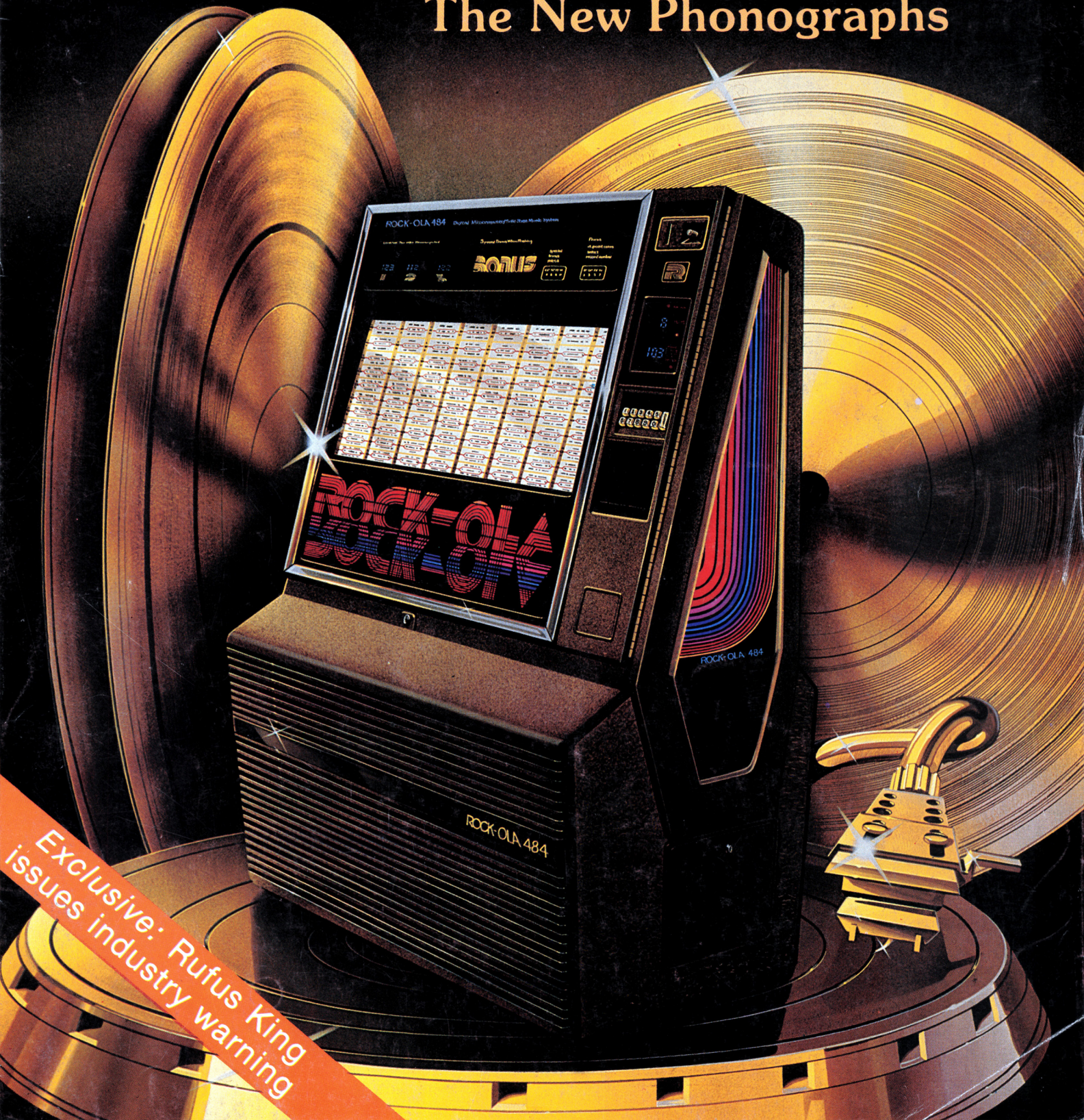


PLAY METER

Volume 7, Number 1

January 15, 1981

The New Phonographs



Exclusive: Rufus King issues industry warning

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PLAY METER

Vol. 7, No. 1
Jan. 15, 1981

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PLAY METER, January, 1981

PLAY METER

Industry Lawyer Warns of Perils Revealed by AMOA Show Exhibits 6

Well-known industry lawyer, Rufus King, issues a strong warning about video card games. They could seriously damage the coin-op amusement business.

Play Meter Plays the Games 14

It was a three-day madhouse — what with all the new games to check out — but the PLAY METER staffers did it. Here's a report on what they thought were the best.

From Operating to Politicking 24

From the AMOA seminar program, Ray Tilley reports on the wide range of topic offered, including a heavy dose of politics for the operator.

AMOA Must Do More 26

At the third state association conference in twelve months, it seems state association leaders and organizers finally got around to saying what they meant— that the AMOA should be doing more to help them out.

'Gray Area' Games Stir Controversy 28

Two unrelated industry crises, writes David Pierson, point out the industry is at a crossroads. Either gray area games must be embraced or castigated. Many industry people apparently don't see any middle ground.

Coin Competition in the Rising Sun 37

Everyone was curious about what was coming out of Japan in the way of video this time around. So a large number of curious American visitors made the trip to Tokyo to check it all out. Ralph Lally was there too, and filed this dispatch.

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Again we offer readers a full-color look at the new phonograph models and a description of the machines that will spin the records of '81.

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From the Editor

Besides all the political battles and power struggles that transpired during this year's AMOA convention, which you will read about elsewhere in this issue, the most exciting aspect of the '80 Show was the resurgence of pinball.

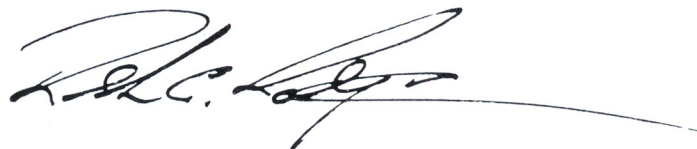
It is no secret that this past year was a soft year for pinball. Most people blamed the sluggish pinball market on the recent video craze. Instead of upgrading their routes proportionately, operators all over America were buying all the *Asteroids*, *Space Invaders*, and *Galaxians* they could get their hands on. While this buying rampage delighted the video manufacturers, makers of the other types of equipment had to just sit back and take their lumps. And it seems the pinball manufacturers were the worst hit. After enjoying several years of rapid growth and record sales figures due mostly to the legalization of pinball in major metropolitan areas and the changeover to solid state technology, the pinball manufacturers found themselves faced with an expected leveling off period and an unexpected market frenzy over video games. It was time to make a move. A big move. The pinball manufacturers were not about to just sit back and let the video games steal the show for another year. Something had to be done.

Up until just recently, the pinball manufacturers would traditionally introduce new play features on a very gradual basis. It was as though they had all these new ideas and concepts sitting on a shelf somewhere and as each new model would come out, one of these new concepts would be taken down off the shelf and introduced into each new game, thereby attempting to squeeze the most out of each and every new play feature. That strategy may have worked back when pinball was booming. But now it's a whole new ballgame. The rapid growth and sophistication of the video game market has forced the pinball manufacturer to fight back with all of the innovations and imagination they could muster up. And so they did.

Williams and Bally went all out recently and pulled a number of new play features and concepts off their shelves and poured them into revolutionary new pinball games. For the first time ever, multi-level playfields were introduced to the industry. Williams' *Black Knight* and Bally's *Flash Gordon* were without a doubt the talk of this year's show.

Clearly the introduction of these two new pins marks the beginning of a new era of pinball. The multi-level pinball will undoubtedly make obsolete all pre-existing pinballs and may very well surpass the sophistication and play appeal of their video counterparts. That is not to say that video will lose some of its propellant. There were indeed a number of excellent video games on tap for the coming year. I am saying that pinball has made up a lot of ground on video and in '81 we'll see *both* pinballs and videos doing extremely well.

For the first time ever, operators will be enjoying the best of both worlds. So get ready for a year that promises the best collection you've ever seen. It's going to be that kind of a year!



Ralph C. Lally II
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An Industry Lawyer Warns of the Perils Revealed by the AMOA Show Exhibits

By Rufus King

One benefit of the controversial AMOA convention policy which mixes displays of gambling and amusement machines is that it puts everyone on notice of the “facts of life” about the coin-operated amusement and gaming segments within the industry. No one who walked those aisles at the Hilton this fall can ever again claim ignorance about the distinctions among the three categories: (1) honest amusement-only vendors of mechanical/electronic entertainment; (2) honest cash payout devices for gambling operations in Nevada, New Jersey, and overseas markets; and (3) subterfuge machines built to pass off as amusement games while really performing the three functions characteristic of all gambling devices. *

I consider “gray area” an unfortunate misnomer. There is nothing indistinct about the divisions among these three types. Amusement games are not designed for gambling operations (if a player bets with another player or the location-owner, or bystanders make side bets, *they* may be gambling, but the machine isn't). And no gambling-adapted device is ever worth much as a pure amusement game, i.e., unless payouts are made.

Any doubt about this last point was blown away at the Convention exhibits where three-deep crowds invariably collected around the honest amusement games, and also around the forthright payout devices when the exhibitor provided demonstration tokens. No one lingered very long around some twenty camouflaged indirect-payout video exhibits, nor over the forlorn surviving pair of bingo pinball offerings. A poker hand that takes less than ten seconds to play out, and the dead-pegged bingo board, quickly lose their interest if there isn't a location owner on the scene to shell out winnings.

The only amusing—but also sinister—thing about the subterfuge-gambling exhibits was the variety of ways their promoters chose to explain and demonstrate how you paid off “skill points” and tallied them with special meters so your location owners could be accurately

reimbursed. (And of course if some naughty locations *g—mbl—d* with this equipment on your routes, that wouldn't be your fault, right?)

Classifying the amusement/gambling categories is a problem that has troubled everyone, the industry, regulators, lawmakers, the courts, and observers like me, ever since Mr. Mills and Mr. Fey gave us the *Liberty Bell*, one-armed bandit, in 1889. Mostly, everyone has concentrated on trying to define what gambling devices are *not*, and what they *cannot* have, or *cannot* do. The AMOA Show, viewed as a fascinating, self-performing laboratory experiment, suggests the possibility of approaching this problem from the other direction, with a definition of what *honest* gambling devices must always be, or do, or have, in terms of the gambling function.

And this appears to be easy. No one would ever manufacture a device with knock-off, or ticket, or token, or mint-vending, or “trade-booster” camouflages for the legalized-gambling market. No operator in his right mind would monkey with any of these cumbersome and costly features if they were not required to fool the sheriff and shield on-the-take cops and prosecutors from too much embarrassment. Nor would any above-board casino operator ever allow a subterfuge device to be mixed with his fast-action slots banks.

So the simple, fool-proof test is this: to qualify for classification as a legitimate coin-operated gambling device a coin-operated machine *must have a coin cup for the automatic delivery of winnings in cash*. Devices with that feature are not much good in areas where gambling promotion is still criminal activity. By the same token, they do not compromise the amusement operators, nor foster corruption or “muscle” tactics, nor sneak up on that dreadfully overworked school-child's lunch money.

In short, the industry segment that flies its gambling colors high and complies with federal and local laws gives jobs, supports industry suppliers, brings no discredit, and shares many common interests with the whole coin-vending family.

What is not amusement

Of course, bracketing the amusement-imposter with definitions on both sides does not eliminate the need for continued reliance on the old, well-tried restrictions also. Thus, anything not openly qualifying for the honest gambling (coin-cup) classification would remain outside the bona fide amusement rubric if:

* *Bona fide amusement games do two things: take the player's money and give him entertainment (including, sometimes, the entertainment of an additional replay or two) in return. Gambling devices must always perform three functions: take money (the stake), apply pure chance, and control chance-determined payouts (wins). A gambling device cannot have any substantial skill element, because then skillful players could consistently beat it.*

1) *it is subject to the Johnson-Eastland Act.* The federal government is still the most sophisticated and accurate classifier of coin machines, though the industry lost an ally of inestimable value when it let the COGD stamp tax die, so the IRS no longer concerns itself with classification problems.

2) *it may award or accumulate more free replays, or "skill points," than could ever reasonably be played off.* Statutory limits for this are usually in the range of 15-20, though in practice the number of games awarded and accumulated is less. No one can honestly suggest that repeating a play 5,000 times continues to be entertaining. But on the other hand, gambling play isn't attractive without a jackpot or "big lick" high-return potential.

3) *it accepts more than one fixed price (which can be one coin, or change, or an alternative like 3 for \$1) for a single play.* No player would ever pay two, or five, or ten times, or (in bingos) an unlimited number of multiples of the price of a play, except as a gambling stake, to improve his odds or increase his prize, or both. Why should he, when, if he is only buying amusement, he gets everything the game can give (and always the same return of entertainment) as soon as the game sets up? Multiple-player features, and adding time with another coin along the way, do not conflict with the only-buying-amusement principle of this test. A few states have applied a variation, placing any machine that returns a *different* value for the same price, on successive operations, in the gambling category.

4) *it contains any circuitry for "knocking off" and recording unplayed credits or replays.*

5) *it has no substantial element of skill (player participation by manipulation.)* Amusement games sell primarily player involvement of some kind; the lure of gambling action is the chance to win, and player manipulation must be held to a minimum.

6) *it can be operated through a complete game cycle in less than 15 seconds.* This is a restriction placed on the German "Rotomat" categories, which seems reasonable and practicable. It is most unlikely that a bona fide amusement or entertainment game can be delivered in less than 15 (or 10, or 20) seconds, while any extensive delay feature in a gambling device would be highly undesirable.

It will take more than a few draftsmen's flourishes and redefinitions to stem the flood of new "amusement only" indirect-payout video devices that has recently hit the U.S. domestic market. But making certain that spades are called spades is a start. There will doubtless be ingenious efforts to overcome the presumptions listed above (and others).

One court has recently actually *accepted* the fanciful justification for knock-off circuitry, that it is installed so a player who is ahead of the game and wants to go home for lunch (often it is the preacher-player who has to stop to write his next-Sunday sermon), can be credited (or paid) in order to go on with the same game next time he comes back (!). Rumors are even floating that someone is about to turn the clock back fifty years with a video mint-vendor.

If the coin-cup test for legitimate gambling devices stands up under further scrutiny, it might ease the way for legislators inclined to respond to the current trend towards legalization. And that is no great threat to the industry, so long as the new lines are clearly drawn. It might also facilitate application of another statutory provision that has been used in a few old gambling laws with good effect, namely, a penalty gradation. Until recently in Alabama, for example, to run an illegal gambling house openly was only a misdemeanor; but anyone who camouflaged such an operation

"in any barred or barricaded house or room, in any place built or constructed in such a manner as to make it difficult of access or ingress to police officers or other officers, or protected, furnished, or equipped with speaking tubes, dumb-waiters, electric wires or bells, or other apparatus for giving alarm from the outside or from the inside of such house"

was guilty of a one-to-five-year felony (and anyone caught frequenting such a house could be sentenced "to hard labor for the county" for up to six months). Applying this concept to camouflaged gambling machines would be much easier and more succinct: "Whoever manufactures, owns, operates, sells...etc. any coin-operated gambling device designed to pay or control the payment of any prize by any means other than the immediate and automatic dispensing of cash, shall...."

Still a crime in 49

It was apparent from AMOA symposia questions and talk in the elevators and halls that the promoters of indirect payout video poker games and other "amusement only" gambling devices are pushing their products very hard. Some of the exhibitors of this equipment are anything but fly-by-night in terms of their resources. The poker games have precipitated an industry crisis in Ohio, evoked a stinging denouncement from the Attorney General of Maryland, and surfaced in significant numbers elsewhere around the nation. Nonetheless *their use for their intended purpose is a crime in forty-nine states, and a crime of felony degree in many*, not to mention possible involvement with the FBI under federal anti-gambling and anti-racketeering statutes.

Operators can't stand up to this alone. When one route is penetrated, competitive pressures on surrounding locations tend to force everyone else in the territory to go along. But that very tendency soon invites hostile public attention, bad press, raids, arrests, scandals, and a quick return to Square One—where the amusement industry started cleaning itself up nearly forty years ago.

The message was there loud and clear in Chicago. Let's hope it got to good-guy badge-wearers in every category. ‡

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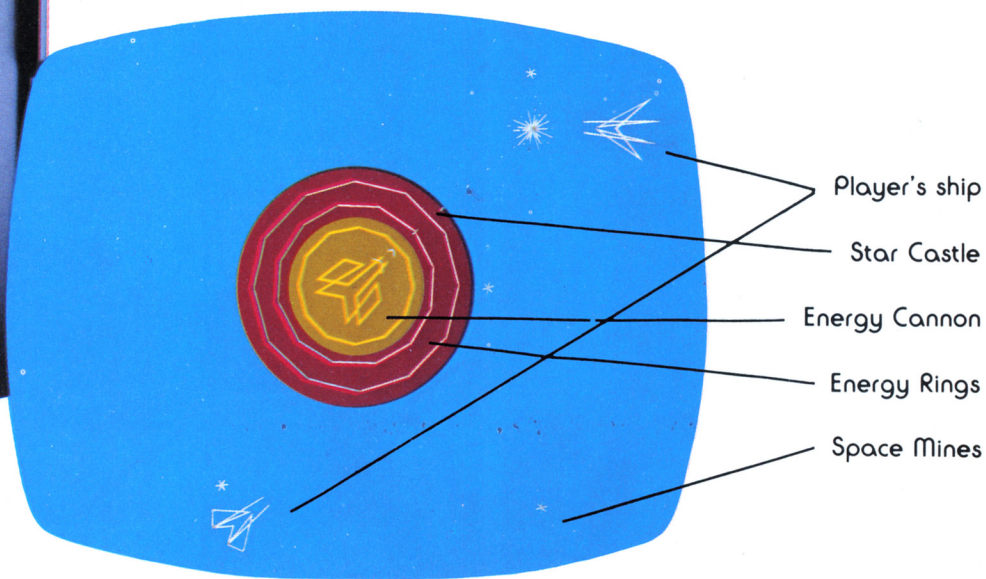
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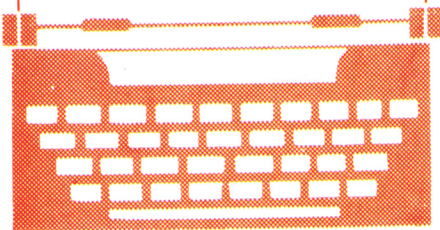


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Mailbox



Cornland congrats

Just wanted to send my congratulations for the superb December issue. Just finished reading from cover to cover, and I must say that the articles within were first class, and I appreciate what a class job December was. You and the staff deserve a day off.

Dick Welu
Red Baron Amusements
Dubuque, Iowa

Ed. Note: Welu's AMOA Diary graces this issue. This nice note on the pre-AMOA Show issue had no influence on our finding him a supply of Louisiana duck calls.

Percentaging games

It is our contention that sometime in the near future, in order to make a better product, manufacturers of video games should try to have their engineers develop in their games some method of ascertaining the percentage of positive achievements on the game and also some kind of meter or timing device to ascertain the length of time consumed in playing the game.

In operating video games today, it is a hit or miss proposition as far as percentaging is concerned. It is for sure that all video games, even as much as flipper games, should have methods of ascertaining the percentage of the game. It is only by good percentaging that we can make all games better, including flippers, video games, driving games, etc.

So, on behalf of all operators and distributors, we ask that the manufacturers instruct their engineers to try to come up with some method of percentaging all phases of the video games.

Joseph Isaacson
New Orleans Novelty Company
New Orleans, Louisiana

Pay TV where-to

In your November 15th State of the Industry Issue, you published an article concerning pay TVs. It mentioned two companies that handle this type of equipment.

I am unable to find the street addresses and zip codes in order to

inquire about such products. I would appreciate any help you could give me in this matter.

Love your magazine.

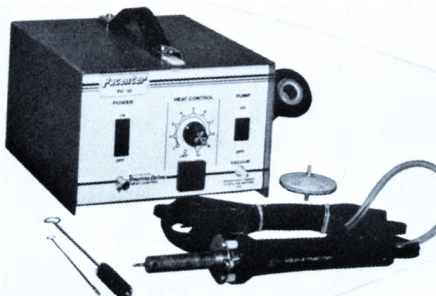
Charles C. Alexander III
Alexander Enterprises
Jackson, Mississippi

The companies you refer to, and their addresses as supplied by Jim Sedlak, who researched and wrote the article "Profiting from Coin-Op TV," are:

Eldorado Products Ltd., 3645 Inglewood Ave., No. 3, Redondo Beach, California 90278; and

KVE Company (a distributor for Televend Systems), 645 12th St., Manhattan Beach, California (no zip given in their correspondence).

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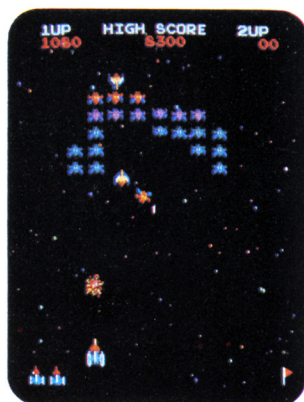
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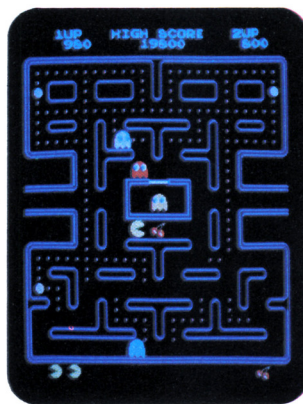
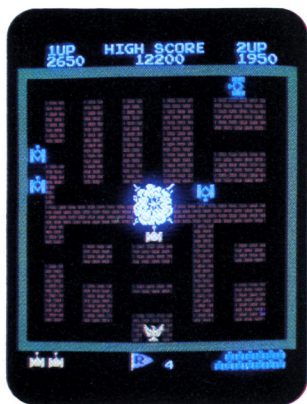
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PAC-MAN



Yankee games
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By David Pierson

Play Meter plays the games

It was to have been the show heralding the Japanese Invasion. The JAA Show in Tokyo a few weeks before was to have been a preview of what to expect at the 1980 AMOA Show in Chicago. And Japanese video game companies, fully expecting a wide open field in the U.S. market, descended en masse on the Conrad Hilton in Chicago October 31-November 2.

They bought up any available exhibit space to show the latest equipment coming from the country that gave us *Space Invaders*, *Galaxian*, and the host of other space-themed combat games that revolutionized the industry. So much exhibit space did they buy up, in fact, that exhibits spilled out into the downstairs lobby of the Conrad Hilton Hotel, making a mockery of the AMOA's three-fingered reminder—"Visit All Three Rooms."

But, although this was supposed to be the show marking the Japanese Invasion, it turned out otherwise. After the three-day whirlwind was over, it appeared the American manufacturers got the best of it all, for the top games of the show were not only being marketed by U.S. companies but were also designed right here in the States.

It couldn't have been more timely for the domestic market. Just when snide remarks about American ingenuity were becoming all too commonplace, and just when the Japanese lettering on the games was becoming almost understandable—the likes of American products such as *Battlezone*, *Berzerk*, *Star Castle*,

and *Defender* burst onto the scene.

The "Made in the U.S.A." rally also extended to the American invention, pinball. In recent months pinball has been suffering through some pretty rough times; and when Stern, Williams, and even Gottlieb came out with video games, there were a lot of industry people nodding their heads and predicting the demise of this form of Americana.

But the reports on the demise of pinball, like the 1902 reports of the death of Mark Twain, were greatly exaggerated. The Chicago pin manufacturers came out with pingames that not only drew crowds but also recaptured the imaginations of convention goers, for they could see that there were still things that

could be done with pinball. Led by Williams' *Black Knight*, a pingame which stands a good chance of commanding 50¢ play, it appears that we can expect a pinball renaissance.

By comparison, it was hard to judge at the show which videos will earn top marks this year and which will become industry also-rans. And it all has to do with the nature of the video game today.

It started with *Space Invaders*, a game that not only offered a novel form of entertainment but also increased in difficulty as the player improved his skill at the game. In the past, by just playing a game such as *Sea Wolf* or *Blockade* a couple of times, you could get a good idea as to whether or not the game had enough play appeal to earn a reasonable return on investment. But since *Space Invaders*, we have seen something new added to the games which makes it all the more difficult to pick a "Game of the Show."

With *Space Invaders*, the industry has come to see that for a video game to really become a hit it must incorporate play progressions which make the game more complicated and challenging as the player becomes more proficient.

The problem is that operators, trying to decide which games are solid, do not have enough time at a show to become proficient enough at the game to see if it will meet the challenge of expert play.

The result is that operators and reviewers are left to wander about the floor, staring intently into the TV



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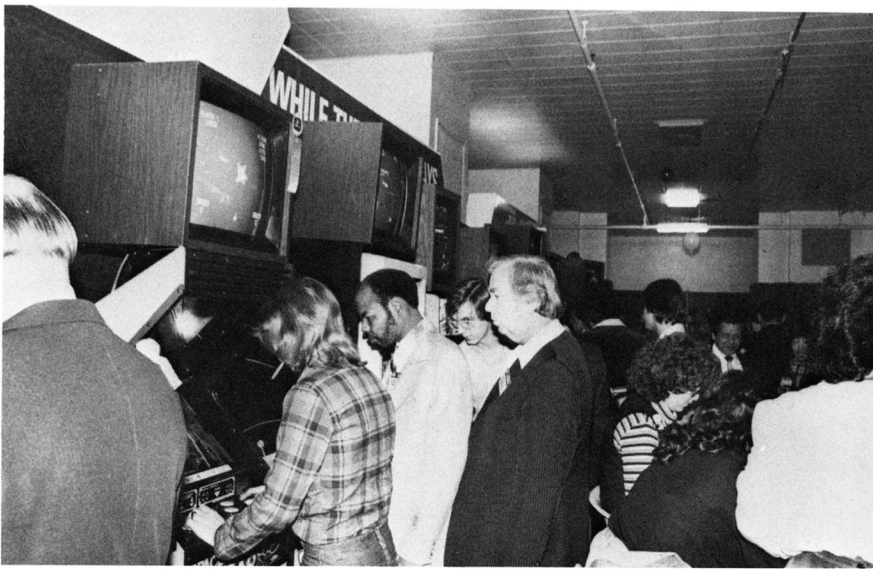
“Let the only people
who could have given us
“Flash”, “Gorgar” and “Firepower”
design a video game
with the same excitement,
appeal and innovation...”

...and Williams created “Defender”.

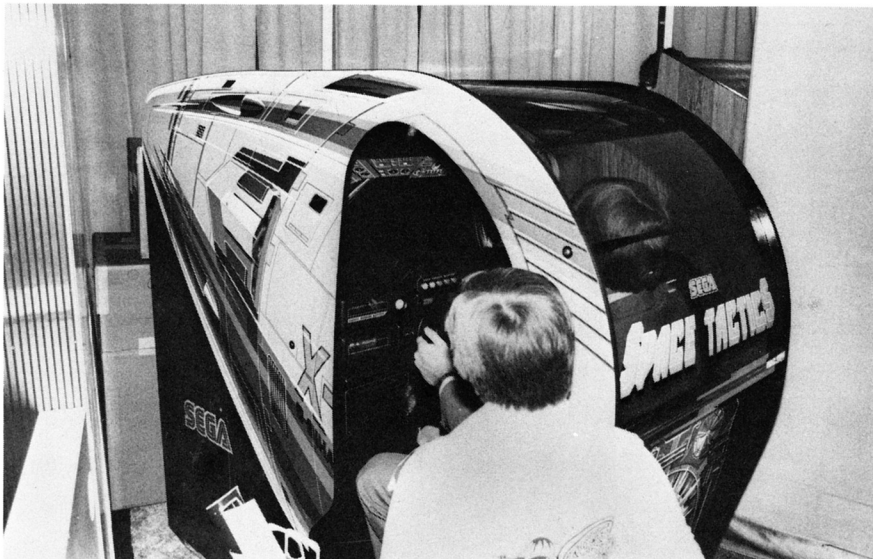


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Overhead monitors, used by several manufacturers, gave a view of game play to the people standing in line: A good idea for arcades, too?



Children enjoyed playing games on the floor—but this made for the same old problem of crowding out interested buyers. Maybe next year....?



An operator ponders the play appeal of React, U.S. Billiards' counter-top reaction-tester.

monitors, trying to see some unfathomable ingredient in the game.

Sure, the game has a novel play idea, but does the game incorporate satisfying progressions to keep the video player coming back? Or will the game become an impulse item, doomed to no more than two quarters of play from any video game player

This is the real challenge of picking games at industry events such as the AMOA Show. It makes picking games all the more difficult and the role for an operator of being a games expert all the more perplexing—since operators can only conjecture as to which games they think will offer satisfying skill progressions and which games will flatten out.

One way manufacturers might be able to help operators see through this veil of uncertainty would be to have a player who is proficient at the game demonstrate how to “beat” the game and then show how the game combats this by becoming more challenging. In this way, the operator would be able to see ahead to what he can expect to happen to his game in ten weeks’ time. With the use of overhead monitors, such as what many video manufacturers displayed this time around, convention goers could judge for themselves if the game will be challenging enough to stay strong on location.

Perhaps with engineers demonstrating the complexities of the game’s play (since it seems that it is the engineers who know more than a marketing executive about the game’s progressions) operators would then be in a better position to separate the chaff from the wheat.

Until such time as that, we can expect operators to stick with the safe names in the business and not venture out to try some novel game that may or may not have the play characteristics the operator is looking for.

Battlezone

Thus it was that many people gravitated to the largest exhibit display on the floor, that of Atari’s. The Sunnyvale, California manufacturer showed off a new game called *Battlezone*, which thankfully was somewhat of a departure from the space theme of recent years.

Though the game is supposedly set on an alien planet where flying saucers come into play, *Battlezone* offers at least some respite from the waves of space-themed games.

With the use of the XY monitor, *Battlezone* offers three-dimensional play features on a two-dimensional screen, something which has been lamentably missing from previous



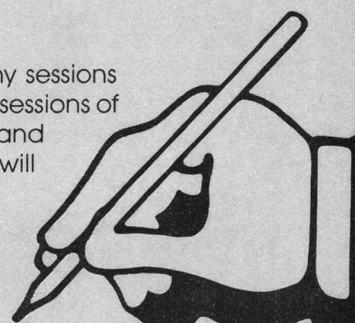
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With the brand-new 2001 are William Olliges and Bill Miller, execs of the new brand—Centuri. Phonographs competed with glamor, technology.



Dynamo chief Bill Rickett (left) demonstrates the features of the Dynamo pool table. Rack up a sale!



Pac Man in a cocktail table drew attention to a 'cute' game theme with more than may meet the eye at first glance.

video efforts (PLAY METER, November 15, "The Hit Syndrome," Page 45).

Twin joysticks, designed to look like tank controls, are used by the player to maneuver his tank. The screen is supposed to be the view from the tank's view screen, an effect that is capitalized on when the player's tank is hit—the screen "shatters."

The game appears to be one which will appeal almost immediately to expert video game players because it is a game that takes a few quarters to understand the complexities. It'll take several games for players to realize that they can make the tank go forward by pushing both joysticks forward simultaneously and backward by pulling both sticks back. Then the player will learn how to move obliquely forward or backward to the right or the left until the handles become second nature to the player.

As the player realizes how he controls the tank's motion he will see that he can engage in chase and run tactics. He can hide behind obstacles and go in hot pursuit of a fleeing tank.

The game enlarges on the domain of the video screen, extending the video's horizon beyond the limits of what can be seen on the screen. Presently, most video games do not let a player escape the threatening environment. In *Asteroids*, for example, an escape from the screen is thwarted by the player's rocket appearing at the other end of the screen. With *Battlezone*, the player will be able to actually enlarge his video game world by going beyond what is initially depicted on the screen.

The game could also become a favorite for scholarly types, what with the preponderance of geometrical shapes such as cubes and triangles littering the battlezone.

And herein lie suggestions of future developments along this game theme. Regrettably, the XY monitor Atari uses does not offer color potential at the present time. So to make sure the enemy can be distinguished from barriers, it was necessary to make the barriers transparent geometrical shapes. It is clear to see that further developments of this three-dimensional play theme will lead to more camouflaging and subtler targets.

But for many people at the show, *Battlezone* seemed to offer the most potential for the present video market.

Berzerk

Another manufacturer which departed somewhat from the space theme was Stern Electronics, which

presented an interesting game of a robot war. It's literally man against machine in this real-life adventure. The player gets the pleasure of being trapped in a maze of corridors where robots, saying such things as "Intruder Alert," "Humanoid Must Not Escape," "Kill the Humanoid," and other such niceties, try to shoot the player-controlled man. And to make the game even more diabolical, there's an "Evil Otto," an indestructible "cookie monster," if you will, who must be avoided at all costs.

The player, using a joystick for player movement and for aiming, and a fire button for shooting, must maneuver through this maze, trying to destroy those who would destroy him. If he escapes from the maze, he only finds himself appearing on the video screen in still another maze with more robots, and more Evil Ottos in pursuit.

The major hinderance to the game seems to be with the player controls. The joystick which controls not only the player's movements but also his aim when firing is suggestive of last year's Exidy game, *Bandido*. But the game's novel use of voice should serve to keep players plugging in more quarters until they get the hang of it.

Also, like *Battlezone*, *Berzerk* offers some interesting possible expansions on its game idea. Because of the game's capacity for offering the player up to 64,000 random maze patterns, it suggests that one game idea which has not yet been fully tried by the coin-op industry may now be in reach, i.e. "Dungeons and Dragons."

The game which has attracted considerable play in recent years could now become an exciting possibility in coin-op.

The "board" game version of "Dungeons and Dragons"—featuring elves, halflings, dwarfs, and mythical beasts such as goblins, giant spiders, and, of course, dragons—could probably offer endless game possibilities for the coin-op industry. Players, accompanied by elves, etc. could wander through a maze of dungeons, looking for gold points but keeping an eye out for monsters and traps that could end the game very quickly. The advantages of the coin-op version is that a computer is faster than a human at drawing different types of dungeons.

It bears looking into, but it does show the video game, *Berzerk*, has more to offer than what is readily seen.

Star Castle

One company which, while not

having the size of an Atari or Midway, has been able to come up again and again with its own game ideas is Cinematronics.

Three years ago, Cinematronics stole the show with *Space Wars*. Since then, while other manufacturers have seen it easier to steal or buy game ideas from abroad (most notably from Japan), Cinematronics has consistently concocted other new games. Their last game, a solid piece in its own right, *Rip Off*, served even as a sort of editorial comment from the El Cajon, California company about the state of the video game market.

This year Cinematronics brought another hot Vector game to the show, another one which was home grown, and the results were positively reassuring.

Star Castle attracted sizeable crowds and quite a number of votes from industry experts as being the best video at the show. The possible disadvantages of the game—its visually unattractive screen and repetitive play with steep play level progressions—seem to be more than offset by the instinctual nature of trying to break through a stellar fortress and blowing up the enemy ship housed inside. When a player strikes the enemy space ship, the resulting explosion is visually sensational and seems to urge the player on to further breakthroughs.

Defender

And then there was Williams' *Defender*. Williams Electronics was probably the hottest company at the show. Its *Black Knight* sparked renewed interest in pinball, and its *Defender* shows signs of being a contender for top video of the year honors—not a bad showing for the company's initial effort into the highly competitive video market.

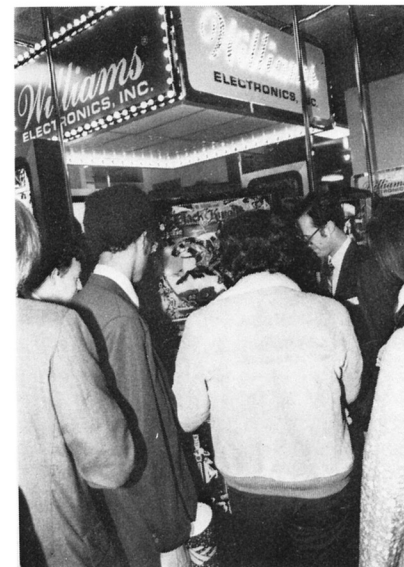
The one- or two-player game features a player-controlled rocket ship which, as its object, must destroy invading rocket ships and rescue stranded astronauts which the invading rocket ships are trying to kidnap.

Players can check a radar screen to see from which direction the invaders are coming—the right or the left side of the screen (the game is horizontal in design, not vertical as is the case with such games as *Space Invaders*).

Player features include Hyper-space which sends a player's rocket ship into another quadrant. But this is only used as a last resort, as a Williams spokesman pointed out, because players have only about a 35-40 percent survival chance with



Daughter and father, Kyoko Nakamura and Masaya Nakamura, of Namco.



It was a tight squeeze if you wanted to play pins like *Black Knight*.



Innovations in play concept were the mark of *Battlezone* at Atari's booth.

Hyperspace in *Defender*. That's a lot slimmer than the odds of surviving Hyperspace in *Asteroids*, but the reason for that is *Defender* has still another panic rescue safety valve for players—three smart bombs which will blow up everything else on the screen except the player's rocketship as a last resort.

It's a strong effort by Williams, but regrettably not that many people had a chance to play the game because of the close quarters in the Williams booth and the sensation created by *Black Knight*.

Two from Midway

Midway featured two Namco-engineered games, *Pac-Man* and *Rally X*. And both pieces show signs of being solid money makers on location.

Pac-Man is another maze-type game where a player-controlled dot (or Pac-Man) races through the maze eating up smaller dots for ten points each. Each time the player's Pac-Man eats an energizer dot he gains 50 points and can then eat the monsters which have been trying to eat him up.

It's a cute game which appears to grow on players, something which "cute" games are not prone to do. The knobbed joystick is the only player control, making the game a simple one to operate. As players play the game, they begin to see the strategy of saving their energy dots until they absolutely have to eat them to avoid being eaten by the attacking monsters. There's more to this game than at first appears. One drawback may be the game's sound. Sound effects include a teasing tune which sounds like a TV game show theme song. It's good for awhile, then becomes annoying.

Midway/Namco's *Rally X* shows promise as an entertaining video maze game somewhat along the lines of *Pac-Man*. By using a radar screen, a player drives his car down streets to roll over flags and pick up points. Instead of Pac Monsters, players try to avoid kamikaze cars. By skillful maneuvers through the maze of roads and the timely use of a smoke

screen, the player can elude the killer cars and clean the road of all the flags, thus resetting the game to the next road maze setup. Like *Pac-Man*, it is a game that is good at encouraging repeat play.

Three from Japan

Nintendo, whose products are marketed in the United States by Far East Video showed off an interesting and colorful game called *Radar-scope*, which caught the eye of many convention visitors. The game features a fight between a player-controlled spaceship and a fleet of enemy ships. The game is distinguished by the gridlike pattern of the screen. The player tries to ward off spaceships and space-mines which attack players with rapid zooming up movements.

The game, which was shown off in upright, cocktail, and sitdown versions, also features a top-ten ranking.

Two other Japanese-designed games which drew kudos from the AMOA crowd were Universal's *Zero Hour* and Irem Corp.'s *Uni Wars*.

In *Zero Hour*, the player's object is to shoot down enemy craft as they attack, shielded by meteorites.

Uni Wars is a *Galaxian*-type game which presents enemy targets as diverse as a 20-point Super Mosquito, a 40-point Demon Fly, a 50-point Rolling Fire, and a big-point-potential Killer King.

Spectar

Exidy's *Spectar* was also shown at the AMOA Expo and is an elaboration of *Targ*, but with a lot more play features. In *Spectar*, the player is faced with a maze structure which is similar to *Targ* but which changes slightly from screen to screen and game to game.

The object of the game is slightly different—to clear the screen of dots (like *Pac-Man* and *Rally X*, this object seems the standard for maze-type games. It is games like *Berzerk* which break the mold in this regard). The player, with the use of a firing button, can destroy enemy attackers which are trying to destroy him. With

each screen, the game gets a little more complicated, the enemy more plentiful and smarter.

Other games

Other games which offered possibilities included Universal's *Space Panic*, which featured a many-storied building, which the player must weave his way through while trying to dodge monsters by knocking out floor levels and causing the monsters to die.

Crazy Climber from Nichibutsu was one of the more curious games at the show. The player operates a human spider who climbs up the side of a very tall building and tries to avoid falling flower pots, steel frames, a vicious condor, and (if that's not enough) King Kong. If hit by any of these objects, it's certain death.

Space Tactics

Without doubt, the top sitdown arcade piece at the show was Gremlin/Sega's *Space Tactics*. The game features a realistic cockpit, good stereo sound effects, and outstanding three-dimensional visual effects. The problem here is it costs a lot, too.

The object of the game is for the player to protect five land bases from an alien attack. When the last of these bases is destroyed, the game is over. Invading UFOs start dropping high-explosive bombs, and the player must try to destroy the UFOs before it is too late. The player, by activating a "Barrier Energy Screen," can create a shield which absorbs enemy bomb blasts. Barriers can be put up four times during the first round, and two more barriers are added for each new round.

Each base is also equipped with its own self-defense mechanism, a one-time missile shot which can destroy enemy bombs headed for the base. Enemy attacks become progressively faster with each round, and the game is over when all the bases are destroyed. The game is a definite 50¢ game, and it has to be, to offset the high cost of the piece.

Show numbers: records set all around

The AMOA Show of 1980 logged a total attendance of 7,400 persons, including guests of industry people, at the international exposition in the Chicago Hilton, Chicago.

According to Leo Droste, assistant executive director of the AMOA, the total registration in 1979 had been 7,130.

The advance registration in 1980 set a high mark of 4,626, over 200 more persons than signed up in advance for 1979's show.

Foreign visitors this year numbered 1,072, included in the total figure, Droste said.

In the three exhibition rooms and lobby of the Hilton's show area were 358 exhibit booths, filled with 138 exhibitors.

The Exposition has, since 1975, shown a 47 percent increase in the number of exhibitors, 58 percent growth in the number of booths—and a 73 percent jump in attendance, said Droste. ●

Unconventional games

Other games at the show included a video called *Deep Death*, in which Pacific Novelty Company of Los Angeles (the manufacturer) allows the player to play "Jaws" for a quarter. In this game, there are swimmers in the water, and a shark. The player does not control the swimmers. He controls the shark.

Loud piercing screams when the shark strikes add to the somewhat controversial nature of the game. Should be a sure hit at beach locations.

And then there was a strip-tease pinball where players can watch a pinup show by hitting the right targets on the pinball playfield. The AMOA officials directed the exhibitors to cover the backglass and playfield display of *Sexy Girl* so as not to offend show visitors.

Some shook their heads and said this wasn't what was needed to get pinball back on track. Others tried to peek under the paper when no one was looking.

But both efforts showed that there is always someone seeking a new way to break into the hot coin-op games market. Who said anything about being conventional?

One thing which many visitors complained about at the show again this year was the number of kids on the showroom floor. The exhibits, more than a few conventioners were heard to comment, were there not for the kids to get in their pre-coin experience, but rather were there for serious buyers to check out. As it was, however, the numbers were large and the crowds big, but there were many complaints by exhibitors and visitors alike that a lot of the people on the floor were not really industry personnel. *Battlezone*, *Black Knight*, *Berzerk*, and other games were dominated many times by players, thus making it hard for operators to play the games. Hopefully, the AMOA will be able to enforce some guidelines to make sure the games aren't dominated by the kids...at least until they hit the streets.

And there was another complaint which was voiced by many in attendance, and it concerned the obvious fact of the AMOA Show's having outgrown the Conrad Hilton Hotel. With the Japanese invasion, the show extended out beyond the three rooms advertised in show-books and AMOA literature.

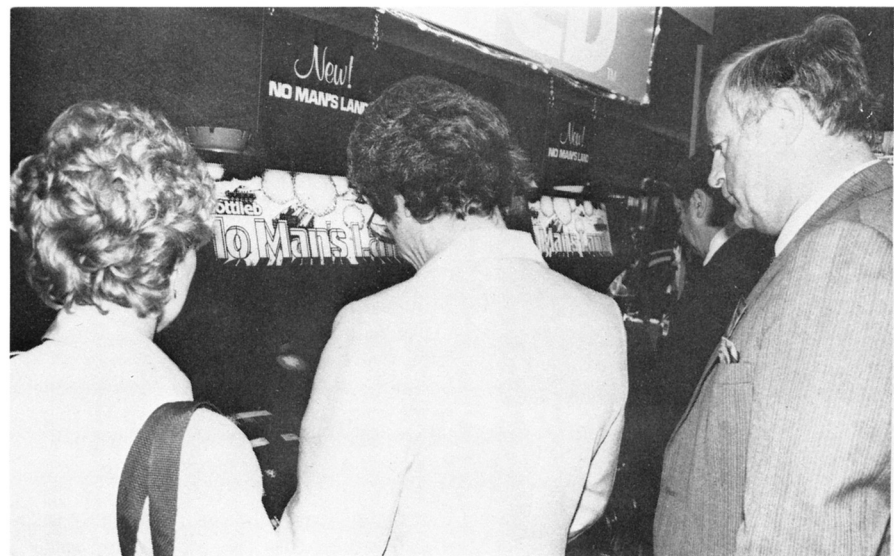
And with exhibits spilling out even onto the lower lobby, there were people who, although not even registered at the show, could visit some of the exhibits without a badge.



Lionizing show-goers were Irving Kaye's Bill Currier and Gary Kealy.



On the Data East team: (left to right) Keiichi Iwamoto, Satish Bhutani, Tetsuo Fukuda, and Hideo Fukuda.



Gottlieb joins the videomakers, and conventioners wanted to check out the product, No Man's Land.

AMOA Seminars

From operating to politicking



Campbell of South Carolina



Latz of Minnesota

The AMOA seminars for the 1980 show ran a range from a session on "The Economy and Grassroots Politics" to a discussion of "Increasing Profits through Promotions" and a panel talking of "New Techniques, Operations, and Cash Control."

The Industry Seminar on Friday featured keynote speaker Robert M. Bleiberg, economics authority and editor of *Barron's*. He predicted that, with the present direction of the national economy, sound investments of the past are not going to keep pace with inflation. As an aside, he noted that baseball trading cards appreciate value better than shares of stock.

"As the value of a coin becomes less, the public will therefore be less wary of throwing it into our machines," a seminar participant noted.

Norman Pink, chairman of the AMOA Seminar Committee, commented however that "not every machine is a 50¢ machine. I personally think the new innovative machines, like Bally's and Williams', will command a higher coin."

Politics

A games operator is influential, and the fact of his labor hiring power and influence with a large number of persons should be communicated to his lawmakers. That was the theme of the portion of the Industry Seminar featuring Carroll Campbell, U.S. Congressman from South Carolina, and Robert Latz, Minnesota lobbyist.

As well as letting legislators know that an operator controls votes—possibly a majority in a town—the importance of "contributing financially and with time to a political campaign was stressed by the speakers. One comment from Campbell was that he, and perhaps many politicians, would rather not have contributions made by an individual to two opposing candidates' campaigns. The

contributor should not appear to be buying a vote in covering two potential lawmakers, in other words.

Pink, who is also treasurer of the Music Operators of Minnesota's Political Action Committee (PAC), summarized the impact of such a campaign-contributing group on the politicians: "They're aware you're out there; they have to be," because of the high degree of PAC's regulation by state law. "So if you need their ear, you have the key to get an audience," said Pink.

In Minnesota, where Latz affirmed the importance of PAC lobbying, the operators make a point to contact legislators before a problem for operators arises—at the beginning of the assembly session. At that time, legislators are made aware of the economic and personal impact the operator has in his community. Every operator should do so, as well as acting with a PAC if he chooses, and/or contributing to a campaign, said the seminar participants.

"With disclosure laws and the new breed of politician, contact with people is almost as important as money," stated Pink. "The confidence of his customers is important to an operator. He is the bar and restaurant owners' confidant, minister, crying towel; he wears a number of hats. We can become a viable force, and should let our legislators know this," commented Pink.

In his own state, "We began an association when we woke up and found we were affected by sales tax although we had a written promise we would not be. But because we are now a viable force, when the tax was increased 1¢, it was stopped on amusement games (gross receipts)."

The same application of influence on the state house should be made on a mayor and city council and national representatives, said the panel members. They agreed that the operator has a legitimate business, "a business he should be proud of, and he should be known."

Toward drawing the picture for lawmakers, the operator has the points of being a businessman who pays a lot in the way of taxes, employs labor, provides entertainment to a lot of people, and does not have any connection to lawless elements.

New operating techniques

A meat-and-potatoes session was the AMOA mini-seminar of Sunday morning. Operators Jack Kerner of Somerville, Massachusetts, and Len Hornstein of North Bergen, New Jersey discussed business methods they have developed successfully.

Kerner explained that his operation (with 7,000 machines) is heavily contracted. "You must get a contract; you must be protected," he said. Payment of the location's share is made monthly, and locations make no interference with route collections. Some attendees objected that their own locations would not submit to having cash collections held out for as much as a month before payment. But Kerner said that he began the practice of monthly payment 12 years ago and now 90 percent of his route has cash collections taken away from the locations.

"A lot depends on how you sell the account," he said, stressing the "salesman" aspect of operating. And, having a check sent with a statement on the 20th of the month, cash from the location is kept for as much as six weeks.

This avoids counting cash at the location. A firm rule of Kerner's Mello-Tone operation is that no one touches the machine except his uniformed route men, who also have ID badges. The customers are

reminded of the rule four times a year.

On the route, the employee takes triplicate slips for each stop: one goes in the cash bag (one separate for each location—which helps identify the source of slugs and pennies, back at the shop) one for the customer, and one for the routeman. Kerner's collection is via "income totalizer" on the machine, each machine having its book with the previous meter reading logged. This book is shown to the customer, and any agreed minimum receipt is paid.

The collection slips allow weekly comparison of collections to show when a machine's income is down. (For more on useful route forms, see articles in PLAY METER for August 15, 1980; pages 44 and 45. Sample forms are included there.)

The location will be cooperative when the operator is "sold" as a businessman, Kerner advised. He is selling a service to the location for a contract, and he convinces the account that more is gained from having the games machines expertise of the operator, he said.

Computerizing

Kerner and Hornstein shared their experience in using computers with the mini-seminar.

Len Hornstein noted, "Computers have become a way of life," as machines' game play and bookkeeping functions both are built on computer. The operator is allowed programming for a "most suitable" time on the machine's play, for example.

He stressed the difference he has seen between cigarette vending and a games route in terms of cash control. "You have to be able to spot

the trends when they happen and rotate that piece. The computer can do wonders for you in that respect," Hornstein said.

He reviewed several commercial systems for bookkeeping and the options of leasing or renting a computer or computer time. (See also July 15, 1980, PLAY METER on business computers.)

The key to consider is who will write the computer program. Like two types of clothing purchases, he noted, are the options of an "off the shelf," or "canned" software program. It may not be perfect for the amusement operator's needs, but it is less expensive than the "custom-made" program, in which the special needs of the operator must be explained in detail to the software programmer.

Hornstein urged operators to talk to as many persons as possible about software options, and he called on the AMOA to be a clearinghouse for operators software systems. Seminar Moderator Fred Collins, Jr. noted that many members have computer systems.

Hiring practices and other nuts-and-bolts points about operating were de-briefed in the seminar.

Other topics

Saturday's seminar had presented panel discussion on "Increasing Your Profits through Promotions." Carol Kantor of Business Builders threw out useful ideas on promotions. Richard Hawkins, Rochester, Minnesota operator, laid out guidelines on operating a successful pool tournament. Wayne Hesch, past AMOA president, served as moderator for questions and answers.

—by Ray E. Tilley



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AMOA must do more

By David Pierson

The AMOA is not doing its job—that theme seemed to be echoed over and over again at the third state association conference in twelve months. Some state association leaders said it, others implied it. But the meaning seemed clear: the AMOA is not doing everything it should be doing. And, as a result, state associations lack the cohesiveness to do an effective job.

On October 30, the eve of the

AMOA Show, in the Conrad Hilton Hotel, state association leaders seemed to be saying to the AMOA that sponsoring a trade show and fighting an interminable copyright battle are not enough.

A letter, authored by the outspoken president of the New York state association, Millie McCarthy, and appearing in the "Mailbox" section of PLAY METER last month, seemed to convey the

deep sentiment many state association leaders have about the necessity for even holding such a forum as the state association conference: "We have come to this not through the AMOA, just because of the AMOA—because the AMOA furnishes no program to help states (associations)."

The conference started off on the peripheral issues just as the two previous forays had—how to round up members, how to fill the coffers of the state associations, how to attack adverse legislation, and so on. But the feeling of the participants this time around seemed to suggest that something else had to be said.

The question was clearly this: why is there a need to discuss these iota of information in person when an organization already exists which could effectively coordinate the activities of the various state associations and keep member operators informed of what has worked elsewhere and what hasn't.

The subject of the AMOA not doing everything it could be doing was first broached by panelist Jim Hayes of the Ohio Music and Amusement Association. Hayes said there were several areas where the AMOA and state associations could work together for mutual benefit.

He suggested the AMOA become involved in the sponsorship of a nationwide coin-op machine tournament, thereby throwing more media attention on the positive side of this industry. He also suggested the AMOA become a storehouse of information which could detail what things work and what things do not work as far as state associations are concerned. Both of these suggestions had been raised at the second state association conference in Ohio this past summer, and Hayes was on the panel at that meeting, too.

Marge Halverson of the Music Operators of Minnesota, the other panelist at the conference of well over fifty participants, picked up on Hayes's cue and offered other suggestions for the AMOA.

She said the AMOA has a vehicle



THE LOCATION

A NEWSLETTER EXCLUSIVELY FOR A.M.O.A. MEMBERS

OCTOBER 1980

AMOA'S BIGGEST EXPOSITION OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 1, 2

AMOA's 1980 International Exposition is now only days away, and we predict that it will break all previous records. Expo '80 will be held in the Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 31-November 1, 2. Three large exhibit rooms—East, West and Continental—plus the lower lobby will be filled with exhibitors.



THE LOCATION

A NEWSLETTER EXCLUSIVELY FOR A.M.O.A. MEMBERS

NOVEMBER 1980

AMOA DOES IT ALL OVER AGAIN: EXPO '80 SMASHES ALL RECORDS

Now recognized as one of the most important shows in the world of games and music, Expo '80 brought in a total attendance of 7,400, an increase of 270 over last year. All regular exhibit space had been sold out since mid-June, and it was necessary to add space in the lower lobby. AMOA Expositions have built up an impressive following, which is still growing. Future plans call for the 1981 Exposition to be held again in the Conrad Hilton, Chicago. The 1982 Expo

'Look-alike' front pages of recent issues of AMOA's The Location suggest validity of the argument posed by association directors—that the newsletter could be a more useful vehicle for members.

which could be used to disseminate a lot of information that was being discussed at the meeting, but that this vehicle was being wasted on repetitious and useless matters. She was referring to the AMOA's monthly newsletter to members, "The Location."

"The national newsletter is not worthwhile," she said. "There is no news in it. I think there's a lot more that can be done with it. The AMOA is missing the boat in not updating the newsletter."

She said that, among other things, the AMOA's copyright lawyer could report regularly on what he is doing for the national association. She also said that "The Location" could be used to coordinate a lobby-writing chain on matters of concern to the coin-op industry. "And I don't mean to restrict that to just the copyright matter," she added.

Someone in the audience commented that a parallel national organization for vending, the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) has become an effective clearinghouse of information for its members. "NAMA does it effectively," someone pointed out. "They have regular mailouts of legislative action."

Halverson also suggested that there was a greater need for educational seminars in the industry and suggested that the AMOA look into the matter of holding educational seminars on a regional basis.

Millie McCarthy from New York spoke up from the floor to question why the AMOA chose to ignore the efforts of others trying to fill the void in this area. In doing so, she touched on the Amusement Operators Expo (sponsored by PLAY METER magazine) and other non-AMOA-sponsored industry events.

"Why does the AMOA ignore things like the Play Meter Show?" she asked. "It wasn't even listed in the AMOA newsletter under the calendar of events! The Play Meter Show is offering educational seminars, but the AMOA is choosing to ignore it. Is it because the AMOA considers the show a threat?"

One member of the AMOA board of directors countered that because such ventures as the AOE are profit-motivated, the AMOA should not publicize their existence, since that could be construed as though the AMOA is recommending them.

McCarthy responded, "What does it matter if it is profit-motivated? Aren't we all in this business for a profit? All that should matter is that it's something the industry needs, something that's for the good of the whole industry, and the AMOA is

trying to pretend that it doesn't even exist."

Gray areas

Another slightly unrelated area of the discussion focused on "gray area" equipment, machines which, though classified technically as amusement devices, are actually gaming devices. Such equipment has created an industry crisis in Ohio (see related articles elsewhere in this issue); and Ohioan operator Hayes spoke out on the subject, apparently suggesting the AMOA should make a stand on this controversial issue.

"I would propose," said Hayes, "that any device used for the purpose of gambling is not in the best interest of the industry."

Later during the conference, attorney Rufus King, who distinguished himself in the industry by his successful court defenses of pinball, said that he too was going to file a friend-of-the-court brief arguing against the legalizing of so-called gray area equipment. He termed the proliferation of gray area equipment a "national problem" and said, because of the gambling nature of these machines, they can present an insidious influence over locations which will insist on these quick-money pieces over other forms of coin-op amusement equipment. With this confusion over what is gambling equipment and what is not, King said, the industry could find itself in dire straits (King has authored an article on this very point which also appears elsewhere in this issue).

One member in the audience asked why didn't the AMOA take a stand on this equipment. "Why do we (the AMOA) allow them to exhibit these games here at our show?" he asked.

The conference's moderator, the former AMOA president, Russell Mawdsley of Massachusetts, said that since the AMOA is an international show and since gambling is legal in many places overseas, the AMOA felt it should allow the equipment to be exhibited. Then he placed the issue back in the laps of the various state associations again. "This is a matter," Mawdsley said, "that each individual state should police."

The response did not seem satisfactory to at least one member operator in the audience who blurted out, "It seems you're condoning this kind of thing if you allow them to show."

And so it was the AMOA came in for a heavy attack on many fronts, with the sentiments in all cases echoing the same theme—the AMOA is not doing enough. ‡

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'Gray area' games stir controversy

By David Pierson

Two different industry crises—one affecting Ohio operators and the other threatening to scuttle the planned 1982 AMOA Show in Las Vegas—have focused industry attention on coin-operated devices which are becoming known as “gray area” equipment.

These so-called gray area machines include the many video card games which have proliferated recently in the United States. They offer players the ability to bet game credits on such things as the flip of a card, the roll of dice, the outcome of a race, and so on—all for the purpose of winning outlandishly high numbers of credits which are

supposedly used to play the game longer.

But amusement industry people contend that argument is only for the naive, that the real purpose of the machines is for gambling. Free game credits, they contend, are used instead of straight cash payouts merely to get around anti-gambling statutes in local areas.

Industry people also point to the fact that, since the repeal of the \$250 IRS gaming tax stamp, the federal government has left the matter of deciding which machines are gambling devices up to the countless state and local authorities. And herein lies the fear that as authorities

tire of the cat-and-mouse game with these pseudo-amusement pieces, they will enact stricter legislation which will, in many cases, outlaw flipper pinballs, videos, and other pure amusement devices.

In fact, many industry people contend that even the description of the machines as being “gray area” is misleading and suggests that there is some confusion even within the industry as to the real nature of these machines. So to combat that, many industry people have already taken a stand and are trying to enlist the support of others within the industry.

Ohio decision

A recent court case in Ohio is a perfect example.

Agents of the Ohio Department of Liquor Control seized two video card games from the Fraternal Order of Eagles in Cleveland, Ohio, claiming the machines were gambling devices. The owner of the machines, Mills-Jennings of Ohio, sought to have the machines returned and a permanent injunction placed against the Department of Liquor Control.

In its August 26 decision, the Court of Common Pleas for Franklin County, Ohio, ruled in favor of the video card game operator, saying the machines that were seized are “amusement machines and not per se gambling devices.”

In making that decree, the Court of Common Pleas said it was “very much impressed with the decision in the case of Progress Vending against the Department of Liquor Control... because it clearly sets forth the legislative changes as relating to public policy of the State with respect to gambling.”

It was a bitter pill for amusement operators in the state. The Progress Vending case is the Ohio Music and Amusement Association's landmark decision allowing free play for flipper games in the state. Ohio operators won that case by showing that pinball was a game of skill and that awarding a non-monetary free play



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was therefore allowable.

But now a "gray area" machine was also being classified as a skill machine, and the court saw no difference between the handful of free plays a flipper game awards and the inordinately high number of credits the video card game awarded. It was still non-monetary and, therefore, not gambling, the Court decided.

Mills-Jennings, to prove the skill factor of their games, argued that a skilled player knows what to discard, what cards to keep, when to stand pat, and when to risk more credits. The court agreed with that logic.

Secondly, the court could find no

because of the liberal interpretation of the court concerning free plays, authorities will get tired of nitpicking eventually and pass another, more stringent law which, while outlawing video card games, will possibly outlaw bona fide forms of coin-op amusement as well.

For right now the state is still working with the present law. The state attorney general, William J. Brown, who lost the Progress Vending case just two years ago in the case against pinball, is appealing the decision to the Ohio Court of Appeals. Reportedly after some dissension among Ohio operators, the OMAA has decided to file a

nearby state, Illinois, foreseeing the problem with the removal of the gaming tax stamp, adopted a resolution through their association in June, 1980, just before the repeal went into effect. Many operators now feel that perhaps the AMOA and other state associations should consider a similar type of resolution as that adopted by the Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association:

"Whereas the coin-operated amusement game industry has spent many years and large resources to win acceptance as a legitimate part of the amusement industry, and

"Whereas the advent of coin-operated video devices as popular

Pinball's landmark case in Ohio, the court ruled, legitimized gray area free plays, too.

evidence that the credits were being converted into cash, though the Liquor Control Department argued that players were getting paid off for the free plays they built up.

The court reasoned it this way: "One of the theories of the defendant was that an employee of the permit premises, such as the bartender, had in his possession a device which would be comparable to an electric garage opener which would wipe out the accumulated plays which would then permit the player to be compensated in cash.

"The testimony of the plaintiffs was to the effect that this was utilized only when the player had accumulated a sufficient number of games when he could not completely utilize them. A record was kept of the number of unused games so that, on his (the

friend-of-the-court brief in behalf of the state attorney general. It's an effort to dissociate bona fide amusement operators from camouflaged gambling operations.

Notably, industry lawyer Rufus King, who has scored several convincing victories for pinball in court cases, is also filing a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of the state attorney general.

The threat, as King sees it, is that it could be a throwback to what happened in the 1940s when one-ball and bingo pinballs proliferated.

The initial problem is that amusement operators in many cases will not be able to compete with subterfuge gambling devices because of the reportedly higher earning ability of the gambling machines, and that will disrupt the

amusement games has also made it possible to camouflage gambling operations in the video format, and

"Whereas the introduction of subterfuge gambling devices threatens the good reputation of the entire coin-operated amusement game industry, and

"Whereas the most common gambling subterfuge is the use of large numbers of credits or 'free replays' to control gambling payouts,

"Now therefore be it resolved that the Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association strongly condemns the introduction of coin-operated gambling devices into areas where their operation is illegal, urges its members and other amusement game proponents to resist any such introduction, and recommends to legislative and regulatory authorities

"Amusement operators will not be able to compete with high-earning subterfuge gambling devices."

player's) next trip in, he could start with that number of games to his credit. In other words, while he could accumulate the free games, he was never compensated in cash for them."

The circuitous logic of Mills-Jennings in regard to how the credits were cleared was accepted by the court, and now Ohio amusement operators find themselves in the uneasy position of being protected by the same law which covers a multitude of sins. The worry is that,

market. The scenario, as King sees it, would then lead to strong-arm tactics by gambling operators, since the stakes with the machines would be high in competing for good locations; and sooner or later this would lead to adverse public reaction against the coin machine industry, resulting in severe new restrictions by statutes and regulations.

Illinois resolution

Interestingly, operators in a

that the number of credits or replays that can be won or awarded on any coin-operated device be limited to a number no larger than can be reasonably played off in the course of play on the device."

Las Vegas dilemma

This leads into the second area of contention concerning gray area equipment—what action, if any, will the AMOA take about the matter. To date, the national association has been reluctant to take any stand at

all about gambling equipment, other than to allow the devices to be exhibited at the annual AMOA Show.

But the AMOA may soon find itself forced into taking a position one way or the other concerning gambling equipment and, more

manufacturers' complaint," said Stern, eliminated one possible option the AMOA had at its disposal. Stern said the reason the AMOA said it was moving the show out of Chicago for 1982 was that there were no dates available at the Conrad Hilton. But Stern said that reason

that until at least March 1981.

AMOA stand wanted

Still the whole matter of the Las Vegas Show is looked upon as merely a peripheral issue by manufacturers, however deep their sentiments run concerning the show

"AMOA could lobby to make sure there is a clean line between amusement and gray area games."

specifically, gray area machines. Amusement machine manufacturers now appear to be driving home that message to the AMOA by threatening to boycott the 1982 AMOA Show, if that show is held as scheduled in Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas.

Manufacturers of amusement equipment—reportedly including Stern, Williams, Atari, Gremlin/Sega, Gottlieb, Exidy, and a host of other manufacturers—say they object to the Las Vegas show because it would place the industry in a compromised position of being associated with gambling. Their position is that a show in the Las Vegas gambling center would create an unfavorable climate for the industry, leaving the industry wide open to unfavorable media reports of connections between gambling and

was not valid.

"The space the AMOA had originally reserved for 1982 with the Conrad Hilton before going to Las Vegas," he said, "was sold the week of the AMOA Show! It was available up until then. The AMOA said the reason for getting out of Chicago and going to Las Vegas was that it couldn't have stayed at the Conrad Hilton. The fact of the matter is the AMOA could have stayed at the Conrad Hilton."

Thus because of the AMOA's delay in responding to the manufacturers' bone of contention, Stern said, that option was now ruled out.

The AMOA's position on the whole matter has been that the national association has contracted with Caesar's Palace for the 1982 show. AMOA president Norman

being held in Las Vegas.

Stern went on to tell PLAY METER. "I don't think the major issue here is the Las Vegas show. The major issue is that some active lobbying should be done both nationally and locally to promote amusement machines and to see we don't lose our federal protection.

"The AMOA could be a strong lobbying effort," he continued. "I would also like to see a manufacturers' association make a strong effort."

The strong lobbying effort, Stern pointed out, would be to make sure there is a clean line drawn between amusement games and so-called gray area games.

"I am very concerned about gray area games," he said. "They confuse the marketplace as a whole. They confuse local authorities...Gray area videos could cause all games to be

"Gray area videos could cause all games to be outlawed in local areas." —Gary Stern

coin-op amusement equipment.

"It's just not a connection our industry can afford to have made," Gary Stern of Stern Electronics told PLAY METER. Stern, who has become the manufacturers' unofficial spokesman in the matter of the Las Vegas show, said the selection of Las Vegas by the AMOA is "a poor choice." It may have been a good choice initially, Stern said, but circumstances have made it necessary to move.

He said the AMOA's handling of the manufacturers' complaint has also been poor. The AMOA was informed in March about the manufacturers' unwillingness to exhibit at the show if it were held in Las Vegas, Stern said, but the AMOA was unresponsive until right before the AMOA Show, over seven months later.

That slowness to respond to the

Pink told PLAY METER that the AMOA could stand to lose financially if the show were cancelled out of Las Vegas.

Manufacturers contend there is still time to get out of the commitment with Caesar's Palace without taking a financial loss. Manufacturers have also hinted that if there were, in fact, a loss, they would be willing to help offset that loss by paying higher booth costs—that's how deep their sentiment is against showing in Las Vegas. However, they contend if the AMOA acts quickly there would probably be no financial loss at all.

Pink told PLAY METER the choice of Las Vegas was a committee decision. He said the manufacturers' complaint "will be taken under serious consideration by the site selection committee." But it appears nothing will be decided on

outlawed in local areas."

He cited a law journal article from Northwestern University on the subject where a prosecuting attorney said the industry should either be willing to provide experts wherever necessary throughout the country to assist police in distinguishing between pure amusement and gambling machines, or else suffer from having all games outlawed since they don't have any real value to society anyway.

Stern stressed the problem was not with "honest" gambling machines but rather with gambling machines that are *disguised* as amusement machines.

So the controversy rages on, and the AMOA, which has restricted its attention on the matter to merely what is allowed to be exhibited at the AMOA Show, may now be forced to choose sides.

AMOA Show Diary

Dick Welu takes an unabashed look at what's on the floor



(Games do things when Welu plays that they don't do for anyone else)

It was a *bit* more crowded than the noon rush hour at the McDonald's in Dubuque, Iowa ...

#1. How can one adequately describe the size of the Pacific Ocean? The complexity of the theory of relativity? The verbosity of Howard Cosell? That's how I felt wandering about the showroom floors of the Conrad Hilton contemplating the deluge of new video games that assaulted the senses with sound, sight, and motion.

To do justice to the welter and skelter into one concise magazine article looked like a task comparable to choreographing a Chinese New Year celebration. *Play Meter*, may I resign?

[No, Dick.—ed.]

#2. Let's start with things that were NOT at the Big Show. Pinballs, for instance. Oh, the Big Four, Williams, Bally, Gottlieb, and Stern turned out *en masse*, plus Game Plan, and one or two other odds and ends showed up, but the glut of foreign pins and new companies prevalent as recently as two years ago has dived as deeply as the pinball sales figures during the previous year.

Also absent were arcade guns. Nary a true gun game made the scene. What will the N.R.A. think? And no driving games. Alas.

#3. No horses were there either, but a bull showed up. Two bulls actually. Zamperla Inc. returned their strength-testing bull for my annual humiliation, but new in the barn to greet guests was F.W. & Associates' *Buck 'N Bull*, a whirling dervish demonstrated by Larry Mahan in the lobby. Did I try it? I looked at that contraption closely, thought about protecting my manhood, and moseyed on, partner. And that's no bull!

#4. For attractive display area, nobody does it better than Gottlieb. With their lighting, display setups, and yards and yards of lustrous blue carpeted walls and floors, the effect was exciting and the atmosphere inviting. Star of Gottlieb's products was *Time Line*, a Star Series 80 pinball which has the best playfield design and features that Gottlieb has

produced for many moons. Continuing their efforts to incorporate the use of time as in *James Bond*, this machine features a mini-playfield in the upper lefthand corner of the playfield that operates on a deadline time to complete the targets within. It adds a new element to the game.

#5. Did I mention the exhibit floor was crowded? Crowded! I mean I'm from Dubuque, Iowa, where standing two places back in the line at McDonald's during the noon hour is as big a crowd as I like to get involved in. But at the AMOA the doors had barely opened before the games were engulfed by humanity. My mother, who accompanied my wife, son, and I, was a first time visitor to the show, and she couldn't believe the distance which foreign visitors traveled to participate. "And they're all so serious about these games," she said. Oh, yeah, Mom, real serious.

#6. I know distributors have warehouses full of used pins, and the game is hurting in the cashbox for all operators, but I was a little sorry to see *Sexy Girl*, a pinball conversion kit being pedaled by a Swiss concern. Using a modified Bally *Playboy* display model, *Sexy Girl* featured a 9 X 12 projection screen in the center of the playfield upon which were projected pictures of nudes when certain targets were hit. The photos were racy, X-rated, and our industry doesn't need this image. (It'll probably be a big hit.) Caution: Do not place in bars frequented by E.R.A. advocates.

#7. Cinematronics made a big splash three years ago when they debuted into the game business with their Vectorbeam monitor and an exciting game, *Space Wars*. But anybody can build one good machine; it's consistency that means financial life or death in this industry. Cinematronics seems to have beaten the odds. Their latest is *Star Castle*, and it's a honey. Within three protective rings is a pulsing *Star Castle* protected by an Energy Cannon. The player, commanding a

space ship, blasts away at the rings in an attempt to penetrate through to the center which earns him extra space ships. Space mines and the Energy Cannon fight back to destroy the invader. Colored overlays and throbbing sound enhance the game's appeal.

Like stars on a clear night

#8. Speaking of space, I went to this year's show apprehensively expecting to be deluged with space games for obvious reasons. And they were there all right, as many as stars in the galaxy. Some were rather weird tie-ins such as Williams' linking of a pinball card game with the title and art of *Alien Poker*, and another was Universal's *Space Panic*, a ladder and blocking games. Both would have benefitted from breaking away from the space rut. But overall, I was greatly encouraged by games which have begun to explore other themes or motifs removed from the *Space Invaders/Galaxian* syndrome.

#9. Atari produced the top game of the year past, *Asteroids*. (Munch, munch more crow for your writer.) And they spent most of the year trying to manufacture enough units to meet the demand. What should also be recognized is that Atari's other 1980 release, *Missile*

Command, may just be the second best game of the year. *Galaxian* supporters may quibble with that assessment, but *Missile Command*, for my money, is a super game. Only its difficulty level for younger players will prevent its reaching the cash accumulations of a *Space Invaders* or *Asteroids*. But the game will endure.

#10. Atari's biggie for '81 is *Battlezone*. Though ostensibly based on a futuristic theme, this is really a combat periscope game. The visual effects are outstanding. The whole scene, as viewed, is three dimensional and realistic. The pulsing sound of approaching tanks gives the player the real feel of being on the imaginary scene. The game seemed tough at first, and the display models were set up so that if you were destroyed twice, the game ended, which made for some very quick games. Probably this is adjustable. I'm pulling for this game because it is a great piece of programming that uses a Quadra-Scan monitor to maximum effect.

#11. Game Plan has been on skimpy rations since starting hot with *Sharpshooter*, and I'd like to come up with an encouraging word for their show features, but I'm afraid few will be heard. Their pinball production seems to be back

burner while they try to leap into the video parade with *Tora Tora Tora*. This game had targets too small, hard to see visuals, and much wasted screen space. The game has the feel of video efforts from years back—a failing found in other manufacturers' showing videos for the first time, such as Williams' *Defender*, which borrowed from demised Electra Games' *Flying Fortress* and needed an octopus to play properly with all the buttons found on the control panel.

#12. I've tried to find something good to say about *Deep Death*, a video offering on display at the Game Plan booth but manufactured by Pacific Novelty. It is the most gruesome, blood-curdling game ever made. How's that? Is that a compliment? Remember all those shark games during the year of "Jaws?" None of them was a big success, but the player always tried to defeat the shark. Not this time. *Deep Death* lets YOU be the shark. And you try to defeat the frogmen in pursuit. How? Direct your shark to the diver and push "the Munch Button." Yes, I said, "the Munch Button." To the accompaniment of dying screams, shouts for help, cries for mercy—the shark gobbles up his victims. The game drew a lot of attention but it was embarrassing to

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play. If you thought Exidy's *Death Race* was controversial, put this baby on your route and duck!

#13. For all you "shorts" connoisseurs, the best pair on display; was at the Arachnid Dart Game booth. Now I never play darts, but I do try to keep a running tally on shorts in my town as a summer hobby. My wife will attest to that. The blond hostess filling the pair of shorts for Arachnid also did a healthy number for the thin little T-shirt she had on. I flipped one of the darts offered and she informed me I scored a six. I told her she didn't have to throw; I gave her a 10.

A game a week?

#14. Universal Ltd. must develop a new game each week. The best of the harvest, one which my son, Tim, found captivating, was the previously mentioned *Space Panic*. It is not at all reminiscent of any current space games, so don't let the name mislead you. Better is should be called "Trap Man," or some such. In play, a number of monsters pursue the player over, up, and down a construction of ladders and brick floors. The player, at intervals, stops his man and chops holes through which he hopes the monsters will fall. It's cute, tricky, and challenging. Give it a look.

#15. Nichibutsu, another prolific Japanese manufacturer, also introduced a climbing game, *Crazy Climber*. In this instance, the climber scales a skyscraper while trying to avoid debris being dropped unexpectedly from windows above. Then, to spice up the action, King Kong takes a swipe or two while a condor tries for a bite on a meaty part. If you complete the climb to the

top, it's helicopter rescue time and a new building to conquer.

#16. Stern's second video game will drive you "*Berzerk*". That's likewise the name of this game and it gets my vote for this year's Best of Show. Really, the game is a freak. It doesn't look attractive; it's not a space motif; it has a quirky sound fidelity; and it has been created, designed, and programmed by Stern Electronics. People won't be able to quit playing it. It's just like eating peanuts. The object of the game is for the player, represented on the video screen by a stick figure, to shoot all the robot figures contained within a room plan. The robots talk, "Intruder alert," "Destroy intruder," and taunt the player with "Chicken" if he dodges out one of the open doors. Destroying a set of robots brings on a more challenging group. For extra interest, there is "Evil Otto"—but I'll let you find out about him yourself when you go **BERZERK!**

#17 I walked past the Summit Systems booth area where a duo of Playboy bunnies were hanging out. And I do mean, "hanging out." But it was necessary to walk by there because I was heading for the Midway display area. I found myself going back to the Midway display quite a few times, and I always had to walk by the Summit booth. Even if I had to make a 360-degree circle to get there.

#18. Midway did have some beauties of its own. *Rally X*, a game licensed from Namco (and what a contribution to games that company has made in recent years), was the closest thing to a driving game seen at the show. Brilliant color and charming sounds highlight a game

which uses a maze of streets to be negotiated by the player's car as he seeks out, via the use of a radar screen, point objectives while being pursued by cars whose intention is to cause a collision. A sure hit.

Pac Man, another Namco creation under the original name, *Puck Man*, and changed in the U.S. for obvious reasons, is another *Head-On* type maze game with a yellow mouth roaming the maze, eating dots and, when it becomes charged up by swallowing a "power capsule," eating the blue monsters in pursuit also.

But the Midway game that I tab as Sleeper of the Show is a thing called *Space Zap*. The player is in control of a central laser base through the use of four directional buttons. Space ships fire mines at random intervals and the player must quickly hit the correct button to aim his laser while pressing the fire button. The game is simple enough in concept but calls for split-second reaction and coordination. The game also works up the most sweat since Atari's *Football*, so keep a deodorant can handy to spray on the crowds that will be attending this one.

Pins alive and well in Chicago

#19. Pinball's death may have been prematurely reported. Besides the already mentioned Gottlieb *Time Line*, Williams and Bally dazzled the crowds with two-level playfield games. Bally's was *Flash Gordon*; Williams hung in there with basic black and the *Black Knight*. The games look like Chutes and Ladders with a few Dungeons and Dragons thrown in for good measure. Also exciting were Stern's *Flight 2000*, a

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talking multi-ball game—and Bally's *Xenon* which features a clear plastic crossover tube, talks, uses two ball play, and has a backglass of superb design. Pinball dead? You ain't seen nothin' yet.

#20. As I walk and talk and play on the exhibit floor, I know there is no way I can do justice to all the games. I resolve to not comment at length on any of the droves of *Space Invaders*/*Galaxian* look-alike games—and some may become solid money earners. I am referring to entries such as Universal's *Magical Spot*, Taito's *Cosmopolis*, Remi's *Uni Wars*, Centuri's *Killer Comet*, Game-A-Tron's *Black Hole* and hosts of others.

Sometime soon, game room devotees being fickle as Norman Mailer, ennuui is going to set in when these space clones are presented. So be careful.

One better spinoff from this group is what I would call the "flying flower" games. I mean by this Gremlin/Sega's *Moon Cresta*, Centuri's *Eagle*, and Universal's *Zero Hour*. The use of color, patterns, and sounds on these games is very attractive to the player initially. The play is similar to a *Galaxian*, but I wonder if long-lasting play appeal is inherent? Just wondering.

#21. Taito America has big hopes

for a game called *Polaris* and I wish them well. Somebody must think it has "Big Money" written all over it, judging by the number of imitators like *Tomakawk Missile* by Electro Sport, *N-Sub* by Sega/Gremlin, and others. The best way to describe *Polaris* is "*Depth Charge* meets *Space Invaders*." Both were winners. Maybe *Polaris* will be twice as good as that combination.

#22. Not counting the Playboy bunnies, big, spectacular things were confined to three sitdown games. Remi Inc. had a tank game called *Panther* enclosed in a *Tailgunner*-type cabinet. I like the game but felt the cabinet unnecessary. The only other configuration on display was in a cocktail table, and, honestly, I think this game would do just fine in a standard upright arcade model.

Big crowds surrounded Sega's *Space Tactics* and Taito's *Space V*, making for long waits to get playing time. Both games had spectacular flying effects, but my nod goes to Sega's game for most realistic involvement of the player. There's a lot going on as you pilot a space ship through the galaxy toward oncoming flights of invaders. You fight them off with cannon fire, bombs, and a shield—but they're tough to hit and keep coming. It helps if you have three hands to play this game, but

nevertheless it is an artistic engineering masterpiece. I was afraid to ask the price.

#23. After exiting *Space Tactics* and getting over air sickness, I found it necessary to make one more round of the exhibit floor. My wife, Sharon, who loved Midway's *Space Zap*, wanted to try it again—but I warned her that if she played more than one game on that baby, she was riding home in the trunk of the car.

#24. In '79 I reported a disappointing AMOA show. In '80, I am thrilled to say, the show was mammoth. If you weren't there, you missed much. I know I am cheating some games and products worth mentioning, but space and time and absorption with all on display simply taxes my abilities to condense.

Game industry—you are very alive and humming!

Editor: To our many inquirers asking, "Who is Dick Welu?" and "Where does he come from?" and "What does he want?"—he is a self-described "crazy duck hunter from Iowa."

Welu also operates Red Baron Amusements in Dubuque.

For submitting this article, he asked for payment in duck calls. Happy holidays, Dick!

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Awards program to expand

Readers' input leads up to 'The Play Meter' bowing-in

"The Play Meter" made its debut as an award for excellence in the coin-operated amusement industry November 1 in presentations to executives of Atari, Inc. and Williams Electronics, Inc. during the AMOA convention in Chicago.

The first recipients of the industry award were cited for excellence in *Firepower* and *Asteroids* as the best-earning pingame and video game, respectively, in 1980 by garnering the most votes in PLAY METER's annual operators survey.

Presentations were made at the manufacturers' celebration dinners in Chicago for the AMOA Show. Accepting the Play Meter award for the top video game was Atari President Gene Lipkin. Michael Stroll, president of Williams Electronics, accepted the award for the top pingame.

Play Meter Publisher Ralph C. Lally II said, "The awards idea was well-received by all industry people. The positive response was definitely not restricted to just the winning companies. I think it shows the industry realizes that the time has come for an award for excellence, as other entertainment fields have such honors."

"The Play Meter" is awarded strictly on the basis of responses by readers of this magazine, Lally said. It reflects no influence by manufacturers nor even the editorial staff of PLAY METER, which merely tabulates the votes from its annual industry survey.

Next year, the awards program will expand to embrace other endeavors in the industry besides production of the top video and pinball games, Lally said.

He asked that readers suggest other categories that should be covered in "The Play Meter" awards program. These might include, for example: game artwork, technical design, promotional techniques, the longest-running hit game, and other award categories.

"We hope that, in time, the awards based on operators' judgement will be recognized outside the industry," Lally commented. "There's no

reason why an industry as large and responsible as ours should not become a greater part of the public's consciousness."

Lally initiated the awards on behalf of PLAY METER, stressing: "This industry has long needed to have a means for recognition of outstanding coin-operated amusement machines. This award is based on the

judgement of operators, expressed in the largest independent sampling of this industry to obtain the information on what are the best-earning pinballs and video games."

The results of the annual industry survey were published in the November issue of this magazine. PLAY METER has surveyed operators yearly since 1976. ●

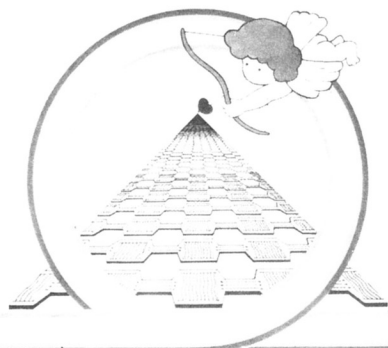


Play Meter Publisher Ralph Lally presents the first of the 1980 pair of awards to Atari President Gene Lipkin and Howard Rubin, Atari marketing exec, during convention weekend at Chicago.



*At Williams Electronics' fete, President Michael Stroll receives the plaque for best-earning pingame *Firepower*. 'Next year, both trophies for Williams!' boasted Stroll, who has guided Williams into videos this year.*

J A A 新組織めざし解散へ



AMUSEMENT MACHINE SHOW.

JAPAN SHOW:

Coin competition in the 'Rising Sun'

By Ralph C. Lally II

With all the excitement being created by the recent video game boom and all the talk going around about the infiltration of the Japanese into the video market, we felt compelled to find out what all the fuss was about. PLAY METER decided to attend, for the first time ever, the 18th Annual Amusement Machine Show sponsored by the Japan Amusement Trade Association (JAA). So, we packed up our trusty pen, writing tablet, and camera, said sayonara to the good old U.S. of A., and boarded a 747 for the land of the rising sun.

The Japanese Amusement Machine Show has been going on for 18 years. The Association that sponsors the event, the JAA, has as its members manufacturers, distributors, and operators of coin operated amusement equipment as well as manufacturers and operators of amusement park equipment. It is a sort of combined form of the AMOA and the IAAPA associations we have here in the United States. The Japanese show therefore consisted of a large mix of both coin operated and amusement park equipment. Up until the last couple of years, the Japan show had little success in attracting overseas buyers. But with the onslaught of the video game business over the same period of time, overseas interest in the show increased at a very rapid rate. Offshore visitors to the Japan show this year almost doubled their number from last year. This year's total overseas attendance figure hit near the 700 mark.

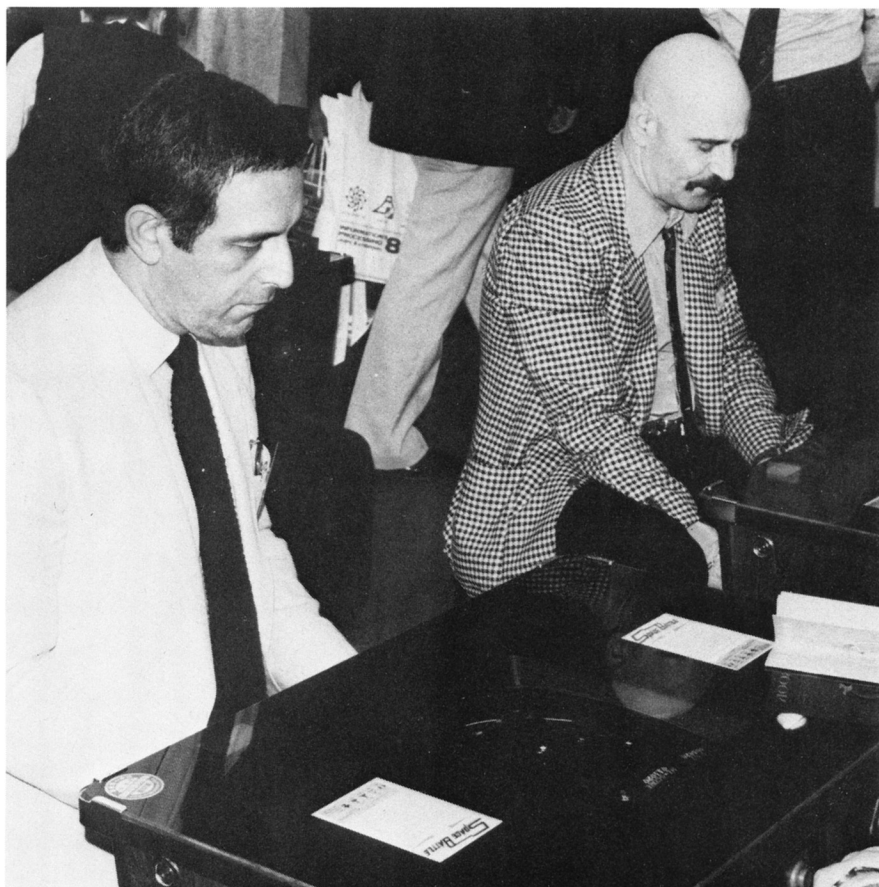
Home of the hot video

Why the rather sudden interest in Japan? The reasoning should be

obvious. Japan is where most of the hot video games have been coming from recently. Such games as *Space Invaders*, *Galaxian*, *Monaco GP*, and *Moon Cresta* were all designed and engineered by Japanese manufacturers. That's just to name a few games. More and more are being added to the list as the weeks and

months go by. The plain simple fact is that what happened to the automotive and electronics industries seems to have also happened to the video games business—a takeover by Japan's manufacturers.

The "second invasion" of sorts has a number of industry observers puzzled as to how all this came about



England's Michael Green of Alca Electronics (left) and Belgium's Hank Grant try out a couple of games Japanese-style: sitting down. The number of cocktail table games was impressive.



With buyers at the Namco booth: Masaya Nakamura, president of Namco (second from left), and Joe Robbins, co-president of Atari's Coin-Op Division (far right).



At the Data East, Inc. booth: (left to right) Steve Paxton, managing director; Hitoshi Omotani, manager; Peter Smith, director; and Satish Bhutani, executive vice president.



From the Bally Group were (left to right): Jerry Marcus of Empire Distributing; Haruko Osawa, Bally Japan; John Reckas, Bally Manufacturing; and Ben Har-el, Empire Distributing.

and how this turnaround will affect the future of the industry.

The Japanese invasion of the video game market started the same way the automobile invasion began. The cost of the U.S.-manufactured goods got so high that Japan soon found out that it had the technical know-how and manpower to produce those same goods on their home soil for less money. In Japan therefore, there was no longer a need to buy video games manufactured in the U.S.; and at that point in time, the tables began to turn.

The U.S.A., the birthplace of video games, had all of a sudden become a secondary market for video games "made in Japan." Some American video game makers such as Atari, Exidy, and Cinematronics have held their ground during the "invasion" and all have managed to keep a sizeable share of the video market.

Other U.S. manufacturers seem to have taken the the "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em" attitude. Numerous companies such as Midway and Gremlin/Sega are now licensing and producing games from Japanese manufacturers. In other words, U.S. manufacturers are now paying Japanese manufacturers for the rights to produce their games in the United States.

To make matters more complicated, we are now seeing Japanese manufacturers setting up shop here in the U.S. and marketing the games through their own distributor networks. With more and more Japanese companies locating in the U.S., fewer Japanese games will be up for grabs for licensing purposes. A number of U.S. manufacturers will then have to go back to the old drawing board and begin designing their own games again—only this time under stiffer competition.

Not only will they have to compete with the other American manufacturers, but they will now have to compete with the Japanese manufacturers in America.

Americans in Japan

It was truly amazing to see how many Americans were at the Japan show of 1980. What was more amazing was the number of U.S. operators at the show. We had anticipated seeing a lot of manufacturing and distributing executives at the show, working deals and sizing up the competition. It seemed operators would be content to forego the expense of a trip to Japan and wait it out until the AMOA show to get a sneak peek at all the latest video equipment. As it turned out, the operators who were there were out for a lot more than just a sneak

preview. U.S. operators were at this show wheeling and dealing with the Japanese manufacturers with the intention of buying new videos direct. A number of them succeeded. Some were buying as few as one or two machines while others were going for container loads.

Needless to say, U.S. manufacturers and distributors were enraged with this development and criticized the Japanese manufacturers who participated in such practices. It should be noted here that not all the Japanese manufacturers were guilty of such dealings. In fact, most of the larger companies stood by their original manufacturer/distributor commitments. Nevertheless, some companies were, in fact, selling to anybody and everybody.

Another interesting aspect of this year's Japan show was the astounding number of copies of games there. Game copying has been around for quite awhile now, and yet the problem of "rip-off" games seems to be getting worse. As best as we can discern, most "rip-off" games come from Japan and end up being sold all over the world.

During an interview through an interpreter with the editor and publisher of the *Amusement Press* (Japan's games trade publication), it was learned that the Japanese manufacturers themselves are largely responsible for the problem of "rip-off" games. It seems that in Japan the large manufacturers also happen to be the largest operators. Companies such as Taito, Sega, Namco, and Universal are all engaged in the actual operating end of the business. Some of them operate in excess of 100,000 pieces of equipment!

Japan's manufacturers are therefore in direct competition with the smaller Japanese operators. As a result, when a large Japanese manufacturer comes up with a real hot game, that firm becomes very reluctant to sell it to the smaller Japanese operators. And here lies the root of the "rip-off" problem.

In an effort to compete with the large Japanese manufacturer/operators, the smaller Japanese manufacturers are encouraged by the small Japanese operators to make copies of the games which are restricted in sales.

Copying a video game is a rather simple task for anyone trained in semiconductor / microprocessor technology. The process is called reverse engineering. All one has to do is get hold of a game that is to be copied. Then it is just a simple matter of reproducing the program chip on the boards. Integrated program chips (ROMs and PROMs) are made up of several layers or wafers laid one

on top of another. To reverse-engineer a game, a photograph of each layer is taken and enlarged. Then it's just a simple matter of tracing the circuits and cloning chips that are exact replicas of the original.

Up until recently, no legal action in Japan has been taken in regards to this problem. As we understand it, the legal process in Japan is extremely expensive, and the entire legal process can take years. But the problem is that the Japanese manufacturers don't seem to be all that worried about the copying going on. Supposedly, by the time a game is copied and out on the streets, the popularity of the game will have dropped off considerably. Hence, no real harm has been done.

Exported 'hijacks'

But what they fail to realize is that these hijacked boards don't just sit around Japan—they end up being sold all over the world, many times in areas where the original game is just being released. The problem as we see it is getting worse.

Yet there is some hope. In the United States, legal action is already under way. [See *PLAY METER*, November 1980, on the 'cloning' problem.] Informed sources say that a major court decision regarding the right to copyright games as well as game concepts will be handed down soon. But even if the American manufacturers are able to lick the problem here, what is it going to take to solve the problem in world markets?

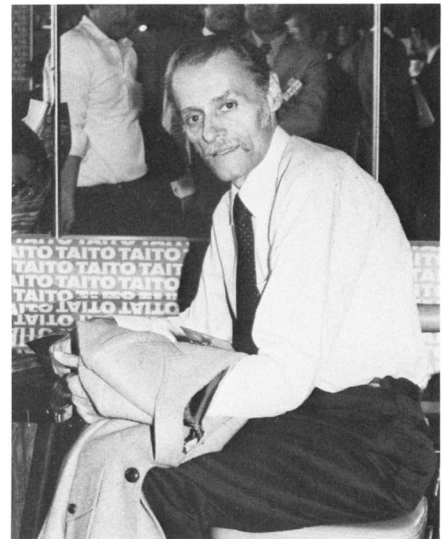
‡ ‡ ‡
Yet another controversial aspect of the 1980 Japan show was the introduction of a "revolutionary" engineering and marketing concept by the Data East Corp. (DECO). The concept is reprogrammable video games. With the DECO system, all one has to do to change games is to slip in a new cassette device. In minutes, an old game is transferred into a new one. The cabinet and monitor can be used over and over.

Some observers had the opinion that the cassette system could deal a lethal blow to the industry. Manufacturers are in the business of selling complete games. If the cassette system catches on, manufacturers may find themselves selling program tapes, graphics, or instruction cards. Obviously, the profit margin on a complete game is much greater than it is on a few component parts. Understandably, manufacturers have a lot to lose if this idea catches on.

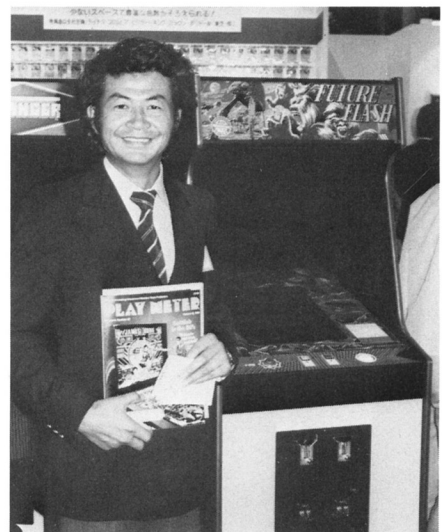
The question is, will it catch on? Ultimately it will be up to the operators to either accept or reject the



Midway's Stan Jarocki at Space Zap—one of the two games at the JAA that was not made in Japan.



Jack Mittel, president of Taito America, during a rare moment—a breather from the fast-pace show.



Tsuyoshi Keda of Hwei International shows off Future Flash...and his trusty *PLAY METER*.



Two American games makers in Japan: Gremlin President Frank Fogelman and Universal USA President Paul Jacobs



Gary Stern, president of Stern Electronics, his wife Denise, and (at right) Michael Stroll, president of Williams Electronics



At the Nichibutsu booth: Ms. Chic Suekuni greets Play Meter Publisher Ralph Lally, with Akinori Sadanaga, vice president of Nichibutsu USA at far right. Much of Japan's wares also came to Chicago.

idea. On the negative side of the question, there are bound to be problems in the areas of reliability and flexibility. Tapes are notorious for their unreliability, and new game concepts and formats may be limited, due to uniform player controls. And let us not forget the copying problem. A tape system is sure to be a lot easier to copy than a fully integrated system.

On the positive side, some operators may find the idea attractive strictly from an economic and practical viewpoint. Games would cost less, and much less time would be spent moving machines around. What will come of all this is anybody's guess. The idea may end up as just a flash in the pan—while on the other hand, it could in fact revolutionize the video game business as we now know it.

Space videos aplenty, on show

The majority of games exhibited at the Japan show were video games; video games were everywhere. The Japanese seem to be hung up on space games; about 25-30 space theme video games were displayed. It was also interesting to note the astounding number of cocktail table games. These were literally wall to wall in every booth. For some reason, cocktail table games are far more popular than upright models,

Apparently, the Japanese prefer the privacy of a sit-down game. They seem to feel they attract too much attention to themselves when they play upright models.

Because space is so limited in Japan there were no pool tables or foosball tables on display. Every other conceivable game was there, including slot machines, bingos, and kiddie rides.

Since the games at the Japan show were themselves secondary to the goings-on behind the scenes, we will forego a review in detail of the games that were there. Suffice it to say that every worthwhile game that was shown at the JAA show has also been shown at the AMOA show. So, we will save our comments about the new games for our game reviews of the AMOA show, elsewhere in this issue.

It should be noted that 98 percent of the video games at the Japan show were all made in Japan. It was indeed encouraging to see two "foreign" games on display. They were an Atari *Asteroids* and a Midway *Space Zap*. It was comforting to know that among all that Japanese hardware and software, the heartbeat of American technology was still going strong. And signs of retaliation and recovery were indeed in the air.

The AMOA is in the stars, says Granger on leaving post

Frederick M. Granger on the eve of his retirement from the post of executive vice president of AMOA said he felt the accomplishment of "the impossible dream." Borrowing from the lyrics from "The Man of LaMancha," he told the General Meeting of the AMOA November 1: "We've reached the star with this association. Don't lose it; protect it."

When he arrived in 1964, he told the assembly, "there was despair on the part of the officers." No money was budgeted for AMOA staff. In 1980, the AMOA has staff, officers, and directors who Granger credited highly.

Granger and his wife will leave Chicago after December 30 for retirement in Scotsdale, Arizona, but he will be available to AMOA as a consultant over the next several years, said Russell Mawdsley, past AMOA president.

Granger said of the job of

executive vice president, which is the staff director post of AMOA, that it is "to administer the association with the resolutions and directions of the board. One thing he does, is to provide continuity while directors come and go."

Essential to the board, he advised, is "control of its own destiny and not be pushed around by outside interests."

Of outgoing AMOA president Bob Nims, the executive director said, "I can't think of a man more dedicated to the association. He's had a very difficult year and a lot of problems." To which the general meeting in the Conrad Hilton's Boulevard Room gave an ovation of approval.

Nicholas Allen, AMOA counsel, explained Granger's "original assignment" with the association was to build up its treasury, its management, and the trade shows,

and to work with the association attorney on copyright problems.

"The record is clear," said Allen. "Fred has reached that impossible star." He termed the executive director "one of the greats in the jukebox industry," waging the fight with the performing rights agencies. Granger's "new assignment," Allen suggested, should be a pursuit of a U.S. Senate seat from his new home state of Arizona.

Russell Mawdsley said of Granger's work: "it was a job that had to be done, and he put in the hours to do it," estimating Granger's travel mileage at 500,000. "The AMOA is no longer looked down on. Today he and the AMOA stand tall."

Granger's concluding remark was to the membership: "I wish you every great, possible success in reaching your impossible star."

—by Ray E. Tilley

Space missions for Gremlin's team

A Gremlin/Sega distributors conference prior to the AMOA Show's opening revealed moves in the ladder of corporate leaders and previewed the manufacturer's stable of games for early 1981.

David Rosen, chairman of the board of Sega Enterprises, told the

meeting in McCormick Plaza on Chicago's lakefront that Frank Fogleman, Gremlin's president, will rise to chairman of the board of the San Diego manufacturing arm.

Becoming Gremlin president will be David Blough, formerly with Sega/Tokyo as executive vice

president and general manager. Coming to Sega Enterprises in Tokyo and into Blough's former post will be Ernie Shrenzel, who had been with Rockwell International Corp. of Pittsburgh.

In an additional announcement, Joseph J. Kally was introduced. As director of U.S. retail operations, Kally will be responsible for Sega Centers and the P.J. Pizzazz arcade/restaurant arm.

Through a lively filmed presentation, distributors were shown the play themes of *Space Firebird* (licensed from Nintendo/Japan), *Moon Cresta* (under license from Nihon Bussan), and *Space Tactics*—a sit-in space pilot game created by Sega and modified somewhat by Gremlin technical shops in California for domestic sales.

Along with these Gremlin/Sega debutantes, the *Carnival* video game attracted handlers' interest, and was displayed with the new line on the AMOA Show floor the next day.

The all-day October 30 meeting at the McCormick briefed handlers on new Gremlin facilities in planning, parts and service programs, and a warranty program update. Topping it all off was a cocktail gathering and game play.



Gremlin/Sega's Bob Harmon and Frank Fogleman show off the innovative sit-in space game *Space Tactics* on the AMOA Show floor.

Gottlieb shakes hands with Sigma/Tokyo for videos

NORTHLAKE, Ill.—A major licensing agreement between D. Gottlieb & Co. and Sigma Enterprises, Inc. of Tokyo, Japan has been jointly announced by the two companies. The license will involve the manufacturing and distribution of Sigma's new video game *New York-New York*.

Katsuki Manabe, president of Sigma Enterprises, stated that his company will provide Gottlieb with its new video game design which Gottlieb will produce and market worldwide, with the exception of Japan where his company has been actively distributing amusement products for years. Sigma Enterprises also operates a network of arcades in Tokyo.

Manabe stated that his company has been operating Gottlieb pinball games for 17 years. He also said Gottlieb products are highly

respected in Japan for innovation and superior quality. He said that his company was proud of its relationship with the 53-year-old pinball company.

Robert W. Bloom, president of Gottlieb, stated that he is "very excited about the quality and performance characteristics of *New York-New York*. Sigma's advanced design and technological capabilities will provide Gottlieb and its worldwide distribution with a video game that is sure to achieve a leading position in the amusement industry," Bloom said, and Manabe further noted that *New York-New York* is the first video game to be licensed under this new relationship. The manufacturing execs said they fully expect many additional amusement products to be jointly developed in the years to come.

D. Gottlieb & Co. is a Columbia Pictures Industries company.



Bloom of Gottlieb and Manabe of Sigma after concluding licensing agreement for *New York-New York* video game.

1st video game ships from manufacturer

The 1980 AMOA Show was the forum for unveiling *No Man's Land*, a new combat video game from D. Gottlieb & Co., the pioneer pinball maker. Gottlieb demonstrated its committed entrance into the total amusement game business and video in particular.

Robert Bloom Gottlieb president and C.E.O., said: "This is a major manufacturing and marketing effort that has been in the planning stages for many months. I think it will become apparent at once to the games industry that we are jumping into video with both feet and on a

permanent basis. The character of this first game in its upright and cocktail table configurations should offer solid evidence that we intend to become a major producer in this segment of the industry.

He noted that "the video games industry has been made up of two or three large, successful companies and a myriad of smaller pioneer companies, some of which, regrettably, have fallen by the wayside. I believe the industry in general can be made only stronger through the addition to the ranks of a company with the resources and

quality reputation of Gottlieb."

Said Bloom, in expanding his remarks, "We chose not to enter the field until we had built up a backlog series of video games to maintain a continuity of production models once we started manufacturing. Initially we will go the licensing route, which will probably be continued indefinitely. However, we have a manpower pool of inventive engineering and a modern new plant that will be totally dedicated to video games. In a short period of time we fully expect to be a major factor in the video game business.

"Finally," Bloom concluded, "we are extremely happy to be able to offer this new line of video games to our existing distributors, all of whom have concentrated so faithfully on Gottlieb pinballs over the years. Our distributor network is worldwide, and Gottlieb upright and cocktail table models will be marketed internationally. Our existing marketing department will be responsible for video and pinball sales."

The company indicated that shipments of *No Man's Land* would probably start in November 1980.

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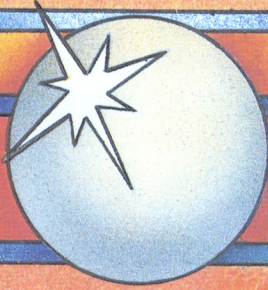


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Play Meter



Equipment Poll

TOP PINGAMES

THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH
1 FIREPOWER/Williams	1	11 LASER BALL/Williams	10
2 SPACE INVADERS/Bally	3	12 SPIDER-MAN/Gottlieb	11
3 BLACKOUT/Williams	5	13 PLAYBOY/Bally	17
4 GORGAR/Williams	2	14 GALAXY/Stern	11
5 FLASH/Williams	6	15 KISS/Bally	18
6 SILVERBALL MANIA/Bally	4	16 PARAGON/Bally	—
7 METEOR/Stern	13	17 VIKING/Bally	—
8 SCORPION/Williams	14	18 GLOBETROTTERS/Bally	—
9 SEA WITCH/Stern	8	19 TOTEM/Gottlieb	—
10 BIG GAME/Stern	7	20 PANTHERA/Gottlieb	—

TOP VIDEOS

THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH	THIS MONTH	LAST MONTH
1 ASTEROIDS/Atari	1	6 TARG/Exidy	8
2 GALAXIAN/Midway	2	7 MONACO G.P./Gremlin	7
3 MISSILE COMMAND/Atari	3	8 MOON CRESTA/Gremlin	—
4 SPACE INVADERS/Midway	4	9 CARNIVAL/Gremlin	—
5 ASTRO FIGHTER/Gremlin & Data East ...	5	10 STAR CASTLE/Cinematronics	—

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

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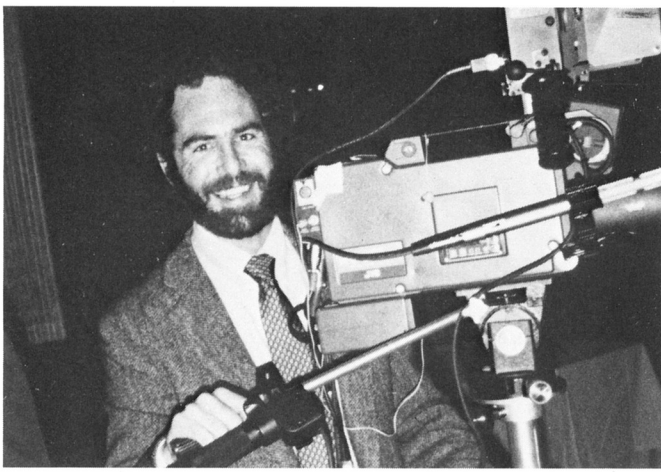
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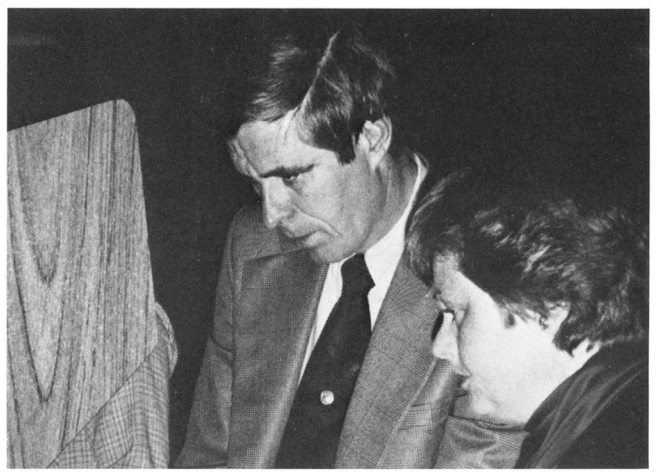
Atari Inc., 1215 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086. 408-745-2500.



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Ron Stein of Gremlin 'cranks up' his videotape to record it all.



Phil Flynn (left) of Music Systems plays Space Firebird.

Betson's line on grand 'showboat'

The 1980 Rock-Ola 484 phonograph was the star attraction at a special showing in a glamorous setting, sponsored by Betson/Pacific. The gathering was held November 18 aboard the "Queen Mary," luxurious trans-Atlantic liner that has been converted to a floating hotel. The ship is now at permanent anchorage at Long Beach, California.

Operators from as far away as Yuma, Arizona came to see the new phonographs. Also on display was the Rock-Ola Model 476, as well as the latest games from Gremlin,

Exidy, and Gottlieb. Gremlin was showing the *Space Firebird* video. Two from Exidy were *Targ*, in a smaller "Classic" cabinet, and the latest release, *Spectar*. Gottlieb had a strong showing with their three latest pinballs, *James Bond*, *Time Line*, and *Force II*.

Those who attended the gathering were treated to cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and a buffet supper.

Betson/Pacific's hosts for the show were Peter H. Betti, Joe Betti, Oscar Robins, Joe Farney, and Andy

Weil. During the dinner, Peter Betti gave a brief speech thanking the operators for the support they have shown the distributorship.

"The last six months have been very rewarding," Betti told the gathering of approximately 160 people.

On hand to record the event for a future promotional videotape presentation was Gremlin's video recording expert, Ron Stein. Also representing Gremlin was Jack Gordon.

Atarians display at London, Tokyo

SUNNYVALE, CA—Two international game shows held recently in England and Japan attracted the attention and interest of Atari personnel.

Atari was represented at the London Preview Show, September 12-15, by Shane Breakes, international marketing director, Lyle Rains, vice president of Coin-op engineer-

ing, Kevin Hayes, managing director of Atari Ireland, and Mary Takatsuno, marketing research.

While in London, Takatsuno talked to operators and did some research in preparation for setting up a Tellus survey at the upcoming ATE Show in January. She and Linda Butcher will be surveying international operators and distributors at the show, getting their input on the latest Atari product.

Attending the JAA Show in Tokyo October 6-10 were Gene Lipkin and Joe Robbins, co-presidents of the Coin-op Division, Frank Ballouz, marketing director, Shane Breakes, Sue Elliott, international sales manager, Lyle Rains, Kevin Hayes, David Burling, assistant legal counsel, and John Ray and Ed Rotberg, coin-op engineering.

Commenting on Atari's attendance at these two recent shows, Frank Ballouz stated, "The international shows provide us with valuable input. By attending these shows, we are able to get a better idea of what it is that our international distributors and operators are looking for in our games."

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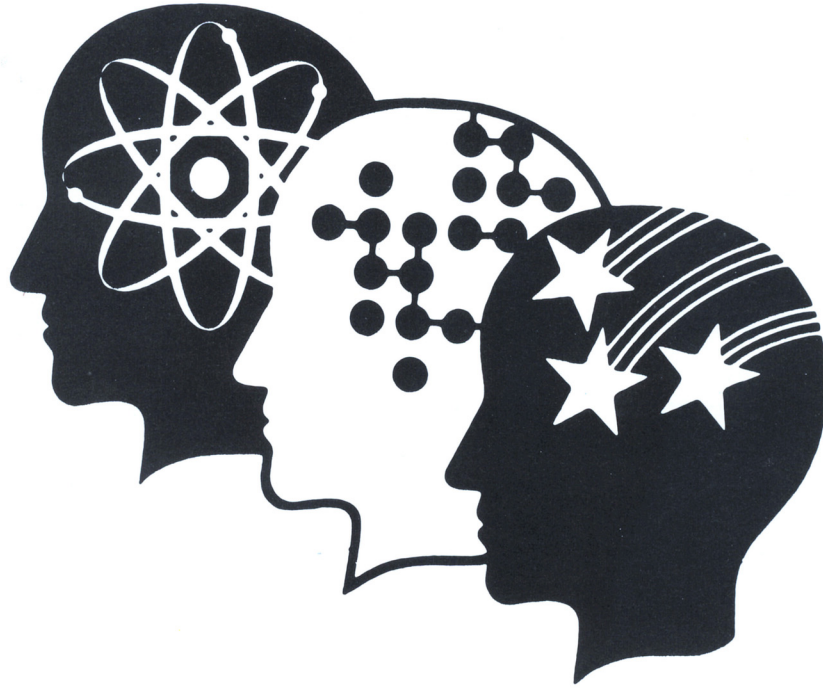
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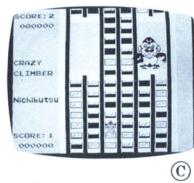
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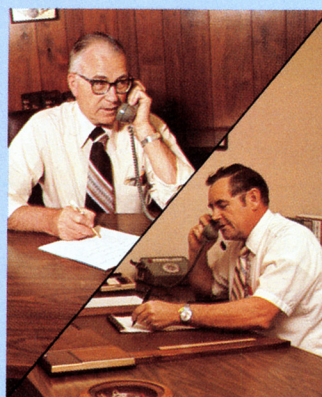
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TO THE HEADACHES OF STOCKING A DIFFERENT DOOR FOR EVERY GAME

Vendors' achievements receive honors in K.C.

KANSAS CITY—Nine NAMA members from six states were honored with the NAMA Chairman's Award for legislative accomplishment at the association's annual meeting here by NAMA Board Chairman Allan P. Lucht.

All were recognized October 23 for leadership in achieving legislative victories accomplished by association members in 1980.

The award winners included: John Barnett, ARA Services, Inc., Cockeysville, Maryland and Al Kleiman, Almi, Inc., Baltimore: sales tax relief in the state of Maryland.

David Katz, Automatic Catering Company, Edison, New Jersey, and Ray Ruppert, Crystal Vending Company, Elizabeth, New Jersey: favorable state sales tax legislation.

Art Kaufman, Valley Vendors, Inc., Phoenix: state legislation exempting certain vended products from the sales tax.

Robert Mundell, University of

Virginia Automatic Food Services, Charlottesville, and Maurice Sullivan, ARA Services, Inc., Richmond, Virginia: legislation to shift the Virginia sales tax on vended products to the wholesale cost.

William Carr, Canteen Food and Vending Service, Warehouse Point, Connecticut: preserving the sales tax exemption for meals under one dollar in value in Connecticut.

Patrick L. O'Malley, chairman, Canteen Corporation, Chicago: leading the successful effort to scale a \$25 per-machine license fee proposal down to \$10 in the city of Chicago.

"By honoring these leaders, we also pay tribute to the many other members who assisted in these and other efforts to obtain favorable legislative action," Lucht commented in making the awards.

David Katz and Maurice Sullivan are previous winners of the annual award.

Jewelry emblems make for a promotional gift item

Custom Cloisonne jewelry items are growing in popularity as a promotion item for prizes, self-liquidators, and giveaways. A new trend is beginning where young people are collecting the colorful pins and displaying them on jackets, hats, and other clothing.

Similar to patches, the pins usually have a meaning to the wearer, such as an award or a place visited. They are proudly worn and, at the same time, are a form of advertising, according to Business Builders, which is now offering these popular custom items for promotion.

Cloisonne emblems are made with colored powdered glass that is fired onto a metal die, making a hard durable surface, and finished with gold, silver, or bronze outlining the areas of color. The emblem is then made into a pin, pendant, tie clasp, key ring, etc. They can be made in almost any size, shape and design. A wide variety of colors is available for the Cloisonne emblems.

"Cloisonne pins are becoming one of the more popular promotion items," explained Carol Kantor of Business Builders. "They are less

costly than T-Shirts and have equivalent impact. Being a jewelry item the perceived value is higher."

The prices for Cloisonne emblems vary according to size and number of colors, as well as quantity. For example, a 1" design using two colors plus gold, silver or bronze would cost under \$1.25 each at a minimum quantity of 100 pieces. There is also a one time die charge that varies according to size (1" die is \$48). "With the minimum order you can mix pins and pendants at no extra charge," Kantor explained as one of the extra good features offered.

Business Builders can order Cloisonne emblems from art that is provided, or it can design an emblem to fit the needs of the customer. Recent emblems that have been made for game centers include Castle Golf & Games and Musee Mechanique, both using their company logo designs.

For further information, contact: Carol Kantor, P.O. Box 209, Cupertino, California 95015 or call 408/255-7789.

One-player 'Annie' goes out on trial

Sampling of the new single player, solid state pinball game, *Asteroid Annie*, is going forward to distributors in selective markets throughout the world, according to an announcement by Tom Herrick, Gottlieb vice president.

Annie combines the durable and characteristically popular line of Gottlieb card game themes with a contemporary space theme in a compact standard-size single player format. It sports ten targets, combinations of which make up poker hands that lead to big bonuses. Four rollovers activate each suit for individual card lights, and the player can play hand after hand during the course of the game.

"This is in the nature of an experiment," Herrick commented. "Games industry veterans will acknowledge the fact that just about the time the industry seems to settle on a solitary game format as being able to answer all field requirements, someone comes along with something new—or possibly a different version of something old!

"We have all more or less accepted the idea, unconsciously perhaps, that the four-player pingame fulfills all market needs. In the meantime, costs of everything have escalated and the industry has been locked into this cycle," he continued. "We have been considering whether or not there might still be a modest market for a single player game at an attractive price. In the music part of the business there still seems to be the need for a 100-selection jukebox even though the jumbo 200's and 160's dominate the market," he pointed out.

"We are not pushing the single player or trying to re-establish what may be an unneeded version of pinball," Herrick said. "We are doing this on a trial basis so if there is an identifiable market out there of any appreciable size, our distributors will have it available. And by the way, don't underestimate the game—it's a flashy and interesting card game in the Gottlieb tradition and I think we could all be surprised with the strength of this game."

The company indicated that testing would continue through part of November prior to a decision.

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ENTER XENON SEQUENCE TO TRANSFORM PLAYFIELD ACTION TO MULTI-BALL

The top saucer awards an  with each entry. Completing the 1st 3 's qualifies the tube for captured ball. Completing the 2nd 3 's releases balls for multi-ball play.

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TOP ROLLOVERS COMPLETE MOLECULAR CONNECTION TO SIDE DROP TARGETS

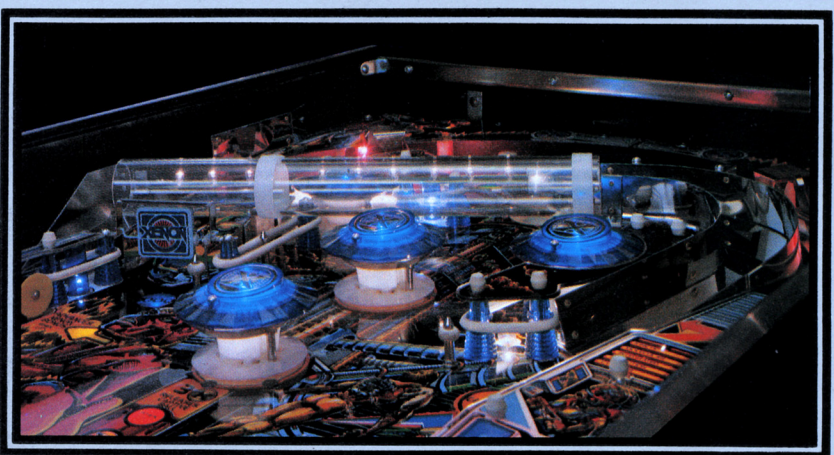
The 4 Right Side Drop Targets are knocked down either as the top playfield rollovers are activated, or by direct ball contact. 10,000 points are awarded for each sequence completion as well as qualifying 2x and 4x bonus multipliers, 25,000 points, extra ball and specials.

SPELL XENON FOR DYNAMIC BONUS POINT POTENTIAL

The Xenon bonus can be advanced from a top saucer entry, a lit left side target or a drop target when the bonus lite is lit. A Super Bonus Score of 20,000 and 40,000 remain in memory after 20,000 bonus points are reached. A special can also be earned.

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The Xenon transport tube leads to the exit chamber saucer awarding from 5,000 to 90,000 points and special, advances the exit value, and resets the backglass infinity lighting pattern and Xenon background sounds. The exit chamber saucer holds the ball captive if multi-ball systems are "GO."



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With new staff executives at R.H. Belam Co. is the export firm's Vice President Bob Haim (second from left). On the team now at Lake Success: Richard Bartlett, manager of general operations; Jackie Haim, executive assistant; and Marshall Caras, heading domestic sales (left to right), seen together here at the AMOA Show.

Industry pros join Belam's L.I. team

LONG ISLAND, N.Y.—Officers of the R.H. Belam Company recently announced the appointment of C. Marshall Caras to the organization's staff. Caras will be in charge of domestic sales and will work out of the company's new headquarters at Lake Success, Long Island.

Caras is a well-known figure in the industry. He was formerly the marketing chief for D. Gottlieb and Co. Before that position, Caras had served with Atari, Inc. and was the head of Rowe's largest distributing outlet, Rowe Dedham, in Dedham, Massachusetts. He was relocating in November from a Chicago area residence to Long Island.

It was also announced that Ron McGill has been promoted to vice president for international marketing at Belam. McGill, who has been with Belam for a number of years, will be in charge of maintaining the company's former headquarters on Madison Avenue, New York City.

Richard Bartlett has been appointed manager of general operations for the new distributing outlet, located at 1 Delaware Drive, Lake Success.

The company headquarters features a large showroom and service facility. Located just 10 minutes from New York's LaGuardia Airport, the new Belam office is situated within 1,000 yards of New York City.

Bartlett's responsibilities will include sales, warehousing, and coordinating parts service. He was the former manager of Amusement Consultants, also located in the Long Island area.

Ms. Jackie Haim, sister of Belam execs Marc and Robert Haim, has been appointed assistant to company Vice President Marc Haim. Ms. Haim was formerly a management trainee with a bank in the New York area, and her new duties will be in coordinating export activities for Belam Company.

Game Plan improves with buy

CHICAGO—Jim Helbertson, president of Summit Systems, Inc. and now chief executive officer of Game Plan, Inc. announced at a special meeting Nov. 1 that Summit Systems has acquired 75 percent of Game Plan's stock.

Summit Systems is a computer-oriented company which also owns Interscience Systems, Inc., Nevada Gaming School, Summit Publications, and other interests.

Helbertson said in an announcement at the Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, that this move is expected to improve Game Plan's financial situation as well as strengthen its place in the market.

Darrel McCullough will remain as president of Game Plan, and Ken Anderson will remain as vice president for marketing.

The former majority shareholder, AES Technology Systems, Inc. will retain the balance of 25 percent of the Game Plan stock. AES announced in July a plan to infuse up to \$15 million in working capital into Game Plan. Cash came from Bliss & Laughlin Industries, Inc. buying certain small office machines interests from AES.

Hy C overlays sold

Harry Carlisle, president of Hy C Enterprises, has announced a new agreement with the R.H. Belam Co. in which Belam will have the exclusive rights to market all products produced by the Hy C company for the coin-operated amusement industry.

The first product being released under this new agreement is a color overlay designed for use with Atari's Asteroids video game.

**CAPITAL
COST**

VS.

**CASH BOX
PROFITS**

SEE PAGE 81

Atari names two for markets posts

SUNNYVALE—Dick Needleman has been named regional sales and promotion manager for the Atari Coin-Operated Games Division, according to Don Osborne, national sales manager.

In his new post, Needleman will be responsible for marketing and promotion efforts in the Southeastern area of the United States.

Osborne said, "Dick will be an important addition to our sales team. His extensive background in the leisure industry and his creative promotional talents make him a valuable asset to Atari. Dick's many contacts in the coin industry will help us to expand our marketing base in the Southeast.

Prior to joining Atari, Needleman served as head of Jungle Habitat, an animal theme park operated by Warner Communications, Inc. He has been actively involved in the leisure and tourism industry in Florida for a number of years, serving as special council to the



Needleman



Rubin

Governor of Florida as well as president of the Florida Public Relations Association.

Upon joining Atari in 1978, Needleman took over as manager of Leisure Facilities in Florida. He worked with operators and distributors in this position to open new locations. He was responsible for the development of new markets for video games in amusement and theme parks, and in such locations as Tussaud's Wax Museum in St. Pete Beach. In addition, he introduced the first video game, Atari's

Lunar Lander to the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral.

Needleman will maintain his residence in Homosassa Springs, Florida.

Howard Rubin has been named special markets manager for Atari's Coin-Operated Games Division.

In making the announcement, Frank Ballouz, Atari marketing director, noted: "Howie will add a great deal to the marketing department. As special markets manager he will pursue new areas for the introduction of coin-op games.

He will work on extending our marketing base in locations such as convenience stores, recreational and amusement parks, and other areas where coin-operated games have not been seen before."

Rubin was formerly East Coast regional sales manager with responsibility for Atari's Customer Service operation in New Jersey. He will now maintain his office at Atari headquarters in Sunnyvale.

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Operators had key roles

A potpourri of games & gamesmen in Connecticut

Games of all types attracted over 10,000 players to the Hartford Civic Center for "Games Unlimited," October 23-26. It was an event where coin-operated games were featured together with classics like chess, backgammon, cribbage, and Scrabble, as well as the introduction of new games such as Kwatro, Wildfire, and Dungeons and Dragons. There were displays, demonstrations, lessons, and competitions during the four day exposition.

The publicity and news coverage of the consumer show was "the most ever given for an event at the Civic Center," noted an executive at the center. It was featured on page 1 of the Weekend Section of the Hartford newspaper as well as in a photo story on the front sports page. All network affiliate news programs in the area covered the Games Unlimited Show. From New York City, P.M. Magazine TV show was to have a segment on the games expo and featuring the finals of the \$10,000 pinball open tournament.

In national coverage, the pinball results were sent out over Associated Press wires, and writers attended representing national magazines such as *Sports Illustrated* and *Games*.

The \$10,000 Pinball Tournament was highlighted at Games Unlimited. Over 500 people entered the competition for the prize money provided by the show sponsor, Arnett & Associates. Entrants came from all over the U.S. and two from overseas. Doug Grear, an enthusiastic player who is organizing the American Pinball Association, ran the four day tournament. The A.P.A. is being formed to promote league and competitive play on flipper games.

This tourney started with twenty different games for the qualifying



The big winners in \$10,000 tourney: (left to right) Joel Godfrey, second place; Dallas Overturf, first; and Bob Mathews, third.



They lined up at Games Unlimited to compete for prizes in Space Zap play. A good time was had, and coin-op games promotion resulted.

rounds. The top scorers went on to the semi-finals played on a new Williams *Blackout* game. The finals were played among the top ten participants whose two-game total on *Blackout* determined the winners.

The highest total score, 6,140,730, was earned by Dallas Overturf of Ashland, Massachusetts, who took home the \$6,500 first prize. Overturf, a computer technician who also works for Silver Ball Arcades in Massachusetts, has developed his skill at the games over the past ten years. This was his second competitive win, the previous prize he received being a *Kiss* pingame.

The second place prize, \$1,500, went to Joel Godfrey of Dillon, Colorado, a recent graduate of Colorado State University. Bob Mathews of West Hartford won third place. Mathews is in the insurance business and is a member of Mensa High IQ Society; his approach to pinball play is very scientific.

The other finalists were: Joel Maloff, Bill Cooper, Glen Buehler, Lee Moscaritolo, Rob Rickenback, Mark Rosenberg, and Gary Platt. All finalists took home part of the total \$10,000 in cash prizes.

Video battles

A video game competition was

held on *Space Zap*, and \$500 in prizes was split among the top three competitors. A \$1 entry fee was collected and donated to the Connecticut 4-H Development Fund from this contest. Steve Roy, 25, of Bloomfield, Connecticut scored 5460 for first place. Keith Lanzoni took second, and Oscar Rivera won third place in the *Space Zap* tourney.

Irv Jeffries of Game-A-Tron, developer of the video game, commented on the show, "Games Unlimited was an excellent show to introduce and spur the popularity of *Space Zap* for manufacture by Midway.

There was a coin game arcade at Games Unlimited next to the exhibits of the other types of board games, card games, etc. It was one of the most popular attractions where enthusiastic players waited in line, four deep, at every game.

Five operators participated in the coin-game portion of Games Unlimited: A & C Electronic Games, Acmont Inc., T.M.C. Corp., Enfield Amusements, and Self Service Sales. Each of these companies provided product for the show. A team of service technicians were on hand to assure continuous operation of the games throughout the show. "Nick Copela and Dwight Hahn were always there to keep the games

going," noted Mahlon Arnett, show promoter. "They, together with the on-call team from Self Service Sales, were essential for the success for the tournament and the arcade." The service team included George Sutherland, David Carrili, Dana Ward, and their manager Phil Lulek.

The Games Unlimited show was a success for the coin-op industry, said the promoters. The blend of arcade games with other types of classic games marks a giant step forward in image building for the industry. People who played chess and Scrabble also stood in line to play *Asteroids* and *Targ*. They watched the pinball competition and noted the level of skill demonstrated by the finalists.

"The fabulous response to this show is only the beginning," said Arnett, who made Games Unlimited happen. "This will become an annual event to be held on the west coast and the east coast. We feel that the coin-operated games were a valuable addition to the games show."

Details for next year's shows are being planned now. For further information contact Arnett & Associates, 25 C Canton Rd., Simsbury, Connecticut 06092 or Carol Kantor, Business Builders, P.O. Box 209, Cupertino, California 95015.

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Simkowski

Gottlieb VP takes consumer firm post

The resignation of George R. Simkowski as vice president/marketing of D. Gottlieb & Co. has been regretfully accepted, said Robert W. Bloom, president of the Chicago area amusement games manufacturer.

Simkowski has accepted the presidency of a major consumer products company specializing in the manufacture and marketing of home entertainment and photographic equipment.

Company Vice President Tom Herrick said Gottlieb would soon be seeking a replacement for the marketing position.

Sales staff grows at Amusement Emporium

The Amusement Emporium recently announced appointment of Richard Henthorn and Judie Kuhlers to expanded sales positions with the worldwide parts distributor. Steve Walko announced that these additions to the sales staff were necessitated by a dramatic expansion in sales.

Henthorn brings to the sales force many years of experience in the coin machine parts industry. In addition to handling the volume of local customers, Henthorn is also offering his expertise to those customers who call the toll free number (800)525-7059 for their ordering.

Ms. Kuhlers comes to Amusement Emporium with a number of years' experience in both sales and electronics parts distribution.

Amusement Emporium customers can look forward to dealing with a sales professional of Ms. Kuhlers' caliber, said Walko.

Taito America takes two staffers for engineering, field service

Taito America Corp. has named David L. Poole to head its engineering staff. Poole was most recently director of engineering for ECCI, Inc., where he was responsible for developing a solid state machine control. Previously, as director of engineering for Williams Electronics, Inc., he was a major force in the design of solid state pins. Before joining Williams, Poole held the position of project engineer for Motorola.

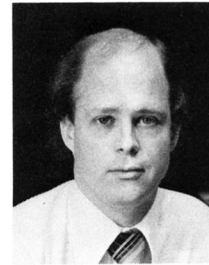
Jack Mittel, Taito America's president, said: "Dave's obvious talent and leadership ability, coupled with his experience in the coin industry, make him the most natural choice to head Taito's engineering team."

Poole said, "I'm looking forward to the challenge. Another game as successful as *Space Invaders* is not impossible, and I intend to prove this in the near future."

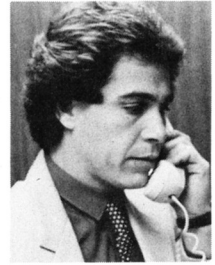
Poole received his BSEE degree from Rose Polytechnic Institute and his MBA from the University of Chicago.

Field service mgr.

Taito America recently appointed Rene Lopez to the position of field service manager. Lopez brings to Taito ten years of technical



Poole



Lopez

experience in the coin machine industry, most recently having served as customer service manager with Game Plan, Inc. where he developed its field service schools over the country. For nine years previously, he was with Bally Manufacturing, where he rose to quality analysis manager for its electronic slot machine division.

Lopez will be in charge of Taito's toll-free service hot line (800/ 323-0666) as well as developing Taito's field service network.

Mike Von Kennel, Taito's sales manager, said: "In addition to his technical background, Rene has also had extensive experience in the operating aspect of the business, which we feel will enable him to communicate effectively with operators as well as distributors. We place a high value on our technical support to the field and we are sure that Rene will be a major factor in this area."

Corporate moves-up at Betti

In a move to further strengthen corporate management, Jerry Gordon has been elevated to senior vice president of H. Betti Industries and is to be a member of the Executive Board.

Gordon's extensive background in the industry and his experience in management and marketing were cited as valuable in helping to formulate and carry out corporate policy decisions in the anticipated continued growth of the company.

With additional corporate responsibilities, Gordon remains chief of Betson Enterprises, the coin machine distributing division of the company. He will be closely assisted in the distributing area by Art Warner as sales manager, and Dan Trivino, operational manager, both of whom will assume greater responsibilities.

In a further re-organizational move, Bob Geschine becomes corporate treasurer with full controllership, financial, and administrative responsibilities. His

background as a C.P.A., public accounting, and six years of experience within the company made him fully qualified for this position. He is also a member of the Executive Board.

Robert Betti becomes corporate secretary and will assume duties in Betson's Connecticut office to assist in further penetration of that market.

Joseph Cirillo continues as executive vice president and chairman of the Executive Board, and as such is the senior corporate officer after Hugh and Bert Betti, president and chairman of the board respectively.

Peter Betti, former senior vice president, and now president of Betson/Pacific, remains as a member of the Board of Directors.

"The rapid changes taking place in the coin industry and its accelerated growth mandate a strong management team, and we are proud and fortunate to have the caliber of all the individuals on our team," said Bert Betti.

Electro-Sport offering its domestic-made game products

Electro-Sport Inc. intends to make its mark on the video games industry with domestically produced machines, designed by its engineering staff in Irvine and Costa Mesa, California, according to its president, Tom Pierce.

Tomahawk Missile, the first game from Electro-Sport, is licensed from Data East, Inc. But it is "totally manufactured" at Electro-Sport, including the circuit board assembly, said Pierce.

Several new games were under design by Electro-Sport, and a decision was to be made in late November on which would be the next three or so to enter the U.S. market. Each game would have a sit-down model as well as an upright produced, and a cocktail version of *Tomahawk Missile* was scheduled to come out before the year's end.

Pierce talked with PLAY METER while he was on the road in the Southeast to line up additional links in the distributor network that numbered 19 firms, some three weeks after the AMOA Show. Some of Data East's handlers took on *Tomahawk*, and the net of distributors would increase, said Pierce.

He noted that the principals of the

new games-making company are all engineers with degrees in computers and with some having aerospace industry backgrounds. Pierce had been a marketing consultant in the computer field before entering games manufacturing.

"Electro-Sport aims high," he said, "to be a company without extensive licensing, to design and produce domestically. We have the opportunity to do that because of the hardware and software staff we retain."

The next immediate step was to be a move to a larger facility in Costa Mesa. Until that is completed, the headquarters at 17842 Cowan in Irvine would be maintained, said Pierce.

Tomahawk Missile game play is framed in a scene of a sea on an imaginary moon. The player fights with missile fire against aliens who attack his sub from the atmosphere above, and these have the capability to make the "water" evaporate if he is slow to knock down their numbers.

The upright *Tomahawk* model stands 72½" high, 26¼" wide, and 33" in depth. Also available is the Salon model: 58½" high, 22¼" wide, and 26"

in depth.

The manufacturer's schedule is for another game to be out by the end of January 1981. "We are prepared and are spending for a good-sized manufacturing facility," said Pierce. "We are totally committed to the industry."

Other principals in Electro-Sport Inc. include Bob Barr, chairman, and Morris Barhart, vice president.

The distributor network of the new games maker included: American Amusement/Klamath Falls, Ore.; Amusement Distributors/Rego Park, N.Y.; Atlas Music Co./Chicago; Audio Visual Amusement/St. Louis; Bay Coin Distributing/Richmond Hills, N.Y.; Boyce Game Sales/Shelbyville, Tenn.; Central Distributing/Omaha; Dale Distributing/Richmond, B.C.; Kentucky Coin/Louisville, Ky.; Modern Vending Sales/Indianapolis; Monroe Distributing in Cleveland and Dayton, Ohio, and Hialeah Lakes, Fla.; Mountain Coin/Denver; Sandler Vending/Minneapolis; Palmetto State Distributing/North Charleston, S.C.; State Sales and Service/Baltimore; Struve Distributing/Salt Lake City; and Jackson Industries/Malden, Mass.

Exidy: Boost quick-store locations

The image shows a page from 'Convenience Store NEWS' magazine. The headline reads 'CAUTION: HIGH PROFITS'. Below the headline is a photograph of a man in a white shirt and dark pants standing next to a tall, dark, compact game cabinet. The cabinet has a 'TARG' sign on it. The man is looking at the cabinet. The magazine page includes several columns of text, some of which are partially obscured by the photograph. The text discusses the benefits of the 'Classic' cabinet for convenience stores, mentioning its compact size and high profit potential. The magazine title 'Convenience Store NEWS' is prominently displayed at the top, along with the tagline 'The industry newspaper'.

Exidy's new compact "Classic" cabinet design is being promoted to convenience store locations. The sleek cabinet is scaled to fit into a small space requiring only 3½ square feet.

"Caution: High Profits" is the attracting headline of Exidy's full page ad in *Convenience Store News*, October 31st issue. This trade publication recently featured games for their "C-store" market and the benefits of high profit amusement equipment. Exidy recognized this as an excellent growth potential for their new products and initiated the ad campaign to the convenience store markets, said a spokesman for the manufacturer.

Targ, the space fantasy game is pictured in the new Classic cabinet in the first ad of the *Convenience Store News* series. The success of this game in street locations is cited as making it an excellent choice for C-store placement. Exidy will also offer

other new games in the Classic cabinet for space constrained locations.

Convenience stores are one of the largest growth markets for game operation, said Exidy. The National Association of Convenience Stores' State of the Industry Report projects an "8% growth in number of stores in 1980. There was a 29% increase in sales volume and 4.7% in store population in 1979." This marks an opportunity for more coin-op game placement, and Exidy is promoting game operation in this market through their ads in the convenience store trade media.

Exidy's convenience store ad in October stressed the potentials for high earnings from minimal square footage. A happy store owner is shown emptying a cashbox full of coins. Inquiries from the campaign will be referred to local distributors and operators to enhance this growing market.

Vending show sets new record marks

CHICAGO—A record 201 exhibitors, occupying more exhibit space than ever before and showing a variety of new products and equipment, made the 1980 National Convention-Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management held in Kansas City an outstanding success, said G. Richard Schreiber, president of the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA).

"All the comments from exhibitors and registrants alike expressed enthusiasm about the show, the convention program, and the location," Schreiber said. Registration totaled 5,487 persons.

The 1979 convention, held in Chicago, attracted 193 exhibitors on total space of 54,000 square feet, compared with 201 exhibitors and 56,000 square feet in the late-October 1980 gathering.

"There was great interest in the new vending machine and coin mechanism technology involving microprocessors and information retrieval, the appearance of new food vending and cigarette vending equipment, as well as the great variety of snack and frozen food products which had not been exhibited before," Schreiber said.

Focusing on the theme of "Productivity for the '80s," the convention meetings covered improved selling methods for vending and foodservice companies, managing stress in the work place, the role of frozen foods in vending machines, hiring practices, and the impact of political and economic developments.



Top team of NAMA for the new year: (standing, from left) Miller, Schreiber, Michaels; (seated) Edgerton, Zaug. Their election was in October at Kansas City.

NAMA names 1981 officers slate

KANSAS CITY—John B. Edgerton, Jr., president of Automatic Products Company, St. Paul, Minnesota, was elected chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Automatic Merchandising Association at a board meeting during the NAMA national convention here. He currently is senior vice chairman of the board and will succeed Allan P. Lucht of Servomation Corporation.

The following were also elected at the October 23 convention:

Senior vice chairman, Jerry L. Zaug, president, Zaug's, Inc., Appleton, Wisconsin; vice chairman, Howard C. Miller, president, Canteen Corporation, Chicago; and treasurer, Howard A. Michaels, president, Automatic Vendors, Randolph, Massachusetts.

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viding the proper Token is selected, Coin Mechs can be set to eliminate slugging completely.

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Experimental package shown by Gottlieb at AMOA

A totally new, experimental cabinet-and-lightbox combination for future Gottlieb pinball machines was previewed at the 1980 AMOA Show in Chicago.

"There really hasn't been a basic change in pinball cabinet design in the coin industry in several decades," said Tom Herrick, vice president of Gottlieb. "The traditional plywood cabinet has served the industry well and, no doubt, there will continue to be a place for it. However, there have been basic design changes over the last few years in practically every type of manufactured product—and that alone would suggest that perhaps it's time for a change."

The new cabinet is made of an injection molded synthetic material in a highly contemporary design. The lines of the cabinet give the viewer an impression of streamlined motion that at once suggests the bustling tempo of today's kind of pinball.

"In addition, it's substantially stronger and more durable than the

traditional plywood cabinet," said Herrick, "and one of its prime advantages is its fold-down lightbox, now possible for the first time." This eliminates the need to disassemble the game when taking it on or off location, saving labor. "Also, because the equipment can now be packed more compactly, it will permit the shipping of larger quantities of games through containerized trucking, resulting in savings all along the line," Herrick concluded.

The lightbox itself features a new electronic digital display panel that is positioned immediately above the playfield. The player can easily check his progress on the score display while playing the game. The lightbox glass will be dedicated to attracting players. The display panel can also be programmed with attention-getting messages.

Gottlieb executives stressed that the cabinet was still experimental and would not be available in the immediate future. ‡

First aid kit for games operators

The development and release of a handy, compact "Emergency First Aid Repair Kit" for games operator usage in the field has been announced by D. Gottlieb & Co.

"Both our distributors and their operator customers have been urging us to create a simple field service kit of repair parts at a reasonable price," said Cliff Strain, Gottlieb assistant sales manager in describing the new unit.

"We have made a study of the most frequently required solid state parts for on-site repair work excluding boards," continued Strain, "and this kit contains all of these required components. Our objective

was to put an assortment of parts in the hands of the operator's service man that could accommodate 80 to 90 percent of his needs in repairing Gottlieb equipment in the field.

"The assortment of parts is contained in a sturdy high-strength cardboard carrying case with various compartments to keep the parts separate," said Strain. "Gottlieb distributors will soon have these kits in stock and we're confident operators will be pleased with the convenience and function of these kits, to say nothing of the modest price," he concluded.

The kits were to be available from local Gottlieb distributors in November.

PLAY METER CALENDAR

January 12-15

ATE international convention, Olympia, London, England

January 16-18

Oregon Amusement & Music Operators Association, annual meeting Marriott Hotel, Portland

January 17-18

Music Operators of Minnesota, annual convention and show,

Holiday Inn Downtown, Minneapolis

January 22-25

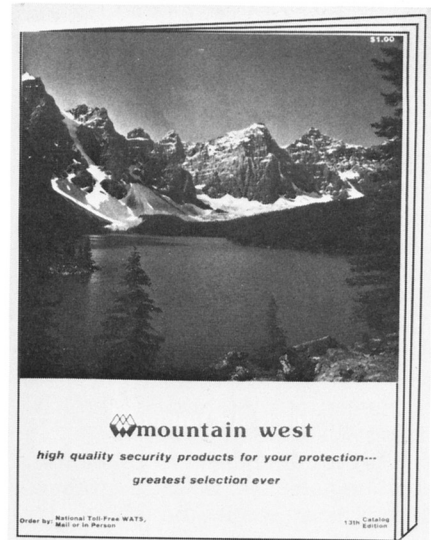
IMA Show, Frankfurt, West Germany

February 17-19

Northern Show trade event, Blackpool, England

March 12-14

Amusement Operators Expo, Hyatt Regency Hotel, New Orleans



Security catalog

The Security System design, alarm application, and installation procedures are all included with product information in the latest full-size edition of Mountain West's security equipment catalog.

The catalog is designed for use by alarm installers, businesses, governmental agencies, and individuals who demand the high quality security. Equipment offered ranges from relatively simple magnetic door switches, control and bell systems to the latest sophisticated radar, ultrasonic, and infrared detectors.

Products are carefully described as to use, principle of operation, and specifications. Connection diagrams allow alarm technicians to design systems with compatible equipment to eliminate guesswork.

For a free copy of this detailed catalog, write Mountain West, P.O. Box 10780, Phoenix, AZ 85064; or call toll-free, 800/528-6169.

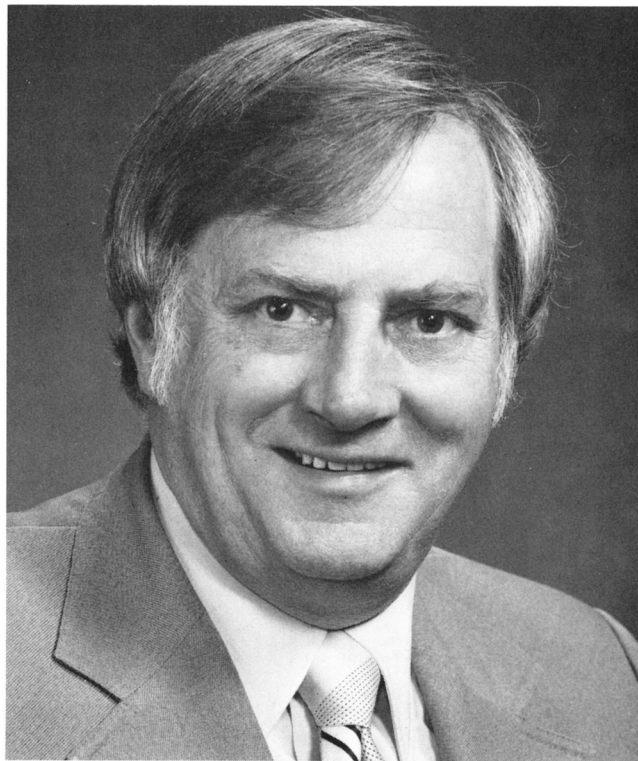
High scores made on Asteroids

Atari has just released recent high score figures achieved by players on the top-selling *Asteroids* game. Shawn Davies of Murray, Utah, scored ten million points. Duncan Brown of Charlottesville, Virginia has scored 7,200,620 points, and Salvador Crodova of Falls Church, Virginia, 7,111,000 points.

Commenting on the top scores, Frank Ballouz, marketing director, said, "We congratulate these players on their skill and perseverance in attaining such high scores. *Asteroids* continues to be a super challenge, and we encourage other players to try to best these current top scores."

Coinman of the Month

Chuck Arnold



A Simon and Garfunkel hit song of the mid-Sixties, "A Dangling Conversation," posed the rhetorical question, "Is the theater really dead?"

In this, our annual Phonograph Buyers' Guide Issue, we approached what may well be the coin industry's version of that question: "Is the jukebox really dead?"

For that answer, we went to Chuck Arnold, general manager of Rowe's Northeast region distributorship, based in Dedham, Massachusetts. As a distributor, he could probably give a wide-ranging appraisal of the phonograph business, we figured, and yet would still be readily familiar with operators on a day-to-day basis, unlike a phonograph manufacturer.

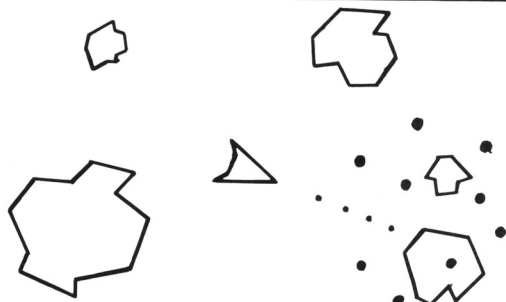
We found Chuck straight and to the point. He said the same about some of the questions we served up to him, but nevertheless he answered them forthrightly and showed clear insight when doing so.

Chuck has been in the coin industry for a little over ten years, joining Chicago Coin as national sales manager after holding a similar position for a manufacturer of bathroom items. Four years later he went over to Allied Leisure (which this past year changed its name to Centuri), holding the same position of national sales manager.

In 1976 he joined Ramtek in the position of vice president of marketing, but left Ramtek in April of the following year to hitch up with Rowe as the company's game sales manager. The following year he became the general manager of Rowe's Dedham, Massachusetts outlet.

A member of his regional vending and music games associations, Chuck feels strongly about the need of an active association to help fight adverse legislation. He was quick to point out one obvious flaw which the music and games association is now trying to overcome—a special Sunday entertainment tax in Massachusetts which the coin-op machines, but not many other industries, suffer from. It smacks of unfairness in industry people's eyes, and is being targeted for erasure by the industry association.

A graduate of Wayne State in Detroit, Chuck is married (wife's name is Millie), has four grown children—Cheryl, Debbie, Chuck, and Keith (Keith is in the industry). He is the grandfather of three.



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PLAY METER: Do you feel a lot of operators are neglecting their music stops?

ARNOLD: Yes, some are because the games have been so fantastic lately that they haven't been looking that closely at their music. But in the last few months we've seen here at Rowe that many operators are taking a second look at music. This past October, for instance, was our biggest month ever in jukeboxes.

We see the upswing in the phonograph market as a reaction to what happened through 1978. There were so many operators who were not upgrading their phonographs, and they let them go too long. Now they have taken another look at the investment. A lot of operators have told us recently that they made so much money on games this year that they saw this as a good time to upgrade their phonographs.

It was such a good investment that our sales manager instructed two particularly large operators to go back and talk to their accountants before buying. Both operators went back, talked with their accountants, and then came back, and each bought multiples. That's the truth. They saw the advantage there.

What that shows, I think, is that the smart money is re-investing some of the money made off the games right back into jukeboxes because it's a steady, solid earner.

PLAY METER: Okay, so you're saying a phonograph's return makes for a solid investment, especially with some of the money made recently with video. But does a phonograph really offer a return on investment that's equivalent to, let's say, a hot video?

ARNOLD: We could be talking about two things here. A jukebox that is five years old could bring in as much as \$650 on a trade-in, but it would be a very odd game that would bring in anything close to that after five or six years on location. When you buy a jukebox and are planning your return on that investment, most operators are buying that jukebox for anywhere from seven to ten years because they move the jukeboxes down from one level to another.

So let's say that, with freight and taxes and so forth, you pay as much as \$3000 for a jukebox. First of all, your accountant is going to take a ten percent federal tax credit. So there's \$300. And the way jukeboxes have been built lately, it's nothing to have them stay out there for ten years.

Now, let's say the operator's end gross is only \$25 per week. You wouldn't buy a new jukebox for that location because it wouldn't justify it. But you could buy a new jukebox for a \$100-a-week location where you figure your end is \$50. If you figure in a couple of record changes, and a cost of between five to seven dollars a week to service the jukebox, and all your overhead, you'll come down with a cost of about \$10. So, actually, your net gross is \$40. That's \$2000 a year.

Now you take your jukebox, do a pro forma over seven to ten years, if that's how long you plan on keeping it, and you can see what that jukebox is costing you. So, the way a lot of smart people are seeing it is that a jukebox's return on investment is far greater than almost any game. Now this was true until this year when we got games like *Asteroids* which are burning down the doors with such a fast return. But year after year we have found, and I think most smart operators will agree, that the jukebox is their best return on investment.

CONFUSED?

PLAY METER: Do you apply this type of reasoning as a sales tool with operators?

ARNOLD: In presenting a jukebox to an operator, our sales people actually put on another hat and call themselves music consultants. What they will do is sit down with any operator and use that operator's figures for depreciation and so on and actually do a pro forma so the operator can see for himself what a good buy a phonograph is.

PLAY METER: But are good phonograph operators really making money operating phonographs?

ARNOLD: Yes, they are. With proper programming, you can make money in jukeboxes. We have found in our area that operators who properly program their music and keep up with the times do make a good return on investment. We've seen just this, for instance, with one of Rowe's overseas customers, Music Hire of England, which changes as many as forty records a week to make sure each area's top forty music is represented on the jukebox. National charts don't help when you're programming like this. It's something that has to be done at the local level.

There are a lot of indications that music with proper programming is still a good money maker. But, to make it happen, an operator has to provide his customers a good mix of records to choose from. One of the old beliefs that has dropped by the wayside, we're finding out, is that it's not just young people who play jukeboxes. There are a lot of older people. So you have to have a good mix of music to appeal to all your customers. Good programming takes this into consideration.

PLAY METER: What are some of the things which can help improve jukebox play?

ARNOLD: I think attention-grabbing methods such as free record play on a jukebox if no one has played a record for, say, twenty minutes or so is something which helps attract attention to the jukebox.

But I think that devices, such a Rowe's Memorec feature, can really help an operator put on the records that will play in his locations. That way, with something like the Memorec, the operator can see for himself which records are the most played and which are the least played. Now a lot of operators don't see a reason for having a Memorec device which can show you the most played as well as the least played, but they both have their function. Of course, the operator is going to want to know which records are the least played so that those records can be pulled off. But by checking which records are the most played, he can tell what type of music is being favored in that location.

And this has advantages of its own. The bartender, for instance, may tell the operator that Elvis Presley is the most popular recording artist in his bar, but when you check out the Memorec, you may find out that the top five songs are all Barry Manilow songs, and maybe the customers are not even playing Elvis.

PLAY METER: Well, then, just how much stock do you place in location requests?

ARNOLD: Let's put it this way: You should put more credibility into the Memorec. Thanks to solid state technology, an operator can know very accurately which kinds of records are best for a location. Now, of course,

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everyone has two or three locations where the music is there as a convenience. If the jukebox is in there for convenience; if you have a cigarette machine in there doing two or three hundred packages a week; or three or four video games that are doing a couple of hundred dollars a week—then, of course, you'd give them what they wanted on the jukebox. But if it is a \$150 jukebox location, you have to sell the location on the fact that they are not requesting the songs that are played in there. And if you don't do that, then you're not a good businessman.

PLAY METER: How many records should an operator figure on buying per jukebox per week?

ARNOLD: In our area, it averages out at one and a half records bought per jukebox. With proper programming, you may pull off forty records, like Music Hire does, but most of those records wouldn't be scrapped, they'd be re-cycled to the next location.

PLAY METER: Pinball nationwide is solidly on quarter play now, and video has been there for some time. But jukebox play is still rather cheap by comparison. Has there been any movement in your area toward a more profitable pricing structure?

ARNOLD: Actually, in our area, operators have moved almost exclusively to one play for a quarter. One of the biggest operators up here, Melo-Tone, I think had a lot to do with setting the pace in this area. They sent out a letter to all their customers, and I think that letter was an example of how you go about handling a price increase in this business. It was not something they did by dealing with each location individually. Instead, they sent out a letter to all their jukebox locations. So I think it was, from that point of view, a positive thing.

What the letter did was let the location know that it wasn't being singled out for the price increase. It informed the location that all the operator's music stops were being hit with the price increase. I called Jack Kerner of Melo-Tone some weeks after he tried this approach, and I asked him how it worked out. I wanted to know how many gripes he got. He told me that of the several thousand jukebox locations the letter went to, they only got about five or six gripes. There were another five or six, he told me, who sounded a little bit disgruntled, but he told them to stay with it for about three, four, or five weeks and see what happens. They did, and they were satisfied, because they saw their part of the music go up too.

(Editor's Note: Melo-Tone's open letter to its jukebox locations is reprinted here.)

Now, how does the distributor fit in? I think distributors should do what we here have been doing for about three years now to reinforce this positive step. We make sure that every jukebox leaving us is put out at one play for a quarter, three plays for 50 cents, five plays for 75 cents, and seven plays for one dollar. That way the operator has to physically do something to the jukebox to change it. And we've found this has been very successful. If, as a distributor, you send all the jukeboxes out on quarter play, three for a half dollar, and so on, then it makes the operator have to go to the parts department and get the changes that have to be made to price the equipment lower.

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PLAY METER: That's a very interesting approach used by Melo-Tone to implement a price increase. One of the problems with implementing a much-needed price increase has always been that it is done piecemeal. I wonder if the same approach could be used to improve the pricing on pool tables?

ARNOLD: Well, to answer your question, I would say that about 70 to 75 percent of the pool tables in our area are on fifty-cent play now only because the operators have had the gumption to go ahead and do what was necessary to keep the piece viable. And for our part, when an operator orders a pool table, it leaves us set on fifty-cent play; so, again, the operator has to do something to the table to price the table downwards.

melo-tone

Melo-Tone Vending, Inc., 130 Broadway, Somerville, Mass. 02145 / tel: 666-4900

To All Our Customers of Coin-operated Music Machines:

In an economic climate where price increases have become the rule rather than the exception, the cost of music from a jukebox has not changed in eighteen years; two plays for a quarter. At this point the viability of the music business itself is threatened.

For that reason we are converting all of our machines to one play for a quarter. We realize there may be some resistance from your customers but this really only brings the price in line with what has been the standard in amusement machines for the past three years. While we regret the necessity for this move, the reasons for it are obvious and compelling.

We anticipate completing this price conversion in the next few weeks, and we hope that the most noticeable result will be mutual financial benefit.

Thanking you for your cooperation in this matter, we are,

Very truly yours,
MELO-TONE VENDING, INC.

Melo-Tone with this letter told all locations they weren't being singled out for a price increase. 'Gripes' were only six out of Melo-Tone's thousands of locations.

PLAY METER: How have wallboxes helped jukebox collections?

ARNOLD: Wallboxes help mostly with the overplays. What happens is that people at different booths can all be playing the top songs at the same time. And it's been touted by various distributors and manufacturers that this will produce an overplay that can be as much as 20 percent. And there are operators who have confirmed that figure for us. Of course, at locations which have expanded and where there are booths that are just too far away from the jukebox, the installation of wallboxes

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can increase jukebox play tremendously.

PLAY METER: Has there been a trend in your area toward more phonographs going on straight rental?

ARNOLD: Not in our area. We do have a few operators who are getting guarantees which, I guess, amount to that. That happens when a location demands a new jukebox but doesn't really warrant one. So, in those cases, what's been happening is the operator agrees to get the jukebox but, in compensation, stipulates that he get a \$40 a week guarantee. And that guarantee will include his checking in two records a week and servicing the machine and so forth. But that's a whole lot different than what I understand is happening in the West where operators are just straight out leasing phonographs.

PLAY METER: In your opinion, has the "Hit Syndrome" had a bad effect on distributors? We hear a lot of comments about distributors becoming merely order takers.

ARNOLD: (laughs) Yes, that's true in some distributorships where the distributor can deliver as many games as he can get delivery from the manufacturer. We have found that if you do that, as it is alleged some distributors are doing, then what happens is your operators are missing out on some really good Number Two and Number Three pieces.

By only offering an *Asteroids* or a *Galaxian* to your operators, you are not providing the service that, as a distributor, you are supposed to provide for them. There are other games out there that, while not making four or five hundred dollar a week collections, are nonetheless still better than the games of old. And there have been some good pingames lately, as well. So I feel that we as distributors fail if we sit back and just take phone orders. Even though we may be in a Hit Syndrome right now, we still have to put our salesmen on the street to make the operators aware that there are other good pieces of equipment available. That's our duty during a Hit Syndrome, to let operators know that there are other games.

Ever since the astronomical collections of *Space Invaders*, operators started comparing their other games to *Space Invaders*. And then no one dreamed that there would be a game as good as that again. And then right behind it came *Asteroids*, which in many cases, did even better. And since then there have been other strong games. Now the problem is that operators seem to think that every game that comes down the pike should produce those kind of astronomical collections. We as distributors hope it lasts forever, but as sensible businessmen we know it can't.

PLAY METER: Is it your opinion that some operators, caught up in this frenzy, are overbuying on certain pieces of equipment?

ARNOLD: I think there are a few like that. However, the operators who have good bottom lines—by that I mean a good pre-tax profit, the guys who pay their bills on time—if they have a hundred places to put the hit game, they are still only buying fifteen or twenty, even then they move them around.

But there are a few in our area who are going out and loading up. But those who have been around look back to when the *Pong* games first came out. There were a lot of operators who loaded up then, and they were sorry later. It took some of them three or four years to clean up their routes. And some of them lost money, and some even went out of business.

And that's where we go back to music and pinballs and other forms of coin-op. You've got to watch where the smart money is going. ●

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'Star Castle' licensed for export

Rock-Ola breaks into video

By RAY E. TILLEY

Rock-Ola Manufacturing Corp. has announced that it will break into the video market by a long-term agreement to license the vector monitor system owned by Cinematronics, Inc. and to market the new game *Star Castle* outside the United States.

The El Cajon, California video maker and the Chicago phonograph producer were mutually impressed with each other's capacities. Penning their licensing pact left Cinematronics with *Star Castle* rights in the U.S.A.—and Rock-Ola will pursue other options for marketing in the video field. As announced in a September distributors meeting, Rock-Ola will look to in-house development of its own games as well as acquisition of other games producers.

Company officials stated that Cinematronics could not presently meet production demands for its games overseas. The bond with Rock-Ola came about, said an officer there, because "they (Cinematronics) are doing an outstanding job right now, they can't produce enough, and have knowledge and expertise pertinent to the Vector monitor."

In an announcement shortly before this issue of *PLAY METER* went to press, Dr. David R. Rockola, senior vice president, said negotiations between his company and Cinematronics were successfully concluded, for Rock-Ola to manufacture and market *Star Castle* under their agreement.

"This covers the exclusive sales, and marketing rights for Europe and Canada, with non-exclusive right for all other export markets," said Dr. Rockola. He indicated that the introduction of additional high-drawing games by Rock-Ola "can be considered to be imminent, as management is now committed to offering a high degree of selectivity to the national and international operator trade.

"We fully realize that continuity of good games is necessary to ensure Rock-Ola's attaining its ambitious but nevertheless realistic domestic and international marketing goals," said Dr. Rockola.



Dr. David Rockola announces plans.



Tom Stroud and Debbie Stroud with the hot game.

The Chicago firm had tested several imported games by late summer but ruled that the candidates did not prove income power in the field to the extent the company wished to serve up to its network of handlers.

Rockola commented to *PLAY METER*, "a lot of operators and distributors have been waiting for the news, and we have fitted a glove to the right hand."

Cinematronics' president Tom Stroud, Jr. said, "We're really excited about it." He saluted the factory facilities of Rock-Ola—which have turned out a variety of material

in 50 years, from Carbine rifles and Packard war hardware during World War II to shuffle alleys (the last game produced by Rock-Ola, up to 1950) to payout games and pingames in the 1930s.

Aim at 'No. 1'

Rockola commented, "Just as Rock-Ola has become the world's number one producer of jukeboxes, so too will we put our hearts and talents behind this great new and promising endeavor."

Rock-Ola's pioneering pingames of 50 years ago, *Jig Saw* and *World Series*, set production records in their day, 1500 units of each per day, "that to date have never been matched." Dr. Rockola claimed that this manufacturing history alone demonstrates Rock-Ola's ability to re-establish itself as a competitor in the games industry.

Production of *Star Castle* at Chicago was scheduled to begin in mid-December, with export marketing likely at January 1, 1981.

Manufacture of the video game will be complete within the Rock-Ola factory, which will build the monitors as well as produce game parts. As well as phonograph production, the plant may also embrace manufacture of conventional raster monitor games at a near date, said Dr. Rockola.

The "skyrocketing income" of video games led Rock-Ola Manufacturing to a decision to re-enter the games field. Other games are being studied for production and marketing, said Dr. Rockola, but on visiting the Amusement Machine Show in Japan recently, he noted the number of favorable comments made by Japanese industry persons about *Star Castle*, among only a few American-made videos.

He concluded: "It is our intent to become a major factor in the very competitive and fast-moving video game business. To do this, we fully realize we must offer our fine network of distributors, both domestic and export, truly outstanding games that are capable of producing top levels of income, and not just another cute or 'also-ran' type of video."

The Singin' Cowboy is Urban and Suburban now

By Pat Matthews

There's no such thing as a dee-jay in a truck stop. That, my friends, is an all too known fact of life. Who needs one when you've got that magic box that'll play all your favorite songs at the drop of a coin...or coins. I really would be hard pressed to prove it, but I'd almost wager a week's pay (well, maybe not that little bit of money) that jukeboxes were born in a truck stop somewhere in Everytown, U.S.A.—probably conceived in a booth way over in the corner, too.

From Hank Williams to Don Williams, sweet country strains have bled through the speakers of jukeboxes everywhere—not only in truck stops but anywhere there's a good time to be had. And it's all because Country music has been with us for quite some time. It's funny in a way, but there are some people (and mostly young ones, at that) who truly believe that "Country" and all the implications it encompasses, is a new thing. Think about it. There are Country "clubs" opening on every

corner in every town whether there's a mechanical bull in it or not.

Flip across your radio dial and you may be surprised. New Country music stations are popping up and enjoying renewed success. It's hard for anyone who knows a little of anything to write it off as a fad. I, personally, think it is a tremendous coincidence that John Travolta could have been the star of two movies that spawned so-called fads in the past few years. Unlike "Saturday Night Fever," which was a box office blockbuster as well as the final nail in the coffin of Disco—"Urban Cowboy" has only brought the Western way of life to those who didn't know or care that it existed!

People as far away as Concord, New Hampshire are two-steppin' like native Texans. And it also goes without saying: You don't have to instruct a *real* cowboy in how to act like one. It comes naturally. You might even call it an art, one which is perfected over the years! Urban,

suburban, or down on the farm, he gets mud on his boots and that sweet country twang deep down in his soul.

What the renaissance of Country music has caused is accessibility, respectability, and acceptability. Country and Western has been brought to the masses without a fight. And this has been accomplished mainly due to the influx of "new" talent on the Country music scene. Who'd ever think that the likes of Boz Scaggs would sing a Country song? Well, the song in question, "Look What You've Done To Me"—from the *Urban Cowboy* soundtrack isn't necessarily a Country tune, yet on the strength of the flick, it crossed over on the charts. And what about the much-overdue mass acceptance of folks like Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, and Mickey Gilley, to name but a few.

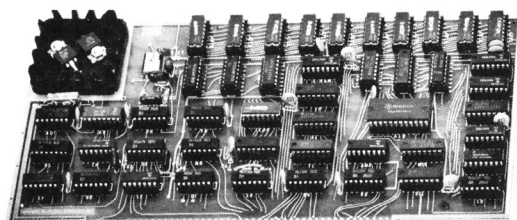
It may seem crazy, but that's Country music—the chord being struck in the Eighties!

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The 484.

*Last year we set records.
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One year ago, the last word in jukebox play and profit was the now legendary Techna by Rock-Ola. Today, the 484 marks the beginning of a new generation—more exciting, more compelling, more profitable than ever before. Because we've taken features with proven success: The exciting, play-generating Bonus Play. Top 3 Location Hits. And

Random Complimentary Play. And we've brought them together in a jukebox that looks as exciting as it really is. The result is a jukebox that is the state-of-the-art in stereo sound, in excitement, in profitability. The new 484 by Rock-Ola.

ROCK-OLA
Ideas That Set Records





MUSIC PROGRAMMING

By Pat Matthews
New Orleans

Program/Music Director WQUE

Diamond: 'On the Rocks'



Once upon a time there were movies without sound. Then, like a miracle, voices and music began to emanate from somewhere behind that "silver screen". The movie was "The Jazz Singer," an historical event in the Twenties which sent shock waves around the world and set the standard for all to follow. Well, here we are some fifty-plus years later and some more history is being made. "The Jazz Singer" has been re-made (modernized) and it stars another singer in his first dramatic role.

Like Al Jolson, Neil Diamond has sold many records and has captured the hearts of millions. Unlike "Jolie," Neil sings many more tender ballads in his initial splash in the movie biz—like the single release from the flick's soundtrack.

LOVE ON THE ROCKS—NEIL DIAMOND—Capitol 4939

It's just one of those songs. One like only Neil Diamond can sing it. In fact, it stands alone and doesn't have to depend on a movie. Neil has acquired a tremendous following over the years and now the visual aspect of the film shouldn't hurt an increase in fans. The tune is unforgettable, the lyrics touching... and the vocals, pure Diamond. Sure to melt a few more ladies' hearts, Neil's headed straight for the top, again—*10 out of 10* with strong crossover potential.

SUDDENLY—OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN & CLIFF RICHARD—MCA/51007

Another movie tune. Once again from "Xanadu" it's that pretty lass from Australia, teamed up with one of the more successful British pop singers of all time. The vocals are smooth on this love ballad and blend well together. The melody line is what carries this one and the instrumentation is almost entirely acoustic. And you have to listen closely to tell if this duet sounds any differently than Olivia and Andy what's-his-name: *8 out of 10* at best.

IT'S MY TURN—DIANA ROSS—Motown/M 1496F

You may not be ready, but here's the third consecutive song from a movie, and probably the third consecutive hit by this fabulous lady of song. From the movie "It's My

Turn," Diana turns a pretty song into a beautiful one as she sheds her "chic" funk at this time. The first time I listened to it, I thought it sounded like a Melissa Manchester song. Well, it turns out, the lyrics were penned by none other than Carole Bayer Sager, former roommate of Marvin Hamlisch, and a writer of many of Melissa's hits. It's well produced and depends heavily on piano and a very lush string arrangement to add to a brilliant performance by Ms. Ross. Should crossover to R&B and Adult Contemporary, too—*9 out of 10* or better.

ONE TRICK PONY—PAUL SIMON—Warner Brothers/WBS 49601

I promise this is the last tune from a movie this time around. This one's from the movie and the soundtrack album (natch) of the same name. Paul Simon is at his best in this bluesy rendering of this autobiographical song. The vocals are a lot like Paul Simon of the "50 Ways..." era and should do well. It's also a "simulated" live recording, but you have to listen closely to tell: *9 out of 10*.

GUILTY—BARBRA STREISAND & BARRY GIBB—Columbia/11-11390

Quite a combination! Seriously, these two go so naturally together, it makes you wonder why they didn't think of it before. It's basically Streisand and that means it's

basically dynamite and positive hit material. Gibb lends support with his 5 octave vocal range and also penned the song with—who else but the rest of his brothers, The Bee Gees. And, like I said on the radio, here's some B.S. with the Bee Gees. And I didn't even feel "Guilty" about it—*10 out of 10*, and may even crossover to R&B. Adult Contemporary is a cinch.

EVERY WOMAN IN THE WORLD—AIR SUPPLY—Arista/AS 0564

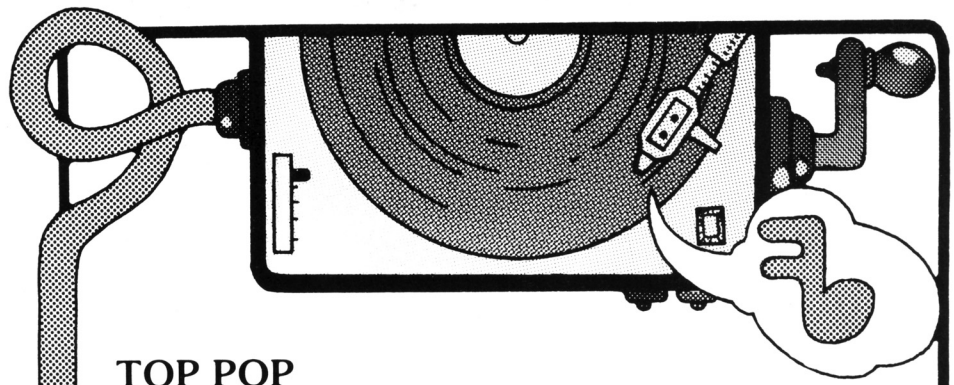
When Bobby "B", the local Arista rep first brought the Air Supply lp to me about a year ago, he said, "It's loaded with singles." I listened to it and the next time I saw Bobby I told him he was right. And now, eleven months later, we're both considering applying for genius status. Here's the third hit from the debut album and there'll probably be more. Graham Russell and Russell Hitchcock (the alternating lead singers) haven't sounded better than on this beautiful love song that's dripping with commercial potential and just begging to be put on your turntable: *10 out of 10*.

COULD I BE DREAMING—POINTER SISTERS—Planet/P-47920

From the "Jacksonish" beginnings, this toe-tapper sounds more and more like a sure hit and an excellent follow-up to "He's So Shy" (picked by yours truly as the comeback record it turned out to be a few months back). Anita Pointer co-wrote this one and sings the lead, ably backed by sisters June and Ruth. Some of the finest vocals on vinyl are showcased on this powerpacked hit with an emphasis on rhythm. The band really cooks on all burners and taking all this into consideration, I've got to believe!...*8 out of 10* or better.

I'LL NEVER FIND ANOTHER—MANHATTANS—Columbia/11-11398

A lot of times, groups and/or record companies include never-before-heard songs on a greatest hits package without any justification. Well, the Manhattans have done that with this song, but there's plenty of reason to be presumptuous on their part. The song's a nice one in the style of the old Stylistics. And easy, flowing bass line leads us through a flowing rhythm pattern and cascading vocals. It's an "easy" record to listen to, though there is a definite "commercial" sound to it. Give it a listen, and I'm certain you'll agree. A positive smash for the Manhattans: *10 out of 10* on highest chart.



TOP POP

- EVERYBODY'S GOT TO LEARN SOMETIME—THE KORGIS—Asylum***
- DEEP INSIDE MY HEART—RANDY MEISNER—Epic***
- SOMETIMES A FANTASY—BILLY JOEL—Columbia
- I'M HAPPY THAT LOVE HAS FOUND YOU—JIMMY HALL—Epic***
- (JUST LIKE) STARTING OVER—JOHN LENNON—Geffen***
- WOMAN IN LOVE—BARBRA STREISAND—Columbia***
- LET ME BE YOUR ANGEL—STACY LATTISAW—Cotillion
- LADY—KENNY ROGERS—Liberty***
- SHE'S SO COLD—ROLLING STONES—Rolling Stones***
- HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT—PAT BENATAR—Chrysalis
- THE WANDERER—DONNA SUMMER—Geffen***
- ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST—QUEEN—Elektra
- YOU'VE LOST THAT LOVIN' FEELING—HALL & OATES—RCA***
- DREAMING—CLIFF RICHARD—EMI America***
- NEVER KNEW LOVE LIKE THIS BEFORE—STEPHANIE MILLS—20th Century Fox***
- NEVER BE THE SAME—CHRISTOPHER CROSS—Warner Brothers
- ON THE ROAD AGAIN—WILLIE NELSON—Columbia***
- HE'S SO SHY—POINTER SISTERS—Planet***
- LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO ME—BOZ SCAGGS—Columbia***
- I'M COMING OUT—DIANA ROSS—Motown***
- THAT GIRL COULD SING—JACKSON BROWNE—Asylum
- DREAMER—SUPERTRAMP—A & M***
- MORE THAN I COULD SAY—LEO SAYER—Warner Brothers
- LOVELY ONE—JACKSONS—Epic***
- REAL LOVE—DOOBIE BROTHERS—Warner Brothers***
- HUNGRY HEART—BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN—Columbia

COUNTRY & WESTERN

- I BELIEVE IN YOU—DON WILLIAMS—MCA
- HARD TIMES—LACY J. DALTON—Columbia
- I'M NOT READY YET—GEORGE JONES—Epic***
- THAT'S THE WAY A COWBOY ROCKS AND ROLLS—JACKY WARD—Mercury
- ON THE ROAD AGAIN—WILLIE NELSON—Columbia***
- SHE CAN'T SAY THAT ANYMORE—JOHN CONLEE—MCA
- THE BOXER—EMMYLOU HARRIS—Warner Brothers
- PECOS PROMENADE—TANYA TUCKER—MCA
- WHY LADY WHY—ALABAMA—RCA
- COULD I HAVE THIS DANCE—ANNE MURRAY—Capitol
- LADY—KENNY ROGERS—Liberty***
- IF YOU EVER CHANGE YOUR MIND—CRYSTAL GAYLE—Columbia

RHYTHM & BLUES

- MASTER BLASTER (JAMMIN')—STEVIE WONDER—Tamla***
- MORE BOUNCE TO THE OUNCE—ZAPP—Warner Brothers
- I'M COMING OUT—DIANA ROSS—Motown***
- NEVER KNEW LOVE LIKE THIS BEFORE—STEPHANIE MILLS—20th Century Fox***
- LOVELY ONE—JACKSONS—Epic***
- LET ME TALK—EARTH, WIND & FIRE—Columbia***
- LOVE X LOVE—GEORGE BENSON—Warner Brothers
- CELEBRATION—KOOL & THE GANG—De-Lite***
- UPTOWN—PRINCE—Warner Brothers
- THE WANDERER—DONNA SUMMER—Geffen***
- THE REAL THING—NARADA MICHAEL WALDEN—Atlantic

***denotes record reviewed previously by PLAY METER

Phonograph Buyer's Guide

Prestige ES II: Modern and Classical Blend

Prestige ES II 160 from NSM offers a blend of modern and classical lines, plus a colorful partial visibility of the phonograph mechanism.

The 160-selection EA-ROM memory stores program information. Pricing and credit program, as well as the cash hold, remain in the memory. The popularity of A and B sides of records and "Top 9" also are recorded in the memory.

Pricing ranges on *ES II 160* can be varied by selector buttons. Most and least played records are shown on the LED display, the most played being indicated as "Top 9" on the display. Cash and pricing information are kept secret, only able to be read through an operator knowing the code number of each phonograph. Automatic random play of a top hit record can be programmed. The "hit" will then be played automatically in sequences of 15 to 105 minutes after the last record played.

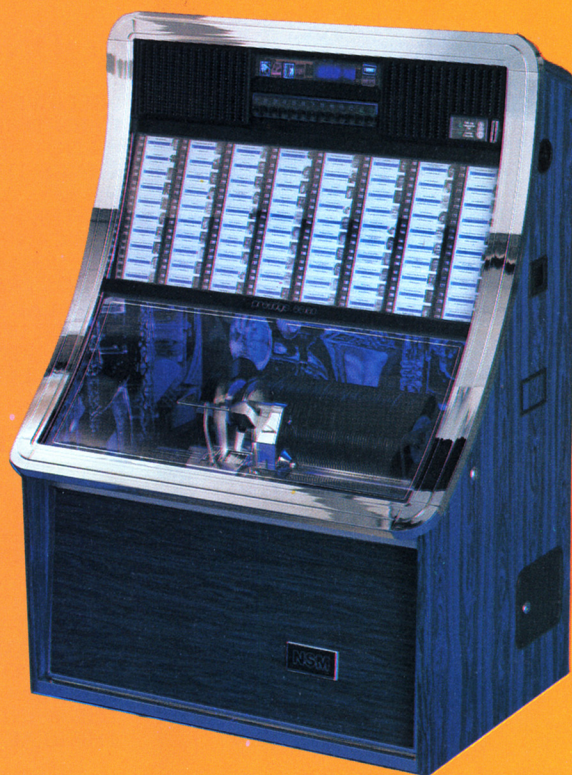
The vertical record playing system has a Shure magnetic cartridge and diamond stylus (needle pressure 3 p.); cartridge positioning is by opto-scanning system.

After making a selection, the customer has 3 seconds in which to reset his choice via a reset button on the selector keys. The symbols on the selector assembly indicate the operating cycle the machine is in, and light to show: Insert Coin, Credit, Playing, and Hit functions. Flashing of the pricing occurs during the play of a record.

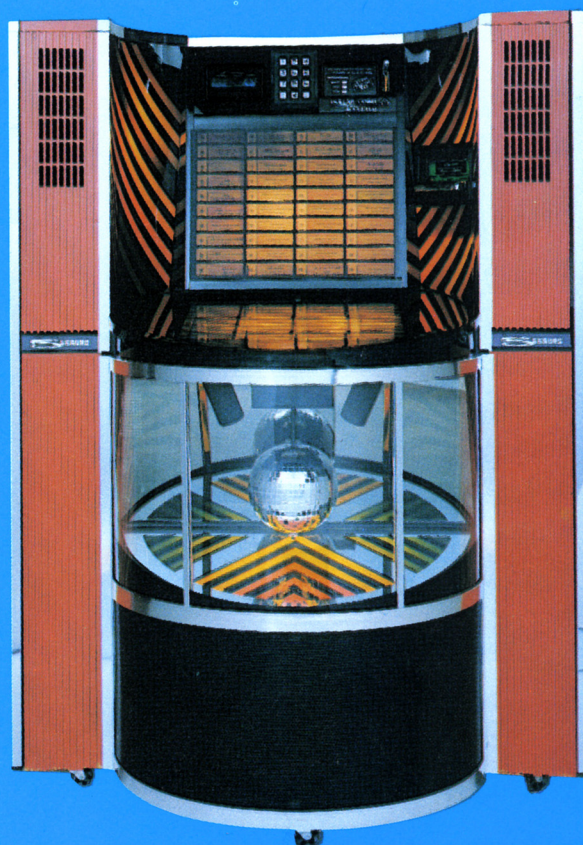
Amplifiers are housed in a supply center with heat sink radiating externally. Two channels each have 75 watts power with A.V.C. An easily removable output board and pre amp boards provide for fast servicing, notes the manufacturer.

Sloping surfaces of the cabinet do not allow cups and glasses to be placed on it; however, it is waterproof.

Dimensions are 128 cm height, 90 cm width, and 64 cm depth.



Phoenix: Return of a 'Legend'



Phoenix, the first phonograph to be produced by Stern/Seeburg, is, like the legendary animal suggested by its name, a machine given re-birth. It signals its redrafted exterior colors and design, and it claims the hallmark of time-honor Seeburg quality.

Designed for maximum customer play convenience, the Customer Play Theater incorporates all music play features in one location. Here are the 8-digit illuminated microprocessor display panel, 10-button electronic dial selector, coin slot which accepts the \$1 coin, and title display panels.

The microprocessor display panel communicates to the customer the information: (1) the 3-digit number of the record play the customer is buying, (2) the 3-digit number of the record being played, and (3) the 2-digit number that indicates the number of credits for further play. If a customer selects an improper music number, one not shown on the phonograph's music program, an illuminated "error" display lights instantly, indicating a mistake has been made. The customer then knows a re-selection of music is necessary.

The Seeburg *Phoenix* allows customers to buy their music with the "Susan B." dollar coin in addition to quarters, dimes, and nickels. Any combination up to one dollar's worth of play will give free bonus selections—a Seeburg innovation that adds play appeal.

The 10-button play panel controls the 160-selection *Phoenix* music titles, with a fast-action telephone-type

panel to allow customer selection simply by pressing a series of three numbered buttons for each selection. Numbers played register instantly. "Advanced electronic technology designed into the selector program provides ultra reliability, maximum performance, and longevity," states the manufacturer.

The new *Phoenix* measures 54½" high, 40" wide, and 28¾" deep.

‡ ‡ ‡

Stern Electronics, in creating a new jukebox division, has brought back an "American classic"—the Seeburg line. Seeburg phonographs will be manufactured in Stern's facility on Diversey Parkway in Chicago. Solid state components will be provided by its URL subsidiary.

The Seeburg name originated with the birth in Sweden in 1871 of Justus P. Sjöberg. In 1886, the young man left Sweden for the United States and entered the piano industry. In 1907 the J. P. Seeburg Piano Company was formed. Twenty years later, his firm went beyond the ivory keyboard and developed an electric multi-selection coin-operated playing phonograph. Since that period, a durable phonograph was provided by Seeburg—into and beyond the 1950s, when Seeburg launched the first exclusive 45 r.p.m. jukebox, the M100B.

In the hands of Stern Electronics, a \$5 million investment has now been committed to the reinstatement of the Seeburg phonograph line.

Starlight: 'Most sophisticated looks' with a powerful brain



On *Starlight*, 42 lights dance around a set of mirrors, creating an "infinity" effect in rhythm with the beat of the music, as described by the manufacturer, ROWE/AMI.

Starlight is one of Rowe's newest 200-selection jukeboxes from the R-85 series—and "quite possibly, the most sophisticated-looking jukebox ever created," claim company officials. Like the other models in this series, it measures 53" high X 41½" wide X 28¼" deep, and weighs 335 lbs.

With two 10" bass speakers housed in a tuned high-efficiency chamber, *Starlight* handles 64 watts of RMS power with no acoustic feedback. An additional 64 power watts are channeled through extension speakers. A pair of 6" speakers carry the mid-to-high ranges. Total power capacity is 128. And, to assure a clear separation of channels, all R-85 models include a Shure magnetic cartridge.

The "brain" of the phonograph is the new Central Control Computer. Using its "Advanced Tech" system, Rowe's engineers have expanded their microprocessor program, enabling operators to choose their desired order of play—*Fido* or *Standard*. *Starlight* features a new price board, allowing up to 31 plays per coin—more than double the allowance of previous models. Also the total credit accumulation has been expanded to 99 plays.

Starlight will also play the A and B sides of a record, in succession, when both selections are made. When not in use, *Starlight* will attract customers by automatically selecting at random and playing the "B" side of records, simply by the operator's putting the "Autoplay" feature to work. And a Memorec System (located in the Central Control Computer board) can instantly tell a location's favorite, or least preferred, records via LED readouts...covering *all* the selections, in preference order.

The phonograph's single tilt-up door makes servicing easily-accessible. Diagnostic LEDs instantly indicate any problems, and exactly where the trouble is. But downtime is proposed to be minimal because *Starlight* operates on solid-state control modules that are literally a "snap" to change.

There are many additional options to choose from including dollar bill acceptor, plug-in paging system, remote volume control, and an automix kit.

And, as with every Rowe jukebox, *Starlight* is backed by a 2-year warranty on all solid-state modules and a 5-year guarantee on every moving part.

Model 484: 'Flowing' design, sharp fit, pop features...



The new model 484 160-selection phonograph takes advantage of exciting new graphics, improved stereo sound, and proven features to stimulate more plays and larger profits, according to Senior Vice President Dr. David R. Rockola.

"Model 484 boasts new graphics to attract and captivate the customers' attention," Rockola said. "To the exciting and compellingly attractive cabinet we have added new colors and designs that provoke maximum player interest and participation. Three-sided wrap-around graphics and the elegantly designed customer control panel combine to produce the ultimate in player interest.

"New backlit, 3-dimensional color graphics on the front of Model 484 are a highly artistic treatment of the name Rock-Ola. The graphics on the front swirl around the sides where they soar upward in a myriad of alluring colors. The graphic design will attract maximum customer attention from every point in the room," Dr. Rockola stated.

Two other cabinet features of Model 484 are notable. It is less than 25" in depth, so it will fit "practically anywhere." Customers can't sit on or set anything on the 484 because it has been intentionally designed without level surfaces.

Model 484 accepts nickels, dimes, quarters, and dollar coins. Adapting the 484 to the most beneficial prices for each location is a matter of snapping a few toggle switches inside the cabinet. With Rock-Ola's Bonus feature it is possible to give special bargain plays for all coins including the Susan B. Anthony coin. A dollar bill acceptor is optional.

The "Top 3 Location Hits" automatically computes and displays the most popular hits played on each Model 484. First-time customers in a location know they are making a popular selection when they play the top three hits indicated above the selection area.

Rock-Ola's Random Complimentary Play takes over when there is a temporary lull in play. The phonograph randomly chooses and plays a record at differing intervals within two time sequences—10 to 30 minutes or 20 to 60 minutes, controlled by the operator—depending on how the operator wants to set the phonograph.

Periodic maintenance or servicing of the new Rock-Ola has been made simple. The dome section swings up and locks into a choice of two positions. The cabinet door drops down, and the customer control panel opens out. Servicing can now be completed quickly and easily.

A series of microprocessor-controlled and computer-operated devices are responsible for Rock-Ola's play and profit stimulators. The "Profit-Setter" enables the operator to customize regular prices, Bonus Features, and Random Complimentary Play in seconds by touching appropriate programming switches.

Rock-Ola's "Hit Tracker" continually computes and displays the top three location hits. A memory bank in the Hit Tracker records the number of times each selection is played, and displays this information on demand starting from the most played (up to 999 times) or the least played (beginning with zero). The Hit Tracker will also display on request the total number of selections played.

The manufacturer states that the speed and dependability of record selection has been increased by a new Opto-Sensor and microprocessor-operated Logic Board. The request for records is fed into the memory bank of the Logic Board which then activates the Opto-Sensor. A beam of light in the Opto-Sensor finds the correct records and delivers them to the turntable.

Model 484's cabinet measures 24 $\frac{7}{8}$ " in depth, by 54 $\frac{7}{8}$ " height, and 42" width. The elegant metallic bronze finish is enhanced by a smooth grained Chamois vinyl. Specially tempered glass protects all back-lighted graphic areas.

Rock-Ola Model 484 carries a 7-year warranty.

Centuri 2001: The state of the jukebox art, with Swiss mechanisms

"The new *Centuri 2001* jukebox features state of the art microprocessor technology, the latest in high quality audio systems technology, a remarkably simple and highly reliable Swiss designed record changer mechanism, and cabinet styling which is years ahead of its time," says John Chapin, vice president/music systems for Centuri, Inc.

"For some reason, the new age of electronics never really caught up to the jukebox industry," said Chapin. "Many aspects of the *2001* represent significant technology breakthroughs."

"Poor sound quality has always been a problem with jukeboxes," said Chapin. "By using passive radiators, highly efficient 'bass multipliers' in the speaker enclosure, alongside high compliance woofers, the *Centuri 2001* almost doubles the sound produced with virtually no distortion."

A Pickering pickup cartridge, considered the finest by industry experts, is standard equipment on the *Centuri 2001*.

"Complex mechanisms which lead to costly downtime have consistently plagued the industry," according to Chapin. "We've solved that problem with a unique Swiss designed and manufactured mechanism," Chapin said. "With only four principal assemblies which can be easily dismantled from one another in less than one minute with practically no tools, almost instantaneous on-site service is now possible."

The *Centuri 2001* has the capacity to handle 105 records, 200 tunes "plus 10" feature selections. A unique feature is the ability to "convert" the amount of selections from location to location, ranging from 100 to 200 plus 10.

Thanks to a sophisticated microcomputer, every bit of information pertinent to the jukebox's on-location performance is recorded. "By selecting the proper function, an operator can find out detailed activity information including the number of time each record has been played and the amount of income the box has generated," Chapin said.

Chapin claimed the *Centuri 2001* is the industry's most aesthetically appealing jukebox. "Its sleek futuristic design is enhanced by subdued graphics housed in a compact cabinet.

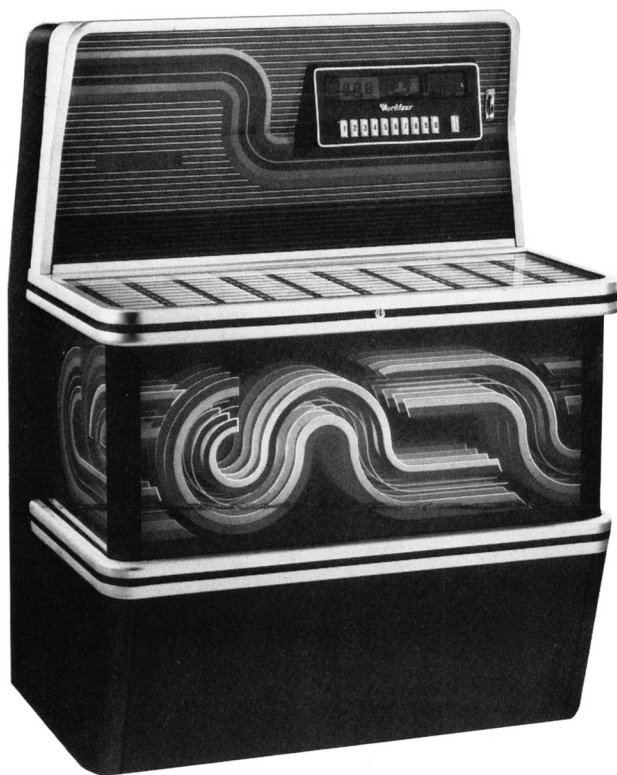
"Title strips, usually the least attractive items on a coin phonograph, are arranged in a very attractive stepped

display holder which can only be viewed by the individual making a selection," he explained.

A full line of major accessories is available for the *2001*, including: wall boxes, remote speakers, volume control, dollar bill validators, microphone paging kit, metered credits storage kit, clear-all-selections switch, and portable printer for income audit and record popularity.

Centuri, Inc., is an international manufacturer of video games and other electronic amusement devices, based in Hialeah, Florida.





Atlanta: Wurlitzer's newest '200'

The *Atlanta* is the newest in Wurlitzer's line of 200-selection phonographs. Play sequence can be alternatively according to selection sequence or the location in the record magazine. Large 3-digit LED displays indicate the credit selection and record playing.

Atlanta 200's Play Stimulator automatically plays a record every 10 to 30 minutes (adjustable) after the last selection has played. It is prepared for infrared remote volume control.

Dimensions are 52.7" height, 39.8" width, and 25.2" depth. Voltage is interchangeable 100-240 volts.

Plug connectors adapt auxiliary amplifier, external speakers, remote control, and microphone. Remote selections are made from the standard wallbox via an adapter.

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AVA 'off the ground'

Coin-op open house proves a sellout in St. Louis

With over 120 people from 97 operating companies attending the November 11-12 grand opening, Audio Visual Amusements of St. Louis got off to a rousing start for the

new coin-op season.

By the time the two-day event was over, only the desks and fixtures that were nailed down were left behind. The showroom was barren, with

even the games on display carted off for immediate use by operators.

Pete Entringer, the industry veteran who resigned his position this past summer with Advance Distributing to buy Brandt Distributing and start AVA, told *PLAY METER*: "I'm absolutely elated beyond expectation. I just wish we would have had more equipment to deliver. The reception we've had in our first three months has been unbelievable. Business has actually doubled what I had optimistically hoped for."

After starting AVA, Entringer held off about three months before holding this grand opening show in order to be able to spotlight the new equipment which debuted at the AMOA Show a few days before in Chicago.

Among the games on display were Cinematronics' *Star Castle* (which attracted probably the most attention), Electro-Sport's *Tomahawk Missile*, Data East's *Mad Alien*, and *Helifire* by Nintendo. Also on show was U.S. Billiards' *React* countertop money maker, and Sunbird wallgames including *Counterattack*.

Manufacturer representatives attending the distributor showing included Aldo Donnalioia of Data East, Jim Ruegamer of Sunbird, Tom Pierce and Bob Burr of Electro-Sport, and the ubiquitous Len Schneller of U.S. Billiards.

Also present at the showing were David Stroud of Cinematronics, and Don Wright, Cinematronics' field service engineer, who conducted a service seminar November 11 covering all Cinematronics games. Turnout for the Cinematronics service school was large, with about 25 service personnel in attendance.

Audio Visual Amusements, which is based at 1809-11 Olive Street in St. Louis, represents the following product lines: American Shuffleboard, Cinematronics, Dynamo, Data East, U.S. Billiards, National Rejectors, Wurlitzer, Electro-Sport, Nintendo, Woodbine Products, and Sunbird Manufacturing.



Tom Pierce and Bob Burr, both of Electro-Sport, and Pete Entringer (extreme right) with compact Electro-Sport upright Tomohawk Missile.



Don Wright, David Stroud of Cinematronics, and Entringer and Brian Nelson of AVA flank Cinematronics' hot video Star Castle.

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Matthews with Abloy

Abloy, manufacturer of high security locks, announced the appointment of Jack W. Matthews as senior vice president and general manager. He will work out of Abloy's Niles, Illinois headquarters.

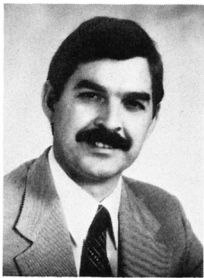
In a sales policy change, Matthews reported Abloy will sell to locksmiths through recognized distributors rather than direct as in the past. Locksmith pricing will be unaffected by this change.

Matthews is in the process of establishing a distributor network to make the Abloy product line more readily available to locksmith dealers.

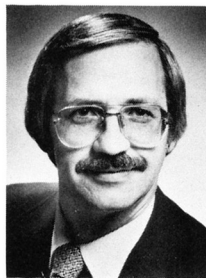
Other immediate Abloy goals Matthews is implementing are expansion of the present product line and development of training schools which will be conducted locally across the nation. Abloy also plans to make key cutting machines available to recognized locksmiths. Restricted and non-restricted key systems will be offered.

Prior to joining Abloy, Matthews held executive positions with Detroit Diesel Allison Division of General Motors and Yanmar Diesel Division of Mitsui and Co. (USA), Inc.

Most of his business experience has been in marketing, sales promotion, establishing distributional networks, dealer sales/service training, and material and production control. He holds an MBA from Butler University and a Marketing BS from the University of Evansville.



Matthews



Woodman

Seeburg's top tech

Alan Woodman has been appointed director of engineering for the newly formed Seeburg division of Stern Electronics, Inc., Chicago, said Tom Campbell, director of marketing.

Woodman comes to Stern from Lowrey Electronics, Inc., Deerfield, Illinois, where he served as director of design. At Stern, he will supervise the formation of an engineering and design department in the company's Seeburg phonograph division.

Woodman resides in Mount Prospect, Ill.



Exidy gears up service power, hot line

A new service at Exidy is its new toll-free Service Hot Line, 800/538-8402. The service support area has been expanded to better meet the needs of distributors and operators who request parts and technical assistance.

In addition to the toll-free number, Exidy is expanding its technical staff and service facilities at the Sunnyvale plant location. "We recognize that strong service backup is essential for the best maintenance and operation of our products," commented Pete Kauffman, Exidy president.

"Our goals for the next year include strengthening our service department and the support services for Exidy customers," he added.

The toll-free telephone is available for inquiries by service technicians relating to any Exidy game products.

Qualified service personnel will be able to answer questions and assist with troubleshooting and repair of the games. The 800 number will be attended during all business hours at Exidy (Pacific Standard Time).

With a larger staff and facility, Exidy Customer Service will be better equipped to provide more support for distributors and operators. More service schools and repair clinics will be held in the future. Service response time will be greatly improved as well. "Exidy is working to have the best service program available for our customers," stated Joanne Anderson, marketing administrator.

The 800 Hot Line was to be in effect as of November 25. It was expected to expedite service response and increase the convenience for technicians' maintenance of Exidy games in the field.

Promotional award for Gremlin tapes

SAN DIEGO—Gremlin Industries has been recognized by the country's leading video experts for excellence in promotional video tapes.

Gremlin's *Digger* game promotional videofax tape took top honors for promotion/merchandising at the first annual Business and Industrial Video Festival sponsored by JVC Corporation in New York City in October.

The *Digger* tape was selected from 116 entries submitted by more than 50 major corporations, including General Foods, Pacific Telephone, Levi Strauss, and Goodyear.

Ron Stein, director of video production, and Lynne Reid, director of advertising for Gremlin, accepted the award for their efforts in producing, directing, and writing the tape.

Presiding at the award ceremony, president and director of U.S. JVC Corporation, Norizo Sakoda, lauded the festival as a "salute to those who have been most bold...and most responsible for the remarkable rapid growth of the video industry."

Award winners in other categories were AT&T Long Lines, Morgan Guaranty Trust Company, and Fisher Scientific Company for employee communications/relations; Fisher Scientific, Union Pacific Railroad, and SEDCO Inc. received prizes for their entries in employee training.

The *Digger* tape was introduced to Gremlin distributors at a June conference. Distributors equipped with video playback units have been supplied with the *Digger*, *Astro Fighter*, and *Carnival* promotional Videofax tapes to aid them in introducing new Gremlin products.

Settle one, sue second—Midway

FRANKLIN PARK, Ill.—Midway Manufacturing Co., Universal Co., Ltd., and Universal USA, Inc. have amicably settled a copyright infringement lawsuit pending in a federal court in California without either party admitting fault or liability.

Under the settlement, Universal Co., Ltd. and Universal USA have agreed not to resume importation or distribution of the video game known as *Cosmic Alien*. On its part, Midway has agreed to cooperate in terminating all legal proceedings against importers and distributors of *Cosmic Alien*.

Other terms of the settlement were not disclosed.

In conjunction with the settlement, the parties have endorsed the principle that video games are a product that can and should be protected by their respective owners, in the interest of fostering creativity in games.

Gilley's 'bull' brouhaha in court

HOUSTON—Gilley's, the Pasadena, Texas nightclub where the mechanical bull craze was born—and bred in the movie "Urban Cowboy"—has sued three Houston companies for fence-jumping into its territory: the bull gimmick itself.

In the lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court here in early November, Gilley's Enterprises, Inc. alleged that the companies are violating the patent Gilley's holds on the headless, legless, engine-driven, and saddled torso. Gilley's also alleged that the defendants have deceived the public by branding their bulls as Gilley's stock.

The defendants—Buck N' Broncos, Inc., Southwest Rodeo Enterprises, Inc., and Texas Rodeo Bulls, Inc.—admitted their manufacture of a version of the bucking machine, but they replied that

Tech team additions at Gottlieb

The appointments of George Offshack as technical services manager and Bruce Minus as field service engineer have been announced by Richard Finger, Gottlieb director of engineering.

In commenting on the promotion, Gil Pollock, Gottlieb vice president of operations said, "George Offshack is well known to every Gottlieb distributor and to literally hundreds of game operators around the country through his intensive

Midway Manufacturing, owning copyright and trademark rights in the United States to the *Galaxian* video game, filed a complaint October 31 in a federal court in Chicago against Artic International, Inc. of Bridgewater, New Jersey, an exhibitor at the AMOA Show.

Midway's complaint filed in U.S. District Court charges Artic with infringement of Midway's copyright and trademark rights in the *Galaxian* game by the sale of printed circuit boards for use in building or modifying the game.

The suit is part of Midway's continuing efforts to protect its proprietary rights in its games against any who copy the game or sell infringing games or components for building or modifying the game, said a statement from Midway Manufacturing.

Gilley's has no right to the patent and is trying to monopolize the mechanical bull market.

Gilley's officials were quoted by the Dallas Times Herald as saying they had made \$1 million in less than two years from the sale of nearly 400 bulls.

Texas Rodeo Bulls' president J. B. Seligman said his company, in business for only a few months, is deluged with orders for the machine.

F. W. & Associates, a Phoenix company not involved with the Texas suit, started production in October of what it calls the world's first computerized mechanical bull and reported a backlog of 200 orders at about the times of the AMOA show. The company claims its *Buck N' Bull* has 360 different combinations of bucks and spins.

series of service schools conducted during the last two years. His appointment will be greeted with enthusiasm by those who have benefited from his schools in every major market area."

Finger concluded, "We are also very pleased with the appointment of Bruce Minus, who came to us with broad experience in solid state and electro-mechanical technology. He will continue to conduct schools on a regular basis through Gottlieb distributors after the AMOA Show."



Koenig



Saign

Finance head named

William J. Koenig, 51, has been named vice president of finance and chief financial officer for Pizza Time Theatre, according to Joseph F. Keenan, president of the Sunnyvale, California chain of family entertainment centers.

Koenig, who was formerly executive vice president and chief financial officer of First International Services Corporation in Darien, Connecticut, has a BSBA degree from the University of Florida in Gainesville, and an MBA from the University of Miami, Florida. Prior to joining First International he was executive vice president of finance for Chock Full-O-Nuts in New York City, for Hardee's Food Systems, Inc. in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, and for Burger King in Miami, Florida.

Koenig and his wife, Patricia, are the parents of four boys. He is a member of the Financial Executives Institute and American Management Association.

PTT marketing chief

Patrick J. Saign, 33, has been named director of marketing for Pizza Time Theatre, Sunnyvale.

Saign, who has a master of science degree from San Jose State University, San Jose, was previously director of marketing for Boise Cascade Corporation, Palo Alto.

Saign and his wife, Diane, are residents of Palo Alto.

Pizza Time Theatre presently operates or has franchised 14 stores in California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona with others under construction in California, Texas, North Carolina, Colorado, and Florida.

Bally payoff on shares

The board of directors of Bally Manufacturing Corp. has declared a regular cash dividend of 2½ cents a share on the company's common stock, payable November 20, 1980, to stockholders of record November 3, 1980.

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Australian AMOA stages its first show



Drawing from Coin Slot of London

A small, but highly professional coin machine industry, is the conclusion drawn from the third Australian Amusement Machine Operators' Association Convention, held at Surfer's Paradise, Queensland, at the end of summer.

Small it was in terms of international markets, but nevertheless vital and in its own way a perfect image in miniature of the world market.

The seventeen exhibitors at the Chevron Hotel displayed equipment in proportion to the relative strengths of each type of machine in the country as a whole. Videos dominated very strongly, followed by pinball, music, and pool.

Hosted by the Queensland AMOA, the Convention was the first for the national Association since its formation earlier in 1980. The two previous exhibitions had been staged by the New South Wales AMOA in 1976 and 1978.

It was, to some extent, an international event, with visitors from the United Kingdom, the

United States, New Zealand, and New Guinea. From the U.S.A., visitors included Shane Breaks and Suzanne Elliott from Atari, Ross Scheer from Bally, and Stephen Kaufman from Stern, who gave a talk to the assembled delegates.

Between the exhibitors, virtually every leading make of equipment was on show to a reasonable turnout of Australian operators. The standard of the displays was excellent, laid out in a major convention room at the Chevron on an open-plan basis. A criticism can be made that the seminars were held in the same room, which meant that all of the equipment had to be switched off during the talking.

Video games displayed their almost-total takeover of the Australian market from pinball, a change that took place in 1979. Not surprisingly, it was the introduction of the *Space Invaders* machines that proved the catalyst. It is estimated that Taito, through its Australian subsidiary, put over 4,000 *Space Invaders* machines onto the Australia-

lian marked, a figure that makes most people in the Australian industry hastily reassess market prospects there.

Taito Australia was therefore exhibiting at the show in some force, displaying *Space Invaders Part II*—sales of which are still climbing—*Space Chaser* and a new game, *Galactic Raiders*, new in a compact cabinet specially built by another Taito subsidiary, Taito New Zealand.

“The opening up of new locations with *Space Invaders* taught us that there are many places which don't like cocktail tables, like bars, and don't like uprights because of the bright graphics,” said Taito Australia Managing Director Brian Storelli. “The smaller cabinet is less conspicuous and appeals to the bars where the owners don't want their premises to look like a games room.

“The idea has been very successful, as can be seen here at the show, because several other companies are producing versions of games in this type of cabinet.”

Taito's new *Speak and Rescue* game, with voice patterns, had not yet arrived in console form, but was there as a cocktail table, a debut appearance.

Leisure and Allied Industries, the Perth-based company which has manufacturing, distributing, and operating interests and which is Australia's largest all-round coin machine company, had the largest display at the show.

The company handles a wide range of the most famous names in coin equipment, some of which it manufactures under license. The big hit of the show was undoubtedly Nintendo's new *Space Firebird* cocktail table, a judgment subsequently borne out since *Space Firebird* has gone on to take over as Japan's number one game.

Of the equipment which Leisure and Allied manufactures under license, the most notable was Atari's. The company has a major manufacturing facility in Perth and also

produces Stern games in quantity.

Other video games strongly represented were Nichibutsu's *Moon Cresta* and *Moon Alien*, shown by the distributors Australian Diversified Industries, and other companies with big video displays were Vanguard Amusement Machines, Automatic Music, and Universal.

Home grown down under

Perhaps the most surprising aspects of the Australian trade, illustrated by the exhibition, was the preparedness of the Australians to take the bull by the horns and manufacture original games themselves. When this is taken to the extent of manufacturing pinball it illustrates the ability of the industry there to tackle the most complex technological undertakings.

It is unfortunate that just when three companies decided to go into pinball manufacturing, the game—then the strongest element of the industry there—was about to be pushed well back into second place by the lightning emergence of the video game.

However, three companies, Leisure and Allied Industries, M.F.S. and J.E. Heron, and A. Hankin and Co., all had their own home-produced tables on display. Possibly

the most notable of these was A. Hankin and Co., by virtue of the fact that as much as 75 per cent of the table was built from Australian-produced components.

The company had three pin tables on show, *Howzat*, *Shark*, and *The Empire Strikes Back*, the last being a singular achievement to obtain exclusive pinball rights over the name.

David Hankin, joint managing director of the company, said: "We were manufacturing pool tables for a long time at our plant at Newcastle, New South Wales. As one of the largest coin machine companies in Australia with our own distribution and operating interests, we felt we could do even more in the manufacturing line.

"We began building pinballs two years ago, importing the electronic components, but carrying out a great deal of the work ourselves. Gradually we have managed to cut down our dependence on outside suppliers to the degree that the games are now three-quarters Australian."

He continued, "It was a bold venture, of course, with what is essentially a small market, but there was a pinball boom on at the time in this country but, unfortunately, it has gone a little soft now. I don't

know that we would do it again, knowing what we do now, but once committed we decided to go on with it. It has taken a lot of work, time, effort, and money to reach the degree of advanced technology as the rest of the international market, but now that we have achieved it, we are ready to go further. We make video games too, but that is a piece of cake compared with building pinball" said Hankin.

The company is now ready to begin exporting their products and challenge the more experienced American and European manufacturers. "We are ready to export anywhere in the world, for we now have a product as good as anything else that is on the market. We have already begun negotiations with overseas companies who may handle it for us."

One of the organizers of the exhibition, Hale Anderson, a member of the Queensland AMOA Board of Directors, said that a great deal of business had been carried out at the show despite a slightly disappointing attendance.

He said his board was looking at the possibility of hosting the Convention in 1982 to coincide with the British Commonwealth Games which will be held in nearby Brisbane. ●

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The Aussie coin trade

Compiled by Play Meter's International Desk

There are marked similarities between the growth patterns of the Australian coin machine industry and the trade in the rest of the world, despite the fact that the country is geographically isolated, physically huge and comparatively sparsely populated.

In general terms the coin machine industry in Australia has suffered historically from media-inspired bad public relations, just as the trade has in the rest of the world, with governmental mismanagement in legislative terms, and periodic euphoria over individual innovative trends—all again in common with elsewhere.

The pattern of coin machine development there has throughout all its growing pains retained an affinity with world markets that is amazingly concise and leads to the conclusion that the trade's characteristics molds the people who run it rather than the other way around.

The trade in Australia has its roots as far back as that in North America but under different conditions. The country has a small population, about 15 million, but concentrated mainly into large cities such as Sydney (3.5 million), Melbourne (three million), Brisbane (one million), and Adelaide with 500,000. Apart from these, the rest of the population resides in a handful of large towns and innumerable low-population villages.

And most of the population is centered along the East Coast, with the huge void of the desert in the middle and only Perth, with about 500,000 people, on the West Coast.

The trade was originally limited to the major cities and within those bounds was fairly similar to other countries before World War II. Machines were few in variety and consisted principally of early pinball games and peep show machines, sited in sweet shops and occasionally in fun centers in large cities. A bad name inevitably followed and for the usual reasons, such as the little old ladies noticing youngsters using the rather avant garde peep show machines, and it was that type of equipment rather than early payout machines that gave the trade a bad

name in Australia.

The machines themselves did not have the sophistication of their successors, of course, and appealed to a limited audience. They also game 10 plays on a pinball for the equivalent of two cents, which meant slow game sequences.

Jukeboxes began to appear quite early, together with novelty type machines, and were principally concentrated in fun parlors—but when the pinball was crowned with a backglass in 1936-7 and became more sophisticated, like the Bally *Classic Golden Wheel*, there was more potential for the trade to expand.

The first major jolt for the trade came with the Second World War, when in 1939, goods which originated in the United States were banned by the Australian Government, not for any political reason, but rather to preserve currency reserves of U.S. dollars, the main method of payment for equipment. A permit was necessary to import any U.S.-made goods at all, and the prohibition only came off 20 years ago.

Making do

This period was a difficult one for the Australian trade during which "make and mend" was the order of the day, and the ingenuity used in keeping machines going was quite remarkable and defies modern comprehension. Most of the equipment was in fun parlors with an attendant mechanic who quickly became adept at running repairs, so the old machines were kept going for far longer than the manufacturers originally intended. Frequent breakdowns were of little consequence with this kind of on-the-spot attention and although there were a few attempts at making Australian machines, using telephone components of British origin, the market was still basically one of keeping the old equipment going at all costs.

The trade still suffered from the major impediment of public attitude. Most conventional business establishments which would normally be regarded as locations showed a bias against coin machines. This op-

position was there by virtue of inaccessibility and reflected back to the old image of nude peep show machines. The trade was no different in Australia in those days than it was, and often still is, in other countries, with old mud firmly adhering to the business, no matter the transformation in the nature of the equipment.

The bad image in Australia was largely overcome, however, by the country's immigration policies. With the advent of so many new Australians, the character of the Australian nation began to change. Italian and Greek restaurant began to open and more liberal attitudes by the immigrants began to permeate the national outlook.

The new Australians in business were prepared to give anything a go that would make money. The most obvious example of this was the opening up of large, numbers of espresso coffee lounges in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Usually the proprietors automatically wanted a jukebox and shortly after that they were open to other types of equipment, principally pinball.

The next major problem for the trade in Australia was the bingo table. It had been made illegal in most American states and the market was therefore flooded with tables as the owners tried to unload them into any market that would have them.

Fortunately in Sydney bingos were kept out of places where they could be abused by younger people. Most operators there agreed that if there were to be problems with bingo tables that it would be because site-owners were largely inexperienced, gullible, and open to exploitation as far as coin machines in general, but bingos in particular, were concerned—and operators tended to shy away from them.

The biggest problem occurred in Victoria where one particular operator chose to import large quantities of them and put them out in Melbourne. In the coffee bars they took large amounts of money as the new Australians liked the tables, and the machines helped to keep establishments going. But trouble was inevitably on the horizon and abuses

crept in and with the abuses came police raids and the confiscation of machines. The trouble, however, was that with so many bingo tables on the open market the prices were low, and confiscated machines would be immediately replaced by others at near \$120 U.S. a piece.

Government reaction

A campaign was mounted by the media and pressure was brought on the Victorian government to take action. Before legislation was passed, several government ministers made operator-placating noises which suggested that pin tables would be permitted, but bingos would be banned. The trade was therefore unprepared for the legislation which effectively banned both, although the wording was woolly. The new law began to bite when the police chose to define the new law as covering pin tables as well. Therefore, as it has happened in many other parts of the world, the new law threw the baby out of the window with the bath water.

As it ended up, licenses were required to operate pin tables and 99 per cent of the business collapsed overnight. The problem fortunately did not spread to other states. The industry continued to expand elsewhere but after the bingo

scandal and the repeatedly expressed bad opinions of the trade, voiced through the newspapers, expansion was somewhat nervous and principally restricted to the jukebox market.

The fruit machine (in the U.S., slot machine), known in Australia as the poker machine, was made illegal in all states in 1935, which is why Australia did not have the problems which the U.S. had a little later. They have been legal in New South Wales for many years, however, and the club market there is fabulously rich thanks to the proceeds of the "pokies" of which, 48,000 are operating in the state.

The clubs grew up around the 6 p.m. closing laws which stifled the expansion of pubs or hotels. Because of the Australian love of beer, men left their work and went straight to the hotels for the last hour before closing, inevitably drinking too much too quickly. Clubs centered around non-profit-making organizations, such as sporting and political clubs as well as ethnic clubs, sprang up as a result. Financing was tight and the social benefits of the clubs was recognized by the authorities who turned a blind eye when clubs started to introduce poker machines to help out finances.

The toleration could not last long,

however, and when the hotels began to feel the pinch from customers draining away to the clubs, they brought pressure to bear. The breweries were encouraged to use their considerable political "clout" to force the issue and a scandal resulted.

The issue went against them, however, and instead of closing down the clubs or banning poker machines, the government decided to bring in legislation to legalize them. Over the years the law has been updated and more controls have been brought in to produce a very sophisticated and well run gambling machine industry.

Amusements' development

Pool tables came to Australia between 1965 and 1968 and trade built up principally around hotels, following the U.S. pattern, and stayed as a traditional line. Since saturation point was achieved, however, in the early 1970s, many establishments have been permitted to buy their own tables and the industry is not now as profitable as it was.

The video game followed exactly the same pattern as it did everywhere else. Ping Pong games came in and were immensely popular because of their novelty value, but they



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"died" virtually overnight and a great many people in Australia had their fingers burned.

Because the trade itself reacted to them responsibly and only bought in small quantities for frequent site-change, however, it was the investors and speculators who lost out. At one time the New South Wales AMOA actually advertised in the press, asking people to contact them before investing their life savings, and managed to prevent some people from ruin.

The resurgence of the video game with *Space Invaders* was again, exactly the same in impact and pattern as it has been elsewhere.

The average route in Australia now has around 200 to 300 units, with a large slice of the overall industry made up of mall operators with up to 30 units. The large companies are few but may have anything up to 4,000 machines on site.

As we have already seen, people principally group into the few major cities in each state and each of those has its own AMOA. New South Wales, for example formed its association in 1961 and has 56 members. Queensland, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, and Tasmania all have their own, and inter-state rivalry is strong. The national association, a federation of the state associations, had its inaugural meeting at the second convention held in Sydney two years ago, but the legal paperwork only went through earlier this year.

Membership is not what it should be, but it takes time and the national association is growing steadily under the chairmanship of Rick Dauroff of Able Amusements, Sydney.

Import duty

The reason for so much emphasis in the Australian trade on attempts to produce home-built products can be found in the import taxes imposed by the government. The duty stands at 41 per cent and then there is a 27½ per cent sales tax on top and a 20 per cent loading for freightage, etc., which effectively puts over 80 per cent on to the cost of a new machine.

The determination of the trade there to overcome its problems, however, displays a resilience and versatility that reflects the coin machine industry world-wide.

Australia's problems may be different, but the trade there has the same ingenuity/showmanship/professional mix as its counterparts elsewhere, a combination that provides strength of character and ensures the future of the Australian trade.

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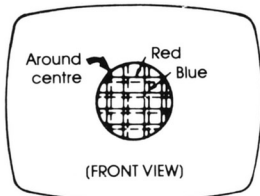
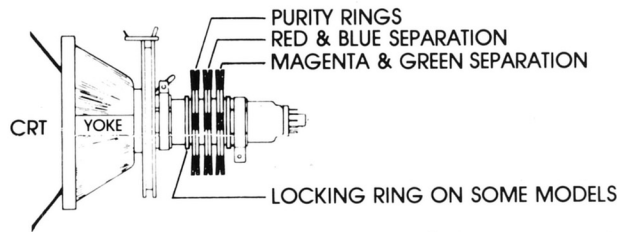
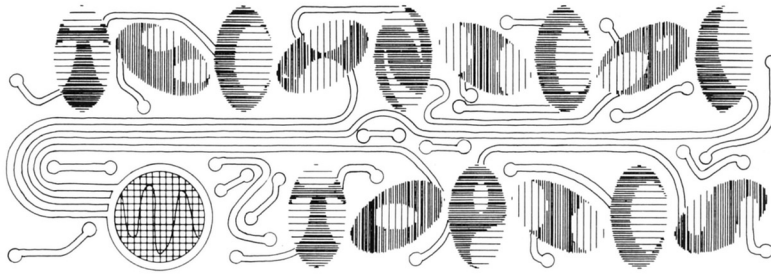
The hydraulic helicopter is complete with sound, flashing lights, machine gun. Seats one child, who can control the helicopter to raise or lower it at the child's whim.

Heavy construction, adjustable timer, 6'2" long, 2'6" wide, and will raise to 6'10".

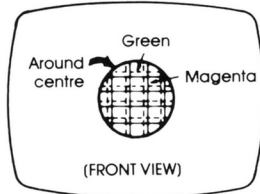
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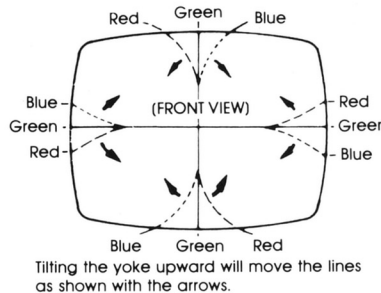
I'm hoping for a new pinball machine!



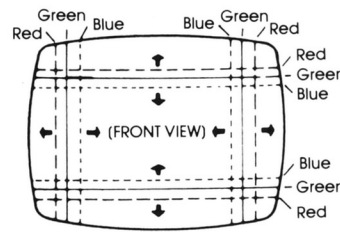
Let the red and blue lines come in line by turning two 4-pole magnets.



Let the green and magenta lines come in line by turning two 6-pole magnets.



Tilting the yoke upward will move the lines as shown with the arrows.



Tilting the yoke to the right will move the lines as shown with the arrows.

ELECTROHOME 19" COLOR TUBE:

Monitor convergence

Static convergence (in the center of the monitor) is achieved by manipulating four magnets located on the neck of the CRT nearest the base of the tube. The middle pair of rings adjusts the red and blue crosshatch. The rear pair of rings adjusts the blue/red to the green crosshatch lines.

Dynamic Convergence is handled by tilting the yoke up, down, left, and right, then securing it with wedges. Refer to the game schematic for diagnostic tests that generate crosshatch and background colors.

A. Tilt the yoke up, down, left, and right to achieve convergence around the edges. Secure one with

one temporary wedge.

B. Rotate the center rings to adjust the red and blue separation.

C. Rotate the rear rings to adjust the magenta (red-blue) and green separation. When best results are achieved, seal the rings with nail polish.

D. Rotate the temporary wedge from the yoke. Tilt the yoke again to adjust the edges of the screen for minimum separation and insert three new wedges. These should have adhesive added to hold them permanently.

—Technical tip from Atari's Coin Connection, used with permission.

Variations bottled in Gottlieb's Bond

James Bond uses more of the program capabilities of Gottlieb's System 80 than previous games have. This was accomplished through the use of one 2K X 8 EPROM which is inserted in PROM 1 socket on the control board. A slight modification is necessary to utilize this PROM. For this reason, do not attempt to use the *James Bond* control board in other System 80 games, or other control boards in a *James Bond* game, the manufacturer cautioned.

The identification number of the *James Bond* control board is PB03-D 107-001.

The previous control board is numbered PB03-D 102-001.

Operators with any control board related problems can call the Gottlieb Service Department toll-free at 1-800-323-9121 for assistance.

James Bond utilizes a revolutionary concept in pinball play, stated the manufacturer. The following is a list of some changes that can be noticed in play and service of the game.

1. Credit (status) display is located in the cardholder.
2. The game is adjusted for "Add Time" and replays cannot be won. The match number is also disabled.
3. The fifth display in the lightbox shows time units remaining for the player currently up and bonus count during play. (This is in place of bonus lamps on the playfield.)
4. An unlimited number of balls in each game may be played. However, 5 time units are subtracted each time the ball is lost.
5. Time units are not seconds. The game counts at a rate different from a regular clock.
6. Several of the 32 option switches have different functions from those in previous System 80 games. Switches 17, 21, 22, and 29 are of particular interest. Refer to the games's instruction manual for details.
7. Bookkeeping step 5 will remain zero. Bookkeeping step 6 will flash zeros. Bookkeeping step 7 will remain zero. Bookkeeping steps 11, 12, 13 are to remain set to zero.
8. Self test step 20 will display 7641 for a faulty PROM even though the part has changed to 2716.

HAVE A

GREAT IDEA

FOR THE INDUSTRY?

Play Meter invites tech solutions

Fame awaits great ideas! Why hide your modification or repair solutions under a barrel? An idea for a technical solution can apply to games' technicians over the whole industry.

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For each "Great Idea" accepted for publication, the sender will receive \$25. At a later time, a number of "Great Ideas" printed here may be judged for further reward.

In the meantime, fame is the name of the game. Let the coin-op world know how *you* can solve a practical problem. Here are the rules for sending "Great Ideas":

1. The idea must be applicable to a coin-operated amusement game only. New game designs are *not* being sought. The idea must have a definite application, which you have shown to be workable in practice.

2. Submit your entry on standard sized typing paper. State the problem and the solution clearly. Use definite terms for parts, etc. Written material must be double-spaced, typewritten or clearly printed: this is a must! Include diagrams, line drawings, or glossy photos (black and white) if appropriate: no more than three pieces of art work. Since diagrams and drawings will be reproduced on a press, blue pencils or pens must not be used: a black drafting pen is best.

Length of written material can vary, but it should not exceed 500 words. PLAY METER may edit the copy, but the sense of the Idea will not be altered.

3. To submit your Idea: Entry should include your name, job title, address and zip code—and your company and telephone number if

you wish to state them (telephone number is for editors' use only).

4. Any person working in technical aspects of the coin-operated industry is eligible—except employees of coin-op *manufacturers*. No partiality will be shown to persons associated with PLAY METER or other publications. PLAY METER's editorial staff will judge all entries' acceptability for publication in this magazine.

5. All entry material becomes the property of PLAY METER, but the technician can assume that all rights to his Great Idea remain his, except that it may be published in this magazine.

The editors will make an effort to return material after it is used, or

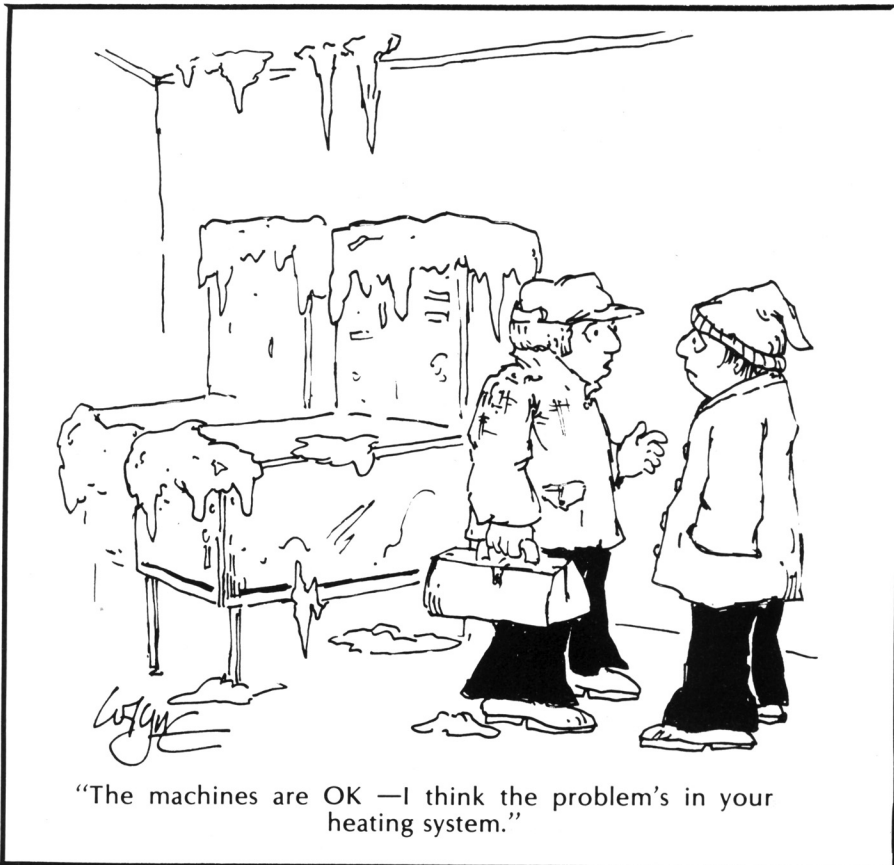
after a decision not to publish it, but *only* if sufficient postage and a self-addressed envelope is sent with the Great Idea entry.

The reader assumes responsibility for assuring that his entry is an original idea. In the event of duplicates received, the editors will decide which of similar entries may be printed. Submissions will not be discussed by telephone.

Remember: state the technical problem and your solution clearly. Make sure the terms you use will be understood by other technicians.

All that's left is to get to work!

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TECHNICAL TOPICS

GREAT IDEA No. 1:

Magical Spot audio hum: logic board solution simple

Editor's Note: The following is the first item accepted under PLAY METER's "Great Ideas" solicitation for games modifications or repair that may be of aid to the entire industry. Contributions are welcomed, and details of how to submit other Ideas are explained elsewhere in this issue.

A problem of a very objectionable loud audio hum in attract mode exists with the cocktail table version of *Magical Spot* by Universal.

The problem arises from the position of the logic board. When the drop side of the cabinet that houses the board is up in the locked position, the logic board audio section is in very close proximity to the video monitor, causing a loud hum to be induced into the audio.

The cure turns out to be quite simple. By moving the logic board to the right about three inches (with the wiring harness edge connector to your left), the audio section is moved far enough away from the video monitor to eliminate the hum pick-up.

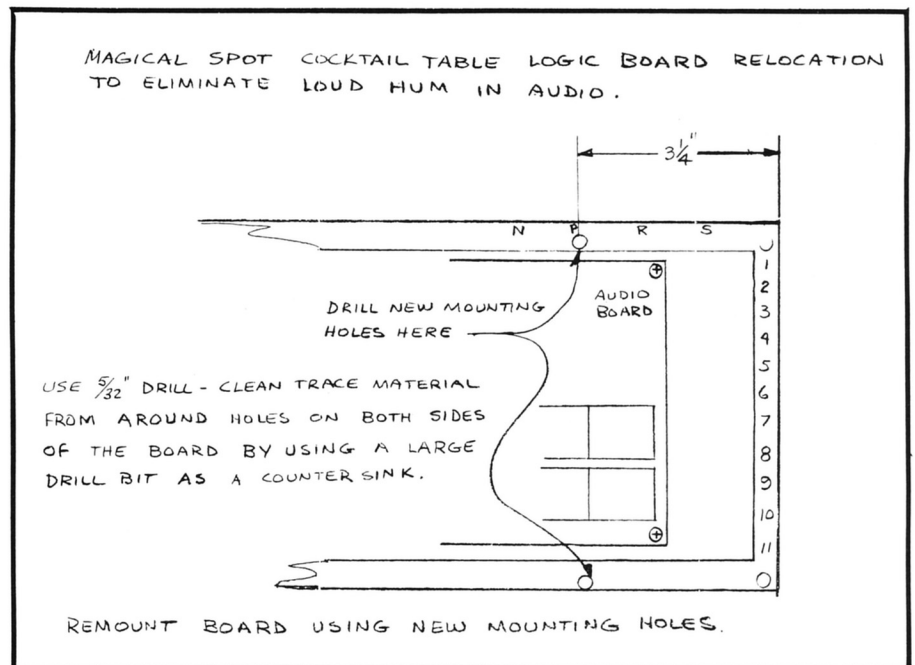
Re-positioning of the logic board requires that two new holes be drilled in the edges of the logic board for the plastic mounting pins. These holes should be drilled, using a 5/32 drill, approximately 3 1/4" from the left end of the board at about the "P" row as shown in the sketch here.

The cable clamp nearest the edge connector on the wiring harness may need to be removed to allow enough slack in the cable to reposition the board.

Care must be exercised when drilling the holes to make sure that none of the circuit trace material is left around the holes. A large drill of 1/2" or so, used by hand, works well to clean the trace material away. Be sure to clean all bits of metal off the board before re-installing.

This simple modification completely eliminates the loud hum, and makes an excellent game even better.

Submitted by:
Ron Cummings,
McKee Distributing Co.,
Portland, Oregon





AN INDEPENDENT REVIEW:

Standout games at Chicago show

The subject of this year's AMOA Show is being dealt with elsewhere in the issue, so I won't spend a lot of time on it here. I would like to observe, however, that I found the three days of it very exciting and positive.

The words of a cigarette company slogan rang in my ears as I passed the displays of the impressive array of new video games—"You've come a long way, baby!"

This time there weren't row after row of copies of *Space Invaders*, an impression I came away with from the 1979 show. Also, the quality of creativity and level of skill required for play escalated sharply this year. It's almost frightening to think of the games and simulations that will be offered by the 1985 show...

As far as the video games introduced at the show go, four really stuck in my mind to talk about. They included a superb simulation of a tank battle by Atari, a terrifically clever chase game by Stern, a fine space battle simulation from Cinematronics and a shark/spearfisherman encounter from Pacific Novelty Mfg. of California.

BATTLEZONE/Atari

Without a doubt, my candidate for top game of the show was *Battlezone* by Atari. This two-fisted simulation of a combat encounter between a tank and a variety of enemy craft captivated players from the opening minutes of the show.

I found the game fully lived up to that much-overused phrase "state of the art."

The stand-up cabinet offers the player a viewer through which to watch a battlefield while he grasps two vertical joy sticks covered with handgrips and equipped with a single fire button. The video screen gives him a three-dimensional graphic representation of a desert with some pyramids and other geometric forms on it. Somewhere in that panorama lurks a computer-driven enemy tank.

The player's job is to find that tank and blast it out of existence. This affords him with his first sampling of

Atari's superb programming. By pulling and/or pushing on the handgrips, the player turns his tank and "views" more of the battlefield. He can also check his radar in the upper left corner of the screen for assistance.

The fact that the enemy tank is also looking for him affords some time pressure, as the tank will blast him if he doesn't pay attention.

"Simulation" experience

Once the player sights the enemy and starts after him, the fun really begins—because this simulation actually gives the feeling of driving a tank. The player controls direction by the handles which work the tank's "treads." Using the viewfinder in center screen, the player lines up his shots and "fires" when ready. Actually, shooting on *Battlezone* is an amazing experience. The player sees a bolt of light propelled from his tank head exactly where he aimed it. Time elapses as the bolt travels toward the target. If he is lucky enough to hit the enemy tank on first shot, he will be rewarded with an explosion that vibrates the machine as his opponent is blown to bits.

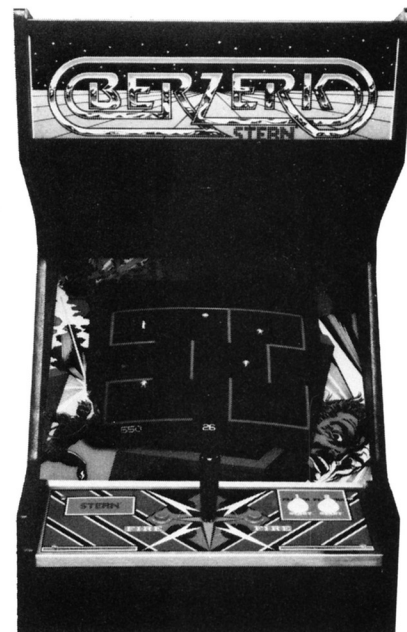
I said "lucky" because he most likely will miss the first few shots as the opponent drives very evasively. Also, as soon as possible, the computer will turn the fleeing tank around and come after that player. At that point, he gets a chance to try to evade and also maneuver his enemy into leaving himself vulnerable.

Players start with from two to five tanks—one of the operator options. As the player succeeds at destroying enemy tanks, the computer dishes out new surprises. Missiles begin to appear randomly after around 5000 points. Like all well-constructed games, the challenge increases with the player's skill. Saucers come out randomly after only 2000 points and the actual enemy tanks themselves travel faster after six have been destroyed.

Atari offers the operator numerous options on *Battlezone* ranging from the number of tanks a player gets, at what score the



Battlezone



Berzerk

By Tony Licata



Star Castle



Deep Death

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missiles come in, bonus levels, and price. The Atari brochure states that there are "121" coin options, including 3 plays/\$1, 1 play/2 coins or 1 play/1 coin.

I think the subject of 50¢ play is too broad to cover in a section of a video review. But I believe if ever a video game has been produced that could justify 50¢ play, it is *Battlezone*.

On a scale of one to 10, *Battlezone* rates either a 9 or 11. The reason I say 9 is that the only drawback I observed at the show was that several players did not realize that they had to drive the tank. They simply thought they were playing some kind of three dimensional shooting gallery. I saw more than one player shooting at the cubes and pyramids with no regard for enemy tanks somewhere nearby.

It's only fair to point out that *Battlezone* comes with very clear instructions. But those mistakes were being made by AMOA showgoers, people very familiar with games who simply didn't bother to read the rules.

My reason for giving the game an alternate 11 on a scale of 10 is simply that the game breaks new ground for video amusements. It's a level above everything else on the market right now. And the reason for the misunderstanding by players at the show is that no one expected a game with this sophistication.

I had no other complaints about the game. The graphics ranked highest marks for the three-dimensional creation of an entire battlefield in the machine's memory. Ditto for the playability, sound, controls, originality of concept, and scoring.

I can't imagine an operator sorry he had a couple of these going for him. The company offers a smaller cabaret type game which one of the Atari people told me he preferred because it allowed others to watch over the player's shoulder. It also took up less space.

That option, you'll have to decide for yourself, based on your own space. I personally preferred the taller machine which the player pushed his head against to view the playfield. It seemed more involving to me.

BERZERK/Stern

The second game that really stood out at the show, in my opinion, was Stern's *Berzerk*.

This was a game that had lines waiting to play for the entire show. Fortunately, the Stern people had the foresight to mount video monitors above the games so that people waiting could see the action.

The *Berzerk* concept appears to

be amazingly simple. Simple, but not easy. The "human" player is trapped in a maze surrounded by killer robots. The player is able to use one joystick control to move his "human" through the maze. The only other control is a "fire" button. He uses this to shoot the robots as they come after him.

There are so many good things about this game, it is difficult to know where to start. That description above really is all there is to the game, but actually playing it and watching it is so much more, I find it hard to describe.

"Witty" concept

A Stern brochure on the game at the show stated, "If you think we went crazy developing *Berzerk*, you're right! This is the first time we've ever put all of our technology and wit to work in one video game...."

I found the key word to be "wit." *Berzerk* proves to be a heck of a lot of fun, maneuvering the "human" through the maze, avoiding the robots and trying to shoot them. As the player's "human" reaches the end of the maze, the screen scrolls over and he finds himself in a new maze with more dangerous robots.

There is also a bouncing, smiling head that comes out, called "Evil Otto" which tries to kill the player.

According to Stern's literature, there are a total of 64,000 random maze patterns that appear on the screen in a non-repetitive sequence. That would certainly seem to make for repeat plays in any location.

One of the very nice features about the game was its vocabulary. That's right, last year we had talking pinball, now talking video. *Berzerk* has a 30-word vocabulary that includes "Intruder Alert," "Humanoid must not escape," and "Kill the Humanoid." The game says these throughout play in a ghostly electronic voice that fits the character of the game perfectly.

Berzerk's attract mode also offers some of the game's humor. At timed intervals the game says, "Coins detected in pockets," which should certainly yield dividends in any of those touristy high-traffic locations.

The graphics are simple shapes which move in very "unreal" or "surreal" motions. Although simple, the graphics prove very effective and, in fact, fit the game perfectly. A really accurate set of renderings would detract from this game.

On a scale of one to 10, I give this game a 9. Playability ranked 10 out of 10; any kid could put a quarter in this game and have a great time. Ditto with the graphics; the simple, rather unearthly forms move in a stilted

SPACE FIREBIRD



“The
Game That’s
Fired Up with
Sizzling Action.”

FLIGHT PLAN:

space firebird

Mission:

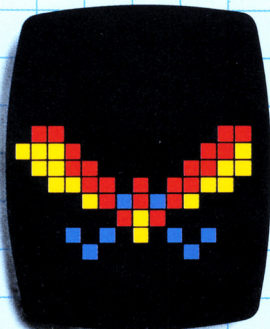
Destroy all Firebirds for maximum points.

Rocket Capabilities:

Fire up to four missiles consecutively. Special WARP mode enables rocket to launch counteroffensive blitz.



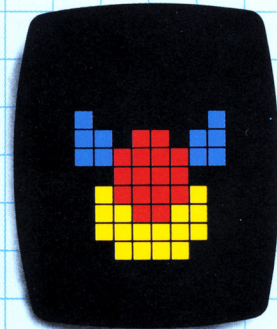
EMPEROR
100 Pts.
4 Hits



EAGLE
50 Pts.
2 Hits



GULL
20 Pts.
1 Hit



BOMB
50-200 Pts.
1 Hit

Plan of Attack:

The Emperor, Eagle and Gull Firebirds fly together in complex looping formations, firing and attacking from all directions. Defend your ship against the sweeping, twisting, turning birds by launching missiles. Monitor your missile hits because the birds have different resistance levels. The fearless Emperor is destroyed by four hits, the Eagle with two hits and the soaring Gull with one hit. CAUTION: the Eagles are armed with a secret weapon aimed at sabotaging your ship. They drop a giant bomb that's headed straight for you! Earn 50 to 200 extra points by hitting it before it crashes . . . but watch out! When hit, the bomb scatters deadly shrapnel. Avoid the flying shrapnel by firing at the



bomb from directly beneath it. Activate WARP mode to escape impending danger or to strike out at a flock of birds. Each ship is equipped with one WARP period. When activated, your ship is thrust into space with a protective shield that deflects enemy fire. Wipe out Firebirds in the WARP mode by ramming into them with your ship, or by firing at close range.



Dimensions

UPRIGHT
25 1/2" W x 67" H x 28" D
64.77 cm W x 170.18 cm H



The SPACE FIREBIRD™ game is manufactured by Gremlin under license from Nintendo Co., Ltd., Kyoto, Japan.

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unreal way. Stern calls them robots, but I found myself thinking of them as zombies, because of the motion. I don't think there's any substantial difference between killer robots or zombies, though. They're all out to get you, right?

The sound also ranked 10 out of 10. The eerie electronic voices added to the illusion on the screens.

I did have some reservations about the controls. Although they worked well, they seemed somewhat limiting in that they only allowed a player eight different directions. Nonetheless, they did not really distract from the play or ruin the game by any means.

STAR CASTLE/Cinematronics

The third absolute winner as far as video games was concerned was *Star Castle* by Cinematronics, Inc. This game was also introduced at the AMOA Show, although one of the firm's representatives told me it had tested extremely well on the West Coast.

For some reason, the name *Star Castle* proved hard to remember. I heard people at the show talking about "Star Gazer" and even "Sand Castle." So, if you hear anybody who went to the show telling you about a great game with a strange name, they may be talking about *Star Castle*.

This game is a brilliant variation on the theme of *Asteroids*. I don't mean to suggest it is a copy of *Asteroids*, because it isn't. However, it seems to offer the player all the enjoyment of *Asteroids* in a totally different form.

Instead of the player's ship being in the center, it flies around on the screen, and instead of a barrage of rocks bombarding the player, it is up to him to bombard the "Star Castle" in the screen's center.

Although the game play is almost the opposite of *Asteroids*, it certainly provides a like amount of entertainment. And since the action of *Asteroids* proved so hypnotic to video players last year, that should continue to work in operators' favor this year in this game.

Among the player's options are flying around the center fortification

and dodging the "space mines" that come out from the "castle." If he doesn't dodge the mines, they blow up his ship.

The screen is laid out in utter simplicity with a ship in the exact center surrounded by "energy rings." The player scores points by shooting the energy rings. Also, the more rings he destroys, the more chance he has of shooting the ship in the rings' center.

"Lethal surprises"

One of the lethal little surprises in the game is that the center ship, which seems so vulnerable that it has to be protected, also has a cannon inside it. More than one player at the show learned to his surprise that the cannon could fire, too. This adds a great deal of pressure on the player, forcing him to maneuver his ship almost continuously as he blasts his way ever nearer to the center of the castle.

On the same one to 10 scale, I give *Star Castle* a 9.

The game merited top marks in terms of playability. It really hypnotized players at the show. Graphics rank among the best for the two-dimensional machines. The sound didn't particularly impress me, although it didn't detract from the play, either.

Since this seems to be a reworking of the *Asteroids* theme, I think it has to lose marks on the basis of originality. On the other hand, I must emphasize that the game plays superbly and the complete reworking of the theme may prove to be as catchy and popular as it was the first time around.

#

There is one other game I would like to mention from the show and give a mini-review. It stuck in my mind for a number of reasons, the most impressive of which was its very original theme.

DEEP DEATH/Pacific Novelty

The game was *Deep Death*, produced by Pacific Novelty Manufacturing, Inc., of Los Angeles, California. This game caught my eye because it had a nice graphic

representation of a shark swimming and being pursued by four divers with spears. I wondered how the player controlled the divers, whether they were individually run or "swam" as a team against the shark.

That was my first surprise: the player didn't control the divers, he was the shark—and he was trying to eat the divers!

The controls included a joystick for moving the shark into deeper or shallower water and also swimming horizontally in either direction. There was also a pair of buttons called "thrust" and "munch." The first made the shark swim faster and the second should be self-explanatory.

There was constant sound track with the play that included the voices of swimmers, presumably above water, saying things like, "Did you see how big that shark was?" "Where did he go?"

My second surprise occurred when the shark got one of the divers. The machine played a recording of incredibly horrible screams as the diver was eaten. The sound track also included some music that sounded a great deal like the theme from the movie about the killer shark. It played when the divers seemed to be getting the best of the beast.

I visited with Phil Lieberman, one of the game's creators, who explained some of its fine points. He said there were seven groups of four divers each. Every time one of the divers was eaten, the program made the remaining three smarter and harder to kill. Additionally, as each new wave of divers entered the water, they proved to be progressively "smarter" and harder for the shark to kill.

I personally thought the game was very clever and the "screams" so ridiculous as to be funny. However, it seems only fair to mention that I heard some people describe it as tasteless and disgusting.

I honestly don't think it is any more tasteless or disgusting than what our kids see on TV any Saturday morning and that is usually unrelieved with humor. ●

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By Roger C. Sharpe

Pinball retaliates!

Well, first off let me wish everyone the best of everything for '81 even though this column is being written only a few days after the show. As for the AMOA convention, it was an opportunity to renew old acquaintances and make new friendships, but the three days went all too fast. In many ways, for this writer, it was an exciting show with the reaffirmation that pinball isn't dead as many feared, but rather it was in hiding, waiting for the right time to strike.

And strike it did. If you were fortunate enough to have walked the floors and aisles in Chicago you must have sensed the mood in the air. Last year video won hands down, but this year the feeling was decidedly different.

Now, admittedly, I'm not about to say that pinball is once again king of the hill, because the climb up is going to take much more than the efforts on the floor. But at least the ascent has been started. Don't get me wrong, because there were some strong and interesting video games present such as *RadarScope*, *Battlezone*, *Berzerk*, *Defender*, *Time Zero*, plus a beautiful sit down from Sega whose name escapes me right now, and even a few others. But for the most part, there were also many take-offs and the originality so prevalent in the past was beginning to wane.

With pinball, on the other hand, the machines on display were more than pleasing for any lover of the steel ball. All one had to do was walk down the main entrance and enter into Bally land for a look at *Xenon*, its graphically exciting game that also has multiball play and infamous "tube shot," along with *Frontier*, *Skateball*, and the glittering *Flash Gordon*, complete with multi-level play and speech. Across the aisle was Stern, and on display, *Flight 2000* and Stern's newest multiball called *Nine Ball*. Move over to the

left and another exciting area that was hopping was the Williams' booth and its talk-of-the-show machine, *Black Knight* complete with multiball and multi-level play, along with *Alien Poker* and crowds galore to catch a glimpse of the former. Over in the other main room was Game Plan which had *Lizard* and talked about the upcoming *Global Warfare* as well as some news about a teaming up and an infusion of funds to keep them going.

Back in the rear of the room stood the Universal pin *Harem Cat*, which played a helluva lot better than last year. Meanwhile upstairs was the assemblage from Gottlieb showing off their *James Bond* pin along with *Asteroid Annie*, a one-player, and the new *Time Line*. Over in a side was a redone *Playboy* complete with pretty pictures on the playfield and an updated backglass that was definitely R-rated, called *Sexy Girl*. At the other end of the floor was the Professional Pinball group from Canada showing off their tournament pins.

And that was the pinball setting at the show. As an overview, many of these games will be hitting the streets by the time you read this, and their success will be self-evident. Others will be upcoming all too soon. But what you'll have to admit is that pinball is back and fighting for its market share with strong games that are offering more than players probably ever imagined just a year or two ago. Multiball play seems to be a given feature on all the newest and best machines; time has arrived for *time* as the play premise of a game or as an integral part of its features; speech and imaginative sounds, along with special graphic treatments and even multi-level play, seem to be combining with thoughtful design that utilizes memory and solid-state electronics far more—for a total package that's going to be hard to beat.

Pinball is doing it and '81 may turn out to be a year when video and pinball share the glory in attracting and keeping old as well as new players. One can only hope so.

As for the games this month, three are reviewed, with the next few months set to catch up on the rest of the action. So sit tight for some of the excitement as the "Corner" enters into yet another year of trying to separate some of the goods from the greats and the fairs from the also-rans.

Stern's NINE BALL

Following *Stars* and *Meteor* comes this third signature effort from Steve Kirk, a fitting multiball machine after the company's very successful *Flight 2000*.

PLAYFIELD: The board is fairly wide open and begins with a right side pop bumper and a top left target (all to the right side of the field). Move down and there's a three-drop-target bank toward the left and another further down on the right side. In between is the game's lone thumper bumper. Back up on top at the left is a turn-around loop that sports a big center bulls-eye drop target and values that can increase from 10,000 points up to 173,000 points. Also at the left, along the side are two four-drop-target banks, with memory, which feature sequential play and front a lane and multiball mechanism for up to three-ball play. Move down the field and there's an overhanging right side spinner that seems to be suspended in air and can mean up to 2,500 points per turn before one leads down to the bottom, which is a wire lane and flipper setup and a center post.

ANALYSIS: The play on *Nine Ball* isn't the easiest in the world to figure out, but it is a fast moving game with skill shots needed to maximize points and effort on any given ball. The top two drop target banks mean bonus multiplier up to 7X, while the left side targets are really the heart of the game and tie in with the theme of

nine ball for all those pool players out there.

Getting all the targets out in sequence can mean a super bonus of 77,000 points as well as specials, while also tying into the multiball play in locking up balls once a player has gotten to the fifth target, which lights up a corresponding light at the access point for that left side lane. The interior lanes to the flippers meanwhile can spot letters and reset the banks, while going around that top left loop can mean an increase in that bulls-eye target value. And add to this a good right side spinner shot and the play is non-stop from start to finish.

GRAPHICS: Although the theme may be pool, the backglass and playfield graphics are anything but a green felt jungle. Instead, one finds the main image of a wizardly looking fellow, similar to a T-shirt Jim Hamilton and I encountered a few years back when we were doing the pinball book. The effect here is one of billiard balls becoming almost planetary in the way they are presented.

PLAY: On three ball play, which almost everybody is finally turning to (although there are some hold-outs around the country), *Nine Ball* can be set at extra ball play with the limits beginning at about 600,000 points to start, followed by about 1 million and 2 million points. For free play you might want to increase each of these levels by about 200,000 to 400,000 points depending upon how liberal the field is set and whether players are hitting too hard to ruin the percentaging.

PROS & CONS: Basically, one of the main problems of *Nine Ball* and whether it can be changed by the operator on location, is that there's no continuity from ball to ball in terms of the side sequential drop targets. Rather than having the game reset those targets left standing for the next ball in play, the entire "rotation" must be accomplished on one ball, or else a player has to start all over again.

Fortunately, the bonus multiplier is held over, even though it will go back to 2X once it's gotten up past 5X, but that's good in terms of maxing out the game. Also, that top loop will hold over value from ball to ball until it's collected. It's just unfortunate that the main part of the

game couldn't be tied-in in such a fashion. However, many of the players I've talked to have tended to focus their criticism on the lack of good, clear shots into the multiball left side lane. Many agree that a shot from the spinner area by the left flipper, will indeed arc up toward the entry point, but more often than not, it's not a set shot to rely on.

The play from side to side and the utilization of the top targets to balance the side shots are good and offer some reverses and good left to right and right to left action, but for the majority of play, *Nine Ball* takes on the nature of being a gun and run machine, when skill shots are really what's needed.

RATING: ###

Williams' ALIEN POKER

Well, once again pinball proves that it can take almost any activity and turn it into a space theme, as witnessed by this company's newest effort which was almost overshadowed at the show by *Black Knight*. But the machine deserves attention on its own merits because it's a strong one.

PLAYFIELD: A center shooter leads play up to the top and the four King Lanes that also feature Williams' exclusive lane change. Above at the left is a kick-out hole (one of three on the field) that controls Aces and also is tied into extra ball values. Move down and there's a four thumper bumper array that provides good rebounding and strong top action. Over to the left is bulls-eye target (one of four on the field for getting "jokers") that offers bonus multiplier values when lit. Over to the side is a spinner for access back to the top, while on the right is a metal arch for getting back to those upper lanes and kick-out hole.

At the center is the heart of the game: a bank of five drop targets (ten of diamonds through ace of diamonds) that must be hit in sequence—there's memory here—and either build or lose value from 20,000 points up to 100,000 points. At the right of this set up is a kick-out hole and bulls-eye target, while at the left is a kick-out hole flanked by a bulls-eye target at either side. Move to the bottom and there's a double flipper configuration at the right, with a wire rail to prevent scissoring (a

really nice touch), and at the left is a single flipper and wire lane set up.

ANALYSIS: A good, basic fully-integrated pinball machine, that's what *Alien Poker* is all about. There are no real gimmicks or overdone cosmetics per se. Admittedly, nice touches include Williams' first seven-digit effort and the use of speech that's a complement to what is happening on the field, but it is the game itself and the shots it presents that makes it something special. The center drop-target bank, which is a first with memory and the need to hit the targets sequentially, offers an extra measure of skill in terms of point build-ups. Tied into the top King Lanes as well as the lower lane leading to the left flipper is the opportunity to increase a separate bonus value on the completion of the total bank, so that a player can get anywhere from 2X to 3X or 4X value which can mean a top of 400,000 points. There's play strategy involved and a feature that's always alive. Add in the bulls-eye targets around the board for bonus multiplier up to 5X with a max of 58,000 points on the out-hole bonus build-up, and there's yet another game within a game.

Further there are the kick-out holes, or Aces, which tie into extra ball value and out-lane specials when completed over the course of the game, with each succeeding time resulting in another letter added in P-O-K-E-R. Shots are strong from left to right and right to left, with some good long efforts possible for real pinball shooters and the close in targets offer good possibilities for a full range of reverses.

GRAPHICS: Not only is the artwork intricately appealing and colorful, but the added cosmetics of lights and sounds, as done by Paul, complete a total effort that's pleasing on all levels and sure to catch its fair share of action from most pinball players around the scene.

PLAY: With the seventh digit, *Alien Poker* adds some good latitude for game settings, although the scoring hasn't been hyped on the field (thank goodness) to abuse the extra digit. And a nice touch is that at each million plateau the machine goes through its paces in a visual and auditory display that's sure to catch people's fancies.

Anyway, for extra ball play, you

Roger's Ratings At-A-Glance

Stern's NINE BALL ### **Williams' ALIEN POKER** #####
Universal's HAREM CAT #½

should be okay beginning at about 600,000 points and following that with about 1,200,000 and 2,400,000 point limits. For free play you might want to increase this by about 200,000 to 400,000 points depending upon what you retain in memory and the caliber of player at your location. And if you're still with five-ball play then a good million for the first limit shouldn't be too much of a problem. **PROS & CONS:** *Alien Poker* offers balance, good skill shots, a thoughtful program and integration of features and point values and more than enough action to keep any player involved. Personally, I think it's a good shooter's game and even one that shouldn't be too difficult for the average player to feel comfortable with. And with the addition of the seventh digit, the game will have that staying power on location as players try to top that high score to date. All in all, another fine effort from Williams that goes back to the basics and makes it work.

RATING: #####

Universal's HAREM CAT

Hopefully next year things will change — with more foreign games

manufacturers' entries, if pinball indeed comes back into the forefront. But for the time being we're left with this single overseas effort from Universal that was on display last year and returned once again to the AMOA for some closer looks.

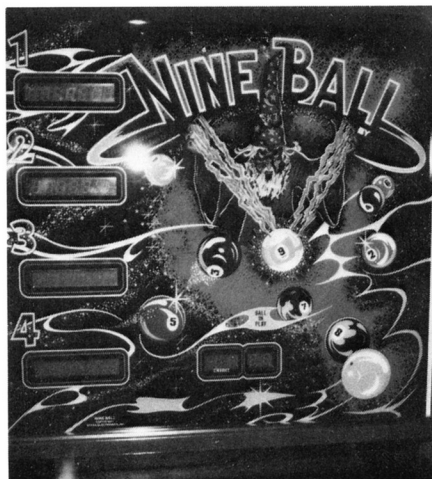
PLAYFIELD: The action starts with three lanes at top (C-A-T) and leads down to two thumper bumpers with a right side roll-over loop for extra ball when lit and a target fronting this set-up (R). At the left for balance is another target (A) as well as an interior hidden little lane for specials when lit, and for another letter (H). Also at the left is an extremely narrow spinner lane for access back to the top while back at the right side is a little resting place for the ball that means more letters (E & M) before leading down a four roll-over set up for points and adding bonus.

At the middle is a three-drop-target bank that offers a slingshot kicker at the top of the set-up for action back up the board from the bumpers. Move over to the left and there's a five-drop-target bank that can mean extra ball or special values when lit, while the right side has four in-line targets for return back to the

plunger when completed. The bottom offers a right side with two lanes leading to the flipper while the left is just a single lane leading down to the flipper.

ANALYSIS: *Harem Cat* is an interesting little game where many of the features do seem smaller than the norm, such as the spinner lane at the left and the drop targets around the field, but there are some nice touches for getting bonus up to 4X and hitting out letters while trying to make some ridiculously hard shots around the field. The play is fast, almost too much so, and the action and strength from the flippers was much improved over last year.

In addition, the Universal approach has added some new dimensions to pinball—not the six-player capability, since we've seen that before—but the idea of using a video monitor on the back glass for scoring display, little graphic goodies for extra ball or specials and the listing of the top five scores to date. It's a great touch which is probably too expensive at this time to be a factor for the majority of pinball machines, but might well be the vision of the future as the games makers continue to think of new



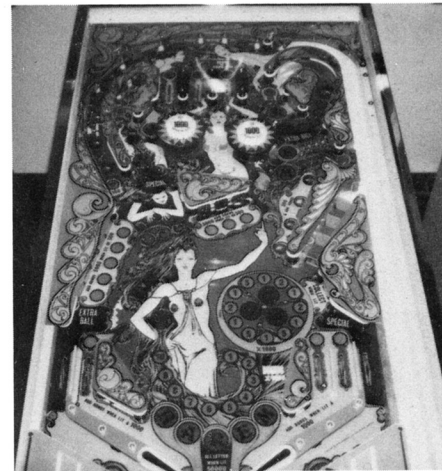
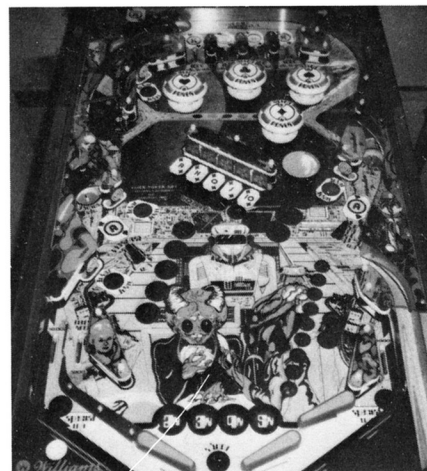
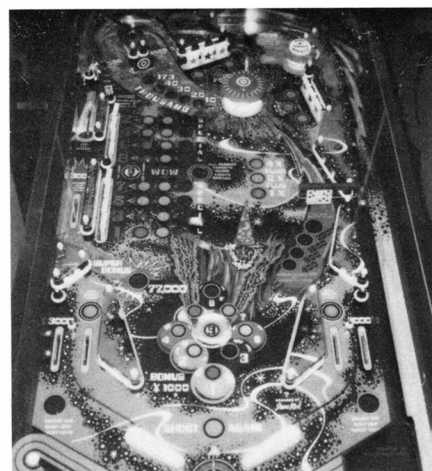
Stern's NINE BALL



Williams' ALIEN POKER



Universal's HAREM CAT



'It was a disappointment that foreign manufacturers have forsaken the pinball market'

things to draw in players.

GRAPHICS: Subtle. Sexy. The technique isn't space but rather more chauvinistically designed to catch the male player's eye with nice soft tones and the use of subdued colors on both the playfield and backglass. A nice "PG-rated" effort. **PLAY:** For three-ball play, *Harem Cat* isn't the most overwhelmingly potent scoring machine, but you should do okay on extra ball with a 100,000 point start followed by 250,000 and 400,000 points. For free play the limits should be able to stand an increase of about 100,000 to 300,000 points each.

PROS & CONS: Can *Harem Cat* compete with today's sophisticated efforts on location and, more importantly, those standout machines that appeared at the show and will be heading to arcades in the coming weeks?

Well, probably not for every place because the play and scoring aren't the greatest in the world. In fact, my

feeling is that since the game does take away time with the visual backglass display, a point made by an operator at the show, my inclination is that this would be a great machine for the home: a difficult game to master, good shots to make throughout, the appeal of something different and foreign. Dens and rec rooms would have a field day with this particular machine.

But on most locations, the game is going to fall far short of the mark; this I believe without knowing the pricing on the game or the interchangeability of parts or servicing. However, I'd like to see where Universal is going with pinball since all is not a total loss here.

RATING: #1/2

It was a disappointment that the foreign manufacturers who used to feature pinball machines at the AMOA have largely forsaken the

market. Not to see the efforts of Playmatic, Recel, Interflip, Zaccaria, and others was a big letdown for this writer last year and also this time around. Admittedly, with costs being what they are and maintenance and parts also being a factor, their reception was probably less than enthusiastic, but still and all it would be good to give the American buyer an opportunity to make the decision on his own.

But pinball forges ahead for the new year with changes, advances and more pizzazz and flair than probably ever before. Next month a chance to look at *Black Knight*, *Xenon* or *Frontier*, *Time Line* and hopefully, a few more surprises.

Until then, may the year be starting off on a good foot for you, to Dick Welu I offer that my walrus imitation has been cracking them up for years although he should see my Groucho—and for everyone else, as always...be well and prosper.



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The crickets are out

Frontier, the latest release from Bally Pinball Division is "a rugged, down-to-earth pinball machine that captures the skillful player and holds him," says Tom Nieman, vice president of marketing.

Players have two sets of bonuses to shoot for: the Den of Predators and the Frontier Bonus. These are achieved through lighting the five rows of animals on the playfield. There are exciting skill shots for the pinball sharpshooter when he tracks down the three-in-line drop targets that lead the way to the Grizzly target and open the gate to Frontier Falls. In addition, *Frontier* has a set of right drop targets and an A-B-C feature for further playfield action.

Frontier has a colorful backglass depicting a mountain man in his struggle to survive against nature. This game is further enhanced by seven-digit scoring with commas for high scoring players. A special coin handling mechanism is also included that awards the same bonus pricing for 4 quarters as for one Susan B. Anthony dollar.

Sea war

"Never before in the history of video have there been so many obstacles pitted against the player or so many scoring opportunities in an underwater game," said Jack Mittel, president of Taito America, describing the spectacular challenge *Polaris*.

Enemy forces bombard the player simultaneously from all directions on the screen. The enemy streaks across the sky and looms up from the depths of the ocean floor, firing at the player's sub, fore and aft, port and starboard. As captain of the *Polaris* missiles, the player uses the 8-way joystick and must take the offensive quickly and destroy jet squadrons bombing overhead, or maneuverability is severely limited.

Mystery points are scored by navigating under enemy subs and blowing them out of the water as well as by blasting torpedo bombers armed with nuclear warheads.

As action progresses, it becomes more and more difficult to hold out. "All the player's resources and skills are called upon in this all-out warfare," said Mittel.

Polaris is currently available in a full-color, one- or two-player upright and was to soon be available in a cocktail model.



Tic-tock-toe

Time Line, the new Gottlieb pinball game which features an "Atomic Time Zone," is in production for domestic markets, according to the company's vice president Tom Herrick.

The player of the dazzling new space-themed game starts by shooting his ball into the time zone where he gets ten beats of the clock to complete targets before the power is transferred from the top flippers to the main flippers. If he downs seven targets he lights the "center X" in the tic-tac-toe game.

This scoring area, called "Atomic Tic-Tac-Toe," features the classic three-by-three spots where the player attempts to win three Xs in a row. These are activated through skill shots positioned all over *Time Line's* playfield. For each "X" the player earns, the game counters with an 0, and every win or draw advances the multiplier.

"The game also features an abundance of super sci-fi background sounds coming out of the dynamic two-speaker Gottlieb sound system," he continued, "and players will be irresistibly drawn by the attention-getting sequenced strobe light pattern which flashes around the backglass with atomic speed," he said.

In addition, there are 19 individual targets, including three banked drop targets, which bring action to every corner of *Time Line's* playfield. Also, each win or draw at tic-tac-toe advances the bonus from 5,000 to 20,000 to Extra Ball to 50,000 to Special.

It's also possible to go back to the launcher in two different ways—through the center top return lane or by completing a bank target which opens up a ball-saver gate.

The company is providing *Time Line* Atomic Tick-Tac-Toe Pads to its distributors to help promote the game in locations. Concluded Herrick: "I think we saved the best for the last in 1980. *Time Line* has had a solid test out on location and we predict that it will be producing top earnings well into the new year."



3-D Combat

Battlezone is the latest combat challenge from Atari. It poses a game of skill and wits between the player and computer-controlled enemy tanks and missiles, where high score is the ultimate goal.

Battlezone is a first person game, with the player in control of a supertank. The player must maneuver his tank to dodge enemy tank fire. A unique radar scan display tells the player where the enemy tank is located, while enemy missiles and saucers also appear to be shot down for added points.

This game features Atari's exclusive QuadraScan display system, along with spectacular "3-D" screen graphics and exciting sound effects. The 1812 Overture is played at special bonus levels. Also featured is Atari's High Score display, which allows the top ten players to enter their initials next to their high point total.

Frank Ballouz, Atari's marketing director, said "*Battlezone* is the latest in Atari's line of innovative combat games. The fast play action and exciting graphics make this game an automatic replay challenge. With both standard upright cabinet and new 'mini' (Cabaret) cabinet available, together with over 121 operator-adjustable game play and coinage options, this game is a must for any location."

Atari will also be offering special *Battlezone* T-shirts and posters featuring the graphics designed for the game, to enhance location play.

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PLAY METER

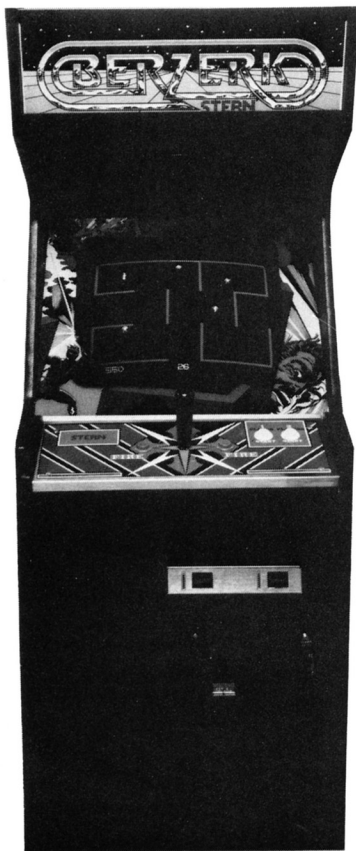
Door-to-door madness

Stern Electronics, Inc. premiered its latest video game, *Berzerk*, at the AMOA exposition in Chicago.

Berzerk offers voice-in-video, a 30-word vocabulary that enables the game to communicate to the player, challenging him to "Stay and fight like a robot" and warning of an "intruder alert."

Billed as the first video game with a sense of humor, *Berzerk* tempts passers-by into play by broadcasting, "Coins detected in pockets," at timed intervals.

A challenging "fight to the finish" game, in *Berzerk* the player, pursued by programmed robots across the video board through a maze of up to 64,000 rooms, avoids robot attack with the use of a "joystick"—a newly designed photo-optical feature that enables players to move images in eight different directions.



Eat or be eaten

"*Pac-Man* is not only sensational," said Stan Jarocki, Midway's vice president for marketing, "it's a unique, full color video attraction for one or two players that tickles vision and is a stimulating challenge to reflexes. Adding to the fun are musical refrains, chomping and action sounds, along with amusing cartoon shows between racks."

The player, using a single handle control, guides the *Pac-Man* about a maze, scoring points by munching up the dots in his path. Four Ghost Monsters—Inky, Blinky, Pinky, and Clyde—chase after the *Pac-Man* trying to capture and deflate him. The *Pac-Man* can counterattack by eating the big Power Capsule that enables him to overpower the monsters for additional score.

After all the dots are gobbled up, a new labyrinth appears, and *Pac-Man* continues for another round. Each rack features a different Fruit Target (cherry, strawberry, peach, etc.) which appears twice in the maze, and if eaten, earns bonus points. Players start with three *Pac-Men*, with one additional man awarded for 10,000 points scored.

Pac-Man is produced by Midway under license from Namco, Ltd.



Lunar sea game

Tomahawk Missile from Electro-Sport is a one or two-player game with play action on an imaginary moon. The action takes place in a "sea" from which the player fights with missile fire against aliens who attack his sub from space.

The attackers have the capability to make the "water" disappear if the player is slow to reduce the attacking numbers of spacecraft.

The upright *Tomahawk* model stands 72½" high, 26¼" wide, and 33" in depth. Also available is the Salon model size, its dimensions: 58½" high, 22¼" wide, and 26" in depth.

A cocktail version was scheduled to be marketed before the end of 1980 by the new Irvine, California manufacturer.





Tubular pinball

Bally Pinball Division has released *Xenon*, "the most extraordinary pinball package ever....*Xenon* is loaded with unique features and fast action skill shots," said Tom Nieman, vice president of marketing for the division.

Xenon has a multi-ball playfield and a unique skill shot, the transport tube. This elevated tube with programmed running lights leads the way to the exit chamber saucer which awards from 50,000 to 90,000 points and special, advances the exit value and resets the backglass infinity lighting effects and *Xenon* background sounds. The exit chamber saucer also holds the captive ball if multi-ball systems are "go."

Multi-ball is earned by the top *Xenon* saucer, which awards an X for each entry. The first completion of three X's qualifies the tube for multi-ball. The second completion releases the balls.

Playing *Xenon* becomes even more exciting as players knock down the right drop targets, either by the top playfield rollovers or by direct ball contact for points and to qualify the 2X & 4X bonus multipliers, 25,000 points, extra ball, and special. There is also an *Xenon* bonus that can be advanced 3 ways as players spell XENON. A *Xenon* Super Bonus of 20,000 and 40,000 points are held in memory after 20,000 bonus points are earned.

Xenon also contains Bally's most sophisticated voice package and is the first game to utilize a female voice. Players will hear the instructions and information uttered by the *Xenon* girl. She is complimented by the stroboscopic infinity backbox effects and intensity building background sounds that made Bally's *Space Invaders* a winning package.



Endangered Earthlings

Williams Electronics, Inc. has created *Defender*, "the most advanced video game ever created."

The action begins with the player piloting the ship *Defender* into outer-space alien territory. The mission: to protect stranded humanoids on the planet's surface from the alien abductors. He maneuvers the ship across the planet with the thrust control button, also utilizing the joystick for vertical movement.

If a player is fast enough with his rocket button, he can destroy the aliens before they pick up his humanoids. Once they have been kidnapped, the duty is twofold—he must destroy the enemy and return the humanoids to the planet. Should he fail to destroy the enemy and the aliens absorb the humanoids, they will mutate, becoming a permanent part of the alien force, revitalizing them and enabling them to mass a more deadly assault on the ship *Defender*. If he shoots the aliens and misses the pick-up, the humanoids drop to their death. Should *Defender* lose all the humanoids during play, then the whole world explodes!

Challenge increases as action progresses through each attack wave. Among the deadliest of the enemy task force are the mother ships. A direct hit smashes the mother ship, but she explodes into a swarming mass of mini-ships that then must be wiped out.

To add interest, a player has two escape options: a limited number of "smart bombs" which blow up all enemies in sight, and Hyperspace, which removes his ship from the present time and space and puts it in another frame. The use of Hyperspace is unlimited, but the area of space the ship goes to could possibly be more dangerous.

Defender offers the highest resolution of color images ever achieved, said Williams Electronics. The images are comprised of more than 80,000 individually controlled video elements, each element being one of a possible 256 different colors.

The Williams-designed video electronic system also includes the most complete system of diagnostics ever programmed into a video game, said the manufacturer.

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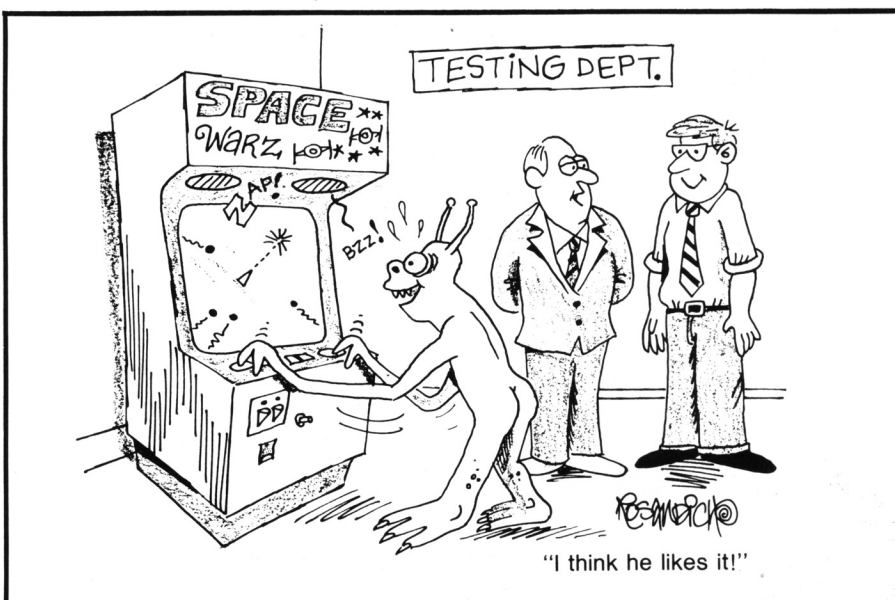
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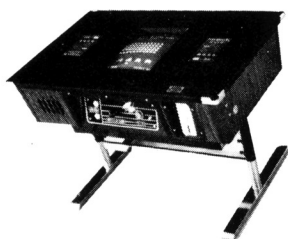
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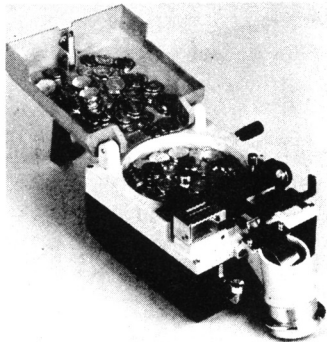
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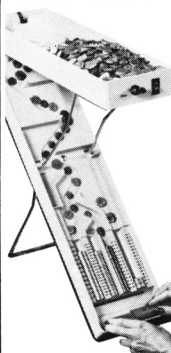
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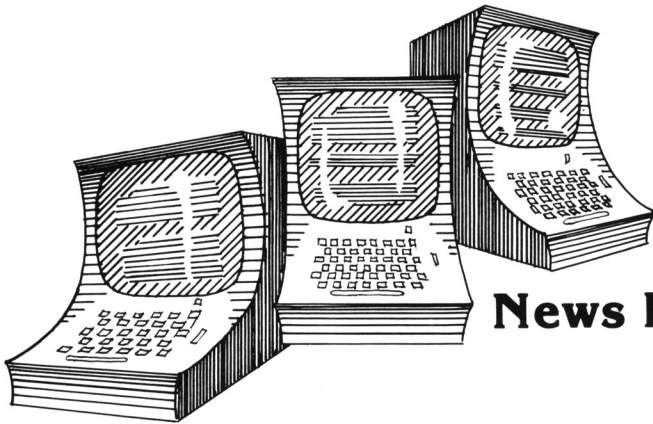
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News briefs....news briefs....news b

.....The long-awaited decision of the Copyright Royalty Tribunal on per-jukebox fees for the next decade was handed down December 10, 1980. The \$8 per-box fee will remain in effect through 1981, then on January 1, 1982 will jump to \$25 per coin-operated phono. Two years later, the license fee will increase to \$50 per jukebox, and as of January 1, 1987, an inflationary adjustment will be made to the \$50 rate based on the consumer price index change from January 1981 to that date, under the CRT decision announced by its Chairman Clarence James. Officials of ASCAP, the performing rights society which appealed for an increase to \$70 per jukebox, stated they were pleased with the higher scale and that "jukebox operators can well afford this modest fee." A spokesman for the AMOA, which had fought to maintain the current \$8 per-box fee, had no immediate comment on the decision. However, all parties have the right to appeal to the U. S. Court of Appeals within 30 days of the decision. Details will follow in PLAY METER's next issue.....

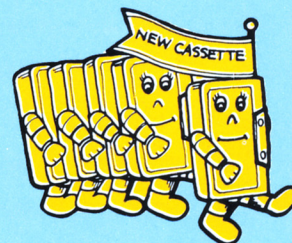
.....The selection of Norman Pink of Advance-Carter of Minneapolis, Minnesota, as the new president of the AMOA was somewhat of a surprise to industry people. Traditionally, the incoming AMOA president moves up through the positions of treasurer, secretary, and first vice president, in that order, before becoming president of the national association. This tradition was abruptly changed this year when the AMOA board of directors passed over James I. Mullins of Mullins Amusement Company in Miami, Florida, and nominated Pink for the position instead. Pink had not served in any of the executive positions of the AMOA before. The general membership confirmed the nomination during the AMOA Show. PLAY METER has learned the change was reportedly made following a disagreement over the AMOA's decision not to allow Bob Stivers & Associates, a television production company based in Hollywood, California, to co-sponsor AMOA's jukebox awards program.....

.....Following several reports of misleading and even fraudulent claims by Kyoto Electric Company, a group of operators are seeking restitution. Kyoto-- which is based in Carson City, Nevada-- is offering conversion kits of popular coin-op video games, but operators are reporting those kits are worthless. Kyoto officials have been unavailable for comment and, in fact, have not even been answering their telephone in recent days.....

.....Gene Lipkin, co-president of Atari, Inc., a Sunnyvale, California manufacturing company, has resigned his position with Atari. The move was made shortly after the AMOA Show.....

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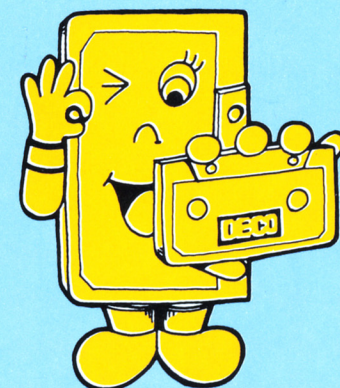
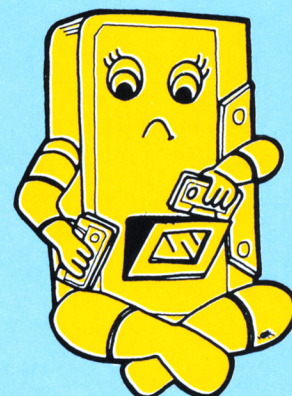
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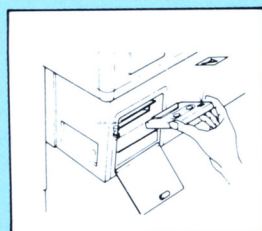
The cabinet assembly contains a highly efficient microprocessor that can assimilate any game.

6. RELIABILITY IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

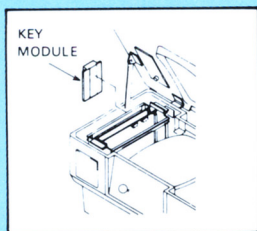
As the cabinet assembly and cassette structure will remain the same over a long period, maintenance procedures are simplified, and quality of product is assured.



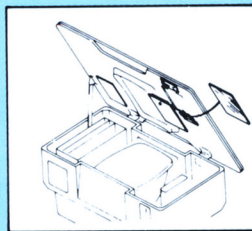
CHANGE GAME CASSETTE SIMPLY LIKE THIS



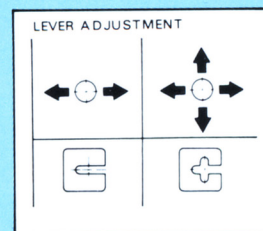
change cassettes.



set key module.



replace explanation panel.



fit the joy stick movement stopper, suitable for the game.



DATA EAST CORPORATION

3-9-5 Minami-Ikebukuro
Toshima-ku Tokyo "171"
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Telex: J29498 DATAEAST



DATA EAST INC.

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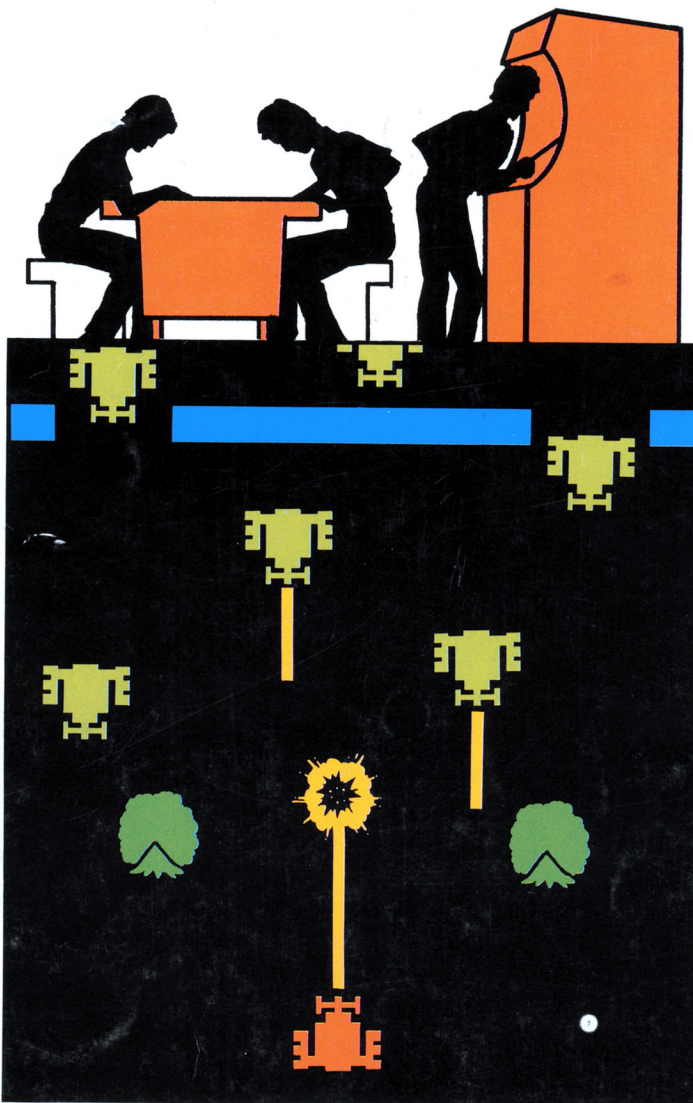
NO MAN'S LAND

Video Combat at its Best!

One tank against an army! But for the first time, a player can move all around the screen, defending his tank against an enemy ambush. Players will appreciate this new mobility feature, and line up to battle the enemy tank corps of NO MAN'S LAND.

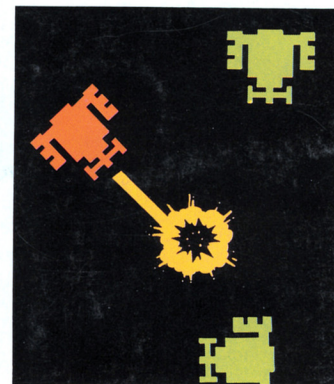
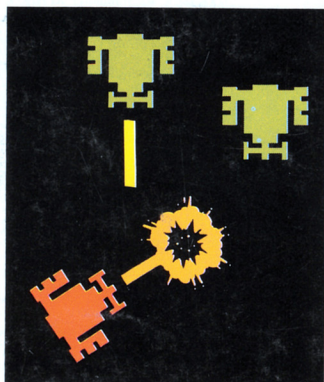
Available in both upright and cocktail cabinets, NO MAN'S LAND offers an exciting combat challenge for one or two players:

- The player's tank can move, aim and fire in 8 directions, but the enemy tanks can move and fire in only 4 directions.



- Player uses a throttle to steer his tank, and presses FIRE button to demolish enemy tanks.
- A reserve tank replaces each tank destroyed.
- Completing a screen of enemy tanks sets up a new screen of faster, more dangerous tanks.

NO MAN'S LAND is video combat at its best, with full screen mobility for every player. A dynamite combination! Call your Gottlieb distributor today!



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