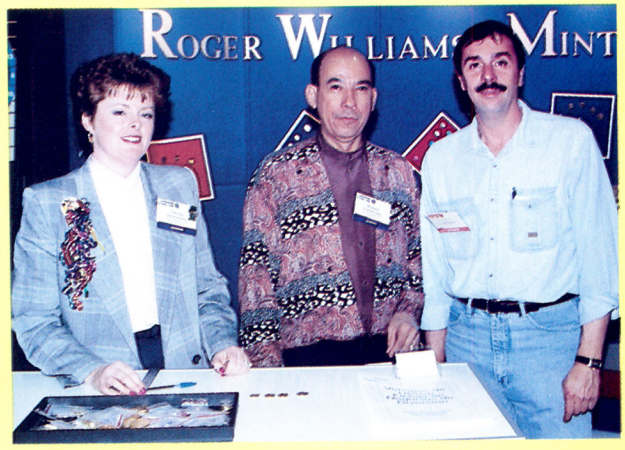
ACME '92



The Game Room's Ken and Sheri Lambourne show Alfredo de la Rosa of Fun Technic their new *Dark Towers* kit.



Roger Williams Mint's Sheila Dellacona and Rafael Guillermo show tokens to Lee Turicano-Graziano (l) of Vincenzo's Group.

Carmen Ricci and Jim Gesser are very proud of Classic Inc.'s new *Sports Authority* sports trivia game that dispenses sports cards.

At the Capcom distributor meeting to unveil *Street Fighter II, Champion Edition*, (l-r): Pacific Vend's Sam Feder, Capcom's Brian Duke, Jim Vanderhoof, and Ron Malinowski, Cleveland Coin's Ron Gold, and Capcom's Jolly Backer and Jeff Walker.

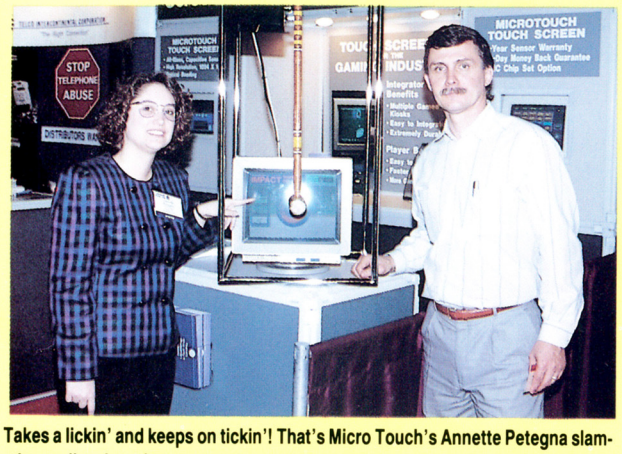
From left: Jay Foreman and Mark Gawlik of hometown company P.M.I. Toys & Novelties show their wares to Cynthia and David Jackson of Pachinko Palace.

An impulsive group around the Mayoni Enterprises impulse machines, (l-r): Mayoni's Isaac Ben-Yehuda, Just for Fun Amusement's Erick Noel, Oscar Robbins of Mayoni, and Bob Conley of Conley Amusements.

ACME '92

Menachem Cohen of Adco Amusements is flanked by Baton Lock's Ted McMichael (l) and Kris Newman.

An appealing group, (l-r): Plush Appeal's Darleen Hansen, Daryl Fletchinger, Peter Christianson, and Catherine Fletchinger.



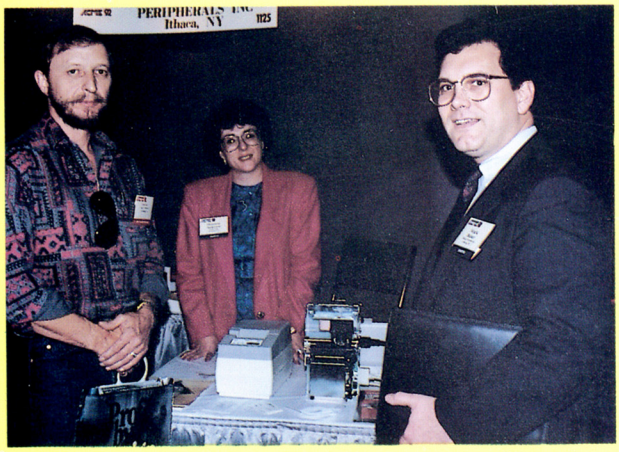
Takes a lickin' and keeps on tickin'! That's Micro Touch's Annette Petegna slamming mallets into the company's new touch-screen for Show-Biz Pizza's Steve Thomas.

From left: ARMS' Lou Cappetta, Chris Weimann, and Rhonda Fletcher show the software program to American Leisure's Bruce Frankel and Michael Alon.

At the Hantarex Monitor booth, (l-r): Ray Fontana, Mario Martelli, and John Hickey show goods to Ichiro Umino of Evergreen City Music.

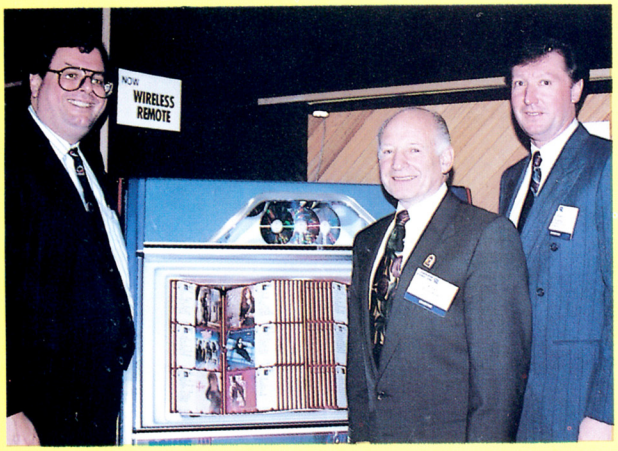
At the Drew's Distributing booth, (l-r): J. Maruyama of Eagle Co. Ltd., Tim Caldwell of Drew's, and Digital Disc America's Bruce Earnhart.

ACME '92



Ithaca Peripherals' Maureen Anderson and Mark Bauer (r) show validator printers to James Stinson of Apollo Enterprises.

The crowded Happ Controls booth, (l-r): Happ's Linda Buchanan, Dennis Sitcler, Anamaria De La Cova, and Cary Hedrick, Olaff Juarez Gutierrez of Olfen Electronics, and Happ's Jim Dziagwa and Sue Happ.



The top brass at Rowe International: Jim Gang (r) with music division vice presidents Joel Friedman (l) and Jerry Gordon.

Showing off "Wayne's World" buttons to Alladin's Castle's Bill Eich (second from r) are HMS Monaco's Bruce Haber, Ira Erstling, and Steve Schulman.

Talking tickets, (l-r): Fred Weigel of P&P Amusements, Suburban Vending's Earl Eppler, and National Tickets' Kimberly Guerlain and Brad Vail.

Falgas USA's Juan Vasquez (l) and Clara Fernadez (r) with Century Vending's Mary and Paul Horning and Sue and Jerry Monday.

An operator's video picks of the show

Jim Overman is an operator in Baton Rouge, La. He has devised a system for rating games at trade shows based on assigning a number of points (a total of 100 is the best) for a variety of factors. He also has a gut feeling on some of the games, which he rates 1-10. These are his picks based on the facts and on instinct. The kit list shows the order when based on the rating system; the other column is in order based on instinct. Keep in mind that these are the top kits and some may have the same rating.

Dedicated games

Rating system	**Gut Feeling**
F1-Exhaust Note/Sega (94)	F1-Exhaust Note/Sega (10)
Grand Prix/Jaleco (94)	Terminator 2/Midway (10)
Street Fighter II/Capcom (94)	X-Men/Konami (10)
Terminator 2/Midway (94)	Grand Prix/Jaleco (9)
Steel Gunner II/Namco (93)	Street Fighter II/Capcom (9)
Total Carnage/Midway (93)	Steel Gunner II/Namco (9)
Air Rescue/Sega (92)	Total Carnage/Midway (9)
B.O.T.S.S./Jaleco (92)	B.O.T.S.S./Jaleco (9)
X-Men/Konami (91)	Turtle in Time/Konami (9)
Turtle in Time/Konami (86)	Air Rescue/Sega (8)

Conversion kits

Fatal Fury/SNK	Mutation Nation/SNK
Mutation Nation/SNK	Relief Pitcher/Atari
Rim Rockin'/Strata	Cosmo Gang/Namco
Robo Army/SNK	GI Joe/Konami
Football Frenzy/SNK	Undercover Cops/Irem
Relief Pitcher/Atari	B. Rap Boys/Kaneko
Ninja Commando/SNK	Saboten Bombers/Tecmo
Cosmo Gang/Namco	Fatal Fury/SNK
Last Resort/SNK	Rim Rockin'/Strata
GI Joe/Konami	Robo Army/SNK
Undercover Cops/Irem	Football Frenzy/SNK
Turtle in Time/Konami	Ninja Commando/SNK
B. Rap Boys/Kaneko	Last Resort/SNK
Operation Thunder Storm/Capcom	Turtle in Time/Konami
Rohoa/Data East	Rohoa/Data East
Legionnaire/Fabtek	Oper. Thunder Storm/Capcom
64 Street/Jaleco	Legionnaire/Fabtek
Tank Force/Namco	64 Street/Jaleco
Silent Dragon/Taito	Silent Dragon/Taito
Dangerous Dungeon/Game Room	Dangerous Dungeon/Game Room
Saboten Bombers/Tecmo	Wizard Fire/Data East
Wizard Fire/Data East	Thunder Strike/Game Room
Thunder Strike/Game Room	Dark Tower/Game Room
Dark Tower/Game Room	Knight of the Round/Capcom
Knight of the Round/Capcom	"New Game"/Romstar
"New Game"/Romstar	Nitro Ball/Data East
Nitro Ball/Data East	Gal's Panic II/Kaneko
Gal's Panic/Kaneko	

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My redemption picks from ACME '92

John Margold

Twice a year Play Meter puts me on the hot seat to predict the redemption games that will emerge as winners from the spring and fall trade shows. As I return from ACME in San Antonio, I once again find myself on the hot seat (actually, I am in Seat 16C on a flight from Chicago to Newark).

First of all, let me predict that there was no one standout redemption game that will dominate sales during the spring and summer of 1992. There were, however, a few solid-looking games. Kiddie redemption was well represented, and it was the games geared for young players that impressed me the most.

Smart Industries' best-looking new game is called *Feed Big Bertha*. The player tries to toss as many plastic balls as possible into Big Bertha's mouth. The more balls you feed her, the bigger she gets. Children—as well as their parents—will enjoy winning tickets and helping Big Bertha get fatter and fatter.

Namco's *Cracky Crab* is another new piece aimed at the young crowd that looks to have play appeal. Namco developed *Wacky Gator* (marketed in America by Data East), and *Cracky Crab* looks like a natural follow-up.

Coastal Distributing had a new game by Harry Levy called *Melody Mouse*. Because the graphics are cute, it will have an immediate appeal to children. *Melody Mouse* is a true skill game. Players must release rolling balls at the right time to fill tubes. The better you become at timing the release, the more tickets you will earn.

Two other games are worthy of the "honorable mention" category. Data East showed *Lizzard Command*, a one- or two-player tank game. This piece has major presence and a good hands-on feel. National Sports Games exhibited a follow-up to *UB-QB* called *Pinch Hitter*. It is a pitching accuracy game that may have application in sports bars and redemption centers. The game needs more

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work before it will be ready.

The final game on my list is Taito's *Super Sonic Blastman*. It was not new at ACME, but I ignored it last year when it was introduced. The collection reports on *Super Sonic Blastman* have proven me wrong. I should have listed it as one of the hits of the show last year—better late than never.

While at ACME I looked for new premium ideas as well as new games. Regular readers of this column know that I believe proper prizes are a vital element in the success of a redemption center.

One item that was popular when I was a kid (30 years ago) is making a comeback: the troll. These gruesome-looking characters were in abundance. Ace Novelty had a wide selection—both big and small. They will make a popular redemption item and can also be used in your cranes.

Laramie Interests' display had several attractive redemption items. Little characters named Bobble Heads are available dressed in professional sports team uniforms (baseball and football). They have all the pro teams represented, and you can purchase an assortment or all one team.

If you want top-of-the-line plush for your redemption center, Laramie has a brand called "24 Karat." These are the softest stuffed animals I've ever felt. Retail stores will get $70 or more, but Laramie buys them as close-outs so that you can get these great premiums for less than $20.

The booth that had the most action on the prize end of redemption was probably HMS Monaco. The film "Wayne's World" has become a mega-hit, and HMS Monaco has the movie's logo on buttons and replica backstage passes. They also have the passes for "Beverly Hills 90210." These are *hot* items, and the activity in the HMS booth showed me that my opinion was shared by many premium buyers.

"ACME had no standout redemption game that will dominate sales during the spring and summer of 1992. There were, however, a few solid-looking games."

ACME introduced some good new equipment and prizes—a perfect combination if you are looking to update your redemption center. □

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The Crank sizes up the show

Frank Seninsky

This year's ACME in San Antonio, Texas, left me with two uncomfortable observations. The first was the lack of operators on the show floor. They either couldn't afford to come (San Antonio is not an easy place to get to), or they came but couldn't resist sightseeing for three days in this most beautiful city.

The economy likely had a lot to do with poor operator attendance, and besides, the distributor open houses will give operators a chance to see the best games anyway. At any rate, there were thousands of manufacturers and distributors on the show floor.

Secondly, it was quite evident that R&D money did not go into video but was instead put into redemption. There were many good new redemption games, but there were also a lot that should be put into a new category: "games with a ticket or card dispenser that operators should not buy." I may even print this list so as not to give redemption a bad name.

Here, then, are my game picks:

Video (dedicated): First place goes to Capcom's *Street Fighter II, Champion Edition*. These models were always being played, and there is little doubt that the game will be a good investment for the operator.

Konami's *X-Men* (six- and four-player models) is also outstanding. This game is earning tremendous amounts of money. Operators should get in early, as these big numbers will not last forever. As far as I'm concerned, that's it for newly released dedicated video!

Video (kits): This category was not very strong, but there are a few titles to watch and a few kits to update certain older games.

1. Atari's *Relief Pitcher* is a good baseball kit.

2. *Steel Gunner 2* by Namco is a $1,500 kit that goes right into *Operation Thunderbolt*.

3. Konami's *Turtles in Time* should do well this summer.

4. *Pop Shot* by Romstar is a $1,000 plug-in kit for *Operation Wolf, Operation Thunderbolt*, or *Mechanized Attack*.

5. Keep an eye on *Total Carnage* by Williams, *Knights of the Round Table* by Capcom, and *Undercover Cops* by Irem.

System games: *Fatal Fury* and *Mutation Nation* on SNK's *Neo-Geo* look to be the best.

Sit-downs: "Big Disappointment." No, that's not the name of a game. I just ordered more *Steel Talons* and *Final Lap IIs*, because Big Disappointment—the new crop of sit-downs—are not worth buying. There was, however, a great sit-down game called *Suzuki 8* by Namco. It's a linked *GP Rider*-type game that's way too overpriced for my checkbook, but I thought it was great for large arcades.

Pinballs: *The Getaway* by Williams is another great pin that follows such smash hits as *Terminator II* and *The Addams Family*.

Novelty: Betson's *Space Pirate*, the new software for *Mad Dog McCree*, will give *Mad Dog* a shot in the arm for summertime, with more software to be introduced at AMOA. *Sonic Blastman* by Taito got a lot of attention, as did Sega's *Speed Shot*. I also liked A.G. & Co.'s *Soccer-Ball*, a two-player, at-the-same-time pinball.

Redemption: Before getting to the listings in my favorite category, I wanted to mention that over 30 manufacturers attended the AMOA Redemption Standardization Committee meeting at ACME. It resulted in more than 20 new standards for redemption games. I'll report on this in the next issue. Now, on to the new games:

Namco's *Cracky Crab* is expensive but looks and plays great. *Pop-A-Slot* by Coastal is a great variation on its *Pop-A-Ball* format. Other very good redemption games are *Troll* by Exidy; Coin Concepts' multi-rim basketball, *Around the World*; and Smart's *Big Bertha* and *Buddy Bear*.

Note that Doyle didn't show any new games, but of the dozen redemption games they always make, five are still rated very highly on my redemption chart: *Hoop Shot, Pro Pitch, Batter Up, Bull Pen*, and *Lil' Hoop Shot*. ICE's *Hungry Hungry Hippo* and Betson's *Clown Around* single-player pusher also rate high on my chart.

I hope that the above will help operators make the best buying decisions. As always...keep cranking! □

ACME 92

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[2 TAPE SET] (F. Seninsky)

____3. HOW TO PROFIT FROM PINBALL (#103)
[2 TAPE SET] (S. Harris, F. Gumma, M. Jensen, D. Young)

____4. 50 OF THE BEST IDEAS IN MANAGEMENT (#104)
[2 TAPE SET] (R. Priesmeyer)

____5. GENERAL VIDEOGAME TROUBLESHOOTING (#105)
[2 TAPE SET] (R. Fromm)

Monday, March 16

____6. PINBALL REPAIR (#200)
[2 TAPE SET] (R. Fromm)

____7. MANAGING CHAOS:
A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO MANAGING CHANGE (#201)
[2 TAPE SET] (R. Priesmeyer)

Monday, March 26, (cont.)

____8. OPERATING SUCCESSFUL REDEMPTION GAMES
AND FAMILY FUN CENTERS (#204)
[2 TAPE SET] (F. Seninsky)

____9. MANUFACTURER'S FIRING LINE
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Half Century Club: A bittersweet gathering

Just a few of the veterans of the coin machine industry.

Eddie Adlum of RePlay shares a story with Sol Lipkin of American Shuffleboard.

Sal DeBruno talks with Si Redd.

Everyone enjoyed the stories from years gone by.

The Half Century Club met during ACME to share stories and greet old and new friends. This year the group sadly said good-bye to one of their own when John Bilotta passed away just days before the show.

Those who knew John shared their memories of him and all dedicated a moment of silence in his memory. The group discussed plans for their next gathering in Nashville during the upcoming AMOA show. All expressed a desire to see more of their peers join them at that time. Steve Kordek of Williams has compiled a list of names. Anyone interested in having his name added to that list need only call Steve at (312) 267-2240. Hope to see all of you industry half century survivors in Nashville. □

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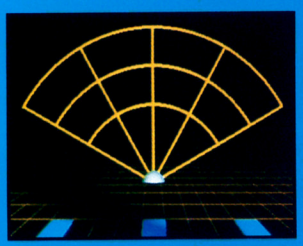

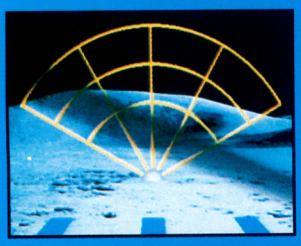

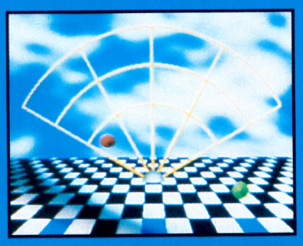

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AAMA banquet honors Valley's Chuck Milhem

The Milhem family, (l-r): Florence, Chuck, Janice, and Laurel.

The Milhem family and table of friends.

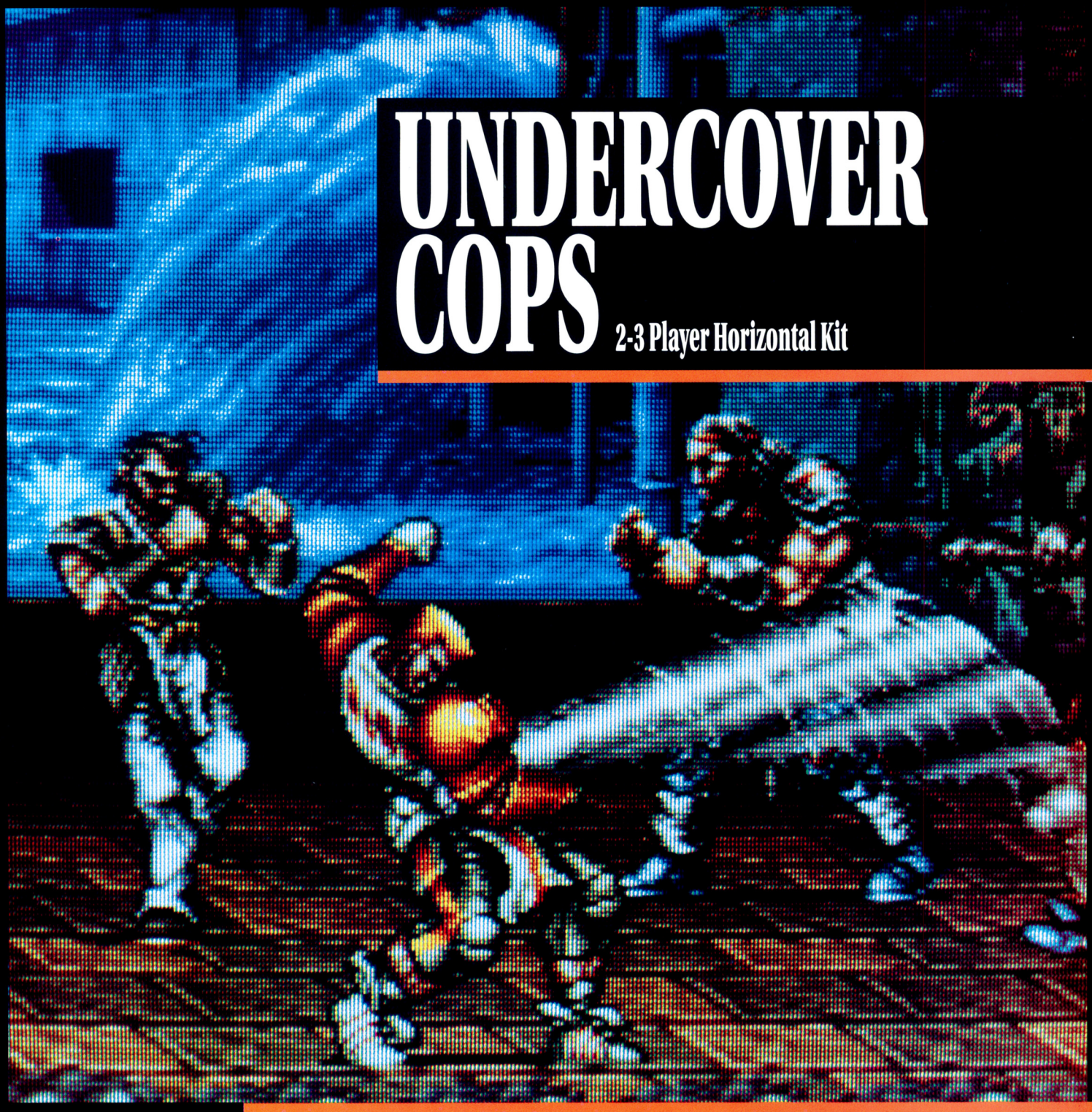
The coin machine industry honored one of its most respected members on March 15 at the American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation Annual Appreciation Dinner in San Antonio, Tex. Chuck Milhem of Valley Recreation Products in Bay City, Mich., was applauded by an enthusiastic audience of his peers.

Longtime industry friend Dick Hawkins of D & R Novelty in Rochester, Minn., spoke of Chuck's integrity and dedication to the amusement industry. Other compliments came from Bill Rickett of Dynamo Corp. (and president of AAMA) and Ray Galante of Music Vend Distributing in Seattle.

The Appreciation Dinner is held annually in conjunction with the American Coin Machine Exposition. Net proceeds from the event will be donated to the Milhem Great Lake Region Children's Philanthropic Fund. In this manner, the industry recognizes the contributions of an outstanding member each year while giving back to the community.

During the ceremony honoring Milhem it was noted that he had received congratulation messages by FAX from all over the world, from Norway to Great Britain.

During his acceptance speech,



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ACME '92

Association presidents, (l-r): Gene Urso of AMOA, Mr. Nakamura of JAMMA, and Bill Rickett of AAMA.

Bill Rickett (r) presents the AAMA Manufacturer of the Year Award to Mike Taylor of Atari.

Dick Hawkins (r) Congratulates Chuck.

Chuck recounted the contributions of such industry legends as the late C.B. Brady, Al Bettelman, and Lou Dunis. He recalled the development of air hockey during his tenure at Brunswick, and thanked Joel Kleiman of Pioneer Sales and Service in Menomonee Falls, Wis., for ordering those first truckloads of equipment.

"This is really a small industry," stated Chuck. "Let's all work together. Look at the AMOA-NDA: three competitors coming together to support an organization." He added that "this evening is the highlight of my career."

Chuck's wife Florence, and daughters Janice and Laurel, were brought up on stage to be with him. He immediately called Florence to his side and publicly thanked her for standing by him through the early lean and sometimes lonely years when his career took him away from home.

In addition to the AAMA award, Chuck also received an award from the Boys and Girls Clubs of America as well as a specially commissioned painting of Chuck presented by Ulrich Schulze and Rus Strahan of NSM.

AAMA announced other awards during the dinner. Brady Distributing of Charlotte, N.C., was named Distributor of the Year; Atari Games of Milpitas, Calif., was named Manufacturer of the Year. Blair Norris and Tom Keil accepted for Brady; Mike Taylor accepted for Atari.

The evening was also the occasion for three industry organizations to stand together: Bill Rickett of AAMA joined with Gene Urso of AAMA and Mr. Nakamura of JAMMA (and president of Namco Japan). □

Steve Walton of Data East USA takes microphone in hand to lead coin-op friends in song.

Bill Rickett (l) presents the AAMA Distributor of the Year Award to Tom Keil and Blair Norris of Brady Distributing.

Ray Galante (r) presents AAMA plaque to Chuck.

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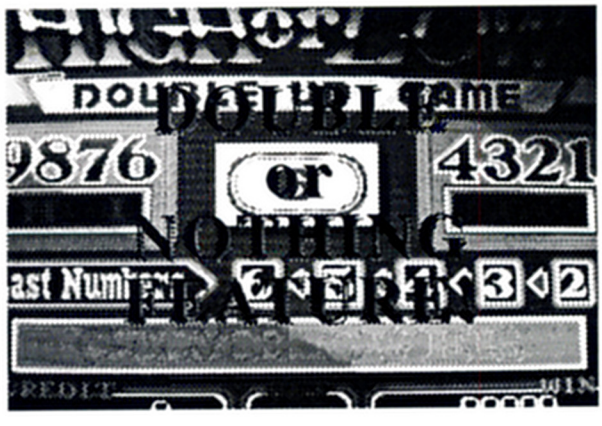

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Play Meter and AAMA present annual awards

From left: Craig Johnson accepts the Ralph C. Lally II Operator of the Year award for Wally Bohrer. Presenting are, (l-r): Carol Lally, Carol Ann Durand, and Valerie Cognevich of Play Meter.

Ralph Coppola of I.C.E. happily accepts an award for Best Novelty/Redemption Game (I.C.E. tied with Dynamo Corp.).

Play Meter and the American Amusement Machine Association, co-sponsors of the American Coin Machine Expo, presented their annual awards during the all-show cocktail party at the San Antonio Convention Center on March 16.

Operators anxiously awaited the announcement of Play Meter's Ralph C. Lally II Operator of the Year Award, this time given to Wally Bohrer of Hastings Distributing in Milwaukee. Bohrer has logged nearly 30 years in the coin machine industry, having served his state association well (Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators) and served as president of our national association (Amusement and Music Operators Association) from 1987-1988.

Bohrer is a member of the AMOA Past Presidents' Council and chairman of the AMOA Government Relations Committee. He was instrumental in organizing the newly created Video Gaming Association, and travels extensively speaking on behalf of our industry and lobbying for amusement operator participation in video lottery programs. Bohrer also labored for an equitable jukebox licensing agreement in recent years. These are but a few of his many accomplishments and contributions to the coin machine community.

In short, Bohrer embodies the work ethic, dedication, and devotion to the industry that made him the unanimous choice for Play Meter's award. Due to his hectic schedule, and prior commitments on behalf of the coin machine in-

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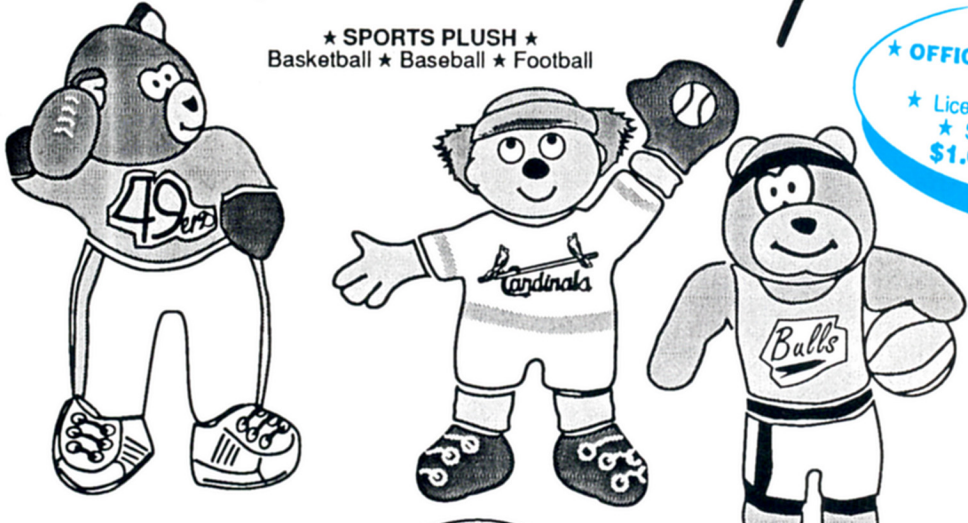

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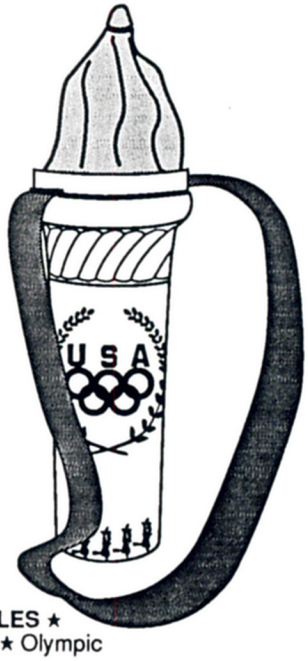

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dustry, Bohrer was not able to attend ACME '92 this year. Craig Johnson, president of Tataka in Salt Lake City, and first vice president of AMOA, accepted the award for Bohrer and expressed the recipient's sincere gratitude for the honor.

Other awards presented by Play Meter are based solely on operator votes written on the annual State of the Industry Survey. Several ties were recorded this year. The categories and winners were:

Best Jukebox: *LaserStar* by Rowe International.

Best Pinball: *Terminator 2* by Williams-Bally/Midway.

Best Dedicated Game: Tie—*Race Drivin* by Atari Games and *Wrestle Fest* by American Technos.

Best Video Kit: *Street Fighter II* by Capcom USA.

Best Novelty/Redemption Game: Tie—*Putting Challenge* by Innovative Concepts in Entertainment and *Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe* by Data East USA.

Best Other Game: Tie—*Cougar Darts* by Valley Recreation and *Air Hockey* by Dynamo Corp.

AAMA presented its Sales Achievement Awards:

Silver: Namco-America for *Final Lap 2*; NSM America for *Silver Sky* and *Firebird*; Williams-Bally/Midway for *Bugs Bunny's Birthday Ball, Gilligan's Island, Harley Davidson, Party Zone,* and *Slugfest*; and Data East for *Batman, Checkpoint*, and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

Gold: Williams-Bally/Midway for *High Impact Football* and Data East for *Star Trek* and *The Simpsons*.

Platinum: Konami for *The Simpsons*; SNK Corp. of America for *Neo-Geo Multivideo System*; and Williams-Bally/Midway for *The Machine*.

Diamond: Capcom USA for *Street Fighter II* and Williams-Bally/Midway for *Funhouse* and *Terminator 2*. □

Award winners and Play Meter staff, (l-r): Ken Fedesna, Steve Ritchie, Bill Rickett, Craig Johnson, Greg Rice, Carol Ann Durand, Dennis Sable, Jerry Gordon, Joel Friedman, Carol Lally, Alan Schafer, Ralph Coppola, Steve Bristow, and Linda Benzler.

Happy winners Alan Schafer (l) of Valley and Bill Rickett of Dynamo with Valerie Cognevich of Play Meter.

AAMA award recipients gathered for a group photo.

Gran numero de personas del Sur de los Estados Unidos atendieron el ACME

En la fotografia se ve la publicadora de Play Meter Carol Lally y Rolando Saldana Martinez (l), Gilberto Saldana Martinez, y Raul Saldana Pena.

El sabor mejicano de la ciudad de San Antonio combinado con la madurez del mercado Mejicano de maquinas operadas con moneda y el agrandecimiento del ACME '92, resulto en un record en el numero de participantes del pais de Mejico. Alrededor de 400 operadores, distribuidores, y fabricantes tomaron la oportunidad de hacer contacto con muchas de las companias que desean y estan, actualmente, haciendo negocios en el pais de Mejico. Un operador nos dijo lo siguiente: "Esta es la primera vez que he participado en un show en los Estados Unidos y, pues, me ha impresionado."

En el pasado, la poliza del gobierno Mejicano resulto en atrasar el desarrollo de la industria de maquinas de entretinimiento de moneda. Como resultado, el desarrollo se ha atazcado ligeramente cuando comparado con el desarrollo en los EE.UU. Pero dos anos aca, el gobierno mejicano altero su poliza relajando las regulaciones hacia la industria. Casi inmediatamente, las companias estadouni-

Continued on page A-71

ACME '92

El doctor Ernesto Milner (l) de la revista Play Meter con Carlos Pablo Koloffon de Negocios y Carol Ann Durand de la revista Play Meter.

En la fotografia se ve Jose Venancio Tapia Vidal (l) de Juegos Video Tokyo con su bella esposa Hermila Aguilar y su hijo Jose Domino.

Aqui se ven Juan Hernandez Camacho (l) y Juan Aquiles Hernandez de Video-juegos visitando amablemente el kiosko de Play Meter para suscribirse.

El Doctor Ernesto Milner de Play Meter conversa con los ingenieros J. Manuel Bustamante (c) y Fco. Javier Murrieta de Fantasy Mazon y Diversion S.A., DE C.V.

IMEX Rafael Salas y Sylvio Saidman hablan con Alicia Gonzalez, Jose Gonzalez, y Victor Gonzalez de J.G. Video Games.

Pasando de visita de derecha a izquierda: Cesar Rabago, Norma Guajuardo, Ramona de Guigardo, y Ramon Guajardo Garcia (operadores de Mejico).

Aqui se ven en la foto Ingeniero Enrique Garcia del Rio y Connie Silva de Videojuegos Funny Chips. Pararon en nuestro kiosko para descansar esos "pies cansados."

Eduardo Solis de Jueguen Len con amiga Mary George.

Continued from page A-69

denses se arrojaron con mucho interes en el mercado mejicano.

Unas de los obstaculos en el desarrollo y una de las barreras la cual es dificil de brincar es la proliferacion de copias de los juegos electronicos hechos en Mejico sin la autorizacion directa de los duenos originales. Esto es el resultado de no tener en su lugar leyes protegiende el derecho de la copia a los duenos originales.

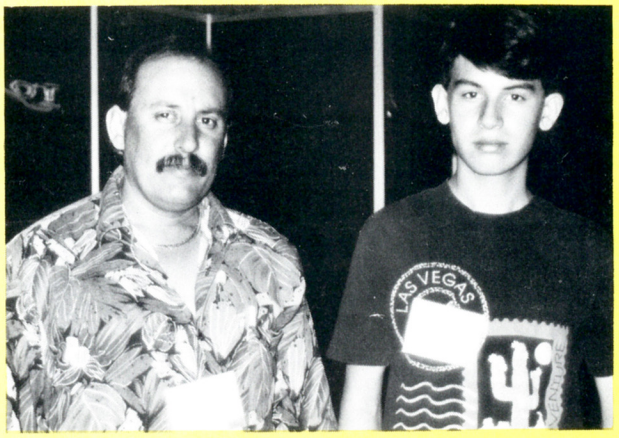
Por dos anos (1990-92), la asociacion Mejicana de juegos electronicos y el AAMA en los Estados Unidos han trabajado en conjuncion y con un deseo comun de cooperacion para crear un ambiente de relaciones harmoniosas para ayudar en el crecimiento y agradecimiento de una industria mejicana. La industria se halla a la orilla de una explosion de negocio.

Entendiendo que hay diferencias culturales entre los dos paises, nosotros creemos firmemente que los operadores de las maquina de juegos electronicos de moneda en los dos paises tienen un deseo ferviente y un gol comun de aprender como proveer entretenimiento de calidad superior y mantener el conocimiento tecnologico que, suceden, y sucederan en nuestra industria en el futuro cercano.

Es nuestro credo que el reciente ACME en San Antonio, Tejas, dio una gran oportunidad no solamente para ver la novedad en los juegos en los Estados Unidos pero tambien nos dio una idea, una vision, de lo que nos espera en el futuro de la industria de juegos electronicos de moneda en el gran paises, sur de nuestra frontera, y especialmente en Mejico.

ACME '92

En la foto de derecha a izquierda: Jaime A. Villegas, Lucen Moreno de Villegas, Luis Leal Calderon, Norma El Guiea De Leal de Jimmy de Puebla en Mejico.



En esta foto se ven el Arquitecto Marco Antonio de Anda F. y su hijo Marco Antonio junior de DISJEL (Disenos de Juegos Electronicos).

En esta foto se ven de derecha a izquierda: Fernando Lopez, J.J. Pardueles, y Angel Pardueles of Telcasa.

La publicadora de la revista Play Meter, Carol Lally (c), le da la bienvenida a Duda Escobar (l) y Rosely Valloni de Brasil. El doctor Ernesto Milner de Play Meter se ve a la derecha.

Visitando de Sur America son de derecha a izquierda: Gabriela Guiterez, Carmen Valay de Abarado de AUMI S.A. de C.V. y Concepcion Castanon Cervantes de Emresa Especializada en Entrenenimiento Grupo E-4.

Bruce Sarlcisian (l) y Fernando Galeb ensenan la camisa de T a Raul Mondragon de Diversified y Tito Reiderman de Arigato de Buenos Aires, Argentina. La camisa es de Mondial International.

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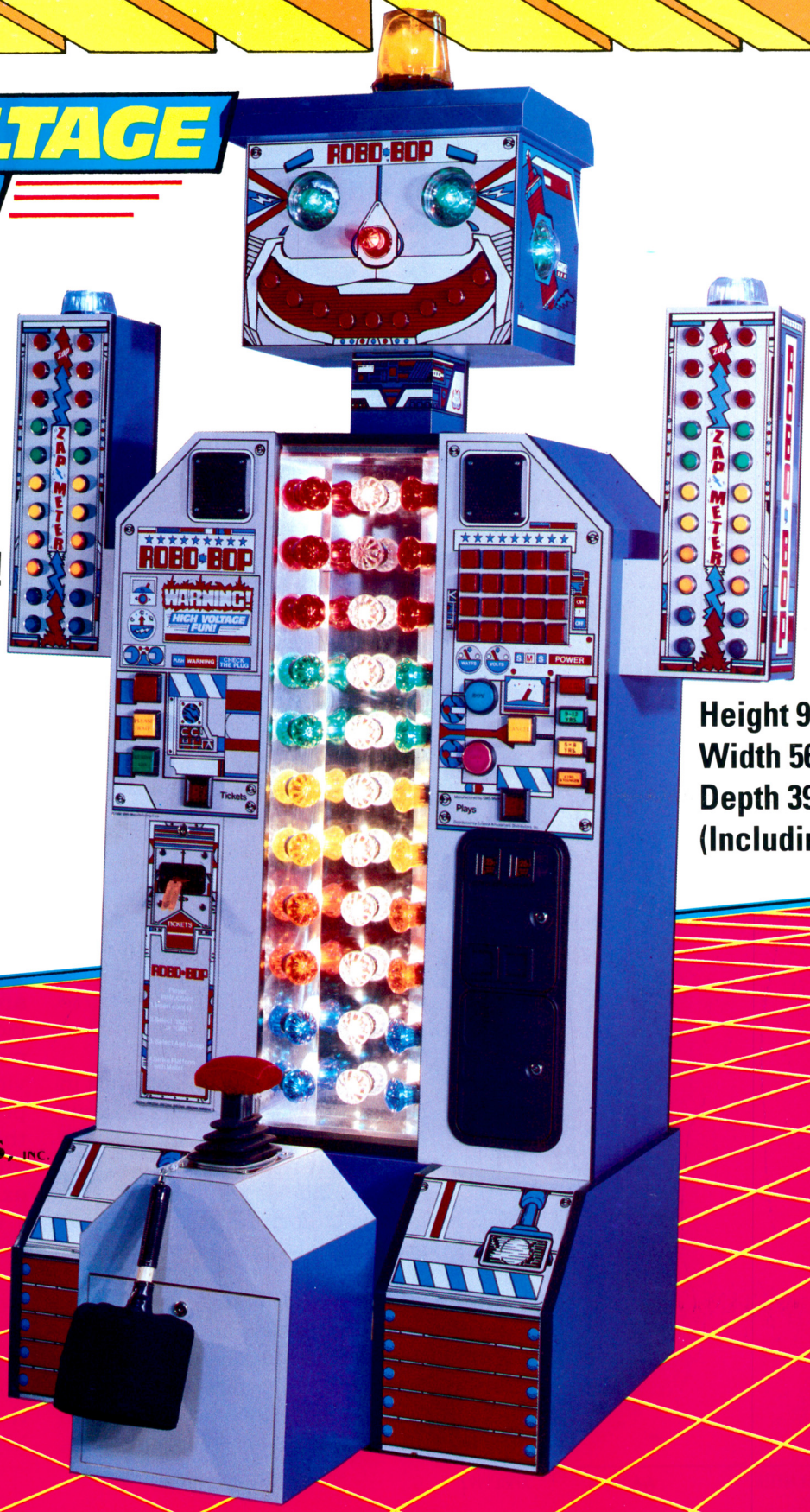

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David Peretz

Dr. David Peretz has been an operator and amusement consultant since 1981. He is the president of Ultimate Lazer Games and is the designer and creator of the successful lazer game,* Starbase Omega, *located in Orlando. It opened in 1987.* Starbase Omega *has had over a quarter of a million plays and, he says, has stood the test of time. His company uses its own technology to design and build a cost-effective transporter simulator ride and return time warp tunnel.

Since there has been a renewed interest in interactive games, we called upon Dr. Peretz to answer a few questions about them.

Why is there so much interest in human interactive entertainment?

Video game technology has been striving for reality. The latest systems, like *Virtuality*, create this reality. Unfortunately, the cost is prohibitive to most entertainment complexes.

Why are entertainment complexes interested in lazer games?

They all need a central concept to attract customers. Video game arcades have depended on miniature golf, go-karts, water slides, theme parks, and mall settings. These options, once innovative, are now commonplace and often lack the imagination needed to stir public interest. Lazer games provide something new that will draw people into a location. Systems like the one we have are affordable to most, while still creating excitement.

What type of facility should consider lazer games?

Our experience has shown that locations with a proven traffic flow of over 100,000 people a year make ideal places for this type of attraction. For example, our lazer attraction in Orlando is part of the Mystery Fun House complex that

also has the fun house, game room, gift shop, restaurant, and miniature golf.

There should be at least 1,500 square feet and at least a 12-foot ceiling. The rest is up to your imagination.

Can you give us a brief description of what type of lazer games there are?

Generally, there are two types: one in which the room is divided into two parts; the other has no restrictions in player movement. In the first type, there are teams on each side of the room. Neither team can cross the midline of the room. Each player hides behind barriers as he tries to deactivate the other teams' guns. When a gun is deactivated, it turns off. The player must then go reset his gun at his team's reset station. Resetting the gun gives a point to the opposing team.

In the second format, the lazer game is played in an open arena. There are no restrictions limiting opposing team players from interacting with each other.

Which type is best?

It all depends on the location. At Starbase Omega we use arena play. Since Orlando is mainly a tourist location, individual scoring is more efficient. We also found that the special effects were very important in that market. Our arena has a super-padded surface to create the illusion of space gravity. We also added a 12-passenger flight simulator (one we designed and built) as well as high-tech arena graphics under black lights and a time warp return tunnel.

On the other hand, there is a low budget, cost effective layout, which has simple barriers made of cardboard with interesting graphics painted on them.

How does the lazer equipment work?

The lazer gun shoots a beam of light, visible and/or infrared. If the shot hits a target and/or target sensor, it scores a point in memory. In the more primitive systems, when a target sensor is hit, the gun is deactivated. To reset it, the player goes to a reset station, which reactivates his gun and scores a point for the opposing team. The score appears on a scoreboard posted in the room.

In the more sophisticated systems, the gun and target sensors record how many shots are fired, how many times a shot hits a target, and who shot the targets. This collective information is downloaded to a computer, usually after the game is over.

What should you look for when selecting a system?

Remember the concept of "keep

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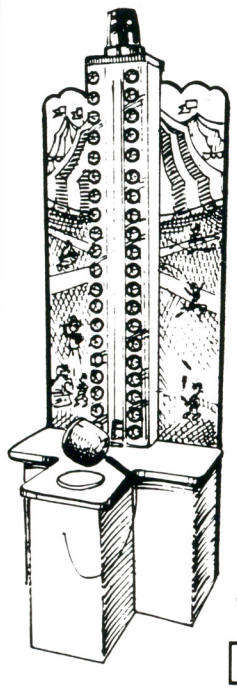

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it simple." The more equipment needed to run a lazer game, the more potential for problems. Stay away from systems that use radio frequencies to transmit information back to a central computer.

This type of system requires special building requirements. Stay away from systems that use head gear and vest packs because they create additional maintenance headaches and additional sanitation problems.

Select a system that has good visual appeal. When the lazer beam is fired, is it visually appealing to both the player and the opponent? Are the sound effects audible to everyone on the playing surface? Does the equipment allow the operator flexibility in game design? Does the equipment allow players to deactivate each other's guns? Does a deactivated gun allow for player reset or just a time penalty feature, or both? Does a reset station give both team and individual points?

Is there a difference between a laser and a lazer?

A laser with an "s" refers to a light source that emits a beam of light, utilizing a specific wavelength that can be extremely intense. A lazer spelled with a "z" refers to a light source that is not actually a laser but creates the illusion of a beam of light resembling an actual laser beam.

How can an operator protect himself from buying the wrong system?

Talk to people who have purchased and have experience with any system you are considering. Ask them if it's dependable. How long does the battery charge last? How often must they change parts? Which parts fail the most? Who repairs the equipment and at what cost? What is the turn around time on having the equipment repaired?

What are the major problems in operating a lazer game attraction?

The more common problems are in the hardware, rather than the software. Be careful of products that have just hit the market and appear to function correctly. They haven't passed the test of time.

What are some common problems with most systems?

The cords connecting the gun to the computer pack fails; the access to replace a failed light source is difficult; the battery capacity and charging system is inadequate for a continuous 16-hour shift; the trigger assemblies do not hold up to normal lazer game use; the plastic casings do not last; and the electronics can't withstand the force of normal wear and tear. We have resolved these problems through experience, so we know that they are problems to be aware of with other systems.

What options do you need?

As many as possible. We've found that different locations have different requests. Some want the equipment to keep individual scores, others want team scores. Some want to change the time of play or want reset stations and a stun or kill feature built into the guns. Still others may want the equipment to dispense redemption tickets based on scores. Just like dip switch settings on video games, we suggest the system you select have all of the above and more.

The best systems let operators create their own game play features. The game equipment should have a microprocessor that allows for operator flexibility and programmable sound options.

Now for the big question: how much do these systems cost?

Most systems offer the option of purchasing just the equipment, usually based on a minimum of 12 player sets. This set needs to include charging units for each player set and either a team reset station with scoreboard or an individual scoring station. The cost for this starts at about $20,000. □

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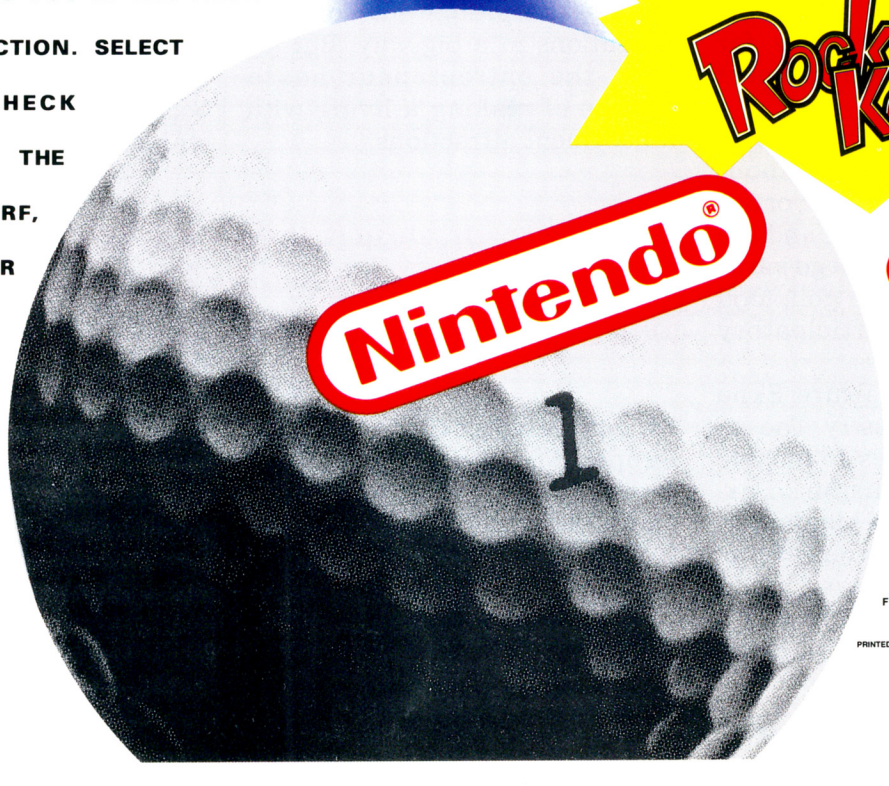

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Frank Seninsky

Leisure Expo: a learning experience

Last year when Scott Rarowsky, president of Tourist Attractions and Parks magazine, asked me to put on a redemption seminar for a new show, Leisure Expo, to take place just two weeks before ACME, I was a little concerned. "How can you get people to come to *another* show?" I asked. Scott assured me that his "reader's response" cards indicated that there are many small mom and pop attraction owners and pink-slipped managers thirsty for knowledge about the amusement industry.

He explained that most of these people don't even know about AMOA, ACME, Play Meter, or our other trade publications, and are interested in seminars on go-karts, redemption, miniature golf, food concessions, and participatory play.

New shows like Leisure Expo help our coin-op industry. The expansion of businesses to include amusements, expansion of existing attractions, and building indoor entertainment centers all provide better locations to place games and improve the industry's image. This new breed is quick to learn.

The coin machine industry is one of the last mom and pop industries left. In the food and retail businesses, large chains are gobbling up most of the market share. People want to go to large, beautifully decorated restaurants and stores. This trend is also happening in our industry with chains like Edison Brothers and Aladdin's Castle. There are also rumors that several Fortune 500 companies are ready to take the plunge into coin-op operations in a big way. But for now, the entrepreneur has a chance of making a living with amusement attractions.

"The current baby boom is the largest since the mid-'60s, and all industries are gearing up to service these families with small children."

If you want to know why this is happening, take a look at the demographics: in 1990 there were 4.2 million babies born in the United States. That number has risen to five million per year. This baby boom is the most since the mid-'60s, and all industries are gearing up to service these families with small children. Smart operators are installing kiddie rides and kiddie redemption in their game operations.

People are also trying to stay close to home because of the recession. Local amusement attractions that provide good value for the entire family are prospering. There are currently 2,000 miniature golf courses, 2,500 attractions, and 4,000 fun centers in the United States. These numbers are growing at an alarming rate. And more good news...in 10 years these early boomers will be teenagers, looking for high-tech amusement areas to socialize and spend their money. Could we be looking at another video boom?

Leisure Expo had 1,500 attendees and featured 14 seminars. There were 250 attendees at the go-kart/fun centers seminar, presented by Rich Sexton of Formula K Raceway, Marvin Bloom of

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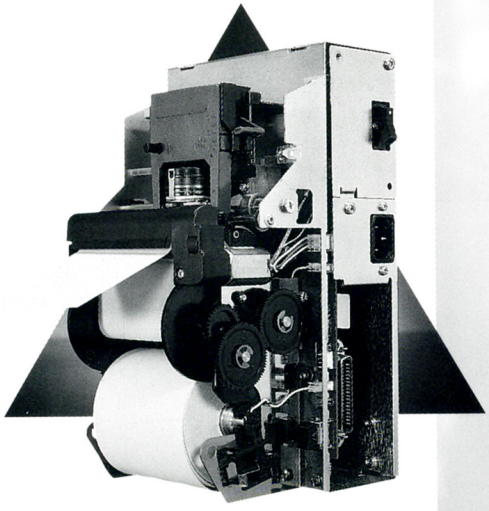

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"Good news: in 10 years these early boomers will be teenagers, looking for high-tech amusement areas."

Gasoline Alley, and Jim Gallagher. Their handouts were exceptional and included a checklist for putting together a business plan to obtain financing, along with a demographics and revenue-projection study. The redemption seminar also drew 250 people and lasted an additional two hours! John Margold of Betson joined me on the panel. I can't recall a seminar where the audience was that hungry for knowledge. The miniature golf seminar drew over 100.

Although there were just 80 exhibitors, they wrote quite a bit of business. Gordon and Jeff Smart of Smart Industries sold dozens of their new kiddie ball toss, *Big Bertha*, which I can already predict will be one of the top new redemption games. Joe Gilbert is back with a game called *Ball +* that dispenses tickets for throwing a baseball for accuracy. Bob's Space Racers and Lazer-Tron also did well. There were many exhibitors expressing an interest in exhibiting at other industry shows.

I also learned quite a few interesting tips at the seminars: community profiles, obtained from any town library, are very important to operators and can help in finding better locations for games; do not invest heavily in towns that only have one or two major employers; look for a community with a high average wage/hour pay scale; seek towns with high savings and deposit accounts in local banks; and get local schools to help you advertise your business by donating what they really need.

Another tip is when looking for bank financing, start with your third choice, so if you are rejected you can find out what additional information is required and what they didn't like about your presentation. By the time you actually see your first choice, you should have your best possible presentation and have a better chance of getting the loan.

Leisure Expo show manager Al Barry said that Leisure Expo II will be in Daytona Beach, Fla., January 21-23, 1993, a week before Super Bowl. As always...keep cranking! □

What are the toughest issues facing the coin-op industry today? What can we do about them? Answer the question or spill your guts on whatever else is on your mind.

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READER'S RESPONSE

We have always felt that it is vital to find out what our readers are thinking. It was suggested to us several years ago that we should devote a page to hearing readers' views. We complied and regularly print the compliments and complaints we've gotten.

We decided to zero in on what operators view as the most pressing concerns in the industry. It was up to our readers to answer the question posed or express opinions about whatever else is on their minds. We will periodically change the question but continue to invite you to tell us what you are thinking. We are counting on you. Your opinion counts!

If the shoe fits!

I've been in the coin machine business for about 15 years and I've got to get something off my chest. It is getting harder and harder to do business because many people ride their suppliers until they look like a swayback mule.

I may be in the minority, but I do not subscribe to the philosophy of "operate on the other man's money." If you can do that and stay within the understood terms — great. It's the people who ask for the cash prices and then ride you for 90 days to a year and still expect to retain a "good credit" status. In my opinion they deserve a "no credit" status.

I think everyone knows that standard "open account" terms mean payment in 30 days. That doesn't mean mail the check in 30 days. It means that the check should be *received* within 30 days. This should apply to manufacturers, distributors, and operators. Go to the number one retailer in the United States and see what kind of terms you get. Try to drive a new car off the dealership's lot without paying cash or signing a finance agreement. This industry is plagued by a few spoiled brats and poor managers.

Another eyesore in this industry is the constant lying you hear every time you call to ask where your part or game is. It seems too commonplace to simply tell a customer that the truckline picked it up yesterday, rather than being honest and saying you haven't even gotten it yet.

If you have to tell an operator that you don't know when a pinball will be in, why not say, "I don't know." If you have to tell a location that you don't know when you'll be able to bring out that new pinball, just say, "I don't know when it will come in." If you have to tell a distributor that it may be two or three weeks before delivery on that load of equipment, then say, "It will be two or three weeks."

Signed: Sick of it

Editors note: Boy, will this letter hit home with just about everyone. I'd like to add that even magazines can be included in the scenario. We offer incentives to those who pay for their ads within the specified terms. You guessed it—many take the discount and do not pay anywhere near those terms. Taking it to extremes, we have one customer who uses an advertising agency that waits nearly a year to pay and then boldly pays the discounted price! How would you like dealing with this character?

Thanks for telling it like it is. In your case, one lie can filter down and affect a great many people. I think we've just become so used to telling tales when things don't go like we planned that there's little chance for change. However, we can all hope!

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Irving Blackman

Cellular phones can be a tax trap

Cellular phones seem to be like mushrooms: they are popping up everywhere. If you're sporting one in your car or elsewhere, think of it as an automobile or computer. Why? Well, in terms of the tax law, those little telephones are subject to the same special depreciation and record-keeping rules. Here they are.

Cellular telephones are not eligible for accelerated depreciation unless they are used more than 50 percent of the time in a qualified business use. But you can use straight-line depreciation (five-year life) if you miss the 50 percent target.

No deduction is allowed, even if the phone is used for business, unless the business use is substantiated. No personal use, which would mean 100 percent business use, won't work either. Substantiation will make or break your deduction.

When an employee uses a company phone for business, the employee must pay tax on the value of the use unless the business purpose is substantiated. Be careful; this one is a double-edged sword. Suppose you don't provide your employer with the necessary proof (substantiation). First, the employer gets no deduction for even the legitimate use. Second, you get socked with a tax on the value of the entire phone use.

"In terms of tax law, cellular telephones are subject to the same special depreciation and record-keeping rules."

If you are willing to do it, this will get you home free: keep a diary of all the business use of your cellular phone. Mark down the date, time, and business purpose of each call.

Second tax opinion saves the day

The phone rang; it was a reader of this column (let's call him Joe). "I need a second opinion," he said. Joe had decided he was at the age (59) when his estate should be put in order. He and his wife Mary (58) had each just signed their own new will and trust agreement. Yet, somehow, Joe still felt uncomfortable.

I asked Joe a series of pointed questions about such things as his business, his three-child family, and his short- and long-term objectives. We decided Joe would send me what we call a "consulting package": copies of his tax returns and financial statements (both business and personal), and copies of the new wills and trusts.

A review of Joe's data revealed several minor problems (easily corrected) and one major problem common to business owners like Joe. It's like a disease, but of a very different kind: it doesn't strike until after you are dead. Let me explain.

An analysis of Joe's personal financial statement clearly showed that important parts of Joe's will and trust agreement were worthless. Don't get me wrong; the documents were well written by an experienced lawyer from a large firm. A good analogy would be having a magnificent automobile with no fuel to run it. I'll tell you why.

The most important factor that today's cautious operators consider when buying a coin-operated game is consistency. Will the unit continue to earn revenue in a year...two years... five years...even longer?

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Suppose Joe died first, before Mary. Here's what would have happened to his assets: his IRA, pension plan, and profit-sharing funds would have gone directly to Mary, since she is the beneficiary. The same goes for the substantial life insurance on Joe's life. All of Joe's significant other assets—the business stock, house, condo, investment stocks, and some other assets—are held in joint tenancy with Mary. If Joe was to die, Mary would own all of these assets outright, not Joe's executor or trustee.

Simply put, Joe's property would not have flowed through the will and then into the trust. Everything would go directly to Mary. First, it would be a tax disaster ultimately costing Joe's family about $250,000 in extra estate taxes. Second, Joe's assets would not have been subject to the protection of the trust.

Fortunately, we were able to change all that. The trust became the beneficiary instead of Mary. All the joint tenancies were terminated, and each asset was put solely into Joe's or Mary's name (or their trusts) as dictated by their objectives.

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Mistakes made in cases like Joe's are typical. His accountant planned the business transfer, the insurance consultant suggested the life insurance coverage, and the lawyer did the documents. All are experts in their own field, but there's no quarterback.

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for many years, I've discovered they usually have three goals concerning these types of investments.

They want to save income taxes, reduce or eliminate estate taxes, and stay in control of the property for as long as they live. Naturally, they want all the income and wealth to stay in the family. It sounds impossible, but there is a way to get the job done. Follow these three simple steps:

1. Form a new corporation and elect S corporation status.

2. Exchange the investments (say, a $100,000 treasury bond) for stock in the new S corporation. This transaction is tax-free.

3. Over a period of time, gift portions of the S corporation stock to your children, grandchildren, or others. Gift to a maximum of 49 percent of the stock. By keeping 51 percent, you will always be in control of the S corporation. Now let's take a look at the tax consequences.

Gift tax: You can gift up to $10,000 tax-free per year to each donee. If you are married, you can double the amount to $20,000 by having your spouse consent to the gift. It is smart not to exceed the $10,000/$20,000 value per year limit. Spread your gifts out over two or more years as necessary.

Income tax: The stockholders pay tax on their proportionate share of the income. For example, let's say the income of the corporation was $10,000 for the year and the kids owned $40,000 of the stock. Their share of the income would be $4,000; yours would be $6,000. This is a great way to build an education fund for the kids. Remember, any child who has not attained age 14 must pay tax on unearned income in excess of $1,200 at his parents' top tax rate. But that's not so bad because of the estate tax result.

Estate tax: The shares of stock owned by other members of the family will not be included in your estate. The top estate tax rate is 55 percent. So, as you can see, significant savings are possible.

One warning: you must operate like a corporation. Title to the assets must be in the corporation's name. You should actually issue certificates of the S corporation stock to each stockholder. Ask your professional adviser to make sure you follow all the necessary details.□

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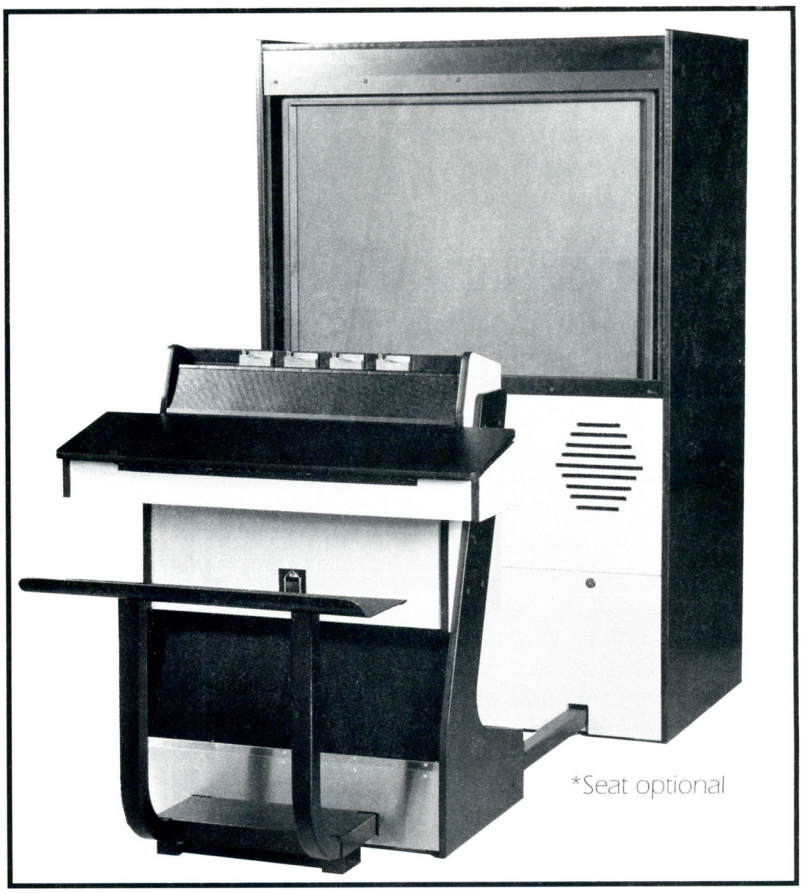

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Randy Fromm

Understanding vertical deflection circuits

It's fairly common knowledge that a television or video game picture is made up of hundreds of closely spaced horizontal lines. Each of these lines is called a "raster line" or a "video line." The exact number of lines will vary between games, but a typical video game picture contains approximately 250 individual lines.

Some games use a "medium resolution" system, with a special monitor that displays more lines. Atari's *Paperboy, Championship Sprint, APB* and *Hard Drivin'* all fall into this category. Of course, more lines will give you a better-looking picture. But regardless of how many there are, the lines are stacked so close together that when viewed from any distance they seem to blend together into one seamless picture.

The part of the monitor that's in charge of putting each of the lines in its proper place is called the "vertical deflection circuit" or "vertical sweep." When the vertical deflection circuit is doing its job properly, it will place each consecutive line of the picture, one beneath the other, and space them evenly across the screen from top to bottom.

The spacing between the lines is important. It's called "vertical linearity." If the vertical linearity is not correct (due to a component failure or poor adjustment) the picture will appear distorted. Round objects, for example, may appear pear-shaped if the lines at the top of the picture are spaced further apart than those at the bottom.

"It's not unusual to encounter problems in the vertical deflection circuit of a monitor. In older monitors this is one of the most common failures."

It's not at all unusual to encounter problems in the vertical deflection circuit of a monitor. In fact, in older monitors this is one of the most common failures you'll see. There are a few different symptoms, depending on the nature of the failure. You might see a picture that doesn't quite fill the screen from the top to the bottom, no matter how you adjust the vertical size or height control.

Another symptom is a picture that's squished at the top of the screen, cutting off the picture and making the scores unreadable. The top of the picture may be so stretched out that it actually appears to fold over onto itself at the top of the screen and display a bit of the image upside down and backwards. This symptom is known as "vertical foldover." In many cases, the vertical deflection circuit fails completely, leaving just a single horizontal line running down the center of the monitor.

Theory of operation

Inside the slender neck of the picture tube, an "electron gun assembly" with three electron guns creates three beams of high-energy electrons. These electron beams are shot toward the screen, which is coated on the inside with stripes of red, green, and blue "phosphor." Each beam is precisely aligned so that it strikes just one colored phosphor. When the high-energy electrons strike the screen, the phosphor coating

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Randy Fromm's Big Blue Book of Really Great Technical Information

This is the same book I use for my Arcade School class. It's full of useful information, troubleshooting shortcuts, parts sources etc. Includes schematic diagrams for monitors and power supplies. $34.95 (plus $4.00 Shipping & Handling)
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glows.

But the electron gun assembly is aimed at the exact center of the picture tube. By itself, it can only produce a dot at the center of the screen (not too entertaining). The electron gun assembly cannot move to direct the beams to other areas of the screen. In order to move the electron beams around the screen, the beams are "deflected," or pushed around with magnetism.

Mounted on the neck of the picture tube are two coils that form an electromagnet assembly called the "yoke." The yoke is powered by two different circuits on the monitor chassis and generates two separate and very powerful magnetic fields. The two magnetic fields point in two different directions: horizontal and vertical.

The magnetic field generated by the "horizontal deflection coil" in the yoke causes the electron beam in the picture tube to scan from left to right, drawing a horizontal raster line across the screen. The beam is then turned off for a quick return trip to the left side of the screen, where the beam is turned back on and the process is repeated. This horizontal scanning is continuous. Whenever the monitor is powered up, the beam is scanning horizontally.

The magnetic field generated by the vertical deflection coil in the yoke starts by pushing the horizontally scanning beam to the top of the screen so it can draw the first line of the picture where it belongs. To draw the second line of the picture, the magnetic field pushes the beam down a tiny bit. When the next horizontal scan occurs, the second raster line is placed right underneath the first one! Again, the beam is pushed down a little so the third line can be drawn underneath the second one. The process is repeated for each line, with the vertical sweep pushing the beam down as each line is drawn lower on the screen.

Eventually, the entire screen is filled with raster lines. It takes approximately 1/60 of a second from the time the first line is drawn at the top of the screen until the last line is drawn at the bottom. One complete screen full of lines is called a "field," and the vertical deflection circuit in the monitor generates approximately 60 fields per second.

The frequency of the vertical sweep is approximately 60 cycles per second or 60 Hertz (60 Hz). This is the same frequency as our household 120 volt AC power.

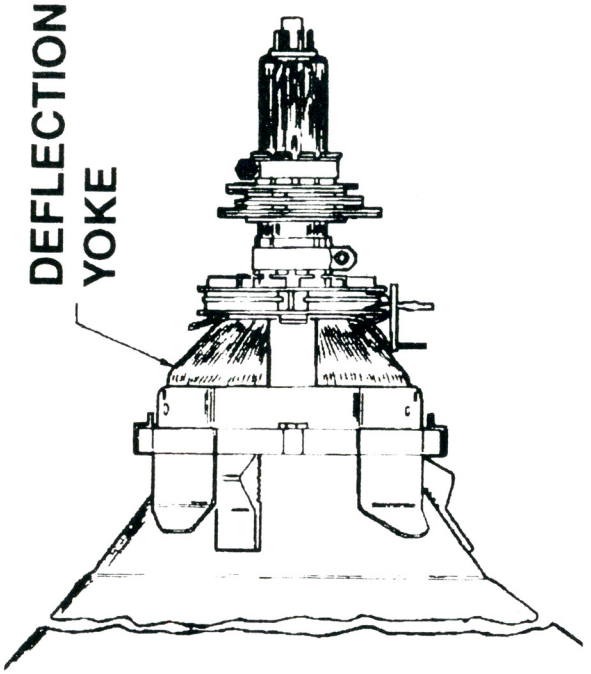
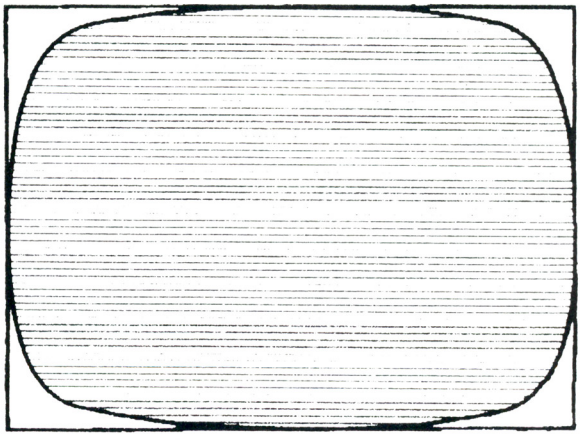


Figure 1



RASTER LINES SHOULD BE EVENLY SPACED FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SCREEN. THIS IS KNOWN AS HAVING PROPER "LINEARITY."

Figure 2

However, the monitor does not depend on the 60 Hz AC power for its vertical sweep. It just happens to be the same frequency. The 60 Hz vertical sweep is generated internally by the vertical deflection circuit. After all, if a monitor depended on the 120 volt AC power for its 60 Hz vertical sweep, you couldn't have battery operated televisions, could you?

After completing one field, the beam is positioned at the bottom of the screen. The vertical sweep now reverses direction and quickly (in about one millisecond or 1/1000 of a second) brings the beam back to the top of the screen. This is called the "vertical retrace." To prevent any lines from being drawn across the screen as the beam races from the bottom to the top during the vertical retrace, another monitor circuit known as the "blanking" circuit turns off the electron guns.

Vertical deflection circuits

There are a few different types of vertical deflection circuits. Some monitors use all discreet components (individual parts like transistors, diodes, capacitors, and resistors). Some monitors combine an integrated circuit with a pair of transistors, while others use two integrated circuits. There are even monitors that use just a single integrated circuit and a small handful of other components for the vertical deflection circuit. Regardless of the specific hardware, all video game monitors use the same basic concept for vertical deflection.

The logic board in the game generates a signal known as "vertical synchronization" or "vertical sync." This is simply a momentary pulse that the computer sends out at the end of every field. There is a wire that carries this pulse from the edge connector of the logic board (pin P on the JAMMA harness) to the sync input connector of the monitor. With the sync signal to guide it, the monitor starts drawing the first line of each field (the top line of the picture) just after each vertical sync pulse. Without sync, the picture will roll.

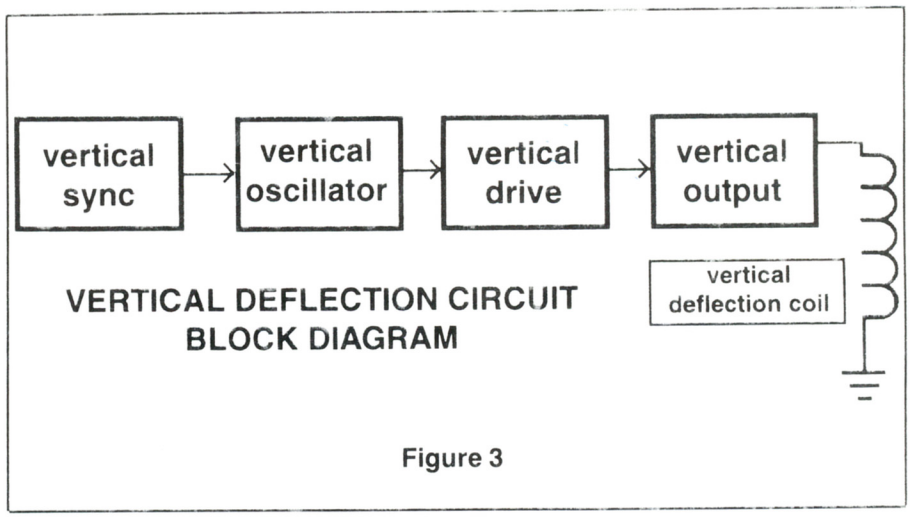


Figure 3

The vertical sync pulse keeps the picture from rolling by passing along to a circuit called the "vertical oscillator." The vertical oscillator generates the 60 Hz signal that will eventually drive the vertical deflection coil in the yoke. By triggering on the vertical sync pulse, the vertical oscillator stays exactly in step with the logic board.

The output of the vertical oscillator is nowhere near powerful enough to drive the vertical deflection coil in the yoke. It has to be amplified first. There are usually one or two stages of amplification that take the weak signal from the vertical oscillator and boost it in voltage and current. This vertical amplifier circuit is often called the "vertical drive."

But we're not through yet! There's still one more stage of amplification needed. Following the vertical drive, a higher powered "vertical output" circuit is then used to drive the vertical deflection coil in the yoke. It is in this vertical output circuit that we find a lot of our component failures. More on that later; stay tuned.

In the next installment, we'll take a close look at the vertical deflection circuitry in several monitors and see how they work, how they fail, and how to troubleshoot them using just a meter (and maybe a capacitor too!). □

"Ticket Vic" Fortenbach

A guide for redemption game manufacturers

Recently a technician friend spoke to me about all the problems he was having with a certain redemption game, the name of which I will not mention. It's one of the newer games on the market and is built by a company that has been in the coin-operated redemption industry for a while.

Some of the problems included the following: some of the cabinet screws that hold the game together were loose and coming out; the power supply was underrated and had to be updated; and one of the motors was binding, causing the underrated motor fuse to blow each time the motor made a complete revolution. The game was brand new, right out of the box, yet experienced all these problems!

I don't want to knock any of the redemption game manufacturers or scare anyone wanting to get into this part of the business. But I think there should be some guidelines for the manufacture of redemption games, sort of like the AMOA standards for video and pinball games.

I know that redemption games can be very different from one another. Any strict standards would cramp the style of the manufacturers. I'm not here to tell you what to do and what not to do; all I'm proposing is a list of items that redemption game manufacturers should take into account when designing a redemption game. This list is solely my opinion and does not reflect the views of Play Meter.

"Provide complete settings of game percentages so the game can be set for the proper percentages."

1. Since redemption games can be quite heavy to move away from the wall for rear access, make all PC boards, power supplies, etc., easily accessible from the front of the game.

2. Make it easy to gain access to the ticket dispenser.

3. Make the loading of tickets as easy as possible. Don't hide the ticket bin deep inside the bottom of the game.

4. Install a "ticket low" indicator lamp on the outside of the game, near the ticket dispenser.

5. Install a "ticket error" message for jammed tickets.

6. Staple a dip switch setting list near the PC board to aid in adjusting the game for the correct percentages.

7. Make the game out of plywood, *not* pressed wood. Remember, the game should be made to last!

8. Create a complete manual for the redemption game *before* going into full production.

9. Put inside each game a "care package" of light bulbs, a tube of motor lube (if your game uses a motor), fuses, etc., like some of the pinball game manufacturers are doing.

10. If your redemption game uses balls, supply some in the care package. Also, provide a second source for the balls if you are unable to supply them.

11. Program the game for some

sort of diagnostic mode, a game test for all switches and lights.

12. Provide complete settings of game options so the game can be set for the proper percentages.

13. If your game uses mechanical parts, enclose the items so that overzealous players won't try to get free games or free balls by reaching under or over the game and creating an out-of-order condition.

"There should be some guidelines for the manufacture of redemption games, sort of like the AMOA standards for video and pinball games."

14. For operators who want to install and use them, provide "taps" for a ticket and coin meter. Better yet, install both meters in the cabinet!

15. Don't use any weird connectors or plugs. Stay with what's proven, i.e., Molex or Amp products.

16. Finally, if your new redemption game uses a new gun or other control that you've designed, ask this question: "If a game player forced this new gun all the way to the left, would it break?"

I welcome any comments about this "guide" (good or bad) from any redemption game manufacturers or technicians. Please forward your reactions to Play Meter. □

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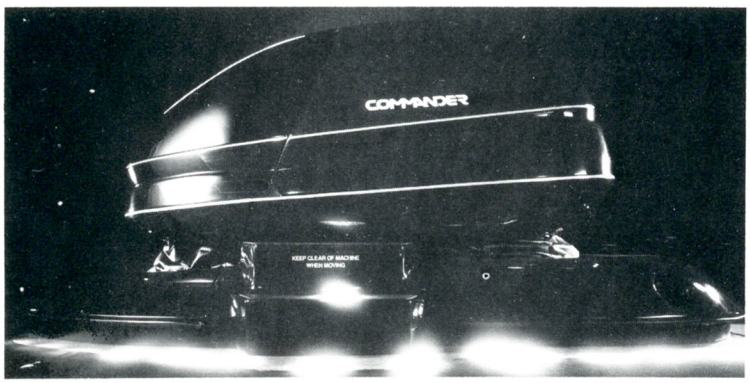


Scorpion

Merit Industries introduces the *Scorpion* upright electronic dart game that incorporates the company's Solo Challenger feature. Solo Challenger enables the player to compete one-on-one against the game's built-in challenger with four selectable skill levels. Players from novice to pro can take on his match—any game, any time.

Scorpion has a reliable linear power supply, over/under cash box door, drop-down front service door, operator-adjustable options, and built-in comprehensive diagnostics and bookkeeping. Merit provides a Solo Challenger promotions kit with the game to encourage play at your locations.

Additional features include overhead scoring, a flush-mount target with reinforced thin rib spider, electronic missed-dart detector (standard option), and a variety of game options. The target and spider together help eliminate shadows and jammed dart tips.

An automatic player change feature lets players keep their minds on the game. The cabinet has an uncluttered look and player-friendly game selection buttons and displays. Team play mode is incorporated on Cricket games; the Stat-Pak provides complete player statistics that meet AMOA-NDA standards.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Merit Industries Inc., 2525 State Road, Bensalem, PA 19020; (215) 639-4700; FAX (215) 639-5346.

Robo Pitch

Robo Pitch Inc. introduces *Robo Pitch*, a fully automated, robotic pitching machine with a real robot that resembles a big league baseball player. *Robo Pitch* winds up and even leg-kicks during delivery.

Two play modes are available: automatic, for random delivery at varying speeds and heights; and manual, in which players select a specific speed and height. *Robo Pitch* can be owner-preset with dip switches and minor adjustments.

A digital sound system reproduces the call of the umpire, catcher's chatter, and ballpark organ music. The unit is licensed from Taito America.

Robo Pitch offers a unique credit card that assists in promotions and can be used for discounts, little league specials, school teams, fundraisers, and groups. The magnetically coded card helps solidify customer loyalty.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Robo Pitch Inc., 7759 S. Harlem, Burbank, IL 60459; (708) 598-2150.

Guardians of the Hood

Three evil street gangs—the Dreads, Bald Eagles, and Dragons—populate Atari's newest one- to three-player fighting-themed video, *Guardians of the Hood*.

Features include head-to-head and side-scrolling game play and a three-button control used in combination with "muscle" and "defend." In addition, the game offers 3-D digitized graphics on a 25" screen.

The gangs have taken over once-peaceful Center City. Players must regain control of the city and unveil Mr. Big's true identity at the finish. Game action occurs in back alleys, damp subway stations, old theatres, and the seedy streets in an undesirable part of town.

Players select from four characters: Conner, Chief, Tanya, and Javier. As they defeat each gang boss they add one to the number of selectable characters (the total is seven). Fighting street-smart is a must; garbage cans, parking meters, newspaper stands, and car fenders are all legitimate weapons.

Characters train at a local gym before squaring off with gang members on each one's turf. Sparring earns bonus stars that add strength to their power moves. After defeat, gangs are converted and players move on to the next challenge.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Atari Games Corp., 675 Sycamore Drive, Milpitas, CA 95035; (408) 434-3799; FAX (408) 434-3776.

Superstar Pit Boss II

Merit Industries debuts the latest version of its successful *Superstar Pit Boss II* countertops and provides new trivia and sex trivia questions for the game.

Merit also offers inexpensive upgrade kits to update all previously installed *Superstar Pit Boss II* units, as well as its other video games in the field.

The *Superstar Pit Boss II* game line-up includes Bonus Blackjack, Joker Poker, Roll Them Bones, Super 7-Stud, Off-to-the Races, Super Phraze Craze, Four Score, and a wide variety of trivia categories.

Pit Boss units provide for up to 12 optional keyboard-entry video advertising screens for operator/location customized advertising messages. Additional features are five-player "high score" screens, automatic game rotation, and full bookkeeping and diagnostics.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Merit Industries Inc., 2525 State Road, Bensalem, PA 19020; (215) 639-4700; FAX (215) 639-5346.

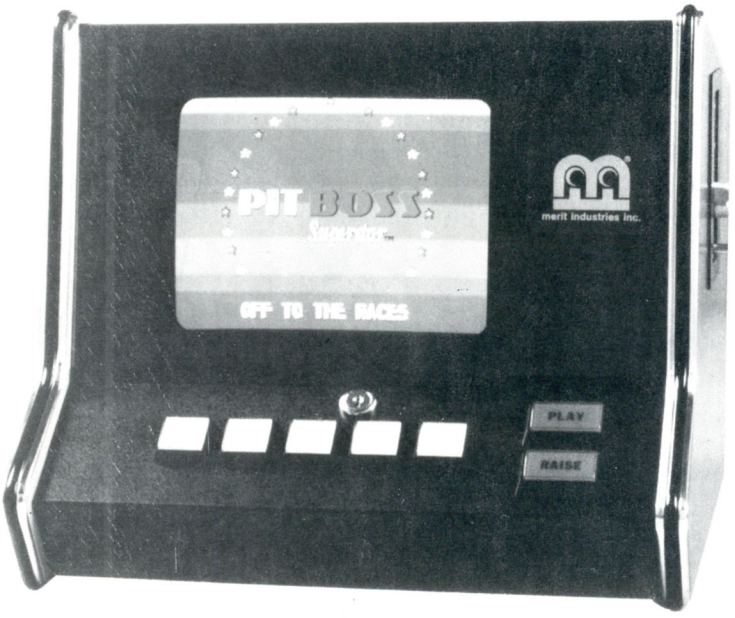


Photo Magic

Auto Photo Systems has developed a new electronic photo vending unit that offers low-cost, low-maintenance, self-service photo vending in a variety of traditional and celebrity photo options.

Named *Photo Magic*, the machine promotes itself when not in use by capturing potential customers on its video monitors as they pass by. The unit has a small footprint (30" wide, 36" deep, 96" high) and occupies the same space as a standard video game.

Features include bill or token operation, six customer scene selections, and a 90-second process time. The machine is completely electronic; there are no chemicals!

For more information, or distributor referral, write Auto Photo Systems, 2722 Walnut Ave., Tustin, CA 92681; (714) 731-3121; FAX (714) 731-4834.

Cracky Crab

Crack 'em! Smack 'em! Whack 'em! Namco-America invites players to take out their frustrations on the new redemption game, *Cracky Crab*, where crazy crabs slide from side to side trying to avoid a hit. Players are taunted by crab wisecracks that add humor to the package.

Features include operator-adjustable ticket settings, timed play with extended time for over 40 points, ticket dispenser door for ease of ticket loading, and a low-level ticket lamp and ticket counter.

Game dimensions are 67" high, 45" wide, and 33" deep. Cabinet graphics include a beach scene, sassy crabs, and zany starfish. The game play is easy to understand and appeals to all age levels. If players gain enough points in the first level, crabs come out in greater numbers and at a faster pace.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Namco-America Inc., 3255-1 Scott Blvd., Suite 102, Santa Clara, CA 95054; (408) 496-6371; FAX (408) 496-6399.

X-Men

The comic book heroes X-Men make a smooth transition to the video screen in Konami's new dedicated upright of the same name. Good vs. evil is the basic tenet of the game, which offers buy-in and game continuation to sustain the adventure.

Players choose their favorite X-Men: Cyclops, with his optic force beam; Colossus, a near-invulnerable man who changes to steel; Wolverine, who has retractable claws; Storm, a mysterious African princess who controls the weather; Nightcrawler, a circus acrobat who can teleport onto any scene; and Dazzler, a stunning actress who turns sounds into sonic light blasts. All are good mutants united under the guidance of Professor X.

As luck would have it, Professor X has been captured by the evil mutants, under the direction of the mad Magneto. The X-Men embark on a mission to locate the professor. They must face-off with the likes of Pyro, a fire-shooting mutant, and Blob, an immovable lump.

After these two are eliminated, the X-Men travel to Magneto's hideout, Island M, to face tail-whipping lizards and ferocious flowers. Magneto also holds Kitty, a young member of the X-Men.

If all this is not enough, more strange characters stand ready to battle the X-Men, among them mud monsters and giant bats. And look out for Professor X's evil brother, Juggernaut.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Konami Inc., 900 Deerfield Parkway, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089; (708) 215-5100; FAX (708) 215-5122.

Game Carousels

Video Insights has designed a series of carousels to accommodate casino-style video gaming equipment. This expanding market benefits from proper game display and the creation of a comfortable atmosphere for patrons.

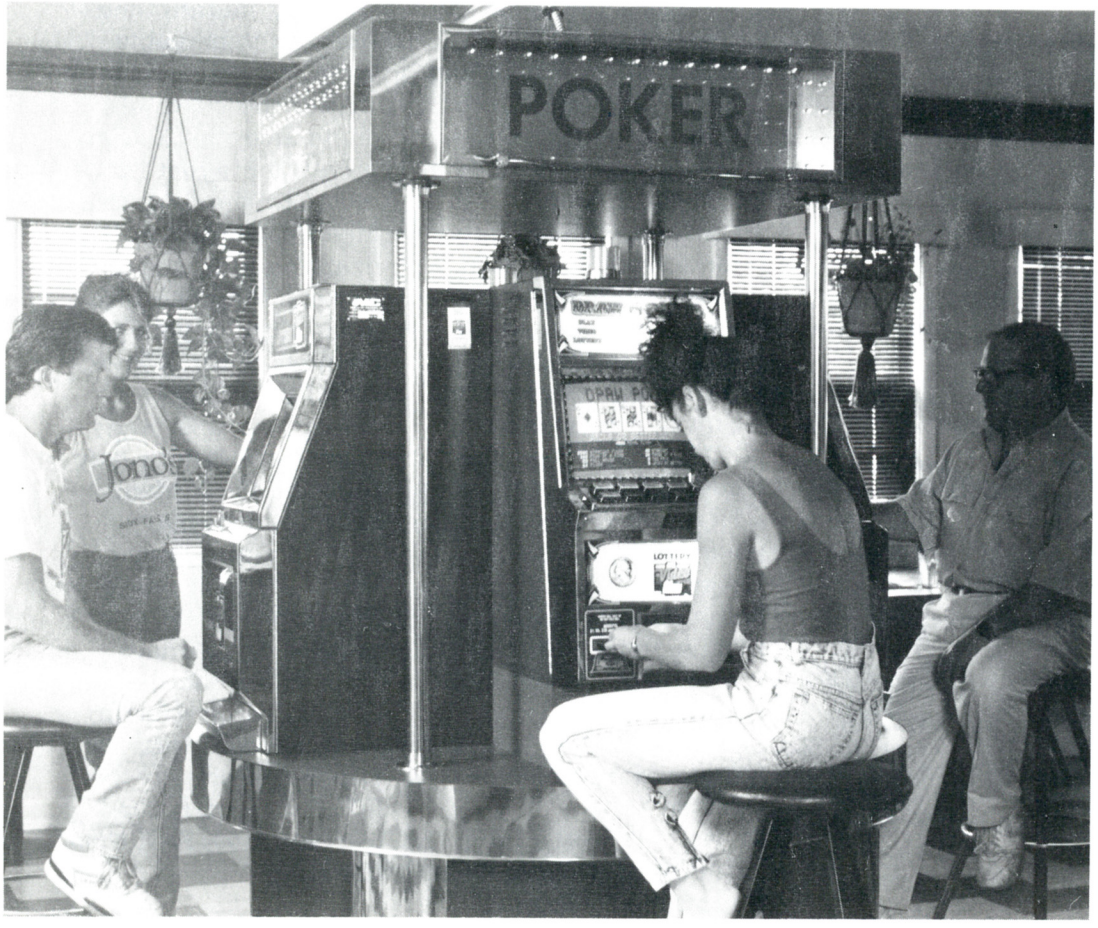
Carousels consist of a base, canopy, and support poles equipped with laminate drink and ashtray holders. Each side of the canopy has a marquee that highlights the name of the game, your business or logo, all set in brass.

Carousels are constructed of top-grade laminate, brass or chrome, and acrylic. Features include black laminate on the toekick, a 24-inch base in a choice of laminate colors, brass quarter rounds on the base, and a six-inch brass ribbon edging to protect the top and base. Fluorescent lighting is available in six colors: yellow, green, blue, pink, amber, and red.

Several models are available to hold three, four, six, and 10 games. Assembly is easy since only six bolts are needed. All components are UL-approved.

Among the options are riser boxes to equalize the height of various manufacturer's units, and computerized display boards to report winnings, upcoming events, or other messages.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Video Insights, 1800 W. 50th St., Sioux Falls, SD 57105; (605) 334-6090; FAX (605) 334-0398.



Silent Dragon

Taito America debuts a two- to four-player universal conversion kit, *Silent Dragon*. The object of the game is to defeat the infamous Dr. Bio, a twisted genius who creates mutant life forms through advanced biotechnology.

Players choose to be one of four characters: Joe, the fighter; Lee, the Kung Fu expert; Katoh, the Ninja; and Sonny, the commander. These men of the Silent Dragon must plan a strategy to thwart the evil intentions of Dr. Bio and his militant mutants.

Five stages of action take place in such unlikely settings as a store interior, harbor, racing transport truck, Dr. Bio's headquarters, and the road to the enemy base. The enemies have super human strength and take pleasure in terrorizing the human race.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Taito America Corp., 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090; (708) 520-9280; FAX (708) 520-1309.

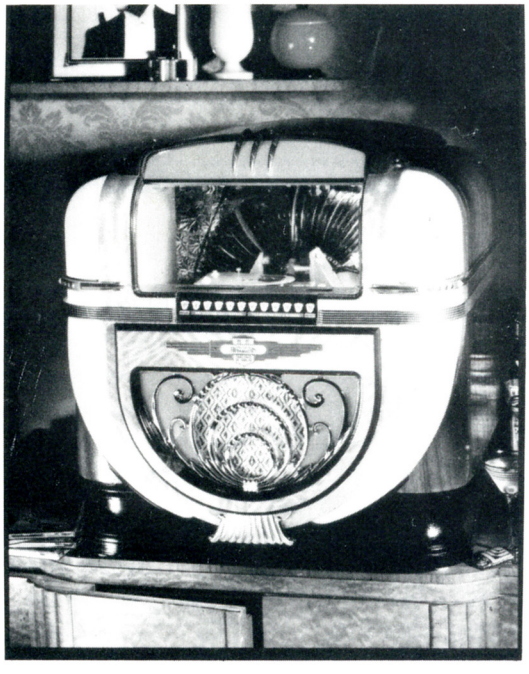
CD-91 Countertop

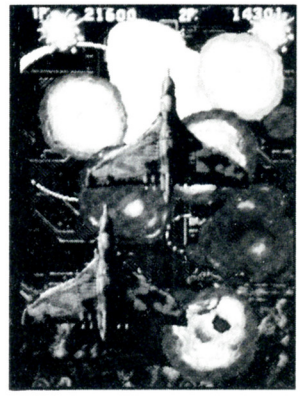
Antique Apparatus introduces the *CD-91 Countertop*, a diminutive unit with the classic look of jukeboxes from the Golden Age.

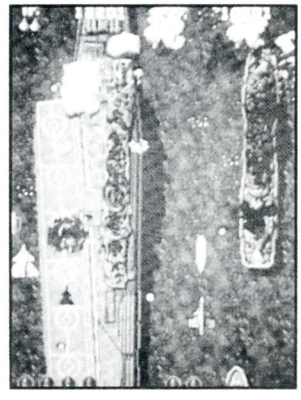
The *CD-91 Countertop* features a hardwood cabinet crafted of African satinwood and American walnut veneers. Inside is a newly designed Rowe CD player with 130 watts of power. All components are neatly incorporated into a drawer for easy maintenance.

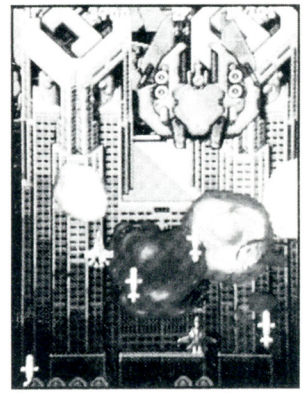
The jukebox's capacity is 100 CDs. It can be operated by coin or on free play and comes standard with an infrared remote with multiple control features. This jukebox is suitable for locations with limited space and a desire for the nostalgic jukebox look of years gone by.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Antique Apparatus, 2335 208th St., Torrance, CA 90501; (310) 328-1306; FAX (310) 320-3736.









Aero Fighters

Mc O'River introduces an aerial combat-themed, vertical monitor video kit, *Aero Fighters*. Four levels of power-ups and special weapons await the players, whose timing and reflexes are critical to success.

Players choose to be one of eight different pilots and fly appropriate aircraft from the U.S., Japan, England, or Sweden. They join together to fight a common enemy. Buy-in and game continuation are included; controls are an eight-way joystick and two buttons.

Aero Fighters features seven action-filled stages that occur over different terrains, such as military bases on land and aircraft carriers at sea. A different boss must be conquered at the end of each stage. There's a surprise ending, so look out!

For more information, or distributor referral, write Mc O'River Inc., 17800 S. Main St., Suite 121, Gardena, CA 90248; (310) 323-2236; FAX (310) 323-4560.

Bill changers

Micro Changers introduces Canadian versions of its front-loading Model MC15 and rear-loading Model MC15R slim-line bill changers. Designed to accept Canadian $2, $5, $10, and $20 bills, the models feature an anti-jam coin hopper, 3,200-quarter (or token) capacity, microprocessor-controlled currency validator, and reverse silkscreened panels for easy maintenance. Security subsystems are included to prevent bill retrieval and overpayout.

The changers are housed in rugged, heavy-gauge steel cabinets designed for on or through-the-wall installation. The units are compact in size: 36" high, 6-1/4" wide, and 15" deep. They weigh 100 pounds.

Micro Changers offers nationwide, 24-hour turnaround repair service from its U.S. service centers.

For more information, contact Micro Changers Inc., 520 McGlincey Lane #7, Campbell, CA 95008; (408) 377-9032; FAX (408) 377-9036.

Coin-op phone

Telco Intercontinental Corp. has unveiled a desk-top pay telephone with a three-coin mechanism. It was designed in response to regulatory demands placed upon the pay telephone industry by some state public utility commissions, which require that pay telephones be able to accept quarters, nickels, and dimes. Other Telco models have been used by vendors to save money instead of installing traditional—and more expensive—wall phones.

For more information, contact Telco Intercontinental Corp., 9812 Whithorn Drive, Houston, TX 77095; (713) 855-2218; FAX (713) 859-8825.

Nostalgia book

"Slot Machines and One-Armed Bandits," a new book by Bill Kurtz, traces the history and development of coin-op amusement games, from the cast-iron machines of the 1800s to today's high-tech wonders. It includes over 150 mostly color photographs; many are devoted to rare coin-op machines.

Published in England, the book actually contains very little about gambling devices. Most of it is devoted to coin-op amusement games like pinball machines, gun games, baseball machines, ball bowlers, shuffle alleys, and foosball and air hockey tables. Kurtz has also uncovered previously unknown information, including stories about some games that never made it into production.

"Slot Machines and One-Armed Bandits" is published by Quintet Publishing and distributed in the United States by Book Sales Inc. For more information, contact the author at (216) 944-9375.

Product catalog

Contact East has released a 196-page catalog that's full of new test instruments and tools. Featured are the Fluke 90 series ScopeMeter, power line monitors, power supplies, adhesives, EPROM programmers, wire sorters, tool kits, and ESD-safe ergonomic chairs.

Also included are hand-held oscilloscopes, DMMs, soldering/desoldering systems, static protection products, ozone-safe cleaners, magnifiers, inspection equipment, work benches, cases, and much more. All products are fully guaranteed, and orders placed by 4 p.m. are shipped by 5 p.m.

To receive a free copy, write Contact East, 335 Willow St., No. Andover, MA 01845; (508) 682-2000; FAX (508) 688-7829.□

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HMS Monaco offers an extensive variety of licensed major league baseball kits for both the National League and American League. The Baseball Crane Capsule Kit features 96 pieces: 12 each of 3" team buttons, mini-pennants, bumper stickers, All Star cards, inflatable bats, satin mini-pillows, mugs, and matching player pin and card sets.

The Baseball Redemption Center Kit (276 pieces) offers buttons, pens with display board, team flags (11" x 17"), and more. Specific team orders are accepted.

There are All Star Baseball Card Kits to satisfy card collectors. Each kit contains 15 1991 player cards, either star or rookie class. Licensed Sports Team Logo Mugs are also available for baseball, basketball, hockey, and football. Mugs are 14-ounce size with the team's official logo and colors; order by team.

And while basketball is flying as high as Michael Jordan can jump, try an NBA Butterdish Capsule Kit with licensed NBA merchandise: team buttons, mini-pennants, bumper stickers, and Hoops player cards (15 to a pack, guaranteed six star cards).

In addition, there are licensed backstage passes for the popular "Wayne's World" big screen movie. For more information, contact HMS Monaco, (800) 777-0901; (212) 691-9000; FAX (212) 727-1382. □

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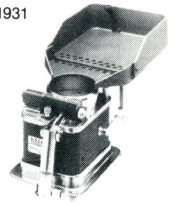

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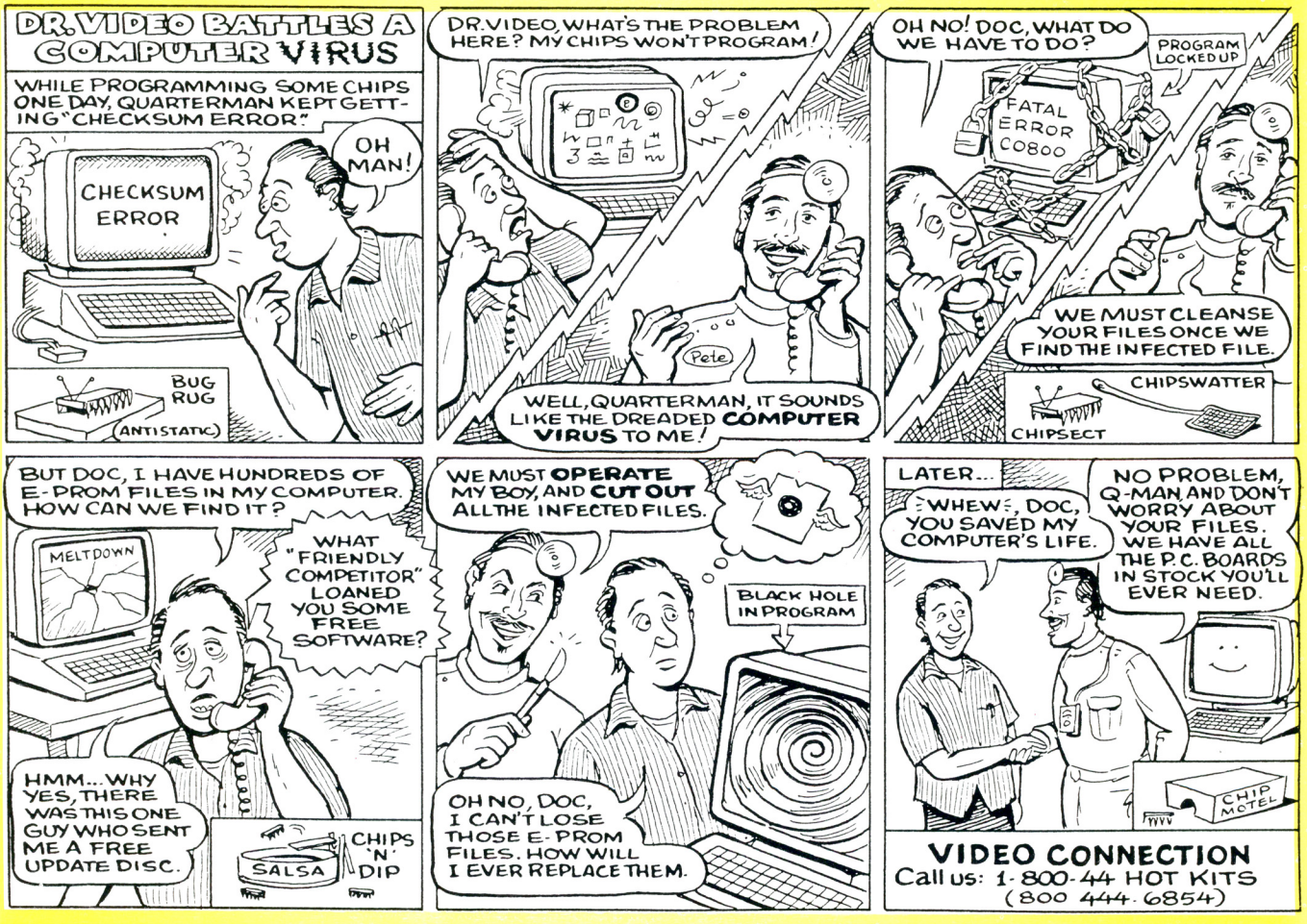

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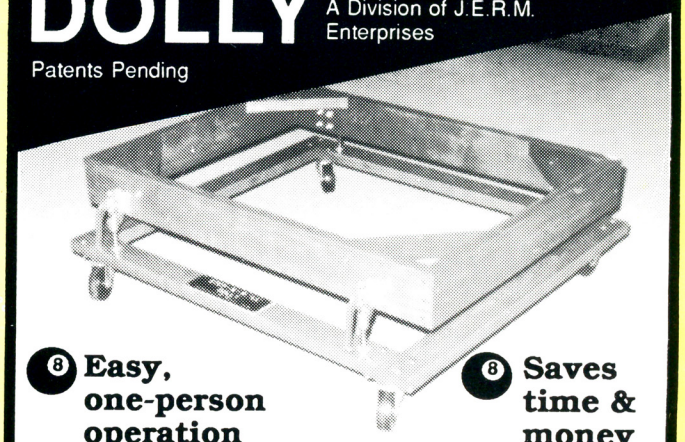

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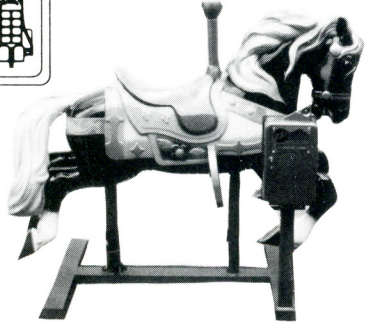

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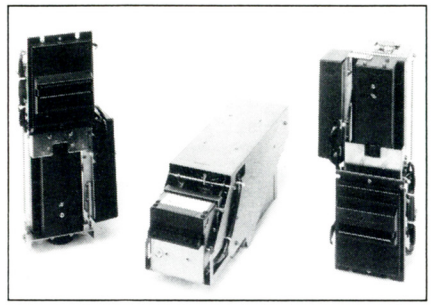

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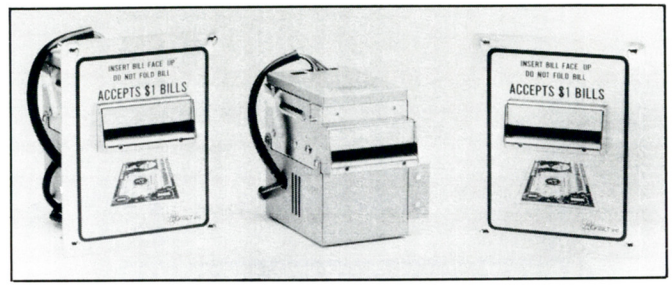

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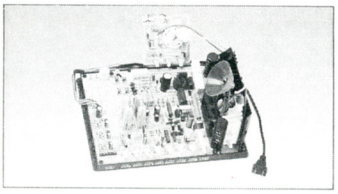

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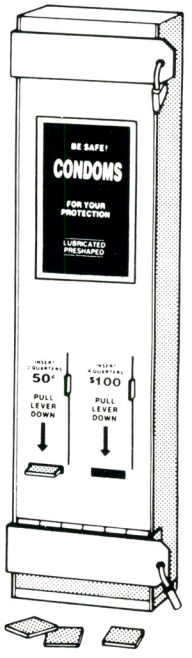

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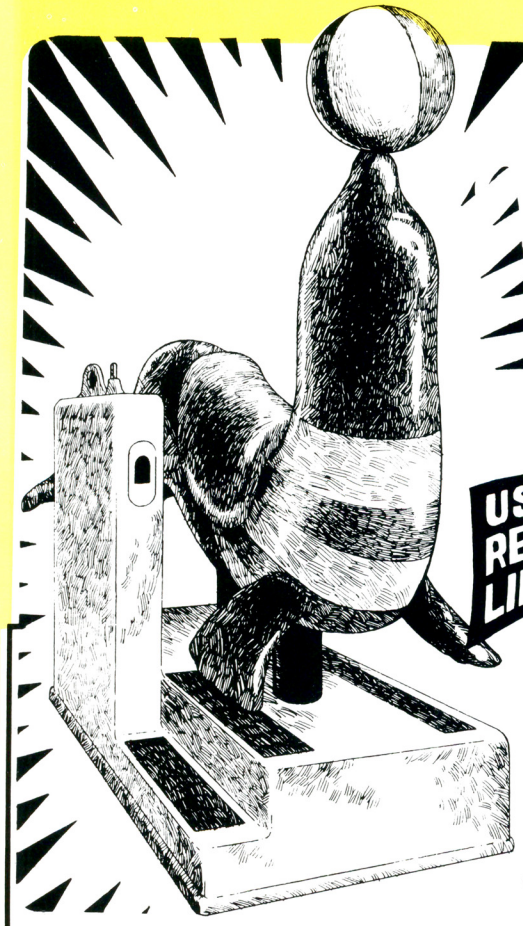

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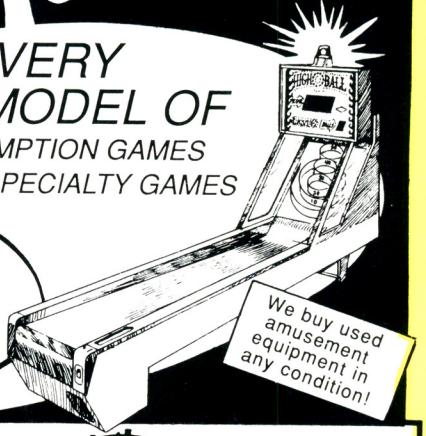

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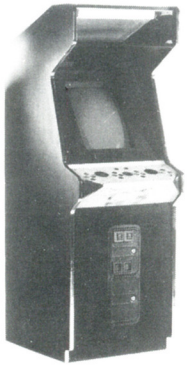

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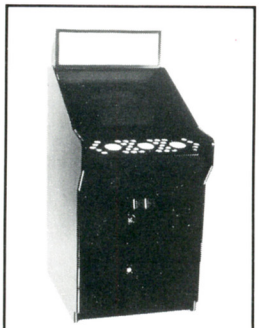

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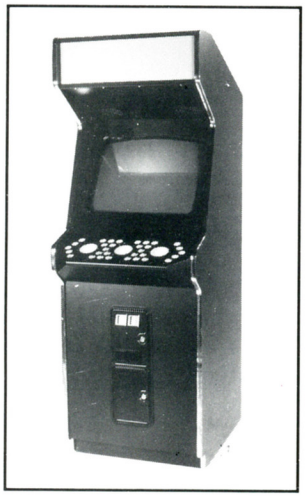

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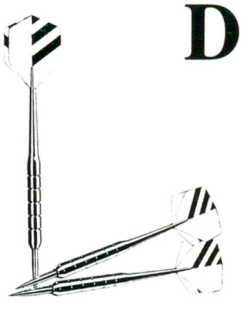

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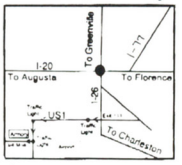

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Pole Position II (s/d)	895
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Rastan	450
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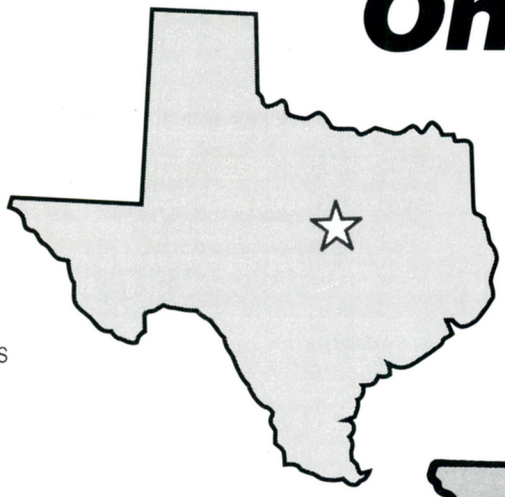
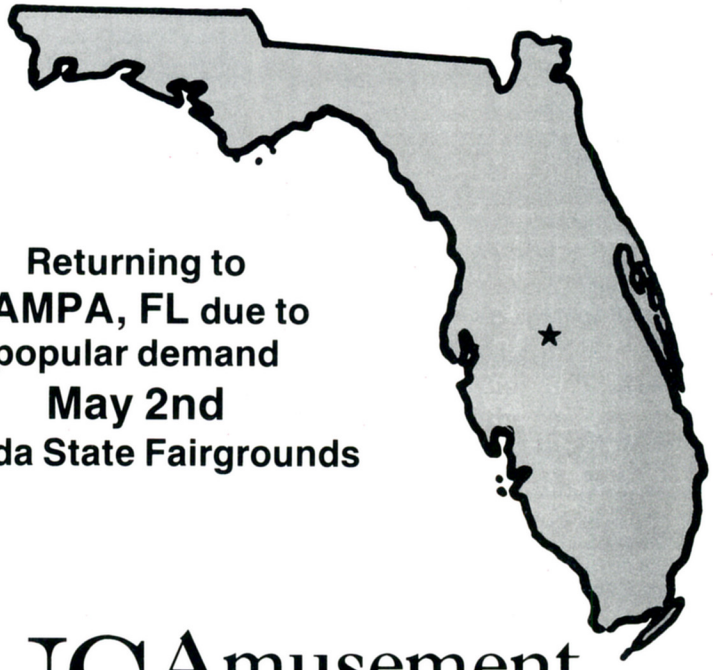


Dallas Auction Information:
Location: Dallas Fair Park (next to the Cotton Bowl)
Agri building, Food and Fiber Pavilion
To consign games for sale, bring them to the site on Friday, April 24th, between 9am and 9pm.



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US Amusement Auction

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April 11
Indianapolis, IN
Indianapolis Fairgrounds

April 25
Dallas, TX
Dallas Fair Park

May 2
Tampa, FL
Florida State Fairgrounds

Other Auction Dates in 1992

Anaheim, CA
November 7

Atlanta, GA
October 17

Columbus, OH
May 16
June 27
September 19
December 12

Dallas, TX
April 25

Indianapolis, IN
April 11
June 13
September 12
October 24
December 5

Louisville,KY
May 30
August 29

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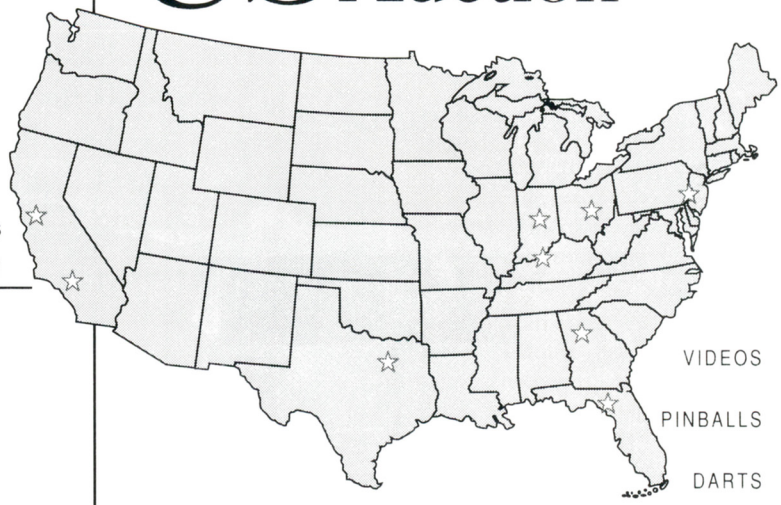

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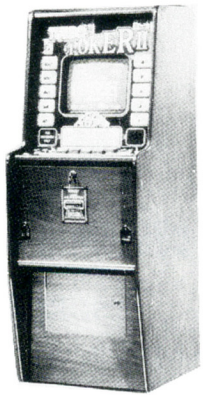

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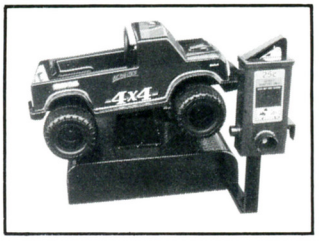

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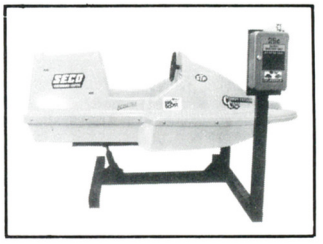

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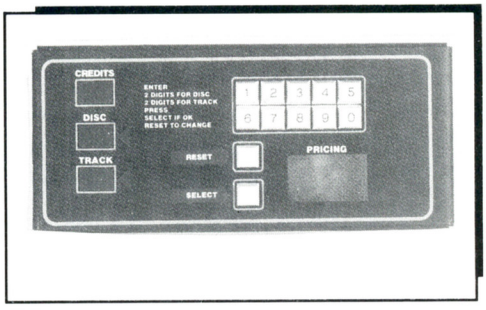

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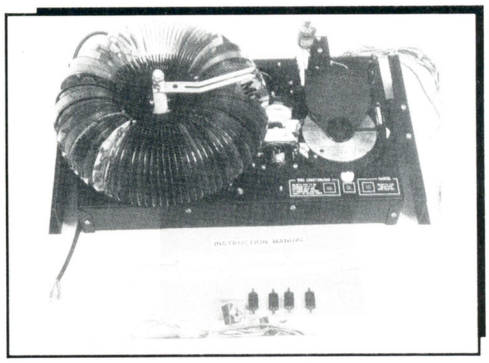

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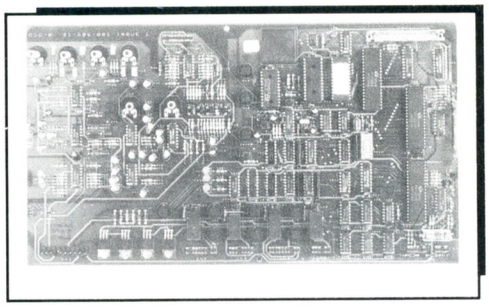

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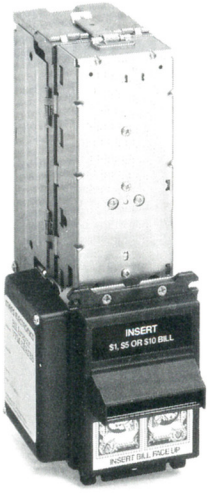

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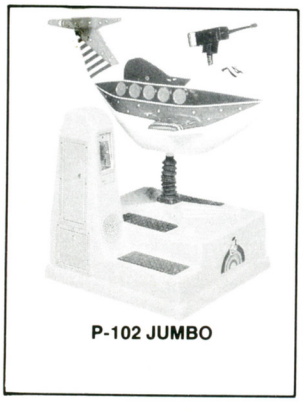

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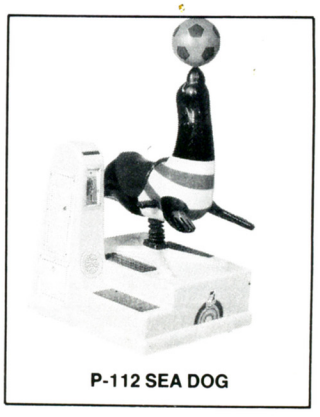

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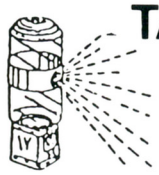

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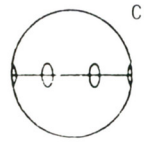

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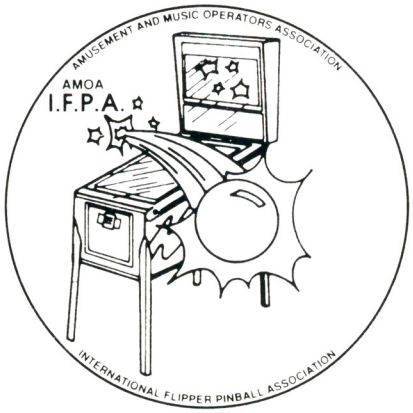

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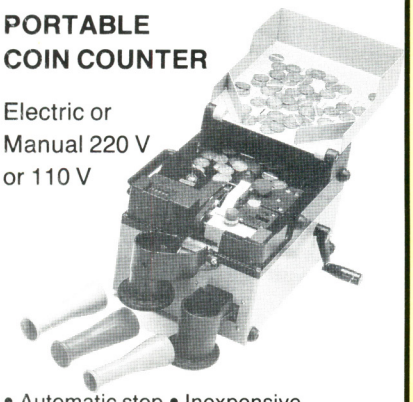

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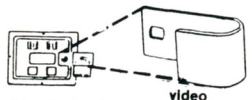

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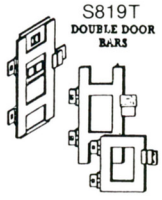

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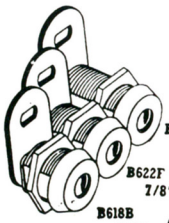

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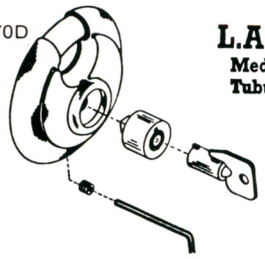

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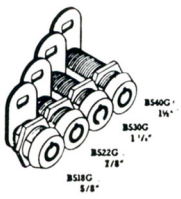

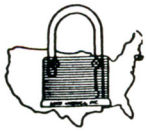

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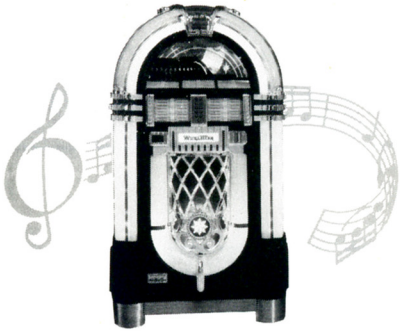

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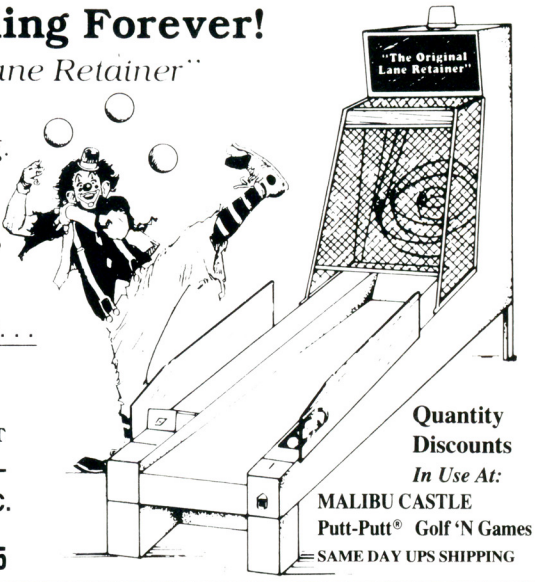

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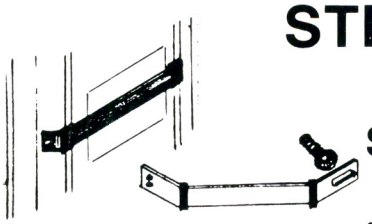

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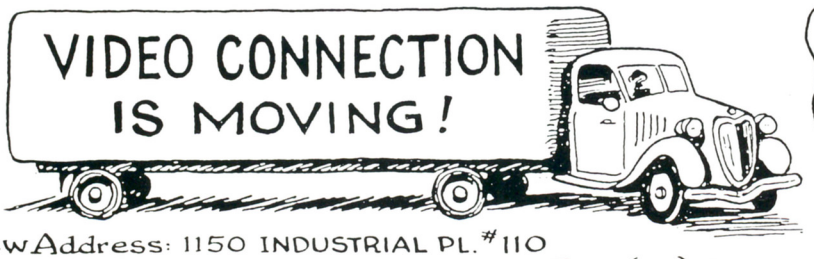

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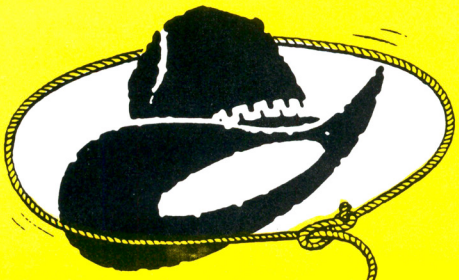

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CALENDAR

April 2-4
Florida Amusement and Vending Association (FAVA) Convention and Trade Show, Orlando Centroplex, Orlando, Fla. Contact FAVA (407) 898-3451; FAX (407) 894-7673.

April 4
Georgia AMOA Annual Meeting, Greater Southern Distributing Co., Atlanta. Contact David Capilouto (404) 352-3040; FAX (404) 355-8149.

April 28-May 2
AMOA National Dart Association 7th Annual International Team Championship, Sahara Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Joe Conway (414) 263-2444.

May 14-16
Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Oshkosh Hilton, Oshkosh, Wis. Contact WAMO (414) 529-4704.

May 23-30
12th Annual Valley National 8-Ball League Association (VNEA) International Championships, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Gregg Elliott (517) 893-1800.

May 28-30
Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Radisson Airport Hotel and Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio. Contact OCMA (614) 888-9772.

May 28-31
California Coin Machine Association (CCMA) Annual Convention, Dana Point Resort, Dana Point, Calif. Contact Cindy Urcan or Nadean Mendenhall (916) 441-5451; FAX (916) 442-5961.

May 29-31
Northeast Regional Trade Show, Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown, N.Y. Contact Karen Nagel of AMOA-NJ (908) 287-4990; FAX (908) 287-3079.

June 7-9
Joint AAMA/AMOA Government Affairs Conference, Hyatt Capitol Hill and the Washington Court on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. Contact either AAMA (703) 494-2758 or AMOA (312) 644-6610.

June 19-21
Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association (ICMOA) Annual Meeting, Continental Regency Hotel, Peoria, Ill. Contact ICMOA (708) 369-2406; FAX (708) 369-2488.

July 17-19
Amusement Operators of Texas (AMOTX) Annual Convention, Westin Paso Del Norte Hotel, El Paso, Texas. Contact Betty Ringo (817) 325-1005 or Vancie Todaro (409) 776-8287.

July 17-19
Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Association (PAMMA) Annual Trade Show and Convention, Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Champion, Pa. Contact Janette Polly (717) 232-5322.

July 23-25
Ninth Annual Billiard Congress of America International Trade Expo, Kansas City Convention Center, Kansas City, Mo. Contact Frank Zdy (619) 278-3877; FAX (619) 268-9372.

Sept. 10-13
North Carolina Amusement Machine Association (NCAMA) Annual Convention, Stouffer Winston Plaza Hotel, Winston-Salem, N.C. Contact NCAMA (919) 584-4833; (919) 584-6669.

September 15-17
Fun Expo, Second Annual Family Fun Center & Miniature Golf Show, Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact Bailey Beeken, Bellwether Expositions (914) 682-2027; FAX (914) 682-2152.

October 1-3
Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Expo '92, Opryland Hotel and Convention Center, Nashville, Tenn. Contact AMOA (312) 245-1021.

November 5-7
National Automatic Merchandising Association Trade Show and Education Sessions for Vending/Foodservice Management, Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C. Contact NAMA (312) 346-0370.

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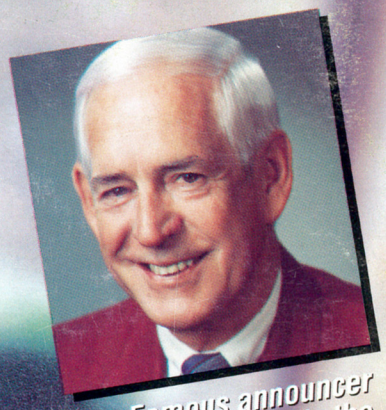

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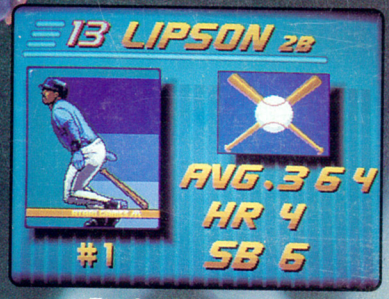

Each player's Baseball Card shows his statistics.

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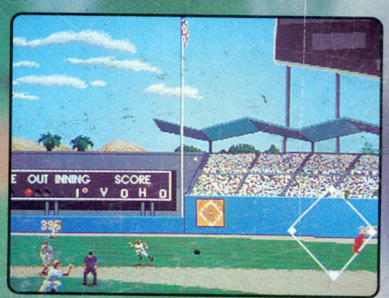
When batting, watch the Coach for strategy.



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