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PLAY METER Magazine

VOLUME 20, No. 3 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY FEBRUARY 1994

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NEWS BULLETIN

COALITION ON VIOLENCE MEETS AT CES

A recently formed coalition of consumer and coin-op industry members met during the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas last month to discuss what to do about violence in video games. Representing the coin-op industry were AMOA board members Randy Chilton and Frank Seninsky; AMOA government relations manager Laura Olson; and AAMA associate director Elaine Krieger. Also present were members of the Video Software Dealers Association, the Software Publishers Association, and a staffer from Connecticut Sen. Joseph Lieberman's office.

"We went in not knowing what to expect," Chilton told Play Meter. "We wondered, 'What's up?' Well, what's up is this: the games are absolutely going to be rated, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. The consumer market makes up the big picture in this coalition. It was pretty humbling to look around the room and see the heavyweights from Nintendo, Sega, and about 50 other people, and then realize that two people—Frank and I—were there to talk about coin-op. The SPA, by consensus, will organize the coalition, but they very much want our support. We'll be right in the middle of it."

On Feb. 8 the AMOA representatives will meet with an AAMA committee that includes Williams Bally/Midway's Joe Dillon and Strata's Richard Ditton to coordinate a unified coin-op position on the violence issue. Though on one hand the industry needs to have a voice in the coalition, might it not also be a good idea to keep a distance from the consumer side and its problems?

"Sen. Lieberman's staffer specifically referred to the coin-op industry as being part of this; there's no escaping it," Chilton said. "I guess we could attack this thing on our own and get away from the consumer side, but that wouldn't be my personal recommendation. I would rather see all of the coalition members get together, agree on something we can all live with, present it at a Senate hearing, and put this whole issue behind us."

He believes that a rating system could work for both the coin-op and consumer industries. "Not only could it work, but in fact I think it's the right thing to do," Chilton said. "But it has to be an informational rating system like the movie industry has. You can't lock a 13-year-old boy up for going to an R-rated movie; it's not against the law.

'We also have to avoid age-controlled environments. Say I have to put a sign on *Mortal Kombat* that reads, 'This game is rated 17; it may contain scenes of violence and/or sex that may be unsuitable for players under the age of 17.' That's fine. Just don't make me put all my 17-rated games in a separate room and check IDs, and then, if the duties are neglected, the proprietor goes to jail. We can't let these types of situations occur. That's not what lawmakers are asking for, but uninformed people, if left uninformed, make decisions like that."

In related news, Sega has withdrawn the current CD version of the controversial game *Night Trap* for re-editing. The company says the new version will be released only after and industry-wide rating system is in place.

JUKEBOX LICENSE FEES DUE

Melonie Krisza, manager of the Jukebox License Office, wanted to remind jukebox operators of the license fee structure for calendar year 1994. It's $287 for the first jukebox; $54 each for jukeboxes two through 10; and $46 each for every jukebox thereafter. The JLO must receive the money by March 15. Beyond that date operators will be assessed a 1-1/2 percent finance charge per month.

For more information, contact the JLO, 1740 Broadway, 2nd Floor, New York City, NY 10019. The toll-free number is (800) 955-5853.

DATA EAST USA CONSOLIDATES

Data East USA announced on Jan. 13 that it will be consolidating some of its operations in the Chicago area, where its subsidiary, Data East Pinball, is located.

Included in the move will be the coin-op sales, service, and parts functions. The consumer business operations and some of the coin-op market research functions will remain in California. The consolidation process will take place over many months.

FORQUE JOINS ARACHNID

Arachnid Inc. has expanded its sales force to the West Coast, naming Lamar Forque sales manager for the area. Forque, a 22-year coin-op veteran who worked most recently for Merit, will be stationed near Seattle. One of his duties will be to increase sales of Arachnid's *Galaxy* dart game. Forque's office phone is (206) 235-5200.

GLASCO EXPANDS DISTRIBUTOR NETWORK

Glasco, which formally debuted a new line of vending equipment at last fall's NAMA show, has added three distributors to its exclusive network. The additions give Glasco a distributor network of 26 offices in the United States, South and Central America, and Puerto Rico.

Mountain Coin has added the Glasco line to its Denver, Salt Lake City, and Albuquerque offices; the line is now represented in all five of the Mountain Coin branches. Three new companies were appointed in California. A-1 Distributing in Sacramento will serve the Northern California market. David's Vending in Burbank will distribute in the greater Los Angeles area, while Hoffman Sales and Service in Chula Vista will handle distribution in and around San Diego. For more information, contact Glasco at (314) 298-3510.

CRAVENS ELECTED AAMA VP

Bill Cravens, president of Bulldog/Leprechaun Amusements in Redmond, Wash., has been elected AAMA vice president, following the resignation of Rus Strahan.

Cravens has been actively involved in a number of activities since becoming a board member in 1987, including work with the American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation and the Joint Venture/ACME Committee. He was also the recipient of the Joe Robbins Award in 1987.

Jerry Gordon, senior vice president of Rowe, was named to the AAMA board to fill the position vacated by Cravens' move to vice president. Gordon has a long history in the coin machine industry and is looking forward to working on the board.

CHICAGO LOCK, CAMLOCK FORGE ALLIANCE

Chicago Lock Co. and CamLock Systems have formed a co-distributorship agreement to market each other's products worldwide. The agreement was announced by Dale Padjen, sales/general manager of Chicago Lock, who has rejoined the company from CamLock.

"This will be an outstanding alliance of two quality product lines that complement each other," he said. "With our new association, Chicago Lock products will now be distributed in Europe. CamLock products will be distributed in North America."

VLT AND EDS FORM PARTNERSHIP

Video Lottery Technologies, parent company of Video Lottery Consultants and Automated Wagering International, and Electronic Data Systems, a wholly-owned subsidiary of General Motors, have agreed to a 10-year partnership that will in effect accelerate and expand VLT's systems services and research and development efforts in the entertainment/gaming industry. Separately, EDS will take a minority equity position in VLT.

EDS and VLT will collaborate on a wide range of product development and service enhancement projects, including VLT's Masterlink Advanced Gaming System, which is currently being implemented for the Atlantic Lottery Corp. in four eastern Canadian provinces and was recently selected by the Delaware state lottery to operate its on-line system.

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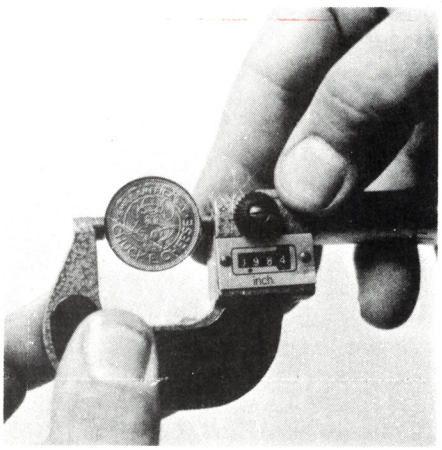

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Income forecasting: the **only** way to depreciate 46

Go ahead, make good use of the 1993 private letter ruling that officially liberated coin machine depreciation from the Dark Ages. Read what Kansas' Randy Chilton, California's Tony Parina, Texas' Wendell Cannon, and Utah's Craig Johnson have to say on this important subject.

Tax Tips to the max 52

One of our most popular continuing columns is Irving Blackman's "Tax Tips," which is expanded this month to meet taxpayer's needs as the Ides of April (15) approach. Six different areas are covered, from the tax implications of selling your business to valuing closely held businesses.

Dollars & Sense: merchandise machines 84

Don't pronounce cranes dead before considering the suggestions from Paul Virgadamo of Southeast Amusement & Vending. His plan for revitalizing cranes is a combination of good business sense, common sense, proper percentaging, and prizes with a high *perceived* value.

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COVER

Bromley Inc., the successful redemption game manufacturer of the '90s and operator of Funland, can trace its coin-op beginnings to 1958. That year Marty Bromley welcomed daughter Lauran (company president) into his world and the amusement industry.

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EQUIPMENT POLL

REDEMPTION

	GAME	MFG.	POINT VALUE
	ALLEY BOWLERS		
1.	Skee-Ball	*(Skee-Ball)*	7.59
2.	Smartball	*(Smart)*	7.14
	SPORTS GAMES		
1.	Sonic Blast Man	*(Taito)*	8.00
2.	Hoop Shot	*(Doyle)*	7.20
3.	Full Court Frenzy	*(I.C.E.)*	6.91
4.	Championship Basketball	*(Grayhound)*	6.88
5.	Shoot To Win!	*(Smart)*	6.65
6.	UB-QB Football	*(National Sports)*	6.56
7.	Slugfest	*(Williams)*	6.17
8.	Putting Challenge	*(I.C.E.)*	6.00
9.	Hot Shot Basketball	*(Williams)*	5.33
10.	Pop-A-Shot	*Pop-A-Shot*	5.25
	SINGLE COIN PUSHERS		
1.	Klondike	*(Betson)*	7.30
	SINGLE CRANES		
1.	Candy Crane	*(Smart)*	8.25
2.	Clean Sweep	*(Smart)*	7.73
3.	Top Choice	*(Betson)*	7.67
4.	Big Choice	*(Betson)*	7.35
5.	Hollywood Crane	*(Maxwell)*	7.00
6.	Skill Crane	*(Grayhound)*	6.73
7.	Challenger	*(Wedges/Ledges)*	5.00
	CHILD-SIZE GAMES		
1.	Super Mario Mushroom	*(Premier)*	7.75
2.	Shoot To Win! Jr.	*(Smart)*	7.67
3.	Bozo Basketball	*(Design Plus)*	7.60
4.	Bozo Grand Prize	*(Exit)*	7.50
5.	Li'l Dump The Ump	*(Doyle)*	7.00
6.	Li'l Hoop Shot	*(Doyle)*	6.13
7.	Skee-Toss B.C.	*(Skee-Ball/Betson)*	6.00
8.	Toss 'Em	*(CCI/UETD)*	6.00
	ROLL DOWNS		
1.	Spin To Win	*(Lazer-Tron)*	7.72
2.	Clown Rolldown	*(BayTek)*	7.67
3.	Tic-Tac-Toe	*(Skee-Ball)*	7.44
	NOVELTY		
1.	Aftershock	*(Lazer-Tron)*	8.69
2.	Wheel' Em In	*(Bromley)*	8.45
3.	Whac-A-Mole	*(Bob's Space)*	7.92
4.	Rock-N-Bowl	*(Bromley)*	7.76
5.	Feed Big Bertha	*(Smart)*	7.75
6.	Wacky Gator	*(Data East)*	7.70
7.	Can Alley	*(Bob's Space)*	7.67
8.	TMNT Pizza Drop	*(Exit)*	7.60
9.	Super Bank It	*(Capcom)*	7.50
10.	Knock Down	*(Meltec)*	7.29
11.	Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe	*(Data East)*	7.21
12.	Big Mouth	*(Meltec)*	7.17
13.	Lippy The Clown	*(Data East)*	7.00
14.	Cracky Crab	*(Namco)*	6.82
15.	Pop-A-Ball	*(Coastal)*	6.73
16.	Dump The Ump	*(Doyle)*	6.67
17.	Hungry Hungry Hippos	*(I.C.E.)*	6.36
18.	Cosmo Gang	*(Data East)*	6.29
19.	Boggieman	*(GaMCO)*	5.80
20.	Bank It	*(Capcom)*	5.58
21.	Pop-A-Slot	*(Coastal)*	5.60
22.	Neck-N-Neck	*(Bundra)*	5.40

VIDEO & PINBALL COMBINED

	GAME	MO. ON CHART	MO. IN TOP 10
1.	Mortal Kombat II *(Midway)*	3	3
2.	Terminator 2 *(Williams)*	31	31
3.	Ridge Racer *(Namco)*	1	1
4.	Air Combat *(Namco)*	3	1
5.	Drug Wars *(Am. Laser)*	1	1
6.	Mortal Kombat *(Midway)*	17	17
7.	Suzuka 8 Hours *(Namco)*	18	14
8.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	23	23
9.	Crime Patrol *(Am. Laser)*	6	4
10.	Virtua Racing *(Sega)*	15	15
11.	NBA Jam *(Williams)*	11	11
12.	Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)*	16	16
13.	Indiana Jones *(Williams)*	4	4
14.	Out Runners *(Sega)*	5	5
15.	Samurai Shodown *(SNK)*	5	5
16.	Tales from the Crypt *(Data East)*	2	1
17.	Rai Den II *(Fabtek)*	2	2
18.	Run and Gun *(Konami)*	2	2
19.	Cybersled *(Namco)*	3	2
20.	Twilight Zone *(Bally)*	10	10
21.	NFL Hard Yardage *(Strata)*	1	1
22.	Super Street Fighter II *(Capcom)*	2	2
23.	Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	6	1
24.	Jurassic Park *(Data East)*	8	8
25.	Creature from the Black Lagoon *(Bally)*	12	11
26.	White Water *(Williams)*	12	9
27.	Survival Arts *(Am. Sammy)*	2	1
28.	Last Action Hero *(Data East)*	4	4
29.	Dracula *(Williams)*	10	7
30.	Judge Dredd *(Bally)*	3	1
31.	Star Trek: Next Generation *(Williams)*	1	0
32.	World Rally *(Atari)*	6	5
33.	Wipe Out *(Premier)*	2	0
34.	Zero Team USA *(Fabtek)*	1	1
35.	Cue Ball Wizard *(Premier)*	15	2
36.	Fish Tales *(Williams)*	17	13
37.	X-men *(Konami)*	23	12
38.	Fatal Fury Special *(SNK)*	1	0
39.	Super Chase *(Taito)*	10	4
40.	Street Fighter Champ *(Capcom)*	22	21
41.	Time Killers *(Strata)*	13	10
42.	Rocky and Bullwinkle *(Data East)*	11	6
43.	The Getaway *(Williams)*	22	13
44.	Warriors of Fate *(Capcom)*	1	0
45.	In the Hunt *(Irem)*	6	2
46.	Atomic Punk 2 *(Irem)*	1	0
47.	Tee'd Off *(Premier)*	7	1
48.	Star Wars *(Data East)*	16	10
49.	Punisher *(Capcom)*	8	2
50.	Moto Frenzy *(Atari)*	14	0
51.	Fun House *(Williams)*	37	34
52.	World Heroes 2 *(SNK)*	8	7
53.	Golden Axe Revenge *(Sega)*	10	1
54.	Title Fight *(Sega)*	6	2
55.	Mad Dog II 33''/50'' *(Am. Laser)*	12	7
56.	Aero Fighters *(McO'River)*	17	10
57.	Fatal Fury 2 *(SNK)*	11	10
58.	Lethal Weapon 3 *(Data East)*	19	8
59.	Mad Dog McCree 25'' *(Am. Laser)*	16	2
60.	Slam Masters *(Capcom)*	4	0

EQUIPMENT POLL

VIDEO KITS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Drug Wars *(Am. Laser)*	8.60	56
2. Mortal Kombat *(Midway)*	8.54	1001
3. Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)*	8.19	857
4. Samurai Shodown *(SNK)*	8.14	270
5. Rai Den II *(Fabtek)*	8.10	69
6. NFL Hard Yardage *(Strata)*	7.73	40
7. Super Street Fighter II *(Capcom)*	7.72	89
8. Survival Arts *(Am. Sammy)*	7.33	37
9. World Rally *(Atari)*	7.00	210
10. Zero Team USA *(Fabtek)*	6.86	27
11. Fatal Fury Special *(SNK)*	6.78	23
12. Street Fighter Champ *(Capcom)*	6.76	1,176
13. Time Killers *(Strata)*	6.75	510
14. Warriors Of Fate *(Capcom)*	6.70	17
15. In The Hunt *(Irem)*	6.66	143
16. Atomic Punk 2 *(Irem)*	6.64	15
17. World Heroes 2 *(SNK)*	6.21	242
18. Golden Axe-Revenge *(Sega)*	6.20	345
19. Aero Fighters *(McO'River)*	6.05	357
20. Fatal Fury 2 *(SNK)*	6.04	287
21. Wild West C.O.W. Boys *(Konami)*	5.91	13
22. Skins *(Irem)*	5.61	97
23. Varth: Operation Thunderstorm *(Romstar)*	5.57	17
24. Knights Of The Round *(Capcom)*	5.56	164
25. Art Of Fighting *(SNK)*	5.52	291
26. World Heroes *(SNK)*	5.47	382
27. King Of The Monsters 2 *(SNK)*	5.41	189
28. Peek-a-Boo! *(Jaleco)*	5.40	3
29. Fatal Fury *(SNK)*	5.38	324
30. Violent Storm *(Konami)*	5.00	0
31. Viewpoint *(SNK)*	4.90	0
32. Three Count Bout *(SNK)*	4.83	70
33. Turtles in Time *(Konami)*	4.57	175
34. Baseball Stars 2 *(SNK)*	4.43	0
35. Relief Pitcher *(Atari)*	4.32	78

VIDEO DEDICATED

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Mortal Kombat II *(Midway)*	9.41	179
2. Ridge Racer *(Namco)*	8.67	58
3. Air Combat *(Namco)*	8.63	105
4. Suzuka 8 Hours *(Namco)*	8.41	814
5. Crime Patrol *(Am. Laser)*	8.36	232
6. Virtua Racing *(Sega)*	8.26	827
7. NBA JAM *(Williams)*	8.21	639
8. Out Runners *(Sega)*	8.18	248
9. Run And Gun *(Konami)*	7.94	88
10. Cybersled *(Namco)*	7.87	101
11. Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	7.69	195
12. X-Men *(Konami)*	6.78	943
13. Super Chase *(Taito)*	6.78	269
14. Punisher *(Capcom)*	6.50	203
15. Moto Frenzy *(Atari)*	6.50	340

PINBALLS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Terminator 2 *(Williams)*	8.78	1,612
2. The Addams Family *(Bally)*	8.37	1374
3. Indiana Jones *(Williams)*	8.19	213
4. Tales From The Crypt *(Data East)*	8.14	71
5. Twilight Zone *(Bally)*	7.86	528
6. Jurassic Park *(Data East)*	7.47	417
7. Creature From the Black Lagoon *(Bally)*	7.44	482
8. White Water *(Williams)*	7.35	455
9. Last Action Hero *(Data East)*	7.29	169
10. Dracula *(Williams)*	7.13	331
11. Judge Dredd *(Bally)*	7.13	95
12. Star Trek: Next Generation *(Data East)*	7.11	30
13. Wipe Out *(Premier)*	6.92	57
14. Cue Ball Wizard *(Premier)*	6.83	323
15. Fish Tales *(Williams)*	6.82	667

Results are based on monthly Equipment Poll ballot returns. Point Value: average of ballot ratings on a scale of 1–10. Longevity Points: determined by standings in Video & Pin Combined column (#1 game receives 60 points, #2 game receives 59 points, etc.) * *Indicates new or reappearing games.*

FROM THE EDITOR

Don't believe everything you hear

My nephew raced into the living room Christmas morning and began ripping open packages. His Sega system was "just what he wanted." Then he opened the other surprises which, of course, weren't really.

"What, no *Mortal Kombat*?" he said, genuinely surprised, his mother related to me later. "There is no way I would even consider buying that game," she stressed in her most concerned motherly voice. "I've heard it's simply awful."

I asked her if she had played it or even seen someone else play it. "I didn't have to," she replied. "With all the publicity about it, I *know* it's just too violent."

How many conversations have you had with people like this? Not just about violence, but about various issues within our industry. People always *just know* what the media has told us we should know. But it's usually so one-sided that it's hard to believe we accept it so blindly. The media certainly are experts at making mountains out of mole hills. I'm thinking of a very recent example concerning President Clinton. Suddenly, we're all questioning whether he actually had illicit affairs and whether the police helped him make his secret rendezvous.

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

Front page stories dredge up the Gennifer Flowers accusations, presented with pride by the media during the pre-election days. Remember Gary Hart and his fateful run for the highest office? Would he have made a good president? Was he qualified? Who cared—he had an *affair*! Gasp! Of course, he couldn't be president.

Is Clinton any less capable because of the possibility of past infidelities? I'm sure there are many other reasons to choose from. Now, I'm not condoning illicit affairs for anyone, but I'm trying to make a point. The media so often sidesteps important issues to dwell on something that makes no difference at all. Well, maybe it'll mean a financial windfall for the policemen when they decide to write a book or sell the movie rights.

I've also been following the Brady bill concerning gun control. The media has been in a frenzy over this. In fact, I'm sure no one really knows the issue from simply reading what the media has chosen to feature. Being familiar with guns and able to shoot fairly well, I resent some of the rationalizing done by the media. I am one of those who believe that if guns are outlawed criminals will still have guns or other ways to kill innocent people. However, for the same reason, I can see where guns in the hands of irresponsible people uneducated in handling handguns could be fatal.

No matter where your sympathies lie, the only thing that's certain is that the media has found a juicy subject; anything they dredge up will be accepted as fact. Sound familiar? Sure, our industry gets onto that treadmill occasionally. It becomes a "hot topic," something like Sen. Bob Packwood and his now-famous diaries. Even in the good-ole-days when video games were new, the media couldn't handle something positive. Instead, they found things like "Pac-Man elbow." It seems someone once complained about playing video games so long that his elbow hurt. Ah hah, said the media, video games cause medical problems! Didn't they just have a field day with that one. Maybe if we complain of breaking out in a mysterious rash from paying taxes, someone will try to ban them!

It's so unfortunate that the media can distort issues so completely. Remember the guns mentioned earlier? We're all so fed up with crime and murders (New Orleans reported nearly 400 murders in 1993) that we are trying to find an answer to the problem. Since many of the crimes involved teenagers, the focus seems to be who to blame. Violence on TV, disgusting shows, violent content in video games.

The media fueled an uproar when a five-year-old set his house on fire, killing his baby sister, after allegedly being influenced by the Beavis and Butt-Head show. No one asked why a five-year-old was allowed to see such a show. Instead of blasting the show (I personally think it's disgusting), why didn't someone admonish the parents? Why isn't someone in the media lashing out at parents of 13- and 14-year-olds who are on a killing spree?

As Chris said in his "Last Word" column last month, he may have wanted to drink beer and watch pornography when he was 13 but his parents put a fast end to that idea. They didn't set out to ban beer and pornography; they settled the matter at home. I'm sure Chris would have been a little shocked if they would have watched him guzzle a few and click on the X-rated flicks, blamed the breweries and filmmakers, but did nothing else to stop him.

Where are parents today? How I wish someone in the media would speak out about the corruption in the family unit and place the blame for many of our problems squarely where it belongs. It's time that parents take a little responsibility for their children and stop trying to place blame everywhere else. In the meantime, we can all campaign to remove violence from video games and plead with manufacturers to reconsider some offensive scenes. But we should know that until the media finds another juicy topic, we're it, folks.

Let's do what we always do when we're attacked—wait for the media to let up so we can get on with our business. □

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AAMA group visits China

Representatives from the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) spent 11 days in China in early December to expose coin-op product to the Chinese market and establish contact with government officials, according to AAMA executive director Bob Fay. The trip also served to educate the contingent on methods of conducting business in China.

The AAMA group consisted of Fay; Dynamo's Mark Struhs, chairman of AAMA's Foreign Business Development Committee; and Fabtek's Frank Ballouz, an AAMA board and FBDC member. They exhibited games at the Hotel Expo and met with government and business officials in Beijing and Shanghai.

Fay reports that there's a dearth of modern coin-operated amusement games in China. In Shanghai they visited two Namco arcades, but such modern facilities are rare in China. "Several small entertainment or amusement centers exist in Beijing and Shanghai, but they contain very limited equipment, most of which is copies," Fay said. Current duties were to have been reduced by 50 percent as of Jan. 1.

"The Foreign Business Development Committee is the one with the most interest among AAMA members," Fay said. "Certain things are going to happen in the United States that, as an industry, we might not have the financial resources to control, such as fiber-optics and violence in video games. The export market is a nice secondary market for our members to enhance their businesses, especially in Asia, where there's capital available. Eastern Europe is a dead market.

Standing with this Chinese operator, who has games along the Great Wall, are, (l-r): Frank Ballouz, Bob Fay, Mark Struhs, and wife Jenny Struhs.

Bob Fay and Mark and Jenny Struhs in Tiananmen Square, with the ominous picture of Chairman Mao looming in the background.

"I think this first trip to China was extremely successful. We learned a lot, though there's a heck of a lot more to learn. Business dealings can be a little confusing, what with the size of the country and the fact that you're dealing with a Communist government that's still going through reforms. This was a break-the-ice trip. We'll be going back to Shanghai at the end of March for another Hotel Expo. About 14 AAMA-member companies have signed up for that so far."

There are critics who condemn American companies for doing business with China because of the government's history of human rights violations. Fay says AAMA hasn't caught any flak for trying to do business in China.

"There's been enough of a commitment from people in the government to go forward with reforms," he said. "There are still hard-liners, but hopefully over the next year or so the reforms will increase and the abuses will decrease. China probably lost a chance to host the Olympics because of those abuses. They need to do something about it if they want to be accepted in the world community. But changes won't happen overnight; it'll take a while. The business that is being done is taking place in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

"Another reason I think these internal problems will be corrected is that they need the United States as a trading partner. They have to convince the government that progress is being made; otherwise they could lose most favored nation status. China used to have trade with North Korea and Russia, but that's gone now. They really don't have anyone left."

Struhs shared Fay's

Capcom promotes Gillin

Capcom USA has promoted John Gillin to director of marketing for both the coin-op and consumer divisions. His rise from marketing manager of the consumer division comes on the heels of Capcom's most successful year. Product sales in 1993 reached record levels, and revenue doubled to over $800 million worldwide.

"Much of our record-breaking success in 1993 can be attributed to Capcom's aggressive and innovative marketing efforts under John's direction," said senior vice president Joe Morici. "With his guidance and new level of responsibility, the unified, strategic direction of our marketing will pave the way for continued growth and leadership, product diversification, and unrivaled success."

With the aid of Gillin's management, Capcom's headline product—*Street Fighter II* for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System—became the best-selling game of 1992, with sales topping two million units. Sequel products—*Street Fighter II Turbo* for the SNES and *Street Fighter II, Special Champion Edition* for the Sega Genesis—sold about two million units each by the end of 1993.

Prior to Capcom, Gillin worked for Del Monte Foods for five years as a product manager.

Arachnid names Mondial

Arachnid Inc. has appointed Mondial International Corp. as its exclusive distributor for dart machines in South America and the Caribbean. Mondial will handle sales of Arachnid *Galaxy*, *Coors Silver Bullet*, and *English Mark Darts* machines from its headquarters in Pelham Manor, N.Y.

Mondial has already scheduled seminars and tournaments in the countries where it has the exclusive. "While darts have enjoyed rapid growth in the U.S. market, not many operators in South America and the Caribbean are aware of the earning potential of these machines," said Fernando Galeb, Mondial's export sales manager.

Sales representatives from Mondial and Arachnid will be present at all seminars and tournaments to demonstrate to local operators the viability of darts in their region. "Arachnid has demonstrated its support for the operators, and we're proud to be a part of their team," Galeb added.

AAMA group visits China

Con't. from page 12

In China it's common to see homemade pool tables outside in the towns and villages. Mark and Jenny Struhs stand beside this attempt at a Dynamo pool table. Nice try.

This retired general, a former head of the Red Army, enjoys a game of air hockey at AAMA's Hotel Expo booth.

enthusiasm about the potential of the Chinese market. "I'm excited not just for my company, Dynamo, but for the whole coin-op industry," he said. "It makes you feel good to see the kind of reaction they had to our industry's products. They're used to junkie copy games and equipment that's terribly outdated. At the Hotel Expo we showed an air hockey table, a pinball machine, a CD jukebox, and a video, *NBA JAM*. The Chinese just loved all of it.

"The government is encouraging and developing reforms for the economy; they're trying to raise the industrial output of the country. But the people are demanding it as well, so it would be very difficult to try to quash that. The government wants to secure and develop a lot of technology in order to create jobs and wealth for China. For most countries GNP growth of two to four percent a year is astronomical. In China it was 15 percent last year and is projected to be nine percent this year. That's unheard of!"

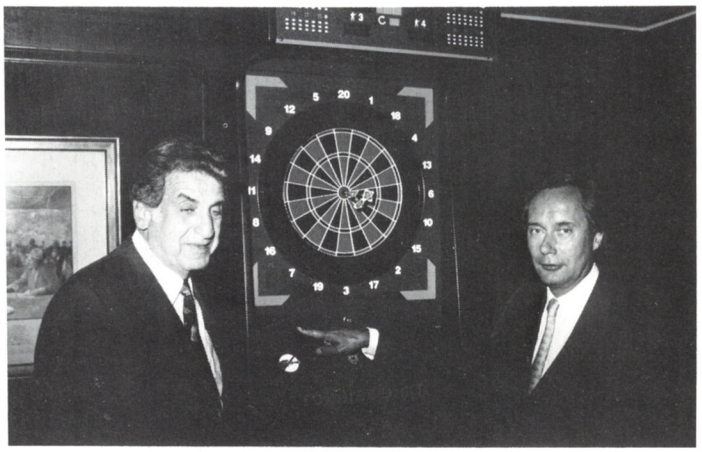
Valley celebrates dart achievement

Valley Recreation Products staged a special celebration dinner last fall to commemorate an achievement unique to the electronic dart industry: the sale of 50,000 electronic dart machines to a single distributor, NSM Aktiengesellschaft in Bingen, Germany.

The 50,000th NSM-destined game rolled off Valley's Sycamore, Ill., production line in the spring of 1993, the eight-year anniversary of the companies' relationship. "We are now well past the 55,000th game shipped to NSM and see no sign of a slow-down," said James Griffiths, Valley's vice president of international operations.

The celebration dinner, held near NSM's headquarters (in the Frankfurt/Weisbaden area), was hosted by Valley president Chuck Milhem, vice president/general manager Dick Shelton, and Griffiths. Senior NSM management, including managing director Ullrich Schulze and director of marketing Peter Kuhn, attended the dinner, as did other key management staff.

The highlight of the occasion was the presentation of a foot-high, faceted lead crystal representation of a dart target etched over a dimensional globe. The handcrafted artwork, commissioned by Valley, was presented by Milhem to Schulze; smaller replicas were given to those in attendance.



Valley's Chuck Milhem (l) and NSM's Ullrich Schulze beside the record-breaking dart machine.

Also on display was the actual 50,000th dart machine, pulled from Valley's production line and shipped to Germany in anticipation of the event. It was fitted with a commemorative plaque giving testimony to its significance. NSM intends to showcase the machine in a special room recently created to preserve equipment of historical value.

In other news concerning Valley darts, the first qualifying tournament leading up to July's Valley Gold Cup took place in Phoenix last fall. Player Dart Inc. hosted the tournament for the first time. "A lot of people found out what Valley Gold is all about," said director Gary Burge. "I think it's great that Valley offers this to their operators."

The Valley Gold Cup is held in Las Vegas. The top finishers there then comprise Team USA, which travels to Europe to compete against international teams in the fall.

NAMA introduces software package

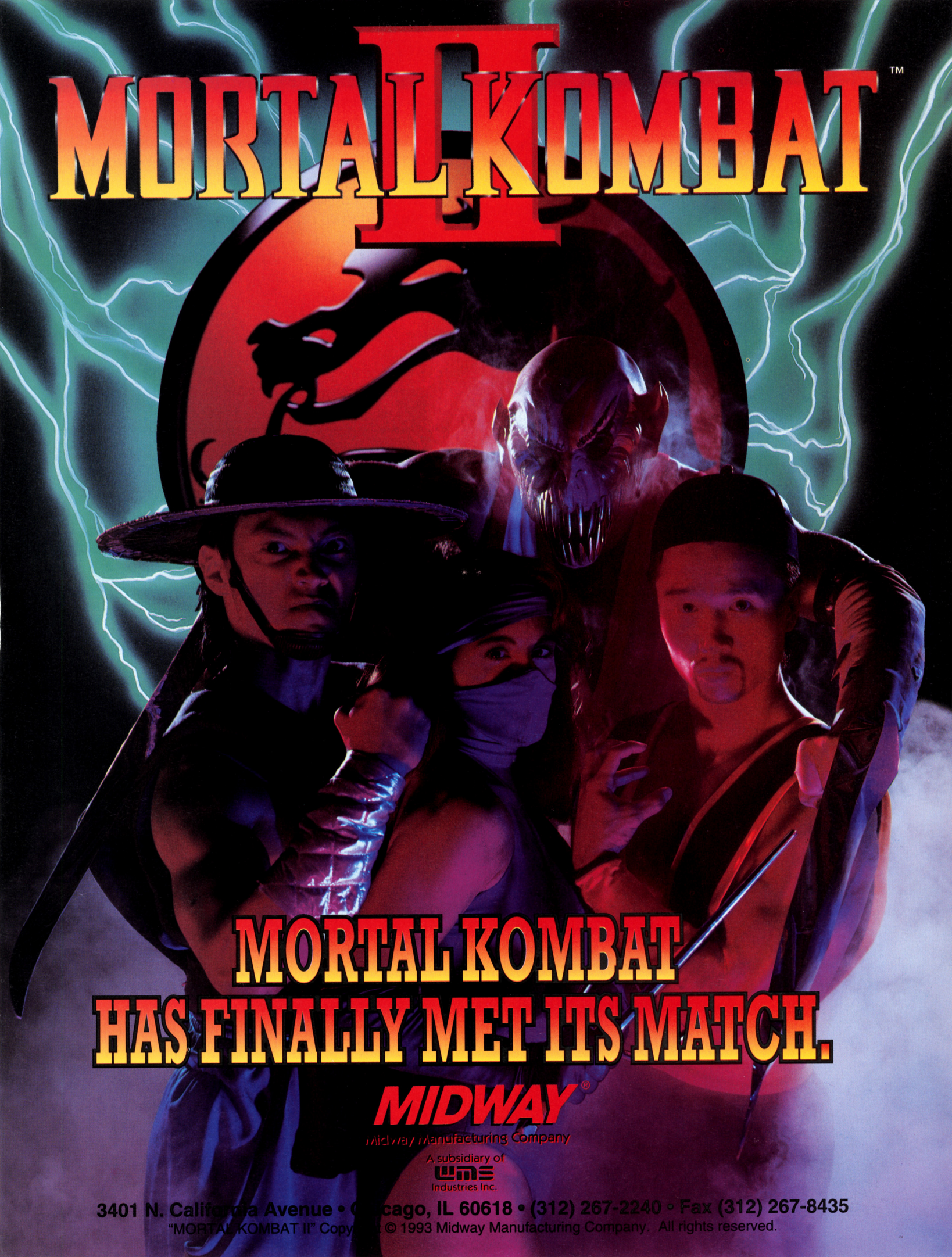
Which products in a vending machine will make the most profits for the operator? That vexing question will be easier to answer now that the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) has made available a software package and supporting instruction manual.

Called the "NAMA Direct Product Profitability (DPP) Model for Vending Machines," this Lotus-based spreadsheet tool measures the profit contributions of all products in a vending machine, compares them to others within that machine, and then evaluates the machine in relation to others at the same or other locations.

The DPP Model adjusts the retail price of each item in a vending machine for allowances, discounts, and taxes. It also factors in such items as the operating costs of handling and storing products in the warehouse; route service; machine costs; and location commissions. The model can calculate the profit advantages or disadvantages of changes in service for locations, or for machines within each location.

"Operators may find that certain products in their machines may make more money than others, even though they cost more," said Richard Geerdes, NAMA vice president of member services. "Others may find that certain products are more 'efficient' in their machines because of their high sales-to-space-requirement."

This tool costs $49.95 plus shipping for NAMA members; the non-member price is $79.95 plus shipping. To order, contact the NAMA Publications Department at 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 3500, Chicago, IL 60606-3102; (312) 346-0370.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Fourth Polish show set for April

American/Europe Business Connection will stage the fourth trade exhibition for Poland on April 14-16 in Kadowice, located about 40 miles from Krakow in southwest Poland. Amusement, vending, and casino equipment will be featured, as will attractions common to theme parks.

"It's a city of four million people," explained show organizer George Herman. "Just as a lot of the other trade shows change cities, we thought it would be a good idea to go to the other side of Poland after spending three years in Warsaw.

"There are almost 40 million people in Poland, with an average age of 28 years. This means there is an enormous market for all types of equipment. It is simply an educational process; they still are unaware of most of the available industry machinery. Most operators still search for sources of supply. The cost of exhibiting is quite low when you consider the opportunities the country offers."

The first three shows sold out, and Herman expects 1994 to be the largest one yet. For information on exhibiting, attending, the cost of hotels and airfare, etc., call Herman at (818) 222-6161 or FAX (818) 222-6165.

James to represent Elographics

James Industries has been appointed the exclusive representative of Elographics touch screens in North America and Australia. Pictured, (l-r): William Douba of James Industries; Al Wargo, William Britts, and Joseph Barresi of Elographics; and Jim Roberts and Vince DiVincenzo of James Industries.

Purple Star, Noel make deal

Purple Star has concluded negotiations with Noel Industries to be the national and international distributor of Noel's *LAX* prize redemption games. The line includes the single-player *LAX Jr.* and four-player *LAX* rotary merchandisers with automatic prize dispenser.

The agreement cements a long-standing working relationship between the officers of Purple Star and Noel Industries. "Chris Noell and I have worked together for years," said Nancy Smart Singh, CEO of Purple Star. "This agreement formally acknowledges that close working relationship. Both companies are totally committed to manufacturing top-quality games that provide years of service-free profits."

For more information, contact Purple Star at (800) 525-7475 or Noel Industries at (800) 234-8729.

Lieberman to set up endowment fund

Steve Lieberman of Lieberman Music Co., the 1994 American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation (AAMCF) honoree, will create an endowment fund similar to those of past honorees Ray Galante and Chuck Milhem.

The fund will be set up after the AAMCF Appreciation Dinner (it takes place March 18 during ACME), and the investment will earn dividends and interest on an annual basis. The yearly proceeds will then be donated to a different charitable organization annually.

All proceeds from the dinner and annual car raffle (a 1994 Mustang convertible) will go toward supporting the Lieberman Endowment Fund. The Washburn Child Guidance Center in Minneapolis will receive the first year's proceeds. It's a 110-year-old non-profit organization serving as the largest children's mental health agency in the city. "The selection of Washburn is greatly appreciated and will make a difference in the lives of high-risk children," said center president Richard Keenan.

Last year about $90,000 was raised from the dinner and car raffle. It was donated to UCLA's Children's Charities on behalf of 1993 honoree Leah Bettelman of C.A. Robinson.

Both Galante and Milhem recently made contributions from their endowment funds. Galante presented checks to the Central Area Youth Association of Seattle and the American Cancer Society of Portland. Milhem's contribution of $6,000 went to the Boy's and Girl's Clubs of Bay County, Michigan.

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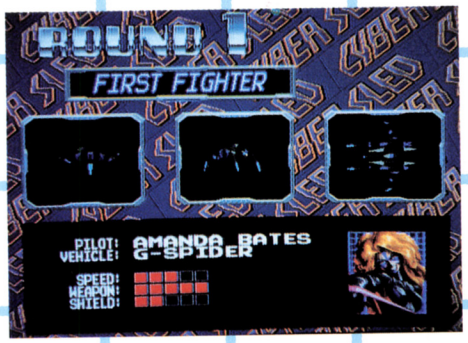
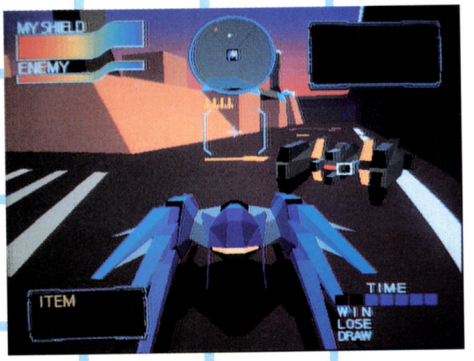
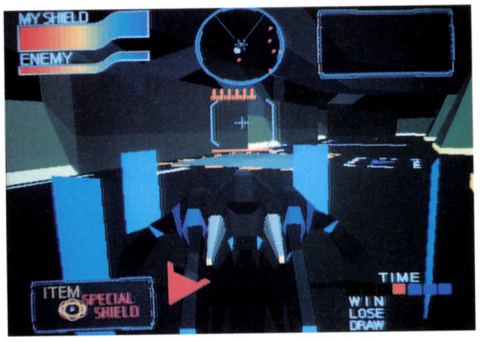


Pilot: Amanda Bates
Vehicle: G-Spider
Shield: Low
Strength: Strong
Speed: Fast



Use strength and skill to obliterate your opponent.



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N.Y. raid nets counterfeits

TNT Vending and Amusement Vending in Brooklyn, N.Y., and Jamma Electronics in Queens have been sentenced in conjunction with guilty pleas for violation of New York state copyright and gambling laws. All three companies received five-year probations and fines.

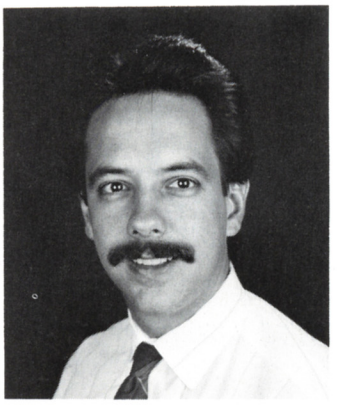
Raids conducted in June 1993 of these and other businesses resulted in the seizure of 994 gambling devices, 289 counterfeit printed circuit boards (*Street Fighter Champion* and *Mortal Kombat*), $122,000 in cash, a number of vehicles, and assorted weapons. Prosecutor David Levine said additional prosecutions are probable.

AAMA has established a successful enforcement program that includes working with the FBI, U.S. Customs Service, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and Mexican Customs to decrease the flow of counterfeit product into the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Chapman leaves EMT for distribution

Jim Chapman is the new sales manager of The Colorado Game & Vending Exchange, replacing Harry Popiel, who left to pursue other interests. Chapman worked most recently for EMT Kiddie Rides as sales manager. He also has experience with such coin-op companies as Taito, Sega, and SNK.

"I am looking forward to working with a person of Jim's integrity and dedication to customer service," said CGE owner Rich Babich. "I believe he will take our dedication to serving our customers to a new high."

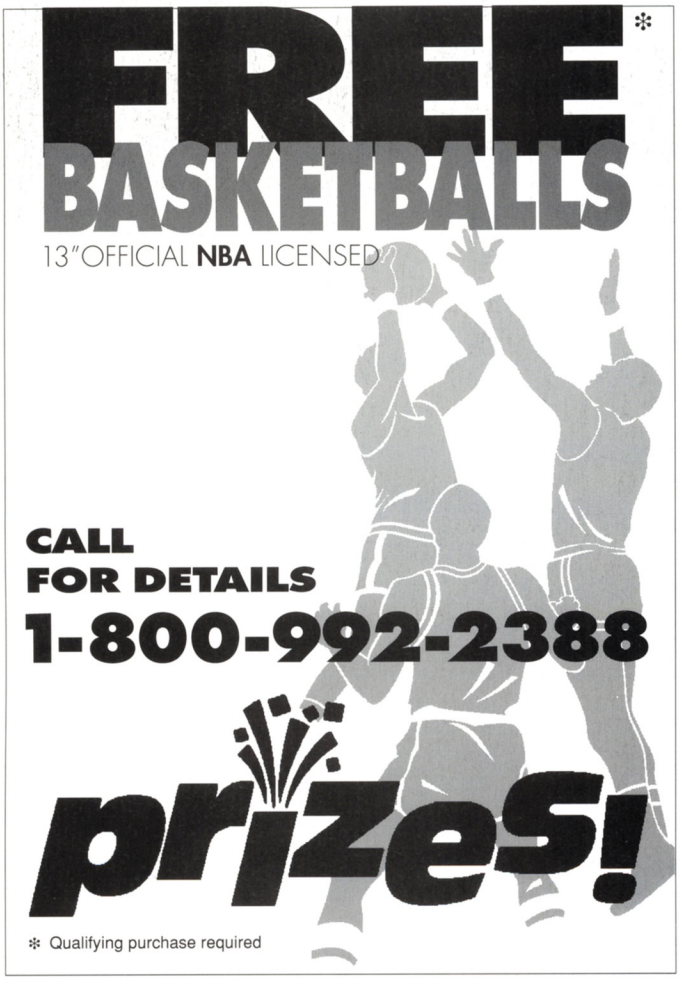


Jim Chapman

Said Chapman, "I look forward to working with everyone at The Colorado Game & Vending Exchange. The opportunity to work at the distribution level will be a challenging endeavor."

Strata driver ready

Driver's Edge, a 3-D, shaded polygon driving simulator from Strata, began shipping on Jan. 15. The dedicated, Indy-style driving game combines the interactive game play of up to eight linked units with Strata's "Pentaphonic Sound System" to create an authentic driving experience.



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Dynamo Corp. promotes Rudolph, Selvey

Veteran Dynamo employees Lou Rudolph and Blenda Selvey have been promoted by the company. Rudolph is now export sales manager, Selvey regional sales manager.

"The Dynamo support team is now stronger by recognizing individual achievement and expanding responsibility in their areas of expertise," said Mark Struhs, vice president of marketing. "Both Rudolph and Selvey bring unique personal experience into their new positions that will increase Dynamo's business opportunities and demonstrate our deep commitment to support our customers."

Lou Rudolph

Blenda Selvey

As export sales manager, Rudolph will develop new business opportunities in Europe, Japan, and the Middle East while providing technical support to current accounts in South America and Taiwan. "My biggest challenge is to develop areas that haven't previously bought American and to establish Dynamo products worldwide," he said. Rudolph is a 30-year industry veteran; five of those years were spent in Europe.

Selvey's responsibilities as a regional sales manager are to provide sales and support to existing accounts in the Midwest and develop new business opportunities. "I am committed to provide not only product but also a new level of quality service to the operator," she said. Selvey has been with Dynamo for six years in customer service, parts, and international coordination.

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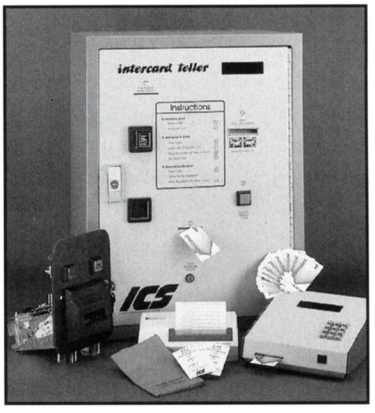

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WEIGHT
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VNEA dates set

The Valley National 8-Ball League Association (VNEA) will hold its 14th Annual International Singles and Team Championships on May 28-June 4 in Las Vegas. The site is the Riviera Hotel & Casino.

More than 4,000 league players from the United States, Canada, Australia, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Germany, Hungary, the United Kingdom, Norway, Spain, and the Netherlands are expected to compete in one or more of the 16 divisions. Over $250,000 in prize money is up for grabs.

Some 130 Valley pool tables will decorate the floor of the Riviera's Grand Ballroom. In addition to the main competition, they will be used for several mini-singles tournaments and instruction sessions.

Meanwhile, the 4th Annual VNEA International Junior Championships will be staged on June 24-26 in Sioux Falls, S.D. Team competition will consist of three age groups ranging from nine to 20 years old; over 100 teams are expected to participate.

For more information on these tournaments, contact VNEA executive director Greg Elliott at (800) 544-1346 or (517) 893-1800.

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Smart elevates Smith

Mike Smith

Smart Industries Corp. has promoted Mike Smith to the position of national inside sales representative. He joined Smart in May 1992 as production foreman, responsible for all production lines and factory output.

During the year that Smith held this position he "strived to improve factory procedures, quality control standards, and coordination between the factory, purchasing department, sales department, office personnel, shipping, and technical services," said president Gordon Smart. "Mike's relationship with the workers in the factory and his close proximity to the various departments gave him the insight to reorganize the production lines and flow of our products and services. He will be beneficial to Smart's sales staff."

Coin Controls appoints Wico

In an effort to strengthen its national distributor network, Coin Controls Inc. has named Wico Corp. its official parts distributor. Wico has over 50 years of experience in the amusement, vending, and gaming industries. It serves more than 15,000 operators, distributors, and OEMs internationally.

Through its six regional offices, Wico will provide a 24-hour turnaround on most orders at standard Coin Controls prices. "This move further illustrates Coin Controls' growing commitment to the operator sector," said Anne Mohan, a sales associate of Coin Controls. "Since Wico will be holding stock on most parts, customers will be able to obtain our product on shorter lead times without adversely affecting price."

In other news

• The 1994 JAMMA show will be held Sept. 21-23, announced the JAMMA board of directors after a Dec. 2 meeting. There was talk that JAMMA would try to move its dates so as to not conflict with the AMOA show, which takes place Sept. 22-24 in San Antonio. But JAMMA officials contend that its dates are the only ones available in September.

• Konami Co. Ltd. of Japan has announced the appointment of Kenji Hiraoka as president of its American subsidiary. Former president Susumu Sakamoto remains director of Konami Co. Ltd.

• The Gambling Enforcement Division of Minnesota has approved U.S. Games as a manufacturer of gambling devices for use within Minnesota. The company had been doing business in the state under a provisional license.

• Operators can trade in older Capcom CPS system game titles and receive a $400 credit toward *Super Street Fighter II*, Capcom's first System 2 game. For a list of applicable games, contact your authorized Capcom distributor.

• The Victoria (Australia) Gaming Commission has approved Video Lottery Technologies' application to be listed on the commission's official Roll of Recognized Manufacturers and Suppliers of Gaming Machines. Additionally, VLT has been selected to supply the central monitoring system for the state-wide video lottery system being developed in South Australia.

• Neil Altneu has been promoted to vice president of national sales for Pioneer New Media Technologies' entertainment division.

• International Game Technology has completed the installation and start-up of its video lottery system with progressive prizes in Iceland. It's the first video lottery system to feature a progressive jackpot that increases with system play.

• Great Lakes Dart Distributors has a new address and phone numbers: S84 W19093 Enterprise Drive, Muskego, WI 53150; (414) 679-8730 or (800) 225-7593; FAX (414) 679-8738 or (800) 841-6944; international FAX (414) 679-8739.

• Finally, congratulations to Data East USA's Kristin Montgomery, who gave birth to a son, Henry, on Dec. 12. He weighed in at 7 pounds, 13 ounces.

Todd Tuckey and Pam Metzger after his wacky proposal of marriage.

A pinball "I do"

Men have thought of countless ways to pop the question, but had anyone dreamed of using a pinball machine to do it before Todd Tuckey? The owner of TNT Amusements in Southampton, Pa., pulled the trick on Dec. 2.

Tuckey set up an elaborate web to lure his wife-to-be, Pam Metzger, into nearby Challenges Arcade, owned by Alan Bruck. When the couple went to the back of the arcade to play pinball, Metzger noticed some newspaper reporters and TV crews. Her suspicions were put to rest by Tuckey, who said they must have been there to do a story on the arcade.

That hurdle crossed, they proceeded to play Premier's *Lights, Camera, Action!*, one of Tuckey's favorites. Not known to Metzger, however, was the fact that he had modified the pinball so that the anticipated gunfight in the animated portion instead read "Will you marry me, Pam Metzger?" Tuckey then gave a verbal proposal and removed a black cover over the coin return slot, revealing a sparkling diamond ring. The bewildered Metzger accepted his proposal, which was captured by the camera crews and included in that night's news programs. Six newspapers ran stories with pictures the next day.

Who says there's no more romance in this world? □

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Compiled by the editors of EuroSlot

GERMANY

A joint warning has been issued by Germany's "Big Three" manufacturers—Gauselmann, NSM, and Bally Wulff—against the illegal use of poker and blackjack machines in Germany. They can only be used as "points gaming machines without payouts," but there have been a growing number of instances where the points won have been exchanged for cash or goods.

This is illegal in Germany, and those involved are risking fines or even imprisonment. The three organizations have instructed their sales departments not to retail machines which store points or which have other features that may be used for illegal accounting procedures.

Elsewhere in Germany, NSM chairman Ullrich Schulze is predicting a growing importance in the non-payout machine business. He said in a recent press interview that machines involved in sports, music, and entertainment will gain an increasing share of the overall market.

What little investment currently going into the German coin machine business is being directed at payout equipment. Nevertheless, this sector is the most heavily taxed. Schulze believes non-payout equipment will therefore attain growing importance.

UNITED KINGDOM

There is a slight risk that video games can trigger epileptic fits, according to a U.K. government inquiry. In Britain up to 150 victims could be affected each year, the majority of them between seven and 19 years old.

The inquiry was set up after a national newspaper alleged that a number of children with no history of epilepsy had been affected while playing Nintendo or Sega consumer games on television screens. The flashing lights can trigger fits in children who are susceptible, the inquiry found.

The Department of Trade and Industry prepared the report with the help of the National Society for Epilepsy. They found that about 600 of the 30,000 people in Britain each year who have an epileptic fit for the first time are "photosensitive" and at risk from TV, video games, or even flashing strip lighting.

Consumer Affairs Minister Lord Strathclyde said that video games only carried a small chance of triggering fits, adding that playing games would very rarely spark a seizure in those who have no history of the illness.

FINLAND

Automaattivuokraajat Ry, the Finnish coin machine trade association newly admitted to Euromat, is conducting a campaign to break the monopoly of the state-owned RAHA organization in Finland (also known as RAY). RAHA controls most of the coin machines and all of the payout machines in the country on behalf of the government, which distributes the proceeds to charities.

The trade association is using Finland's high-profile entry into the European Community on Jan. 1 as a means to break the monopoly. Its membership in Euromat has been used to highlight the situation, and it has appealed to other members to lobby their own governments to take action.

Secretary Tapio Kauppi said, "We want the European Community to demand the dismantling of Finland's four automatic machine monopolies, in particular because they violate the Treaty of Rome and the Treaty of Maastricht (the laws on competition contained in those documents).

"If Finland's coin machine monopoly is permitted to remain, then similar monopolies in favor of charitable organization may also come into existence in other EC countries."

RAHA also has jukeboxes and kiddie rides with which it competes with private operators. Automaattivuokraajat also contests RAHA's coin-operated pool table, which is rated as an amusement machine yet competes with ordinary non-coin-op games that are provided by private entrepreneurs. It leaves for the rest of the industry jukeboxes, reaction testers, certain sports games—darts, basketball, and golf—non-coin-op pool, and kiddie rides.

Automaattivuokraajat chairman Seppo Henriksson said: "The machine monopolies in Finland are the only ones in Europe. They provide problems of competition because different types of machines complement each other to some extent. RAHA competes with private companies for the limited space available in restaurants for coin machines. It is the most efficient and profitable way for the monopoly-holder to collect as much as possible from as few slot machines as possible, and give preference to those machines for which RAHA pays the minimum share to the location.

"In order to achieve a maximum profit, RAHA only provides restaurants with a limited number of machines which are affected by the monopoly. This results in an uneven competitive situation between locations because some are left completely without machines, and few of them get as many as they want."

AUSTRALIA

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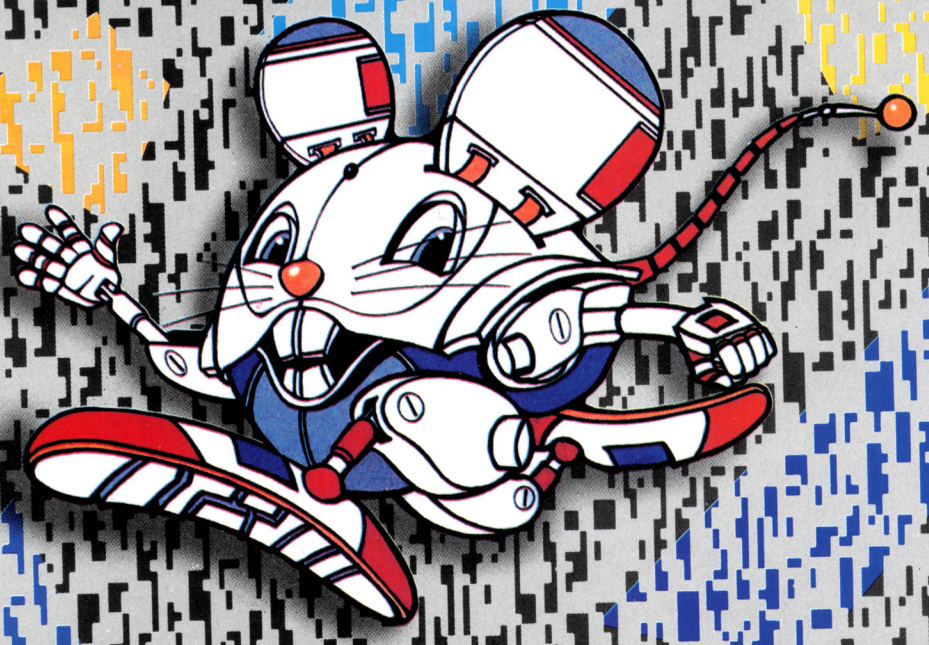

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and Allied Industries of Perth, Western Australia, to develop the largest leisure center in the Southern Hemisphere. To be located at Queensland's Surfer's Paradise, it will likely have a carnival theme, cover 4,000 square meters, and become the second largest in the world. The cost to develop the center? Around $4 million.

SOUTH AFRICA

As South Africa moves toward its first fully integrated elections on April 27, the heat is apparently off the country's coin machine industry. The government had cracked down on illegal casinos and a range of other equipment, including unlawful gambling machines and video pokers.

It seemed that further troubles were in store for the industry, but it has been overtaken by far larger political considerations as the elections loom, with the near-certainty of a black majority rule for the first time. It looks likely that the country will be split into 10 provinces, based on tribal areas with a high degree of individual autonomy. The industry is hoping that this autonomy will extend to decisions on whether gambling will be legalized in any form.

GREECE

There is still confusion in the Greek coin machine industry following the apparent opening of the market to payout machines and a change of government. It is understood that the new government has done nothing to overturn the previous administration's decisions on coin machines.

The Greeks appear content with JPM's *Reel Magic* machine as the mainstay of the market, and it is being copied extensively. The machine is described by the official Greek government documents as being made by Jac van Hamm in Holland (JPM's distributor) and imported by Serdaris-Xatzianestiadis of Thessaloniki. An official definition of the game has been prepared, of which *EuroSlot* has an English translation.

MOROCCO

Pool is gaining popularity in the hotels and cafes around Casablanca, according to Stan McKenna of Hazel Grove Music. The tables are being exported from France and the United Kingdom.

The managing director of Moroccan distributor Yanda, M. Laredo, has taken on the line of Hazel Grove Music's U.K. pool tables and is siting them in the Casablanca area. Laredo first saw the tables in France —where the game is extremely popular—and took on the exclusive distributorship for Morocco. They're distributed throughout France from HGM's base in Rennes (located in the Brittany region). Laredo has visited the company's head office in the United Kingdom, where the tables are manufactured.

Distributors and operators in Morocco are continuously looking for new leisure outlets. Laredo has become a member of the French pool association, AFEBAS, to prove his commitment to the game's promotion. AFEBAS runs national tournaments in France.

As a predominantly Muslim country, Morocco has strict rules about alcohol and gambling. This means that the only type of coin machines permitted are amusement games. There are also, therefore, few bars; pool tables are usually located in large hotels or pool centers.

TURKEY

License fees for casinos in Turkey have just been increased by about 200 percent for 1994. This means that a 50-slot, 10-table operation which paid $150,000 in 1993 will now pay over $400,000. The table license fee of $100,000 for an unlimited number of tables will now only cover the first six tables; each additional table will cost $15,000.

In 1993 slots were licensed at $5,000 for the first 15 and $400 after that. This has increased to $15,000 for the first 15 and $800 thereafter. Membership cards were available to casinos for $37,500, but this will increase to $201,250.

The large city-based casinos should have no problem covering the new fees, but the seasonal casinos on the coast will struggle. Their argument is that they deal with international tourists who don't need membership cards, and that the minimum of 500 now required is too high.

Another complaint is that the government had promised to close illegal casinos, but it has only happened to a limited extent. Many of the estimated 50 illegal casinos are operated by influential people. There are 50 legal casinos licensed in Turkey; most are in Istanbul and Ankara.

The Turkish government, struggling to finance the continuing battle against the PKK (Kurdish terrorists), has announced a wide range of tax increases on VAT rates, gasoline, and imported goods. This is serious news for all coin machine operators. The rate relating to coin machines has increased from 38 percent to 88 percent, which means that a machine costing $5,000 will have $4,400 added in import duty. □

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UP FRONT

Honesty is best, if not always tactful, policy

There's a limit to how much honesty I can tolerate. Such as when an operator disclosed to me at a major trade event: "Your editorials are nice but they're fluff. Everyone looks at the Equipment Poll, then the Classified section, then Randy Fromm's Technical Topics. The average operator doesn't have time for all that's in-between." I take it he likes the magazine to a sandwich in reverse: two slices of meat with the soft bread in the middle.

I hope everyone is not of the same mind. We know that it may not be possible to read every single line in the magazine, although we think all the articles are valuable. We put a great deal of effort into what we research and write. Each magazine is our "baby" and we are understandably distressed when someone calls to request a back copy, explaining: "I threw mine away before a friend told me about a good article in it." We'll dutifully send a replacement, with the admonishment not to discard any in the future (or the trade magazine police will get you!).

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

The editorial staff may find comfort in fellow writer Andy Rooney's comment: "No one wants to read a lot of good writing. There's just so much good writing a reader can take."

The individual who expressed the views in the first paragraph also had a suggestion for obtaining more responses to the Equipment Poll: electronic polling. Considering the technology of voice mail and automated answering systems, it could be done. It might fall out something like this:

"Hello, you have reached the Play Meter Equipment Poll Hot Line. If you have a touch-tone phone, listen to the litany of video, pin, and redemption games. After each game press one for a point value of 10, press two for a point value of 9, press three for a point value of 8, press four for a point value of 7, press five for a point value of 6, and press six for a point value of 5. Got it?

Point values after five are not worth a fig. If you would like to have the under-five-point games picked up by a local landfill, press zero.

If you are calling from a car phone in a luxury automobile, you are probably terribly successful and can afford to buy whatever you want in large quantities and don't need to anguish over the ratings.

If you are one of the poor souls left on the face of the earth with a rotary dial phone, you are out of luck. Welcome to the 20th century. Run, don't walk, to your nearest retail outlet and purchase a touch-tone unit in a day-glo color. Live a little. And don't forget to call in your game ratings next month."

Behind this fluff is a point: every reader has favorite parts of the magazine. We recognize that the Equipment Poll is one of the most important parts. To that end we solicit greater input from you, our operator readers. Thanks to the faithful who send their polls in regularly. To others who have not returned a poll lately, drop it in the postage-paid envelope and send it along. An automated system may become a reality down the road, but in the meantime we rely on the mail and you.

By the way, the last set of instructions in our automated system of the future would be: "Press P for a real, live person. You can be painfully honest; we'll listen." □

P.S. While on the subject of the Equipment Poll, in an effort to rate brand new and recent releases for our readers we now include on the ballot only games introduced within the last two years. The history of older equipment is widely known and well documented. Video games that debut as dedicated and later appear as kits are moved into the kit category.

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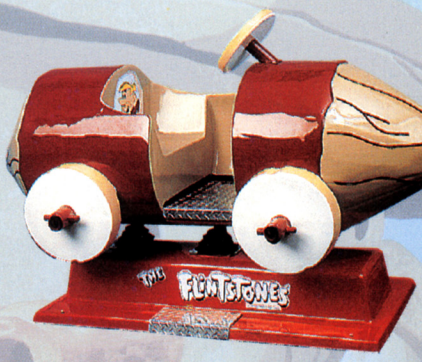

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NEWS FEATURE

Rowe unveils new jukeboxes in Dallas

Operators anxious for a new model of Rowe International's *LaserStar America* need wait no longer. In fact, the company raised the curtain on *two* jukeboxes at a principals-only distributor meeting in Dallas on Dec. 1.

Production begins this month on the 1994 *LaserStar CD-100D Black Magic* and the *LaserStar CD-100D Lady In Red*. The former is black with gold trim, the latter red with gold trim. New features on both include the words "Compact Disc" on the bottom; a top multi-reflective enclosure that produces a moire effect and has three CDs that rotate in a rainbow of changing colors; and a programmable message center on the keypad for up to eight messages. The jukeboxes are equipped with a Rowe bill acceptor that takes $1 and $5 bills; it's available with a 500 or optional 1,000 bill stacker.

By the Black Magic, (l-r): Rowe's Phil Cole, Joe Krestakos, Ed Gundrum, and Joel Friedman.

"We had operators who specifically asked us for a red jukebox, something that's not common," explained senior vice president Joel Friedman. "The *Lady In Red* gives operators an interesting jukebox for locations that warrant it. As for the *Black Magic*, it's created quite a strong reaction from those who've seen it. The black with gold trim is just beautiful.

"The *Black Magic*, we think, will be the number one choice, but we want to leave that decision to the operators. The *Lady In Red* is more of a specialty jukebox, to the extent that it's for operators who want something different in terms of color."

And what did the distributors who gathered in Dallas think of the new jukeboxes? Here are some of their comments:

Phil Sternberg, Eastern Music: "These are rich-looking pieces. Operators have been asking for color changes, and Rowe has come up with some nice ones. I expect both jukeboxes to earn really well."

Morris Piha, Greater Southern: "I believe the red jukebox will go well in certain areas, but personally I prefer the black one. In some cases the operators will really benefit from the choice of colors. Take the University of Georgia, for example. With the school colors being black and red, it's a natural location. And I'm glad Rowe didn't make any mechanical changes, because the mechanism is working beautifully."

Lou Ptacek, Bird Distributors: "They are very attractive and should sell well throughout 1994. I think operators will appreciate the choice of colors."

John Gatens, Southgate Amusement: "The last model worked fine and was very reliable. I'm well satisfied with the new model

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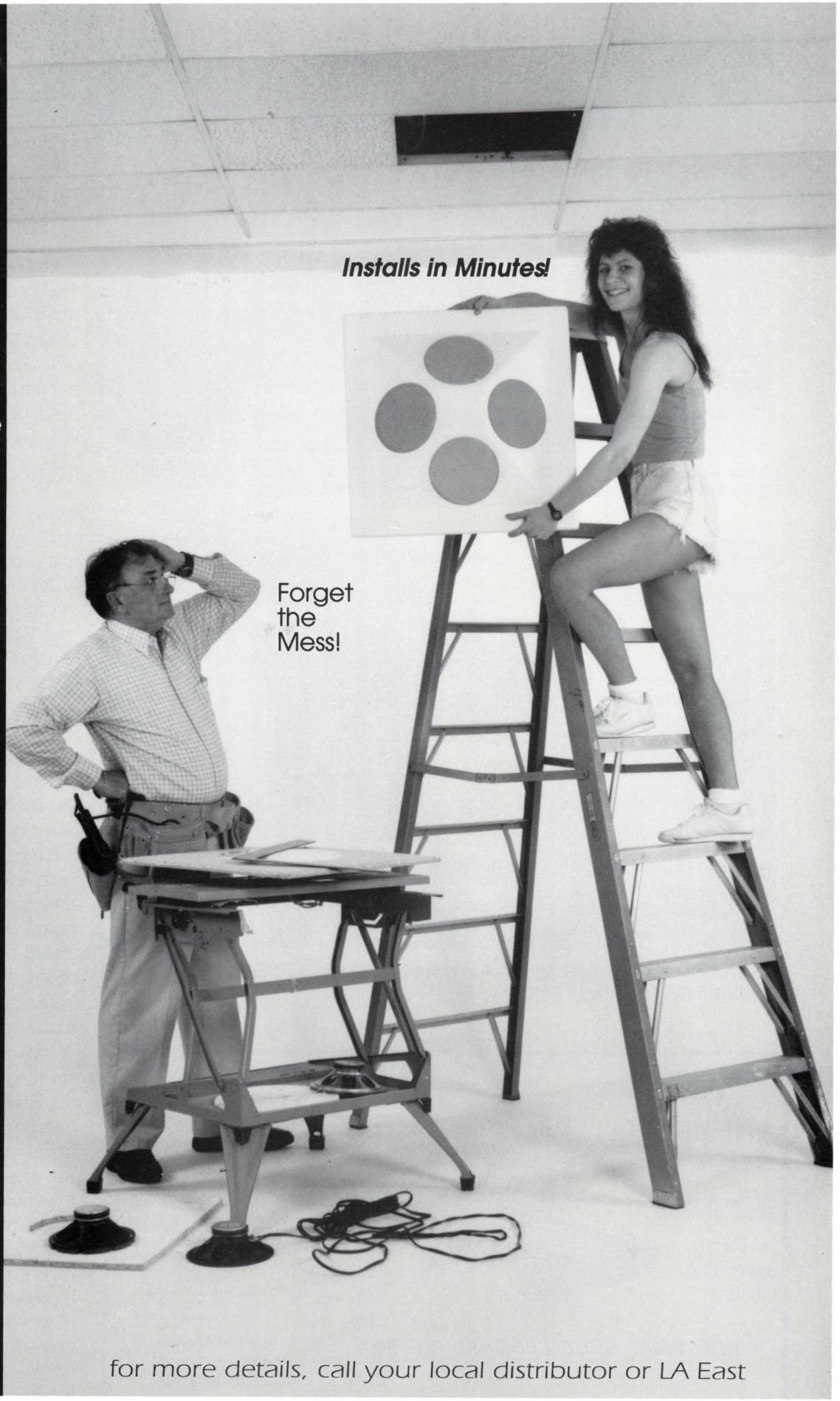

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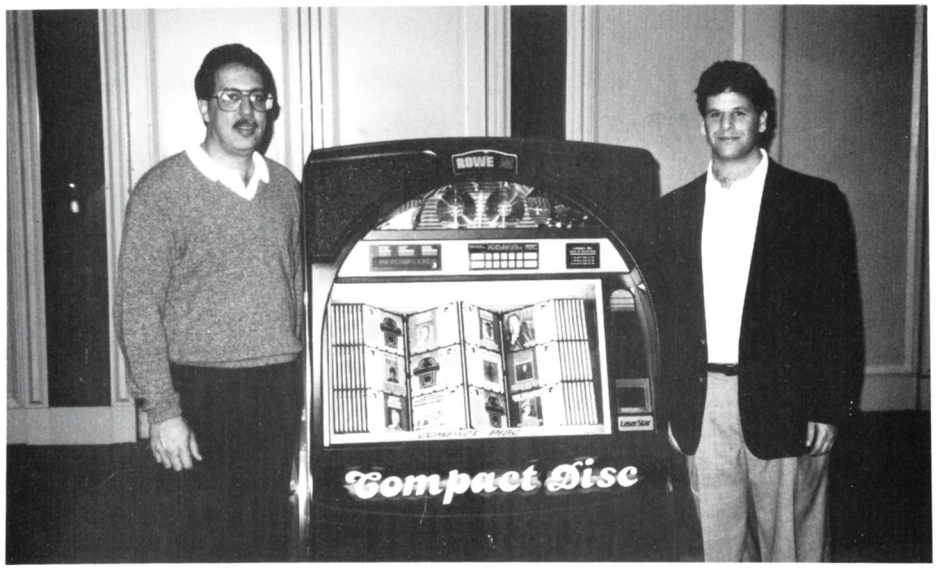
distributor inquiries invited

Standing beside the Black Magic are, (l-r): Morris Piha of Greater Southern, Phil Sternberg of Eastern Music, and Lou Ptacek of Bird Distributors.



Frank Gumma Jr. of American Vending Sales (l) and Steven Toranto of Birmingham Vending flank the Lady In Red.

and look forward to selling it this year."

On another front, Friedman says Rowe will produce an add-on karaoke kit later this year. "We've always felt we have a responsibility to look at the marketplace and what may be happening in the future," he said. "One of the things we considered early on is CDG, which is another form of CD. It looks the same as a CD but has graphics added to one of the tracks. So one of the things we thought about was how to incorporate that into a product if it becomes a reality, which it really hasn't to date.

"What we've done from an engineering standpoint is come up with a prototype for taking our jukebox and adding karaoke or CDG. At the AMOA show we displayed an engineering prototype that was done in conjunction with Philips Electronics. We received such a positive response that we're going to produce an add-on kit for the *LaserStar America* jukeboxes. I expect it to be ready by the middle of the year. It'll give operators another opportunity to compete in the locations."

Rowe/AMI is celebrating its 85th anniversary this year, and the company's jukeboxes can be found in 50 countries and six continents. The Rowe family of jukeboxes now consists of the two new models, the *CD-51, CD-Nostalgia, Wallette*, and *Wallstar Hideaway*.

"We think 1994 is going to be a really good year," Friedman concluded. "What we continue to hear from operators is that CD jukeboxes continue to earn well for their routes. The Rowe CD jukeboxes have been out for five years now, and we find that operators are starting to replace older models in larger numbers. The base of opportunities of where CD jukeboxes can go is expanding, and operators are expanding with it. They're finding that CD jukeboxes are good for business." □

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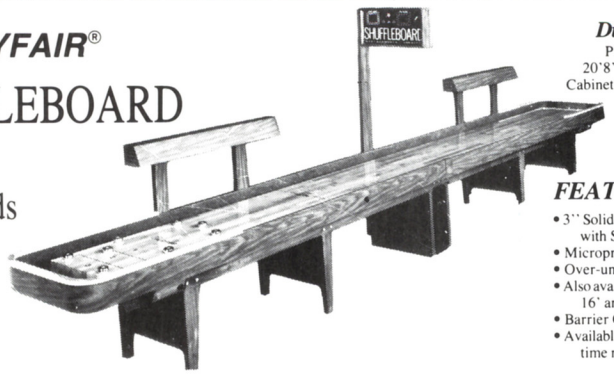

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COVER STORY

Bromley Inc.: a lifetime of learning pays off

Lauran Bromley and Joe Bundra.

Lauran Bromley, president and founder of Bromley Inc. and Funland, has been around the coin-op industry literally all of her life. Her story begins in New York long before she was born.

Her grandfather, Irving Bromberg, was a successful operator and distributor of games. He brought the first pinball machine to New York and started the Irving Bromberg Co., which had five offices in the state.

After selling the business and moving to California, he reopened the Irving Bromberg Co., the only Bally distributorship in California at that time. Irving was delighted when his only son (Lauran's father) Martin took an interest in the industry, even operating some of his own games while still in high school. Tragically, Irving died at a young age of Parkinson's disease.

Martin Bromley (he had shortened the family name) never left the coin-op industry. He was one of the founders of Service Games. Of course, we know it better as Sega.

We asked Lauran how she got her start in the coin-op industry; she tells this story: "My parents divorced when I was only two and my mom, my sister, and I ended up in Hawaii. When I was around 13, my dad would often send me brochures of games. I'd cut them up and re-paste them so they looked better."

She continued, "When I was 16, I began going to the AMOA conventions in Chicago. I was still dealing with brochures, this time handing them out in front of the booth."

But when did she have her first *real* job in the industry? "I've

From left: Game engineer John Kubik, vice president of sales Joey Bundra, field technician Mike Modrzejewski, and software engineer Vito Caporusso.

The Professional-Amateur Pinball Association (PAPA) tournament semi-finals were held at Funland in Dec. '93. From left: L.J. Green (Premier), Roger Sharpe (Williams), Gil Pollock (Premier), Lauran, and Tom Cahill (Williams).

Bromley's latest product, **Dino Rally**, in its prototype stage. It went on test Dec. 16.

never had a real job," Lauran exclaims. "This is the coin-op industry; how could you call this a real job!"

Seriously, Lauran didn't actually start working in the industry until after finishing college. She majored in drama at USC, but knew after working on several movies that films would absolutely not be her chosen career. After finishing school, she summoned up her nerve and asked her dad if she could come into his industry. To convince him, she reasoned that the industry was not so unlike working on films—a pinball has a beginning, an end, and a theme.

Marty agreed. However, although he had an interest in Stern Electronics, he made it clear that Lauran would have to interview with Gary Stern and earn a job on her own merits. Lauran was hired on a one-year training program, where she served time in every department.

Lauran left Stern just ahead of its demise. Not wanting to leave the industry, she and another former Stern Electronics employee, Larry Seigel, formed Bar Star. Lauran calls their game a great concept. It was a totally portable poker machine about the size of a cigar box, operated by batteries—perfect for bar locations. There was just one problem: when they tested them they were shocked to realize you couldn't play them in the dark. Said Lauran, "That was the end of that company!"

Lauran reluctantly left the industry, but vowed to find a way to get back into it. Her chance came when Gary Stern started Data East Pinball, just blocks from Lauran's house. She eagerly signed on as a one-woman "volunteer department," working for nearly a year. When the company moved nearly an hour away, she was put on a contract basis for specialty jobs.

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Eventually, she was hired permanently in the purchasing department, racking up four more years of industry experience. In the mid-80s, Lauran was fascinated with the redemption phenomenon sweeping the industry. She had no doubt that she wanted to be a part of it. It was time to venture out on her own.

Lauran describes the experience: "It was like getting out of the industry, but not really, because it took nearly a year before the first product was ready."

When *Little Pro* hit the market, Lauran describes the feeling as "pretty darn good!"

Why was that first game and subsequent ones—*Rock N' Bowl*, *Wheel 'Em In*—so successful in a very competitive market? The answer comes easily to Lauran: "What makes us so unique is that we haven't created games, we've re-created games. We have taken wonderfully successful games and brought them up-to-date. *Little Pro* was a game done by Harry Williams decades ago. *Rock N' Bowl* was done in Spain in the early '60s. In fact, there were over 100,000 of them built in Spain."

Obviously, since Lauran is too young to remember the games, she praises her mentor—her dad—who remembers them very well. Lauran laughs when she tells us this story: "My dad will say 'Doll, remember that game built in 1950?' and I'll say 'Dad, I was negative-eight then!' But he'll promise to get one of the old games and the rest is history."

Marty is very proud of his daughter and even admits that he doesn't even mind when people say, "Oh, so you're Lauran's father!"

Many would have been content with the obvious success Bromley Inc. has enjoyed with its list of must-have redemption games. Not Lauran. Last year she opened Funland, touted as Chicago's largest family amusement center. Funland is 16,000 square feet with a strong mix of redemption games and a 30-foot-long redemption counter chock full of tempting prizes.

Funland features specialties like the Sega *R3600* flight simulator and the only indoor bumper cars. You'll also see Namco's *Suzuka 8 Hours*, Sega's *Virtua Racing*, and many other high-tech games. An entire floor is dedicated to the younger set with an interactive, educational playroom featuring soft play and a fun ball crawl.

Lauran knows that there will be a weeding out of redemption companies, but is confident Bromley Inc. will survive. Why? "Those who know what redemption is and what the kids want will be around for a long time. There must be extensive testing to know if the game is good. We're willing to do that. I've seen companies stick a ticket dispenser on any old game and say, 'Hey, I'm in the redemption business.' That's not what redemption is all about. It's much more, and those who understand that will survive and be very successful."

Of course, we're always curious about upcoming games. Bromley Inc.'s product line-up will soon include *Dino Rally*, a remake of a hit game called *Turf Champ*. It's out on test right now and should be ready to preview at the March ACME show, to be held in Bromley's backyard of Rosemont, Ill.

"What makes us so unique is that we haven't created games, we've re-created games. We have taken wonderfully successful games and brought them up-to-date."

We asked Lauran what she sees for the industry in the near future. Here's what she had to say: "The redemption market will continue to expand. However, the competition will be fiercer than ever. If you look back 10 years ago there were probably only three companies making redemption pieces; there are dozens now. Operators will have to be cautious about who they are dealing with. They need quality equipment that doesn't break down. They need a company to stand behind its games; you only get that from reputable companies. Operators are going to be making some tough choices. Bromley Inc. has vowed to introduce only those games that will give operators a fair return on their investment."

But Lauran is quick to point out that she couldn't do it alone. She has the very capable help of Joe Bundra, her vice president of sales. She describes him as "the hardest worker she knows." Joe and Lauran, the core of Bromley Inc., work closely on a daily basis and are making plans to open more Funlands throughout the Chicago area.

Other key employees include engineer John Kubik, software engineer Vito Caporusso, and field technician Mike Modrzejowski. □

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Emphasize quality service and game reliability

As an operator in the highly competitive market of the greater New York area, I can trace one of the key elements of our operation's continued success to a principle set down by my grandfather: if you want customers to enjoy themselves, you must provide a facility with games that work!

At our facilities, the philosophy is simple: every flipper, drop-target, bumper, button, pedal, and coin mech **must work** or the customer is entitled to a complete refund. In my opinion, this policy has contributed to the success of some of our original family game centers.

A typical business hears from only four percent of its dissatisfied customers. About 96 percent just go away; 91 percent never come back. If you apply these statistics another way, it could mean these customers might never try a game again if one does not work correctly the first time.

A common problem for arcade operators is the **unnoticed** game that is not working properly. Machines without sound, indicator lights, or functional input/output controls (joysticks, buttons, accelerator pedals, etc.), will make far less money than they should. Unless there is a knowledgeable employee interested enough to attend to these problems, customers will walk away unhappy and usually not tell anyone about it.

Maintenance reviews must be performed periodically. These should cover not only input/output controls, indicator lights, and sound volume, but also locks and security measures, game cleanliness, and option settings.

It's not necessary to have a technician perform the review function. A properly trained arcade change attendant is capable of constantly checking for common machine ailments that can affect your business. This type of training takes time, patience, and a willingness to learn on the part of the trainee.

Some items can be checked at any time. Indicator lights, loose controls, or obviously broken parts can be found and repaired immediately, or the game can have an out-of-order sign placed on it until a technican arrives.

Other problems are seen only while the game is being played. This takes more effort on the part of the employee and may entail giving a customer refund. Showing customers that quality is a top priority in your location is one of the best ways to promote repeat play. A customer refund is a powerful way to send this message.

This attitude also tells customers that if they alert you to a problem on a game you will reward them with a free game. The result is that the vocal four percent of dissatisfied customers now work with you to provide a better facility for all.

Start training your staff to be observant and maintain the quality of the products you've spent so much time to select and so much money to purchase. This mindset of quality assurance is the one thing you can do to increase customer satisfaction and long-term repeat play. □

Michael Getlan

Michael Getlan is the director of operations for Amusement Consultants Ltd. in New Rochelle, N.Y. The 40-year-old family business operates nearly 5,000 games in approximately 50 game centers in 10 states. Also in the company fold, located in five amusement and recreational parks, are three miniature golf courses, two batting cages, two golf driving ranges, a par-3 18-hole golf course, amusement park rides, and the first Q-Zar facility in the Northeast. The staff numbers 400 full-time employees and 1,000 in the summer season.

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COMPANY PROFILE

Drew's builds on family tradition

The Drew's crew, (l-r): front row—Scott Foster, Tyler Foster, James Pearson, Phillip Caldwell; center row—Rachelle Peace, Joyce Humphries, Claudia Humphries, Hugh Andrews II; back row—Cliff Clary, Patty Clayton, Mark Crawley, Chuck Howell, Shawn Suttles, Tim Caldwell.

Young Hugh Andrews II came to love and understand the coin machine business at an early age. One of his most vivid memories is that of rolling nickels with a hand-held device when accompanying his parents on their collection rounds for Andrews Amusement Co.

"I loved it and was interested from day one," he says with an affectionate tone. Andrews officially started working for his dad at age 12; by the time he turned 17 he had decided to make the amusement business his career. Andrews took the $8,000 his folks had saved for his college education and bought his first building, a beer tavern. He rented it and installed his own games there.

Horace Hugh and Geraldine Andrews worked long hours seven days a week managing a route of jukeboxes, pool tables, bingo pinball machines, and other equipment. Their strong work ethic made an impression on their son, who bought a half-interest in the family route in 1974, then the other half in 1978. He opened Drew's Distributing Co. in 1981 when he was president of the South Carolina Coin Operators Association.

"I'd been involved with the association for years and knew all the operators," explains Andrews. "I envisioned distributing as a way to buy the games I needed for my route at a discount, as well as to sell games to my friends across the state. At first it was a sideline; I never dreamed it would turn out to be such a good business."

Andrews could see that the state was leaning toward operating draw poker games. He aligned himself with a manufacturer in New Jersey and started handling that company's products in South Carolina. In 1983 he entered the manufacturing field and started producing his own games.

At present, Drew's Distributing Co. manufactures the following games: *Treasure Chest* video poker (four single-game models), *Respin 8* video slot machine, *Deuce's Wild* and *Double-Up* poker games, *Monte Carlo* 8-line, and *Jackpot Bingo* video bingo. In addition, the M1A and M2 changers are manufactured at the 12,500-square-foot company headquarters in Spartanburg, S.C. Drew's plans to expand this year and double the size of its physical plant.

On the distributing side, the company represents U.S. Games (*Pot-O-Gold* and *Bar Brain*), Eagle-Wing (*Dream Jack* and slot

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machines), Mikohn (progressive jackpots), IGCA (live craps games), Blitz (*Bank Robber*), Excellent Systems (*Dream 9*), Mars Electronics, Mali billiard cloth and cues, Valley cues, Norwood cues, and Eagle Lift lift gates. Quite a jump from the first tavern location.

South Carolina's unique situation

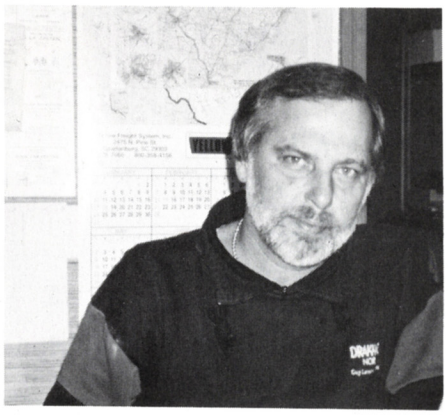
Whenever a list of legal gaming jurisdictions is published, South Carolina's name does not appear. Video gaming devices have been legal there since 1978, an exception to the state's gambling laws. Each game must be licensed; the fee is $1,500 per unit per year (some two-year license terms, some one-year).

Video poker and 8-line games can be found in convenience stores, restaurants, taverns, bowling centers, truck stops, and washaterias—just about anywhere. The games cannot pay out money directly; accumulated credits are cashed in at the register. The low-profile operation of the games changed in 1991 when a Supreme Court ruling brought attention to the loophole in the law that allows payoffs on the games.

According to Andrews, suddenly South Carolina went from approximately 15,000 video poker and 8-line games to 24,000 in one year. When as many as 30 games began to appear under one roof, public concern led to more regulations, something SCCOA members had wanted for years.

A law passed in 1993 limits the number of games per location to eight, with no one under the age of 21 allowed to play. Central computer system accountability will be required down the road, by July 1, 1995. In four-and-a-half years all games in the state must be random generating, a totally different animal than existing games on location.

Hugh Andrews II, president.



Tim Caldwell, vice president of sales.

Pamela and Dustin Andrews.

Phillip Caldwell, vice president of operations.

Can operators in the state hope to keep current poker and 8-line games and merely make adjustments? Says Andrews, "I don't believe this is possible for several reasons. First, the program for these games would have to be totally rewritten, and I don't believe there's enough in the hardware design to make the necessary changes. Second, there's also not enough hardware to go on-line with a statewide computer. Third, the state is going to require that acceptable games be tested in a gaming lab."

A statewide referendum (county by county) looms ahead in November, at which time voters will be asked whether to keep video poker legal in the state.

Andrews points out, "A lot of people don't realize how much these games have helped small businesses stay in business. The economy has grown substantially over the years because we've been able to operate these games. We were always in mom-and-pop-type stores. I would like to see that protected, as opposed to seeing small-scale casinos with 40-50 games."

While there's been a decided slowdown in coin machine operator-backed efforts to obtain legalized video gaming, does Andrews still see a future for gaming?

In his words, "The market is exploding in terms of Indian gaming." On other fronts: "Here in South Carolina I hope for coin machine operators to be involved as much as ever. At Drew's we've been working on legal gaming machines for the industry for the last few years."

Few outside of the manufacturing ranks understand the time and money that go into game research and development. Andrews concedes: "I can see where you can sink $1 million into developing a game with no problem at all. In our *Treasure Chest* and

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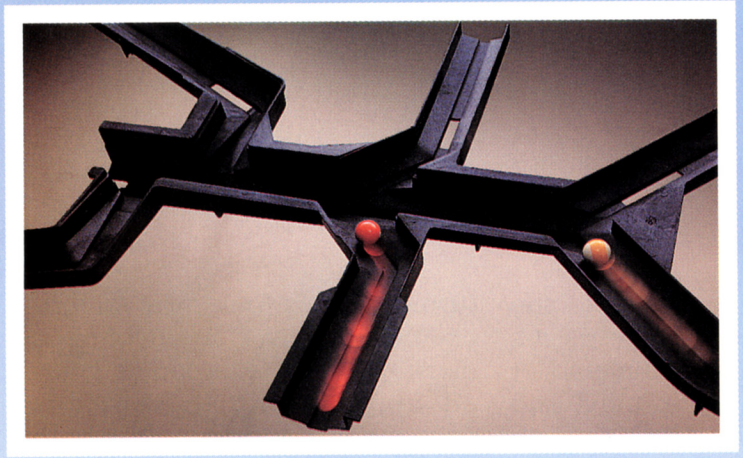

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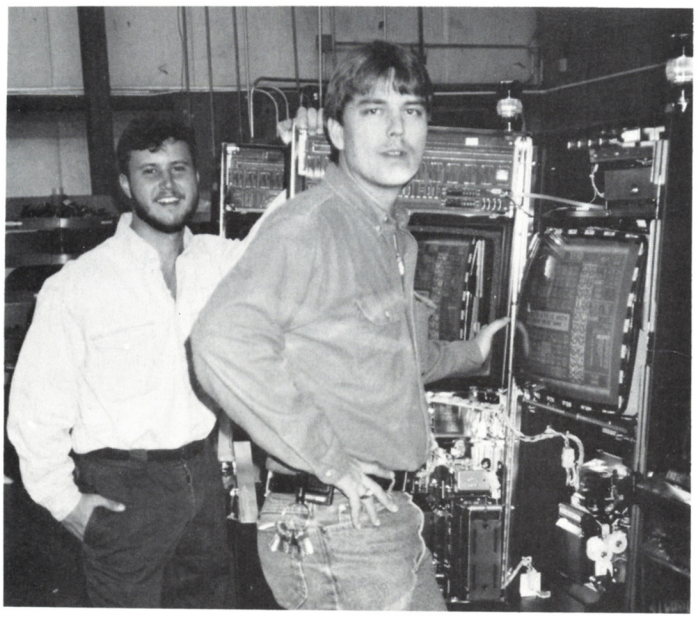

Drew Andrews and Huey Hayden in the factory.

The multi-player **Live Video Craps** may be a new category of game in the future.

Respin 8 we have probably spent $400,000 on the game concept and cabinet design. And that doesn't include the board." The games were developed in conjunction with Eagle Wing of Japan.

He adds, "You go to sell something and customers want to buy it for $100 over cost. They don't realize what you've already invested in the game."

While quietly handling its own affairs, South Carolina has felt pressure from out-of-state interests looking for gaming opportunities. "I feel like the carpetbaggers have moved to the state," comments Andrews. "They come here promoting land-based casinos and pari-mutuel betting. I don't see any succeeding, with the exception of a lottery. I expect to see lottery lobbying in the Legislature this year."

The state constitution prohibits a lottery but, says Andrews, "The concept seems to be well accepted here, with 66 percent of the citizens in favor. People don't see a lottery as being something you can overdo. It's probably the same as other gambling but isn't perceived that way."

Games of yesterday, today, and tomorrow

Since video gaming equipment is the mainstay at Drew's, which games are the most popular? "For the past three years or so the most popular game for us has been the *W-7* 8-line," answers Andrews. "Our new video lottery-type games seem to have the most interest at this time."

"A lot of people don't realize how much these games (pokers and 8-lines) have helped small businesses stay in business."

To what does he attribute the success of 8-liners? "I think it's the fact that they resemble a slot machine, are easy to play, and provide a high 'hit rate.' You win nearly every hand. A lot of times you don't win as much as you bet, but something is happening all the time."

Tiger Paw cranes, both standard and jumbo, were once high on the demand list at Drew's. Now the games are no longer in the product line. Notes Andrews: "When the fad for cranes was over and the business slowed down at the end of the '80s, we ceased to manufacture them. We haven't seen it as a market for us; the return is not significant enough. We could build them again if the market was not so soft."

Andrews attributes the downturn in cranes to several factors, one being inferior product on the market. "Some companies geared up, thinking it would be tremendous, and ended up with inventory they couldn't sell. At first, people played the cranes to WIN. They played for everything at the beginning, then they got particular. There's still a place for cranes but now it takes a special place."

Does the company have any

plans on the drawing board for new products in 1994? "We're experimenting with some new games," notes Andrews. "For example, a six-player craps game. We may be approaching the era of games where five or six people sit down together to play. It could become a new category of equipment, one that we could distribute in South Carolina."

Andrews admits that he is so geared to gaming equipment that it's difficult to stay in-tune with other available product. "The arcade pieces, they're hard to keep up with, hard to pay for, and you can't charge enough to get a good return on investment. But it's been that way for 10-12 years.

"The biggest concern of our customers who buy gaming equipment is the higher cost of new games. They're waiting to see what happens with the fall referendum. That means major sales of new gaming equipment will come after November this year."

All in the family

Family teams are at the heart of Drew's Distributing. Andrews' son, Drew, has joined the staff. Wife Pamela is vice president and treasurer. Daughter Holly, 12, shows promise for a coin-op future while Dustin, 6, is a bit young to determine his preference yet.

"We may be approaching the era of games where five or six people sit down together to play. It could become a new category of equipment."

Fourteen employees round out the company: Phillip Caldwell, vice president of operations; Tim Caldwell, vice president of sales; Chuck Howell, chief technician; Cliff Clary, technician and OBA repair; Scott Foster, warehouse supervisor; Tyler Foster, changer technician; Shawn Suttles, technician; James Pearson, technician and delivery; Mark Crawley, parts supervisor; Joyce Humphries, shipping and receiving; Brenda Curtis, game assembly; Rachelle Peace, receptionist; and Claudia Humphries and Patty Clayton, bookkeepers.

Although his parents are no longer here to see the Drew's Distributing of the '90s, Andrews credits his success to their legacy. Says Andrews: "I remember how hard they worked. I was proud of them for giving me the opportunity to be in this business." □

Life on the **Treasure Chest** production line.

Chuck Howell, chief technician.

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Income forecasting: the only way to depreciate

In mid-1993 the IRS issued a private letter ruling that allowed coin machine operators to use the income forecasting method of depreciation. Even though some operators had already been using it, the ruling provided an important precedent. This significant victory, secured by AMOA and, more specifically, immediate past president Craig Johnson, means operators can now defer thousands of dollars using this method.

With April 15 not far away, we thought it would be a fitting time to speak with operators who have either used the income forecasting method for years or who have only recently discovered its benefits. Either way, their message is clear: if you operate games—especially video games—and don't use the income forecasting method, it's time to give it serious thought.

"The number one thing the income forecasting method allows operators to do is depreciate the equipment while it's earning."

Christopher Caire

Background

(Note: The following background information comes from a booklet prepared by the international accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche in Salt Lake City, which assisted AMOA and Johnson.)

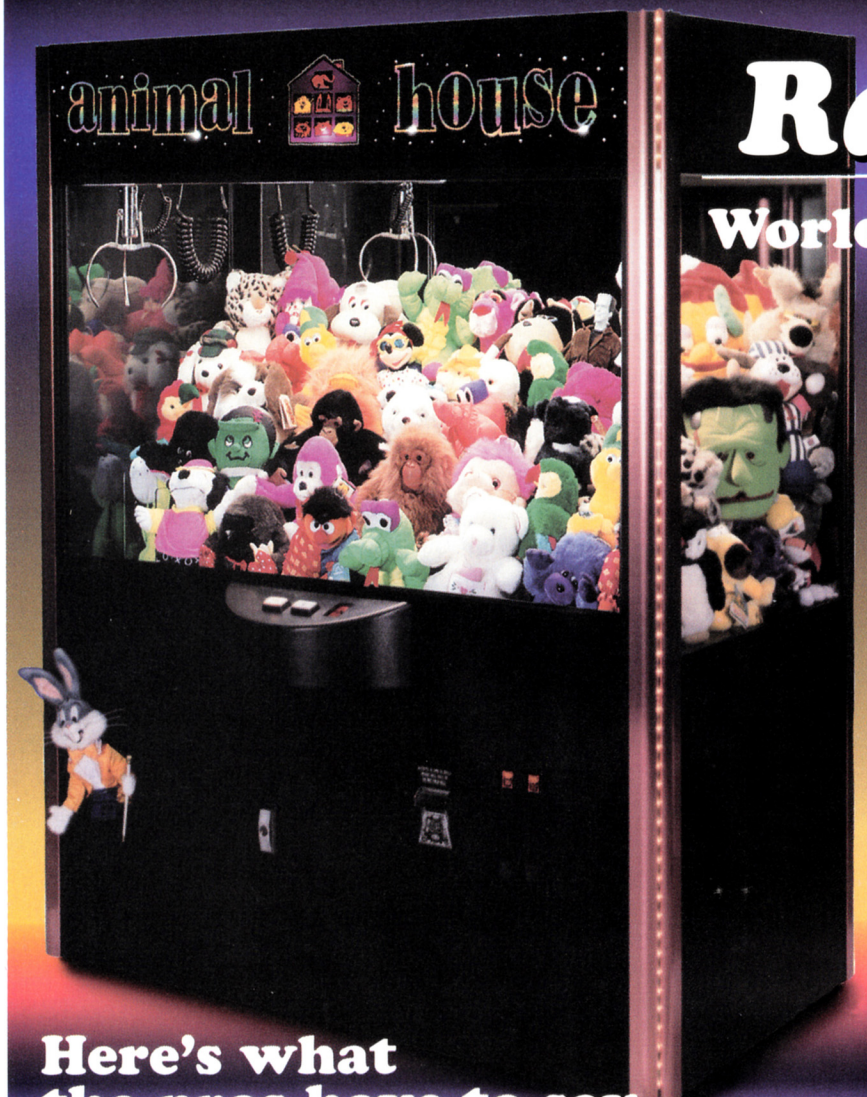
Prior to 1981, video games were depreciated over a period of 24 months or less. For video games purchased between 1981 and 1986, Congress increased the depreciable life to five years. Under the current federal tax depreciation rules (MACRS), a video machine is depreciated over a five- or seven-year life, depending upon whether the machine is considered a computer or entertainment equipment. In the volatile video game industry, either a five- or seven-year life grossly overstates the actual operating period of most video arcade machines. In fact, video games generally lose most of their public appeal after the first or second year.

Congress has allowed other entertainment industries, such as the motion picture and publishing industries, to avoid MACRS useful life classifications and use the income forecast depreciation method. The income forecasting method recognizes that certain assets generate uneven flows of income and have unique income-producing potential.

Video games fall within this classification since the income potential for video games is wholly dependent upon public appeal. For example, under the income forecasting method the movie "Jurassic Park" would likely be depreciated over a longer period than the movie "Last Action Hero" since "Jurassic Park" has shown a stronger audience appeal, which may continue for a longer period.

In a recent private letter ruling, the IRS allowed a video game operator (Johnson) to use the income forecasting method of depreciation for federal tax purposes. While the IRS states that the ruling cannot be cited as legal authority, it reflects the IRS's current position on a national level with respect to the use of the income forecasting method for video machines. As such, local IRS agents should consider the private letter ruling when examining an operator's method of depreciation.

In the past, IRS auditors who have disallowed the use of the



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Ken Higgins and Bill Emerson — Northeast Coin Company

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income forecasting method did so because no specific IRS ruling allowed such a method for video games. Now that the IRS has issued a private letter ruling allowing it, the video operator's next concern should be to establish a reasonable method for calculating depreciation using income forecasting. Only industries such as the motion picture and publishing industries have been previously authorized to use it, and most of the IRS's written direction for calculating depreciation under the income forecasting method was intended for those industries.

Tax benefits of using income forecasting

Again, according to Deloitte & Touche, "Most of the tax savings from using the income forecasting method are found in the year new machines are purchased and placed into service. Based upon a survey of video game operators that we performed, the average income forecasting depreciation percentages, as compared to five- and seven-year MACRS depreciation percentages over a five-year period, are as follows":

	Income Forecasting Method	5-Year MACRS	7-Year MACRS
Year 1	53.37%	20.00%	14.29%
Year 2	23.33	32.00	24.49
Year 3	13.54	19.20	17.49
Year 4	8.60	11.52	12.49
Year 5	1.16	11.52	8.93

For example, a video game purchased for $3,000 and depreciated in the first year would result in a tax deferral of $252 as opposed to depreciating the asset using five-year MACRS. Such deferral assumes a 28 percent tax bracket and no salvage value for the video game.

Randy Chilton, Chilton Vending

Chilton, the current AMOA treasurer, says income forecasting is the association's greatest achievement in 20 years.

"The number one thing the income forecasting method allows operators to do is depreciate the equipment while it's earning. Over a 20-year period, it doesn't matter a hill of beans how you depreciate your equipment. But what income forecasting allows you to do is depreciate the product while it's earning the majority of its revenue, which is good because that's when you've got to pay for it. Secondly, when you elect to use income forecasting, it no longer falls under the acid test of the alternative minimum tax method."

He estimates that medium-sized operating companies, depending on their level of video game purchasing, could save between $30,000-$50,000 in any given tax year. As for that level of purchasing, Chilton says it doesn't matter if you buy one video game or 100—income forecasting is the way to go. "It simply makes no sense to depreciate a video game over five years or seven years," he said.

While Chilton feels that operators who operate video games "are costing themselves a lot of money by not using income forecasting," the situation is not the same with pool tables, jukeboxes, cranes, and other steady-earning equipment.

"There's a big difference; look at the revenue stream," he explained. "A pool table will still be good in 10 years. Buy a video game and a pool table today and consider their likelihood of actual use over 10 years; it's a dramatic difference. Operators need to make a category-by-category decision. You don't have to use income forecasting for all of your equipment."

If an operator's accountant isn't familiar with the income forecasting method of depreciation, "make sure he becomes familiar. This is just too important not to take advantage of it," Chilton concluded.

Tony Parina, Parina Enterprises

Parina has been using the income forecasting method for eight years. After going back and forth with him as to whether the method could be used, the IRS gave its approval, albeit implicitly. Why didn't that translate into a precedent for operators?

"Craig Johnson received a private letter ruling, whereas the IRS essentially told us they had no problem with us using income forecasting—but they wouldn't issue a private letter ruling," Parina explained. "They wanted $1 million from me, and I ended up paying roughly $300,000. At the time I used income forecasting and took ITC (investment tax credit), which is no longer available. I could only have one, so I did have to pay the $300,000, but I did not have to pay for the use of income forecasting."

As an example of how much money can be saved, in the third year of using this method of depreciation, Parina realized a tax deferral of about $700,000 for a video game investment in the $5 million range.

He agrees with Chilton that

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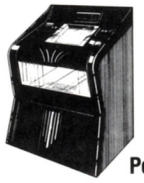

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income forecasting is ideal for equipment like video games and pinball machines, not as much so for jukeboxes, pool tables, etc. "Income forecasting has traditionally been a depreciation for the movie industry," Parina explained. "They don't know how long a movie will be popular with the paying public. Obviously 'Gone with the Wind' couldn't be written off over two years, while others could be written off in an hour-and-a-half! This same situation exists for operators of video games."

Not everyone, however, is a candidate for using income forecasting, Parina says.

"A lot of people operate equipment that isn't 100 percent legal," he said. "Therefore they will not be able to use this method, because detailed, accurate accounting is needed. If you have gray games all over the place and are paying under the table, you better stay away from income forecasting; it's a free ticket to jail. But those who operate legitimate games on a commission or lease basis should utilize income forecasting."

To illustrate how painstaking income forecasting is, Parina gave the following example:

"Every game—each unit—has to be set up on income. Let's say you have a *Mortal Kombat II* that started out at a pizza parlor, went to a bowling center, then back to another pizza parlor, then was broken because someone stole the board out of it. The different locations will obviously experience different earnings. Here's the key: you can't take your purchase of 40 *Mortal Kombat II*s and try to come up with a value on it. You must track *each and every one of them* and determine what the income was for the year and what you expect it to be in the future."

Is it all worth it? "In my opinion, yes, by all means," Parina concluded.

Wendell Cannon, Amusement Games of Texas

Cannon had been using a form of income forecasting prior to being audited by the IRS. At the audit he was told that he shouldn't be using income forecasting; Cannon disagreed. On the eve of going to court, he settled with the IRS, but not before spending about $113,000 in legal and accounting fees and interest for a $21,000 tax bill. "It was a real horror story; I never want to have to go through that again," Cannon said.He was audited for 1988, 1989, and 1990. Despite having charts, graphs, industry figures, income forecasts, etc., which substantiated that his video games dropped over 50 percent in value after the first year, the IRS would hear nothing of it. At an 11th hour meeting before going to court, Cannon and the IRS reached a settlement.

"One of the main reasons they settled was because I was using the income forecasting method, or at least a derivative of it," Cannon said. "I believe that had we gone to court, we could've proven that the games do deteriorate quickly in value and that the income forecast method is a valid method of depreciation. I think the IRS would've received an adverse ruling.

"I've switched to a pure income forecasting method. I contend that you can use it for any amusement equipment that takes a quarter. But be careful that you accurately ascertain what the income is going to be and what percentage is going to be obtained in the first year, second year, and third year. That said, the only safe way to depreciate equipment—especially video games—is using income forecasting. Otherwise you take seven-year MACRS, which is a catastrophe."

Cannon says a real no-no is storing old, never-to-be-used-again games in a warehouse. "Most operators will take their old pieces off the route and keep them in the warehouse; that's a mistake," he said. "Sell them or throw them in the junkpile! That's the only thing that saved me. Otherwise the IRS can come in and say, 'The games are still here, aren't they? You have to apply seven-year MACRS to them all.' Boom, the operator's dead."

In the most emphatic of terms, Cannon concluded: "Quit fooling around with alternative methods of depreciation. If your accountant doesn't know how to use income forecasting or doesn't want to, fire him! As for the IRS, they're nothing but a bunch of crooks."

Finally, here's how Craig Johnson sums up the private letter ruling allowing income forecasting: "Income forecasting depreciation, simply put, gives video game owners the ability to properly account for their assets. This means that you are not giving the government your money in advance of when it is rightfully due. By depreciating video games using the income forecasting method, you can keep very accurate books and at all times know what your business is doing and where you stand.

"This year video game owners will keep hundreds of thousands of dollars that would have been paid to the government if they had not been using income forecasting. With the ability of computers today, keeping track of your equipment for the use of income forecasting is not difficult."

For a much more detailed explanation of income forecasting, contained in the booklet prepared by Deloitte & Touche, contact AMOA headquarters at (800) YES-AMOA. □

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TAX TIPS

Retire, but don't sell your business

This war story is true. A reader of this column—let's call him Joe—recently called with a typical request: "Irv, I want to retire. Will you value my business so I know how much to sell it for?"

After a short conversation, two important parts of Joe's financial picture puzzle came into clear focus: 1) Joe's business was valuable and would be easy to sell, but 2) the tax cost would be murder. Unfortunately, many readers, like Joe, are in the same boat; they just don't know it.

An in-depth consultation a few weeks later completed the puzzle. Joe is 62 years old, has two kids—a son and a daughter—in the business and one son who is not interested in the business. Joe owns all of the stock of Family Co., a C corporation (a tax-paying corporation). Family Co. owns appreciated assets—land, buildings, and goodwill—that are worth about five times their book value on the company's books. Goodwill, as is usually the case, is not on the books or, put another way, is put on the books for zero.

Joe started the business 31 years ago with $1,800 of his own and a large loan from his dad. To keep it simple, let's say that Joe's tax basis for the Family Co. stock is zero.

Now the economic facts and the tax problem. The business, including the appreciated assets, is worth about $2.5 million. Great! The tax hit to the corporation is about $.6 million. What happens when Joe takes the $1.9 million balance out of the corporation? Another tax hit. This time about $570,000. True enough, the $1,330,000 left is a nice bundle of cash, but not nearly enough for the after-tax investment income (estimated at $60,000 to $80,000 before taxes per year, depending on interest rates) to maintain the retirement lifestyle Joe and his wife have dreamt about. For Joe to pay almost half of the business's value in taxes to accomplish his retirement goal is insanity. What to do?

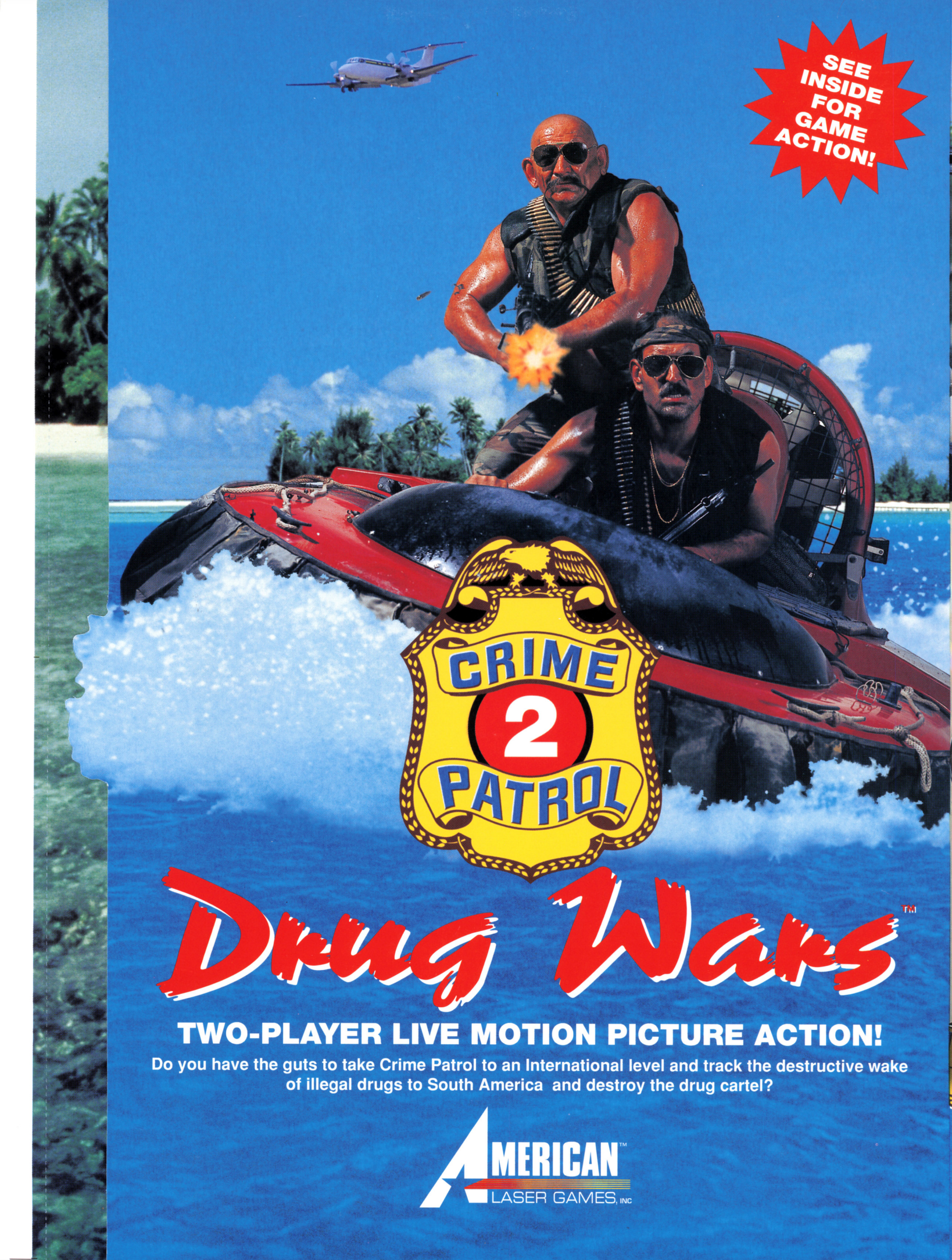
Don't sell the business. Keep it. Without covering every detail, here's the basic plan we worked out for Joe. Family Co. elected S corporation status. Joe retired; the kids run the business anyway. Yes, Joe consults—working half days—about six to 10 times a month, except in the winter when he goes south.

Family Co. usually made $300,000 to $450,000 per year before any salary or fringe benefits to Joe. That leaves plenty of room for Joe to take $100,000 after taxes (more or less) of S corporation dividends to fund his annual retirement needs. We also put two plans into effect: first, a transfer of stock plan to the children, including a buy/sell agreement; and second, an estate plan for Joe and his wife, funded by insurance, that will eliminate all estate taxes.

IRS caves in

OK, all together now. Stand and cheer. Applaud, for the IRS no less. Why? Because the IRS has finally come over to our side on a how-to-value-your-closely-held-business issue that will save you and your family a bundle of taxes.

Here's the story. For over 20 years, my office—via these articles, special reports, valuation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books, and actual reports valuing closely held businesses for tax purposes—has been screaming at the IRS, "We are entitled to take a minority discount when a majority owner of a closely-held business transfers a minority interest to one or more of his children or grandchildren." Over the years, the courts have agreed with my position; the IRS has not.

Now the IRS agrees—in writing. This is what the IRS says in Revenue Ruling 93-12: "A minority discount will not be disallowed solely because a transferred interest, when aggregated with interests held by family members, would be part of a controlling interest."

The ruling offers this practical example: "P owned all of the single outstanding class of stock of X corporation. P transferred all of his shares by making simultaneous gifts of 20 percent of the shares to each of his five children: A, B, C, D, and E."

Let's translate the example into dollars for your business. Suppose X Corp. is your business and is valued at $3 million. Everyone agrees with the value, even the IRS. In our office we would typically take a discount for general lack of marketability (usually in the 35 percent range) and an additional discount for minority interest that would bring the total discounts to 45 percent, or $1,350,000 ($3 million x 45 percent). This means that the value of your business for tax purposes is only $1,650,000 ($3 million minus $1,350,000).

The IRS has accepted the marketability discount theory for years. Adding the minority discount theory to the IRS's acceptance list puts us (the business valuation appraisers and you—the business owners) in the driver's seat. Now the IRS can only argue the amount of the discount, and as long as our discounts are reasonable (like the percentages used above), you are on solid ground.

For more information, send for these special reports: "Transfer Your Corporation to the Next Generation—Tax Free"; "Transferring Your Business When You Have Two or More Children"; and "How You Can Beat the Estate Tax—Legally." □

Two magic bullets to help you beat the tax collector

Do you really know the true tax cost of every dollar you earn? Most people don't, not even successful people.

Let's crunch the numbers. To make it easy, assume you're in a 30 percent income tax bracket—a 50 percent estate tax bracket. After you read this you may want to substitute your actual brackets. Also consider what Washington did to tax brackets in 1993. And don't forget that your home state gets a piece of your tax action.

For example, if you make $1 the first 30 cents goes for income tax. You've still got 70 cents, which you save and some day die with. Now the estate tax robs half: 35 cents goes to the IRS and 35 cents goes to your family. Yep! The tax collector gets 65 cents (usually more) of every dollar you earn and save. Your family gets 35

cents and often less.

Let's apply this basic (but unfortunately true) example to the two kinds of assets you own: tax-paid and tax-deferred. Tax-paid assets (like cash, CDs, stocks, bonds, etc. that you bought out of savings) will be clobbered by a 50 percent estate tax when you pass on. Or put another way, each additional $1 million in your estate is only worth $500,000 to your family. Sorry!

Now what about tax-deferred assets (like the funds you have in a pension plan, profit-sharing plan, 401(k), or an IRA)? Better sit down. Ready? Take $1 out. Just like the basic example: the result is 65 cents to the tax collector, 35 cents to your family. Or put another way, each additional $100,000 of your tax-deferred assets is only worth $35,000 to your family!

What happens if you die with the funds still in the tax-deferred plan? Same thing. Only 35 cents out of every dollar to your family.

OK, now you might take a few minutes (or a few hours) to pencil out what your estate is really worth.

Now here's some exciting news. We have developed a new concept that beats the estate tax—legally. Best of all, if you or your spouse is insurable, it always works. In a nutshell, here's how. It's a three-step process.

Let's use $1 million as an example (your amount can be higher or lower and assets can be tax-paid or tax-deferred, in any combination). We're going to apply the concept to tax-paid assets:

Step #1: Buy a $1 million single-premium immediate-pay life annuity (assume you are a 64-year old male and your wife is 59). You will immediately begin to receive $108,000 (the amount varies with age, sex, and current interest rates) per year as long as you live. A portion of the $108,000 is tax-free. Remember that a portion of that $108,000 is a return of your $1 million. The tax is only $19,973, leaving $88,027 of spendable cash. Now, the first magic bullet—when you die, there is zero estate tax. Why? The annuity has no value at your death.

Step #2: Buy a $1 million second-to-die policy (on your life and your wife's life). The cost is $20,905 per year, leaving you $67,122 in after-tax (and after the cost of the insurance) spendable income every year. That's a 6.71 percent return after taxes. Compare it to your current rate

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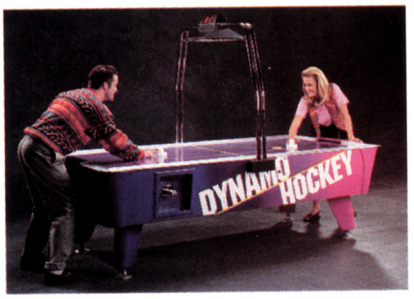

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Step #3: Here comes the second magic bullet. Have an irrevocable life insurance trust (ILIT) buy the $1 million policy. After the second death (of you and your wife), the ILIT will collect the $1 million tax-free (no income tax and no estate tax).

Let's summarize: during your life, you are assured of over $67,000 of after-tax income for as long as you live. After the second death, $500,000 has been turned into $1 million.

The concept works in a similar manner—even better for estate tax purposes—for tax-deferred assets. The $35,000 (or less) that would have been left after taxes for each $100,000 in your plan is turned back into $100,000 (or more) after taxes.

There are many variations (if you are single, richer, want to increase wealth, etc.) of the example given. In practice, the concept is tailored to your specific situation. No attempt is made to cover every variation, rule, trap, and exception. The concept requires the help of an experienced and knowledgeable professional.

If you want to learn more about this fascinating new wealth-building concept, you may be interested in the following special reports: "The Secret of How the Rich Create Wealth and Income Without Risk—The Junk Money Concept"; How to Triple Your Pension, Profit-Sharing or IRA Value"; and "Pay Zero Estate Tax—The Super Trust Way."

The address to send for all of the special reports ($25 each) mentioned in the articles is Blackman Kallick Bartelstein, 300 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606. □

Why own term life insurance?

For years I have been telling my business clients—with tongue in cheek—that one of the first rules for saving taxes is "If you pay it, deduct it. If you can't deduct it, don't pay it—or cut the cost."

Well, let me tell you why this old quote is appropriate here. Life insurance premiums are not deductible. Whole life premiums are never deductible. With one minor group-term exception, term life insurance premiums are not deductible. Yet millions of business owners (for various reasons) own term life insurance policies. Most own one-year term, which means if you are lucky enough to survive for a year, the insurance company will let you place your bet for the next year on the same policy. The bet, technically called *premium*, gets higher every year. And it ain't deductible.

But recently an insurance consultant (let's call him Steve) showed me how to really *cut the cost*. Steve has one of those tiny notebook computers and, with a few magic strokes, the computer screen lists the lowest cost term coverage for any given age. Steve kept stroking the keyboard to eliminate all but the top-rated companies in the industry.

Combining low-cost term insurance with an irrevocable life insurance trust (ILIT) is the key to economic heaven for you and your family. Why? The low insurance premiums cut your out-of-pocket costs during your life, and the ILIT eliminates the estate tax cost to your family when you go to the big business in the sky. If you are one of the millions of term life insurance owners, call your insurance consultant today. Steve's impressive insurance computer software is available to anyone. If you don't have any luck, give me a call (312/207-1040) and I'll put you in touch with Steve. □

Stock bonuses: a great way to transfer stock

Do one or more of your children work for your closely-held corporation? If so, keep reading. Let's say your daughter, Ann, works for and, as a practical matter, runs your corporation, Your Co. The family business, an S corporation, is worth about $2 million. You would like to give Ann five percent of the corporation, a $100,000 gift. Such a large gift has gift tax consequences. Is there a better way?

A stock bonus can do some neat tax tricks for most business owners with this kind of problem. Suppose Your Co. gives Ann a $100,000 bonus—not in cash, but in stock in the company. The tax consequences are near perfection. Ann must pay income tax on the $100,000. No doubt you can make a gift to Ann of the cash to pay this tax. Where will you get the money? Well, the $100,000 stock bonus is deductible by Your Co. That will reduce the corporation's profits and your tax burden. Simply put, Ann pays tax on the $100,000 while you get a deduction (through the S corporation).

Can anything go wrong with this tax plan to get stock and money out of your business? Yes,

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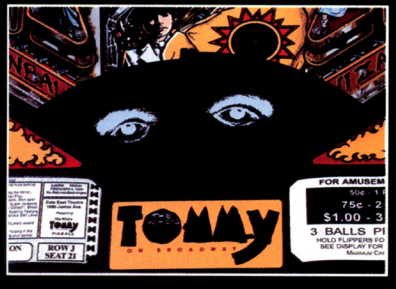

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The Who's Tommy Pinball Wizard with it s eye catching graphics, award winning music and pulse racing playfield excitement is sure to become a pinball classic in the same way The Who's Rock Opera has become a Rock-n-Roll classic.

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two things. First, the IRS may attack by saying Ann's compensation is unreasonable. This problem is easily solved by paying out the stock bonus over a period of two or more years.

Secondly, the IRS may attack the valuation of the shares. Having a competent business appraiser value the shares issued as a bonus is the easy way to avoid any conflict with the IRS. And remember, the value of the shares is entitled to two significant discounts: a discount for general lack of marketability and a discount for a minority interest. Combined, these discounts are in the 35 to 45 percent range.

One more point. This technique can be used by a regular tax-paying C corporation, as well as by an S corporation. □

401(k) plans: a sure tax winner

Do you know what successful business owners identify as their favorite long-term tax-saving technique? Hands down, a qualified pension or profit-sharing plan always wins. And why not?

Where else can you control your tax-saving goodies every step of the way? You get a tax deduction when you put money into the plan's trust; the earnings of the trust accumulate tax free; and when you take your share out of the trust, a special averaging break cuts your tax burden.

Can you match or even beat the tax benefits listed? Well, maybe you can with a 401(k) plan. Actually, a 401(k) plan is an old-fashioned profit-sharing plan with a wonderful twist—the employee can make deductible contributions to the employer's plan.

Here's an example: Success Co. establishes a 401(k) plan that allows employees to contribute up to 10 percent of their compensation to the plan. Bart, who earns $50,000 per year and is in a 30 percent tax bracket (including state income taxes), contributes $5,000 to the plan. You'll love the tax results. Bart's income for the year is only $45,000 ($50,000 minus $5,000). His income tax saving is $1,500 ($5,000 x 30 percent).

The most important feature of the plan is that contributions made by the employee get the same tax benefits as employer contributions to a regular profit-sharing plan—the contributions are deductible. Better yet, from the employer's viewpoint, the company provides a solid tax opportunity to the employee without using one dollar of company money to fund the plan. Can high-paid executives and stockholder/employees contribute? Yes. Is a 401(k) plan right for your company? The answer depends on a host of factors, but here's a list that tells if your company is a likely candidate:

1) Your current profit-sharing plan is subject to the top-heavy rules. You are forced to make a minimum three percent contribution for all eligible employees.

2) You currently have a thrift plan. Your employees are making nondeductible contributions to your present plan.

3) The cost of a traditional plan is too high. You must include too many non-key employees.

4) Your profit margins are low. Since you can't afford to make contributions, you never installed a qualified plan.

Section 401(k) plans are one of the most exciting employee fringe benefits to come along since the birth of pension and profit-sharing plans. Want to learn all you need to know about qualified employee retirement plans? Read these special reports: "Section 401(k)—Everybody Wins, Employer and Employee"; "Still the Best Fringe Benefit—Profit-Sharing and Pension Plans"; and "How to Cash Out Tax Free, Yet Keep Your Business." □

Golf tax bogie

There are sand traps and there are tax traps. This sad tale involves both. Here's the story. A company—let's call it Go Go Inc.—promoted a three-day golf outing at a resort. The agenda was vacation-like: dinner and open bar the first night; golf activities with dinner, followed by awards the second day; and departure after breakfast on the last day. The festivities were enjoyed by 49 employees of Go Go and 108 representatives of customers.

Can Go Go deduct the expenses of the outing—food, lodging, golf fees, prizes, and transportation? No, says the IRS (Letter Ruling 8315006). Shocked? Don't be. The IRS is right. The law clearly does not allow a deduction if the entertainment occurred under circumstances where there was little or no possibility of engaging in the active conduct of business.

Sure, the activity was business-related and of a general economic benefit to Go Go. Even the IRS conceded that. But the fact remains that such activities are primarily non-deductible goodwill.

Could the deduction have been saved? Yes. If the agenda had included bona fide and substantial business discussions before or after the fun time activities, the golf outing expenses would have been 100 percent deductible.

Irving Blackman, a CPA specializing in closely-held businesses, will consult with readers of this column. His tax hotline is (312) 207-1040. □

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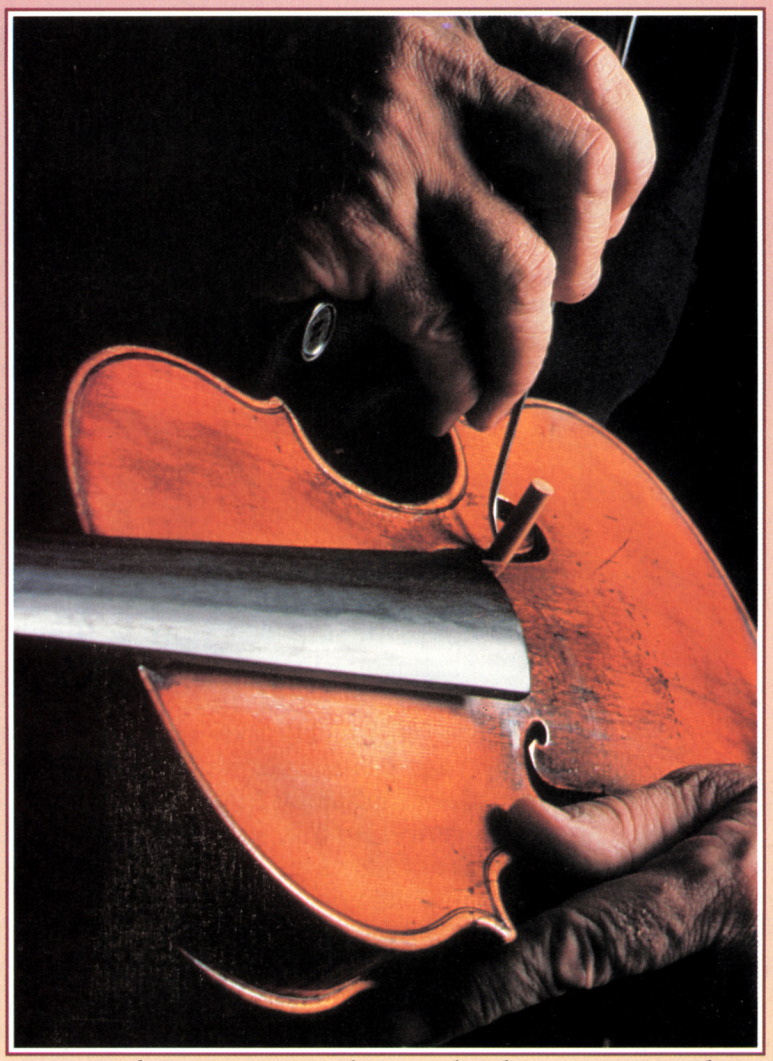

Master craftsman Antonio Stradivari produced just over 1,000 violins in his Cremona, Italy workshop before his death in 1737. Today the Stradivarius is still considered the pinnacle of perfection.

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If you're content to fiddle around, any violin will do. But if you appreciate the value of a true classic, there's no substitute for the legendary Stradivarius.

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Buried in the IRS Code is a provision with great potential and a very unlikely name. Salary Reduction Plans let you and your employees pay for fringe benefits with before-tax dollars, lowering federal income tax liability and, in many cases, state and local income taxes as well.

Anything involving the IRS is a minefield of Is and Ts and red tape. Let's see if we can get to the other side. Here's how a basic Salary Reduction Plan works.

Suppose you pay the health insurance premium for your employees, but not their dependents. Through payroll deductions, employees electing dependent coverage pay $50 per month. With a Salary Reduction Plan, the dependent premium is subtracted from gross earnings to determine taxable income. An employee earning $18,000 annually pays taxes on $17,400 and, at a 15 percent tax rate, saves $90 in federal income tax, plus possible state and local income tax savings. Now $600 insurance premiums cost $510 or less.

There are hoops to jump through to implement the plan, i.e., filing forms with the IRS. After that, your present payroll procedures remain basically intact, but Box 10 on the employees' W2s (wages, tips, and other compensation) show the reduced gross pay.

Important: There are Social Security (FICA) and Medicare tax savings to the employee and the employer under some Salary Reduction Plans, but not others. See your accountant or benefits advisor for details.

Though you won't see a substantial dollar savings from this program, it's an almost no-cost benefit you can provide employees (and yourself). Afraid of being tarred and feathered at an employee meeting announcing a Salary Reduction Plan? Call it something else. Salary Conversion Plan sounds better, or use another IRS term, Cafeteria Plan.

You can stop reading the magazine and tell the bookkeeper to make these changes. Or you can wait and consider the best time to implement the plan. We all face inevitable annual increases in medical premiums. If employees pay part of the cost, you might time the Cafeteria Plan to begin with the next premium increase, softening the blow.

However, with health care reform looming large on the horizon, you may want to begin now, while tax savings are definitely available. Whatever you do, before implementing any of the suggestions in this article, talk to

Survey of Small and Mid-Size Company Fringe Benefits

Paid Vacation	75%	Unpaid Parental Leave *	17%
Health/Medical Insurance	61%	Profit Sharing	16%
Paid Sick Leave	44%	Tuition Reimbursement	15%
Bonus	43%	Paid Parental Leave *	5%
Flexible Hours	34%	Other	4%
Dental Insurance	22%	Stock Ownership Plan	4%
Retirement Plan	21%	Child Care Reimbursement	2%
Employee Leave	18%	None of the above	13%

* Surveyed before the Family Leave Act was signed.

Source: National Small Business United/Arthur Andersen Enterprise Group Survey, June, 1993. Used with permission.

For more information or copies of the full report, contact Laurence Hayward of Arthur Andersen Enterprise Group, (312) 507-1295, or Marcia Bradford of NSBU, (202) 293-8830.

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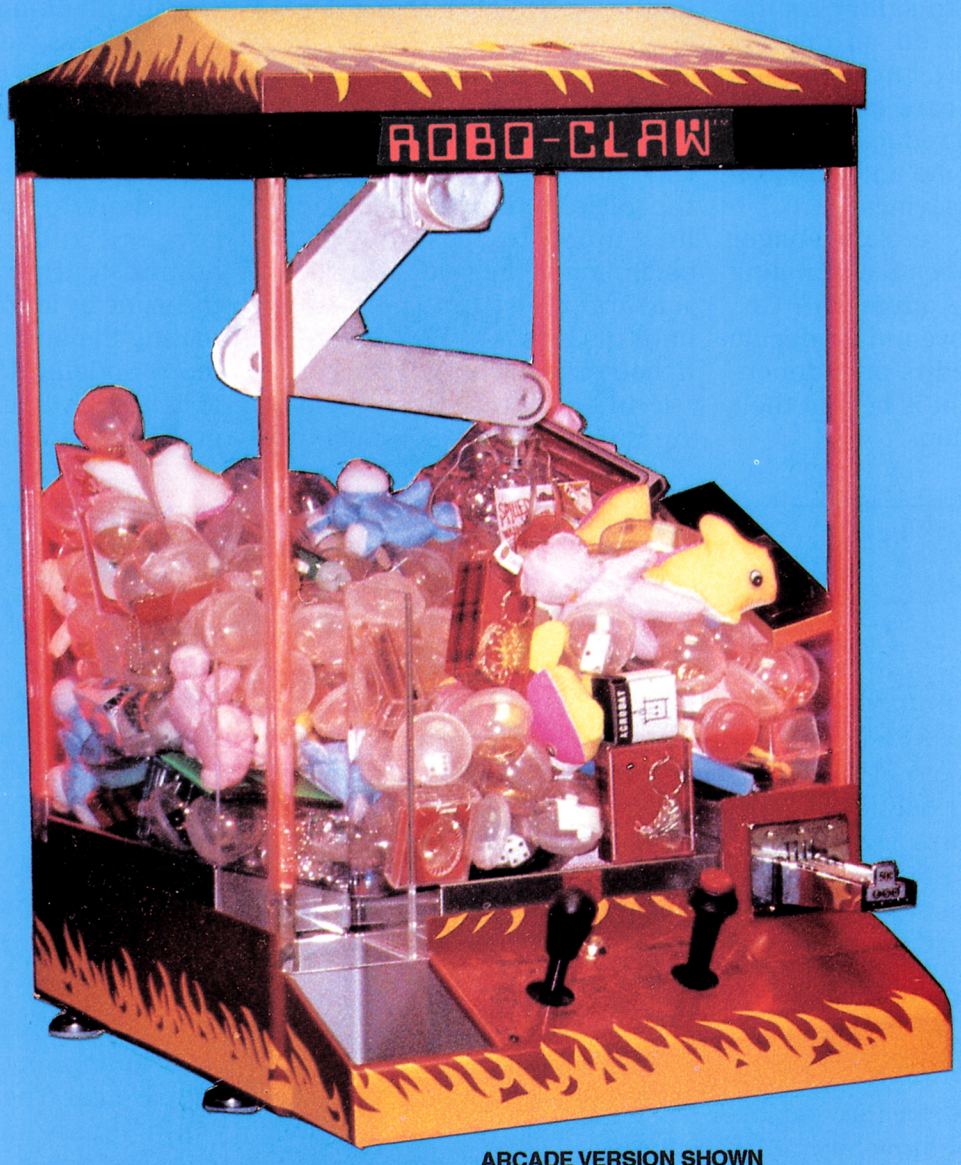

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your accountant or employee benefits specialist.

Other benefits eligible for salary reduction

Besides insurance premiums, Cafeteria Plans apply to other benefits, but time and administrative costs increase. Under current tax rules, a portion of dependent care costs (child, elderly, disabled), subject to salary limitations, are allowed as credits against federal income tax. Covering these care costs under a Cafeteria Plan reduces employees' taxable income and may provide greater tax savings.

David Sharkey, a tax manager with the international accounting firm of Arthur Andersen & Co., says each employee must decide whether tax credits or a dependent care account is best in their individual situation.

Employees who opt to cover dependent care cost in a Cafeteria Plan determine their monthly care expenses; you subtract that amount from their gross pay just like the insurance premiums above. The funds are withheld from employees' wages and individual accounts track employee contributions. Periodically, employees present care cost receipts; reimburse them with tax-free money they have set aside.

If you begin a care cost plan, be sure your employees understand the pitfalls. Employees decide how much to set aside at the beginning of the year. You deduct that amount from their salary until the next election date, even if their circumstances change.

If an employee doesn't use all the money in his account, they lose the funds. You can offset employee losses by distributing total unused funds in the plan to all participating employees or rolling over unused funds into the employee's account for next year.

You can't return an individual employee's excess contributions. The problem of excess funds can be minimized by the employee's careful planning. Care costs are generally easy to predict.

Another Cafeteria Plan option covers reimbursed medical expenses: deductibles, co-payments, and non-covered items (i.e., dental expenses, cosmetic surgery, and eyeglasses). The administrative procedures are the same as for care cost, but estimating the amount to set aside is more difficult. Unused funds are forfeited. Still, if the kids need a great smile, or their noses trim-

IRS Key Employee Rules

If your plan provides nontaxable benefits to key employees (defined below) that are more than 25 percent of the total of the nontaxable benefits provided for all employees under the plan, key employees must include in income the value of the benefits that could have been elected. (Special rules apply to key employees concerning group life insurance.)

A key employee is any employee or former employee who, during the year, or any of the four preceding years, was:

1. An officer or the employer having for any year listed below, annual compensation of more than:

   a) 1989—$49,032
   b) 1990—$51,291
   c) 1991—$54,482
   d) 1992—$56,111
   e) 1993—$57,820

2. One of 10 employees having annual compensation of more than $30,000 and owning (or considered to own under related-party rules) the largest interests in the employer.

3. A five percent owner of the employer.

4. Or a one percent owner of the employer with annual compensation of more than $150,000.

A related party includes members of the employee's family (including spouse, children, grandchildren, and parents). These rules also apply to certain individuals, corporations, partnerships, estates, and trusts. Related parties are treated as if each owned both his or her own interest and also the other party's interest.

Source: IRS Publication 535, "Business Expenses."

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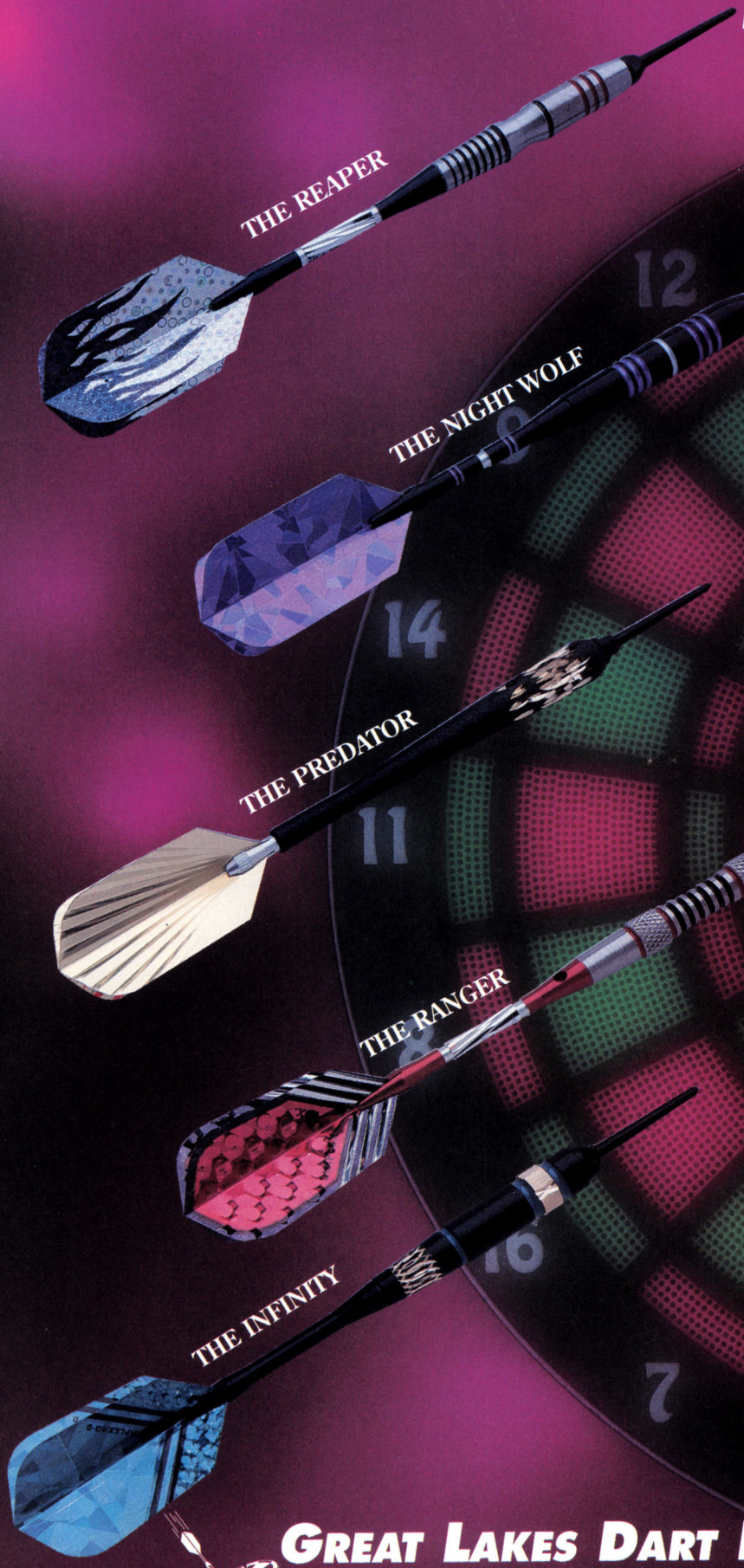

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med, tax-free money can be set aside for those needs. Again, the sting of forfeiture can be eased by redistributions and rollovers.

Important: Employees can submit claims for more than they've deposited in their medical expense account. If Jane begins depositing $100 per month in January and submits a $1,000 claim in February, you must honor it.

Where does the extra money come from? If the pool of funds from all employees is large enough, you rob Peter to pay Jane. But in the end, Jane's claim must be honored as long as she has scheduled deposits for that year sufficient to cover it. This means you may be out-of-pocket funding employee medical expenses.

What if Jane leaves the company before depositing enough to cover the money paid to her? The answer isn't pretty. You suffer the loss. Because of the potential liability, you may only want to implement a medical expense plan if your business has low employee turnover and screens its employees well.

Other plans can also be funded with before-tax dollars. Sharkey explains that while 401(k) plans and SEP plans are not Cafeteria Plans, they operate in much the same way.

There are two common types of 401(k) plans: profit-sharing and savings. Under the 401(k) profit-sharing plan, you *must* make contributions to the plan on behalf of your employees. Typically, companies match part of their employees' tax-deferred contribution up to a predetermined percentage of salary. For example, you might match employees' contributions 50 cents on the dollar up to six percent of their salary; employees may contribute up to 10 percent of their salary.

For a small business a 401(k) profit-sharing plan may not make sense, unless it substitutes for all or part of a general salary increase. Even then, administration (accounting, investment decisions, vesting provisions) can be difficult to do yourself, or expensive contracted out. You might consider a 401(k) savings plan or a SEP plan instead.

Employees make tax-deferred contributions to a 401(k) savings plan with no employer match. Limiting investment options cuts down administration and expense. A SEP plan is even less of an administrative burden.

A SEP plan is a self-directed Individual Retirement Account funded by regular payroll deductions. Employers may *choose* to match all or part of employees' contributions to a SEP. Employees determine how much to deduct from their pay (subject to IRS rules). You send their money (along with your contribution, if any) to the bank, investment firm, etc., that the employee designates.

After that, the employee decides what to do with the money. The process for your business is no more complicated than payroll deductions, U.S. Savings Bonds, or the United Way.

"Small and medium-size companies compete with each other and with large companies for employees," says Sharkey. "Cafeteria Plans, 401(k)s and SEPs give a small company a low-cost way to attract and keep competent people."

Is it worth implementing any of these plans to attract qualified employees or to improve morale or relations with current employees? The accompanying table showing typical fringe benefits provided by small businesses may help you decide.

We've discussed various tax-reducing/deferring plans in their increasing order of difficulty and administrative expense. By now you've realized they're called Cafeteria Plans because employees choose which benefits they want. An employee with no dependents and good health might opt out of a medical reimbursement plan and choose the 401(k) savings plan; another might choose exactly opposite; and a third may choose both.

While Cafeteria Plans can have dizzying complexity, administra-

IRS Nondiscrimination Rules For Highly Compensated Employees

If, in any plan year, your Cafeteria Plans discriminate in favor of highly compensated individuals as to eligibility to participate in the plan, or as to plan contributions or benefits, highly compensated participants are taxed on the amount of the taxable benefits that could have been elected. An individual or participant is highly compensated if he or she is:

1. An officer.
2. A shareholder owning more than five percent of the voting power or value of all classes of the employer's stock.
3. Highly paid.
4. A spouse or dependent of a person described in 1, 2, or 3.

Note: If your plan is maintained under a collective bargaining agreement it is not treated as discriminatory.

Source: IRS Publication 535, "Business Expenses."

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tion is made easier by a personal computer. Forrest Smith, vice president of Software Services Inc. in New Orleans, recommends the accounting program RealWorld to handle deductions and employee accounts (Real World Corp., Concord, N.H., 800-678-6336).

A word of caution

Cafeteria Plans provide nice benefits for the owners of a small business, but may be too expensive or time consuming for all employees. Here the IRS nondiscrimination and key employee rules kick in.

If a Cafeteria Plan favors certain employees (including owners) in eligibility, contributions, or benefits, those employees are taxed on the benefits. The accompanying tables give the simplified IRS nondiscrimination rules and key employee definitions.

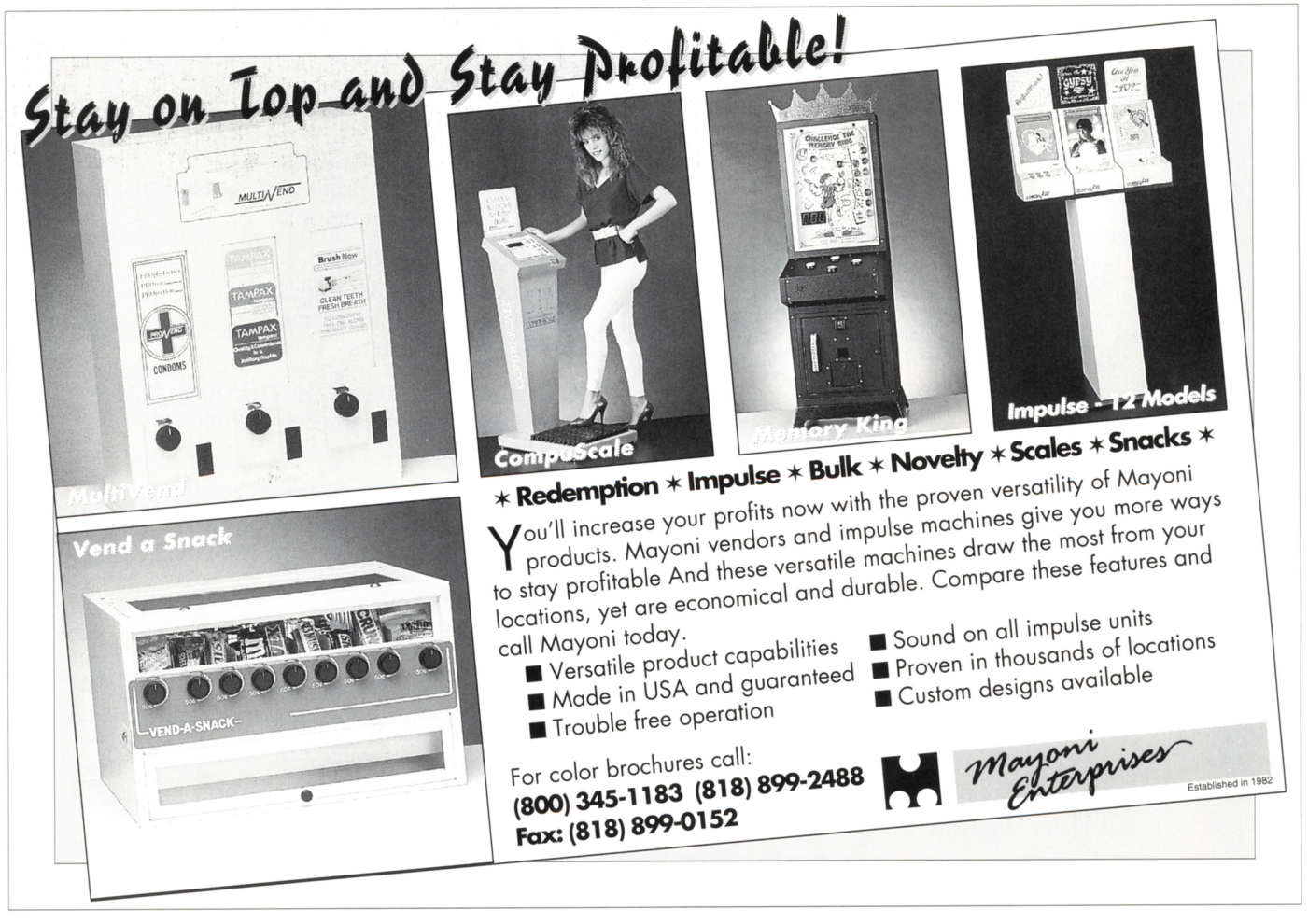
For more detailed, free information about these plans, call the IRS at 800-829-3676 and request Publication 515, Business Expenses, and Publication 525, Taxable and Non-taxable Income.

"You might time the new plan to begin with the next medical premium increase, softening the blow."

Cafeteria Plans should be tailored to the specific needs of your business. Difficulties can be overcome and pitfalls avoided with planning and the advice of a competent employee benefits specialist. Expert advice is especially needed in light of the new tax law, which affected the maximum salary used to calculate contributions to 401(k) and SEP plans.

Changes in IRS regulations as a result of the new tax law, and court interpretations, could cause further revisions. But working your way through the minefield will help you attract and keep good employees. □

Channing F. Hayden Jr. is a senior instructor at Tulane University College in New Orleans, where he currently teaches "Principles of Management" and sits on the college's Business Study Committee. A businessman of 27 years, he is also a management consultant whose articles have appeared in several major business publications.



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EMT: a force to watch

"We were witness to a madman bent on destroying everything in the place," said John Margold, head of EMT Kiddie Rides, a newly formed division of NSM-America.

"No testing lab would ever consider doing what this guy did to these things," remarked Tony Lantz, EMT's new American service manager.

"OK, it was a little crazy—a lot crazy, really—but the guy made his point," stated sales manager George Haydocy.

These were just a few of the comments made by observers of a recent durability demonstration given by Ulli Kunnecke, the president of the German-based parent company.

Dubbed "Mr. Destructo" by those witnessing the demonstration, Kunnecke was showing Margold, Lantz, Haydocy, and the rest of management the differences between EMT's kiddie rides and competitive rides. The new American company, a sister company to NSM-America that's housed in its Illinois-based facility, was formed to distribute German-made EMT rides in the American marketplace.

The "totally unscientific" demonstration took place at the loading docks in EMT's portion of the NSM-America office/warehouse facility. Kunnecke had flown in from Germany just for the demonstration and, in preparation for his visit, had asked to have, in addition to an EMT ride, three competitive rides—"any three models from any three manufacturers"—on hand for the demonstration.

The demonstration started with Kunnecke disabling overload protectors and climbing on each of the four rides. He then invited two others to join him—yes, the full weight of all three men on one ride at the same time. Two of the four rides lasted less than five minutes before their motors started to overheat. A frame member supporting the fiberglass shell on one of the competitive models failed altogether. EMT's *Mercedes Benz*, on the other hand, passed nicely.

"That's because our motors are nearly half-horse, 110/220 volt, 4.5 AMP, asynchronous, heavy-duty motors," Kunnecke pointed out.

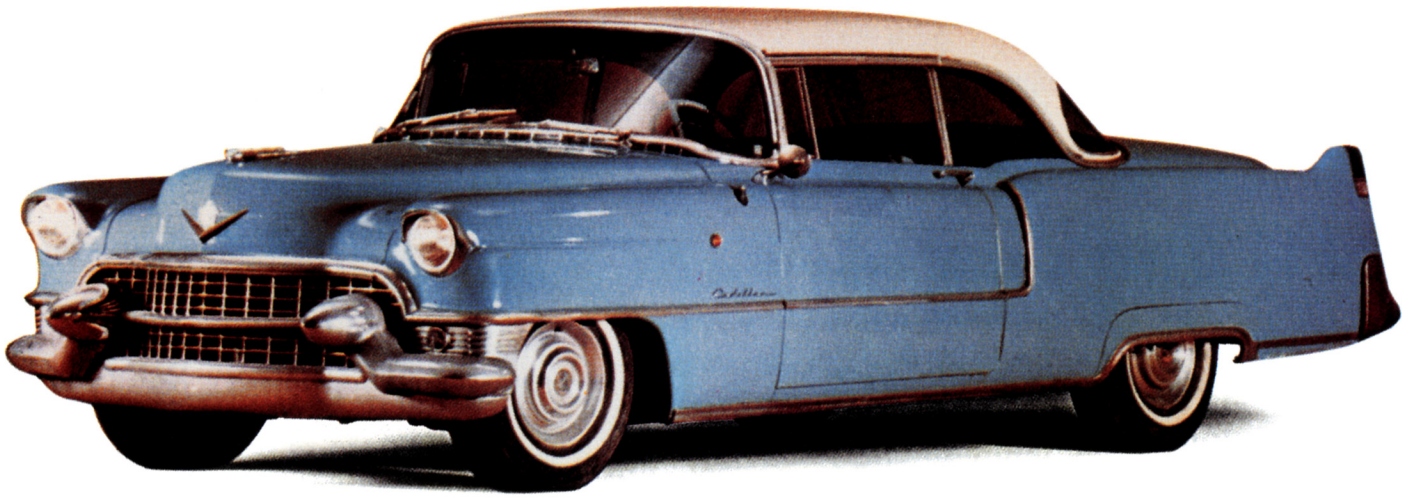
Then, without any warning, according to Margold, "Ulli started kicking the fiberglass shells with all the force he could muster—like a madman."

That was Kunnecke's fiberglass strength test. Again, two of the four didn't make it without severe cracking, and one had a hole in its fender about the size of a size 11 shoe. You guessed it, the EMT *Mercedes* only bore some healthy scuff marks from the "madman" episode.

But Kunnecke wasn't through. He pulled a can of rubbing compound out of his briefcase and rubbed out those scuff marks, leaving only a few scratches that could only be seen if you stood at the correct angle. "EMT's gel coat—the outer layer of fiberglass resin that is color impregnated—is exceptionally thick. If it gets scuffed, you just rub it out," Mr. Destructo explained.

Are you convinced yet? If not, there's even more; this time it's the moving test. EMT's rides are built with wheeled castors on one end, stationary feet on the other, and come with a wheeled leverage handle that slips under and raises the stationary end. You just "lever up" and walk away with the ride in tow. Kunnecke towed his *Mercedes* over to the edge of the loading dock, then

If Detroit's cars lasted as long as ours,



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And, oh yes, one of those full-size car companies commissioned EMT to build a likeness of their product, too.

Mercedes Benz.

wrestled the others over one by one, making certain his observers amply appreciated all of the "grunt and groan" effort he had to go through to move the competitive rides. His ending remark was: "Enough said about mobility, gentlemen?"

With that the madman resurfaced. Kunnecke flung open the dock door and pushed his *Mercedes* off, followed by the three competitive models. According to vice president of finance Jurgen Jost, "It took us by surprise; Ulli certainly achieved the desired effect. We knew that EMT rides were very well built. We'd seen all the words and heard all the descriptions, but something like this—well, it was very impressive."

"The demonstration started with Kunnecke disabling overload protectors and climbing on each of the four rides."

Lantz then manned the forklift and was heading out to hoist the "remains" back on the dock, when Kunnecke thought of something even more bizarre. He grabbed the water hose and preceded to wet all of the games thoroughly. The water-logged rides were put back on the dock; two were all but destroyed, the third made strange sounds when it was plugged in. The *Mercedes*? Intact, but showing a few healthy bruises along with a cracked windshield. With a note of confidence, Kunnecke asked two others to again join him for a ride.

From left: EMT president Ulli Kunnecke, NSM-America president Peter Kuhn, FunTecnic president Linley Hughes (exclusive EMT representative), and John Margold, head of EMT Kiddie Rides, a division of NSM-America.

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If you guessed that it ran perfectly, you were right. Kunnecke had more than made his point. And we suppose, three grown men riding up and down on a wet kiddie ride in the back of a warehouse probably makes some kind of point about management, too. Where's a camera when you need it!

A number of other more "humane" tests were run, like cutting paper along rough fiberglass edges where little fingers might reach and forcing open cash boxes that big fingers try to reach.

The rides are obviously durable, but they aren't cheap. Margold said they cost about a third more than ordinary rides. "Operators looking for an up-front bargain won't find it at EMT. On the other hand," according to Margold, "operators who are looking at long-term earnings will find that EMT rides are a real bargain."

He added, "Our rides are built to last indefinitely. Naturally, it costs us more to build these rides to last. In fact, our costs are probably half-again as much as the next guy, yet our pricing is only an average of a third more."

Kunnecke stressed that making rides that last and are as close to service-free as possible is only the first task of a kiddie ride manufacturer. But there's another key to their earnings success. Kunnecke explained, "Our rides earn more every day because we do what major toy manufacturers do—professionally design them with all the enticers that attract and interest kids."

He continued, "Toy manufacturers spend a great deal on researching and testing their products before ever putting them on the market; EMT does the same thing. Toy designers have learned how to use sounds, animation, movement, color, and

object-design in ways that capture young imaginations; EMT has honed their skills accordingly.

Margold added, "Look at the dashboard on our *Mercedes*, for example. It's filled with 36 colored, sequencing lights. Push the gas pedal and you'll hear 'Vrrrooom.' Push a button and a Mercedes-sounding horn will honk. There's a reason for all of it."

Margold and Kunnecke emphasized that to entice a child to want to ride once is not what's hard. The trick is to design a ride that stays interesting, that keeps kids coming back. They pointed out that for every 10 rides they design and test, maybe two actually ever see the marketplace.

Margold added, "Kiddie rides should look enticing to parents, too. As enticing as the toys they buy for their kids. It's a real trick to accomplish.".

The days of kiddie rides designed on "whim and fancy" are coming to a close. Safety is another challenge when designing kiddie rides. "Overcoming the inherent conflict in designing a ride that represents a thrill to a 10-year-old, yet is safe to even a 3-year-old, is not an easy task," Kunnecke said.

But EMT has evidently accomplished it. EMT rides have passed German TUV laboratory tests and the goal is for all rides to bear the ETL Certification Seal in the near future.

Why did EMT wait until its third decade of operation to enter the American market? "It took us that long to learn the business and to get to a level of production that we could handle more than our European market," Kunnecke explained. "Up until recently, EMT has been selling everything it could manufacture right in our own European backyard."

What can U.S. operators and fun center owners expect to see from EMT next? We doubt that you'll see any more "not-a-shred-of-scientific-value" Mr. Destructo test demonstrations. And you probably won't see German-based Kunnecke in the forefront of the American EMT effort anymore. Margold, Haydocy, Jost, and Lantz will be representing EMT products here.

But you will see a host of new ads in coin-op publications that give prospective EMT operators details on the rides. You'll also see EMT at all the shows, including ACME in March. □

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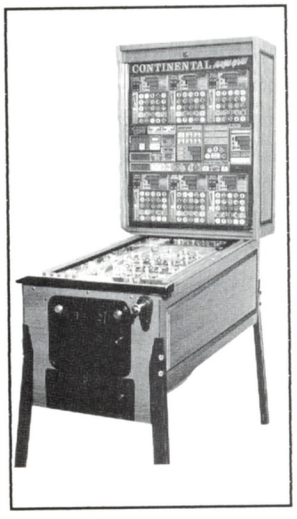

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This is a nice fun business. It feels so good, how can I go broke? Famous last words. A well-equipped family entertainment center in an area without the traffic to support it is doomed.

Don't let this happen to you, cautions Marshall Gardner, president of Designs International in Dallas. Gardner offered sage advice during a seminar at the third Fun Expo last fall. His suggestions bear repeating.

Gardner believes in "doing your homework up front. Better to lose a little money at the start rather than more later." The money in question pertains to "soft costs" of $5,000-$50,000 for such items as feasibility studies and research.

"The goal is to know your area, the marketplace, and who your real customers will be."

Gardner recommends visiting older and newer parks and family entertainment centers and observing what works and what doesn't. Gather all the print material you can get your hands on, from trade magazines and trade associations to your local library.

Know what you're trying to accomplish. To determine what you can and will spend on a family entertainment center, turn to a feasibility or demographic firm. The goal is to know your area, the marketplace, and who your real customers will be. Don't be shy; ask for a list of the firm's clients and talk to them. According to Gardner, "Ninety-five percent of those who hire architectural or feasibility firms never meet any of the company's clients face to face."

He strongly advises, "Never let an architectural or feasibility firm buy equipment for you unless you have a fixed fee in writing. Don't be gullible. Be aware that side fees of from three to five percent may influence the decisions."

When it comes down to game and ride selections, Gardner suggests discussing maintenance with the manufacturers. Ask about product liability. Be sure it's not just your insurance company that's out on the line. Discuss trucking and moving costs.

His top amusement ride choices include family rides that accommodate both children and adults (a trend that began in '93), a child's airplane ride, bumper cars (available in three sizes), a soft play area (an element, not an entire facility), a mini-coaster for kids only, a train, a kid's model ferris wheel, an umbrella ride for smaller children, a wet boat ride, and lastly, a carousel.

Says Gardner, "Parents and grandparents love carousels but they take up a lot of space. If a carousel is to be in the amusement mix, buy an overhead-driven model. Remember, a ride the size of a carousel brings people into a location but does not earn like bumper cars and other rides."

The bottom line: plan carefully; there are no shortcuts. Gardner added, "We would like to see you succeed so you buy more equipment and stay in this business." □

Designs International manufactures midway rides and redemption games and works with large and mid-sized parks, arcades, and carnivals.

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James welcomes hundreds in Miami, Puerto Rico

From left (foreground): James Industries' Aldo Andreu, Orlando Morales, William Rosa, and John Blouin (James Industries president); Paul Jacobs of Data East USA; and James Industries' Patricia Andreu and Jim Roberts.

Aldo Andreu and Jim Roberts flank SNK's Tom Keil and Marty Kitazawa.

James Industries officially celebrated the grand opening of its new offices—known as James Industries South—in Miami and Puerto Rico on Dec. 7 and 9, respectively. Attendees—over 350 in Puerto Rico alone—joined a host of manufacturer representatives for a tour of the facilities and a look at the latest coin-op equipment.

"The Puerto Rican market is one that's evolving," said chairman Jim Roberts. "It was primarily a video poker market with very few amusement games. There were something like 40,000 poker machines on the island, and practically overnight they were outlawed. That put severe monetary restraints on a lot of people, because all of a sudden their machines were no good. Now what we're doing is trying to show people that hey, there's life after poker machines. We're getting them interested in amusement machines primarily for bars, such as pool tables and darts.

"In Miami, our emphasis is on the Latin community in south Florida. We'll also serve our Central and South American customers, a lot of whom come to Miami. What we've done is make it convenient for them to visit us, since we're right near the airport. Puerto Rico is our focus; the Miami office is essentially to better serve our customer base."

The following companies are currently represented by James Industries in Puerto Rico: Alvin G. & Co., American Laser Games, Atari, Bromley, Coastal Amusements, Coin Controls, Data East, Dynamo, Grayhound, Irem, Jaleco, JCM, Konami, Lazer-Tron,

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James Griffiths of Valley Recreation Products with Brenda Quintana and Jim Roberts.

Lenny Dean (l) and Sal Mirando of Coastal Amusements.

Jim Roberts (l) with H.L Coats and Lou Randolph of Dynamo.

Clara Fernandez and Richard Thunberg of Falgas U.S.A.

Glenn Streeter of Antique Apparatus/Rock-Ola with Jim Roberts.

Steve Kinder (second from right) of JCM with John Blouin, Aldo Andreu, and Jim Roberts.

From left: James Industries' Brenda Quintana, father Serafin Quintana, Don Brenner of Revenco Corp., and James Industries' Orlando Morales.

Thad Johnson (r) of Polyvend with Valiente Almeida of Vajoansus Vending Machines.

Namco, Polyvend, Rowe, Sega, Smart, SNK, Taito, Valley, Wells-Gardner, and Wico. In Florida those companies are Alvin G. & Co., American Laser Games, Amutronics, Arachnid darts, Coastal Amusements, Grayhound, Irem, Jaleco, JCM, Lazer-Tron, Polyvend, Rock-Ola, SRL, Wells-Gardner, and Wico.

Aldo Andreu is president of both the Puerto Rico and Miami divisions. Other personnel includes: **Puerto Rico**: Debbie Rios, office manager; Brenda Quintana, administrative assistant; and Wilmer Rosa and Orlando Morales, sales representatives; **Miami**: Patricia Andreu, operations manager; Lina Escandon, export specialist; Paul Acree, technician and sales representative; and Gabriel Alba, sales representative.

The Puerto Rico office is located at Marginal Los Angeles, J7-B, Carolina, Puerto Rico 00979. The phone numbers are (809) 253-7149 and (809) 253-7169; the FAX is (809) 253-7189. The Miami address is 1673 N.W. 79th Ave., Miami, FL 33126-1106. The phone and FAX numbers are (305) 715-9440 and (305) 715-9449.

James Industries is headquartered in Inverness, Ill., and has an additional office in Mexico City. It represents these companies in Mexico: Amutronics, Atari, Coin Controls, Data East, Dynamo (pool tables, shuffleboard, and air hockey), Irem, Kaneko, Konami, Lazer-Tron, NSM-America, Premier Technology, Sega, Smart, Wells-Gardner, and Wico. □

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Merchandise machines

Over the last several years, I have heard of many locations nationally removing, due to declining income, what have been and are the highest grossing amusement games on our route—cranes and rotaries.

This phenomenon has totally amazed me because with a small but consistent amount of marketing effort, these machines can and will produce the greatest amount of net revenue per square foot than any other profit center within the location.

Our typical truck stop or bowling center crane today grosses $800-$1,000 per week, while our typical four-player rotary merchandiser consistently earns about half that amount. I know of some locations where these same types of machines are continually averaging double these figures. After deducting an approximate average of 40 percent in merchandise costs, the $800 crane is netting $480 per week, while the $400 rotary is netting $240. Not bad for a piece of equipment that has been in the same location for several years!

Like everything else, cranes and rotaries do require some work to keep them producing week in and week out in order to keep players interested. Below are some tips to give these machines an injection of pep and an increase in revenue.

1) Visibility—Highly visible machines are, without a doubt, the best earners. If you want them to be played, don't hide them. I strongly suggest placement near the location's primary entrance, thus being exposed to the greatest flow of customer traffic.

2) Location/location/location—The type of person who plays these machines is typically not the video or pinball game player. Merchandise games are usually played by seniors, adults, women, and young children. By placing one of these machines in the location's game room (if it has a separate area for arcade games) you may alienate your players, and they will not venture in to play. If at all possible, keep these machines away from your other games, and as previously stated, as highly visible as possible.

3) Winners make players—Are your players winning enough to make them want to come back for more? Would you continue to put 75 cents into a soda machine if it did not dispense any product? When cranes first surfaced several years ago, players would have played for a 10 percent payback. However, in today's saturated merchandise machine market, I find that a 40 to 50 percent win percentage keeps even the most sophisticated players returning. Furthermore, as legal authorities nationwide question the classification of these games as games of skill or as gambling devices, a higher win percentage will do nothing but strengthen the argument that they are indeed games of skill.

4) Merchandising—In most locations, the same players play these machines week after week. The following factors pertaining to merchandising are essential in order to insure success:

a: Display—Machines should be clean. Internal lights need to be working to give the best visibility of prizes. Prizes should not be arranged so that the player has

Paul T. Virgadamo

no chance to win and should be displayed in an attractive manner.

b: Quality—Merchandise should be of an assorted quality and price range, but in all cases, merchandise should be perceived to be of real value so that players feel they are getting something for the dollars they have spent. In recent times, we have had the greatest success using watches and jumbo plush in our cranes. In addition to the perception of increased value it gives to players, it has enabled us to increase the price per play by as much as 100 percent. However, it is important to note that although the price per play has been doubled, the payout percentage still remains at 40-50 percent.

"Are your players winning enough to make them want to come back for more?"

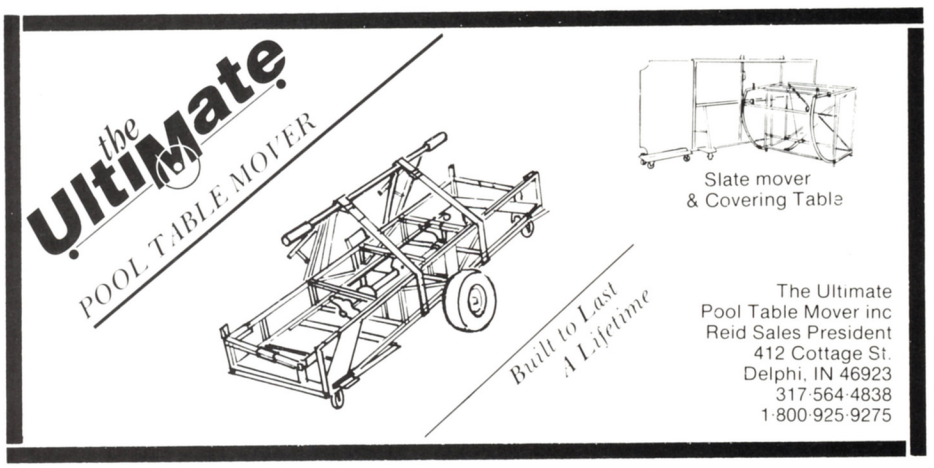
c: Rotation—Merchandise should be changed frequently so that players do not tire of the same prizes. This rotation will help sustain income levels.

5) Model type—We have experimented with many different types of cranes and rotaries. It is my opinion that while there may be many satisfactory units by different manufacturers available, the Cadillac of crane machines is the *Classic Jumbo* crane by Smart Industries. Likewise, the best rotary merchandiser is the four-player *LAX* rotary by Noel Industries. While it is not my normal practice to endorse specific products, these two machines are far superior to others I've tried.

Also, most of our merchandise games, especially cranes, are equipped with dollar bill acceptor options which give credits but no change. I have found this option will increase revenues by 20 to 30 percent.

Try some of these suggestions and watch your revenues soar! □

Paul Virgadamo, a 13-year veteran in the coin-op business, is president and CEO of Southeast Amusement & Vending Corp. in Tampa, Fla. His company recently began offering complete arcade/redemption center design and consultation services worldwide.



REDEMPTION REPORT

The redemption myth

Combatious, the God of Arcade, looked down on his people and gave to them a gift. He called it Crane. He said you must work hard, make it always look nice, and you shall prosper.

His people took the crane with great glee. Soon cranes were prospering in every location. The people were happy. However, within a year some operators began to cut corners in an effort to save money. They also ignored cleaning out the lint. Once they failed to appease the gods, they were struck down. Their cranes were no longer making a profit and soon had to be sold.

Combatious beheld the tragedy and since he loved them, he gave them another gift to help heal the wounds. He gave them Redemption. The concept caught on and soon many operators were asking, "What can redemption do for me?" But it was the wrong question to be asking. The people should have been asking, "What can I do to make redemption work for me?"

These operators need to see that redemption is *labor intensive*. Redemption is *hard work*. But it also can be rewarding and can boost your location's profits if you are willing *to put in the effort*.

These laws are universal, and only with these laws can the gods be appeased and redemption made to prosper. If you are a true believer and a hard worker, redemption will work for you. Listen well to those who have given of themselves to please the God of Arcade.

Depending on the size of your location it can take up to $350,000 to start up. Once you have your games and merchandise, the cost of maintenance will go way down. At least $5,000 of the initial start-up cost should go into your redemption counter. Your shelves should be overflowing with bright, attractive prizes and always be clean. You need to make sure your games always have plenty of tickets in them and that your prizes are not outlandishly priced.

Your employees must be kind and friendly and, most of all, make sure your redemption area looks like a retail store and not a salvage store. Your prizes and the allure of your store sell the games, not the war-torn, swap-meet motif of yesteryear. The rigors of redemption cannot be taken lightly. If you are willing to put in the work, redemption can be added to most locations and be very rewarding. From bowling centers to family entertainment locations, let redemption ring.

Two examples of operators adding redemption to perk up their locations are Stephen Shyrack of Colorado Game Exchange and Jim Holt of Bowling & Billiards in Texas. Colorado Game Exchange operates over 30 bowling centers; 15 of those are Brunswick Bowling Centers. There are locations in Colorado, Arizona, Iowa, Nebraska, and Utah. Four of the locations have redemption. There are approximately nine redemption pieces per location, 10 video, an air hockey, a pool table, a CD jukebox, and two cranes. They added redemption six weeks ago to one of the bowling centers and their base income rose 23 percent, with the gross revenue doubling or even tripling in the third week.

Stephen says that although

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these figures are impressive, "redemption is not something everybody needs." He explains that you have to be sure of your location. Redemption will do best in high-traffic centers where a lot of children are present. Redemption doesn't necessarily draw more customers in, but more parents will bring their kids into a location and stay longer. Steve emphasizes the need for strong management that understands that redemption is labor intensive. A saying at Colorado Game Exchange is: "Everyone likes to look for an easier way to make more money; redemption is just the opposite."

Jim Holt also operates in existing bowling centers. He runs approximately 130 locations. Of the 15 with redemption, he says 14 are successful. The locations average 16-20 pieces of redemption along with video, pool, air hockey, jukeboxes, and cranes. Jim states that, in general, the gross revenue has doubled and the baseline is up 20 percent.

"However, within a year some operators began to cut corners in an effort to save money."

Secondary expenditures like food concessions also are up in these centers. Jim warns that revenues will drop after three months, but only slightly if you have strong management. He advises that redemption is viewed as a retail business. The prizes and management drive the business, not necessarily the games. Redemption can be a big boost to a location if the people want to be there.

Redemption has been added to bars, family entertainment centers, and bowling centers. On the average, game rooms will increase 20-25 percent with the gross revenue up 100-150 percent. Translated into English—redemption can be very profitable. The general advice from successful operators is this: you have to commit a lot of time. If you're not prepared to invest the time and treat redemption like a pampered child, it won't work for you.

So what's the moral to this myth? Don't eat Mexican food and stand near an open flame. □

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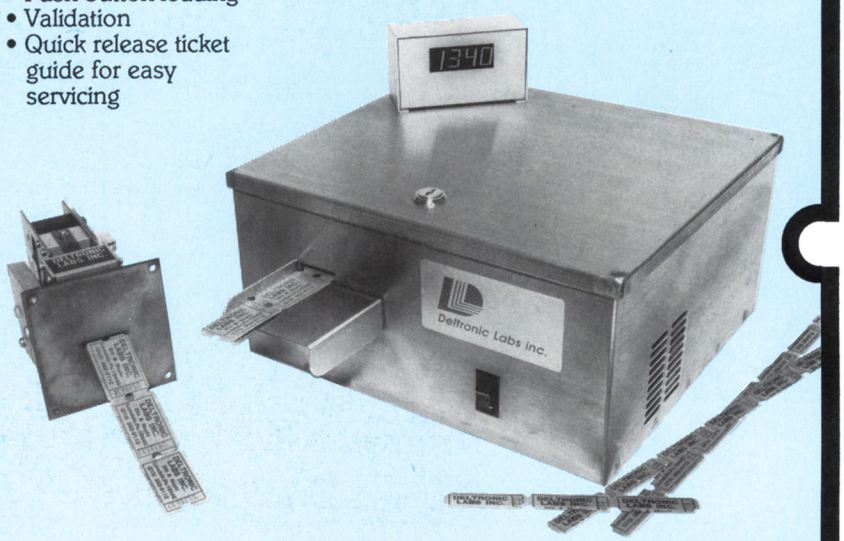

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Merit kicks off 7th World Series of Darts

From left: Tony Snipas of Blue Star; Mike Kutz, Donna Niedosik, and Lou Yeager (first place in Mixed Triples); and Bob Wiles of Merit.

Tony Snipas of Blue Star (l) joins Open Doubles winners Jerry Umberger and Jim Watkins and Bob Wiles (r) of Merit.

Rick Bianchi (c) of Merit congratulates Tank Melson (l) and Thom Johnson (r) on winning first place in Cricket Doubles.

Debbie Shutt and Carol Wilke, first place winners in Women's Doubles, plant a kiss on Bob Wiles of Merit.

Philadelphia played host to the first North American regional tournament in Merit's World Series of Darts competition with the Liberty Bell Classic. The event, held last fall, was co-sponsored by Tony Snipas of Blue Star Vending and the Liberty Electronic Dart Association.

The emphasis in this seventh year of Merit's series is on attracting average league players by offering a format in which they do not compete with pro shooters. Merit's new '01 Equal Darts feature opens the dart series to all player levels.

Merit extends thanks to All About Graphics and Great Lakes Darts for their involvement in the series, as well as to the co-sponsors and players in attendance.

Two tournaments were held in January: the Jacksonville Classic in Jacksonville, Fla., and the Indy Classic in Indianapolis, Ind.

Upcoming tournaments include the Wisconsin Classic at the Starlite Club in Kaukauna, Wis., Feb. 18-20; the Kansas Klassic at The Family Inn in Wichita, Kan., Feb. 25-27; the California Classic at the Holiday Inn Northeast in Sacramento, Calif., Mar. 4-6; and the Volunteer Open at the Knoxville Hilton in Knoxville, Tenn., Apr. 8-10.

For more information on the World Series of Darts, call Merit Industries, (215) 639-4700.

Winners in the major categories of the Philadelphia event include:

Draw Doubles 501: 1st—Joe Lemerise of Philadelphia and Justin Voden of New Berlin, Wis.; 2nd—Bill Davis of Philadelphia and Randy Morrow of Norfolk, Va.; 3rd—Ed Konstanty and Dave Keppler, both of Philadelphia.

Women's Singles 301: 1st—Debbie Shutt of Largo, Fla.; 2nd—Carol Wilke of Hebron, Ill.; 3rd—Shawne Sheluga of Philadelphia.

Women's Doubles 301: 1st—Debbie Shutt and Carol Wilke; 2nd—Donna Niedosik and Robin Young, both of Philadelphia; 3rd—Shawne Sheluga and Margaret Holmes of Attalla, Ala.

Open Singles 501/Cricket: 1st—Greg Jones of Whitehaven, Pa.; 2nd—Mick Sweeney of Philadelphia; 3rd—Alan Shortz of Jeffersonville, Pa.

Open Doubles 501 Master/Cricket: 1st—Jerry Umberger of New Philadelphia, Pa., and Jim Watkins of Port Carbon, Pa.; 2nd—Lou Yeager and Mike Kutz, both of Pottsville, Pa.; 3rd—Bill Davis and Bob Gargan of Wilmington, Del.

Mixed Triples 501/Cricket: 1st—Lou Yeager, Mike Kutz, and Donna Niedosik; 2nd—Tank Melson of Union, Ill., Randy Morrow, and Carol Wilke; 3rd—Thom Johnson of Largo, Fla., Randy Goins of Jacksonville, Fla., and Debbie Shutt.

Open Doubles Cricket: 1st—Tank Melson and Thom Johnson; 2nd—Lou Yeager and Mike Kutz; 3rd—Randy Goins and Randy Morrow. □

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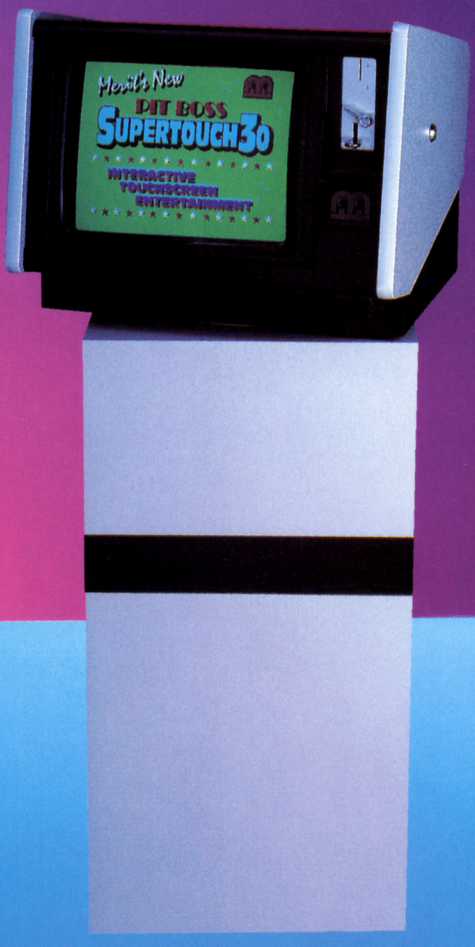

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FRANK'S CRANKS

Frank "The Crank" Seninsky

Where did 1993 go?

I just got a call from Play Meter managing editor Bonnie Theard reminding me about another deadline. All we hear is that the economy is bad, yet those in the coin-op industry seem to be putting in more hours of work and there is just so much to do that we can't keep up.

Hey, I'm not complaining; the work is interesting and we should be glad that there is work to do!

Frank says that redemption is the fastest growing segment of the industry. Here Leslye Hillman of Play By Play shows off some of the merchandise available and notes that the company is putting together a new catalog.

Kiddie rides are popular in family entertainment centers. Frank takes a spin on Alter Enterprises' **Crank 'N Roll**, even though it's for little kids. Some people never grow up!

Our industry is going to see some major changes in the very near future. Technology is advancing every day. Our industry will now become part of two fast-growing industries: entertainment and communications.

What do I mean by a part of the communications industry? As you know the AMOA Industry Standardization Committee has been working very hard to come up with a standard that would enable operators to poll their games by telephone (two-way communication). In addition, I have been working with AT&T on a few other projects that involve downloading software over telephone lines and linking bowlers' scores electronically to a central computer, which instantaneously feeds back scores and player standings to hundreds of locations.

You've also read that AMOA is about to announce a project that its Advanced Technology Committee has been working on.

Another reason I say we are "linked" to the communications industry is the role that AMOA will be playing as part of an industry coalition dealing with video violence. Players in the project include video and computer software manufacturers, software dealers, television and movie producers, carriers, dealers, educational institutions, the U.S. Congress, the president, and several other giant industries. AMOA will be taking a pro-active role and I'm sure that many new doors will open for our own industry. Being involved always brings respect and new opportunities.

With all of this happening, redemption is still the fastest growing segment of our industry. Family entertainment centers are opening quickly throughout the world and the potential for games and service is enormous. Good operators are desperately needed. They must be willing to make the investment necessary to provide the type of service these new clients will require.

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Frank is right at home with government officials. Here he is with New Jersey's new governor, Christine Todd Whitman. Two years ago, when no one even knew who the Republican candidate would be, Frank predicted Whitman would be the next governor. Way to call 'em, Frank!

Redemption pieces are quite popular. Here's Namco's Jerry Momoda showing **Shark Attack** at the recent IAAPA show.

Here's another one of Frank's favorite redemption games shown at IAAPA, Coin Concepts' **Lazer Blazer**. From left are Karen Nagel (Alpha-Omega), Gary Warner, Jeff Lankiewicz, and Art Warner of Coin Concepts.

Now that I'm back on the AMOA board of directors, I am happy to use my abilities to help our industry forge ahead. I will continue to work with the Standardization Committee because I feel that no industry has ever expanded without having first standardized itself. Remember the VHS and Beta wars not too long ago? Look at what happened when the format became standardized. Let this be a lesson to the companies who feel they can rule our industry by themselves. The truth is that we should all work together; the giants will get bigger anyway, but the rest of us will also grow and prosper.

I am also a part of AMOA's Advanced Technology Committee, which will play a very important role in all of our futures. In addition, Randy Chilton, Laura Olson, and I will be representing AMOA at the coalition meetings for video violence. I'm also going to be working with Bill Beckham (another new AMOA board member) on what is to become of the parallel law when it sunsets. I'll be working with him on other lobbying issues as well.

Yes, 1994 looks to be a dynamic year. Whatever you think now will most likely change as you absorb more and more information. My advice to everyone is to make it your New Year's resolution to read as much as you can about things that will affect your business, actively discuss your thoughts with others in the industry, make a contribution to the industry by joining an industry organization, and get ready to change. If Plan A doesn't work, make sure you have a Plan B.

As always, keep cranking! □

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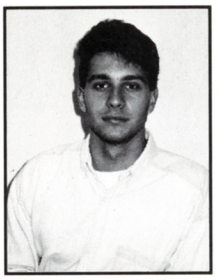


Greg Reeves

PLAYER'S PERSPECTIVE

Diverse trio offers challenging competition

Kombatants looking for new challenges will find their wishes fulfilled in *Mortal Kombat II*, the dedicated video from Midway Mfg. Sporting competition of a different nature awaits in Namco's *Numan Athletics*, a kit for one to four players. On the pinball side, skiing and snowboarding serve as a change-of-pace theme for Premier's *Wipe Out*. Something for everyone.

Mortal Kombat II

It's here! Probably the most anticipated video game sequel, following the huge success of the first *Mortal Kombat* and its accompanying home system versions and comic book merchandise.

The popularity of the game probably lies in the near-realistic digitized graphics and serious nature of the theme, as opposed to fighting-themed games with more cartoonish effects. *Mortal Kombat II* continues the adventure after the defeat of Shang Tsung and the apparent death of Goro, his servant in the original game.

Tsung's failed attempts to dominate the ancient Shaolin contest lead him to beg forgiveness from his demon master, Shao Kahn. Khan grants it and allows Tsung to kompete with other kombatants in his dark ancestral home.

Midway creators combined six new characters with six characters from the original game for battles against each other, a new half-human dragon named Kintaro, and finally Shao Kahn himself.

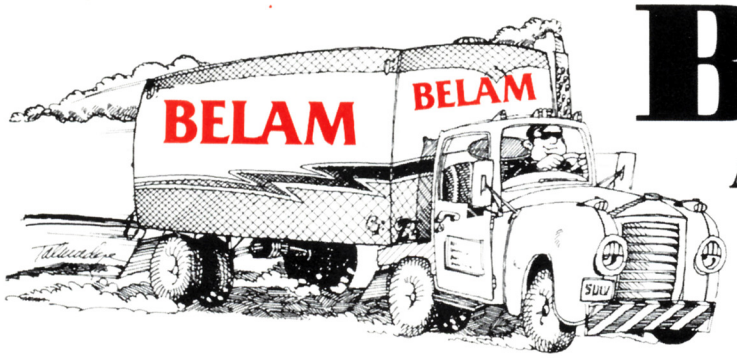
Raiden, Scorpion, Sub-Zero, Liu Kang, and Johnny Cage are again among the choices. Each character has slightly altered costumes and all the same techniques they previously possessed, plus an added new attack.

Shang Tsung is now a regular kombatant, looking much younger and capable of transforming into his opponent or firing screaming skulls. Reptile, a character seen only in home system versions, can now be chosen by the player. New characters include Baraka, a mutant with retracting scissor blades; Jax, an American wrestler; Kitana, a female ninja armed with sais; and Kung Lao, a Raiden-like character who can teleport and throw his hat as a weapon.

New background scenes highlight the sequel and are much darker and more evil than in the original. Sometimes players kompete in the Living Forest, a dark wood with talking trees, or the Armory, a weapon-filled dungeon with rusty chains and hooks hanging from the ceiling. The most impressive background is the Wasteland, a dead landscape with a surrounding black lake, clouded purple sky, and distant fortress. The fighter progression screen has changed from a tablet to a mountain peak with Shao Kahn at the top and kompetitors down to the base.

To say the game is great is an understatement; it's perfect. The dedicated cabinet is again imposing, with a photograph of Raiden on the side and dragon symbols all over the game. Character choices are more extensive, allowing the player a chance to test a kombatant's mastered skills from the original game in a

Greg masters skills needed in Midway's Mortal Kombat II.



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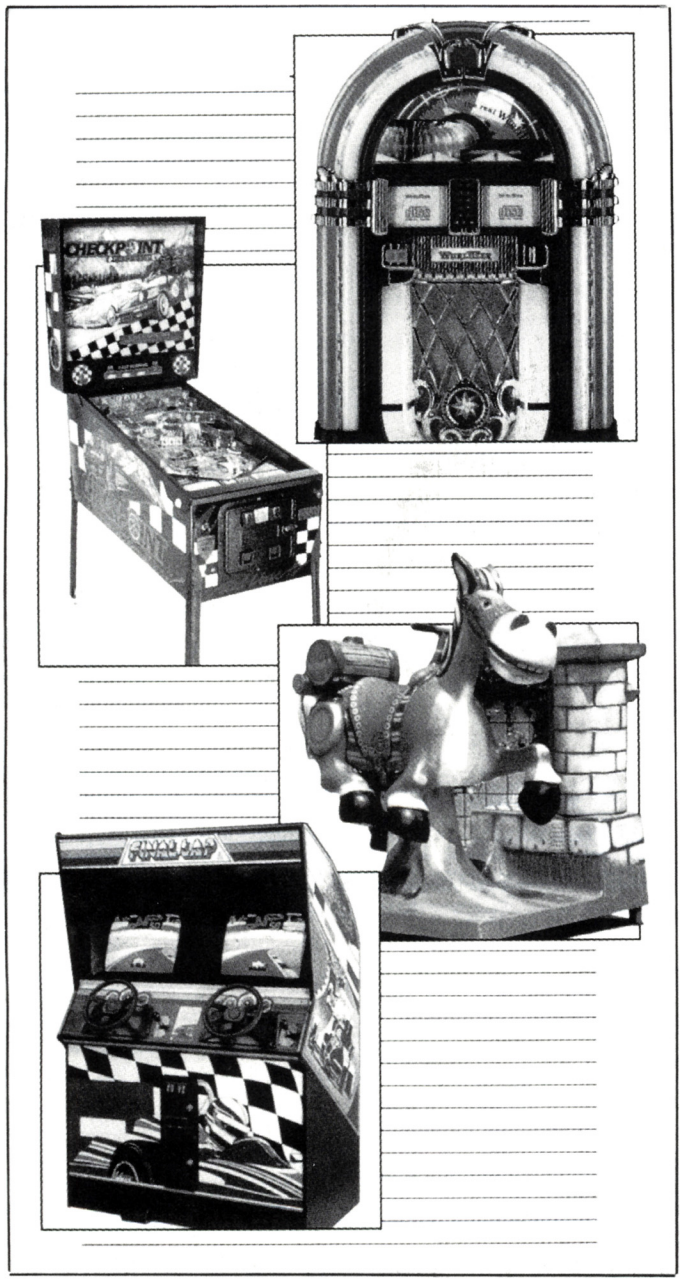

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new environment, or to use one of the newly created fighters.

Characters themselves are even more realistically digitized, and the use of new costumes gives the impression that no shortcuts were taken in making the game. The improved distance attacks, such as Raiden's electricity, Reptile's venom, and Liu Kang's fireball, are more detailed and cause the opponent realistic visual pain or rising smoke as a result of the impact.

Background scenes are beautifully painted with a dark fantasy touch combined with ancient Oriental art, as in the Wasteland. The deep voice that referees the battles has become deeper and all the finishing moves and fatalities have been preserved.

Mortal Kombat II is one fighting game that has original appeal. Further sequels would not ruin the theme. Placement of the game is welcome anywhere, though preferably where an older crowd gathers.

Numan Athletics

This interesting kit from Namco takes the eternal theme of sports competition to new levels with unusual events and superhuman athletes. It's a modern version of *Track and Field* or *Hyper Sports* with grander goals and devastating defeats. Players may choose from among four characters, each with the superhuman strength, speed, and agility needed to compete in eight events leading to the championship.

The various events take place around the world, with each competition characteristic of the location. Competition begins with the Turbo Dash, a race on foot that accelerates so fast the background blurs before the finish line is reached. Next is the Interceptor, a challenge for players to knock down incoming missiles from distant ships by using fireballs at their disposal.

The Missile Toss is a javelin-like event involving an exploding projectile. Mutant creatures that appear at random must be targeted in the Numan Sniper round. A strength challenge named Vs. Express follows, in which players must stop a train.

Tower Topper is a race to reach the top of twin buildings by

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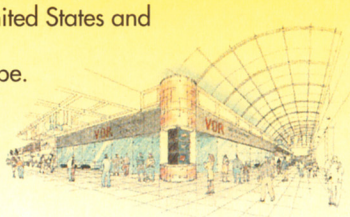

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bounding in-between them.

A combination of timing and strength is needed to break down a boulder in the No-Stop Rock Chop round. Finally, the Niagara Jumps challenge athletes to bound over the famous falls or be dragged under.

These events are completed by perfect timing in the manipulation of the three buttons per player. Often the A and C buttons are alternately pressed to simulate running or the strength build-up of a particular character, and the B button is used to fire a projectile or jump obstacles as they are encountered.

The theme of superhuman competition is appealing and has potential for further game releases. *Numan Athletics* is fun to play for one-player progression or multi-player competition. Graphics are clean and colorful, resembling cartoons or comic books done in the distinct Japanese style. The game's availability as a conversion kit for multi-player cabinets is welcome.

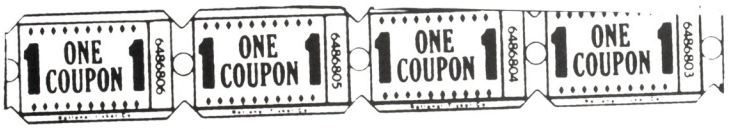
"The winter sport aspect of the game gives the player an experience rather than just a game."

Wipe Out

Premier's latest Gottlieb pinball release uses the winter sports of skiing and snowboarding for its theme. There's a ski lift with a waiting gate in the upper left corner of the playfield, which takes the ball up to a ramp and onto a mini-playfield raised in the avalanche mode, or a slalom run through lighted bumpers for points.

The lift and vibrating ramp are most interesting during multi-ball, resembling a busy day at the slopes. There is a loop through the Psycho Ski Club at the top of the game and a hot doggin' ramp down the middle. Players can "Rip the Crud" on an upside-down loop or target the panic button five times in a row for an extra ball.

The field is deep to accommodate the ski lift. Mountain effects make the game play seem a bit more realistic; the mini-playfield takes up a lot of space. The light-hearted winter sport aspect of the game is appealing, giving the player an experience rather than just a game. □



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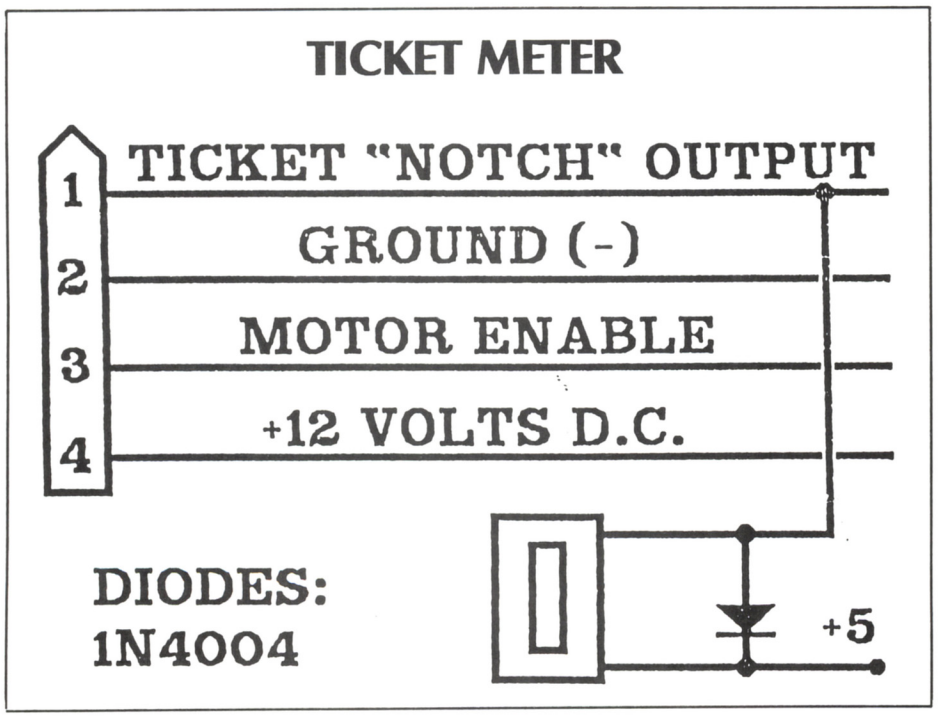
TICKET TECH

"Ticket Vic" Fortenbach

Ticket meters revisited

There seem to be some questions about redemption ticket meters that need to be answered. For instance, "Do all redemption games have a ticket meter?" "Are they expensive or difficult to install?" "Will they damage my game?" The answer to all of the above is "no."

Redemption ticket meters are a must if you really want to know how much your redemption operation is making (or losing) in terms of profit and player enjoyment.



I'm not going to get into the ticket percentages for redemption games; talk to Frank "The Crank" Seninsky for that information. However, I will discuss the meter itself.

Most redemption games manufactured within the last two years already have a ticket meter. Whether mechanical or electronic, this meter's function is to count the number of tickets vended by the game. If you have some older redemption games, chances are that you will need to install a ticket meter.

Before you connect a meter to a redemption game, find out if the wiring harness and/or the electronic driver circuitry for a meter is not already in place on the main logic board or somewhere inside the game. Some game manufacturers choose *not* to install a ticket meter because of cost (one ticket meter = $3.95!).

Some ticket dispensers offer you the option of connecting a meter to the ticket dispenser itself. The newer dispensers from Clever Devices, Coin Controls, and the DL-4SS or DL-4PS dispensers from Deltronic already have this circuit, so all that is required is a meter and a plug.

The DL-1275 dispenser from Deltronic Labs and the ticket dispenser from the older Clever Devices ticket mechs require a meter that is connected to the output of the dispenser. The ticket dispenser output is called the notch output. This output is an open collector and goes to ground (low) when a ticket notch is sensed by the sensor.

To connect the 5-volt meter, connect one wire to the notch output and the other meter wire to the +5 volts. You must connect a diode across the meter to eliminate any interference that will be caused by the meter. The diode that should be used is a 1N4004 from Radio Shack. If you can't find any 1N4004 diodes, any one

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of its "sisters" will work (1N4003, 1N4002, 1N4001).

The diode must be connected so the cathode of the diode (the gray band) is connected to the + side of the power wires (+5 volts). A couple of notes regarding this installation: the ticket meter will be activated or "on" whenever the ticket sensor inside the dispenser is "open." An example is when a dispenser is out of tickets; the meter will advance once for every time the tickets run out. (Don't let your game run out of tickets!) Use a better-quality meter if you have one that has a metal casing, which draws too much current and is not fast enough. It will damage the notch output of the dispenser. The meter must have a minimum rating of 15 CPS (cycles per second).

If you want to use the +12 volts that is already at the ticket dispenser instead of running a +5 volts wire, it can be done.

"Redemption ticket meters are a must."

However, you will have to change the notch output transistor to one that will handle the additional current. A TIP120 pinball transistor works great. The TIP120 is quite a bit larger than the original transistor, so you will have to be careful that it doesn't get knocked loose when refilling tickets. A 5- or 6-volt meter can still be used in this case, since the pulse from the dispenser is so short only about 6 volts is going to the meter.

After you connect the meter you will need to mount it so it can be seen easily when you need to read it. Also, mount the meter where it will not interfere with refilling tickets. After you have installed the meter, you will need to test it. Pull the tickets out of the dispenser and view the meter. It should be "half clicked" or "energized." Put your finger on the notch transistor; it will be slightly warm. If it's hot, remove power and recheck all of your wiring and the position of the diode. You may have to replace the notch transistor on the ticket dispenser since it probably was damaged due to an error. □

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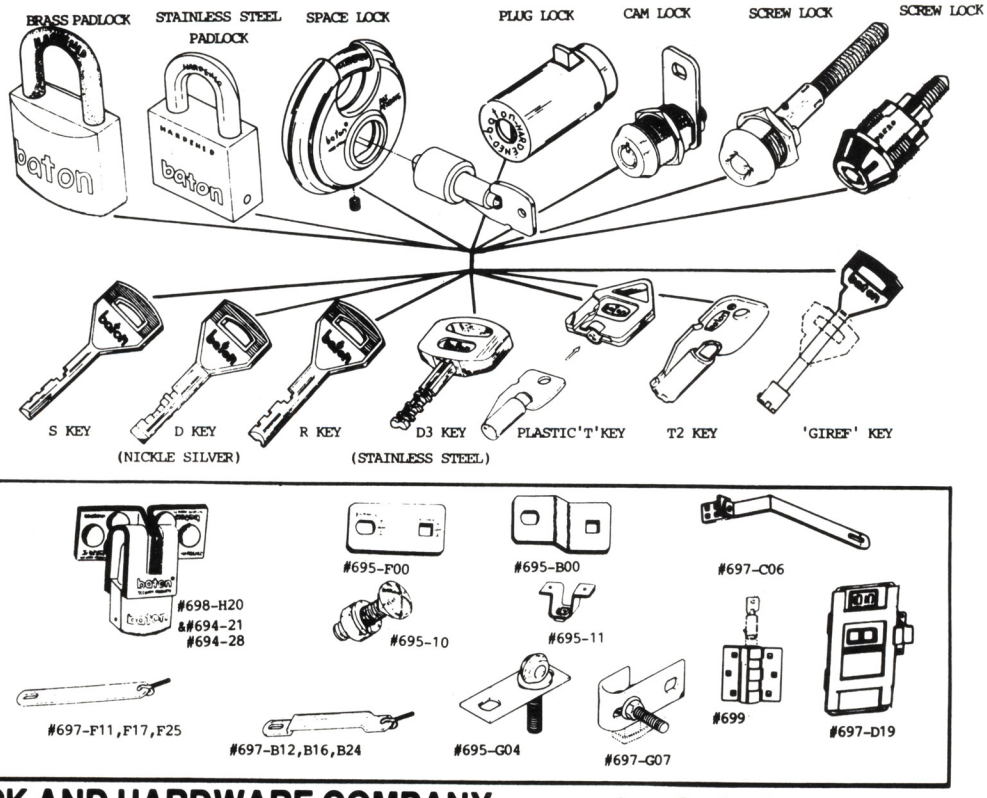

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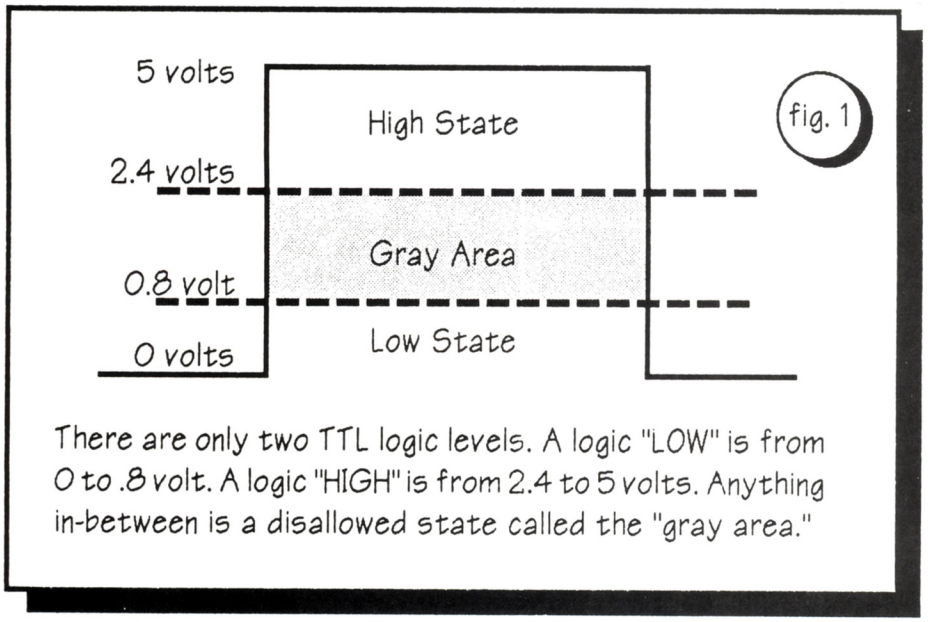
TECHNICAL TOPICS

An introduction to digital electronics

There are two distinct types of electronic circuits: analog and digital. If you've been working on power supplies, monitors (on the video amplifier circuits or the vertical deflection circuit or the horizontal deflection circuit), or jukebox amplifiers, you have been working on analog circuits.



There are only two TTL logic levels. A logic "LOW" is from 0 to .8 volt. A logic "HIGH" is from 2.4 to 5 volts. Anything in-between is a disallowed state called the "gray area."

So, what is meant by digital electronics? What's the difference between the two? Well, there are lots of differences between analog and digital electronic circuits. In fact, they're so different that you really don't have to know much about analog electronics to be successful in repairing digital systems. Some of the best techs I've ever met are great on microprocessor systems, but aren't worth a darn when it comes to fixing monitors.

In the analog world, you'll work on circuits that have all kinds of different voltages. As little as 7/10s of a volt will turn on a transistor. A video signal may have anywhere from 0 to 4 volts on it. The power supply circuit voltages are +5, +12, and even -5 volts! A monitor will have a B+ supply of +115 to +130 volts. There's even 20,000 volts or more at the second anode!

The world of digital electronics is much simpler than the chaotic realm of analog circuits. You know how all the logic boards are powered by +5 volts DC? Well, in digital electronics, that's just about all you'll see.

If you use an oscilloscope to probe just about any "node" (any connections between integrated circuits are called nodes) you'll see that the voltage there will be either around +5 volts or it will be close to 0 volts (or it will be alternating between the two as shown in figure 1). This is called "pulsing." That's it. In fact, if you see anything else, you've probably found something wrong—a circuit fault of some type.

Video games and pinball machines use a family of integrated circuits known as TTL—Transistor, Transistor Logic. There are only two states allowed in TTL, digital electronics. Either a signal is at a logic "high" or a logic "low." A logic high isn't really exactly 5 volts. There's a threshold voltage of 2.4 volts. Anything above 2.4 volts is considered to be a valid logic high.

The threshold for a logic low is .8 volts. Anything in-between is a "disallowed state" called the "gray area." Normally, you will not see signals in the gray area. That's one of the things you look for when troubleshooting digital circuits. If I'm probing around in a circuit and I see a signal that's in the gray area, I gotta think that

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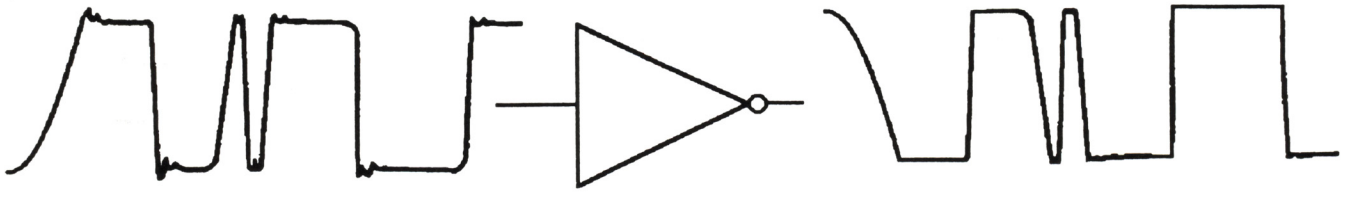


fig. 2 The inverter flips the signal upside-down. In the process, the signal is also cleaned-up!

something's not correct. A gray area violates the "rules" of digital electronics and that's what I'm looking for.

Digital electronics follows very specific rules of operation. The rules state things like "if this input is high, this output will be low" or "if these two inputs are both low, the output will be high." This is called "digital logic."

Troubleshooting digital electronics is kind of like playing baseball. If you don't know the rules, you can't play the game. The rules of operation are contained in a reference book called a "databook." It contains a fact sheet (in some cases, many fact sheets) on each device and tells you how the integrated circuit is supposed to operate. *It's the rule book!* Without this book, you can't play the game. The really cool thing is that this book is absolutely FREE! In fact, you can get four different data books absolutely free just by calling National Semiconductor at (800) 272-9959. You don't even have to pay for the call. Ask them for the TTL databook 400044.

There are other books available, too. Radio Shack (believe it or not) has a number of books and pamphlets on the subject of digital electronics. These were written by well-known technical writer Forrest Mimms. Wico has some good publications as well. One I highly recommend you get is the "TTL Cookbook" by Don Lancaster. Just about anyone interested in learning digital electronics should get this one. Another is the "CMOS Cookbook."

The inverter & buffer

The simplest circuit is called an "inverter." To invert something means to flip it upside down. That's exactly what the inverter does. If the input signal to an inverter is mostly high, with narrow, downward-going pulses, it comes out upside down; the pulses are now going up (figure 2). Sometimes a signal is upside-down from what we need in a circuit and an inverter is used to flip it right-side up.

So, the rules for the inverter are: when the input is low the output is high and when the input is high the output is low. The rules are printed in the "truth table" that's in the data book (figure 3). A is the input; Y is the output. 'Nuff said?

The 7404 is called a "HEX INVERTER" because there are actually six inverters in the one package. They only share a common power connection.

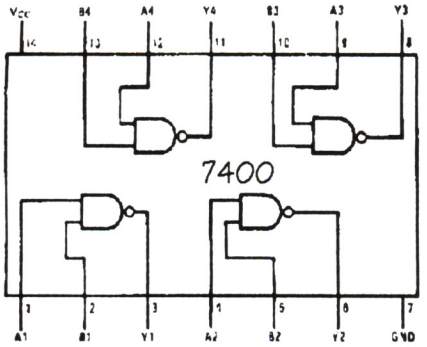
You may notice that the signal looks cleaner that it did before (figure 2). See how the input is not a clean waveform but the output is? In addition to inverting the signal, the inverter also cleans it up. Remember, anything above 2.4 is a high. Anything below .8 is a low. The inverter ignores all the garbage. Digital circuits kind of clean themselves up as the signal is passed from device to device.

If we need to clean up a signal without inverting we can use a circuit called a "buffer." The buffer passes the signal through unchanged but cleaner. The buffer is also used when the output of an IC is used to drive a lot of other inputs. This is called "fan-out." A typical fan-out for TTL is 10. That is, the output of one chip can drive up to 10 inputs on other integrated circuits. Each input is called a "unit load." A typical TTL output can drive up to 10 U.L. If you're a designer, this is an important consideration. As technicians, it's not generally too important. By the way, some inputs are more than 1 U.L. and some are less. Again, this is more important to design engineers than technicians, who are only interested in locating and replacing bad parts.

Totem-pole output

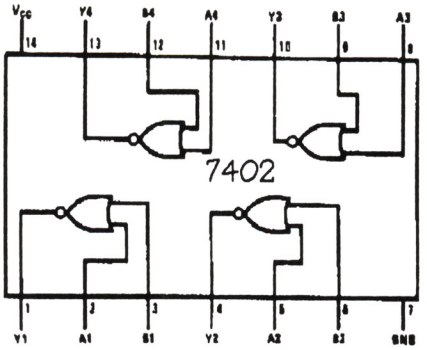
The output of a TTL device is known as a "totem-pole" output (see figure 4). The way it works is really simple. To make the output go high, (output a logic 1) transistor T3 is turned on. This allows the +5 volt power source (also known as Vcc) to pass through resistor R3, transistor T3, and diode D1 to the output pin of the chip. When the output is high, the chip is said to be "sourcing" current.

To bring the output low, transistor T4 is turned on. This grounds the output pin, making it

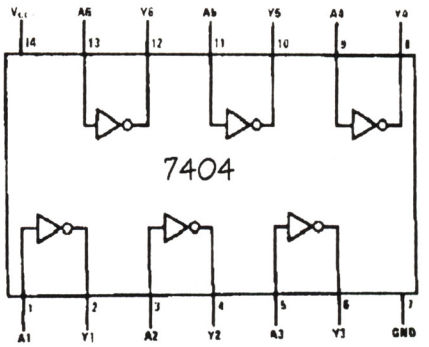


Inputs		Outputs
A	B	Y
L	L	H
L	H	H
H	L	H
H	H	L

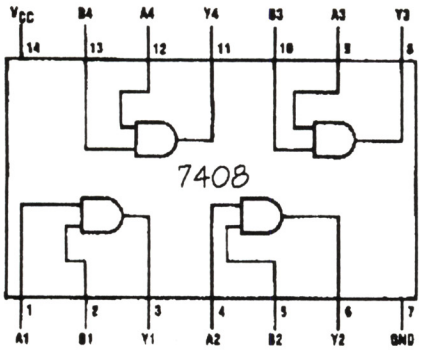
H = High Logic Level
L = Low Logic Level



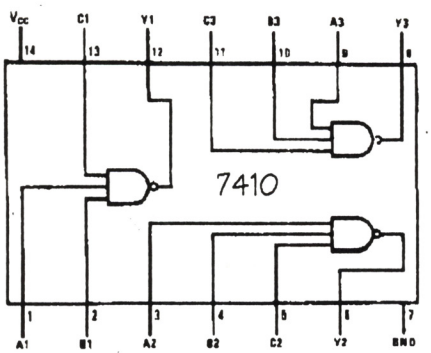
Inputs		Output
A	B	Y
L	L	H
L	H	L
H	L	L
H	H	L



Input	Output
A	Y
L	H
H	L

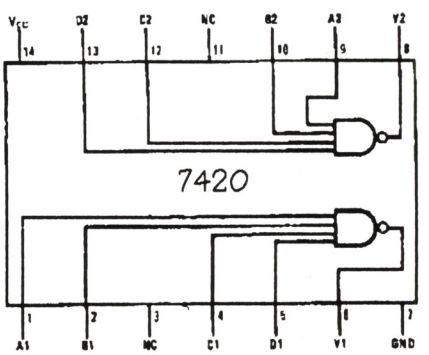


Inputs		Output
A	B	Y
L	L	L
L	H	L
H	L	L
H	H	H

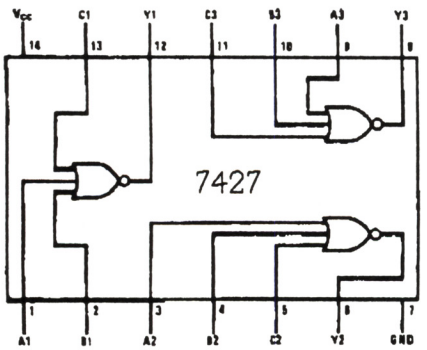


Inputs			Output
A	B	C	Y
X	X	L	H
X	L	X	H
L	X	X	H
H	H	H	L

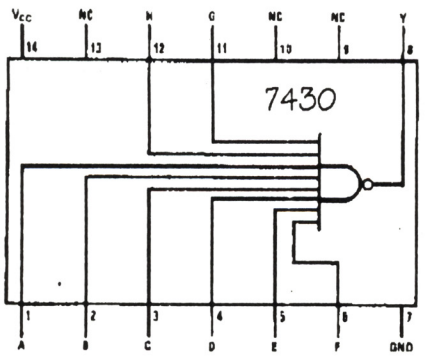
H = High Logic Level
L = Low Logic Level
X = Either Low or High Logic Level



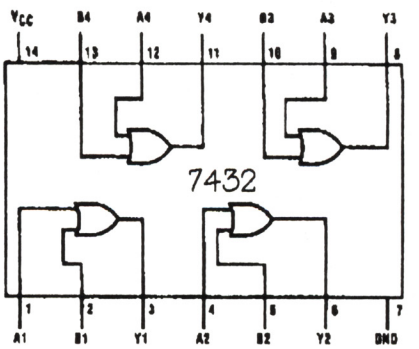
Inputs				Output
A	B	C	D	Y
X	X	X	L	H
X	X	L	X	H
X	L	X	X	H
L	X	X	X	H
H	H	H	H	L



Inputs			Output
A	B	C	Y
L	L	L	H
X	X	H	L
X	H	X	L
H	X	X	L



Inputs	Output
A thru H	Y
All inputs H	L
One or more input L	H



Inputs		Output
A	B	Y
L	L	L
L	H	H
H	L	H
H	H	H

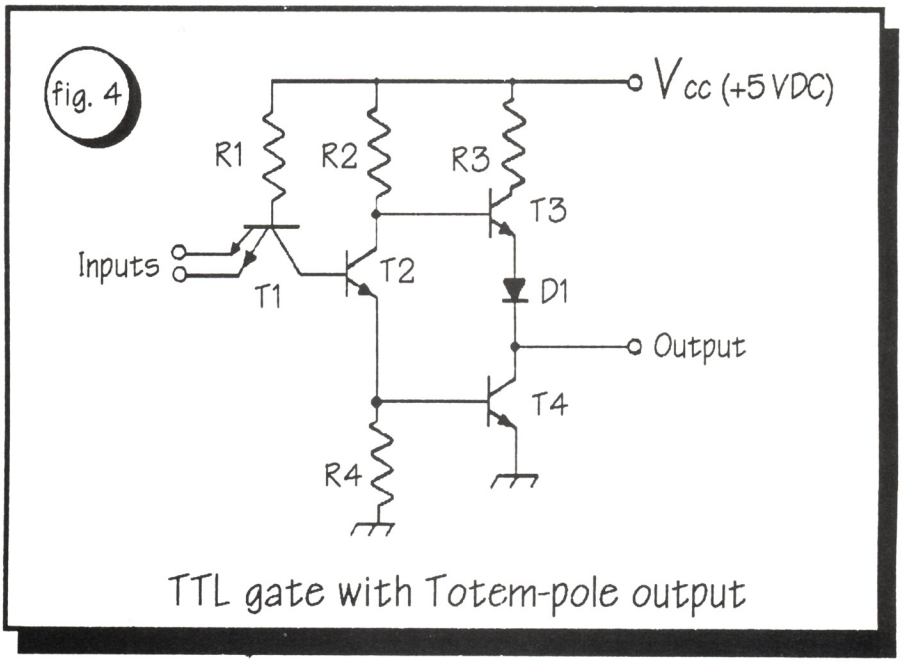
fig.3 A sample of TTL inverters and gates with their truth tables

0 volts—a logic 0. When the output is low, the IC is "sinking" current.

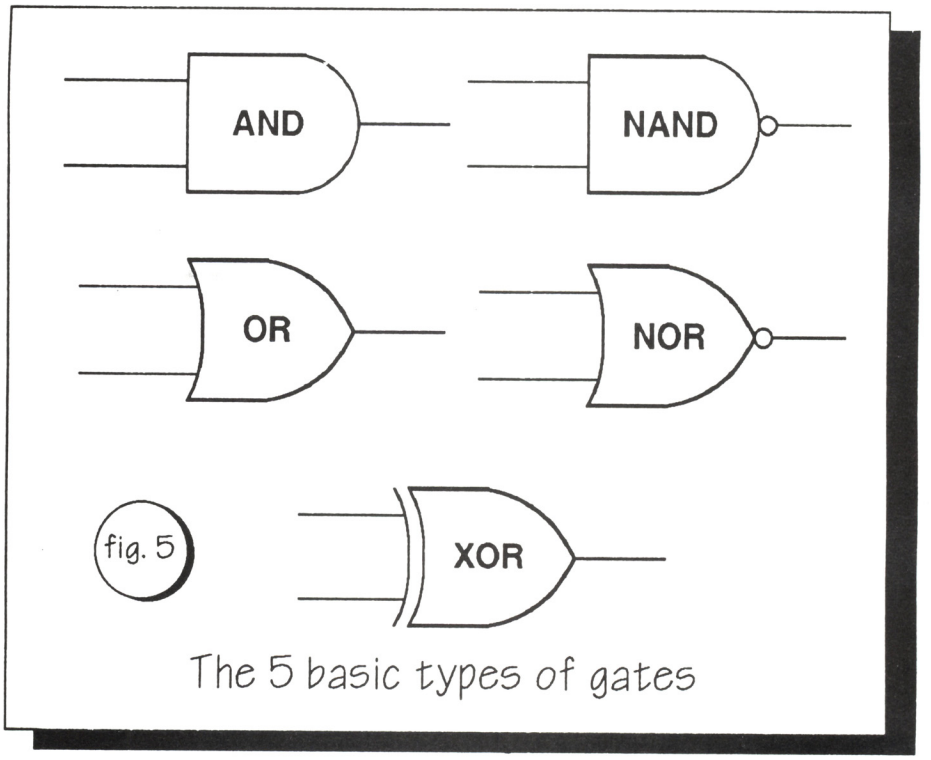
Never connect two totem-pole outputs together. If one output goes low while the other tries to go high, the low will always win over the high (often producing a "gray area" output) because transistor T4 connects the output directly ground. A logic high must be delivered through resistor R3 and the diode. Also, the "high" output chip might be damaged due to excessive heat dissipation across R3, T3, and the diode.

Another type of digital IC known as a "tri-state" device allows multiple outputs to be wired together. Tri-state devices can completely disconnect themselves from the common output, allowing only one active output regardless of the fact that the output pins of the integrated circuits are hard-wired together on the printed circuit board. Tri-state devices are common in microprocessor systems.

Since the totem-pole output does a better job of "sinking" current than "sourcing" it, the "active" output of an integrated circuit is often a low rather than a high. An "active low" function is called a "NOT" function. That's what the small circle on the end of the inverter symbol is for. The circle is sometimes called a "bubble" or a "zirc." The circle indicates the NOT function. That is, whatever function the device performs, the output comes out inverted.



TTL gate with Totem-pole output



The 5 basic types of gates

The gates

Inverters and buffers can't make any logical decisions. To do that, we need to use something called a "gate." Gates are the building blocks for all the logical functions in digital integrated circuits.

The first gate we'll look at is called an "AND" gate (figure 5). It looks like the letter "D" with the inputs on the flat side of the D and the output on the rounded end. If both inputs are high, the output will be high. If one input is high AND the other input is high, the output will be high.

Offhand, that may seem pretty limited but here's what you can do with it. If you have a signal that needs to be turned on and off (for example, a momentary audio tone that sounds off when a ticket is vended in a redemption game), you can connect a continuous audio signal to one of the inputs of a gate (figure 6). The other input is connected to the "control" signal—a momentary pulse that goes high when the ticket is vended.

When the control signal is low, the audio signal is blocked and the output of the AND gate is low. Remember, both inputs must be high in order to get a high out. But when the control signal is high, the audio signal is passed through to the output. It's like opening a gate and letting the signal through. That's why it's called a gate!

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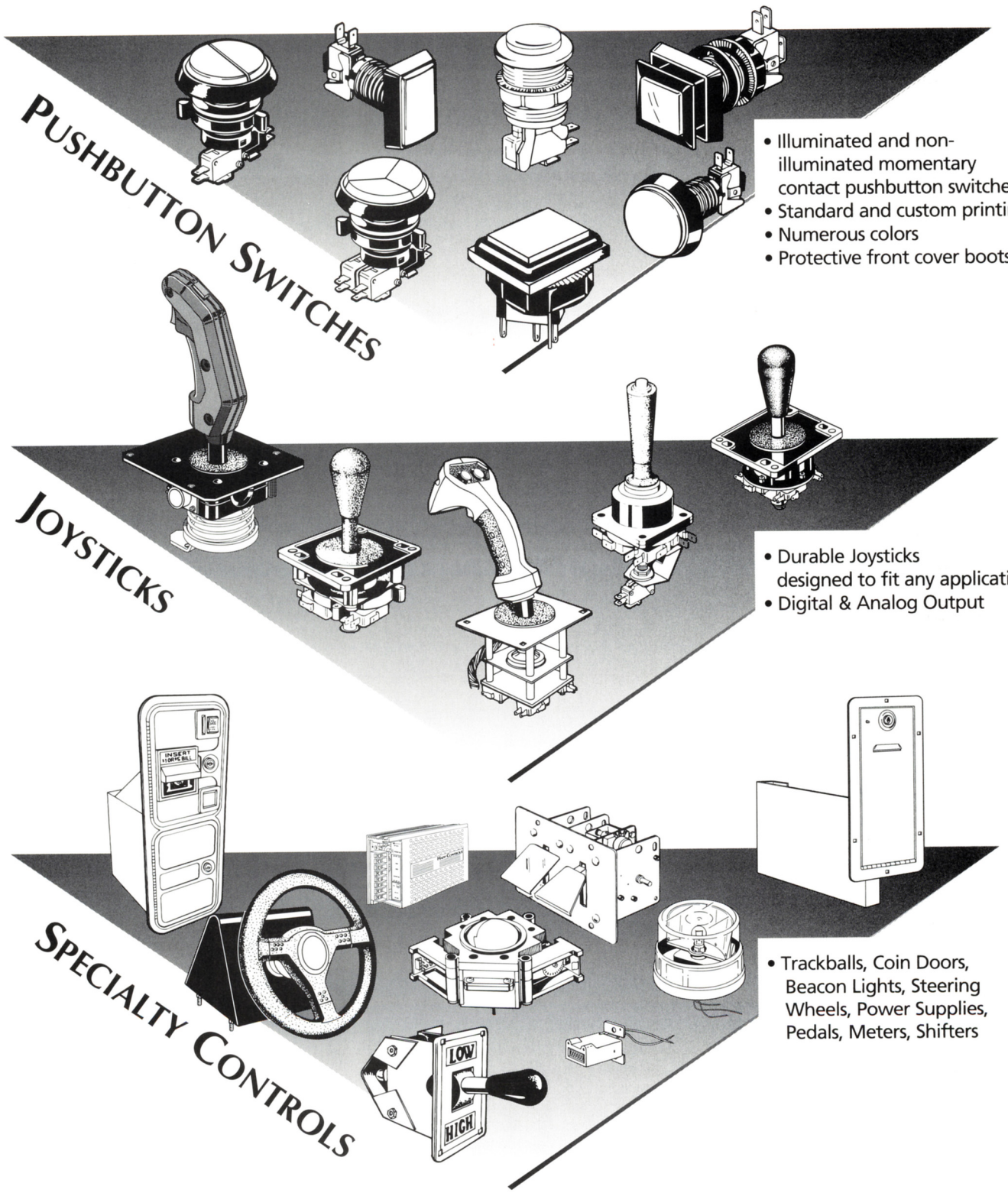

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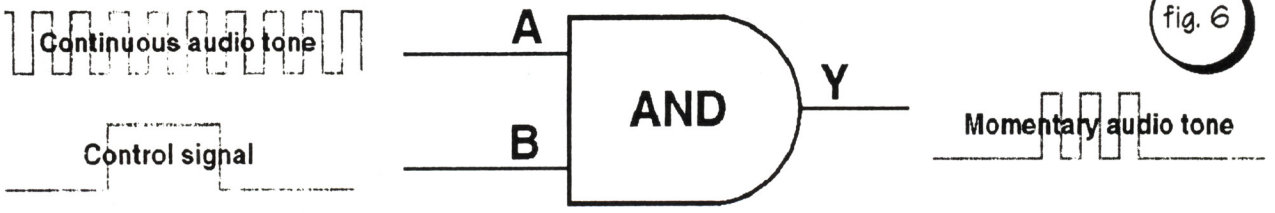

fig. 6

The AND gate in action using a continuous audio tone on one input and control signal on the other. The output is a momentary audio tone.

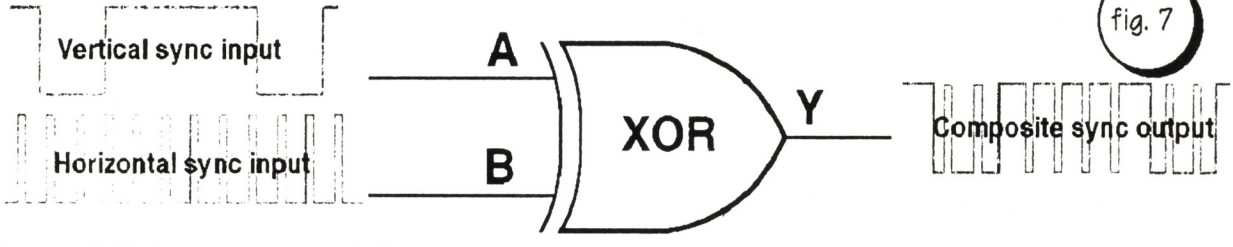

fig. 7

The XOR (exclusive OR) gate in action. With vertical sync at input A and horizontal sync at input B. The output Y is composite sync.

Remember when I mentioned that it's easier for an IC to go low than it is to provide a high? There is another kind of AND gate. This one includes the NOT function we saw in the inverter. It's called a "NAND" gate. NAND stands for "NOT AND." It's like an AND gate followed by an inverter. Take a look at the 7408 integrated circuit. It looks like the AND gate but it has the bubble on the end. Look at the truth table for the NAND gate. It's exactly the same as the AND gate, but the output is reversed. In the NAND gate, both inputs must be high in order to get a low out.

There are some other types of gates as well. One is called an "OR" gate. If one or the other or both inputs are high, the output will be high. The active low version of the OR gate is called the "NOR" gate. If one or the other or both inputs are high, the output will be low.

Another type of OR gate is called the "exclusive OR." You'll see it abbreviated XOR. If one or the other input is high, the output will be high but not if both inputs are high. If both inputs are high, the output is low. An example of the XOR in action is in a video game where the vertical sync is connected to one of the XOR inputs and the horizontal sync is connected to the other (figure 7). The output of the XOR gate is composite sync.

When you are thinking about logic functions, don't get hung up on the name of the gate. To illustrate my point, let's go back to the AND gate. When one input AND the other are both high, you'll get a high out. That's logical, huh? After all, it is called LOGIC, isn't it?

But think about it like this: imagine both inputs as being high. If both the inputs are high, the output of the gate is high, right? But if one input OR the other input goes low, the output will be low, won't it? In this case, we are using the AND gate to perform a kind of OR function, aren't we? This is a perfectly acceptable way to think of the AND gate. It's called "negative logic."

It's the same with the OR gate. The truth table states that if one input OR the other input is high, the output will be high. In terms of negative logic, if one input *and* the other input are both low, the output will be low.

How does this affect us as technicians? Not much as far as testing the individual gate is concerned. That remains the same no matter what. It does go toward understanding how that particular device is being used within the system.

Next month we'll take a look at some more advanced types of integrated circuits called "flip-flops" and "counters." We'll also take a look at digital troubleshooting, and I'll show you a way to find bad ICs using just a battery, two wires, and a finger! □

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2. Has competition stopped you from raising your price per play?__
_____

3. What other factors have influenced your decision to stay at quarter play?_____
_____
_____
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4. What will have to happen to cause an across-the-board raise in price per play on videos and pins?_____
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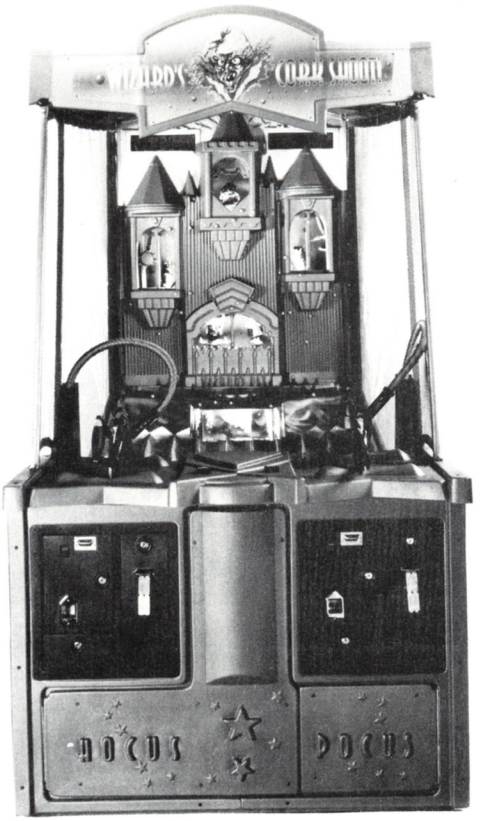
WHAT'S NEW



Wizard's Cork Shoot

Century Vending, in conjunction with Ehlers Star Galleries, debuts a one- or two-gun shooting gallery game, *Wizard's Cork Shoot*.

The object of the game is to rescue the prince and princess from the clutches of a mad wizard and his henchman by shooting real corks at animated targets for scores.

Wizard's Cork Shoot conveys the feel and action of a traditional shooting game. It features an air-flow controlled cork shooting technology, pump-and-shoot-style low-pressure air guns, automatic-load gun mechanisms, visual and audio response to targets hit, dual coin mechs and coin boxes, dual ticket dispensers with low-ticket sensors, and computerized target tracking and scoring of individual stations.

Players can shoot as many corks as possible within a pre-determined time limit. Hitting the wizard or the guard means more points gained; points are deducted for accidentally hitting the prince or princess (oops!).

While in the play mode the game offers hints and comments; in the passive mode it invites players to try the game. Cabinet construction is all-plywood; dimensions are 4' wide x 12' deep x 7' high. Dominant colors are gray, blue, and purple. The electronics, displays, and gun system are by Entertronics Inc.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Century Vending and Distributing, 13458 S. Western Ave., Gardena, CA 90249; (310) 532-2351; FAX (310) 532-2355.

Dream Team

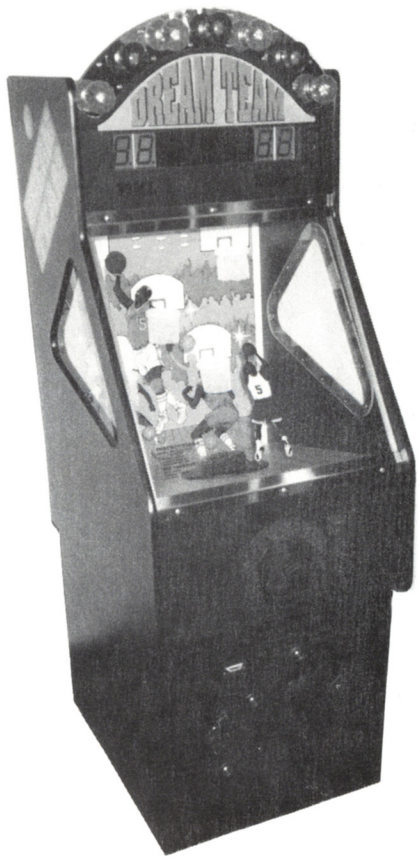
As part of the company's 10th anniversary celebration, GaMCO introduces *Dream Team*, a rapid-fire mini-basketball game housed in a fluorescent orange-red day-glo cabinet.

Dream Team challenges players to shoot the basketballs, propelled by a gun, at five baskets of varying heights. Tickets are awarded for high scores. Music is a toe-tapping beat; bells ring with each ticket dispensed. The game's cabinet features seven layers of lacquer for a durable finish.

Many operator-adjustable features are included: attract mode music, coins per play, time of game, points per score, points per ticket, jackpot payout, and absolute ticket payout. All features are programmable via GaMCO's keypad touch-programmable CPU.

The game's playfield closely resembles a standard basketball court, complete with a crowd scene done in neon colors. Look for a locking coin box, ticket dispenser, and coin mech, all keyed differently.

For more information, or distributor referral, write GaMCO International Inc., 2153 10th St., Sarasota, FL 34237; (800) 642-7263 or (815) 366-1133; FAX (813) 366-1134.



Dinosaur Eggs

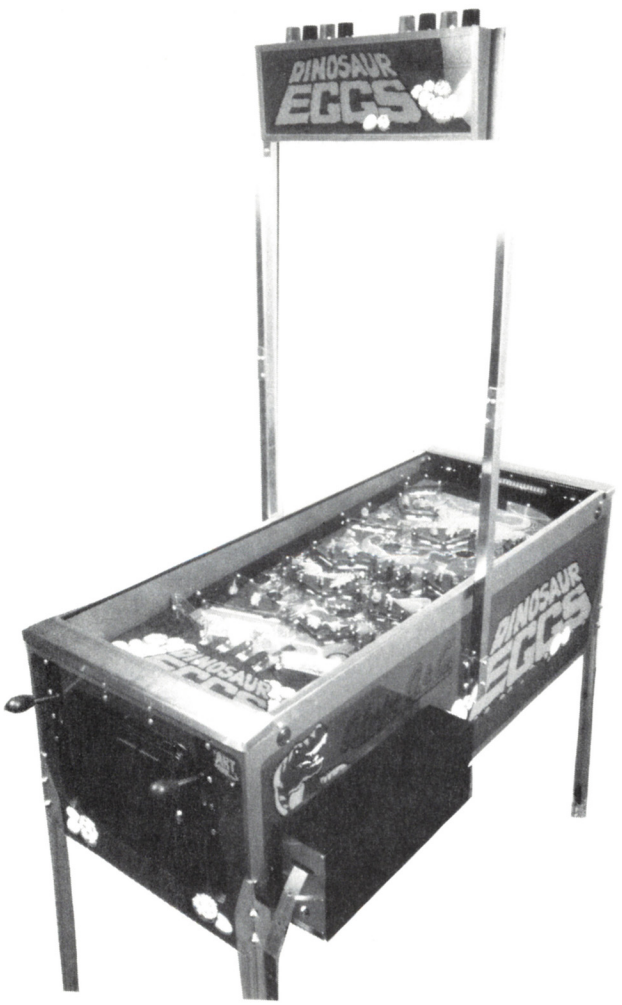
Alvin G. & Co. has developed *Dinosaur Eggs*, a prehistoric-themed novelty/redemption game with a movable playfield.

The goal of the game is to sneak into the dinosaur's nest to steal eggs before Mamasaur returns from the hunt. Players skillfully guide a ball through the lit rollovers, showing which eggs to steal.

Two levers at the front of the cabinet allow the playfield to shift up and down or side to side to move the ball through the maze and a possible 30-ticket bonus.

Realistic animal sounds and jungle music complement the game. The cabinet features bright green and yellow graphics; an overhead marquee with flashing lights completes the package.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Alvin G. & Co., 905 W. North Ave., Melrose Park, IL 60160; (708) 345-9000; FAX (708) 345-2222.



Desk-top Coin Phone

If you wish you had a quarter for every time someone asked to borrow your business phone, G-Tel has the solution: a desk-top coin phone suitable for businesses that don't have enough traffic to warrant installation of a traditional wall-mount phone.

G-Tel's tabletop model eliminates customer abuse of house telephones. Potential locations include restaurants, laundromats, health clubs, beauty shops, professional offices, schools, waiting rooms, retail/wholesale stores, employee lounges, recreation centers, and taverns, among others.

Several models are available: Model 707 for local calls only, Model 757 for local and long distance, and Lock-Up Banker Option 777 that allows the unit to be mounted to the wall or counter for added security.

The phone requires no electricity, installs into a standard jack, is PBX compatible, and blocks 976, 900, 011, overseas, and optional 411 calls.

For more information, or distributor referral, write G-Tel Enterprises Inc., 17423 Shatnerwood Drive, Houston, TX 77095; (713) 550-5592; FAX (713) 550-1028.

Critter

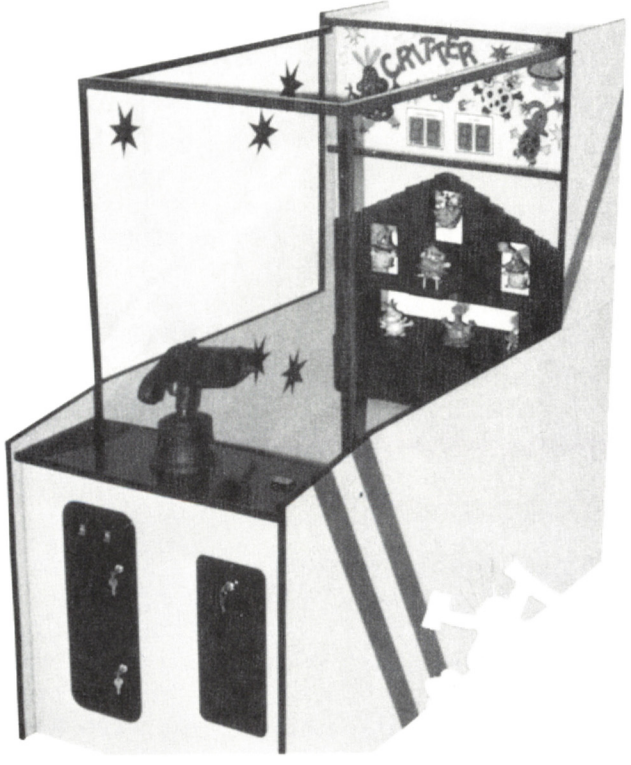
Exidy introduces another target shooting game, *Critter*, designed in the style of its novelty piece, *Troll*.

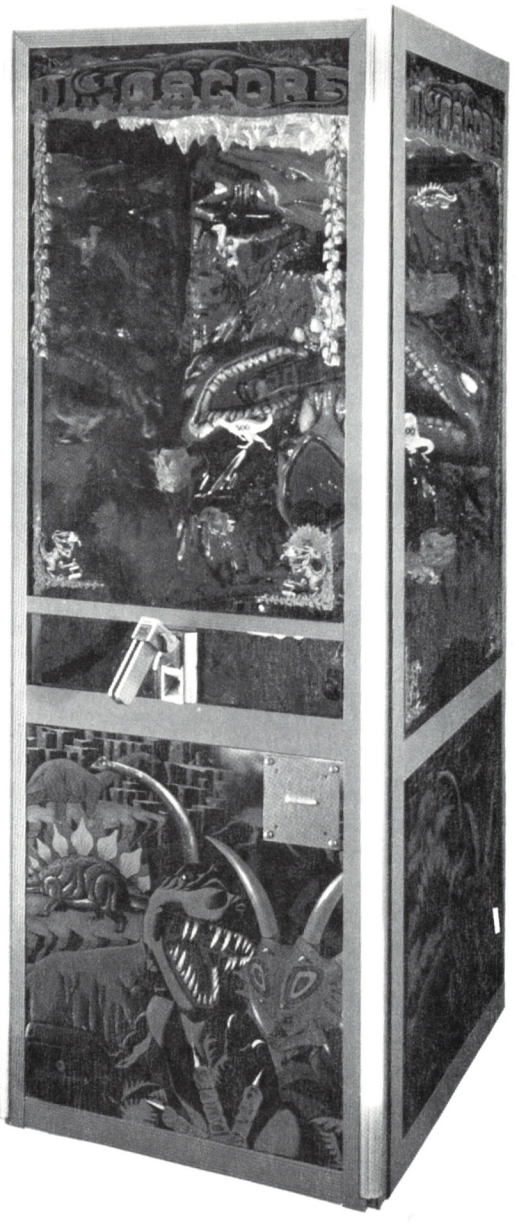
In *Critter*, players use a gun to aim pellets at an assortment of strange looking creatures on the backboard.

Features include optic sensors, midway sounds, a new gravity ball-feeding system, and Deltronic ticket dispenser.

The cabinet is constructed of Marine plywood and covered with turquoise-colored Formica. Clear front and side panels keep balls inside the confines of the cabinet. Dimensions are 6'6" long x 3' wide x 67" high.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Exidy Inc., 2688 C Middlefield Road, Redwood City, Calif. 94063; (415) 364-5201: FAX: (415) 364-5286.





Dinoscore

Planet Earth Entertainment offers over 28 different skill shots to players of *Dinoscore*, a target-shooting game in an upright cabinet that can be linked to other units for a super jackpot award.

Players use a gun mechanism to shoot at lifelike dinosaurs and an erupting volcano to gain high scores. Features include adjustable target settings, percentages, and tickets or tokens; accurate bookkeeping and diagnostics; and realistic dinosaur sounds.

Options include a combination ticket or token dispenser and neon cabinet lights. *Dinoscore* is available in a choice of yellow, red, or purple cabinet. It can be a large prize redemption unit or a bulk prize redemption unit.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Planet Earth Entertainment, 326 Mira Loma Ave., Glendale, CA 91204; (818) 247-6655; FAX (818) 247-2303.

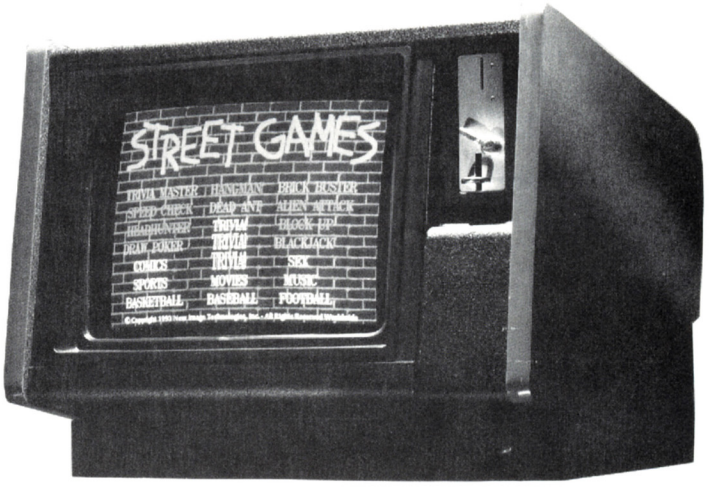


Photo Play, Street Games II

New Image Technologies has developed two new touch-screen games for the tavern market: *Photo Play* and *Street Games II*.

Photo Play features CD ROM technology and interchangeable discs that keep the multiple game choices fresh. Thousands of photos are included for trivia game fun on the subjects of sports, TV, music, sex, memory, action, and concentration and reflex games, among others.

Street Games II features 35 games in one compact unit. There are 18 trivia categories with over 12,000 all-new questions, "for fun" casino-style games, memory tests, word games, bar action games, and more. Games are E-PROM upgradable.

Both games are available in either a countertop model measuring 18" wide x 15" high x 18" deep with a 14" all-glass screen, or a kiosk model measuring 21" wide x 47" high x 25" deep with a 19" all-glass screen.

For more information, or distributor referral, write New Image Technologies Inc., 190 Keystone Drive, Telford, PA 18969; (215) 453-8626; fAX (215) 453-8623.

Triple Sport

Pop-A-Shot introduces *Triple Sport*, a sports-themed ball toss game that can easily be converted to a basketball, football, or baseball action game for one or two players.

Features include rugged steel construction, proven electronics, dual coin mechs, tamper-proof gate and netting, programmable coin settings, easy-access electronics, and quality balls. A ticket dispenser and bill acceptor are optional. Two sizes are available: 9' x 9' or 9' x 8'.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Pop-A-Shot, P.O. Box 1073, Salina, KS 67402; (913) 827-6229; FAX (913) 827-6336.

Premier Crane

Mission Crane Service enters the coin-op market with the *Premier Crane* that features a single-source computer center, high-quality wiring harness assemblies, and large drop opening for prizes.

The crane's cabinet has an aluminum framework and heavy-gauge steel and sheet metal for shelving, brackets, and component panels. Safety glass surrounds the prize viewing area; the claw mechanism has a drive assembly with steel main gears.

Other special features include rope lighting with variable speed chase control, tamper-resistant coin mechs surface-mounted to the front door, and a coin box accessible only from the inside of the machine.

The triple-locked front entry door uses a vertical locking deadbolt rod to secure the top and bottom of the door, as well as a swing latch at the door's center for maximum security without bars and padlocks.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Mission Crane Service Inc., 5142 Bolsa Ave., Suite 103, Huntington Beach, CA 92649; (714) 891-6422; FAX (714) 891-7613.

End Zone, Shark Frenzy

Doyle International adds two ball toss games to its lineup of sports-themed redemption equipment with *End Zone* and *Shark Frenzy*.

End Zone challenges players to toss as many footballs as possible into target holes on the backboard of the game, within a certain time limit. High scores merit ticket awards. Dimensions are 84" high x 34" wide x 123" deep.

Shark Frenzy asks players to aim balls at sharks attacking a pleasure craft depicted on the backboard. High scores within the allotted time frame result in equally high ticket payouts. Dimensions are 85-1/2" high x 34" wide x 109" deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Doyle International, P.O. Drawer 49467, Sarasota, FL 34230; (813) 366-3735; FAX (813) 366-5197.

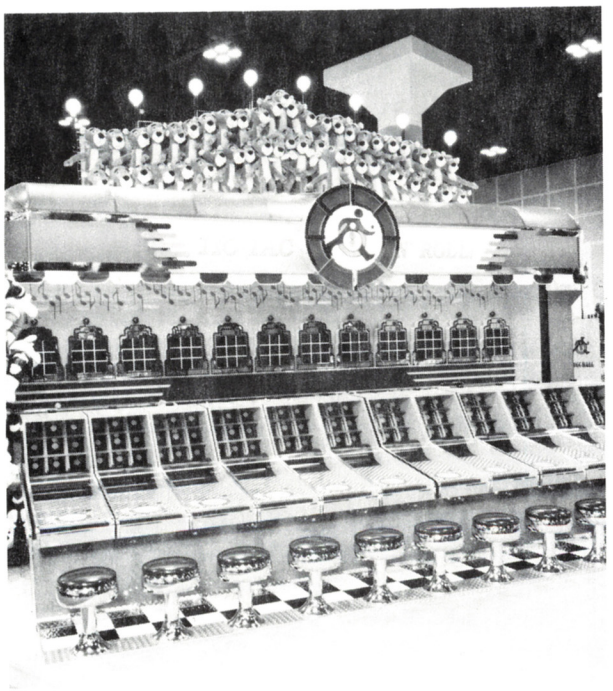
Tic Tac N' Roll

Skee-Ball adds *Tic Tac N' Roll* to its lineup of group race games. It captures the nostalgia of the '50s with tabletop jukebox displays, red and white checkered countertops, and diner style stools. Bright neon colors and rock n' roll music of the era complete the package.

The game utilizes the easy-to-understand Tic Tac Toe concept. Before the race begins, all the possible three-in-a-row patterns are displayed. As the game starts, flashing lights indicate the pattern that must be completed to win.

The first player to land balls in the correct holes within the allotted time comes out on top. Up to 12 players can enjoy *Tic Tac N' Roll*.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Skee-Ball Inc., 121 Liberty Lane, Chalfont, PA 18914; (215) 997-8900; FAX (215) 997-8982.



1/2 Pint Frenzy

Innovative Concepts in Entertainment follows up its popular *Full Court Frenzy* basketball game with a new model for the younger set. Named *1/2 Pint Frenzy*, the game features a moving hoop and kid-friendly score and time indicators.

In addition, *1/2 Pint Frenzy* offers numerous operator controls, attractive graphics, double coin mechs, background sounds, and optional ticket dispenser and flashing lights.

Strong side netting keeps the mini-basketballs from straying during game play. The cabinet is mostly white with red, yellow, and blue graphics. Dimensions are 6' high x 4' wide x 7' deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Innovative Concepts in Entertainment Inc., 1501 Kensington Ave., Buffalo, NY 14215; (800) 342-3433 or (716) 833-0481; FAX (716) 833-1342.

Flippa Winner

Betson introduces a one-player, multi-level coin pusher aptly named *Flippa Winner*. The game is from Crompton and is designed in the *Klondike* tradition.

Features include ticket or token redemption with an optional ticket-every-time, full tilt alarm system, vivid graphics, full metering, and a sound package. Dimensions are 33" wide x 40" deep x 78" high in the single-player version; a three-player model is available.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Betson Enterprises, 3003 Paterson Plank Road, Carlstadt, NJ 07072; (800) 524-2343 or (201) 438-1300; FAX (201) 438-4837.

Cops N' Robbers

Gizmo Enterprises introduces a fast-playing redemption game with an interactive audio/visual playfield. *Cops N' Robbers* is a whimsical bank heist-themed game in which players attempt to rob the bank by capturing various denominations of loot as the cops close in.

Multiple play options allow players to maximize their chances to grab the money and run. An extra jackpot can be won by locking two extra-ball cards.

Look for adjustable jackpot levels, full self-diagnostic audit functions on the coin door, and flexible percentaging. The game is well-suited to any family-oriented location.

It is housed in a dark blue upright cabinet with double coin mechs and a ticket dispenser.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Gizmo Enterprises Ltd., 250 Devon Ave., Bensenville, IL 60106; (708) 616-9550; FAX (708) 616-9610.

Image Series

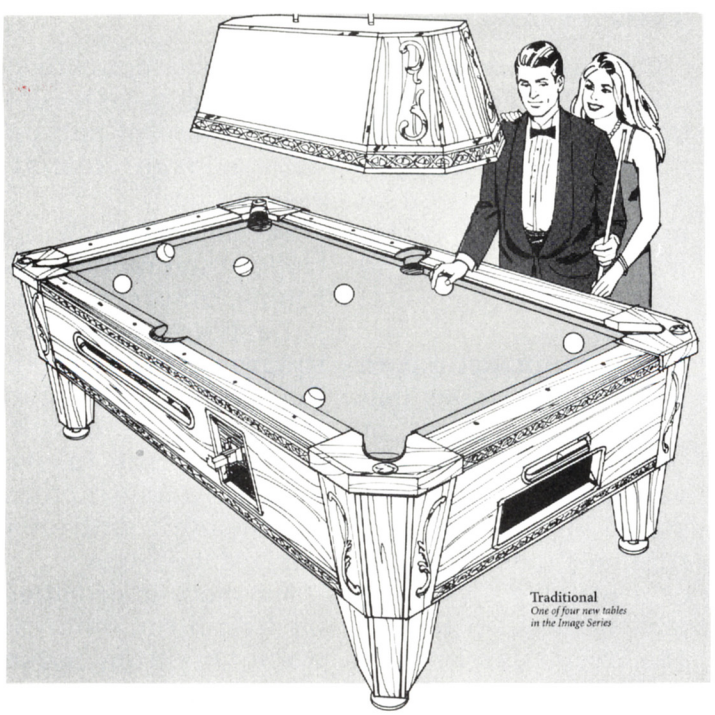
Thinking of upgrading prime locations, attracting new players and locations, and increasing price per play?

Valley makes it easy with a new line of distinctively styled coin-op pool tables, the *Image Series*.

The four models feature theme designs that blend with most restaurant and tavern location motifs.

Included are the Allsport, complete with racing flags, green felt, and green, yellow, and white laminate; the Contemporary, a unit with granite laminate, chrome trim, and blue felt; the Country, an Old West-style rustic design with rope wood highlights, a wild stallion plaque, saddle-leather laminate, and tan felt; and the Traditional, a carved oak and brass-accented model with oak grain laminate and royal teal felt.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Valley Recreation Products, 333 Morton St., Bay City, MI 48707; (800) 248-2837 or (517) 892-4536; FAX (517) 892-6513.



Traditional
One of four new tables in the Image Series

Super Wheel 'Em In

Bromley introduces an even faster-playing redemption game than its *Wheel 'Em In*. Meet *Super Wheel 'Em In*, a three-player game with new backglass colors, progressive play, and a jackpot marquee at no extra charge.

In addition, the game has BSMT 2000 stereo sound, an automatic ticket count on the inside of the display board, a low-ticket indicator light, solid-state electronics, and a high-grade tongue-in-groove plywood cabinet.

Players skillfully direct a token onto a conveyor belt playfield with nine lanes of different values. *Super Wheel 'Em In* measures 61-1/4" wide x 57-1/4" high x 47" long. The cabinet is bright red with green, yellow, and purple accent colors and a winner light atop the marquee.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Bromley Inc., 3231 W. Victoria St., Chicago, IL 60659; (312) 267-6030; FAX (312) 509-9508.

Grand Prix Star II

Jaleco has designed a sequel to its *Grand Prix* deluxe driving simulator and brought *F1 Grand Prix Star II* to the marketplace.

Features include a vibrating seat for realism, four new tracks for true racing adventure, a shaking steering assembly, and a new power booster.

The result is genuine Formula One racing in a game that has the capability of linking up to eight units for challenging match-ups. The cabinet's dimensions are 69" high x 49" wide x 63" deep. *F1 Grand Prix Star II* is licensed by FOCA (Formula One Constructors Association).

For more information, or distributor referral, write Jaleco USA Inc., 685 Chaddick Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090; (708) 215-1811; FAX (708) 215-2642.

The Wizard

Quantum makes it possible to find a crystal ball when you really need one. The company's novelty impulse machine, *The Wizard*, predicts the future and serves as a personal advisor.

Players insert a coin and pose questions that can be answered "yes" or "no." Answers come in a variety of phrases and sound effects. The unit runs on either AC power or a long-life 6-volt lantern battery (included). *The Wizard* can be used as a countertop unit or mounted on a stand.

The figure of a Medieval wizard is encased in a durable polycarbonate plastic globe mounted on a metal cabinet with a large capacity cash box.

Suitable locations include restaurants, game rooms, diners, taverns, supermarkets, movie theaters, and convenience stores. Quantum plans more novelty pieces for the future, with new characters, animation, and customized messages.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Quantum Industries Inc., 336 Stamm Road, Newington, CT 06111; (203) 667-7655; FAX (203) 666-8767.

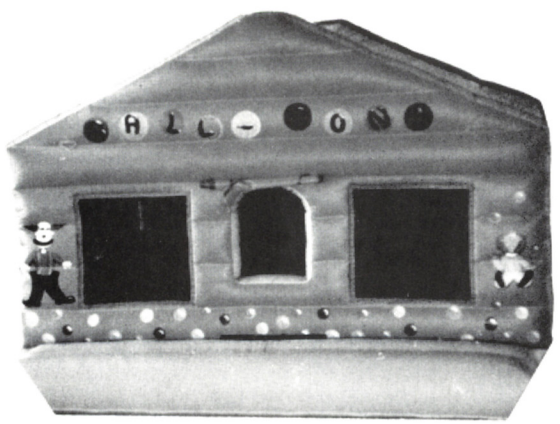
Kiddie Rides, Inflatables

Fun Times Amusements has developed a line of coin- or token-operated kiddie rides for the smallest of amusement seekers.

Included are a giraffe, seal, jumbo jet, truck, jet plane, and 25 others. All Fun Times kiddie rides are hand-crafted; rock back and forth, side to side, and up and down; and feature internal music. Many of the figures are interchangeable and utilize the same base. Construction is fiberglass with inner steel frames and smooth outside edges.

The company also offers a series of heavy-duty, 18-gauge vinyl inflatable attractions for year 'round use indoors or outdoors. Choose from over 30 designs, from castles to animals to ball ponds. All models are hand-painted and feature a large safety step in front, an extra 2" vinyl strip on the floor bed, and quadruple stitching.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Fun Times Amusements, P.O. Box 58202, Tukwilla, WA 98138; (206) 241-9160; FAX (206) 248-2321.



Polygonet Commanders

Konami introduces a 3-D, military battle-themed dedicated video in *Polygonet Commanders*. Players test their defense skills and protect their tanks from enemy blasts, while seeking to destroy the enemy first.

Polygonet Commanders utilizes a state-of-the-art polygon texture-mapping technology. Players choose from eight stages of action: vacant lot and overpass (beginner), shrine and city at night (intermediate), wasteland and brickyard (advanced), swamp and launch pad (championship).

There are several phases in each stage. A bonus life at the top of the screen decreases with every hit incurred by the player but increases with every hit inflicted on the enemy. Completing a phase within the time limit affords additional time to complete the next phase.

Polygonet Commanders features a universal-mount monitor, buy-in and game continuation, one- to four-player linkability, and two three-way gearshifts with fire buttons.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Konami Inc., 900 Deerfield Parkway, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089; (708) 215-5100; FAX (708) 215-5144.

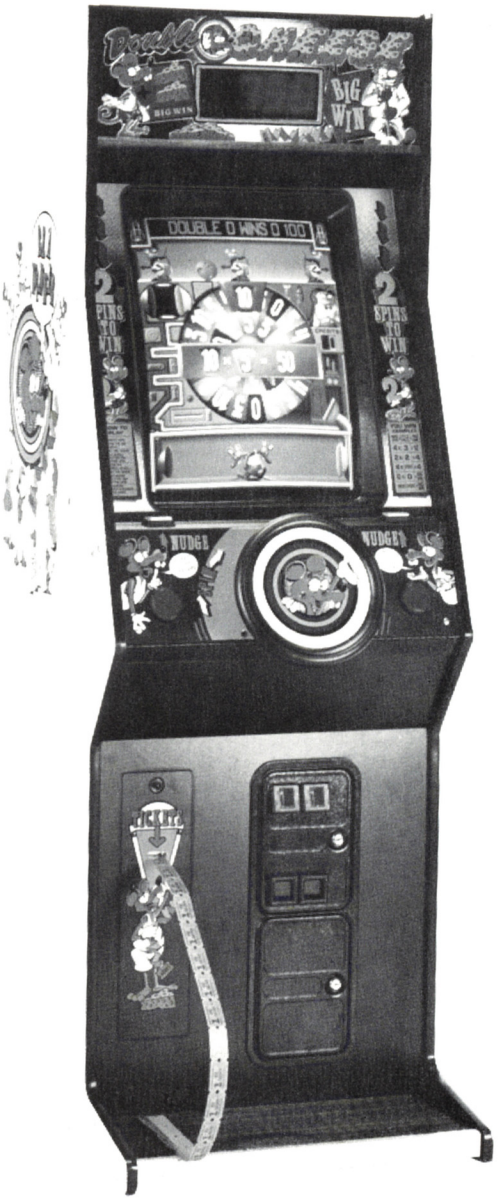
Striker

Design Plus brings a new big ball bowler to the market with *Striker*, an easy-to-set-up unit that's fully operator-adjustable.

Players obtain five balls and a full set of pins for each roll; tickets are awarded for every strike. Forty different phrases are programmed into the game to encourage players and interact with them.

Features include real pins, interactive sound, neon color graphics, all-plywood construction, and air cylinders that pull up the pins easily. Games can be placed side-by-side for a wall of bowling fun. Dimensions are 37-1/2" wide x 10' 6" long x 6' tall.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Design Plus Industries, 737 E. Marietta Ave., Peoria Heights, IL 61614; (309) 682-9359; FAX (309) 682-9394.



Double Cheese

Now you can order a pizza-themed redemption game the same way you order a special pizza—with double cheese. That's the name chosen by Midway Mfg. for its new video/redemption game, *Double Cheese*.

The game is housed in an upright cabinet and features double coin mechs, ticket dispenser, steering wheel-style control, vertical monitor, and large LED scoring on the marquee. Games can be linked for a progressive jackpot and big winnings.

Players are allowed two spins to gain high scores or be lucky enough to hit "double cheese" for the jackpot. A jackpot screen and sound effects signal the winner. Cabinet dimensions are 77" high x 25-1/2" wide x 35" deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Midway Mfg. Co., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240; FAX (312) 267-8435.

Robo-Claw

It's been a long time since the industry has seen a countertop crane. Vend Tech Industries enters this market with the newly developed *Robo-Claw*.

Players use joystick controls to maneuver the robotic arm over a field of prizes housed in capsules, bringing captured items to the front left corner in a specified amount of time (operator-adjustable).

Features include strobe and chase neon lights, adjustable attract mode and speed, extra time, and straight vend or winner-every-time option. The unit is UPS-shippable and comes with a coin or bill acceptor; a voice chip is optional.

Custom finishes and lighting are available. Dimensions are 18" deep x 23" wide x 32" high. Vend Tech also offers the *Robo-Crane* kit for larger existing cranes.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Vend Tech Industries, 3331 Towerwood Dr., Suite 307, Dallas, TX 75234; (214) 243-0456; FAX (214) 241-0432.

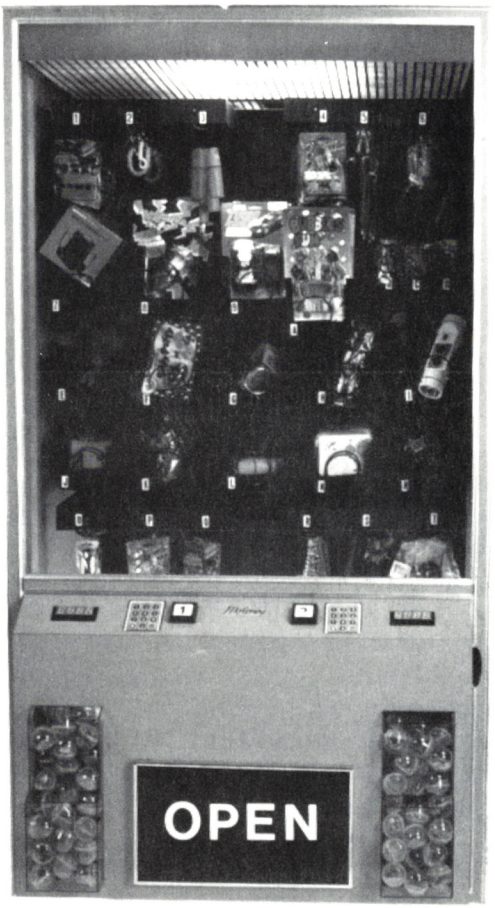
Ribbit Racin

Lazer-Tron introduces *Ribbit Racin*, a two-player racing-themed redemption game that asks players to hit frog faces as they light up. This action causes big frogs to move up an incline to the finish line above a backdrop of lily pads.

Players may use their hands or padded mallets to achieve their goal. Special bonus jackpots can be won for beating the fastest times of the day. Jackpots are operator-adjustable.

Other features include adjustable cost per play, ticket payout, and difficulty levels. Several games can be linked together to accommodate up to 10 racers. Dimensions are 41" wide x 38" deep x 95" high.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Lazer-Tron, 4430 Willow Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588; (510) 460-0873; FAX (510) 460-0365.



Tap a Tune, Redemption Shoppe Vendor

Moloney debuts a children's music-inspired video and a prize vendor patterned after a glass-front snack-vending unit.

Tap a Tune is the first in a series of new games for pre-teens. Players see a musical rendition of a favorite tune, watch the colorful keys light up, and play the same tune to beat the clock.

The cabinet is a junior size with front-drawer design. Redemption options include a ticket dispenser, prizes at chosen score levels, and an attachment for a winner-every-time.

The *Redemption Shoppe* vendor is a self-contained and unmanned redemption center that includes unique circuitry that allows it to be linked to any one or two ticket-dispensing novelty games. Instead of winning tickets, players find the score tallied at the *Redemption Shoppe*, where they can choose from displayed prizes.

Dimensions are 42" wide x 45" deep x 80" high. The front door is removable for installation in locations with 36" door openings.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Moloney Mfg., 1100 Davis Road, Elgin, IL 60123; (708) 622-0224; FAX (708) 622-0491.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

AMERICAN COIN MACHINE EXPOSITION • ROSEMONT, ILLINOIS • MARCH 17-19, 1994

ACME
IS THE NAME
COIN-OP
IS THE GAME

ACME 94

AMERICAN COIN MACHINE EXPOSITION

THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY
MARCH 17, 18, 19, 1994
ROSEMONT/O'HARE EXPOSITION CENTER
ROSEMONT, ILLINOIS

Sponsored by:
The American Amusement Machine Association
and Play Meter Magazine

MARCH 17, 18 AND 19 ARE YOUR LUCKY DAYS!

This Is The Place For International Business Opportunities

ACME '94 is the perfect opportunity for overseas operators and distributors to find U.S. manufacturers as potential sources for the new products and services with universal player appeal. You can meet face-to-face with leading U.S. suppliers who are eager to meet you and help expand your coin-op business.

ACME 94
AMERICAN COIN MACHINE EXPOSITION

ACME '94 – it's the pot of gold at the end of the coin-op rainbow – and what a rainbow it is! The products, the promotions and the parties are guaranteed to get everyone's eyes a smilin' when they see what coin-up treasures await them.

Three action-packed days put coin-op's best ideas on display – the ideas that will shape the future of your coin-op business beyond tomorrow. With a host of **exhibits featuring more than 1,000 booths,** you'll see the spectrum of products from traditional coin-op to innovative and interactive technologies.

A full schedule of seminar programs helps prepare your coin-op business for future success. These practical, informative sessions bring you up to date on where your business needs to go and how to get there to keep pace with changes in the marketplace.

ACME's **Action Centers – Redemption City** and **Coin-Op Olympics,** let operators get into the act. Coin-Op Olympics lets operators go for the gold by competing in live tournament play for valuable prizes and at the same time, learn from our "Olympic" team of tournament experts how to organize and operate leagues and tournaments for fun and profit. Redemption City shows operators the latest in design, layout, product mix and merchandising ideas for family entertainment centers.

And no clan can party like coin-op can – from the **Operator's Cocktail Party** to the **American Machine Charitable Foundation's Annual Appreciation Dinner** – you'll have more fun than you can shake a shillalah at!

If coin-op is your game, then ACME '94 is the only place to see what's what, who's who, what's hot and what's new . . . and that's no blarney! See for yourself why ACME '94 is the ONLY game in town!

ACME Is The Name...Coin-Op Is The Game, and Rosemont Is The Place

ACME '94 is the only major industry show to be held east of the Mississippi this year. We want to make it as easy as possible for international visitors, operators and distributors from coast to coast to attend the only show positioned in the peak of the spring and summer buying season.

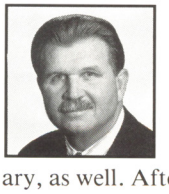
Here's three reasons why the Rosemont/O'Hare Exposition Center is an ideal location for ACME '94:

1. The Rosemont/O'Hare Exposition Center and hotels are a quick ten minute taxi ride from Chicago's O'Hare International Airport – you don't have to fight the traffic going into downtown Chicago.
2. For domestic and international visitors, O'Hare International Airport services direct flights from locations all over the country.
3. The city of Rosemont and the surrounding area offer a wide variety of restaurants, night clubs and entertainment options to make your visit more enjoyable. You'll quickly see why Rosemont is the "Second City" to Chicago!

From Dublin, Ohio to Dublin, Ireland, operators and distributors who are looking to get lucky in finding new ideas know that if they go anywhere this year, they are going to Rosemont for ACME '94.

SEE YOU THERE!

Mike Ditka – LIVE! Friday, March 18 8:00-9:00 am



As a player, a coach, and a spokesman, Mike Ditka has firmly established himself among football legends.

As a motivator, Mike Ditka's reputation is legendary, as well. After inheriting a team which had only two winning seasons in the previous years, he led the Chicago Bears to a 10 and 6 record, and the NFC Central Division title in just his third season.

Mike's place is also firmly established in Sugar Bowl history, being one of only two men to win a Super Bowl as a player, assistant coach and as a head coach.

Ditka is a highly-sought after motivational speaker and television personality. He has appeared on virtually every late night network talk show and gained notoriety as the featured guest on Saturday Night Live's popular 'Da Bears skit.

ACME '94 – Makes You the Center of Attention

If you operate a bowling center, ice or rolling skating center, mini-golf center, go-cart track or fun center of any kind, your luck is about to change.

Coin-op has kept pace with the growing family entertainment market and is pumping life and profits into these locations throughout the country. But adding redemption as an expansion to your existing "center" is serious business that requires careful planning. ACME '94 gives you a game plan for operating successful redemption that helps build customers and boosts your bottom line.

Whether you are thinking about adding-on to your location or you're a seasoned operator, ACME '94 gives you a glimpse of the newest redemption games on the market and presents a full range of products and merchandise that help you choose the right product mix for your "center."

You'll want to make Redemption City your first stop at the Show. Here you get the latest ideas for product selection, prize offerings and design concepts for redemption/family fun centers. Next you will want to talk to exhibitors who sell these exciting redemption products and merchandise. Redemption is a "show within a show" with exhibits categorized in a separate section on the exhibit floor for your convenience. Plus, you will want to learn everything you can by attending the redemption seminars which have been expanded this year to appeal to locations at all levels of redemption operation.

If you want to get into the game, there is no better place to see these new profit making ideas in action than at ACME '94!

Great Games From the Great Names in Coin-Op

Every leading supplier of games, music and amusement products, supplies and services exhibits at ACME. You'll flip over the hot, new pinballs – stay in tune with the latest in CD jukebox and reap the rewards of the most redeeming products and merchandise to come along in years! Or if darts, pool, air hockey, basketball or shuffleboard are your game, you've come to the right place. From video games to virtual reality, ACME '94 has it all!

Product Listing

Air Hockey
Amusement Games
Basketball
Bill Acceptors
Bill Changers
Billiards/Billiard Accessories
Bowling Games
Bulk Vending
Cabinets/Cabinet Parts
Can Vendors
Card Dispensers
Cleaners/Polishes
Coin Counters
Coin Validators
Computer Software/Hardware
Cranes & Rotaries
Darts
Design Firms
Digital Audio Sound Products
Gaming Equipment
Golf Games
Impulse Machines
Joysticks
Jukeboxes
Kiddie Rides
Kits
Laser Disc Players
Liftgates
Lighting
Locks
Management Consulting
Monitors
One-Stops
Pay Telephones
Pinball
Plush/Novelties
Pool
Power Supplies
Pushbuttons
Redemption Equipment & Merchandise
Remote Control Products
Replacement Parts
Scales
Security Alarms/Devices
Shuffleboard
Simulators
Sports Games
Sports & Trading Cards
Table Soccer
Tickets
Ticket Dispensing Equipment
Tokens/Coins/Medallions
Trade Associations
Trade Publications
Vending
Videogames
Video Lottery
Video Poker
Virtual Reality

REDEMPTION, MINIATURE GOL

Redemption

Our resident redemption experts, Sue Monday, Century Vending & Distributing and Rhonda Fletcher, ARMS International Inc. have planned a blockbuster program on redemption. This year, we've expanded redemption seminars to appeal to operators of redemption at all levels. A leading line-up of panelists will give you great ideas and practical information for operating and enhancing your family entertainment centers. Mark these "must go" sessions on your calendar!

#100 SPECIAL REDEMPTION FIELD TRIP

Wednesday, March 16, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

A first for ACME! We are pleased to announce an exciting outing to some of Chicago's most successful redemption facilities. You will visit diverse locations such as a complete entertainment center, soft play environment and children's activity center to name a few attractions. Be sure not to miss out on what is surely to become an ACME tradition! This session includes lunch at one of the locations. Buses will depart Rosemont/O'Hare Exposition Center promptly at 9:00 am and return at approximately 5:00 pm.

COST: $35.00

#200 REDEMPTION 101 REVISITED

Thursday, March 17, 8:00 am – 10:00 am

This seminar will cover all of the fundamentals of a successful redemption center for the new operator or the owner/operator who needs a refresher course. Topics to be covered by our panel of experts are the history of redemption, legalities of running redemption, locating the appropriate location geographically and demographically, choosing the proper machine mix, fine tuning your payout percentages and hit frequencies, security and controls behind the counter.

COST: $20.00

#301 REDEMPTION FOR PROFIT

Friday, March 18, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

With redemption basics under your belt, this seminar will help the established operator fine tune his or her operation and realize more profits. With the proper mix of merchandise and marketing techniques, our distinguished panel will discuss many new and exciting ideas for your redemption facility. Also, the use of other products to complement the redemption games such as mini golf, soft play, rides and attractions, food concessions and party planning will be discussed.

COST: $20.00

Miniature Golf

#101 MGAA ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Wednesday, March 16, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

If you have a mini-golf center or are interested in getting into the business, you will not want to miss a day of Round Table Discussions presented by the Miniature Golf Association of America (MGAA) at ACME '94. The MGAA faculty will consist of seasoned operators, suppliers, consultants and builders of their network of family facilities worldwide. This program is tiring, yet rewarding in that it is the most in-depth presentation of facilities of family sports and entertainment.

Seven in-depth round table discussions, plus time for open discussion start at 8:30 am, Wednesday, March 16. Each attendee will be assigned a group number or track. This will be your group for the day. There will be seven designated discussion groups. Group size is limited to between 10-15 people. Each group will proceed to their assigned discussion area. Each group rotates every 50 minutes. Each topic will be presented seven times so that each attendee will receive all the information presented. An open discussion session will be held at the end of the program allowing any unanswered questions to be addressed. This program affords you the opportunity to listen, contribute and take part in all the sessions presented without having to choose topics.

This program includes a light lunch. Advance registration is recommended. Registrants should come to the Seminar Registration Desk between 8:00 – 8:30 am to receive their group number and schedule for the day.

COST: $30.00

Round Table Topics Include:

Miniature Golf – Putting It Together

From its past history to the trends in the 90's, you will learn how the new challenging and themed courses are putting more than 100,000 rounds per season. Learn how to build or revamp facilities that attract ages 4 to 84. Discover how hole layout, themes, landscaping, water systems, club houses, etc. play an important role in the miniature golf country club. Learn how to build a "Honey, I shrunk the course" golf in a miniature facility.

Miniature Golf – Golf Operators Views & Clues

Learn how successful operators do it! Learn how customer satisfaction with one's facility results in long term family relationships through generations of putters. Hear how the MGAA member facilities operate and what components are right in different areas of the country. Discover methods of managing employees and maintaining the facility. Hear how MGAA members got started and share the ups and downs of operating their facilities. Learn the owners side of the counter – what goes on behind the scenes including what goes into the cash register.

Facility Financing – How'd They Do It!

MGAA Faculty members share their expertise on the subjects of joint venture, SBA loans, bank financing, partnerships or cash requirements to build or renovate a project. From small to large facilities, you'll find our faculty willing to share their wealth of information on how they did it and what guidelines to follow. You will learn how demographics and feasibility studies are made and why due diligence reports and why pro formas play an important role. You'll hear it from the people behind the counter who have been there and made it.

Driving Ranges – Alternative Golf Facilities & Supplies

No longer are driving ranges thought of as an alternative or interim use for land. The newly designed facilities feature low level lighting, target greens, learning academies, ultra-modern tee areas and most recently acres of synthetic turf. The MGAA faculty will share their facility operations with you and inform you of Alternative Golf which attracts the entire family such as executive golf courses, synthetic or bent-grass putting courses or golf simulation. They'll also show you the new putting surfaces together with the dome installations for year-round play and the equipment needed for these advanced operations.

Family Entertainment Centers (FEC) and Family Fun Centers (FFC) – Components That Add UP To Dollars!

The MGAA faculty operators and builders of the hottest industry in the 90's share their world of knowledge. You'll learn what makes up these complexes such as go-karts, batting cages/ranges, bumper boats, miniature golf, arcades and redemption centers, soft play and much more. Learn what mix you may want and how other operators have put their complexes together. You'll see how each component helps the other component if done properly. Be prepared for you'll get some facts and figures that will astound you. You'll discover why these facilities are attracting the entire family for this is truly "G" rated whole family recreation.

To Register, complete the registration form included with this brochure. Tickets will be mailed to you with your badge of admission. Seminar registration fees listed in this brochure and on the registration form apply to advance registration only.

TECHNICAL SESSIONS & MORE!

Family Sports Complexes – One Step Beyond the FEC
Evolving beyond the Family Entertainment Center or Family Fun Center is the Family Sports Complex. You'll learn every component necessary to implement the necessary steps to build, design or renovate your facility into this complete concept. The decision to patronize these facilities are made by the entire family. Our faculty will share their operations with you from start to finish including their ever changing revisions to keep up with the great demand of such a facility. Every component of the MGAA network umbrella will be discussed for these complexes utilize almost all of the cutting-edge activities that can be found in the family sport, recreation and entertainment areas.

Operations, Advertising, Marketing, Promotions & Tournaments
The key to success is "keep 'em coming back." Learn from the tried and proven operations format in this area how not to waste your budget on gimmicks, but instead use it wisely on successful events and promotions that really work. The MGAA faculty will share their secrets in this area. You'll find out how your facility can get the hands on experience and knowledge that works. Find out how the MGAA's National Promotions and Tournaments can work for you. See excerpts of the 1993 MGAA National Championship that aired on ESPN and how you can start a successful tournament and league program.

The series of roundtable discussions concludes with a general session in which all MGAA member faculty are present for you to ask and have your questions answered.

Technical Sessions

THEY'RE BACK! RANDY FROMM'S ADVANCED TECHNICAL SESSIONS! If you missed them last year, you'll want to plan now to attend these information packed sessions to help you sharpen your technical skills.

#201 HOW TO OPERATE AN OSCILLOSCOPE

Thursday, March 17, 8:00 am – 10:00 am
The oscilloscope can be an indispensable piece of test equipment for troubleshooting both analog and digital circuits. This seminar will begin with the most basic use of the oscilloscope and its controls and switches. The session concludes with advanced measurement techniques. Some general familiarity with electronics will help those attending.
COST: $25

#203 ADVANCED MONITOR TROUBLESHOOTING

Thursday, March 17, 10:15 am – 12:15 pm
Most monitor repairs are pretty straightforward. You change a few capacitors or a transistor and pat yourself on the back for a job well-done. But some monitor repairs aren't so easy. This seminar will provide a detailed look at monitor circuits and oscilloscope waveforms. Advanced troubleshooting techniques will be presented as well. A good, working knowledge of monitor operation will greatly assist those attending. Anyone attending this session should have previously attended one of Randy's monitor seminars at ACME.
COST: $25

#300 INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL ELECTRONICS AND MICROPROCESSOR BASED SYSTEMS

Friday, March 18, 9:00 am – Noon
From pinball machines to redemption equipment to CD jukeboxes, we're living in a wild, wacky, digital world. This seminar will touch on the most basic concepts of digital electronics and trouble-shooting. This will help you fix a lot of simple failures in digital systems. But more importantly, this seminar will show you how to teach yourself and expand your knowledge of digital electronics and microprocessor based systems.
COST: $25

...And More!

These timely sessions are designed to help you promote your pinball or CD jukebox location and learn more about current legislation that will affect your business.
Cost to attend these sessions: $20 per person, per session.

#202 MUSIC BUSINESS 101: PROGRAMMING AND PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO MAXIMIZE CD JUKEBOX COLLECTIONS

Thursday, March 17, 8:00 am – 10:00 am
Moderator: Jeremy Tepper, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief, Street Beat Magazine

A panel of leading jukebox operators and music industry professionals discuss current music trends and opportunities for operators to customize location selections, increase CD jukebox awareness and boost earnings power.

#204 HEALTH CARE REFORM AND ITS IMPACT ON OPERATORS

Thursday, March 17, 10:15 am – 12:15 pm
Speakers: Robert L. Castle and Robert L. Water, Attorneys Arent, Fox, Kintner, Plotkin and Kahn

The Clinton Administration's proposed Health Security plan will affect everyone, but in particular, small business owners. This important session will keep you well informed on the impact and responsibilities the plan will have on your business operation. Mr. Castle and Mr. Waters represent employer interests in, respectively, litigation involving employee benefits and federal employment legislation. Mr. Waters will discuss the current status in Congress of the Clinton Administration's Health Security Act and the counterproposals to it; Mr. Castle will discuss the decisions and costs that will be required of small employers if the legislation is enacted. Time will be allowed for question and answer at the conclusion of the session.

#302 YOUR "EYE" TO THE FUTURE: INNOVATIVE AND INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Friday, March 18, 11:15 am – 1:15 pm
Moderator: Michael Getlan, Amusement Consultants, Inc.

Forward thinking operators looking for new and creative ways to increase traffic and improve profits are taking a good hard look at interactive and new and innovative technologies in pay for play. Learn what is available in the marketplace today and how these products can help you compete and succeed in the coin-op market of tomorrow.

#303 PRIMER FOR SUCCESSFUL PINBALL PROMOTION

Friday, March 18, 11:15 am – 1:15 pm
Speakers: Steve Epstein, President, PAPA and Owner/Operator of the Broadway Arcade
Joe Schick, Executive Director, PAPA and President of Schick Promotions.

The pinball revival that has occurred in the last few years has paved the way for increased profit making opportunities. Now more than ever before, the product, the titles and the technology has captured the interest and attention of players worldwide. It's re-kindled America's love-affair with the pinball. This session will teach operators ways to use P.O.P. in your locations, what in-store promotions work, how to get editorial coverage for your location and more. You will learn the basics of pinball promotion from the pros and benefit from their expertise from both an operator's perspective and from a promoters perspective. You will leave this fast paced session with loads of ideas and practical information you can put into action immediately. Come prepared to share your ideas and learn how proper promotion at the local level can boost your earnings and bring in more customers.

SHOWSTOPPING ENTERTAINMENT AND EVENTS YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS

OPERATORS – This One's For You

B'gosh and begorra – the gang's all here! Sure as the Chicago River runs green on St. Patrick's Day, *ACME* salutes the operators who continue to be the backbone of this great industry. Everyone will be sporting their shamrocks, sipping some brew and sampling the tastes that made Chicago famous.

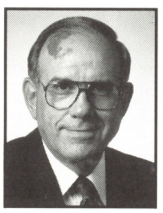
Courtesy of ***Street Beat Magazine*** and ***Mobile Records,*** you will be entertained by an established major label recording artist.

The special highlight of the evening includes the presentation of the AAMA Achievement Awards and the Play Meter Awards for Excellence.

Thursday, March 17 at 7:00 p.m. marks the date and the Rosemont/O'Hare Exposition Center is the place to meet old friends, make new acquaintances and join in the merry making!

ACME '94 continues a long-standing tradition for top-notch entertainment and innovation. At the ***American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation Annual Appreciation Dinner*** *and* ***Operator's Cocktail Party,*** *you'll have a chance to relax from the fast pace of the exposition and spend sometime unwinding with your peers.*

American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation's Annual Appreciation Dinner



Steve Lieberman, of Lieberman Music Company, will be honored at the ***American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation's (AAMCF) 1994 Annual Appreciation Dinner*** as one of coin-op's outstanding leaders. Back by popular demand, the Pink Flamingo's promise a lively evening of entertainment. Make your plans to honor Steve on March 18th at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare. Tickets can be purchased by calling the *AAMCF at (708) 290-9171.* Proceeds from the Appreciation Dinner will be donated to a children's charity of the honoree's choice.

Redemption City Returns!

Last year, ***Redemption City*** was the "hit of the show." This year, we're making Redemption City even bigger and better. There will be more displays and presentations by manufacturers and suppliers of redemption equipment and merchandise to help you get a bigger share of the fastest growing segment of the industry.

If you want to learn more about operating a successful redemption center in your location, make Redemption City your first stop and preview the latest games and merchandising available in the redemption category.

Let The Games Begin – Again!

Where else can you flex your flippers or go for the "goal," learn how to run leagues and tournaments plus win valuable prizes? ***Coin-Op Olympics*** lets operators compete in four coin-op categories: Pinball, Darts, Hoop Shot and Air Hockey. The three highest overall scorers win their choice of equipment from designated prizes courtesy of our "Olympic" sponsors. Plus you can benefit from our team of Coin-Op Olympic trainers who will teach you how to run and organize leagues and tournaments for fun and profit.

The three highest overall scorers can choose their prize from valuable equipment courtesy of our Olympic sponsors. The tournament will be based on an Olympian scoring system.

Plus all contestants qualify for a random drawing for one of the designated games.

All operators attending *ACME '94* are eligible to participate. There is no fee to participate, just sign up at the Show. Last year, there were 162 contestants so don't miss this chance to get into the games!

Last Year's Winners

1st Place: *Robert L. Brown, Fun & Games,* Glendale, Arizona won Creature From The Black Lagoon, courtesy of Williams Electronics

2nd Place: *Dan Aymar, P-N-L Vending,* Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania won Street Fighter II, courtesy of Premier Technology

3rd Place: *David Brown, Sierra Amusement Co.* Sacremento, California won Rocky & Bullwinkle, courtesy of Data East Pinball

Badge Registration

Register Today For Your ACME '94 Badge and $ave, $ave, $ave!!!

Register by **February 11, 1994** and pay only **$15**. After February 11 and on-site, the fee will be $20. There is a $10 fee to replace lost badges – no exceptions. Minors under the age of 19 will be admitted provided they have paid their registration fee and are accompanied by a badge bearing adult.

Your registration fee includes:

- Personalized badge of admission mailed to you in advance of the Show
- Admission to exhibits
- Admission to the Operator's Cocktail Party
- Participation in Coin-Op Olympics

Housing

Specially negotiated rates have been secured at the following official ***ACME '94*** hotels in the Rosemont area:

- Embassy Suites
- Holiday Inn O'Hare
- Hotel Sofitel
- Hyatt Regency O'Hare
- O'Hare Hilton
- Radisson Suites
- Westin O'Hare

Please refer to the list of hotels and room rates and policies listed on the enclosed Housing Form.

All reservations must be made through the ACME Housing Bureau by submitting the hotel reservation form enclosed in this brochure. All hotels require one night's deposit to guarantee your room for arrival. The hotels accept all major credit cards or company checks. Please complete the required credit card information on the Hotel Registration Form to guarantee your room for arrival. If sending a company check, make check payable to the hotel of your choice.

Confirmations will be sent directly from the hotels. Upon receipt of confirmation from the hotel, changes in arrival/departure dates can be made directly with the hotel. Requests for additional rooms or cancellations must be submitted in writing to the ACME Housing Bureau. The ACME Housing Bureau will not accept phone reservations – all requests must be submitted on the official Hotel Reservation Form or on company letterhead.

The Hyatt Regency, The Hotel Sofitel and the Radisson Suites are linked to the Rosemont/O'Hare Exposition Center via the unique Rosemont Skybridge Network, a totally enclosed walkway. Across from the Exposition Center is the Holiday Inn. Just a short distance away is Embassy Suites whose courtesy shuttle will transport you to the Exposition Center. The O'Hare Hilton is located at the Airport.

Many of the hotels in the Rosemont area offer complimentary airport shuttle service. Check with the hotel to which you have been assigned for shuttle information.

If you are driving, the Rosemont/O'Hare Exposition Center is easily accessible by major expressways. Parking is available in one of two facilities which also connect to the Exposition Center via the Skybridge Network.

Air Travel

Liberty Travel, the official travel agent of *ACME '94* offers considerable discounts on several major carriers servicing Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. For reservations and information, call ***(908) 322-2444*** Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Be sure to mention ACME.

Car Rental

National Car Rental is the official car rental agency for ***ACME '94.*** Call today for advanced, confirmed reservations and information: ***1-800-CAR-RENT.*** Be sure to mention discount #6402634.

Schedule of Events

Exhibits and seminars will be held at the Rosemont/O'Hare Exposition Center unless otherwise noted.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

Seminar #100
Redemption Field Trip
Boarding at 8:30 am in front of Rosemont/O'Hare Exposition Center Buses depart promptly at 9:00 am.

Seminar #101: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm
Miniature Golf Association of America (MGAA)
Round Table Discussions
Miniature Golf – Putting It Together
Miniature Golf – Golf Operators Views & Clues
Facility Financing – How'd They Do It!
Driving Ranges – Alternative Golf Facilities & Supplies
Family Entertainment Centers (FEC) & Family Fun Centers (FFC) – Components That Add Up To Dollars!
Family Sports Complexes – One Step Beyond the FEC
Operations, Advertising, Marketing, Promotions & Tournaments
Open Discussion

Distributor Gala 8:00 pm
(By Invitation Only) Westin O'Hare

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

Seminar #200: 8:00 am – 10:00 am
Redemption 101 Revisited

Seminar #201: 8:00 am – 10:00 am
How To Operate an Oscilloscope

Seminar #202: 8:00 am – 10:00 am
Music Business 101:
Programming & Promotional Opportunities To Maximize CD Jukebox Collections

Coin-Op Olympics 9:00 am – Noon

Exhibit Hours: 9:00 am – Noon
Distributors Only

Seminar #203: 10:15 am – 12:15 pm
Advanced Monitor Troubleshooting

Seminar #204: 10:15 am – 12:15 pm
Health Care Reform & Its Impact On Operators

Exhibit Hours: Noon – 5:00 pm
General Trade Admission

Coin-Op Olympics 4:00 – 5:00 pm

ACME Operator's Cocktail Party 7:00 – 9:00 pm
(Free Admission)

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

Mike Ditka – LIVE! 8:00 am – 9:00 am
(Free Admission)

Seminar #300: 9:00 am – Noon
Introduction To Digital Electronics & Microprocessor Based Systems

Seminar #301: 9:00 am – 11:00 am
Redemption For Profit

Coin-Op Olympics 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Exhibit Hours: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm
General Trade Admission

Seminar #302: 11:15 am – 1:15 pm
Your "Eye" To The Future:
Interactive & Innovative Technologies

Seminar #303: 11:15 am – 1:15 pm
A Primer For Successful Pinball Promotion

Coin-Op Olympics 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation Annual Appreciation Dinner 7:00 pm
Hyatt Regency O'Hare
Honoring Steve Lieberman, Lieberman Music Company
(Paid Admission)

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

Coin-Op Olympics 8:00 am – 10:00 am

Exhibit Hours: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
General Trade Admission

Stay Ahead of the Game

Go to the Show with game plan in mind, and you'll come back a winner every time!

- Register & Make Your Travel Plans *Now* !
- Set your show goals and objectives
- Make a list of companies you want to see
- Clip articles from trade publications about products you want to see
- Jot down questions you need to know – pricing, service, delivery, etc.
- Schedule appointments with companies you know you need to see

Show Sponsors

ACME '94 is sponsored and produced by the *American Amusement Machine Association*, the national trade association for manufacturers, distributors and parts suppliers of coin-operated amusement products and *Play Meter Magazine*, a leading publisher in the coin-operated entertainment field.

1994 Show Committee

Bill Cravens, Leprechaun, Inc., Chairman
Valerie Cognevich, Play Meter Magazine
Carol Lally, Play Meter Magazine
Sue Monday, Century Vending & Distributing
Bill Rickett, Dynamo Corporation

ACME '93 List of Exhibitors

A-1 Products
Ace Novelty Company
Acme Premium Supply
Action Lighting, Inc.
Advanced Auctions
Advanced Games & Engineering Inc.
Advent Technology
Alter Enterprises
Alternate Worlds Technology, Inc.
Alvin G. & Company
AAMA
Ameri Corporation
American Alpha
American Darters Association, Inc.
American Design Components
American International Shuffleboard Corp.
American Laser Games
American Sammy Corp.
American Simulators, Inc.
American Technos Inc.
Amusement World Inc.
The Amusement Equipment Exchange
Amutronics Inc.
Aqua Skill
Arachnid, Inc.
Asahi Seiko USA, Inc.
Atari Games Corporation
B & E Vending Co. Inc.
Bally Gaming Inc.
Base 2 Technologies
Baton Lock & Hardware
Bay Tek, Inc.
R.H. Belam Company, Inc.
Bergmann USA Inc.
Betson Enterprises
Betson Imperial Export
Betstar Ltd.
H. Betti Industries
Biederman Design Labs
Big Ten Electronics
Blitz System, Inc.
The Board Market
Bob-Cap Industries
Bob's Space Racers
Bonita Marie International
Bottelsen Dart Co. Inc.
Dan Brechner & Co., Inc.
Bromley Inc.
Bundra Games Corp.
CDS
C & G Electronics
California Games
Canadian Coin Box Magazine
Capcom U.S.A. Inc.
Carousel International
Cartoon Express of America
Century Vending & Dist.
Classic Inc.
Clever Devices
Coastal Amusement Distributors, Inc.
Coin Acceptors, Inc.
Coin Concepts, Inc.
Coin Controls International
Coin Journal Limited
Coin Mechanisms Inc.
CompuLine, Inc.
Condor Creations, Inc.
Conlux USA Corp.
D & R Industries, Inc.
Dart World, Inc.
Data East
Deltronic Labs, Inc.
Design Plus Industries
Designs International
Digital Disc of America
Diversified Coin Service
Dixie-Narco
Dobco Enterprises Ltd.
Double Game Magazine
Doyle International
Drew Dist. Co. Inc.
Dynamo Corporation
EAGO Company Ltd.
Barma-Wilson Corp.
EAGLE LIFT
Eldorado Games Ltd.
Equipment Systems & Devices, Inc. - ESD
EuroSlot
Exidy Inc.
Eygo Company Ltd.
FABTEK Inc.
Falgas U.S.A., Inc.
Fawn Vendors Inc.
Fun Industries, Inc. (formerly Johnston Products Co.)
G.D.C., Inc.
GaMCO International Inc.
The Game Doc
Gemini Chemical Co.
Giant Gumball Machine
Good Stuff Corp.
Grayhound Electronics Inc.
Great American Billiards
Great Lakes Darts Distr.
HMS Monaco
Hamilton Mfg. Corp.
Hantarex Corporation of America
Happ Controls, Inc.
Hecon Corporation
Hoffman & Hoffman
Hoops! USA Inc.
Hot Hits
ICM Corporation
Ideal Software Systems
IFPA – International Flipper Pinball Association
Imperial International
Innovative Concepts In Entertainment
Intercard Inc.
International Game Technology
International Impulse
International Vending Machines
Intervideo S.A.
Irem America Corporation
Ithaca Peripherals, Inc. (subsidiary of Tridex Corp.)
JCM North American Bill Acceptors Div.
J-S Sales Company, Inc.
Jaleco USA, Inc.
Just Kiddie Rides
K-Scale, Inc.
Kaneko USA, Ltd.
Kiddie Rides USA
Kids World Amusement Corp.
King Plush
Konami Inc.
Kramer Manufacturing
LA East
Laramie Interests, Inc.
The Latin Jukebox
Lazer-Tron
Leisure Entertainment, Ltd.
Leprechaun, Inc.
Lock America, Inc.
Lynde-Ordway Co. Inc.
M.S. Toy/Brady Novelty
Machine-O-Matic Limited
Mars Electronics International
Maxima Entertainment
May Lei U.S.A. Inc.
Mayoni Enterprises
McO'River, Inc.
Medalist Mktg. Corp.
Meltec, Inc.
Merit Industries, Inc.
Micro Manufacturing Inc.
Microtouch Systems, Inc.
Midway Mfg. Co.
J.R. Minick & Associates
Miraco Industries Ltd.
Mobile Record Service
Monarch Tool & Mfg. Co.
Mondial
Money Won Inc.
Mr. Vend
Multi-Max Ltd.
Muncie Novelty
Murrey & Sons Co. Inc.
Musivend, Inc./Video Insights
NAMCO America, Inc.
NSM America Inc.
Nadel & Sons Toy Corp.
NANCO/Nancy Sales Co.
National Sports Games
National Ticket Co.
Neonetics, Inc.
Neotec Graphic International, Inc.
Noel Industries Inc.
Nortech Inc.
David Nutting Associates
Ocean of America
OK Manufacturing
Oriental Trading Company
P & H Company, Inc.
P.V.A.
Peninsula Vending
Pentranic, Inc.
Perfect 360 Controls
Pioneer Laser Entertainment
Play Ball! Cards & Novelties
Play-By-Play Toys and Novelties
Play Meter Magazine
Plush Appeal
Plush-4-Play, Inc.
Pop-A-Shot, Inc.
Premier Technology
Print-A-Card Inc. USA
PRIZES!
Protect Vending
Quantum Industries, Inc.
Quick Silver Development Co.
RMK Sales, Inc.
Rainbow Crane
Real Darts International
Rebecca's
Red Baron Board Exchange
Redemption Central
Reid Sales Mfg.
RePlay Magazine
Rock-Ola Mfg. Corp.
Roger Williams Mint
Romstar
Rosette, Inc.
Rowe International, Inc.
S&A International
SNK Corporation of America
Scan Coin, Inc.
Seeburg International, Inc.
SEGA Enterprises, Inc. (USA)
Segai, Inc.
Seidel Amusement Machine Co. Inc.
Selectra International Designs, Ltd.
Kevin Sharp Enterprises
Sharp Image Electronics
Fred Silber Company
Silent Partner Inc.
Merchandise Services Division
Simangraph
Skee Ball, Inc./Vari-Tech International
Smart Industries Corp.
Sony Corp.
Space Age Electronics
Sportech Inc.
Sport Sciences Inc.
Standard Change-Makers Inc.
Standard Metal Typer Inc.
Star Manufacturing, Inc.
Steiner Manufacturing & Sales Inc.
Step & Roll Dolly
Strata Group, Inc.
Street Beat Magazine
Superior Toy & Novelty
Taito America Corporation
Tamiko Corp.
Teamwrite Corporation
Technik Mfg. Inc.
Tecmo, Inc.
TEKBILT inc.
3-Koam, Inc.
Tornado Table Soccer
Tourist Attractions Parks Magazine
U-Seal-It Inc.
The Ultimate Pooltable Mover
U.S. Amusement Auction
U.S. Games, Inc.
VR8 Inc.
Valley Recreation Products, Inc.
Van Brook of Lexington
Vari-Tech Intl., Div. of Skee Ball
Vending Times
Video Amusements of Canada
Video Gaming Technologies
Video Lottery Consultants
WMS Gaming Inc.
Wells-Gardner Electronics Corporation
What's New For Family Fun Centers
Wico Corporation
Williams Electronics Games, Inc.
The Wurlitzer Jukebox Co.
XCP Inc.
Zamperla, Inc.

For Information Contact:

ACME '94 Show Management
WILLIAM T. GLASGOW, INC.
16066 South Park Avenue
South Holland, IL 60473-1500
Phone: 708-333-9292
FAX: 708-333-4086

SHOW SPONSORS:

AMERICAN AMUSEMENT MACHINE ASSOCIATION (AAMA)
450 East Higgins Road, Suite 201
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1417
Phone: 708-290-9088

PLAY METER MAGAZINE
6600 Fleur De Lis Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70124
Phone: 504-488-7003

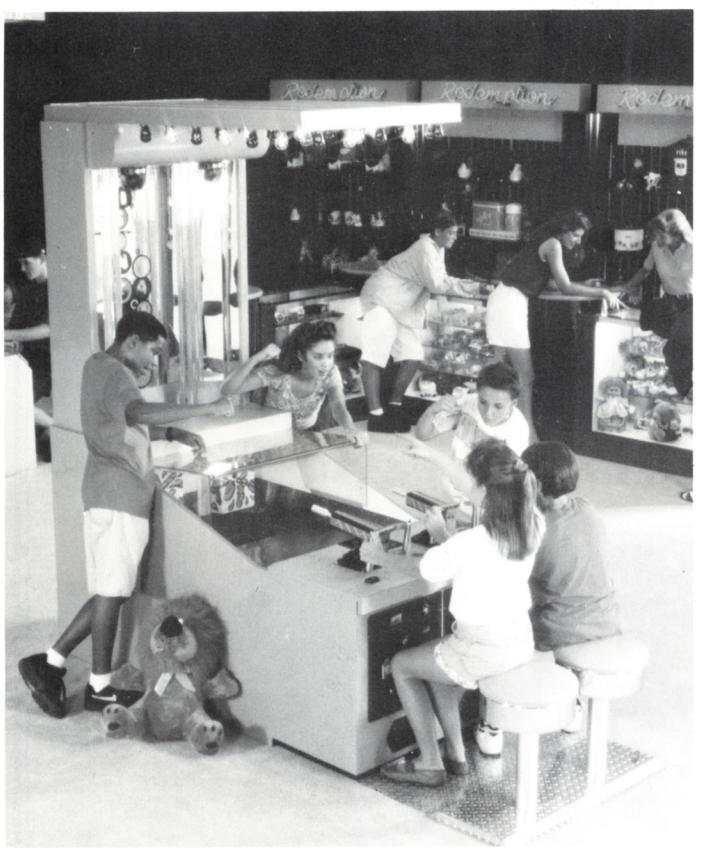
Rising Waters

Bob's Space Racers brings a bubbling, gurgling, water race game to the redemption market with *Rising Waters*. Players aim their water cannons at the target bull's-eye, attempting to fill a tube with colored water before a competitor.

Features include a player accounting system, ticket dispenser with adjustable payout, automatic winner lights and bell, plastic laminate finish, separate locking cash box, self-contained water system, adjustable score and difficulty level, and player seating.

Options include decorative lighting, custom color, and custom accounting and cash control. Game dimensions are 94" high x 103" deep with the seat.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Bob's Space Racers Inc., 427 15th St., Daytona Beach, FL 32117; (904) 677-0761; FAX (904) 677-0794.



Virtua Fighters

Sega debuts the world's first CG graphic fighting action game, *Virtua Fighters*. Like the successful *Virtua Racing*, *Virtua Fighters* offers a selection of four viewports.

The computerized viewport function provides an exciting view into the game action while two players combat each other on an isolated arena platform. The viewport rotates around the arena in a full 360-degree format for a superior 3-D perspective.

Players choose to be one of eight characters, each with his own special moves, then fight at least eight enemies on a battle platform in a 3-D environment. The goal: battle the opponent for the best of three matches.

Secret moves and combinations await the player. An instant replay mode provides a rotational repeat view of a finishing move after a competitor is knocked out.

The control panel includes an eight-way joystick and three buttons for kick, punch, and defense. Sega's Model 1 hardware system affords 180,000 polygons-per-second of simulation.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Sega Enterprises Inc., 275 Shoreline Drive, Suite 201, Redwood City, CA 94065; (415) 802-3100; FAX (415) 802-3120.

The IRS Says...

that you may now use **income forecasting** to depreciate your video games.

How does this affect you?

You may now depreciate your video games in excess of **50% - in the very first year!** (Thank God! It's about time we got a break!) This will save you thousands of dollars in taxes.

Now the bad news...

You will have to keep very detailed and precise records for up to 5 years on each of your games. Now, if you are not careful, you will end up giving the biggest share of savings to your accounting firm or hire another person in the office...

Solution... Solution... Solution... Solution...

The FORECASTOR

The FORECASTOR is a computer program designed specifically to meet all the requirements of the IRS letter ruling on depreciation of video games. It maintains all records, calculates depreciation percentages, and retains in a special log all details needed for tax returns.

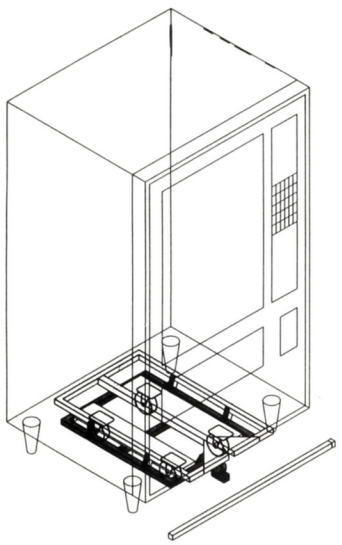
Distributed Exclusively By:

SILENT PARTNER, INC.

3441 SOUTH PARK • SPRINGFIELD, IL 62704

(217) 793-3350

Vending machine mover

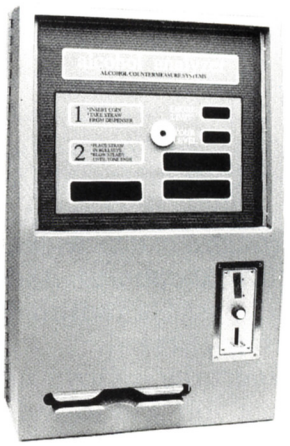


Nortech has a new machine designed to move big window vending machines. The *Vendor Easy Lift* is easy to use to relocate and clean your vending machines and can reduce injury claims. It requires less than 50 pounds of down pressure to lift the machine.

The *Vendor Easy Lift* has four-inch casters for easy rolling, durable steel construction, and is inexpensive.

For more information, contact Nortech Inc., P.O. Box 338, Virginia, MN 55792; (218) 741-6075 or toll-free (800) 542-6372; FAX (218) 741-8618.

Public breath tester



Alcohol Countermeasure Systems, manufacturer of law enforcement breath alcohol testers for 10 years, introduces the EBA electronic breath analyzer. It's a public access analyzer as accurate as those used by police and as simple to use as a telephone.

The EBA is designed for unsupervised public testing and is automatically ready for a test. The user simply inserts a coin, places a straw into the bullseye, and exhales. In only a few seconds an audio tone sounds to signal the end of the test. The exact alcohol reading is displayed on the digital readout and the local blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit is shown above it for comparison.

For more information, contact Alcohol Countermeasure Systems Corp., 14-975 Midway Blvd., Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L5T 2C6; (416) 670-2288 or FAX (416) 670-8211.

Coin cleaner

Wada Metal of America has introduced a new coin washing and drying machine called the *Coin Clean*. The *Coin Clean* can handle 120,000 coins per hour with its unique dehydration process and built-in dryer system.

The automatic computer system monitors all operations and shuts down in case of improper usage.

Stainless steel durability and compact design makes installation easy The unit weighs 270 lbs. and features a large capacity hopper, water supply and safe one-touch drain, low water warning buzzer, and one-touch operation control panel. The dimensions are 29-1/2" high x 21-3/4" wide x 39" long.

For more information, contact WADA Metal of America, 27 Superior Blvd., Rome, GA 30161; (706) 291-7410 or FAX (706) 291-7472.

Low cost meters

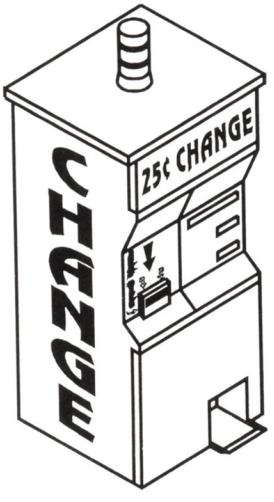
Tekbilt Inc. has introduced low-cost, high-quality meters. They are six-digit, non-resettable, electromechanical, and 12VDC (6, 24, and 110 voltages available).

Life testing exceeds over 10 million counts and private labeling is available. Mechanical meters require two things, price and performance. Tekbilt says it offers both. The meter prices average 50 to 75 cents less than industry pricing.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Tekbilt Inc., 3983 Mann Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006; (800) 666-7776.

Gaming change machine

Tekbilt Inc. has introduced a new high-speed, high-capacity, and high-security gaming change machine. It accepts $1 through $20 bills with $50 and $100 optional. It also accepts Canadian $2 through $20 bills.

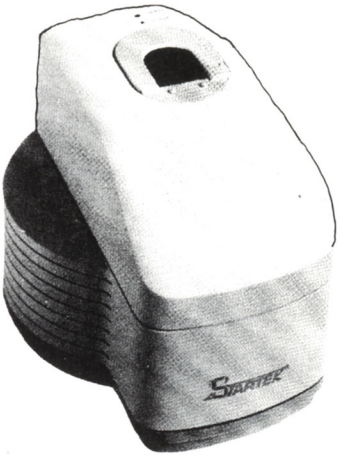


Features include network or stand-alone operation, remote programmable moving message, remote enabling of acceptable denominations, full accounting functions, full error code reporting, last transaction indicator, three level runaway protection, high-security bill acceptor with 1,000 bill stacker, and standard PC-based management program. Options include lockable removable stackers and custom interfaces and programs. The dimensions are 16" wide x 16.5" deep x 39" high.

For more information, contact Tekbilt, Huntingdon Valley Industrial Center, 3983 Mann Rd., Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006; (215) 322-3232 or FAX (215) 322-3238.

Fingerprint Verifier

Tekbilt Inc. has introduced a fool-proof security entrance/passage/access identification machine called the *FingerCheck Fingerprint Verifier*.



The machine makes use of the unique and unchangeable characteristics of personal fingerprints to provide highly accurate identity verification. The live-scan fingerprint captured by the fingerprint reader is matched up to the scan previously enrolled into the computer system.

Features include an optical system that rejects counterfeit fingerprints duplicated in any way when used to access the system, a reader (FC100) that provides true replica picture of live-scan fingerprints by connecting to the computer and printing systems, and a verifier that takes only two to three seconds for one-on-one matching.

For more information, contact Tekbilt, Huntingdon Valley Industrial Center, 3983 Mann Rd., Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006; (215) 322-3232 or FAX (215) 322-3238.

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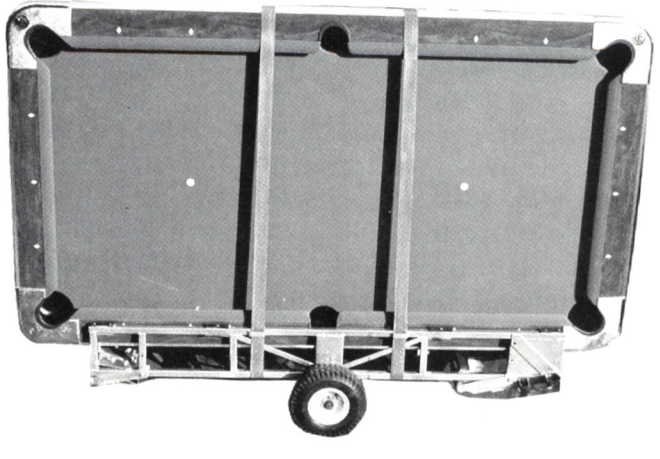

The slate covering table lifts the slate from the mover and places it perfectly centered on the table. A latch releases a roll bar, which recesses inside the covering table allowing easy access on all sides to recover the slate.

The dimensions are 40" wide x 36" high x 36" deep. It weighs 85 lbs.

For more information, contact Reid Sales Music Co., 412 Cottage St., Delphi, IN 46923; (317) 564-3182 or toll-free (800) 925-9275. □

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(A monthly survey conducted by AAMA)

Convenience Stores

Video: Mortal Kombat II (Midway)
Super Street Fighter II (Capcom)
NBA JAM (Midway)
Samurai Shodown (SNK)
Lethal Enforcers (Konami)

Pinball: The Addams Family (Bally)
Indiana Jones (Williams)

Pizza Parlors and Restaurants

Video: Mortal Kombat II (Midway)
Super Street Fighter II (Capcom)
NBA JAM (Midway)
Samurai Shodown (SNK)
Lethal Enforcers (Konami)

Pinball: Jurassic Park (Data East)
Indiana Jones (Williams)

Other: Air Hockey (Dynamo)
CD Jukebox (unnamed)

Nightclubs and Taverns

Video: NBA JAM (Midway)
Virtua Racing (Sega)
Raiden II (Fabtek)

Pinball: Tee'd Off (Premier)
Indiana Jones (Williams)

Other: Full Court Frenzy (ICE)
Pool Table (unnamed)

Bowling and Recreation Centers

Video: Mortal Kombat II (Midway)
NBA JAM (Midway)
Super Street Fighter II (Capcom)
Lethal Enforcers (Konami)
Run and Gun (Konami)
Samurai Shodown (SNK)
Raiden II (Fabtek)

Pinball: Indiana Jones (Williams)
The Addams Family (Bally)
Judge Dredd (Bally)

Other: Air Hockey (Dynamo)
Crane (unnamed)

Amusement Centers

Video: Mortal Kombat II (Midway)
NBA JAM (Midway)
Super Street Fighter II (Capcom)
Lethal Enforcers (Konami)
Run and Gun (Konami)
Samurai Shodown (SNK)
Raiden II (Fabtek)

Pinball: Indiana Jones (Williams)
The Addams Family (Bally)
Judge Dredd (Bally)

Other: Air Hockey (Dynamo)
Crane (unnamed)

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	THIS CHART	LAST CHART	TITLE	ARTIST
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	3	6	PURA SANGRE	BRONCO
	4	4	LASTIMA QUE SEAS AJENA	VICENTE FERNANDEZ
	5	2	INALCANZABLE	LOS BUKIS
	6	--	PROVOCAME	BANDA VALLARTA SHOW
	7	5	COSAS DE	BANDA SUPERBANDIDO
	8	7	LA CRUDA	LOS ACUARIO
	9	4	LA GARRA DE	LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE
	10	8	VIENTOS	LOS HURACANES DEL NORTE
TROPICAL / SALSA	1	3	CARA DE NINO	JERRY RIVERA
	2	--	UN ALTO EN EL CAMINO	GRUPO NICHE
	3	7	EL ESPECTACULAR 12 EXITOS	OSCAR D'LEON
	4	--	MERENGUISIMO	VARIOUS ARTISTAS
	5	1	ES UN ESCANDALO	SONORA DINAMITA
	6	8	LO MEJOR DE	BANDA BLANCA
	7	2	MI TIERRA	GLORIA ESTEFAN
	8	--	MAMBO	AZUCAR MORENO
	9	--	EL ORIGINAL 4.40	JUAN LUIS GUERRA Y 4.40
	10	--	12 ANOS	GRUPO NICHE
POP	1	1	LUNA	ANA GABRIEL
	2	2	THE BEST	ANA GABRIEL
	3	--	17 SUPER EXITOS	SELENA
	4	--	LO MEJOR	JUAN GABRIEL
	5	--	VERANO DE AMOR	INDUSTRIA DEL AMOR
	6	8	AHORA Y SIEMPRE	LA MAFIA
	7	--	EXITOS	GLORIA ESTEFAN
	8	6	ARIES	LUIS MIGUEL
	9	4	17 SUPER EXITOS	LA MAFIA
	10	5	UN SEGUNDO EN EL TIEMPO	CRISTIAN

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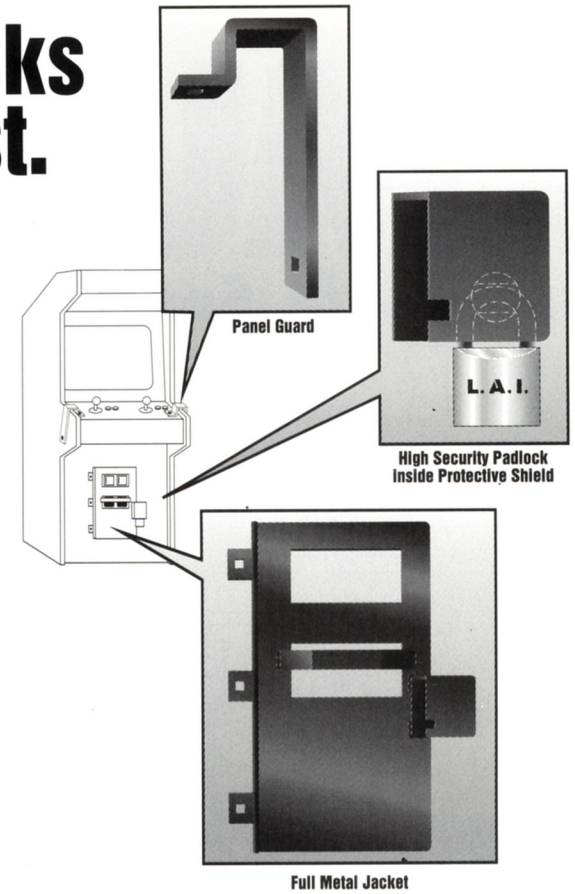

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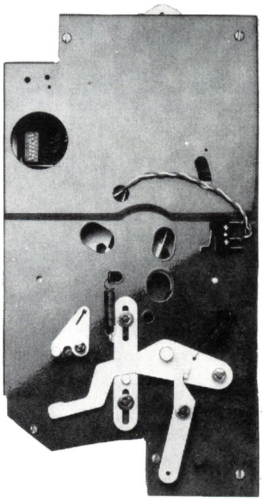

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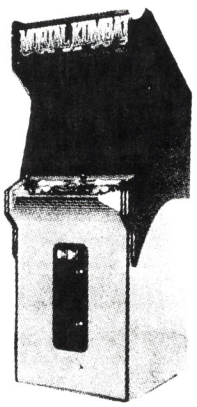

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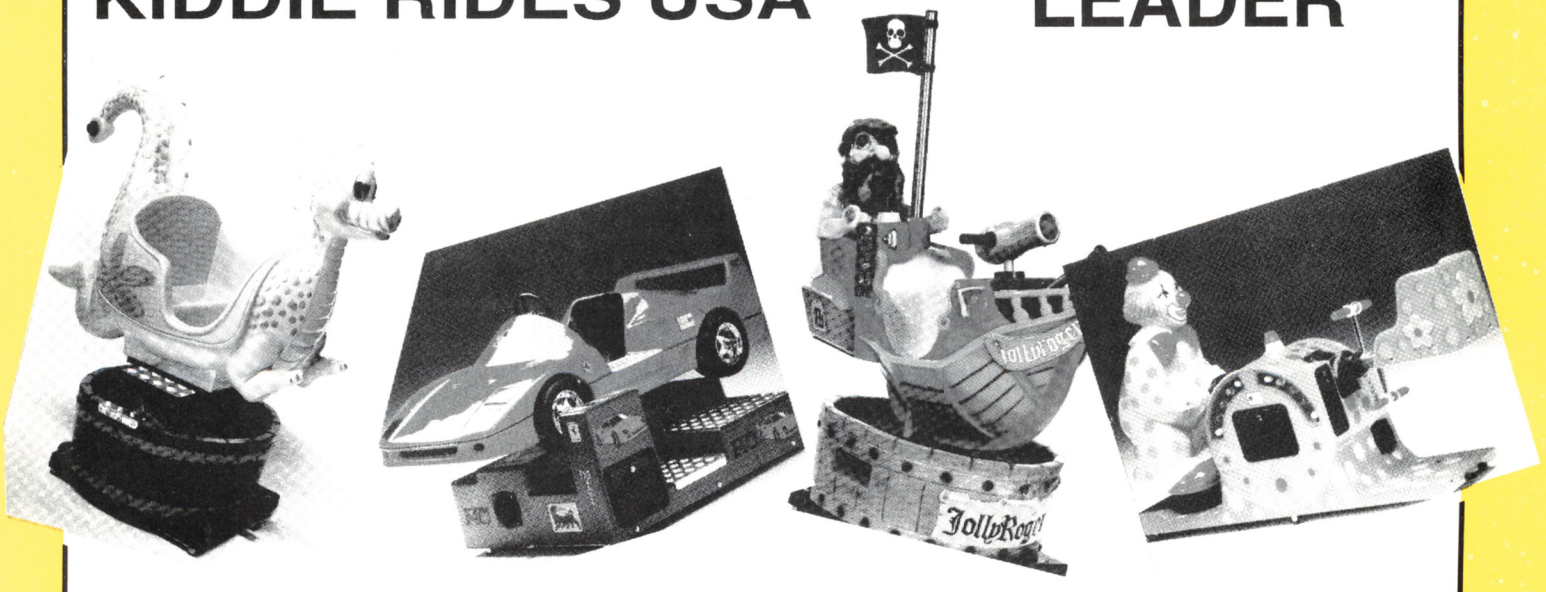

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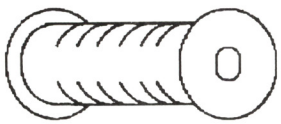

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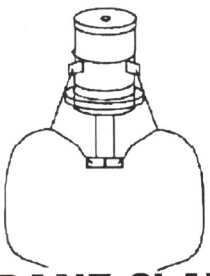

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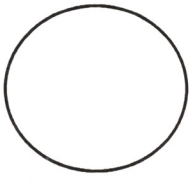

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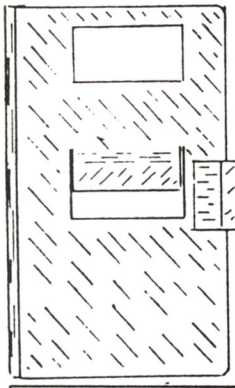

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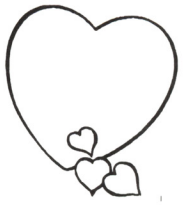

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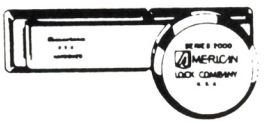

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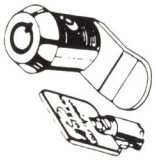

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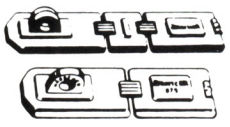

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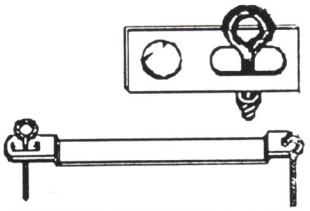

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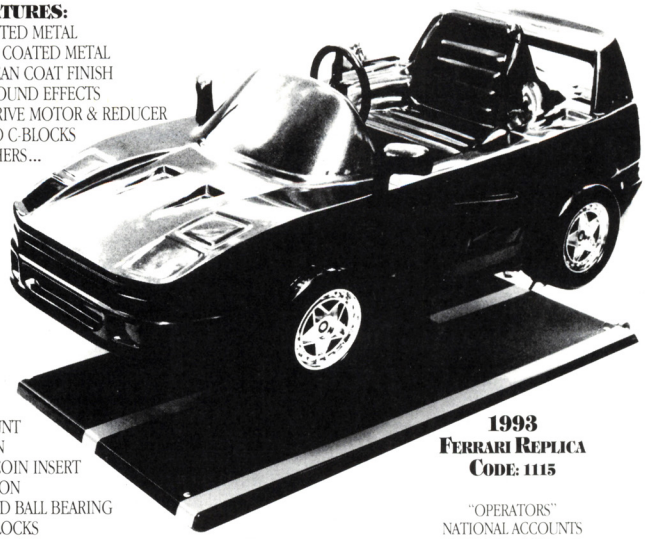

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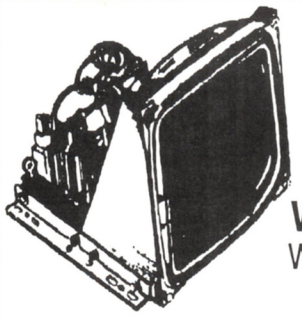

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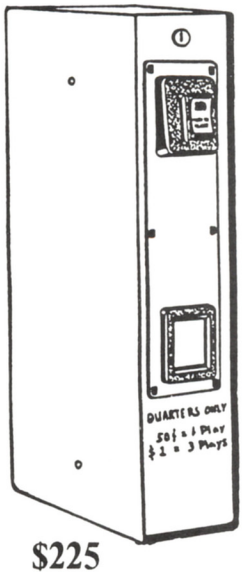

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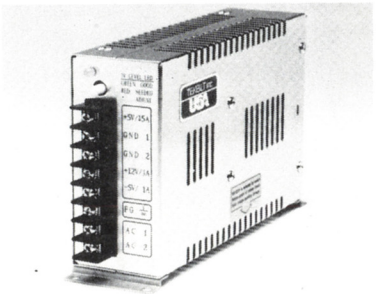

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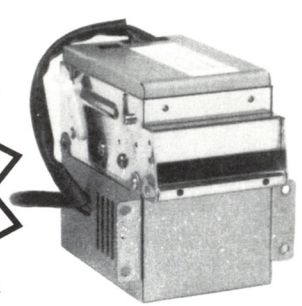

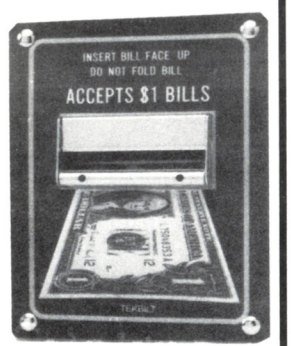

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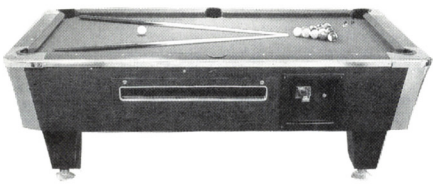

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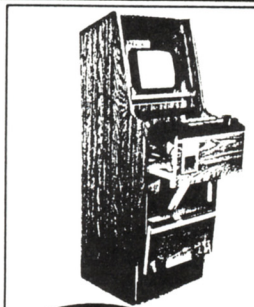

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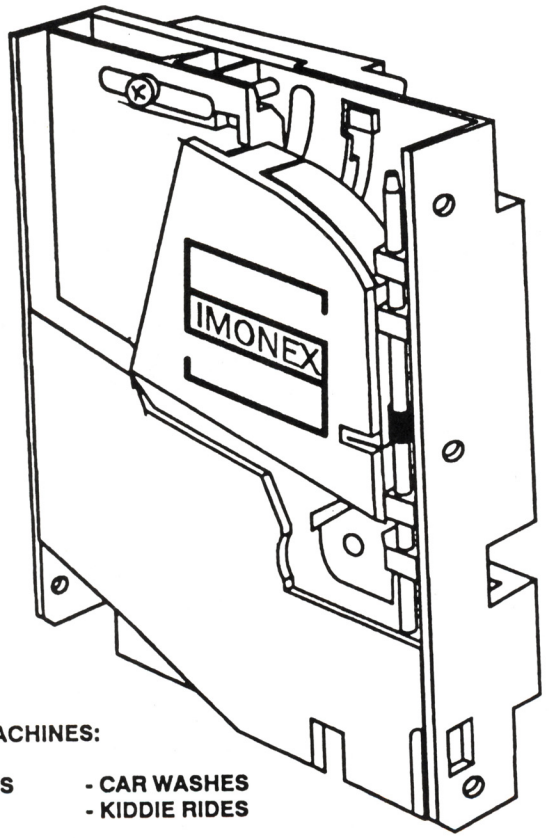

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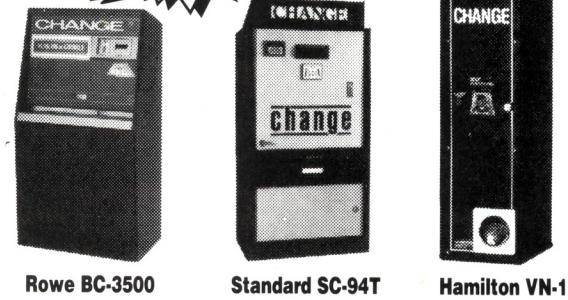

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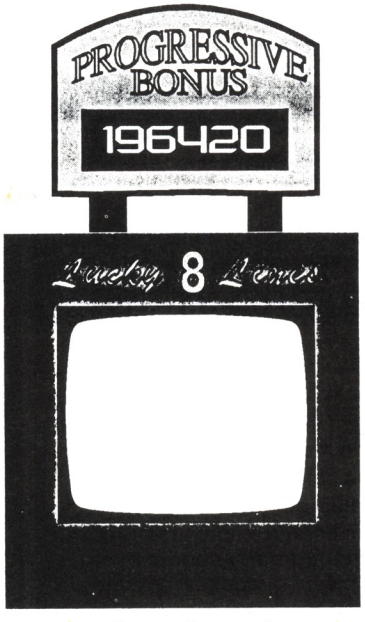

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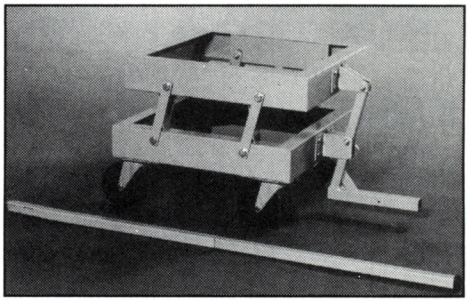

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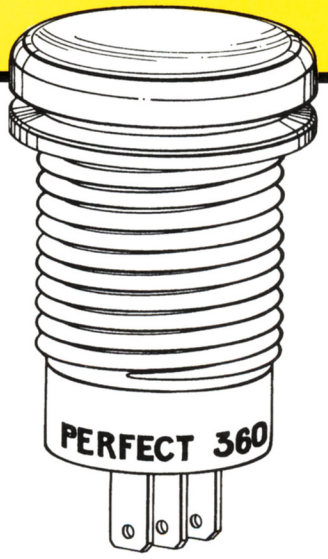

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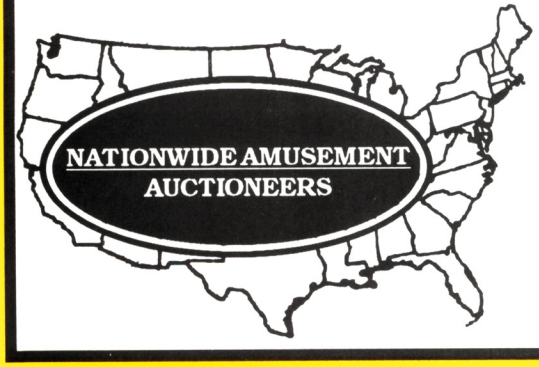

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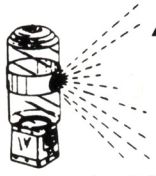

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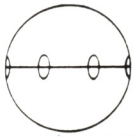

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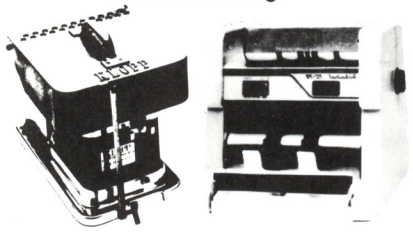

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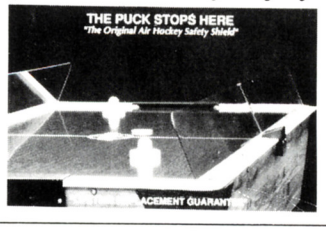

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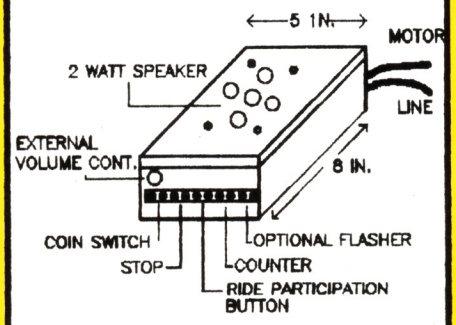

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March 8-11
International Pizza Expo, MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev., sponsored by Pizza Today magazine. Contact Gerry or Kaye Durnell, (812) 949-0909.

March 17-19
American Coin Machine Expo (ACME), Rosemont Convention Center, Rosemont, Ill. Contact W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708) 333-9292.

April 14-16
4th Annual Exhibition for Poland, Warsaw, Poland. Contact George Herman in Woodland Hills, Calif., (818) 222-6161; FAX (818) 222-6165; or Bogden Jankowski in Warsaw, Poland, (48) 22278597; FAX (48) 26358113.

April 21-23
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) Western Convention and Trade Show, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact NAMA Convention Dept., (312) 346-0370.

April 22-24
International Flipper Pinball Association (IFPA) World Championships, Clarion Hotel, Rosemont, Ill. Contact IFPA, (414) 422-0600; FAX (414) 422-0707.

April 26-30
AMOA-NDA 9th Annual International Team Dart Championships, Sahara Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Joe Conway, (414) 476-4665; FAX (414) 476-8181.

April 27-29
FER '94, the Spanish Amusement Trade Show International, Pabellon de Cristal, Patronato de la Ferio del Campo, Madrid, Spain. Contact Secretaria General, Avda. Diagonal, 474, 08006 Barcelona, Spain; Tel. (93) 416-14-66; FAX (93) 415-00-95.

June 2-4
Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO) Convention and Trade Show, Racine Marriott, Racine, Wis. Contact WAMO, (414) 529-4704.

June 8-13
Expo-Diversiones '94, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Tel. (3) 614-30-15; FAX (3) 647-88-39.

July 20-21
Latin American Amusement, Music, and Games Expo, Exhibimex, Mexico City, Mexico. Contact W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708) 333-9292; FAX (708) 333-4086.

July 21-23
11th Annual Billiard Congress of America International Trade Expo, The Sands Expo & Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Frank Zdy, (619) 278-3877; FAX (619) 268-9372.

September 22-24
Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Expo '94, San Antonio, Texas. Contact AMOA, (312) 245-1021; FAX (312) 321-6869.

October 2-4
Fun Expo, International Family Fun Center and Mini-Golf Show, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Bailey Beeken, (914) 682-2027; FAX (914) 682-2152.

October 20-22
AMOA-NDA 1st Annual Singles and Doubles Championships. Contact Joe Conway, (414) 476-4665; FAX (414) 476-8181.

November 2-5
International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) 76th Convention and Trade Show, Miami Beach, Fla. Contact IAAPA, (703) 836-4800; FAX (703) 836-4801.

November 3-5
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) National Convention and Trade Show, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga. Contact NAMA Convention Dept., (312) 346-0370.

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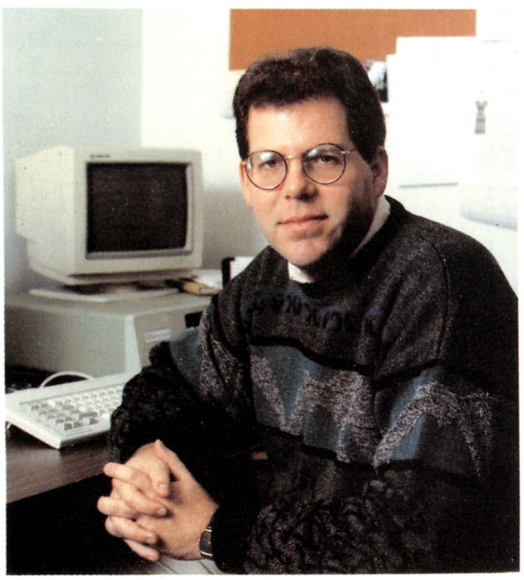
1974-1994
CELEBRATING OUR
20th
YEAR
PLAY METER

THE LAST WORD

Watch your mouth

I put down the newspaper in disgust and asked myself, "To what lengths will the Thought Police go to ensure an America free of potentially offensive speech?" Actually, that's the G-rated version of the question; in its uncensored form it was laced with expletives.

The item: St. John's University in New York has caved in to pressures from Native American (formerly Indian) groups and will drop the basketball team's nickname, the Redmen. Patently offensive, of course. The horribly insensitive Atlanta Braves and Florida State Seminoles have yet to address their wayward nicknames—nor, for that matter, have they refrained from doing the "Tomahawk Chop" to express euphoria. Tsk, tsk.



Christopher Caire
Features Editor

A college student who couldn't study because a bunch of loud females (adjective needed?) were raising hell shouted, "Shut up, you water buffaloes!" What was their response? The only logical one, of course: they hauled him before a disciplinary tribunal at the university, which gave him a verbal spanking and threatened to expel him. A backlash by the community was all that saved the cruel lout.

Even the *Los Angeles Times*, which I recently praised on this page, has gotten into the act. Its new style guidelines are filled with words and phrases that are strictly taboo. For example, you can't call a person who's incapable of hearing "deaf" any longer if you write for that newspaper. They're now "hearing impaired." Nevermind that advocacy groups for the deaf want to be known as such. Their wishes have fallen on...never mind.

Protests aside, if the *Los Angeles Times* says reform, reform we will. Henceforth, when faced with a situation that calls for negative words, Play Meter will present it in the most positive of lights.

If, after a major trade show, Frank Seninsky recommends that you buy 10 games and nine of them turn out to be 30-day wonders, don't write us a letter calling Frank a "knucklehead" or a "dumb-dumb." We'll have to edit it and refer to the Crank as "temporarily dementia-filled, brought on by the stress of so weighty a responsibility." While we're at it, "30-day wonder" will have to be expunged from the lexicon, as it reflects badly on the manufacturer and its game designers. How about "cash box challenged"?

From now on, when AAMA sends us a press release about a raid that netted 100 counterfeit boards and the copiers' arrests, we'll have to rewrite it. Those who committed the offense were instead "morally deprived persons who borrowed from the work of others, possibly because they weren't given their rightful opportunity to succeed in the '80s due to Reagan and his backward domestic policies."

And if, in 1994, dollar coin legislation again stays bottled up in committee, we won't editorialize about spineless, do-nothing politicians. Rather, they will be described as "selfless, Lincoln-like statesmen who strive to do what's best for America during the most trying of times." Wouldn't want to "dis" our valiant leaders.

There you have it, Play Meter's pledge to be more sensitive and caring, offered by the balding features editor. Or should I say "hair deficient"? □

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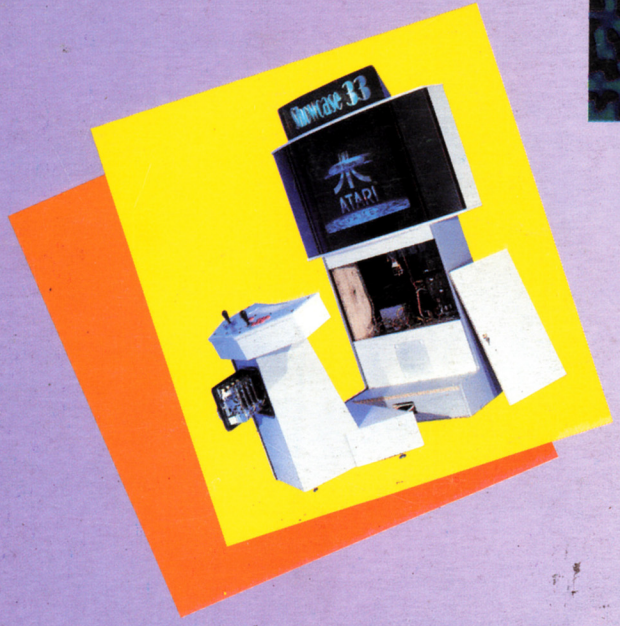

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