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The Adventure Of Link!

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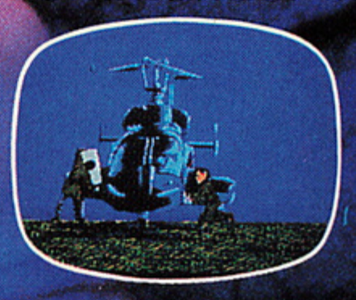

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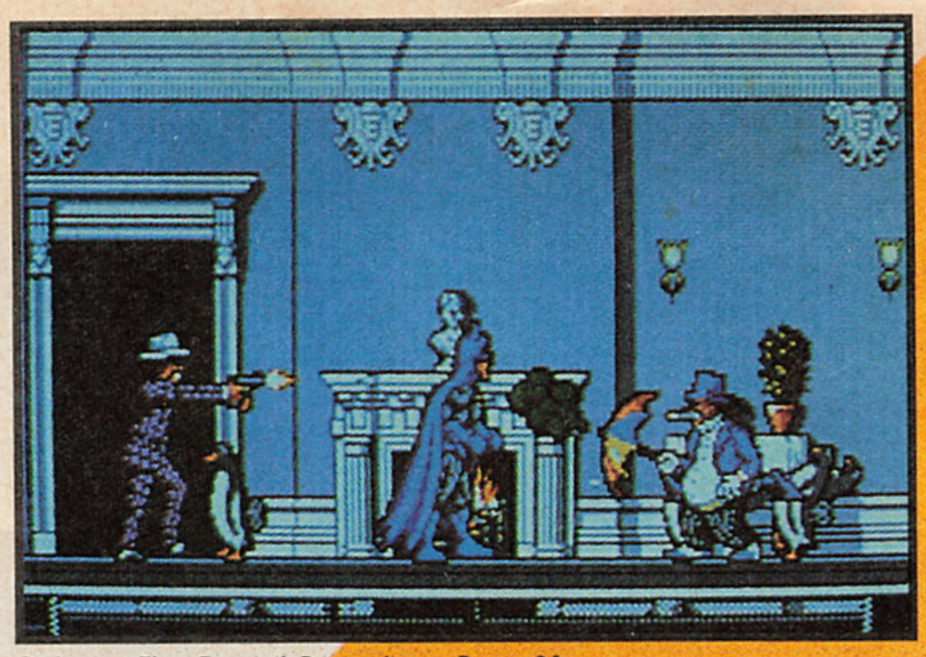

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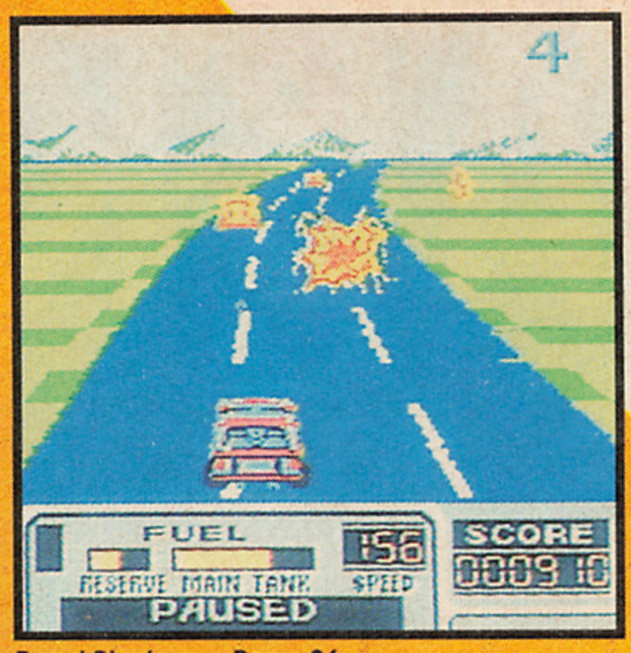

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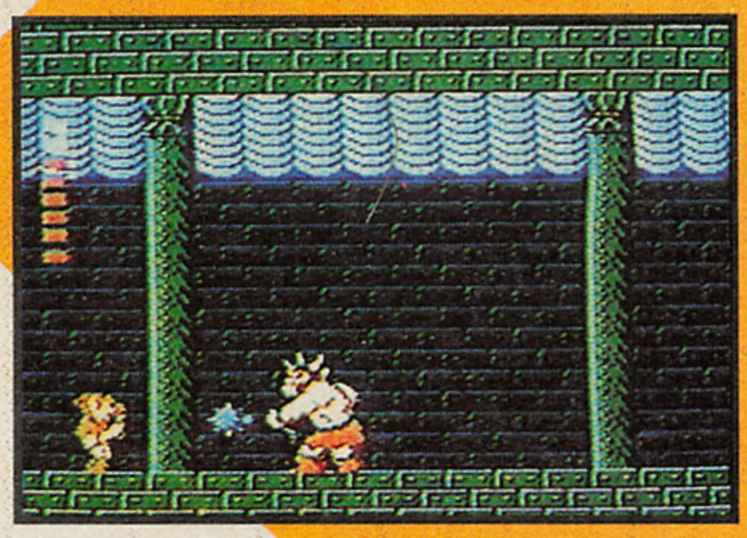

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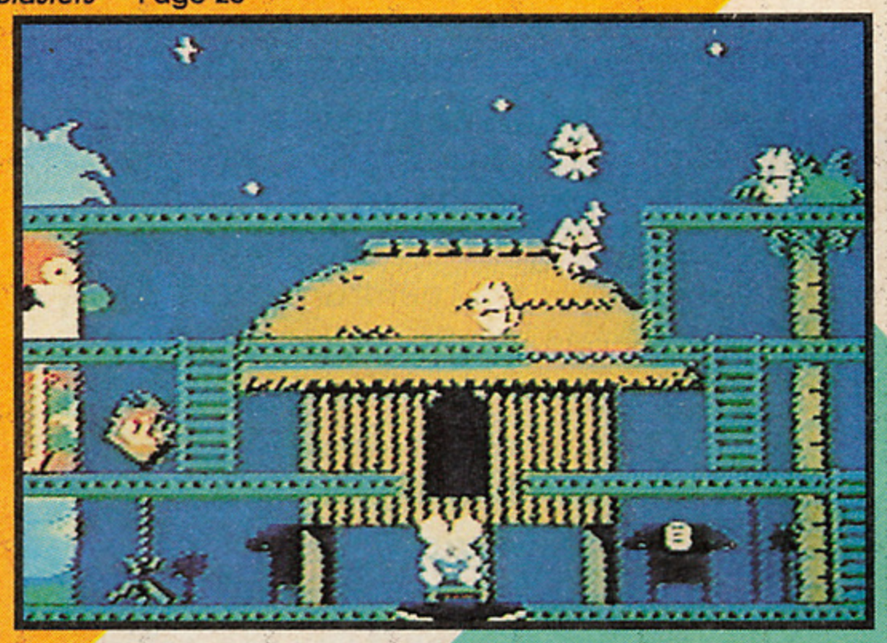

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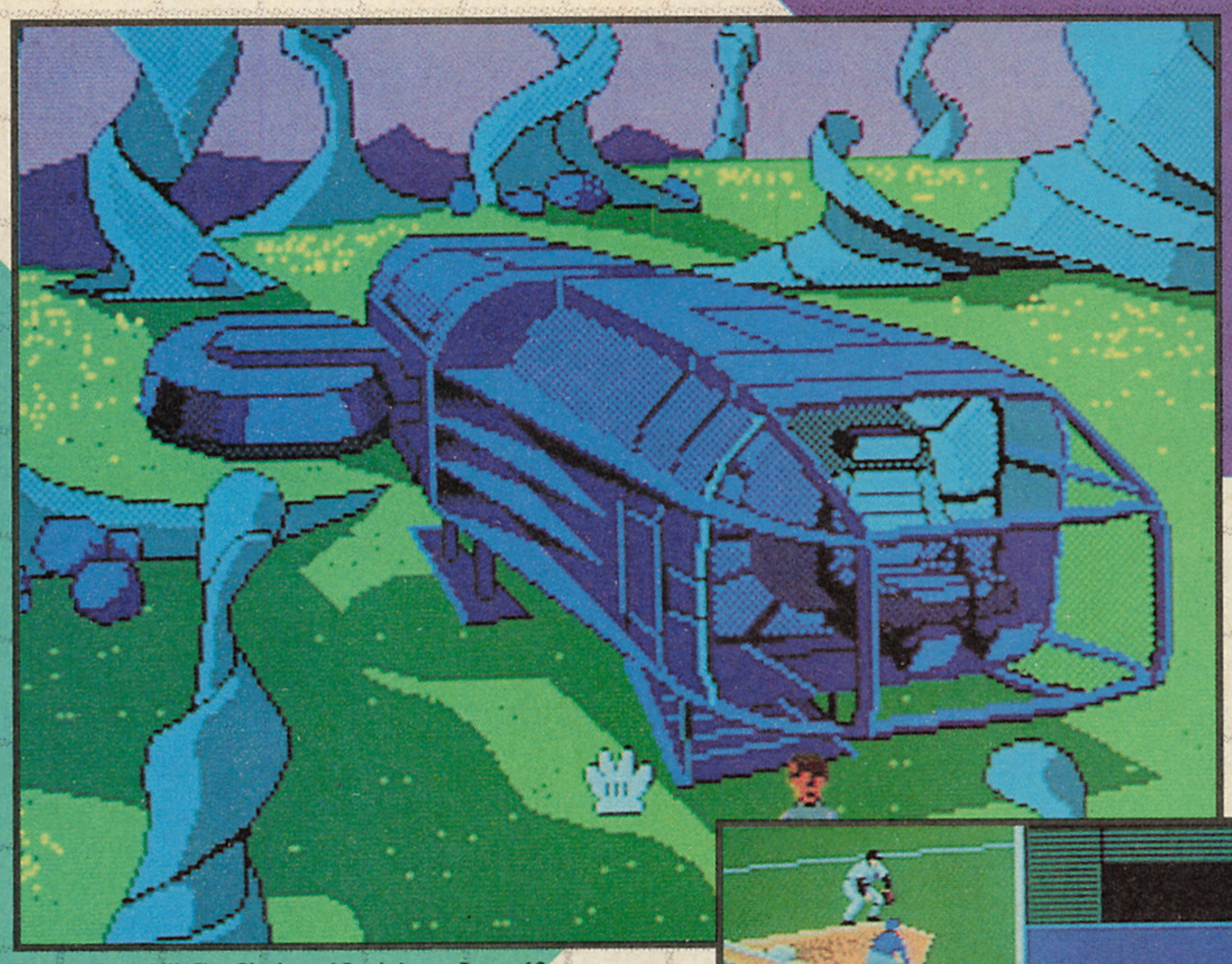

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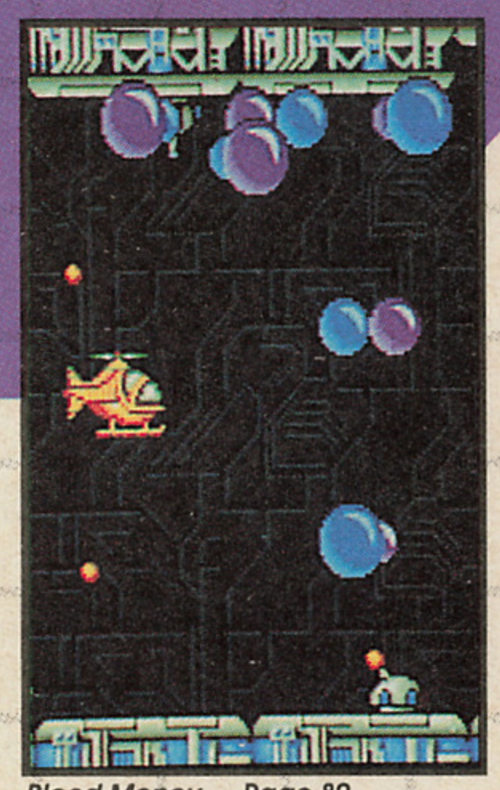

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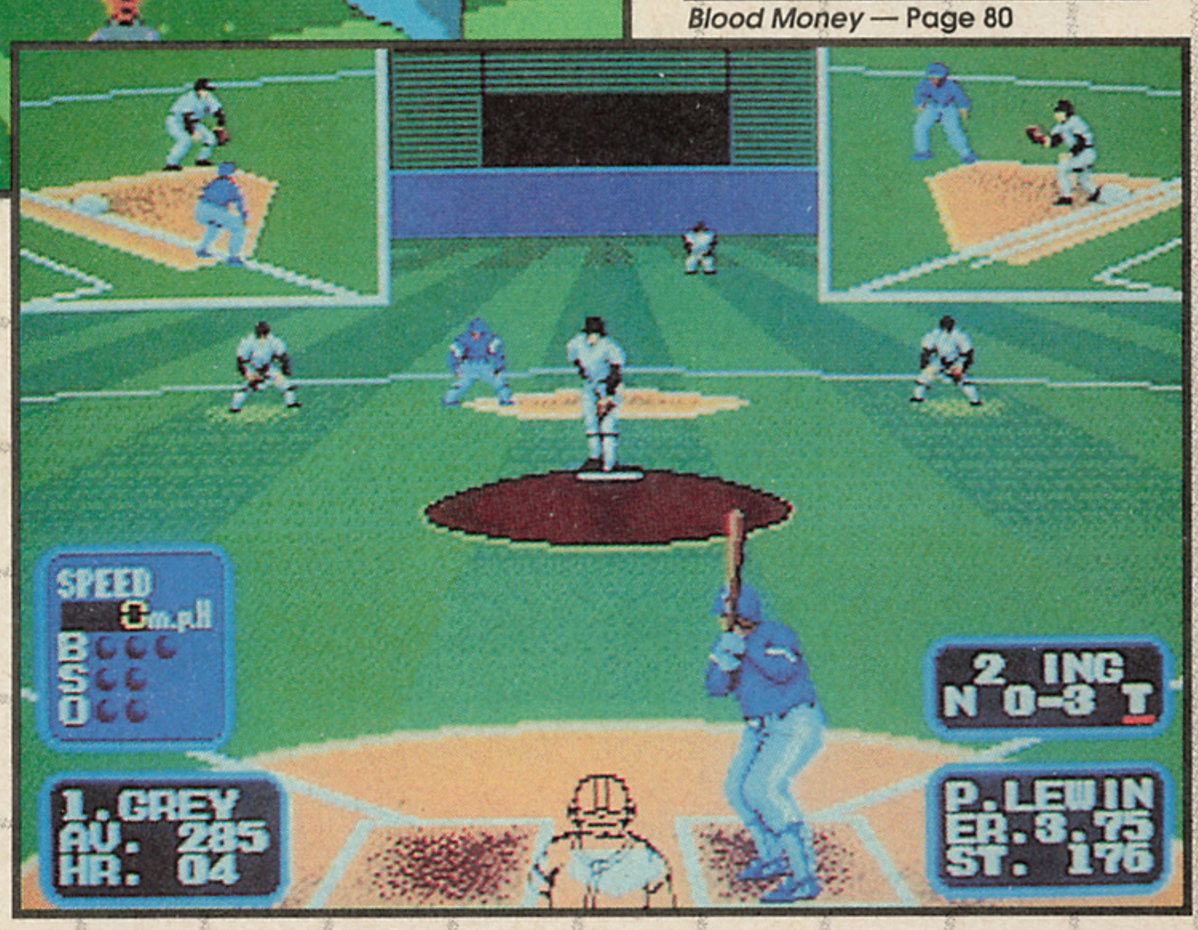

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The EDITORS VIEW

Over 100,000 business people flock to Chicago every June for a noisy event called the Summer Consumer Electronics Show. Most are buyers for stores or discount chains. They help decide which products will be stocked on store shelves in the latter half of the year during the important holiday shopping season.

At this year's Summer CES, the buzzword was "16-bit videogame machines." The advanced game machines that are challenging Nintendo's leadership in the home videogame market were big news. Sega exhibited its new Genesis and NEC its TurboGrafx-16, which have been available in Japan for several months. Elsewhere in this issue of *Game Player's*, you'll find full reports on these exciting systems.

But what do these new game machines mean to you? And how will they affect the rapidly expanding world of home videogaming?

Thanks to their more powerful electronics, 16-bit game machines can deliver graphics and stereo sound capable of matching anything now being done on any personal computer system — including the remarkable (and much more expensive) Amiga. Indeed, these new machines can offer games comparable in quality to those found in coin-operated arcades. In addition, their greater memory capacity and other features (such as optional CD-ROM drives) make it possible for programmers to write games which are more detailed and complex than anything we've yet seen.

What this means is that the technology gap between home videogame machines and personal computers has been closed. Until now, some people wouldn't buy a videogame machine because they preferred the more sophisticated games made only for personal computers. And many computer software publishers wouldn't release versions of their titles for videogame machines because they didn't think the cartridge-based systems could do justice to their best games. But when programmers begin exploiting the full potential of the 16-bit game machines, you'll be able to run extremely sophisticated simulators, arcade-quality action games, and rich adventure games. (Not that these types of games will be your only choice, of course. The less-complex games will still be popular, and better than ever, on the 16-bit machines.)

The new-generation game machines will have other effects as well. Sega and NEC have challenged Nintendo, and Nintendo will be forced to respond. By early 1990, Nintendo is expected to announce a 16-bit system of its own. From what we hear, it will be at least as good as the Sega and NEC systems, and it will be compatible with all current Nintendo cartridges (although an adapter may be required). There are also rumors that Atari and possibly Commodore will introduce advanced game systems next year, too. This burst of fresh competition is sure to produce lots of interesting new games for everyone.

Some people still think videogames are a fad. Although the videogame market is sure to have its ups and downs — as does the market for every consumer product — we believe home videogames are here to stay. In the years ahead, it will become increasingly clear that "video entertainment" means much more than just sitting down for an evening of TV.

Tom R. Halfhill
Editor-in-Chief,
Game Player's

GP

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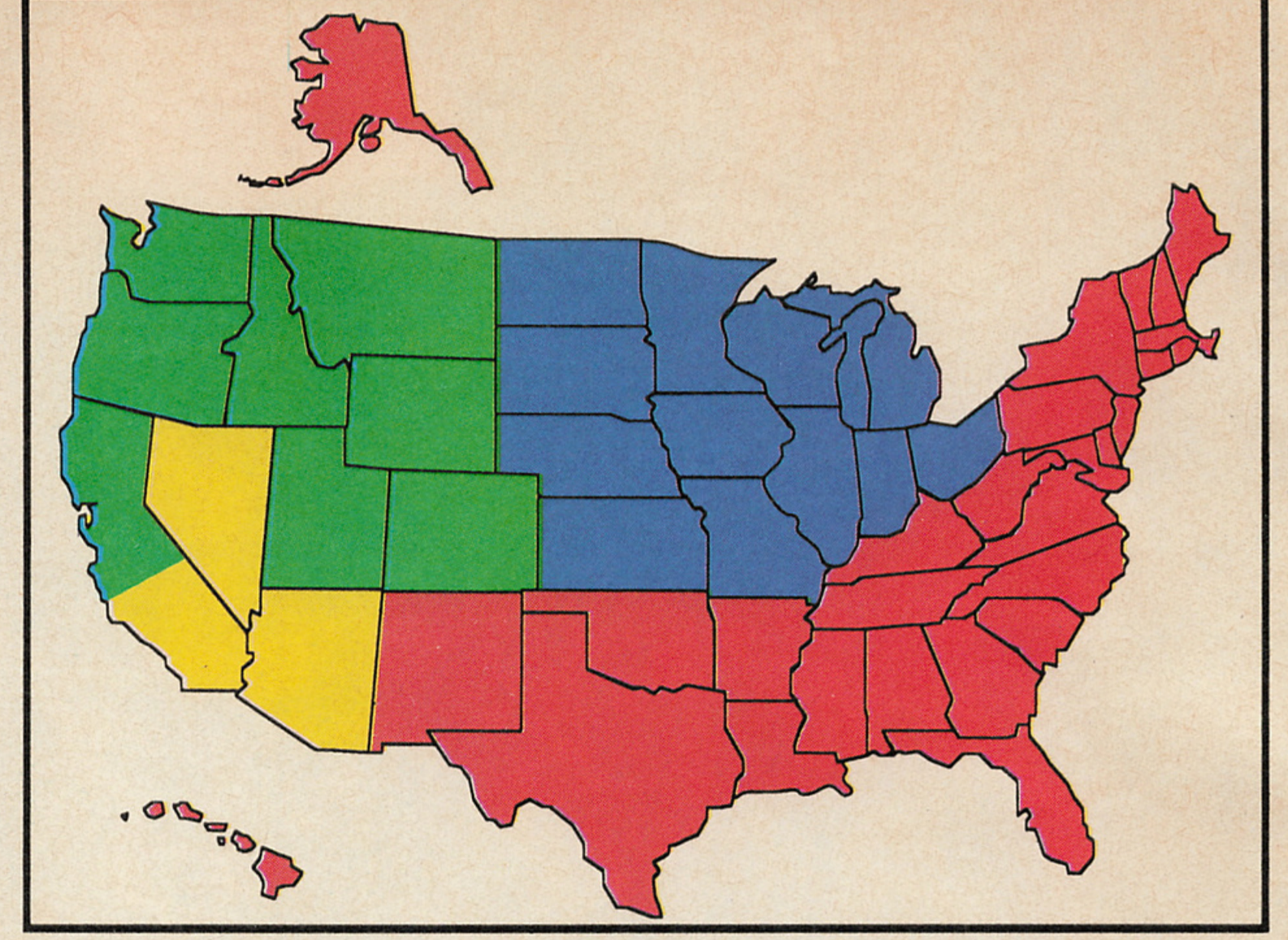

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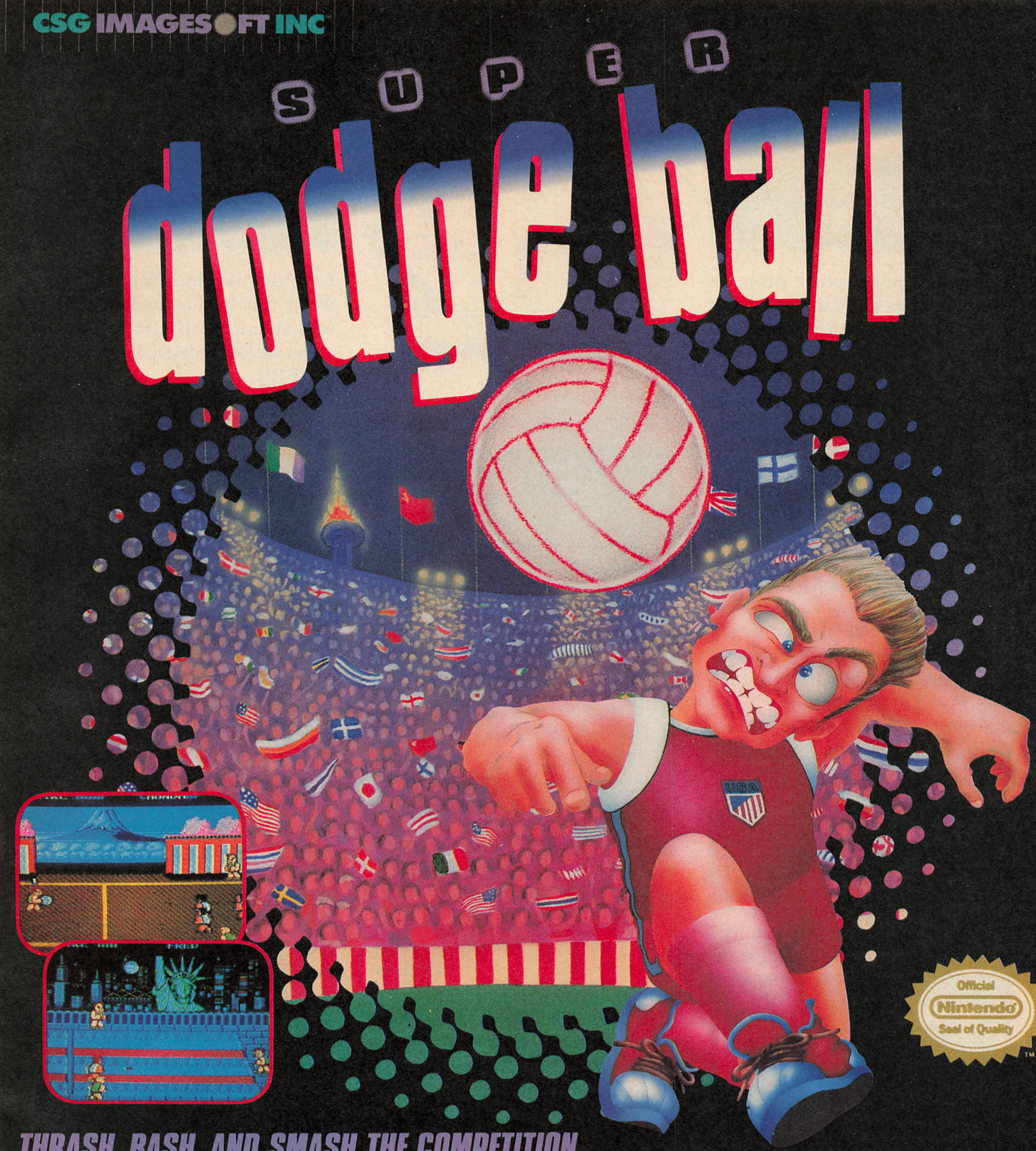
SUPER dodge ball



THRASH, BASH, AND SMASH THE COMPETITION

Team USA is on its way to a Cinderella success story in the Super Dodge Ball World Cup Championships. From out of nowhere, this scrappy bunch of rookies is advancing to the final round of competition. But, seven powerful teams still stand between Team USA and their ultimate challenge; the long awaited grudge match with the undefeated, defending world champions, Team Russia. Only you can lead the U.S. to victory over the highly-favored competition, and give them the chance to crush the mighty Soviets.

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TIP SHEET

Continuing In *Gradius*

Can you give me some hints on how to get past the third level of *Gradius* and how to continue the game?

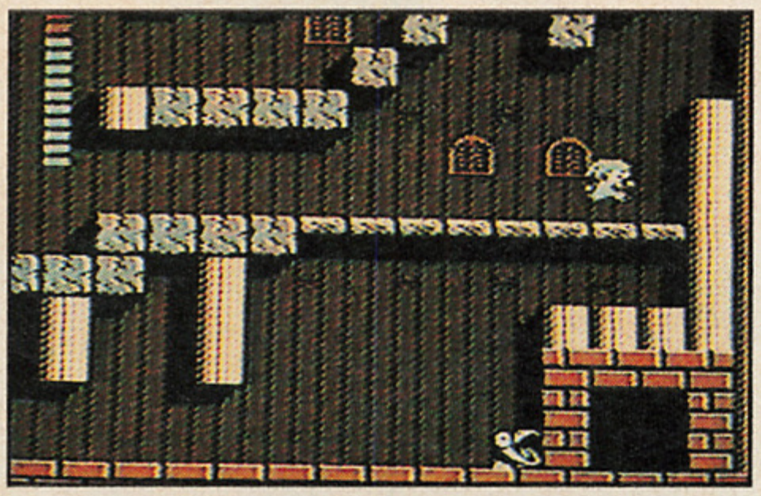
Eduardo Martinez
California

A couple of readers have sent us hints for Gradius. *Ken Toizumi, of Washington, says you can warp from stage 2 to stage 4 by beating the enemy at the end of level 2 in "about two seconds or less." You can also warp from stage 3 to 5 by destroying ten statues and beating the enemy at the end of level 3.*

Carl Soukal, of Illinois, says the continue command for Gradius *is Up, B, A, B, A, B, A, B, A, and Start. To get full options, press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, B, A, and Start.*

Where's Milon's Fireplace?

We are trying to get through *Milon's Secret Castle* but can get no



further than level 2. We understand the hints, such as "push against the fireplace," but where in the world is the fireplace? We've been trying to find it for months.

Beverly Sandlin
Illinois

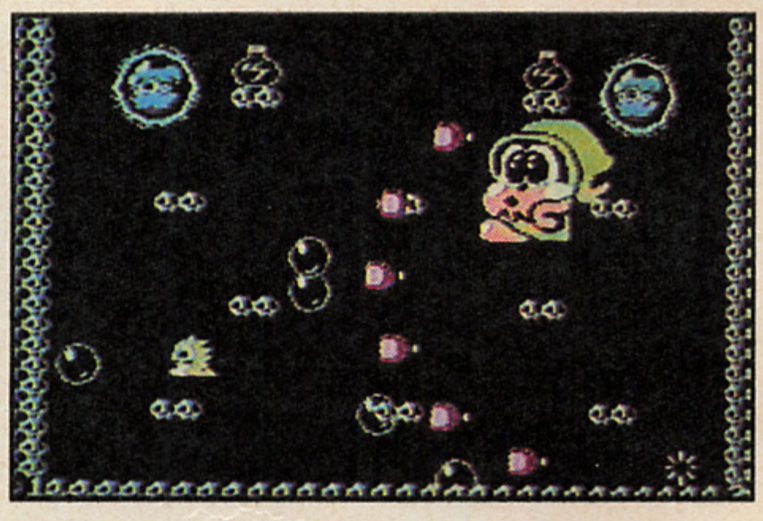
You won't find the fireplace until you're on level 4 (and then you shouldn't have any difficulty finding it). Before advancing to level 2, however, go down into the well by the right-hand tower and get the hammer. Use the hammer to break into a secret room on level 1. There you'll get a saw. You'll need the saw to get into two rooms on level 2. Good luck.

Do you have any questions about your favorite videogames and computer games? Or do you have any hints and tips to share with your fellow game players? If so, write to The Tip Sheet, *Game Player's*, P.O. Box 29364, Greensboro, NC 27429. Due to the volume of mail we receive, we regret that we cannot reply individually by mail to game questions.

Bubble Bobble And *Golgo 13*

I would like to offer the password for *Bubble Bobble* which will automatically let you begin at the second world (first level). It is GEJBJ.

Kelly K. McFaul
Minnesota



I have found a way to continue on *Golgo 13*. It would be easier with two people. Let the game run through the preview and wait until you see the big picture of the agent's head. Then, on controller 1, press Start, and on controller 2 press Left, Up, A, and B *all at the same time and hold*. On controller 1 hold Up, A, and B. Press Start, and "OO" will appear. Press Up and Down on controller 1 to select a stage.

Ken Toizumi
Washington

Thanks for the tips.

Getting Started In *Deadly Towers*

I've purchased a very difficult Nintendo game called *Deadly*

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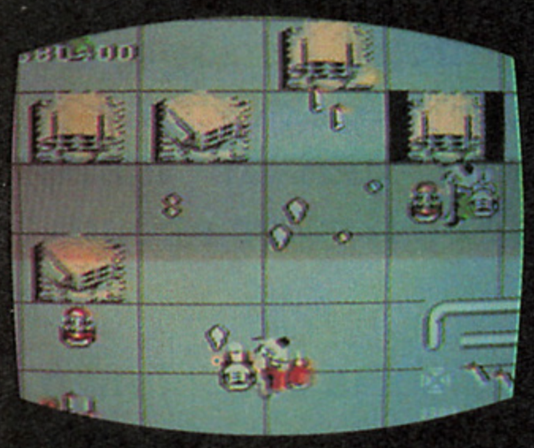
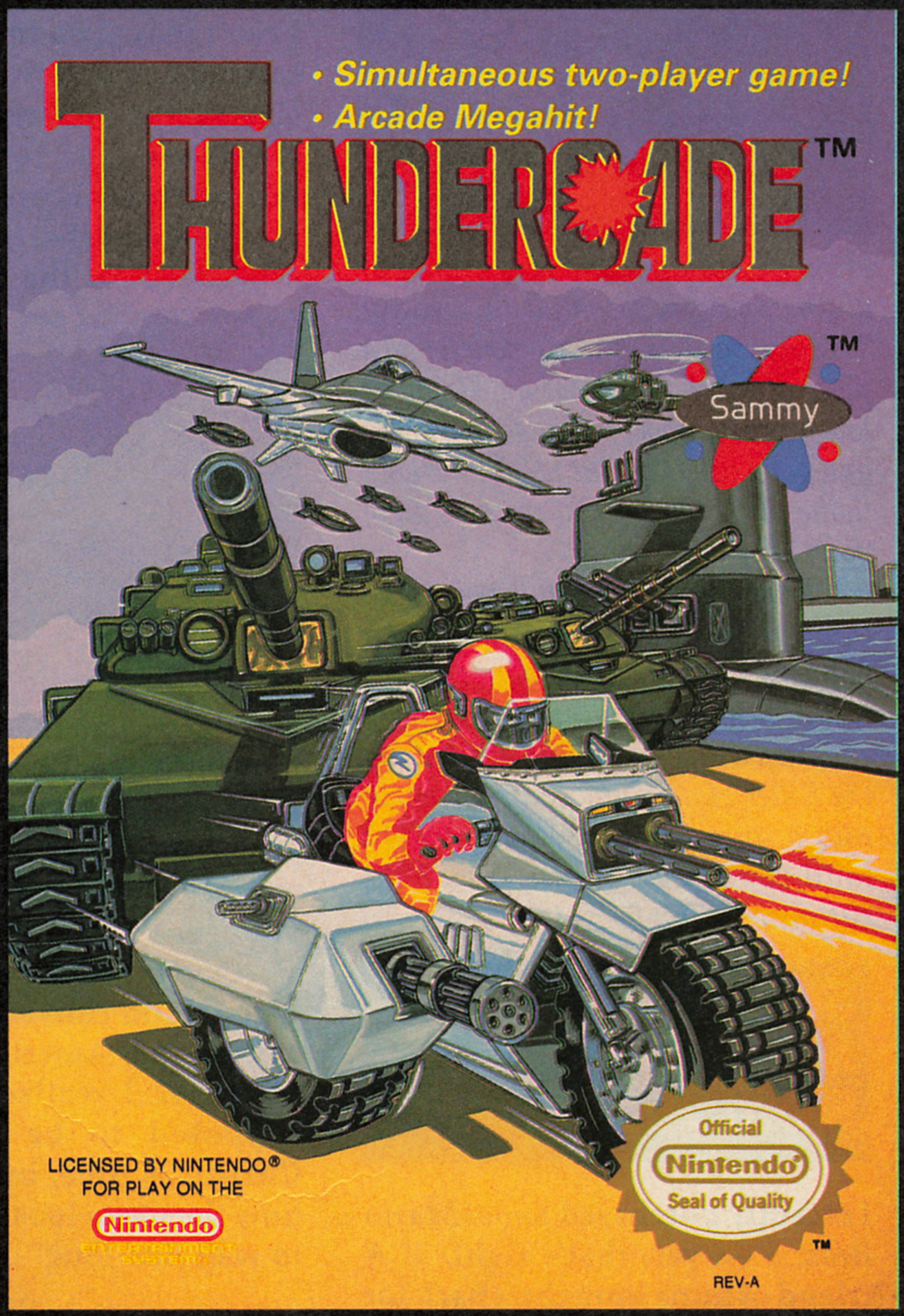
Start in the city streets and continue through bases, woodlands and the fortress before reaching the heavily guarded nuclear power plant.

With a hit-miss ratio display at the end of each stage, you can improve your attack efficiency.

Have a friend join in and save the world together!

Go for the challenge!!!





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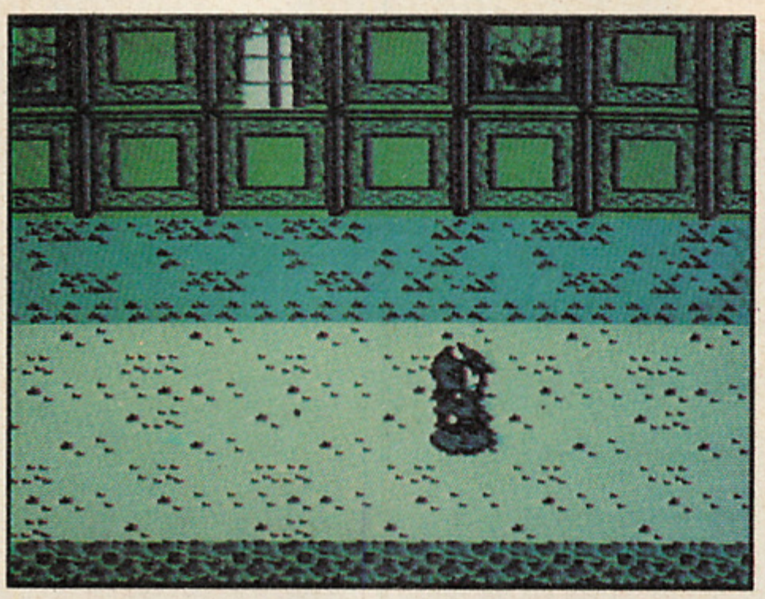
Towers. I've tried and tried, but I can't seem to get very far. If you can, please give me some hints and tips.

Andy Groth
New York



Here are some general hints. First of all, mapping is essential in Deadly Towers, *so always keep a pencil and a piece of graph paper handy. If you're low on energy when you defeat a boss and get a bell, take the bell to the holy flame. Burning the bell restores all of your hit points.*

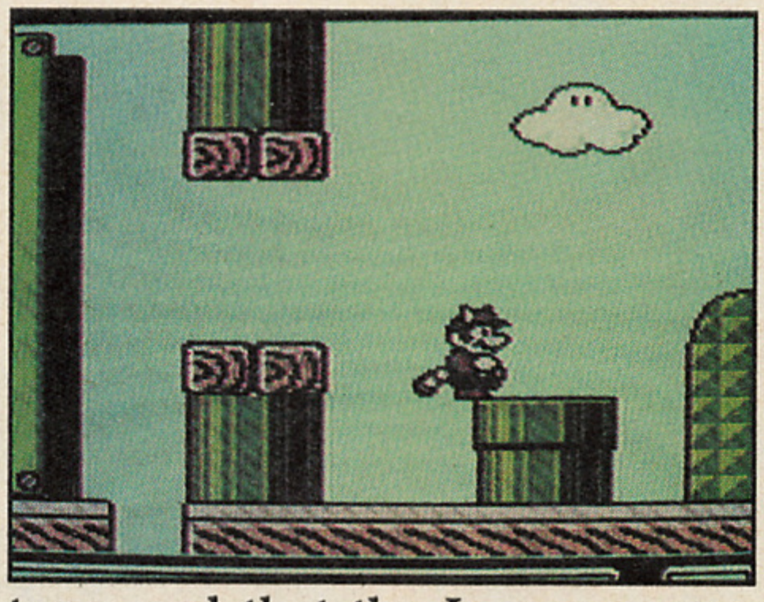
From your starting point, go through the first entrance into a brown hallway. Go north into a green hallway. Then go west until the hallway ends. Take the exit to the north. Slay the Killer Hound and continue north into a gray hallway. Walk straight until you reach a corner. That's the entrance to Dungeon 4.

Super Mario Bros. 3 From Japan

I recently purchased *Super Mario Bros. 3* — yes, that's right, *3*! A friend of mine brought it back for me on a recent trip to Japan. But unfortunately, there is a problem.

I can't play it on my system. The cartridge is yellow, and half the size of the American Nintendo cartridges. And to top it all off, the instructions are in Japanese.

I've heard that it was designed especially for the Japanese sys-



tems and that the Japanese system will never be sold here. Even if my friend had brought back a Japanese system, it wouldn't have worked with our TVs and on our voltage.

Do you know of a company who would convert this game to run on an American Nintendo machine? I realize the game is supposed to be here around Christmas time, but after seeing how the game looks, I don't want to wait that long!

Frankie D. Wilson
Michigan

We wish we had good news to report, but we're afraid you probably can't use that cartridge. The Japanese Nintendo system is called the Family Computer, or Famicom. Although the Famicom and our NES are very similar, the cartridges are not interchangeable. Nor can a Japanese cartridge be converted to an American cartridge. Your best alternative is to wait until the U.S. version of Super Mario Bros. 3 becomes available, perhaps by this Christmas.

Sega Hints

I am an 18-year-old Sega addict, and my brothers are also. Here are a few tips that might help other players.

***R-Type*: On the continue screen, roll the control pad left for a sound test, right for additional credits. Also, in the middle of the cells in round 4, there are two poles at the top. Manuever between the poles and touch your ship to the rear pole. You'll enter an extra battle scene.**

***Double Dragon*: In round 4, jump 30 times before entering the fight. Then you can still continue.**

***Alex Kidd in Miracle World*: After killing the first octopus in the first lake, put Alex's stomach on the treasure chest and move left to right. You'll enter a bonus round.**

Thomas Corpolongo
Florida

Thanks for the tips.

GP

PLAYERS WORLD

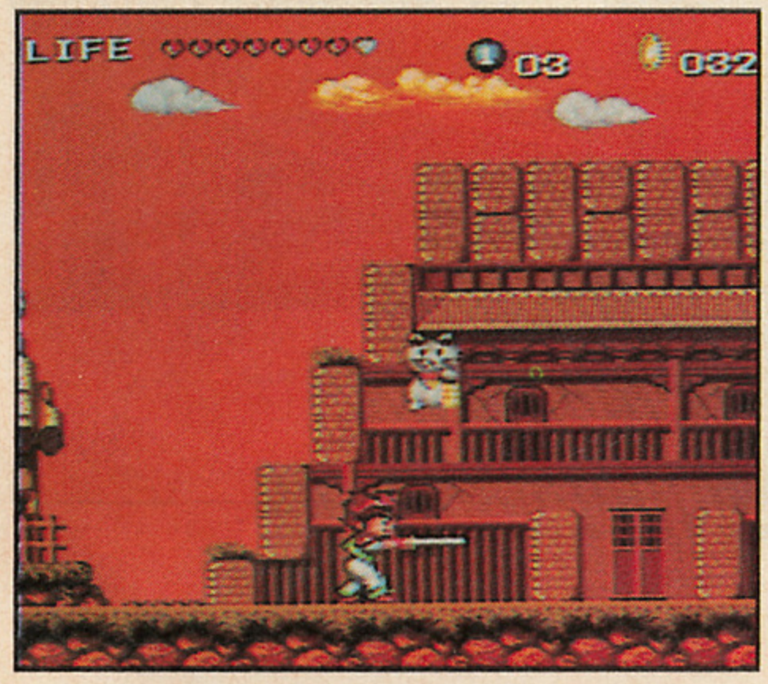
NEC'S TURBOGRAFX-16 ADVANCED GAME SYSTEM CHALLENGES NINTENDO

Tom R. Halfhill

Promising better graphics, high-fidelity sound, and more sophisticated game play, NEC recently became the first company to unveil a next-generation home videogame machine in the U.S.

The new 16-bit system, called the TurboGrafx-16, is designed to challenge Nintendo's supremacy in the home videogame market. Nintendo currently controls at least 80 percent of the U.S. market

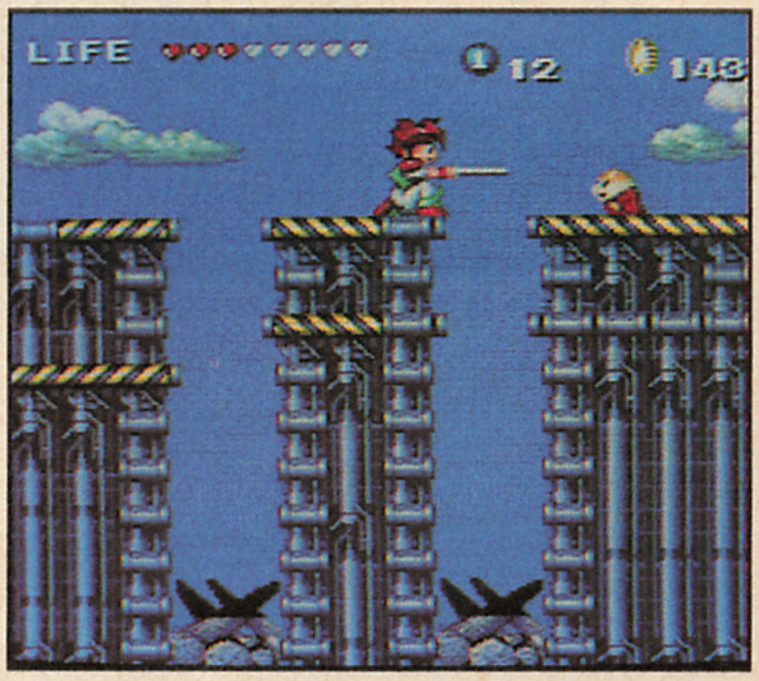
The NEC TurboGrafx-16 and some of its optional accessories, including the TurboStick, TurboTap, TurboBooster, and TurboGrafx-CD compact disc player.



The TurboGrafx-16 comes with one game card, *Keith Courage in Alpha Zones*. The game takes place in the year 2017, 13 years after a giant meteor has collided with Earth.

with nearly 15 million Nintendo machines in American homes. Besides taking on Nintendo, the TurboGrafx-16 will also compete with Sega's new 16-bit game machine, the Genesis. (For a full report on the Genesis, see the "Sega Masters" column elsewhere in this issue.)

Thanks to its powerful electronics and innovative accessories, the TurboGrafx-16 is capable of running arcade-quality games that surpass anything now available for home game machines and personal computers. Its custom-designed computer chips allow more colorful graphics, faster and more complex animation, smoother screen scrolling, and high-quality sound. The game cartridges are the size of credit cards and hold at least twice as much data as the average Nintendo cartridge, making it possible for programmers to design more



Another scene from *Keith Courage*: Don't fall off the cliff onto the rocks!

sophisticated games — more levels, more complicated stories, and so forth.

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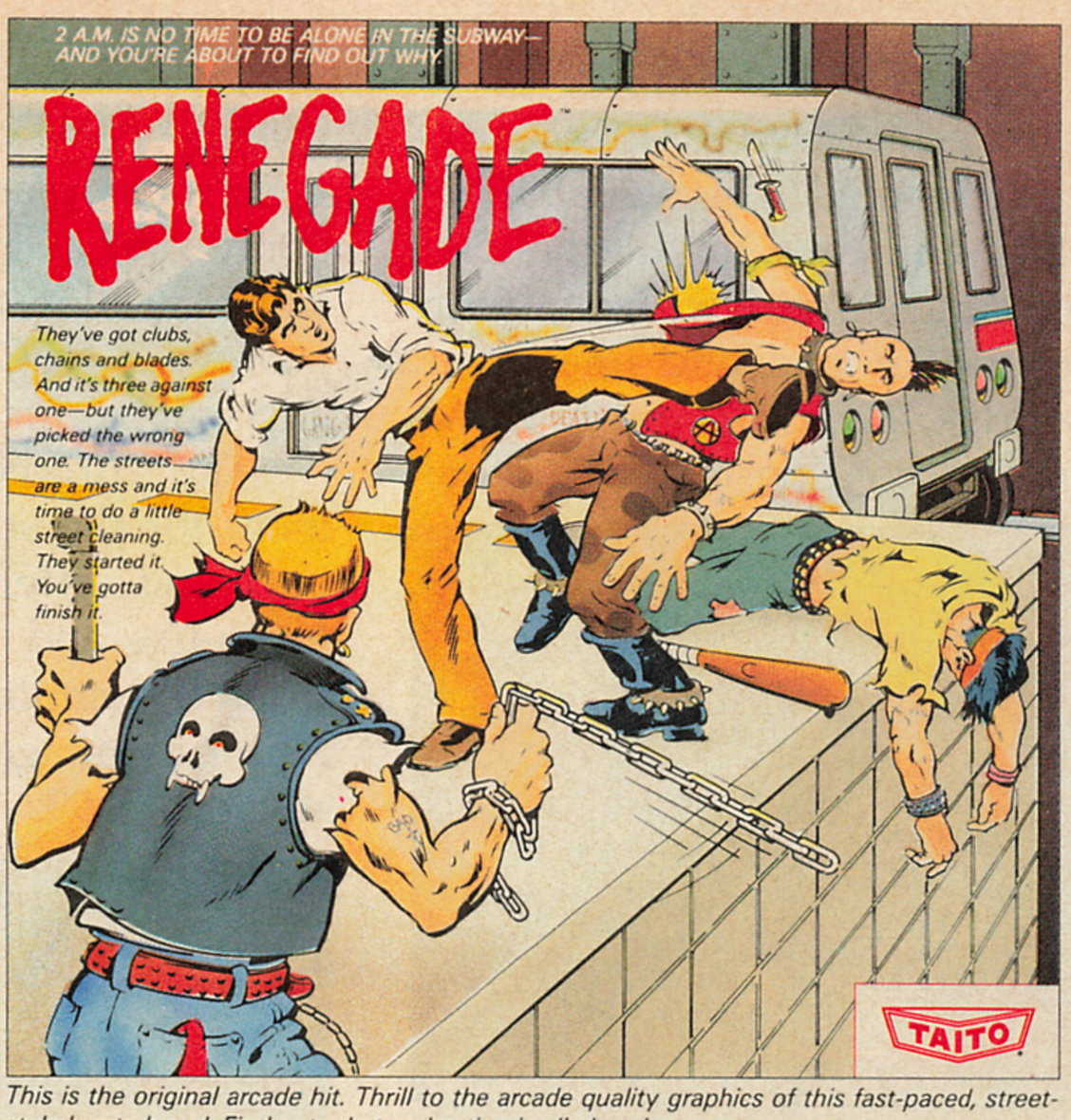

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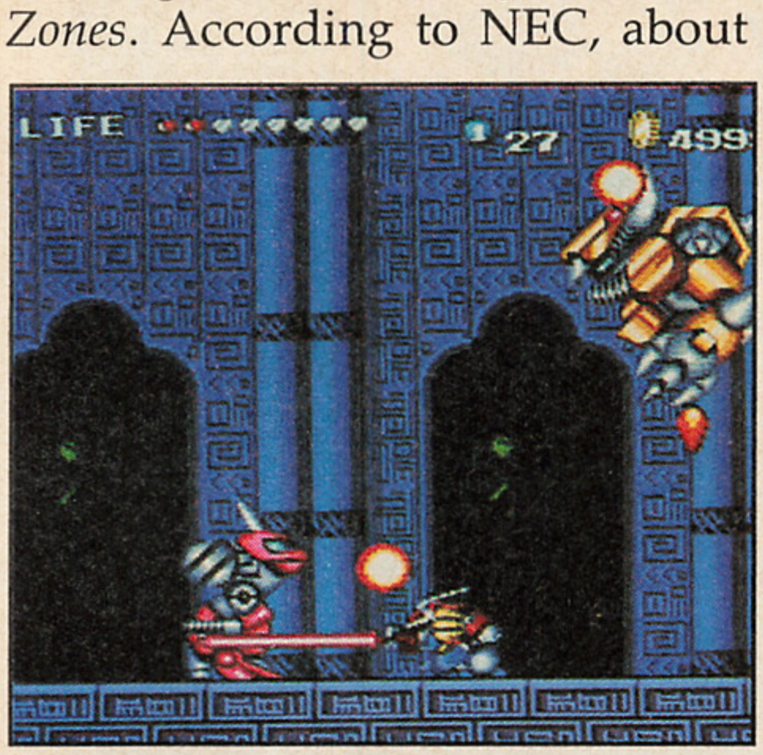
Priced at $199, the TurboGrafx-16 is scheduled to be available this fall, just in time for the holiday shopping season. It will come with a controller pad and one game cartridge, *Keith Courage in Alpha Zones*. According to NEC, about



Keith Courage: Notice the colorful, detailed graphics in this screen.

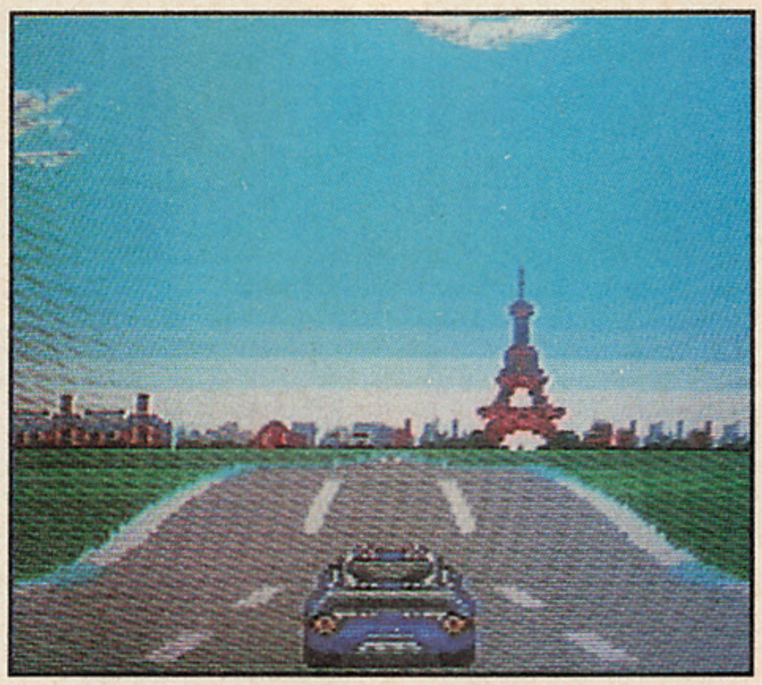
20 titles will be available by Christmas, priced about the same as Nintendo games.

Optional Accessories

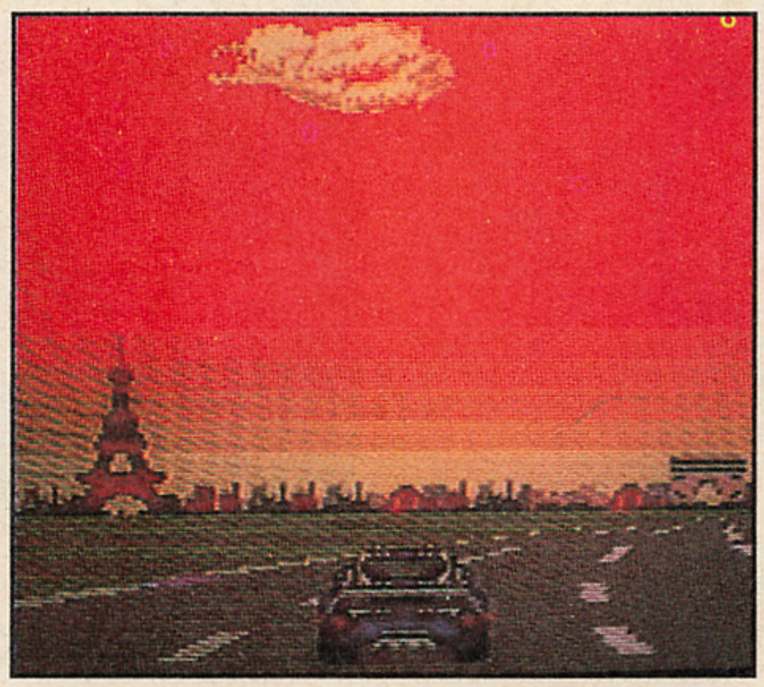
NEC says it will introduce several optional accessories for the TurboGrafx-16 in the months to come. These include a controller adapter that permits several people to play a game at once; a turbo-fire joystick similar to those sold for other game machines; an audio-video enhancer that allows the TurboGrafx-16 to be plugged into high-quality video monitors and stereo systems; and a special compact disc player.

The controller adapter is called the TurboTap. By itself, the TurboGrafx-16 allows only one controller pad to be plugged in at once, limiting the machine to single-person play. But with the TurboTap, as many as five controllers can be plugged in, so five people can play simultaneously. (Only certain games will be designed to allow this many players, however.) NEC says the TurboTap will be priced at $19.99.

The TurboStick is a replacement for the standard controller pad and offers variable-speed turbo-fire and slow-motion features. It is similar in concept to the NES Advantage joystick and will sell for $44.99.

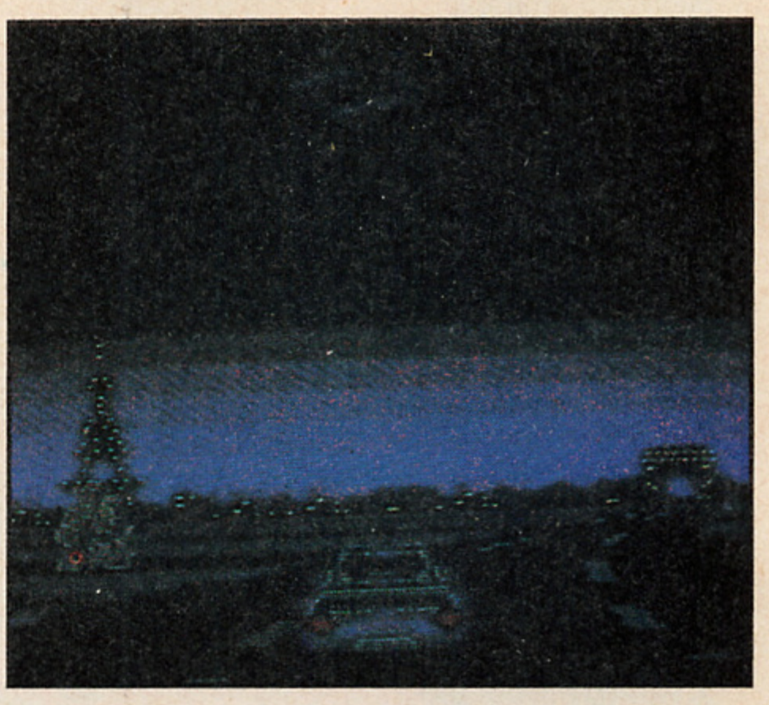


Victory Run is a high-speed driving game for the TurboGrafx-16. It features exotic scenery that changes according to the time of day. This view shows Paris and the Eiffel Tower in daylight.



Victory Run: Here's another view of Paris, at sunset. Notice the Arc de Triomphe at the end of the road.

The audio-video enhancer is called the TurboBooster. This device adds composite video and stereo audio outputs to the TurboGrafx-16, allowing it to be plugged into video monitors and stereo systems. (Without the TurboBooster, the TurboGrafx-16 can be hooked up to ordinary TV sets and is limited to mono sound.)



Victory Run: Paris by night. Watch out for that boulder on the left.

The TurboBooster will be priced at $34.99.

But the most exciting accessory for the TurboGrafx-16 is the special compact disc player, the TurboGrafx-CD. In addition to providing digital-quality sound effects and stereo music soundtracks for videogames, it also functions as a high-capacity storage device that allows the TurboGrafx-16 to run games of unprecedented size and scope. A single CD can hold 550 *megabytes* of information — that's more information than can be stored on 4,400 conventional game cartridges or 1,500 IBM-compatible floppy disks!

Until now, this vast amount of storage was available only to personal computers with expensive CD-ROM drives. The only game currently released in the U.S. on a CD is Activision's *The Manhole* for the Macintosh, which requires a CD-ROM drive costing nearly $1,000. Yet, according to NEC, the TurboGrafx-CD will retail this fall for only $399. This breakthrough in game technology makes it possible for designers to create massive adventure games with entire worlds to explore, flight simula-

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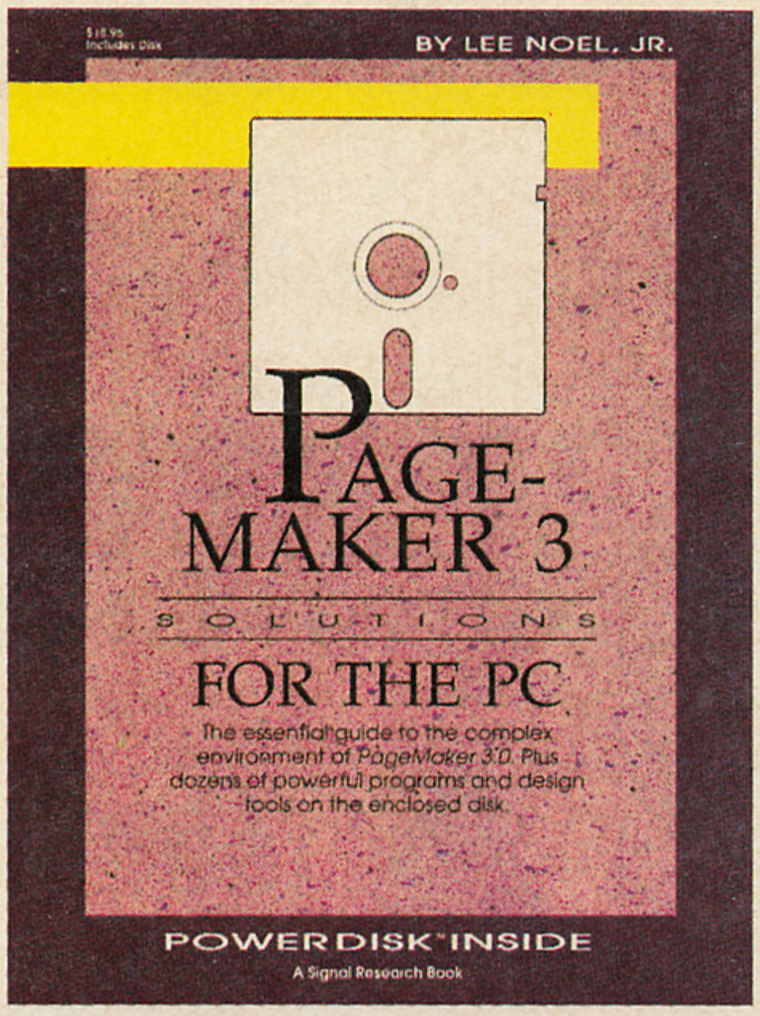

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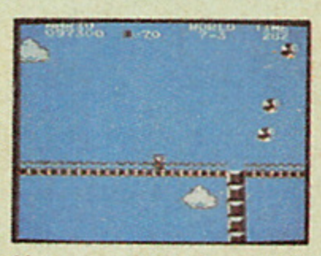
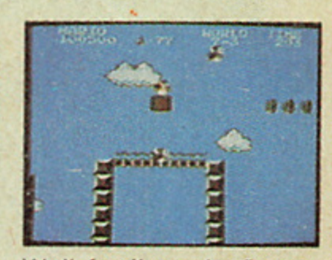
NINTENDO GAME of the MONTH

SUPER MARIO

The editors and game players





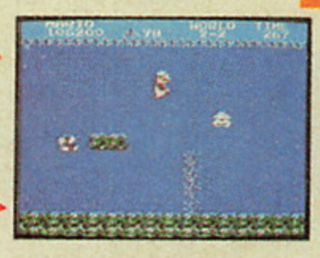
Millions of Nintendo players now own *Super Mario*. And we suspect that a few haven't yet played all of the way through. Here are some clues, maps, hints, and tips that our editors and game players put together for you.

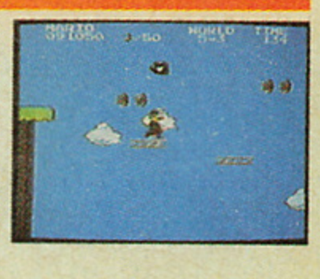
Throughout this game your timing is very important. Jumping and leaping are critical skills in the treetop worlds. You just have to work your way through, learning when to jump and when to wait.

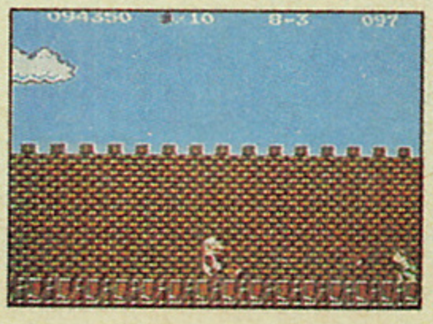
Here you must time your runs to keep from being killed by the cheep-cheeps.

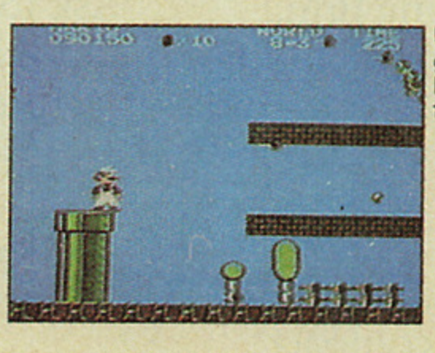
Wait for them to fly up, then run under them.

They're rough in the water worlds, too, but not as aggressive as the Bloobers (jellyfish). Use the A button to swim up. The water worlds are much easier if you're fiery Mario.



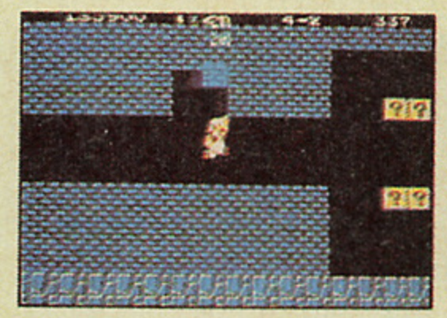




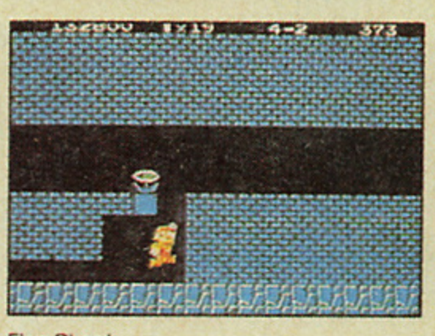


Uh oh... It's the Hammer Brothers. These guys are bad! It's best to be fiery Mario whenever you have to get past them.

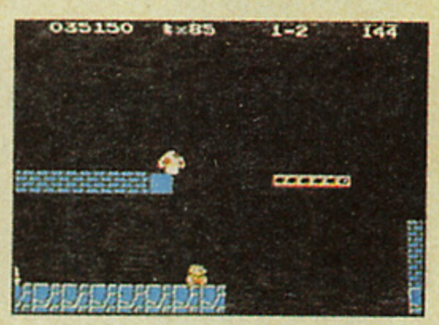
All through the game you'll find hidden coin boxes, fire plants, magic mushrooms, and more. These samples show you what you're looking for.



Coin Box.



Fire Plant.



Magic Mushroom.

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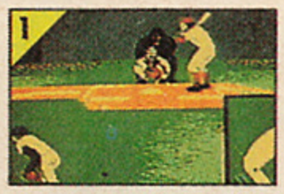
All right, I admit it. I get excited about the return of baseball. I follow the results during spring training. I make a few phone calls about season tickets, hoping that somehow they're on sale for 70 percent off. And I watch the season opener and home opener as if each was the seventh game of the World Series.



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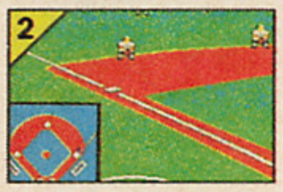

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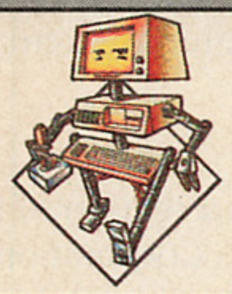
One more confession. When spring training begins, I find myself searching for my computer baseball games. I play Accolade's *Hardball* while watching a game on TV. I look to Gamestar's *Pete Rose Pennant Fever* when I want to test my skills at building a franchise. Mondays, with the sports pages in front of me, I boot up Electronic Arts' *Earl Weaver Baseball*, change some statistics, and play the games my favorite team will be playing that week.

Why do I have three baseball simulations? Because each one has its own particular focus. *Hardball* is purely an action game, with an emphasis on the classic confrontation between pitcher and batter. *Pete Rose Pennant Fever* is a franchise-building game, in which you have ten seasons to assemble a championship team. *Earl Weaver Baseball* focuses on managing the individual game; all of its many features are designed with that in mind.



PC PLAYERS

Take Me Out To The Videogame

Neil Randall

3

1 *Hardball*: The pitcher-batter screen.

2 *Hardball*: Fielding a batted ball.

3 *Pete Rose*: The main view from behind home plate.

4 *Pete Rose*: The pitcher-batter screen.

5 *Pete Rose*: Selecting Pete Rose's position.

Hardball

In *Hardball*, the screen you see most often shows your pitcher (either left-handed or right-handed) preparing to throw to the plate. It's the classic viewpoint of televised baseball, as seen from somewhere in left-center field.

The menus at the bottom of the *Hardball* screen show your options. Using the keyboard, joystick, or mouse, you select the pitch you wish to throw. If you're batting, you choose to bunt, steal, or swing away.

Once the defensive player has selected the pitch, and the offensive player the batting option, the menus change. Now the pitcher chooses a location for the pitch, while the batter selects whether he will swing high, low, inside, or outside. When you're batting against a human opponent, the catcher's glove moves as a signal to where the pitch might be going. When playing against the computer, you're at a distinct disadvantage — the glove does not

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5

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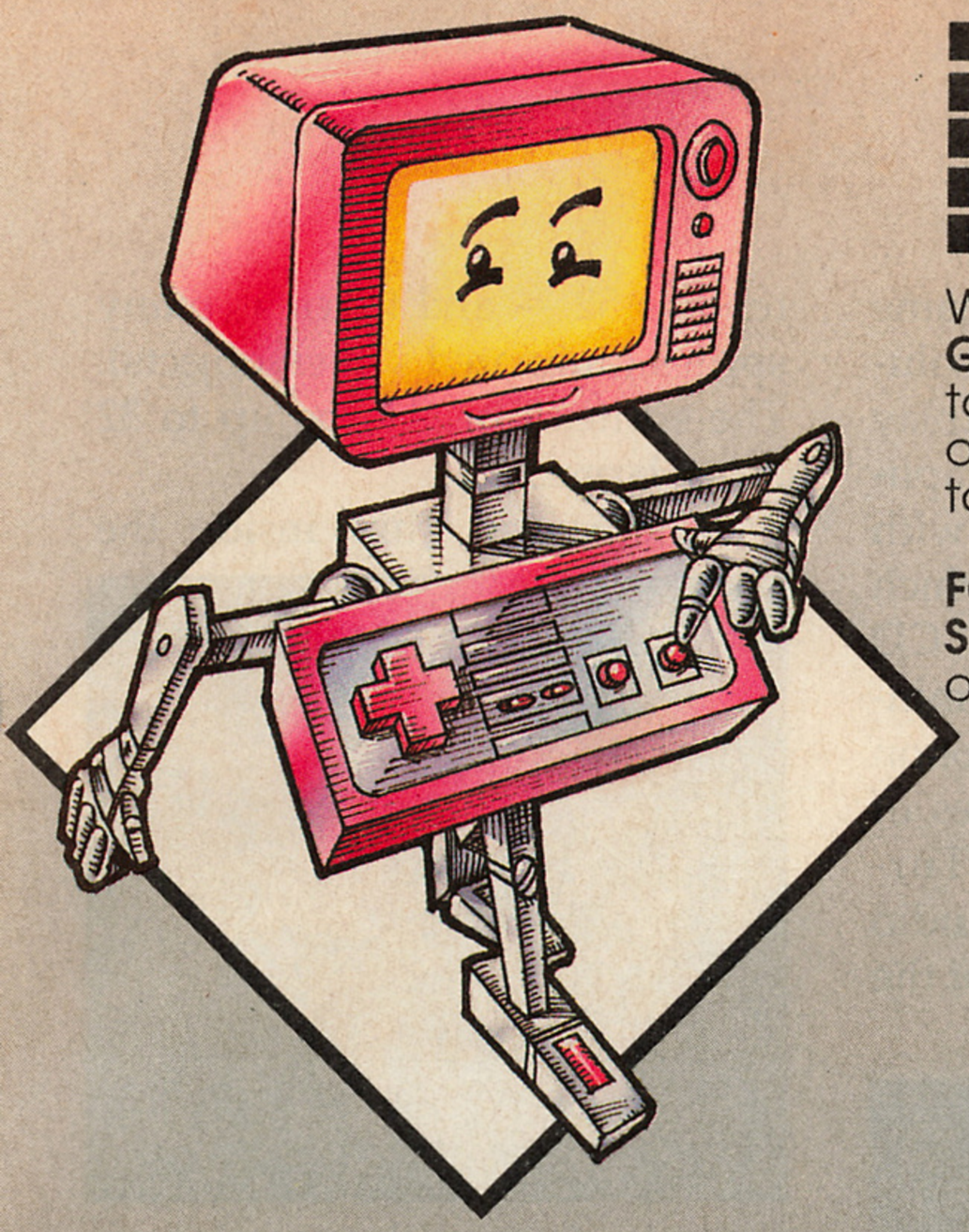

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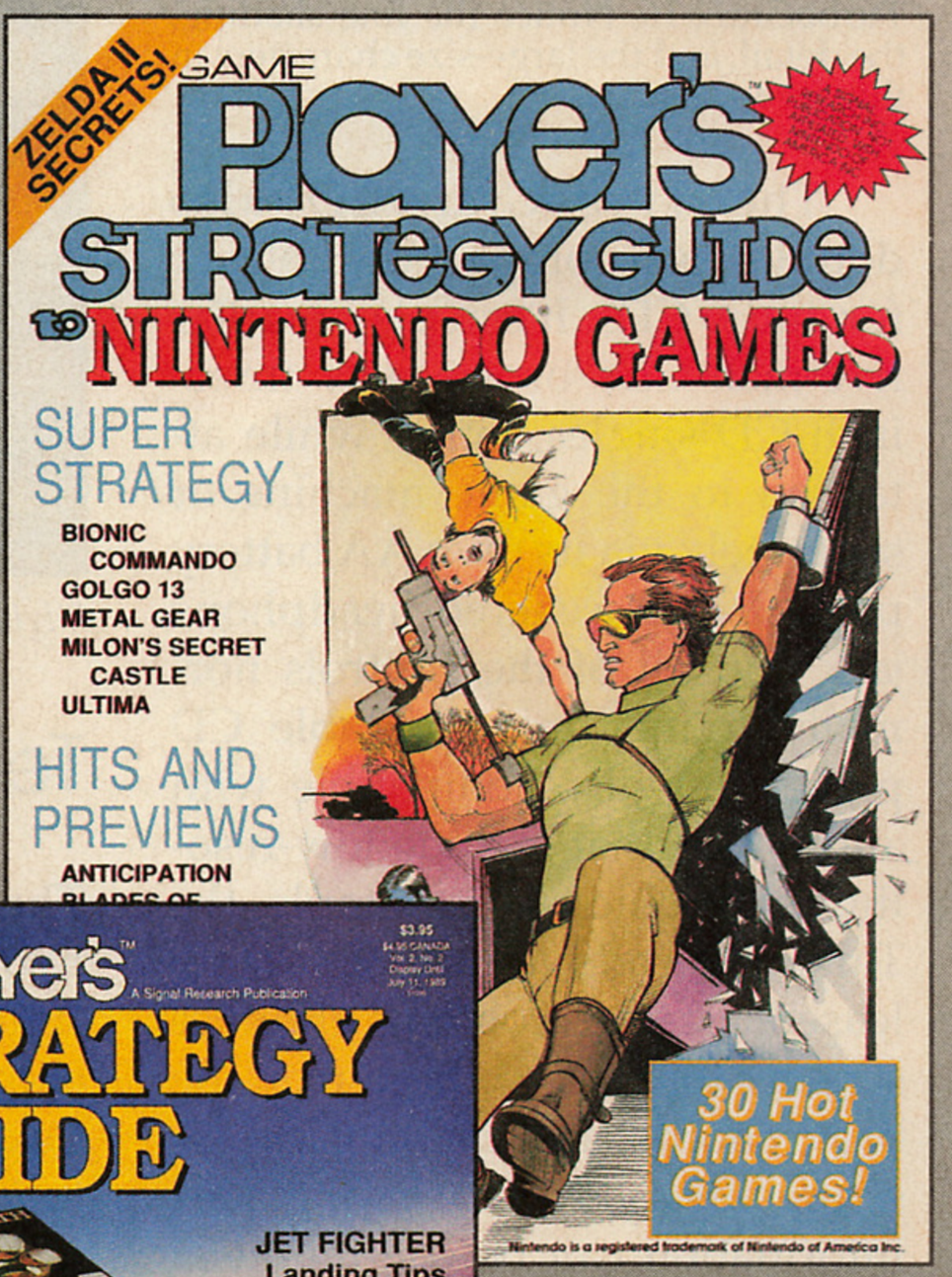


In the days before Christmas, people hunting for Nintendo cartridges to stuff into the stockings of their loved ones mainly found empty racks. Every new game seemed to be in short supply.

But since January there has been a consistent stream of new releases. Even *Super Mario Bros. 2* and *Double Dragon* are now available. And it seems the new releases have more personality than games of the past — which all too often seemed interchangeable, like clones of each other. Certainly *Amagon*, *Bubble Bobble*, and *Golgo 13* are not imitations of games that have come before.

NINTENDO NEWS

New Titles Perk Up Nintendo Library

Leslie Mizell

1. Study the *Bionic Commando* map to decide when to descend and when to transfer.
2. In area 1, you should quickly get behind this soldier and shoot him before he shoots you.
3. This power beam is deadly, so hoist yourself up and shoot out the generator.
4. Fire directly into the core of the main system to destroy it, but watch for soldiers!
5. When you eliminate armored soldiers in the vertical scrolling scenes, you earn eagles worth extra firepower.

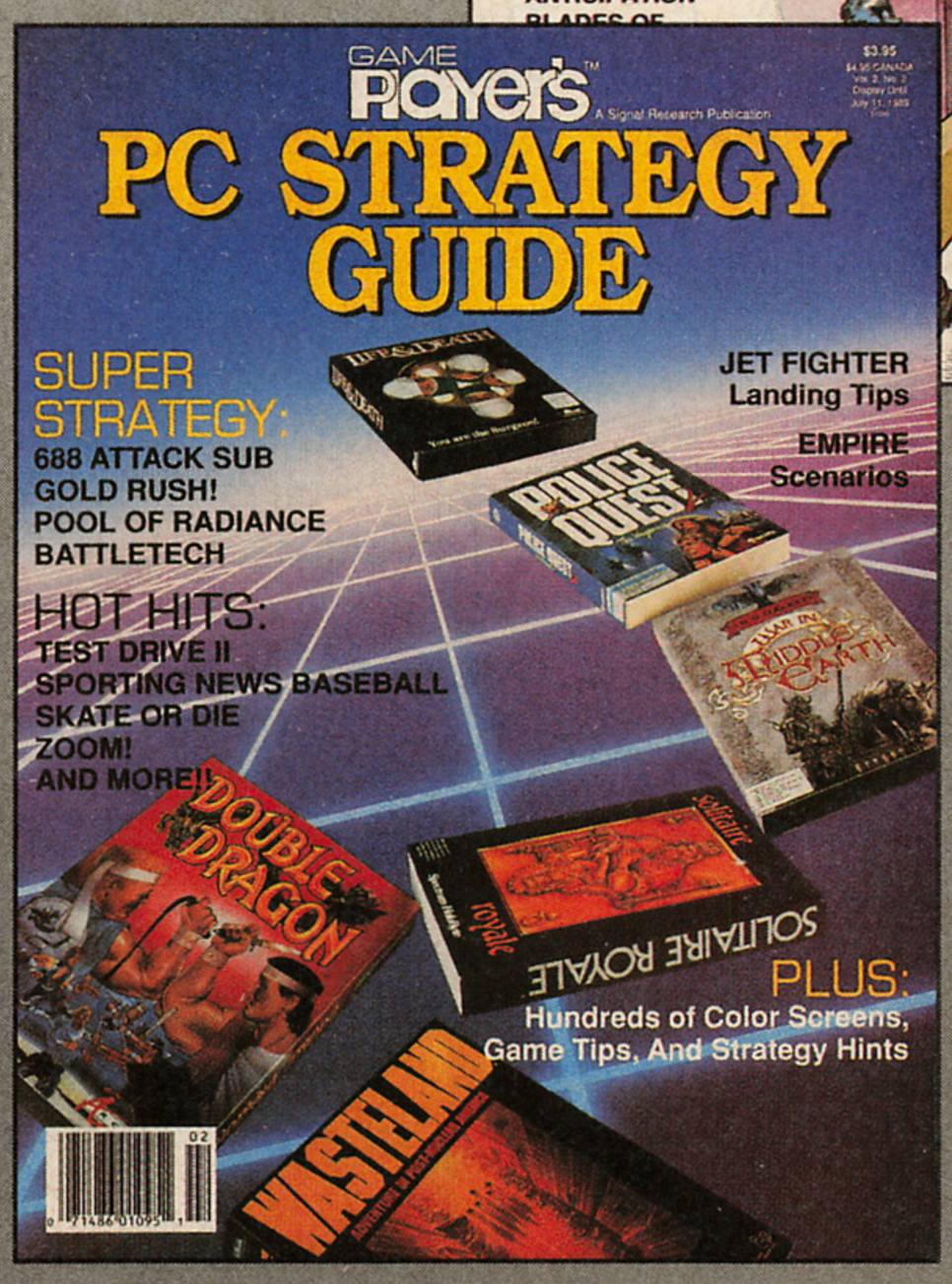
Bionic Commando

Neither is *Bionic Commando*, Capcom's new adventure. Okay, our hero is single-handedly battling hordes of heavily armed soldiers, trying to rescue Super Joe, and attempting to destroy the Imperial Army's arsenals at the same time. And yes, he's armed with a gun that gets more powerful throughout the game until it becomes a "hyper bazooka."

Still, the Bionic Commando does not run, jump, and karate chop his way through enemy lines. Instead, he has a special grappling mechanism called a bionic arm. When he reaches a chasm, or when he needs to reach a high ledge, he just shoots a wire (remember Spiderman?) which is immediately anchored. Then he can either jump across the chasm or raise himself to the ledge.

The game begins on a map of 19 areas. The helicopter which drops the Bionic Commando can travel to any of the zones. Watch out for enemy trucks, however, because when you run into one, you automatically descend and battle the enemy. Areas 1 through 12 are each different, with dangerous missions to complete. Areas 13-19 are "neutral zones." They contain masses of enemies to defeat, but always in the same patterns. You'll pick up vital supplies in the neutral zones that you'll need to complete other areas. A flare gun in zone 13, for example, lights the tunnel in area 4 so you won't have to battle soldiers in the dark.

When you encounter the enemy, you descend into one of two locales — a beach or a desert. Here, you fight the enemy on a short,



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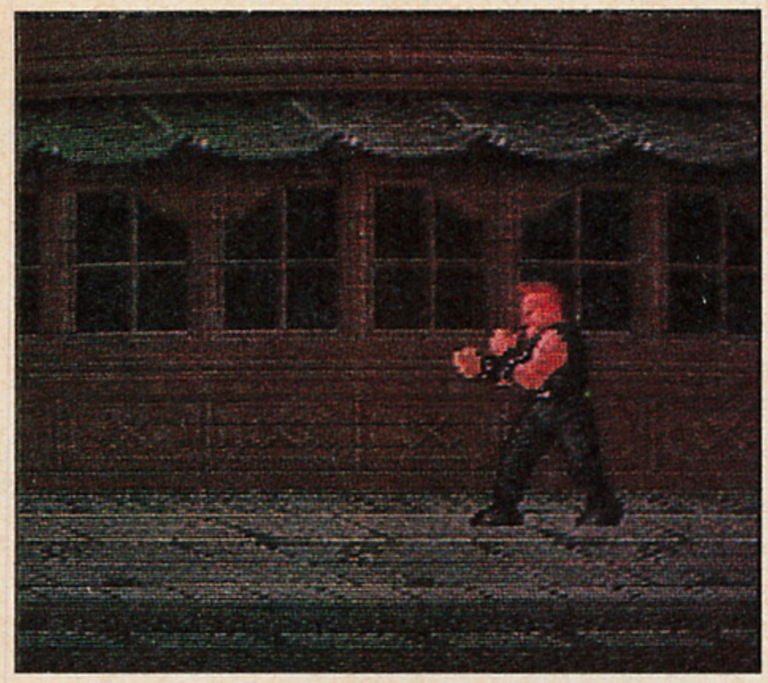
tors with extremely detailed scenery, and games with full-motion video sequences.



Vigilante is a martial-arts game for the TurboGrafx-16. Notice the fine shading, the detail, and the large-size characters in this scene.

The TurboGrafx-CD also doubles as a compact disc player for audio CDs. It can play regular five-inch CDs or the new three-inch CD singles, either while attached to the game machine or separately via its own AA battery pack. It has a stereo headphone jack and all of the controls normally found on a portable CD player. It's also compatible with audio CDs that include low-resolution graphics. For example, the Talking Heads album *Naked*, released last year, contains graphics screens that show the lyrics, the basic chords, and the musical instruments used for each song. This information can be continuously displayed on a TV screen as the music plays — but only when the CD is played on a graphics-compatible CD player. Very few CD players in the U.S. have this capability, so most people aren't aware that some CDs already in their collections include graphics. With the spread of CD players like the TurboGrafx-CD, that will begin to change.

To view these graphics, however, the TurboGrafx-CD must be attached to a TurboGrafx-16 game machine, so it's not the ideal solution for audiophiles who don't play videogames. Also, the CD graphics should not be confused with the gold CD Video discs which recently became available. CD Video discs offer about five minutes of TV-quality, full-motion video, plus about 20 minutes of CD-quality sound. The TurboGrafx-CD can play the audio portion of these discs, but not the video portion.

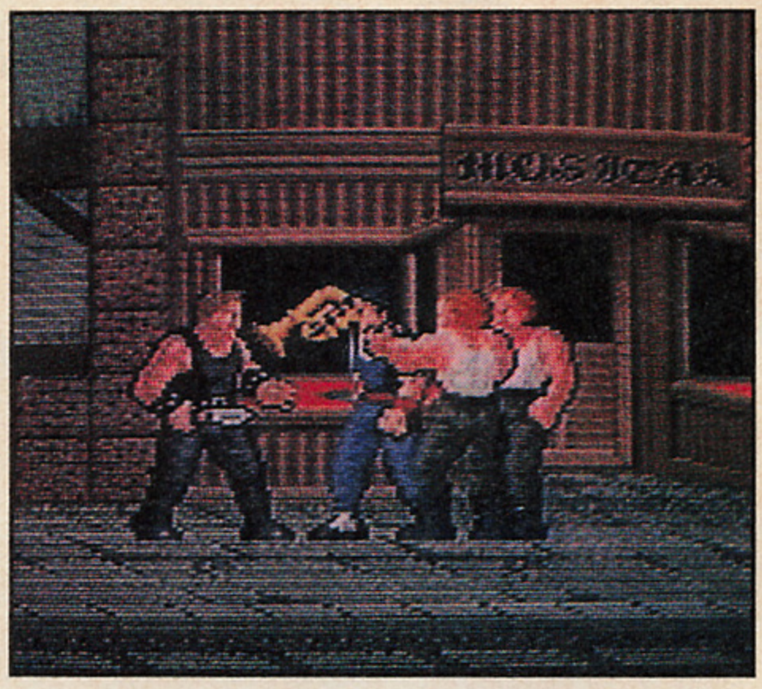
Vigilante: Our hero fights back.

Technical Details

The TurboGrafx-16 is actually a hybrid 8/16-bit microcomputer. At its heart is a special 16-bit video chip which is more powerful and flexible than the chips found in today's home game machines and in most personal computers. The video chip works together with a very fast 8-bit microprocessor chip, a customized 6502 that runs at eight megahertz. This is approximately four times as fast as the microprocessor found in the Nintendo game machine.

The TurboGrafx-16's screen resolution is 256 x 216 pixels (screen dots), only slightly more detailed than Nintendo's 256 x 192. But the TurboGrafx-16 can display many more colors — 512 versus Nintendo's 52 — and twice as many sprites (animated screen objects). The sprites can also be up to 32 times larger.

The sound chip inside the



Vigilante: Even with several large characters on the screen, the TurboGrafx-16 is capable of rapid animation without flicker.

TurboGrafx-16 has six channels with fully programmable waveforms. This compares to the Nintendo's five channels with five preset waveforms.

Unlike Nintendo and Sega, NEC has never before sold a videogame machine in the U.S. NEC is better known in this country for its personal computers, TV sets, audio equipment, and microchips. However, the TurboGrafx-16 has been available in Japan under the name PC Engine since October 1987, and also has been available in Europe and the U.K. for several months. It is reportedly a hot seller in those parts of the world, and the special CD player is proving especially popular with Japanese game players.

GP

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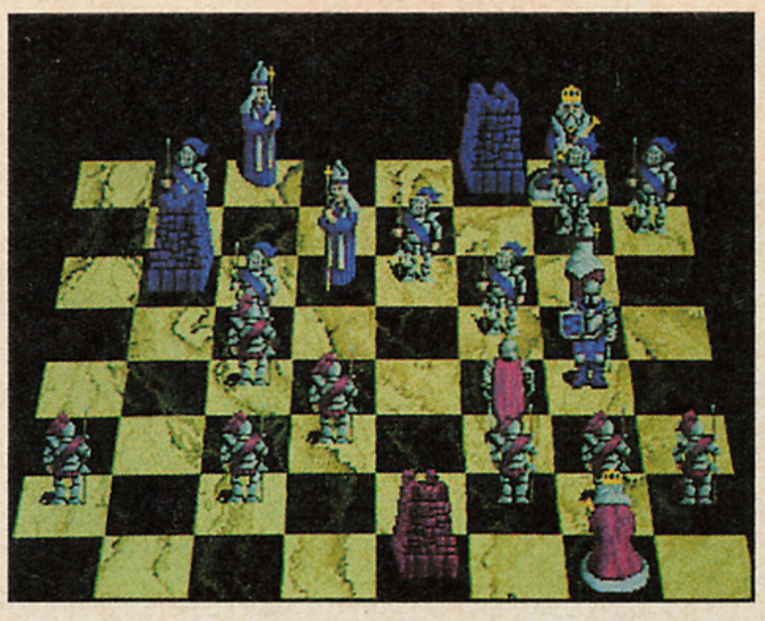
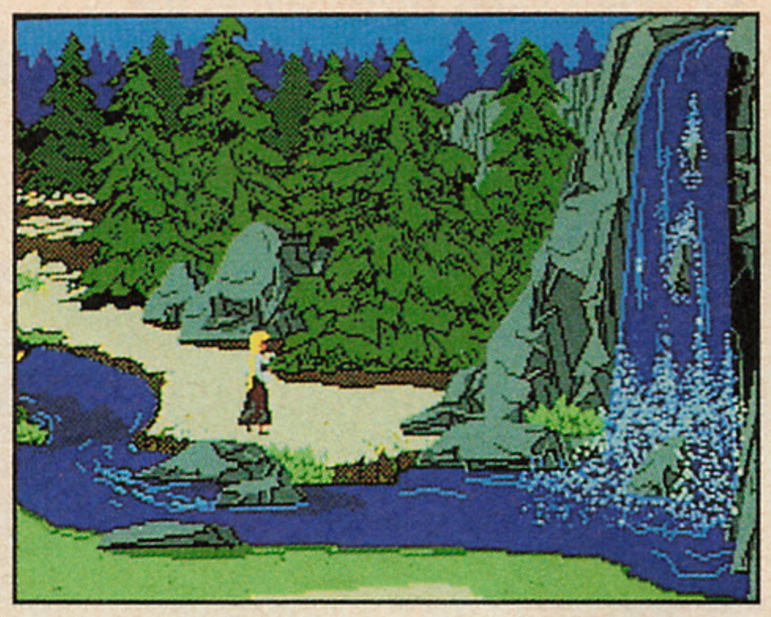
PLAYERS WORLD

AWARD-WINNING COMPUTER GAMES

Tom R. Halfhill

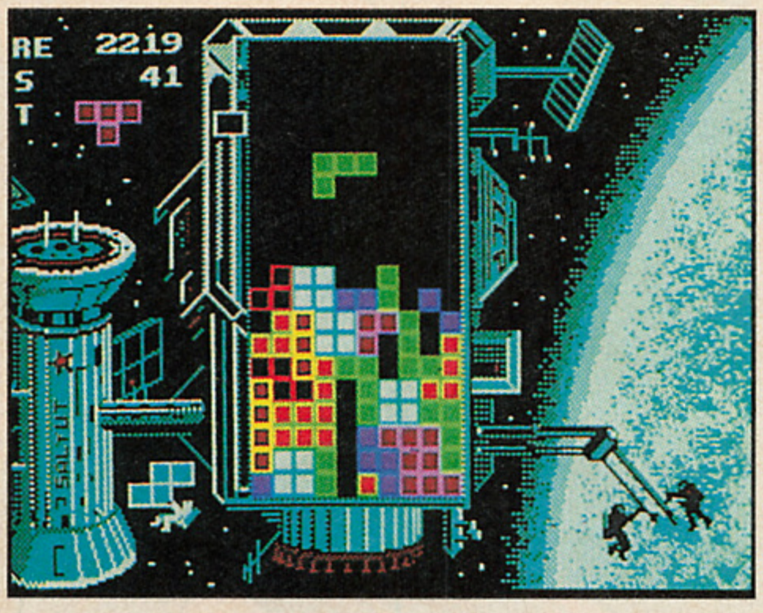


Interplay Productions' *Battle Chess* was singled out for Best Graphics. This is the Amiga version.



King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella won the award for Best Adventure or Fantasy Role-Playing Program.

Tetris was the big winner at the computer industry's version of Hollywood's Academy Awards. At a banquet held recently in San Diego, members of the Software Publishers Association (a trade group consisting mostly of software companies) announced their favorite programs of 1988 in several categories. *Tetris*, the first



Spectrum Holobyte's *Tetris* won four SPA awards, sweeping almost every category in which it was nominated.

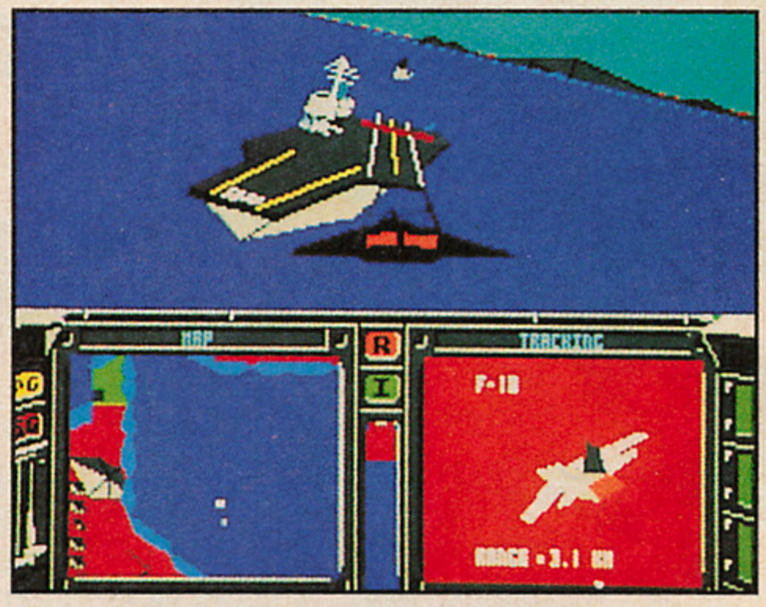
videogame imported from the Soviet Union, won four awards — more than any other game.

Tetris' strong showing surprised some software publishers because it bucks the current trend of sophisticated simulations and complex adventure games. Published in the U.S. by Spectrum Holobyte, *Tetris* is a relatively simple (but addictive) game of skill, luck, and quick reactions. Yet it won every category in which it was nominated, except Best Music. It captured awards for Best Original Game Achievement, Best Consumer Software Program, Best Action/Strategy Program, and Best Entertainment Program.

Another surprise was the Best Music award (officially called Best Sound Achievement in a Non-Music Product). Many observers expected the winner would be Sierra On-Line's hit adventure game *King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella*, which features a 40-minute musical score by composer William Goldstein. Instead, the winner was the Amiga version of Cinemaware's *The Three Stooges*. Sierra didn't go home empty-handed, however — *King's Quest IV* later won the award for Best Adventure or Fantasy/Role-Playing Program.

MicroProse's *F-19 Stealth Fighter* (*Game Player's* Computer Game of the Month last issue) was another major winner, capturing the award for Best Simulation. Broderbund's *Shufflepuck Cafe*, an air-hockey simulation for the Macintosh, took the award for Best Action/Arcade Game. The Amiga version of Bethesda Softwork's *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* (reviewed in last month's issue of *Game Player's*) was chosen the Best Sports Game, and Interplay Productions' *Battle Chess* won the award for Best Graphics Achievement in a Non-Graphics Product.

One game, Mediagenic's *The Manhole* for the Macintosh, was considered so unusual that it won the award for Best New Use of a Computer. *The Manhole* is a graphics-adventure game based on Apple's Hypercard software, and is the first U.S. computer game to be available on a CD-ROM disc.



F-19 Stealth Fighter from MicroProse walked away with the Best Simulation award.

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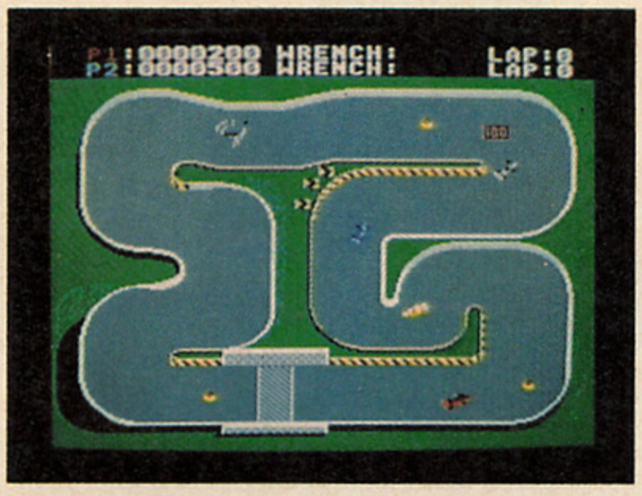

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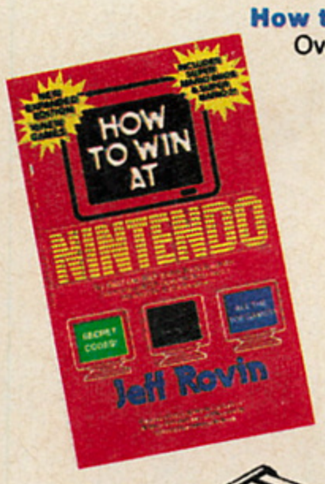

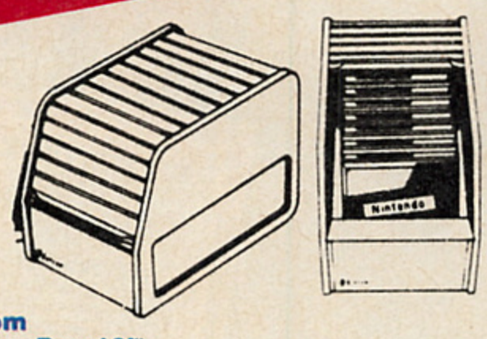

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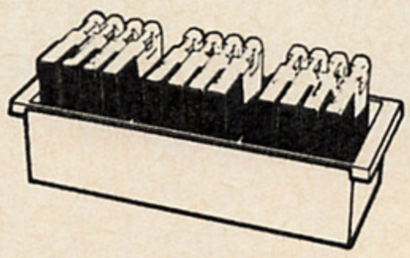

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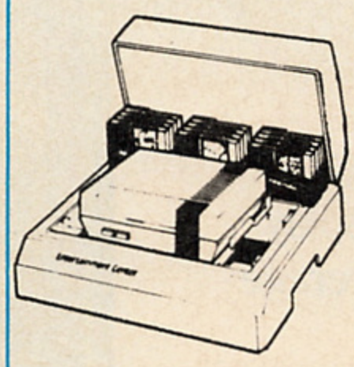

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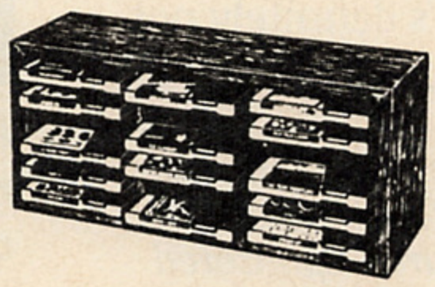

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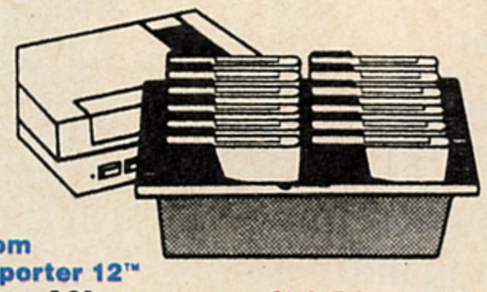

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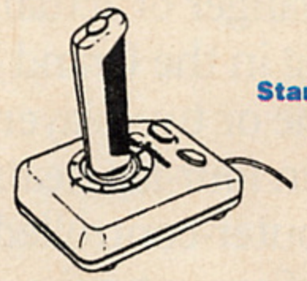

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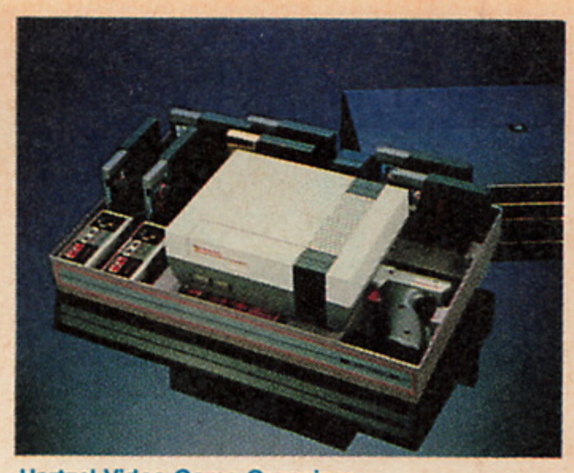

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FACE-TO-FACE ...WITH WIL WHEATON

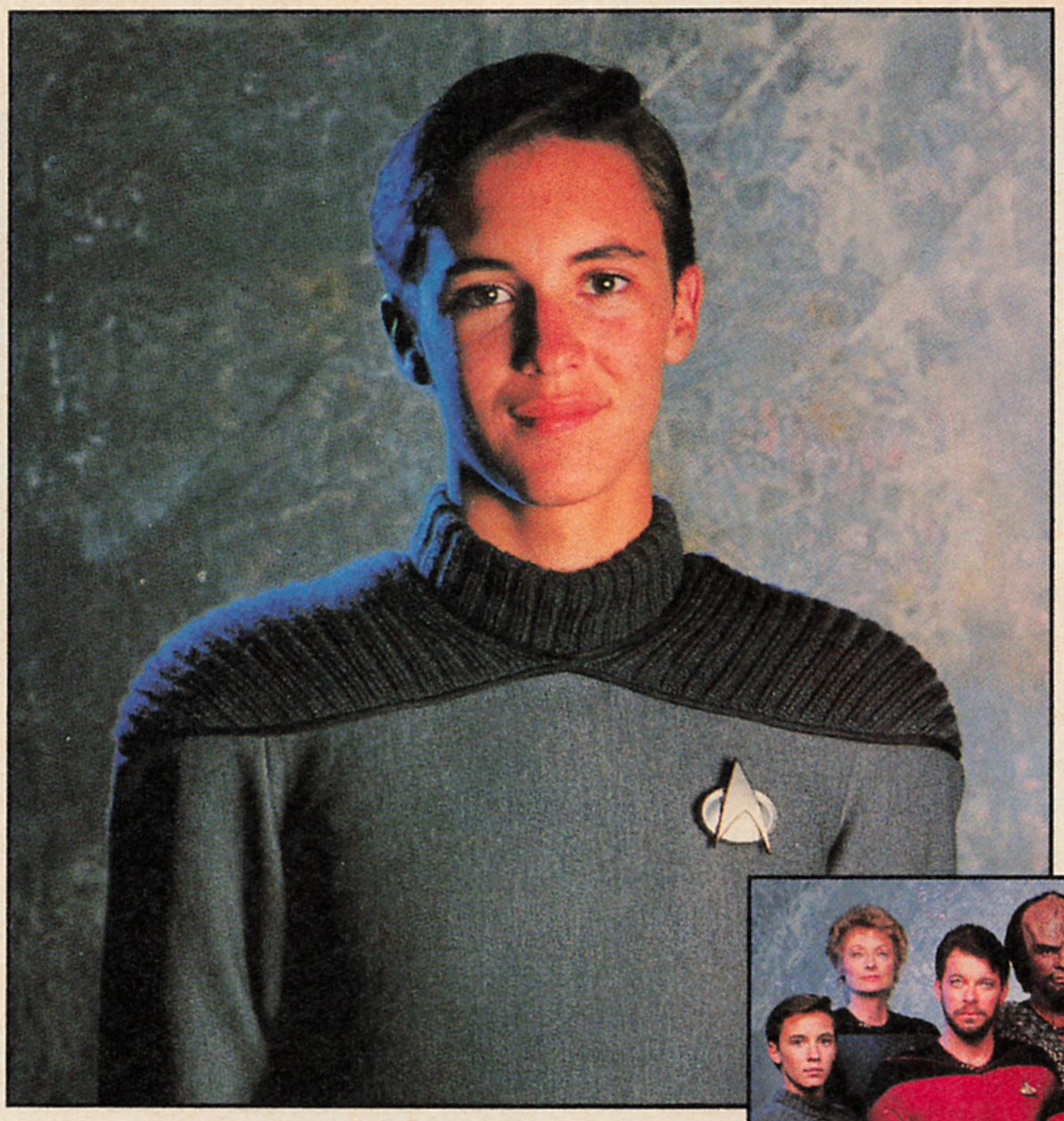
Jason R. Rich

Seventeen-year-old Wil Wheaton really believes that space is the "final frontier," which is probably why astronomy has become one of his favorite subjects in school. Using a telescope in his backyard, Wil enjoys studying the stars. Of course, he also enjoys visiting the stars as "Wesley Crusher" on TV's *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

On *Star Trek*, Wil's character is a genius who knows all about computers. In real life, Wil knows all about his Nintendo machine and Apple Macintosh computer.

"We've had the Nintendo since it first came out," says Wil. "We have around 30 game cartridges. I like the *Super Mario Bros.* game a lot. *The Legend of Zelda* is one game I got heavily into. My friends and I spent months trying to solve it."

Wil prefers games that are intellectually stimulating. "*The Legend of Zelda* is challenging and has good graphics. There is so much stuff to remember in that game. I suggest that someone playing the game draw maps. Finding level 7 was really tough. Also, always go for the hearts so you can get more life. That is how we beat the game."



Wil Wheaton, who plays "Wesley Crusher" on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, enjoys playing Nintendo games and programming his Macintosh computer.

Other members of the *Star Trek* cast enjoy computers, too. Wil recently helped Captain Picard (Patrick Stewart) set up his new Macintosh.

Although Wil also plays games on his Macintosh, more recently he's become a "hacker," he says. "Not hacking as in breaking into government computers or anything," he explains. "I mean opening up the computer, and learning about what ROM does what. I have learned how to do my own upgrades. I just got into playing with the resource editor, making my own icons and writing my own programs."

But Wil and his younger brother still like to play Nintendo. "Since the video store near our house began renting Nintendo games, we rent all of the new games before we buy them. There has not been a game which I really hated."

Other members of the *Star Trek* cast share his interests, Wil says. "We are like a huge family. Jonathan Frakes [Commander Riker] is like the older brother I never had. My best friend, Guy, who is a stand-in on the show, got me interested in the Macintosh. Patrick Stewart [Captain Picard] recently got himself a Macintosh, so he invited us over for dinner, and we helped him set it up."

GP

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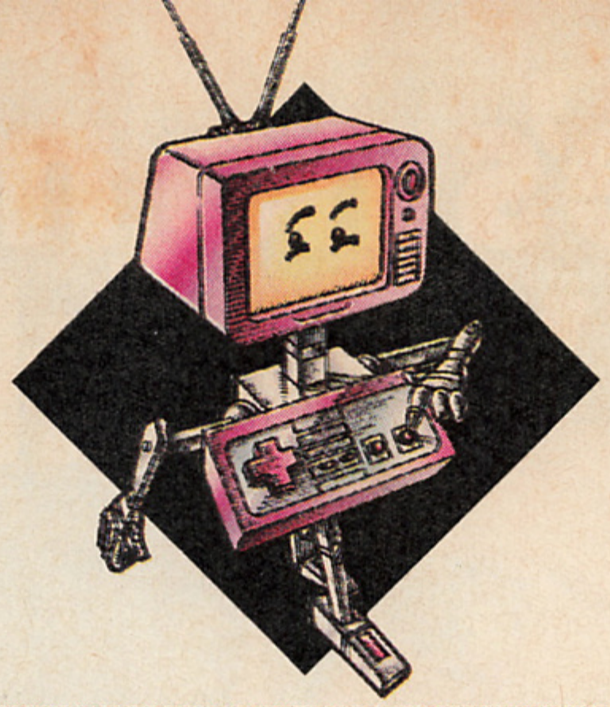


NINTENDO NEWS

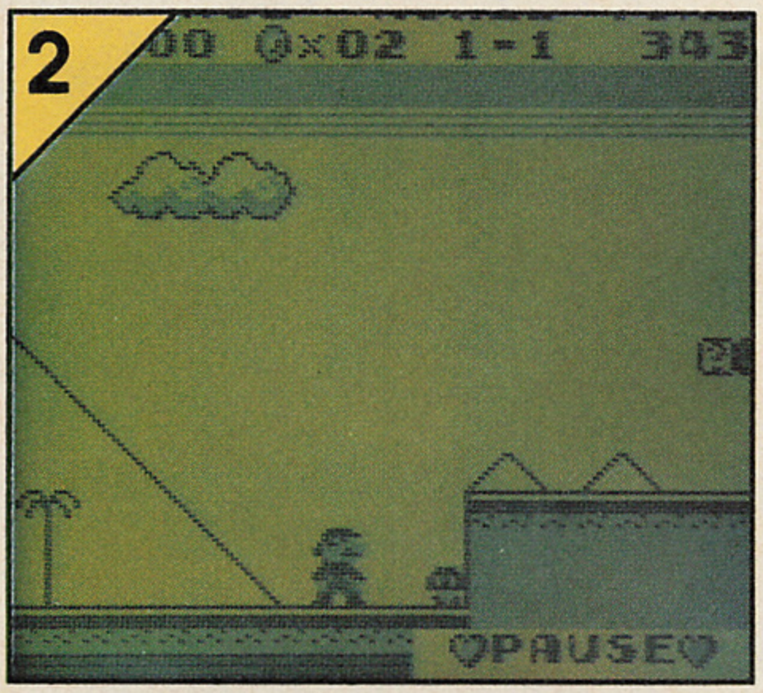
Hot This Fall: Portable Game Boy, New NES Games

Tom R. Halfhill

Do you ever miss your Nintendo machine when you're away from home? Have you ever wished there were something better to do during long drives than fidget in the back seat and count out-of-state license plates? Would you like a machine that lets you play Nintendo games anywhere, anytime?

Nintendo has the solution: a handheld, battery-powered videogame system that's as portable as a

Sony Walkman. It's called the Game Boy, and it could become one of the hottest toys during the fall and holiday seasons.



Handheld videogames have been around for years, of course, but the Game Boy is different. First, it's not limited to playing only one game. It works with special cartridges the size of a credit card, so you can play many different games on the same machine. Second, the quality of the game play is vastly improved over earlier handheld videogames. The graphics are more detailed, the animation is smoother, and the sound effects and music are in true stereo. In fact, the Game Boy even comes with a pair of Walkman-style earphones so you can hear the dynamite sound effects and background music without bothering anyone.

Finally, the Game Boy has the powerful backing of Nintendo, far and away the dominant force in home videogames. Software companies are quick to support anything Nintendo does, and the new Game Boy is no exception. About two dozen companies have already indicated that they will introduce game cards for the Game Boy, virtually guaranteeing that it will enjoy a wider selection of games than any competing system.

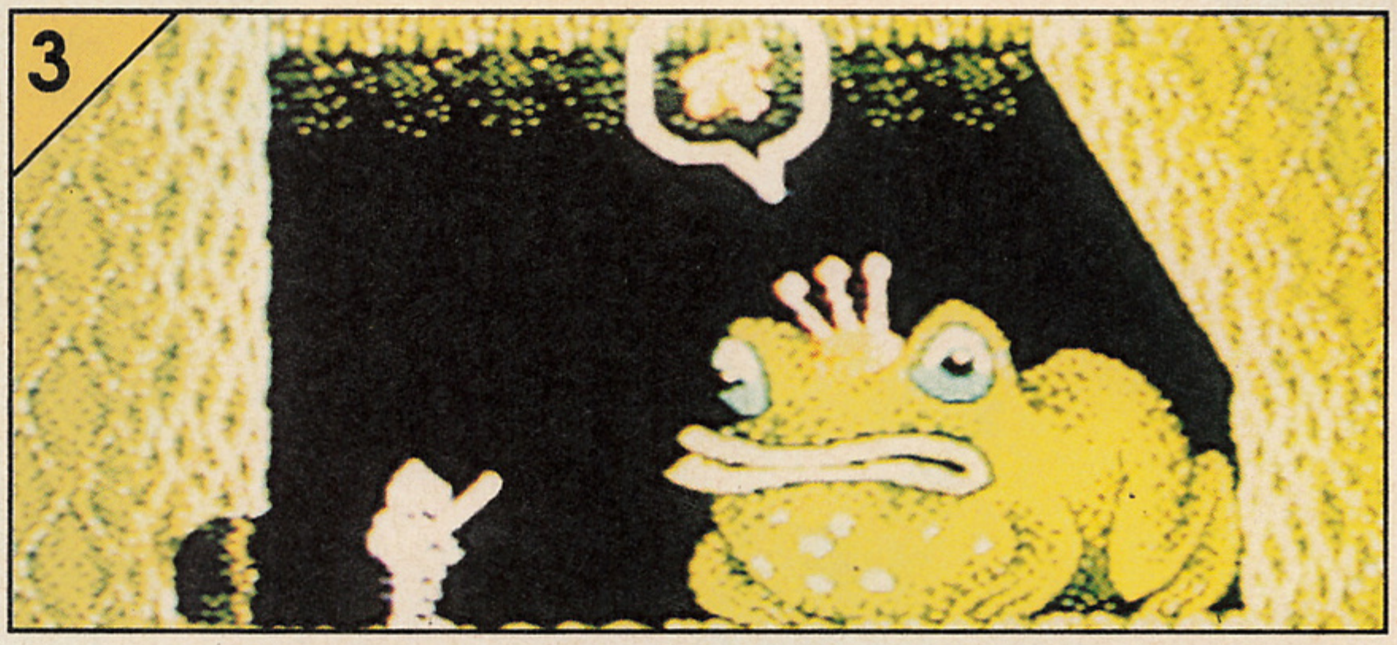
Our tests of the Game Boy reveal that it's indeed a leap beyond all earlier handheld videogames. It's very playable, and the games are as challenging as those made for the full-size Nintendo machine. We're not surprised that the Game Boy is already a big hit in Japan, where it's been available for several months.

In fact, we've seen only one handheld videogame system that outshines the Game Boy — the new Atari Portable Color Entertainment System. It can do anything the Game Boy can, but in-

1 Nintendo's Game Boy is a portable videogame machine about the size of a Sony Walkman.

2 One of the first games to be released for the Game Boy will be *Super MarioLand*, based on the *Super Mario Bros.* series.

3 *Ironsword: Wizards & Warriors II* is an eagerly awaited sequel coming soon from Acclaim.



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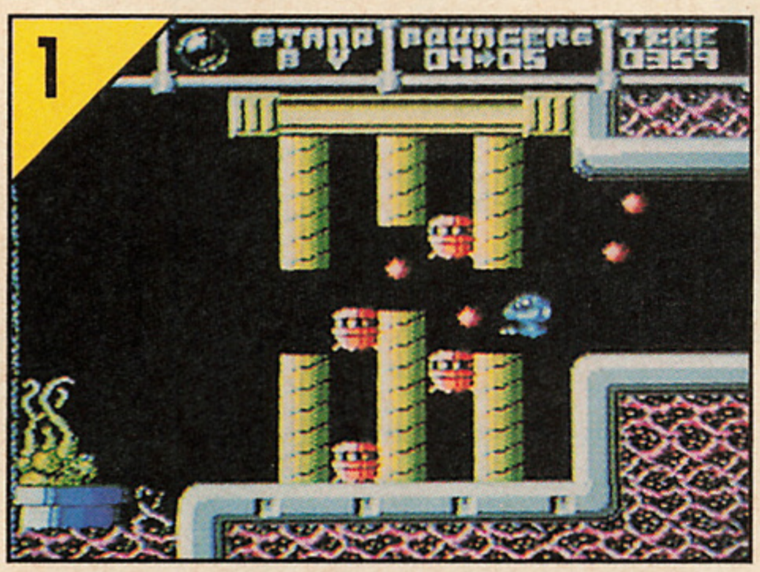

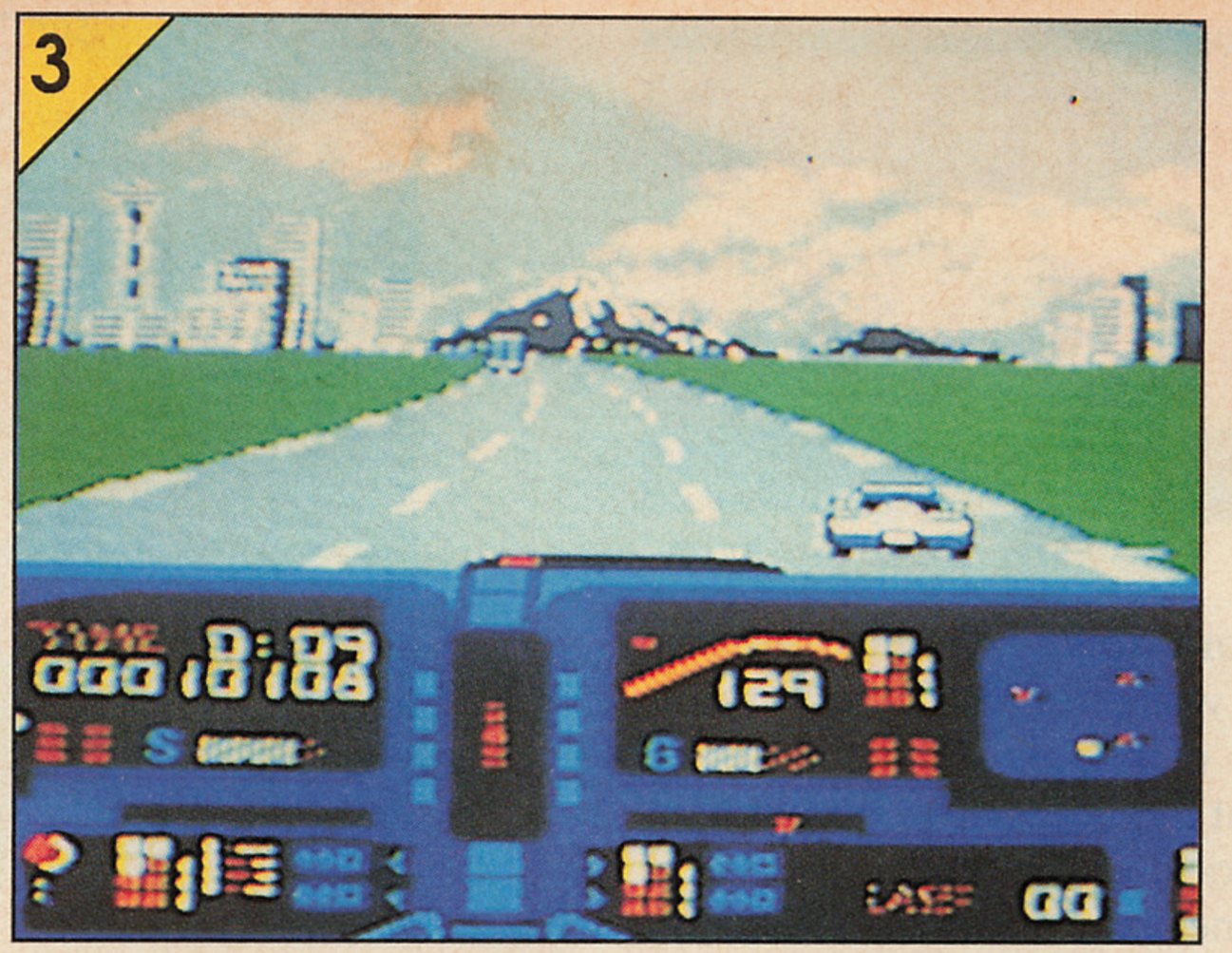

1 Odd creatures abound in Acclaim's *Cybernoid*, a sci-fi thriller.

2 Acclaim's *Bigfoot* puts you in the driver's seat of a monster car-crusher truck.

3 *Knightrider*, another Nintendo game from Acclaim, is based on the popular TV series about a car with super powers.

stead of the Game Boy's 2.5-inch black-and-white LCD screen, the Atari has a 3.5-inch screen in full color. We've played both portables, and the Atari comes closest to duplicating the experience of playing a full-size videogame.

However, the Atari costs more ($149.95 versus $89.95), lacks such popular Nintendo games as *Super Mario*, and probably won't be as widely available as the Game Boy. (For a full report on the Atari portable, see the "Atari Safari" column on page 41.)

When the Game Boy begins appearing on U.S. store shelves in September, it will come with one game card (*Tetris*), a pair of stereo earphones, four AA batteries, and a special cable called the Video Link. With the Video Link, two Game Boys can be wired together for multiplayer games. Special game cards will allow head-to-head competition between two players.

Optional accessories for the Game Boy include a carrying case ($9.95) and a rechargeable battery pack that doubles as an AC adapter ($27.95). The carrying case has a belt attachment and room for the Game Boy, a Video Link cable, earphones, and four game cards. The rechargeable battery pack eliminates the need to use regular AA batteries. Nintendo says it supplies enough power for ten hours of continuous play between charges, and it can be recharged hundreds of times. Indoors, it can be plugged into a wall socket to run the Game Boy on regular AC power.

Game cards will sell for about $20, and will be available at most places where regular Nintendo cartridges are sold. Among the first games to be released for the Game Boy this fall (besides *Tetris*) are *Super MarioLand*, a special version of the popular *Super Mario Bros.* series; *Alleyway*, in which players must break through a gridlock in a table-tennis match with a deadly energy ball; and a pair of sports games, *Baseball* and *Tennis*. Both sports games allow direct competition between two players when two Game Boys are hooked together with the Video Link cable.

If Nintendo's predictions are correct, the Game Boy will be one of the most sought-after products this fall — so do your shopping early.

New NES Games

Nintendo's Game Boy isn't the only big news this summer. Dozens of new games, including some long-awaited sequels, are due to hit the stores in the months to come.

We got a chance to play some of these games this June at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. At this giant industry event, Nintendo had by far the biggest booth — more than 50,000 square feet, as much space as about 40 average-sized houses. It cost Nintendo $1.5 million to build this massive exhibit, which

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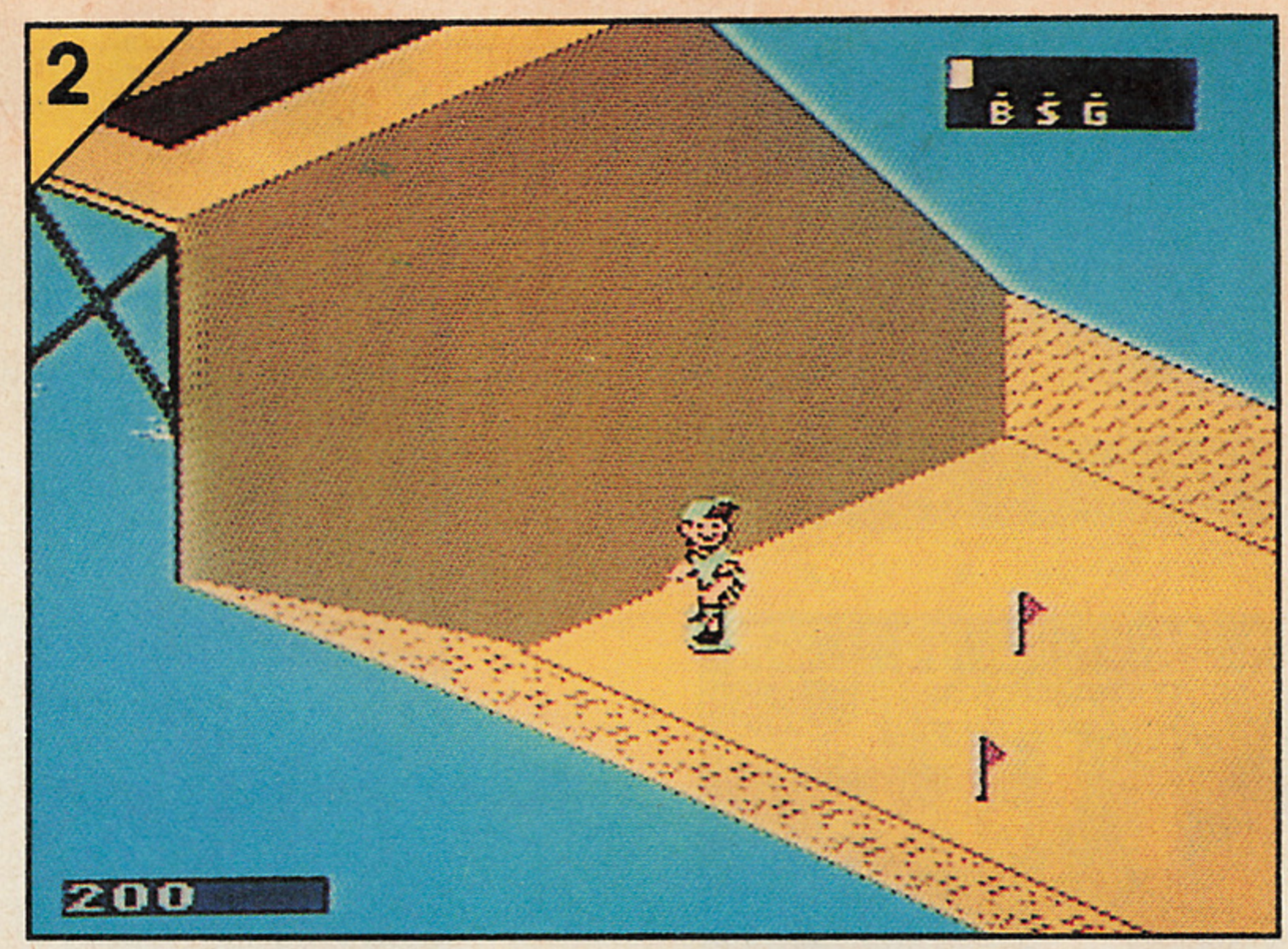


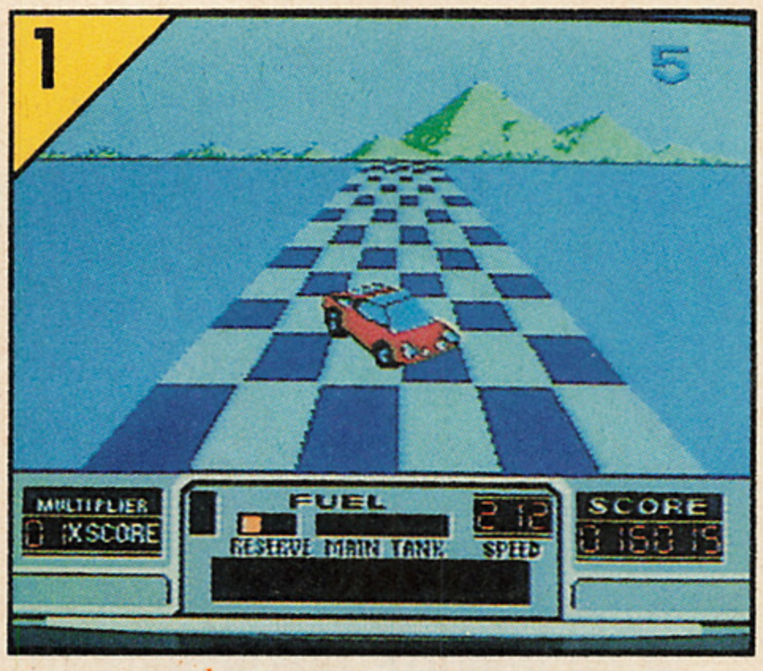
1 *Road Blasters* from Mindscape: Watch out for enemy lasers, and don't spin out of control!

2 Skateboard your way to the world championship in Mindscape's *720*.

3 Piloting this advanced attack helicopter is only half the battle in Mindscape's *Infiltrator*.

was torn down after the four-day show was over. But tens of thousands of people got an advance look at the latest developments in the world of Nintendo.

One of the hottest hits is sure to be Acclaim's *Double Dragon II: The Revenge*, the eagerly awaited followup to *Double Dragon*. Like the



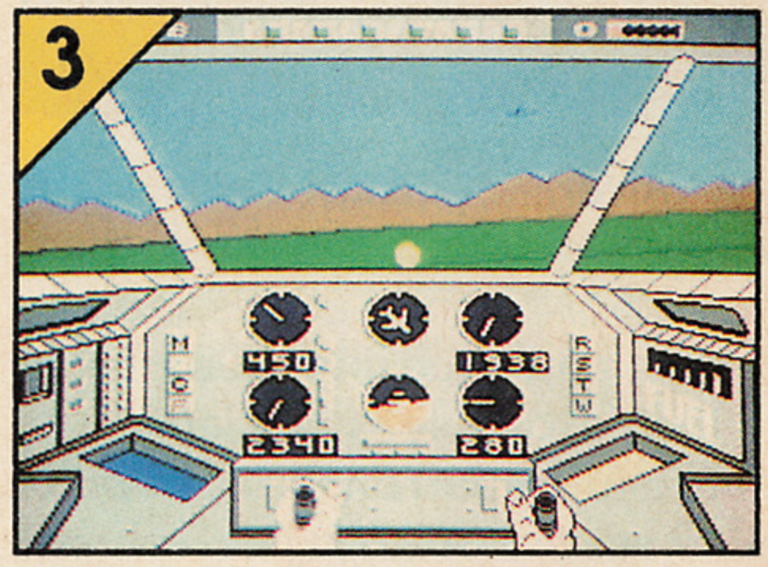
popular arcade version, the Nintendo game will permit two players to participate simultaneously as the twin brothers Billy and Jimmy Lee. The twins are on a mission to avenge the disappearance of Billy's girlfriend, and the action takes place in dark alleys, atop buildings, and in underwater tunnels. To win the game, you must defeat the ultimate enemy, the evil Shadow Boss.

To make two-player games like *Double Dragon II* easier to play, Acclaim is introducing a two-player wireless remote controller. It works with single-player games too, of course, and also has rapid-fire turbo options for both the A and B buttons, slow motion, and an auto shut-off circuit to reduce battery drain. The Acclaim Double Player System should be available by August for $44.95.

Another Acclaim sequel that's on the way is *Ironsword: Wizards & Warriors II*. Due in November, it will feature more than 100 different characters and five different lands to explore. Other new games from Acclaim include *Cybernoid*, a science-fiction thriller populated with bizarre life forms; *Bigfoot*, a racing game with car-crunching monster trucks; and *Knightrider*, based on the popular TV series.

Konami is introducing four new Nintendo titles under its Konami and Ultra labels. Konami's *Top Gun: The Second Mission* is the sequel to the original *Top Gun* game based on the hit movie. Once again, you're the pilot of an F-14 Tomcat engaging enemy fighters and ships in combat. Konami's *Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf* has been adapted from a popular personal computer game by Accolade. It's a golfing simulator. You play holes from famous golf courses around the country. Ultra's *Silent Service* is a World War II submarine simulator translated from a hit game by MicroProse. It emphasizes strategy rather than quick reflexes. And Ultra's *Kings of the Beach* is another adaptation of a popular computer game, this time from Electronic Arts. It's a beach volleyball game that has everything from six-pack spikes to skyballs and crushers.

Hi Tech Expressions is introducing three interesting new games designed to appeal to both



adults and youngsters. *Win, Lose or Draw* is based on the TV game show in which players try to guess famous names, titles, and phrases by looking at rough sketches. The game includes 500 puzzles and also lets players draw their own clues on the screen with the controller pad. *The Chessmaster* is adapted

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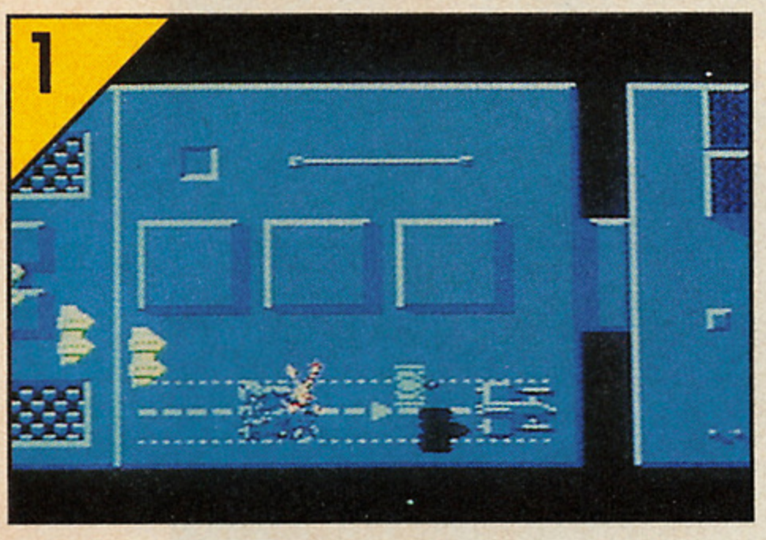
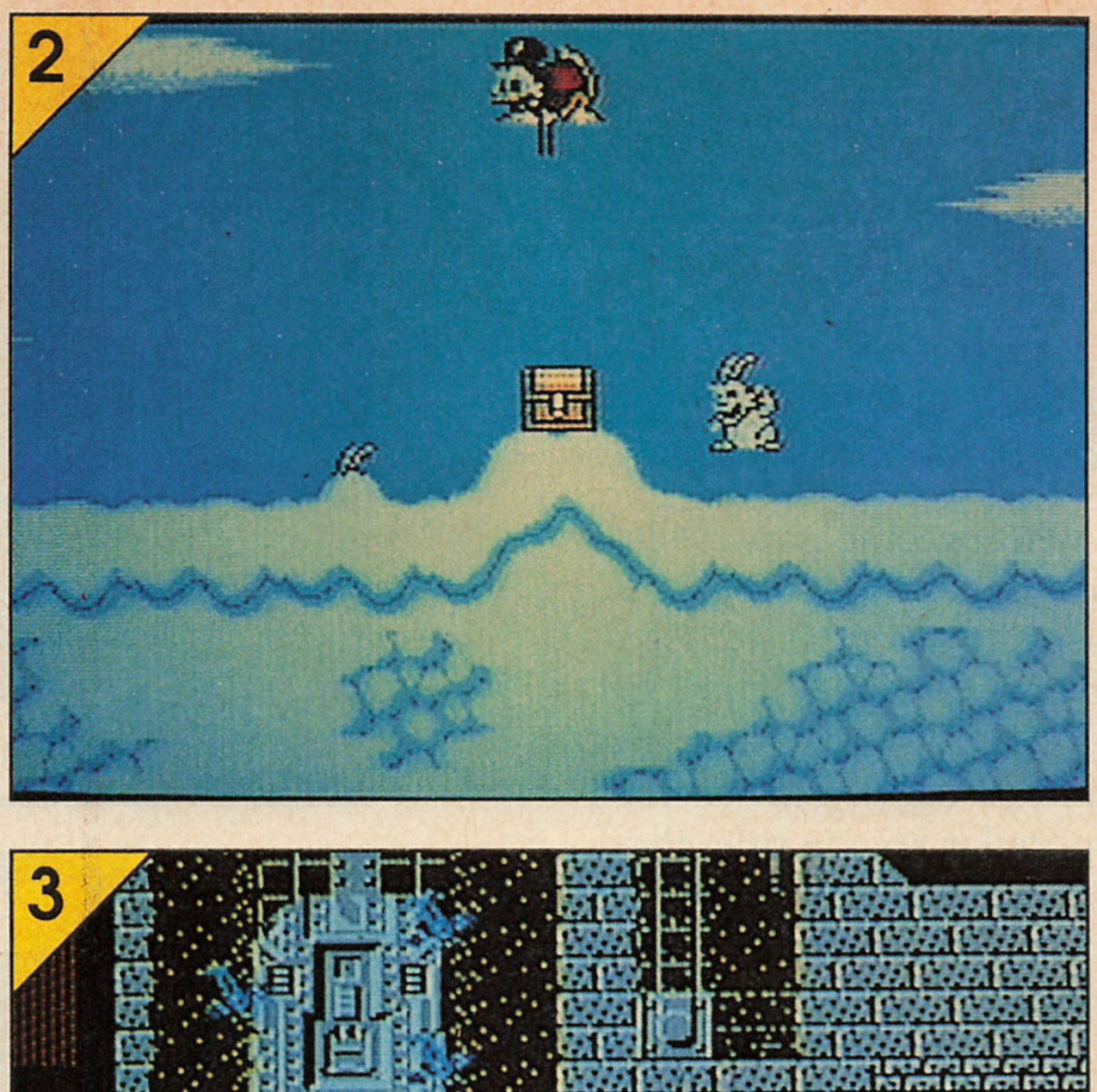
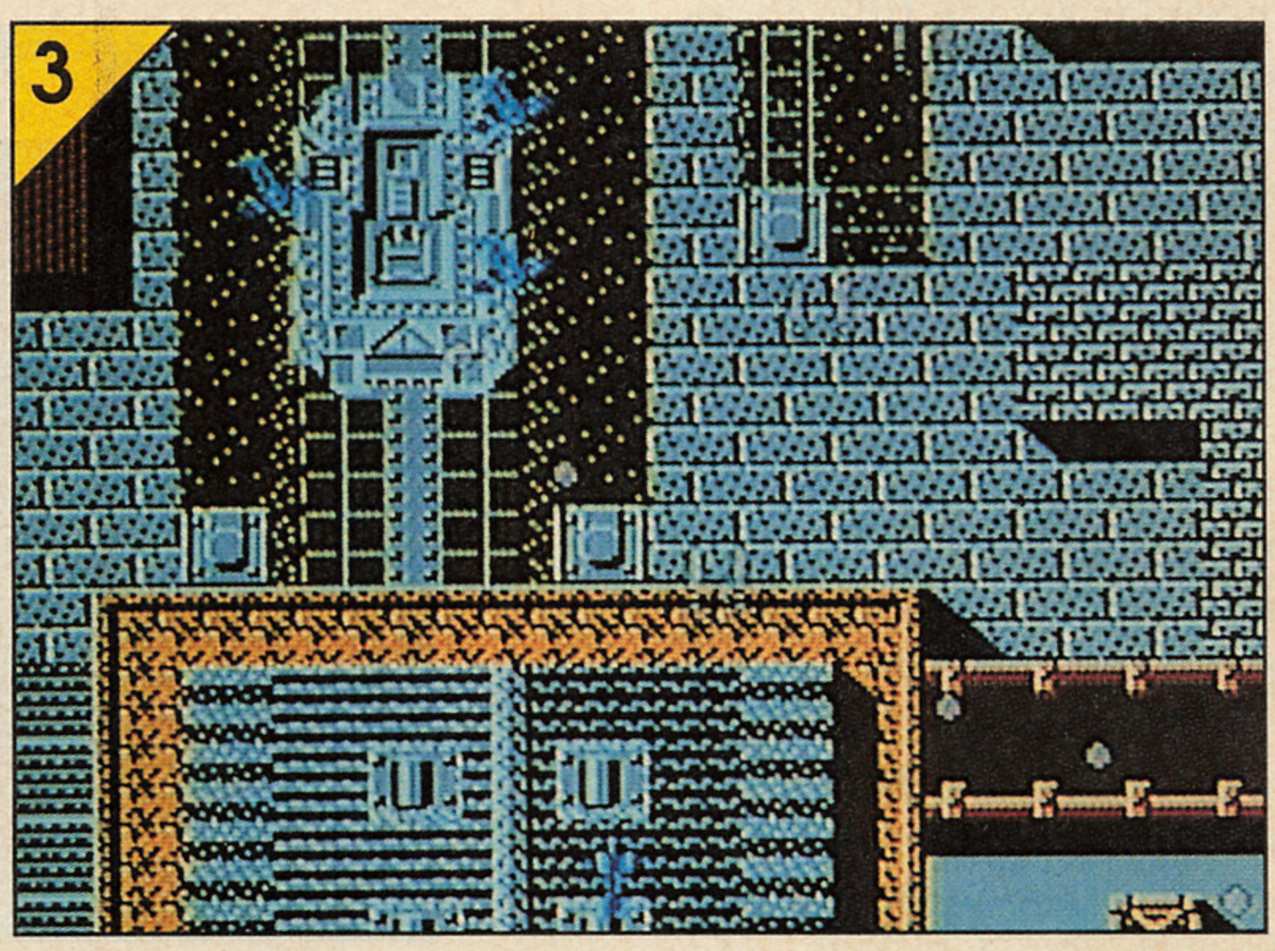
from computer versions of *Chessmaster 2000* and *Chessmaster 2100*, a pair of top-rated chess-playing programs from The Software Toolworks. And *The Hunt for Red October*, based on Tom Clancy's bestselling novel, puts you at the helm of a Soviet nuclear-powered submarine in a high-stakes game of hide-and-seek.

Mindscape is bringing out five Nintendo titles adapted from ar-



cade and computer games. In *Road Blasters*, you control a high-performance armored vehicle as you spin around turns and blast opponents with lasers. In *720*, another arcade translation, you're a skateboarder who must overcome water hazards, street gangs, swarms of killer bees, and Frisbee throwers on your way to the world skateboarding championship. *Infiltrator* puts you in the cockpit of an advanced attack chopper for both air and ground combat missions. *The Last Starfighter* is a space-combat game based on the innovative science-fiction movie of a few years ago. And *Road Runner* is based on the familiar cartoon series, starring you as the Road Runner with the crafty Wile E. Coyote in pursuit.





1 Mindscape adapted *The Last Starfighter* from the innovative movie.

2 Capcom has adapted *DuckTales* from the Walt Disney TV cartoon show.

3 In Taito's *Sky Shark*, you're in the cockpit of a P-40 Tiger Shark for aerial combat action.

Capcom USA is releasing *DuckTales*, based on Walt Disney's top-rated TV cartoon show. Due in stores in September, *DuckTales* stars millionaire Scrooge McDuck on a global search for treasure and adventure. Other new Capcom titles for Nintendo are *Adventures in the Magic Kingdom*, an action-adventure game set in a Disney-style theme park; *Code Name: Viper*, in which players battle Central American drug lords; and *Willow*, based on last year's movie.

Tengen has four new titles: *Super Sprint*, *Vindicators*, *Xybots*, and *Police Academy*. Tengen says *Super Sprint* is the most sophisticated Grand Prix racing game yet introduced for the Nintendo. One or two players can race against computer-controlled cars on one of seven tracks. Players can also customize their cars for greater performance. *Vindicators* and *Xybots* are adaptations of hit arcade games (see last issue's "Arcade Action" column). *Police Academy* is based on the series of slapstick movies about a bunch of

NINTENDO NEWS

misfits who become cops. All of Tengen's games should be available this fall, except *Police Academy*, which is due in January 1990.

Data East is releasing *Bad Dudes*, a street-fighting game based on the popular arcade title. Players assume the role of a modern-day hero whose mission is to save the President from nasty kidnappers.

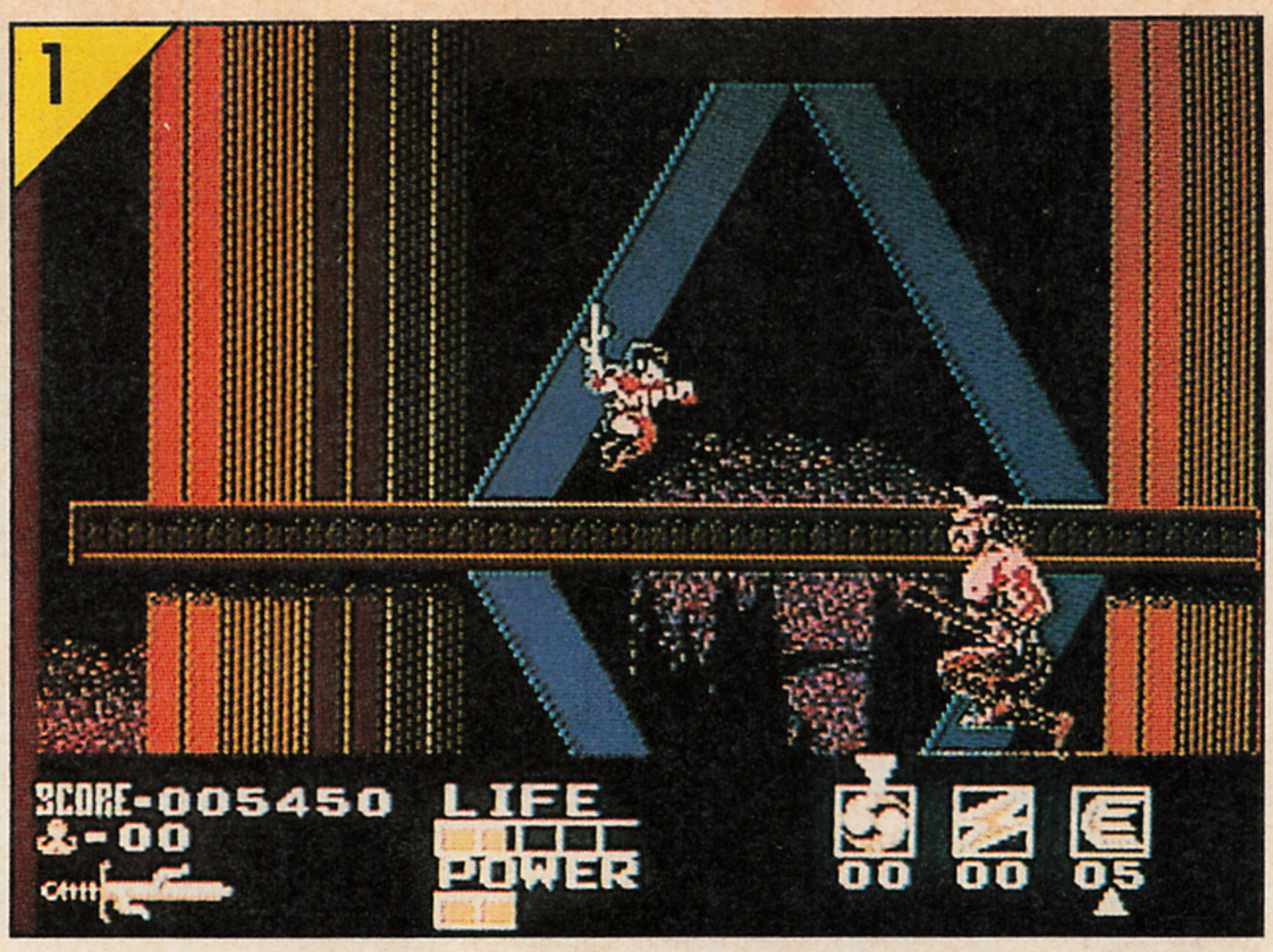
FCI is introducing *WCW: World Championship Wrestling*, which lets you choose from 12 pro wrestlers; and *Phantom Fighter*, a martial-arts game that goes beyond kicking and screaming — you have to answer tricky questions before the Master reveals his unique maneuvers. Both are due in November.

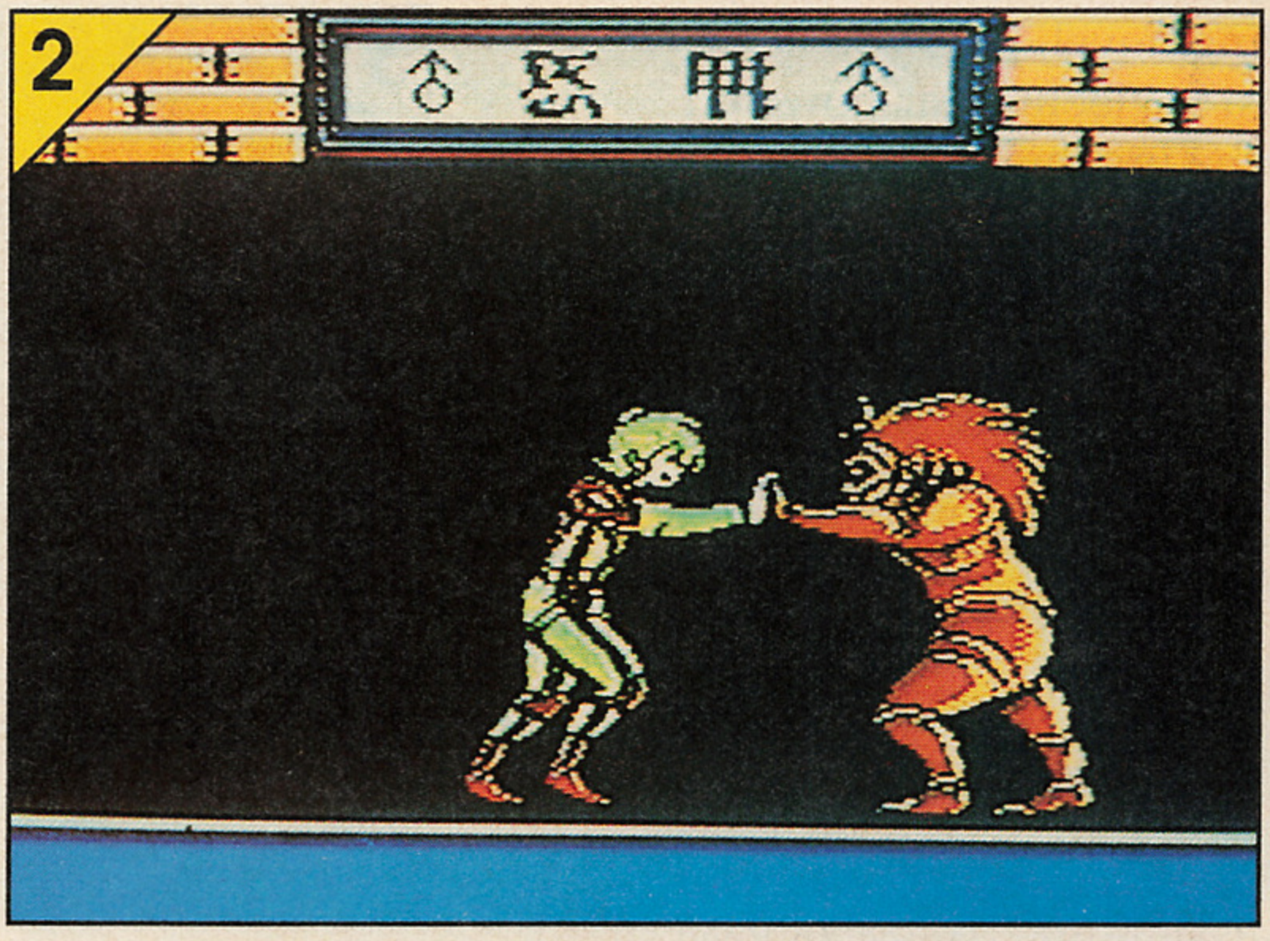
Taito is bringing out three new Nintendo titles between July and December. *Sky Shark* puts you in the cockpit of a P-40 fighter plane deep behind enemy lines in World War II. Armed with bombs and machine guns, you must fight your way past waves of enemy planes, tanks, and artillery bunkers. *Demon Sword* pits you against a dark fiend who uses terrifying magic to rule an ancient world. Wielding a broken sword, you must defeat the fiend's horde of demons. *Target Renegade* is the street-fighting sequel to *Renegade*. Your goal is to dispatch gangs of toughs who lurk in alleys, parking lots, and shopping malls.

Absolute Entertainment, known for its Atari 2600 and 7800 videogames, is introducing its first Nintendo title: *A Boy & His Blob*. This arcade-style adventure revolves around a boy who befriends a young alien known as a Blob. The Blob has journeyed to Earth to find someone to help him save his planet, Blobolonia. *A Boy & His Blob* is notable as the first Nintendo game by David Crane, one of the industry's top game designers. Crane's previous games include such multimillion-sellers as *Pitfall* and *Ghostbusters*. Absolute says *A Boy & His Blob* will be released near the end of this year.

Another newcomer to Nintendo is Matchbox Toys, the miniature car maker. Matchbox will be releasing five new titles for Nintendo in 1990. They are *Tune-Up Rallye*, a one- or two-player racing game; *Monster Truck Rodeo*, a competition involving giant pickups; *Urban Convoy*, in which gamers play wildcat truckers; *Web World*, a space adventure with hand-to-hand combat against aliens; and *Ring Raiders*, in which the futuristic Ring Raiders Air Force battles the Skull Squadron in a contest of world domination.

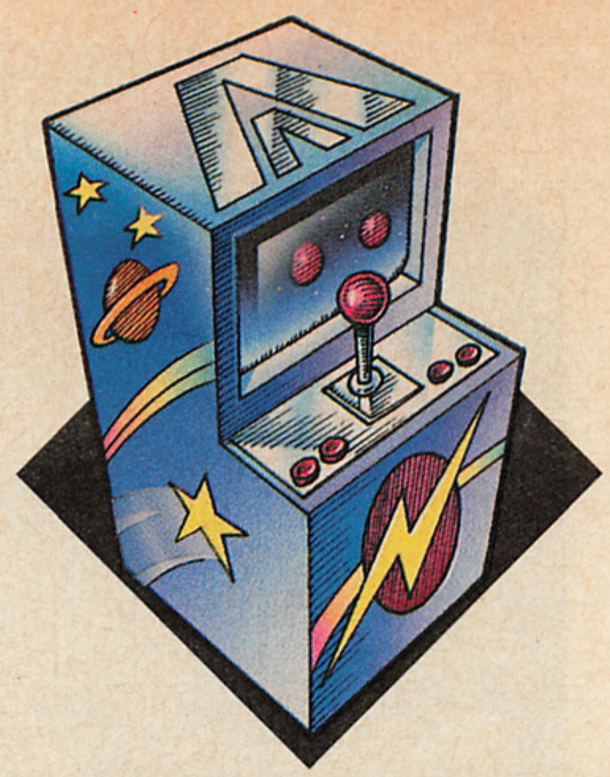
GP





1 *Demon Sword*, another Taito title, forces you to begin a dangerous quest with nothing but a broken sword.

2 *Bashi Bazook: Morphoid Masher* is a new action game from Jaleco.



ARCADE ACTION

HARD DRIVIN': THE WORLD'S BEST DRIVING GAME?

Scott Wolf

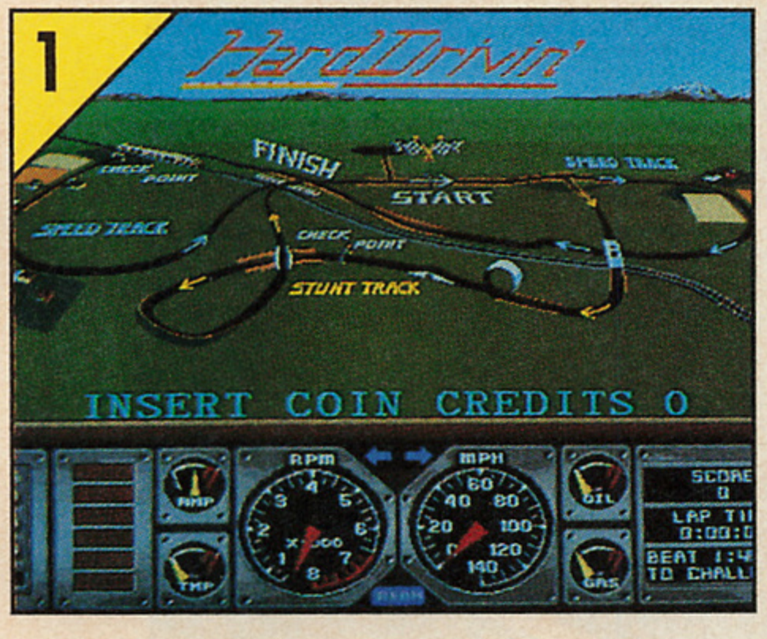
1 *Hard Drivin'* lets you choose between a fast-moving speed track or a tricky stunt track.

2 Obey the sign and maintain a speed of at least 60 mph when entering the 360-degree vertical loop on the stunt track.

3 Here's what happens if you don't go fast enough through the loop.

Climb into your new Ferrari Testarossa and get ready for *the* state-of-the-art driving simulation, courtesy of Atari Games. I'm talkin' about *Hard Drivin'*, a game that will redefine your concept of car race games. *Hard Drivin'* is totally unlike anything else you've seen, including *Out Run*. It is realism taken to the max!

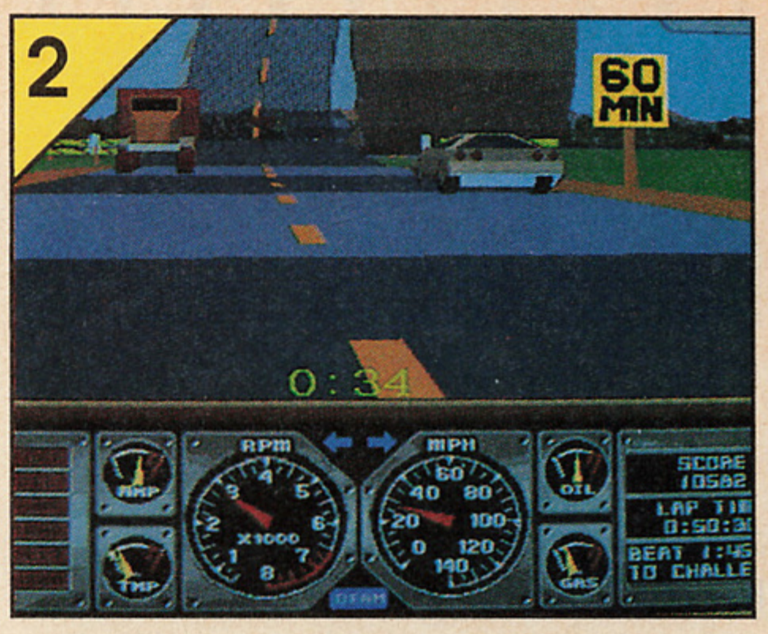
First of all, you don't see your



own car on the screen; *Hard Drivin'* features true first-person perspective. The graphics are solid-filled 3-D, just like Rainbird's *Carrier Command* and *Starglider II* games for the Atari ST and Amiga personal computers. The intro screen in *Hard Drivin'* warns you that what you're about to do is extremely dangerous — *don't try this in real life!*

Although *Hard Drivin'* doesn't shake, rattle, and roll like some other sit-down arcade cabinets, it does have what Atari calls "feedback steering." The steering wheel feels just like a real steering wheel would in the same situation, whether you're zooming down a straightaway, spinning out on a gravel shoulder, bumping through a field alongside the road, or tumbling through the air. And if you select the manual transmission option, *Hard Drivin'* gives you an actual "H" shift pattern — with a reverse gear available at the arcade manager's discretion. (This is one of several options that can be changed by the arcade manager.)

The realistic controls are important, because *Hard Drivin'* isn't some lame autopilot simulation in which you stay mostly on the road, no matter how you drive. In *Hard Drivin'*, you can wander off-road in any direction for up to ten seconds. After that, the game automatically repositions you back on the track, where you must restart



your car and rejoin the fray. In fact, there's so much freedom of control that you can even drive the wrong way — against traffic!

There are two different tracks to choose from: the speed track and the stunt track. The stunt track has a drawbridge jump, a 360-degree vertical loop, a peaked ramp jump, and a 45-degree banked corner. If you reach a certain checkpoint, you get 30 seconds of extra game time.

After adjusting your seat and selecting manual or automatic trans, you turn a key to begin the game. (If you select manual trans and the shifter is in gear, you must press the clutch pedal before starting the car.) Your windshield is a 26-inch color monitor that brings all the action right up close and personal.

Opposing traffic includes Corvettes, vans, trucks, compacts, and other sports cars. And talk

ARCADE ACTION

about scenery! *Hard Drivin'* has houses, farms, gas stations, a four-car railroad train, speed-limit signs, mile-marker posts (which stay bent when hit), and overhead streetlights. There's also a scrolling mountain background and various other distractions.

If you mess up and crash in *Hard Drivin'*, you get much more than a bland "Game Over" message. Your windshield cracks, and you are treated to an instant replay — as seen from outside — of your car bursting into flames.

What's the object of all this? You must compete against the current champion by completing a lap on either track in less than the allotted time. If you succeed in beating the champ's best time, you can continue driving laps, or just go sightseeing — stop at a gas station, pull into a driveway, or take a side road to see where it leads — until you run out of time or crash. At that point, you will be challenged to a championship lap on the stunt track. And get this: If you beat the champ, the exact way you drove is saved in memory, and *you* become the champ to beat. Your winning style is even featured in the attract mode!

Here are some tips that might save you from an early crash and burn:

• Take the stunts at the posted speeds. If you drive too slow on the 360-degree loop, you'll fall off. If you drive too fast over the jumps, you'll plow into the ground.

• The stick shift is more responsive and quicker off the line. Save time by speed-shifting through the gears without using the clutch.

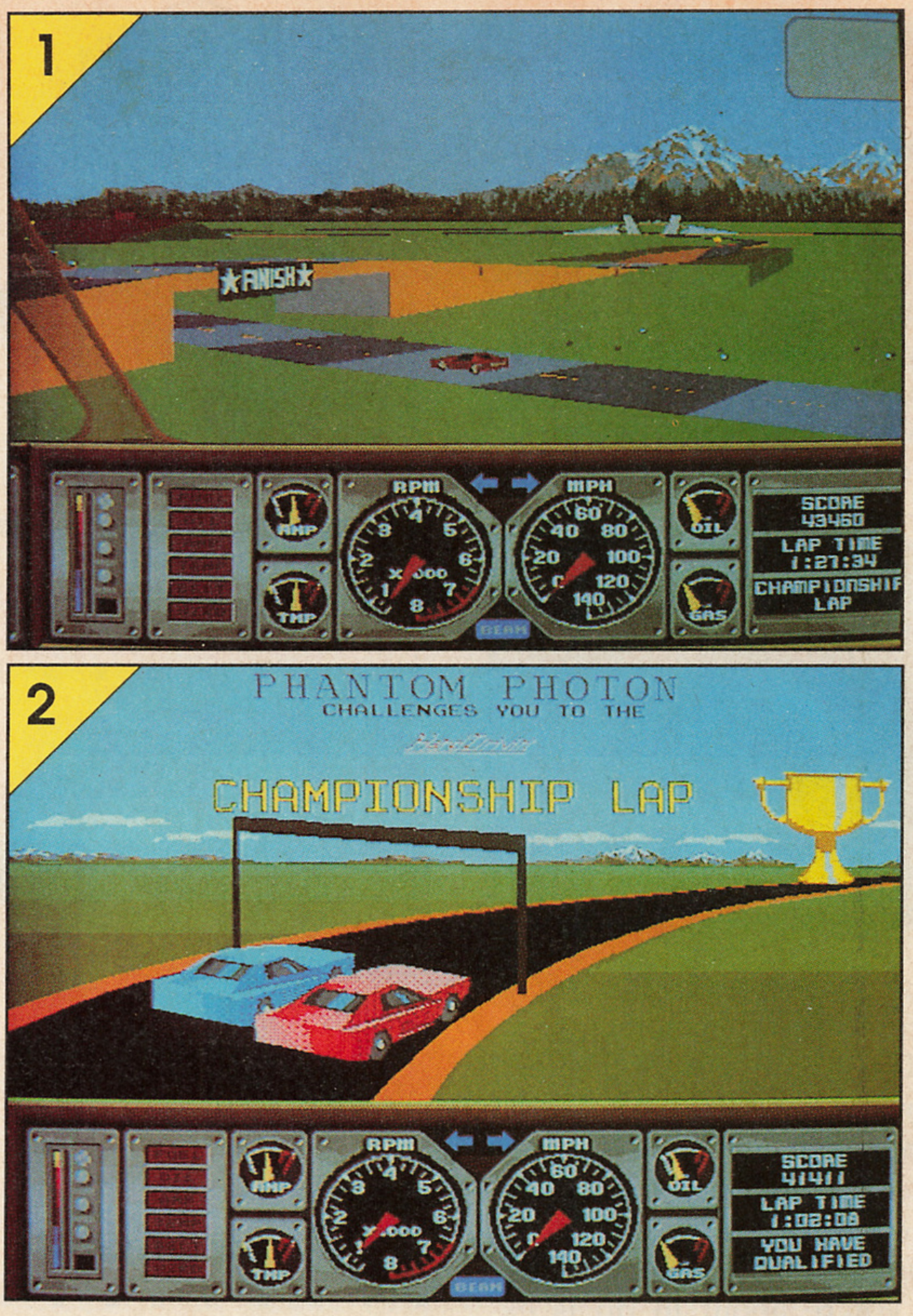
• The steering wheel is very sensitive — *steer carefully!*

• If you've got enough speed, cut corners on the sharp turns by going off the road. This slows you down, but is still faster than trying to recover from a spin.

• If you run out of time just as you're approaching a checkpoint or the finish line, shift into neutral. This eliminates the effect of engine braking and gives you a pretty good chance of coasting through in the nick of time.

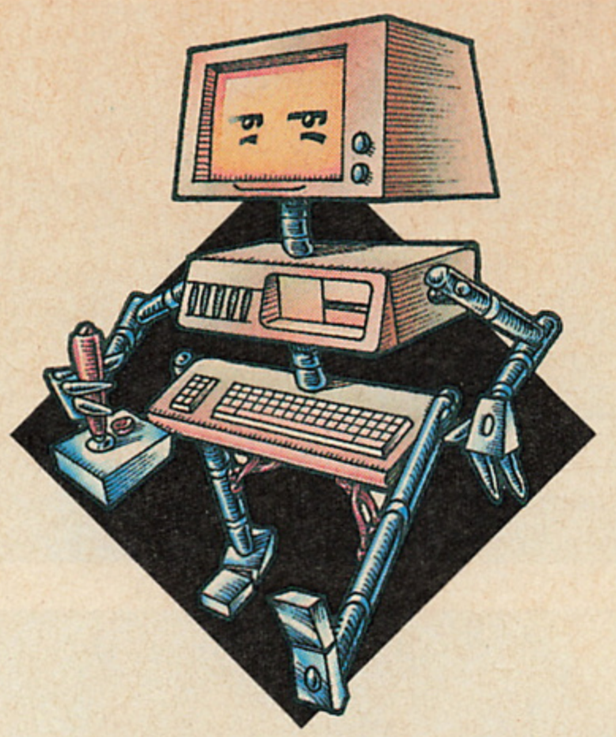
• One last thing: The farmer's cow does not appreciate getting hit!

GP



1 The object of *Hard Drivin'* is to reach the finish line in the allotted time. Notice the highly detailed scenery in the background.

2 Your final challenge is a championship lap against the current champ. If you win, your driving style is stored in memory, so *you* become the champ.



PC PLAYERS

ROLE-PLAYING MADE EASIER

Neil Randall

Fantasy role-playing games almost always revolve around the idea of a party of adventurers. Like the party of Gandalf, Bilbo, and the Dwarves in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, these parties adventure as a unit, with each member contributing skills needed for the group's survival. In role-playing games, each character is played by one

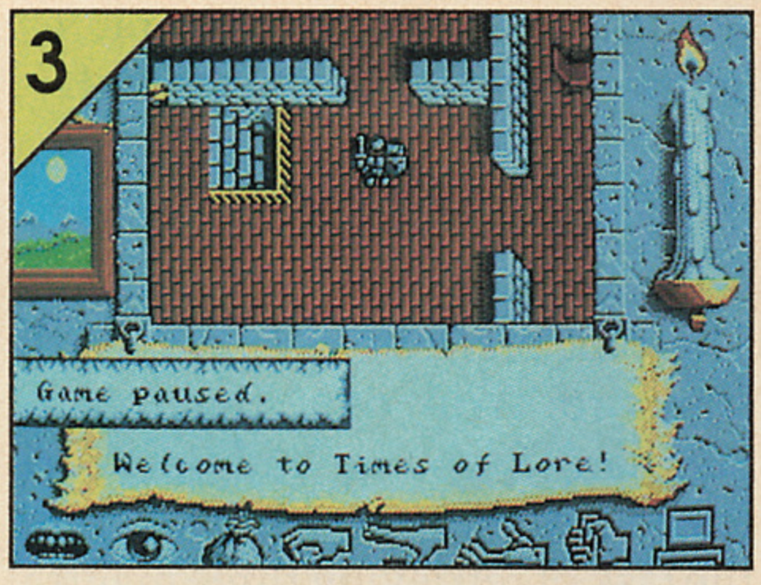
player, so the group dynamic becomes the focus of the game.

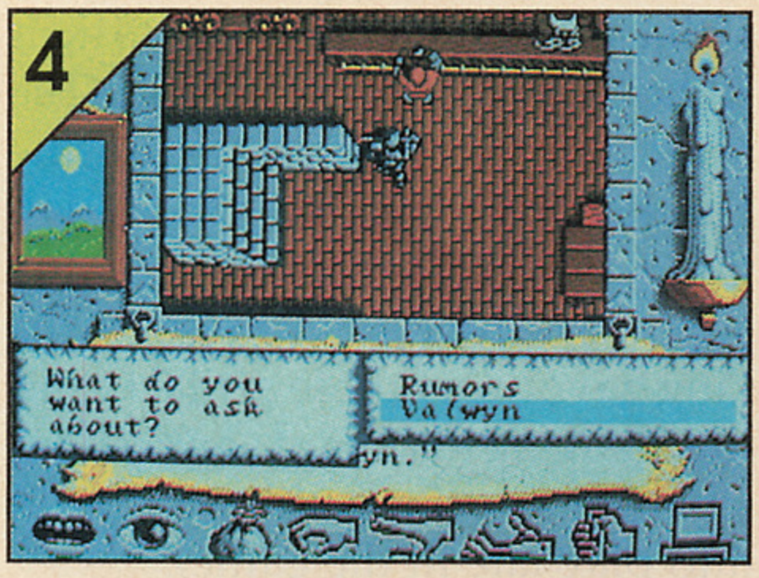
Most computer games, however, are played solitaire. In fact, strong solo play is one of the primary attractions of a computer game. With fantasy role-playing games, this means that one player controls all the characters in the company of adventurers, so the group dynamic is lost. It also means that the game becomes extremely complex. Keeping track of the skills, progression, weapons, and wealth of an individual fighter or sorcerer is difficult enough. When you add thieves, paladins, clerics, and other character types, all with their own skills and their own rates of progression, the game often becomes hard to learn and hard to play.

For all these reasons and more, two recent games stand out from the rest. Origin Systems' *Times of Lore* and Activision's *Prophecy* are role-playing games in which you control only one character, and you don't have to keep track of zillions of statistics and numbers. Unlike the more comprehensive games in this field, *Prophecy* and *Times of Lore* are designed to be played and solved without a commitment of months of your life. As a result, both are extremely welcome products.

Don't get me wrong — I *like* the big, sprawling, role-playing games. Like many people, I have spent hours, days, even weeks working my way through *Bard's Tale III*, *Wizardry V*, *Phantasie II*, and *Ultima IV*. But also like many people (I suspect), I have never finished a single one of these games. In some cases I've come close, but something has always stood between me and the game's conclusion. When you get that far in a game and you *still* can't finish it, the game becomes a frustration.

That's why *Prophecy* and *Times of Lore* are so appealing. To be sure, they don't have some of the complex quests, sub-quests, and storylines we've come to expect from the larger games, but they also don't demand hundreds of hours of your time. For those with plenty of time to spend solving an *Ultima*





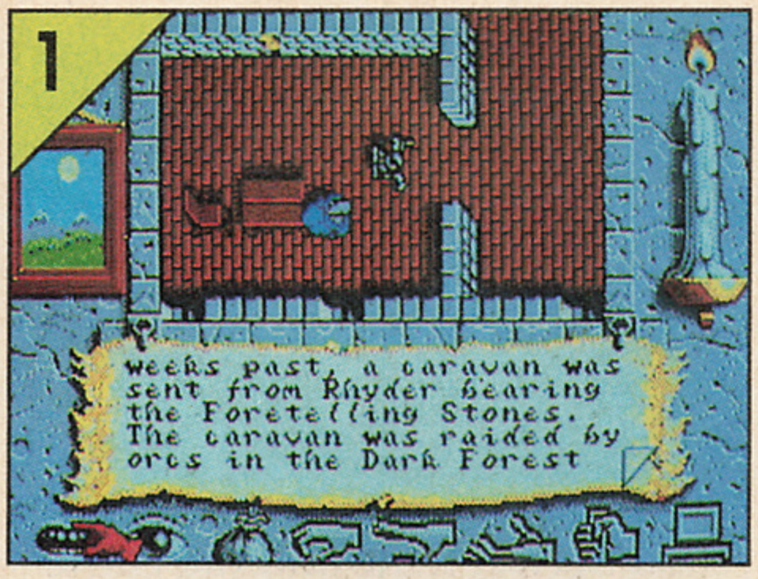
1 *Times of Lore*: The introductory screens set the stage for your quest.

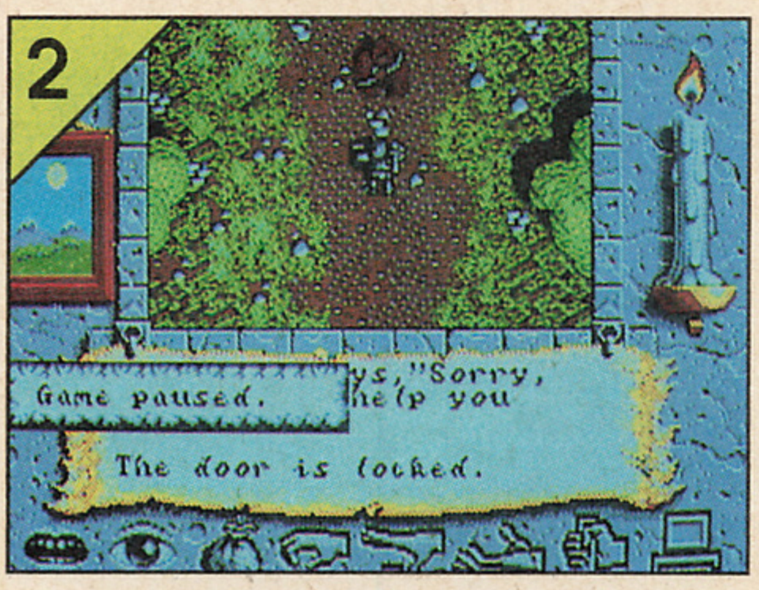
2 *Times of Lore*: You can choose to be a knight, a valkyrie, or a barbarian.

3 *Times of Lore*: You start here, with stairs leading down.

4 *Times of Lore*: The dialog box, asking you what you want to say.

PC PLAYERS

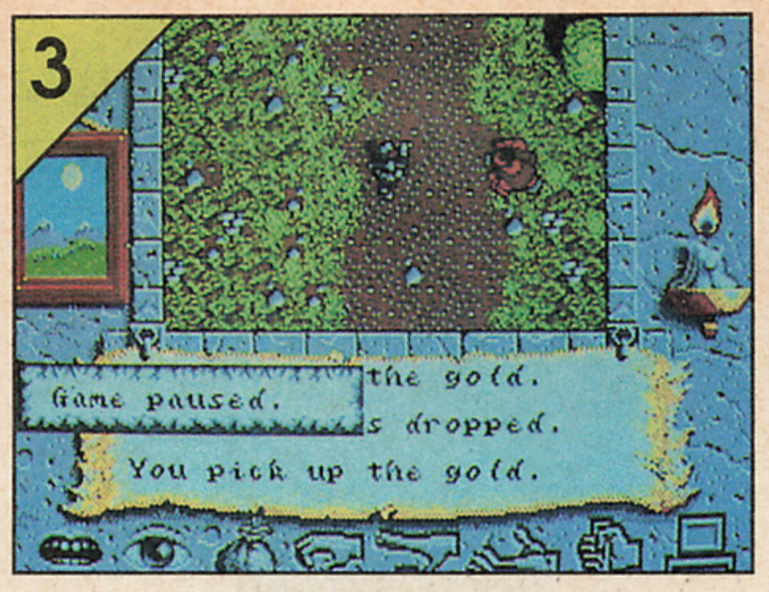


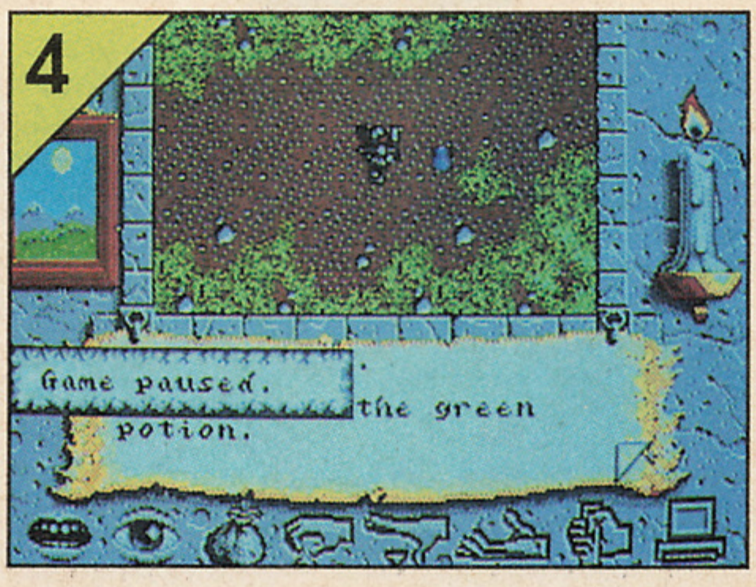


or a *Bard's Tale*, these two new games will probably disappoint. For those with shorter interest spans, however, they are ideal.

Times of Lore

The plot of *Times of Lore* is fairly standard. You play the role of Stephan, a young and inexperienced adventurer who takes on the task of retrieving three magical artifacts and returning them to their rightful place in Albareth. The artifacts are the Tablet of Truth, the Foretelling Stones, and the Medallion of Power. There is also an entire subplot dealing with the way the king gave away these artifacts and died leaving his infant son responsible for the kingdom (it comes into play late in the game).





As Stephan, you travel through the countryside of Albareth (an island), searching for the three artifacts and accomplishing other tasks you are given along the way. This is a treacherous land, with enemies practically everywhere, and you must find food, water, gold, scrolls, and other helpful items. You find most of them by knocking off the bad guys, who then disappear and leave the items in your path.

1 *Times of Lore*: A friar assigns you to your first quest.

2 *Times of Lore*: A rogue attacks you on the road.

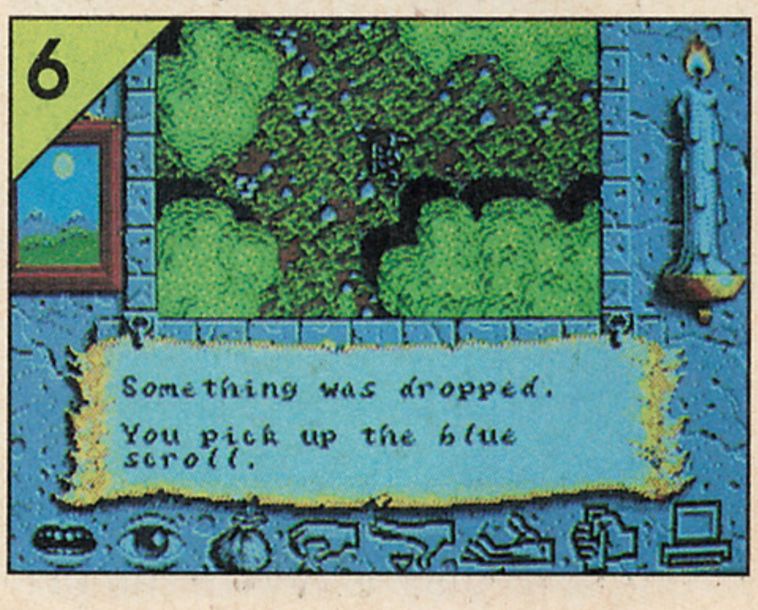
3 *Times of Lore*: An orc attacks, and your candle (life force) is already low.

4 *Times of Lore*: After a battle, a green potion lies on the road. Pick it up; it restores your health.

5 *Times of Lore*: You meet a woodsman. Talk to him, and enter his house.

6 *Times of Lore*: Finding your way through the trees is not easy.

You can control the game with the keyboard, a joystick, or a mouse, although I found the keyboard to be the easiest device to use. To control Stephan, you move a cursor from the movement screen to the command icons. These icons are at the bottom of the screen, and they allow you to talk to other characters, examine nearby objects, check your inventory, pick up and drop objects, give objects to other characters, and use scrolls and

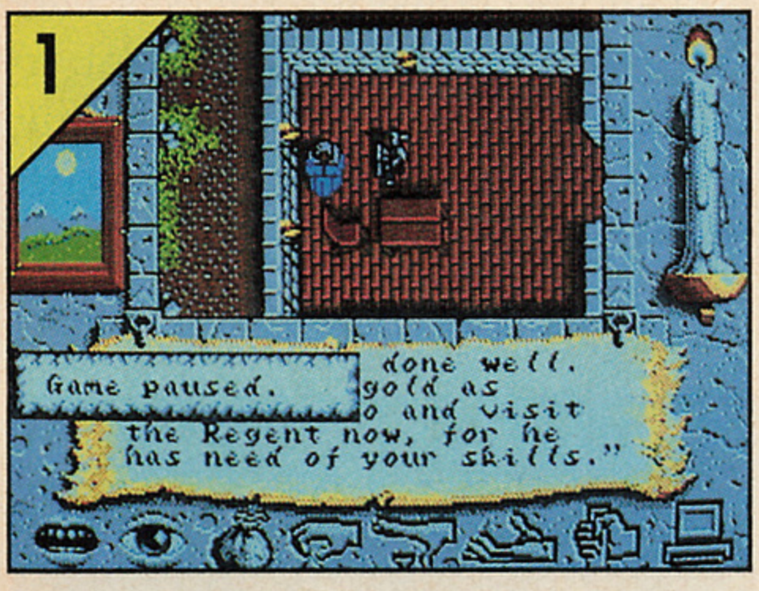


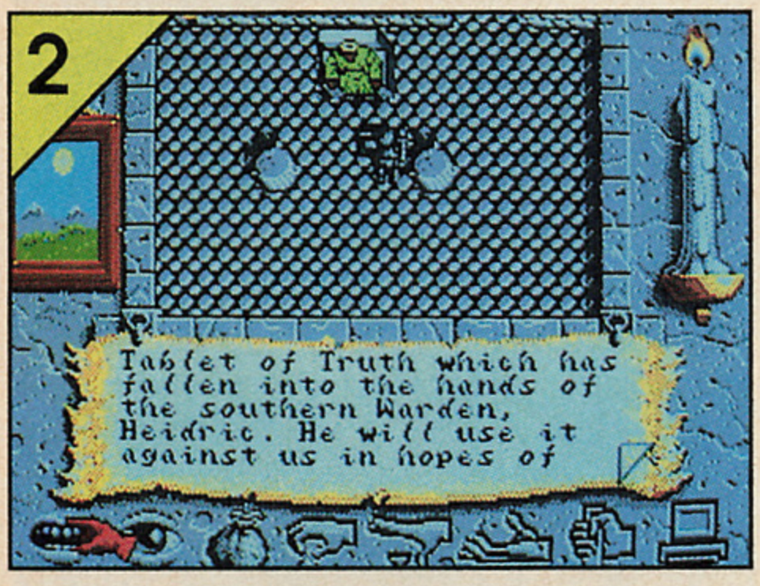
potions. Additional icons allow you to save and load games in progress. These icons can also be accessed by pressing a function key on the keyboard.

Most of the game, though, is played in movement mode, where you move across the island, fighting enemies who attack you (and there are many!). Enemies range from omnipresent orcs and rogues to less-common skeletons, ghosts, slimes, and extremely dangerous clerics. Fighting means simply facing your opponent and pressing the joystick, mouse button, or Enter key. The computer automati-

cally selects the best weapon for the situation.

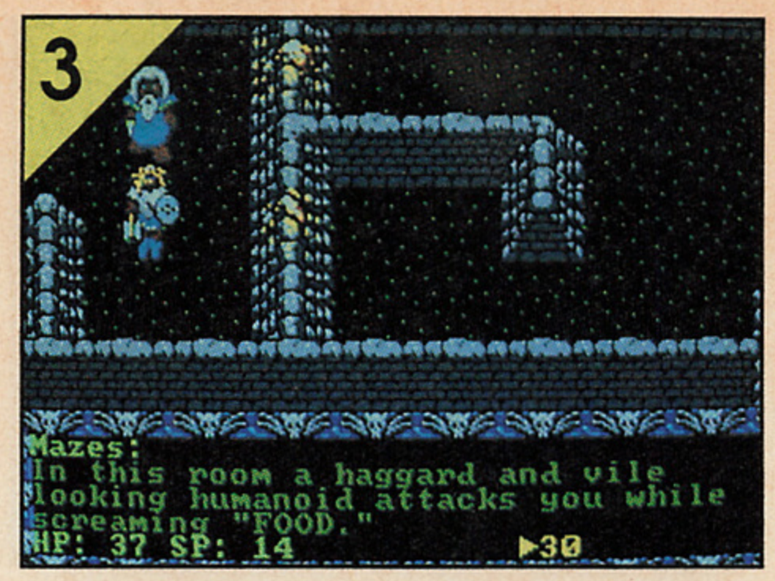
What makes *Times of Lore* so playable is that it lets you forego the task of keeping track of character data in favor of adventuring and discovering. Exploration is the great charm of fantasy role-playing, but few game designers seem to realize it. The adventures awaiting you in the various towns, buildings, and unmarked roads help to make *Times of Lore* an instant classic.

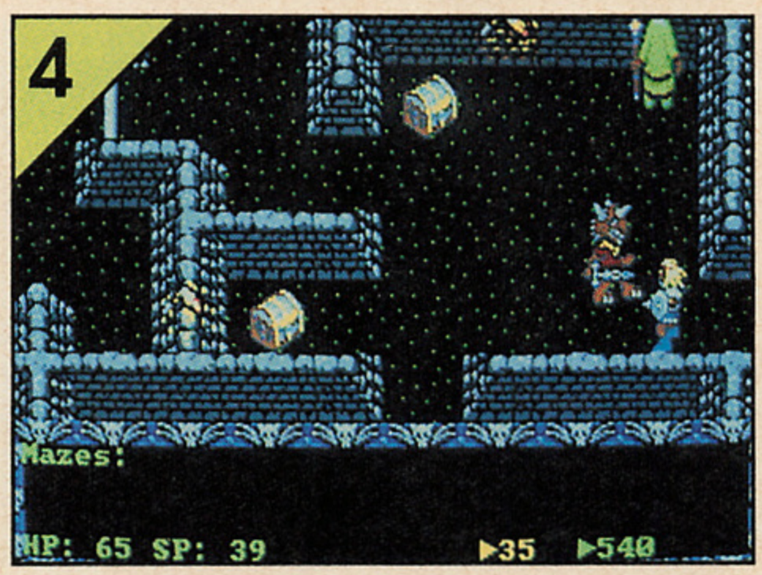




Prophecy

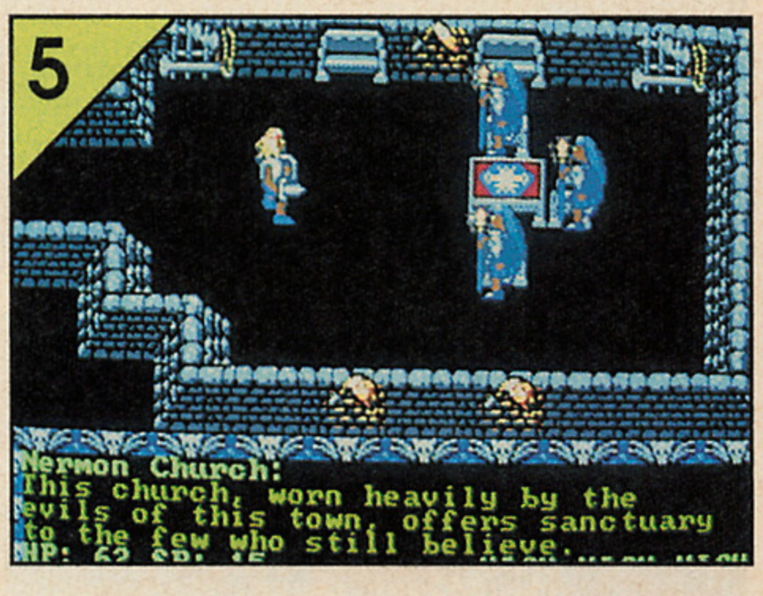
In *Prophecy*, your task is also to save your world. This time, though, you are searching for the evil Krellane, and you progress in levels as you fulfill your role as a Jedist warrior (yes, there's a bit of *Star Wars* here). Your first destination is the church near your hometown of CrissCross. The high priests will send you to Nermon on your first of several quests.

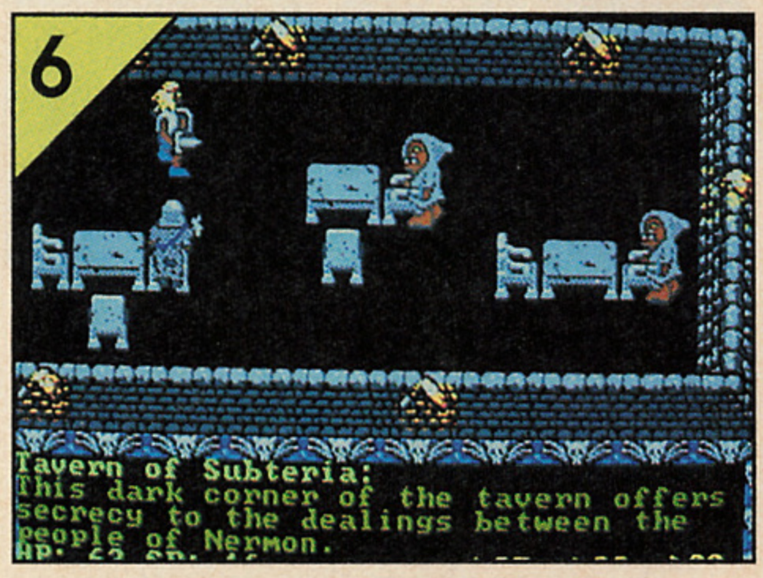




One of the fascinating parts of *Prophecy* is the ongoing revelation of the story of Krellane. He's evil, sure, but there's a fair bit to pity about the guy, and one hermit even suggests that the stories you've been told about him (or about something, at least) have all been lies. At any rate, you must use the knowledge you gain to make your way to the Tower of Jed. Once there, you will finally confront the being you seek.

The game play in *Prophecy* is slightly more complex than in *Times of Lore*. Your character progresses in levels, with hit points, spell points, and damage capabilities increasing as a result. You spend most of your time going from room to room opening treasure chests (by just walking into them), and these contain gold, weapons, armor, and magic items. Each weapon increases your damage points by a different amount, and each piece of armor increases your ability to withstand enemy attack. Equipping your character is simply a matter of pressing the E key, cursoring down to the desired item, and pressing Enter.





1 *Times of Lore*: Returning with the Foretelling Stones, you are sent to the Regent in the castle.

2 *Times of Lore*: The Regent Dariel asks you to retrieve the Tablet of Truth from Heidric.

3 *Prophecy*: On a bridge near your home, you encounter your first difficult opponent.

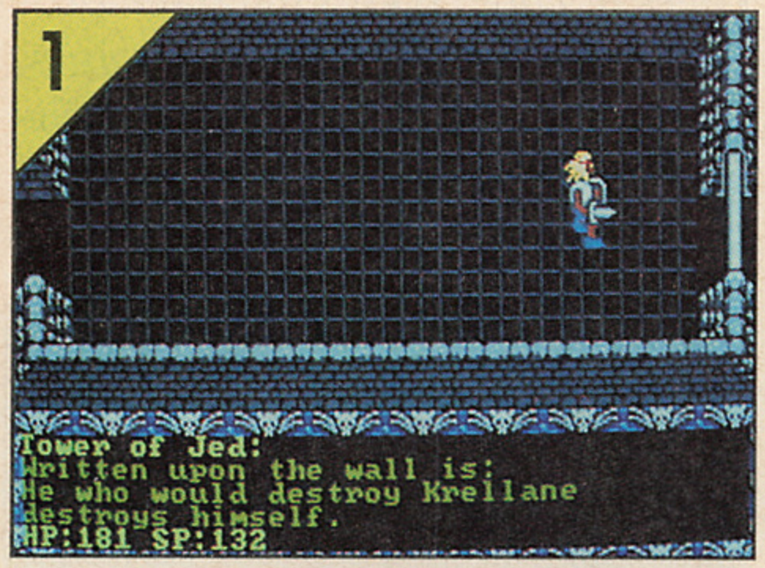
4 *Prophecy*: A goblin guards this chest. Can you get to it?

5 *Prophecy*: In a church in Nermon, the High Priests will give you the next phase of your quest.

6 *Prophecy*: In the Tavern of Subteria, talk to the assassin near the wall.

Prophecy's magic system really shines. Your character can memorize up to ten spells at once. It costs you nothing to memorize the spells, but it does cost spell points

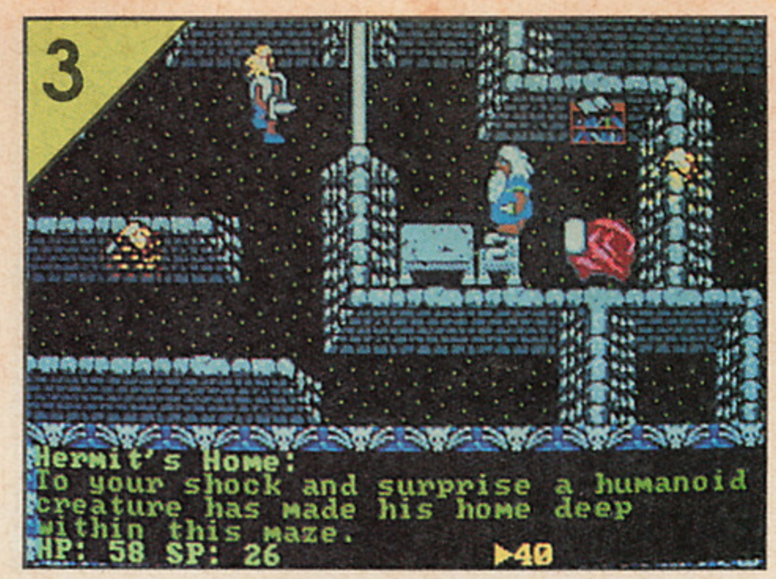
PC PLAYERS

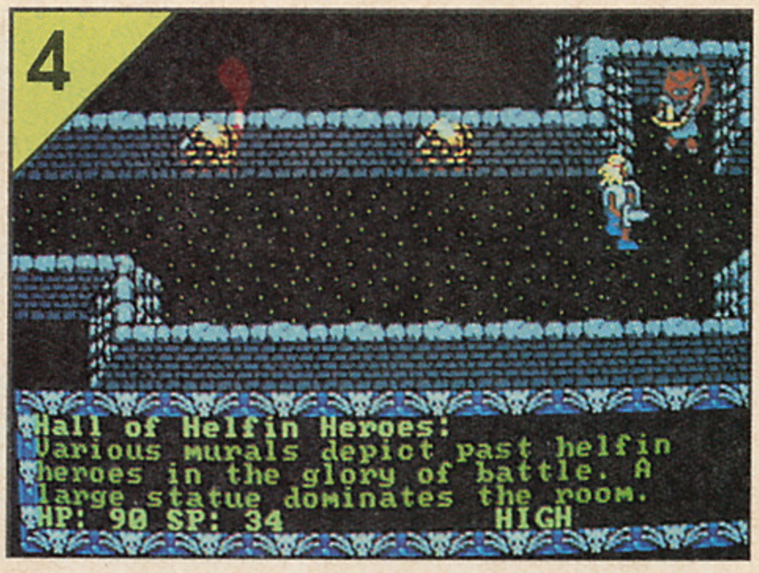


to cast them. To cast a spell, you merely press the corresponding function key. The spell begins and has the appropriate effect.

As your character grows more powerful, you'll want more powerful spells. This is also well-handled. You simply forget one of your existing spells, replacing it with a new spell. The new spell is one of the base spells with a prefix added. The prefix signifies that the spell costs more spell points to cast, and that it is more powerful by a certain factor. All in all, it's an excellent magic system.

Prophecy embodies a philosophy rarely seen in fantasy games: Killing is not always the answer. It's true that most of the creatures you meet must be attacked and vanquished, but others you must talk to, and a few should be





avoided. The Goblin-king, for instance, is very tough to kill, but by using a speed spell, you can get what you need from him without actually fighting. Avoidance can be a very useful tactic in several places, in fact, although the game does not (as I think it should) reward your character with experience points when you opt for this intelligent strategy.

1 *Prophecy*: The only way through these gates in the Tower of Jed is to know what you have learned throughout the game.

2 *Prophecy*: Sir William is only one of many characters who will give you valuable clues.

3 *Prophecy*: Another unexpected event. A hermit, deep in the dungeon. Talk to him.

4 *Prophecy*: Approach the statue in the alcove. It has some *vital* information.

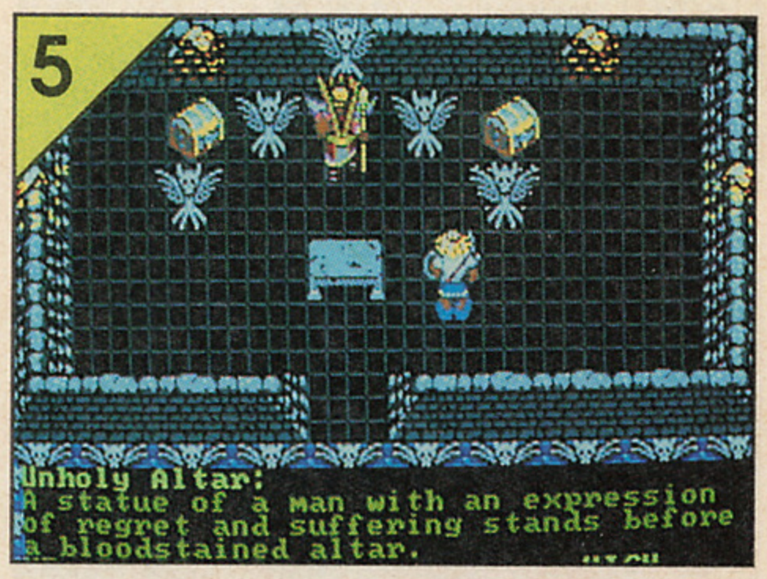
5 *Prophecy*: Before your eyes is the statue of Krellane. Approach and hear what he says.

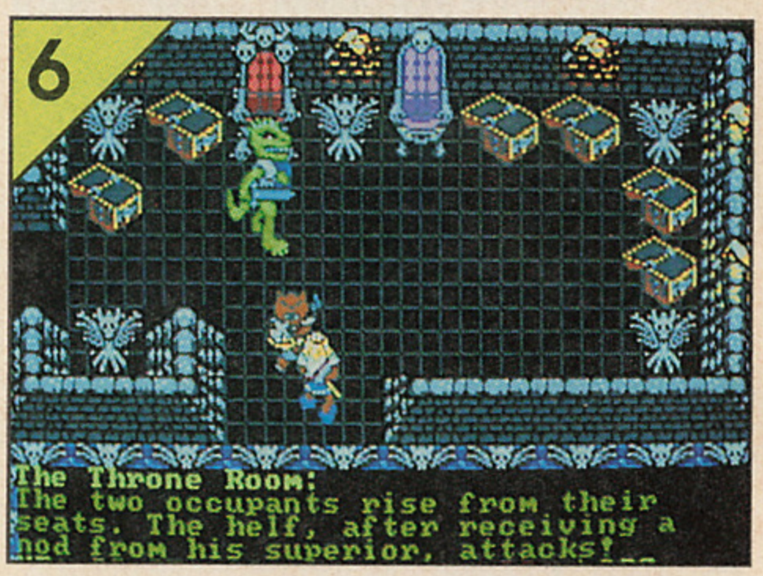
6 *Prophecy*: Another throne room, this time deep in Helfobia. The King has 800 hit points!

As with *Times of Lore*, the essence of *Prophecy* lies in discovery. You must find items and return them to the High Priests, and in the process you discover creatures of many types. Find Krellane, and you will unravel his story. But be sure to write down everything you're told and everything you read, because at times you can proceed with the game only by recalling the knowledge you have gained.

Both of these games are well worth playing. If you're new to role-playing games, start with *Times of Lore*; when you're finished, go on to *Prophecy*. If you're an experienced role-player, but short of time, you'll probably want to begin with *Prophecy*. Nonetheless, you should consider *Times of Lore* as well. Finally, if you want to introduce children to role-playing games, *Times of Lore* is the perfect place to start.

GP





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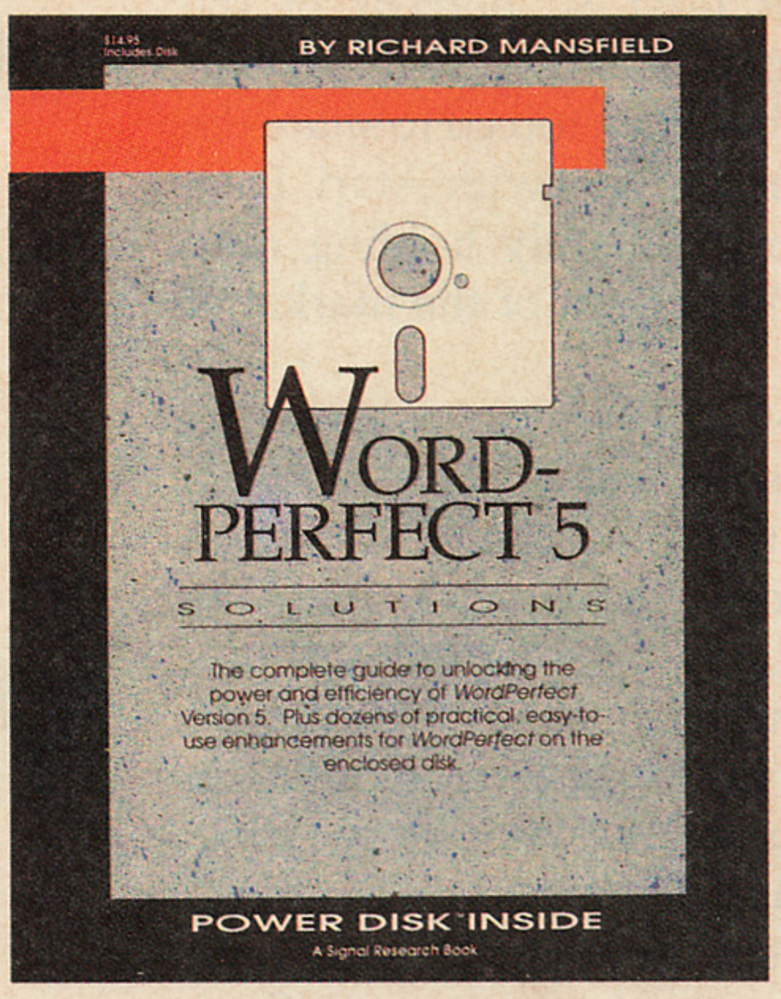

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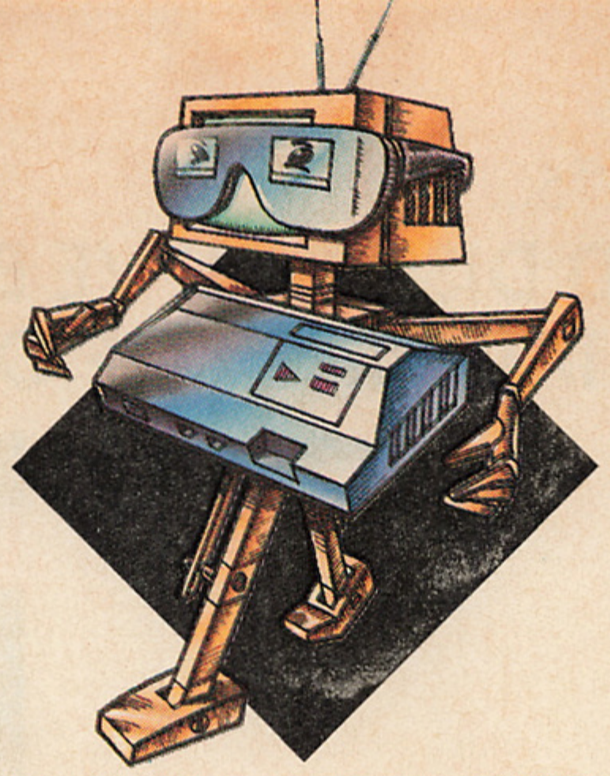


SEGA MASTERS

GENESIS: A NEW BEGINNING FOR SEGA?

Tom R. Halfhill

When you're Number 2, you try harder. Since 1985, Nintendo has sold about 15 million game machines in the U.S., winning at least 80 percent of the American market. Sega, meanwhile, has been forced to share the meager leftovers with Atari. Each company is barely holding onto about 10 percent of the market, if that.

Not satisfied to remain a distant also-ran, in June Sega introduced the American version of an advanced videogame machine based on 16-bit computer technology. The machine has already been available for several months in Japan under the name Mega Drive. (For an earlier report on the Mega Drive, see the "Sega Masters" column in the last issue of *Game Player's*.) Without changing the machine's technical specifications, Sega cosmetically redesigned the Mega Drive to make it more attractive to American game players, renamed it the Genesis, and introduced it at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. The debut of the Genesis closely followed the unveiling of another 16-bit home game system, the TurboGrafx-16 from NEC. (See page 11.)

Due to hit stores this fall — at about the same time as the TurboGrafx-16 — the Genesis represents a new generation in home videogaming. Like the TurboGrafx-16, it offers more detailed graphics, more colors, better animation, flicker-free screen scrolling, high-fidelity stereo sound, and game cartridges with greater memory capacity. If programmers make the most of these features, both the Genesis and the TurboGrafx-16 will run games that are better than anything now seen in video arcades or on personal computers.

In addition, there are some exciting new accessories for the Genesis that have never been offered for home videogame machines. For instance, it will soon be possible to play games over the telephone against players who live next door or thousands of miles away! With the Genesis, Sega is hoping to woo millions of people who would otherwise buy a Nintendo system this Christmas.

Unaltered Beast

The basic Genesis system will sell for under $200 and consists of a base unit that hooks up to any TV or monitor, a controller pad, and one game cartridge, *Altered Beast*. A better name for this game might be *Unaltered Beast*, because it's virtually identical to the popular Sega coin-operated version found in video arcades across the country. If you've ever been disappointed in the home version of an arcade game, the Genesis will be a revela-

1

1 The Sega Genesis 16-bit videogame system.

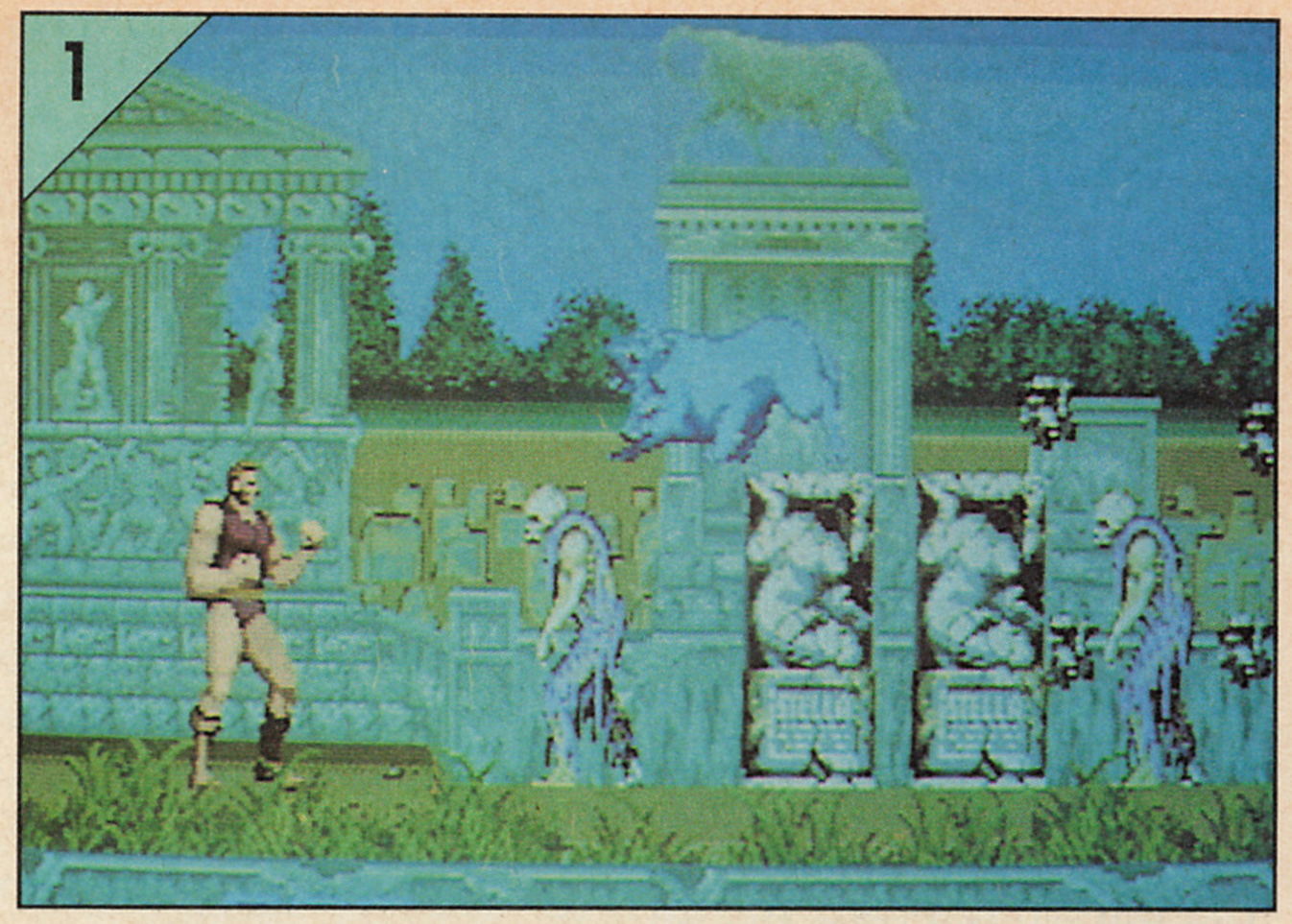
SEGA MASTERS

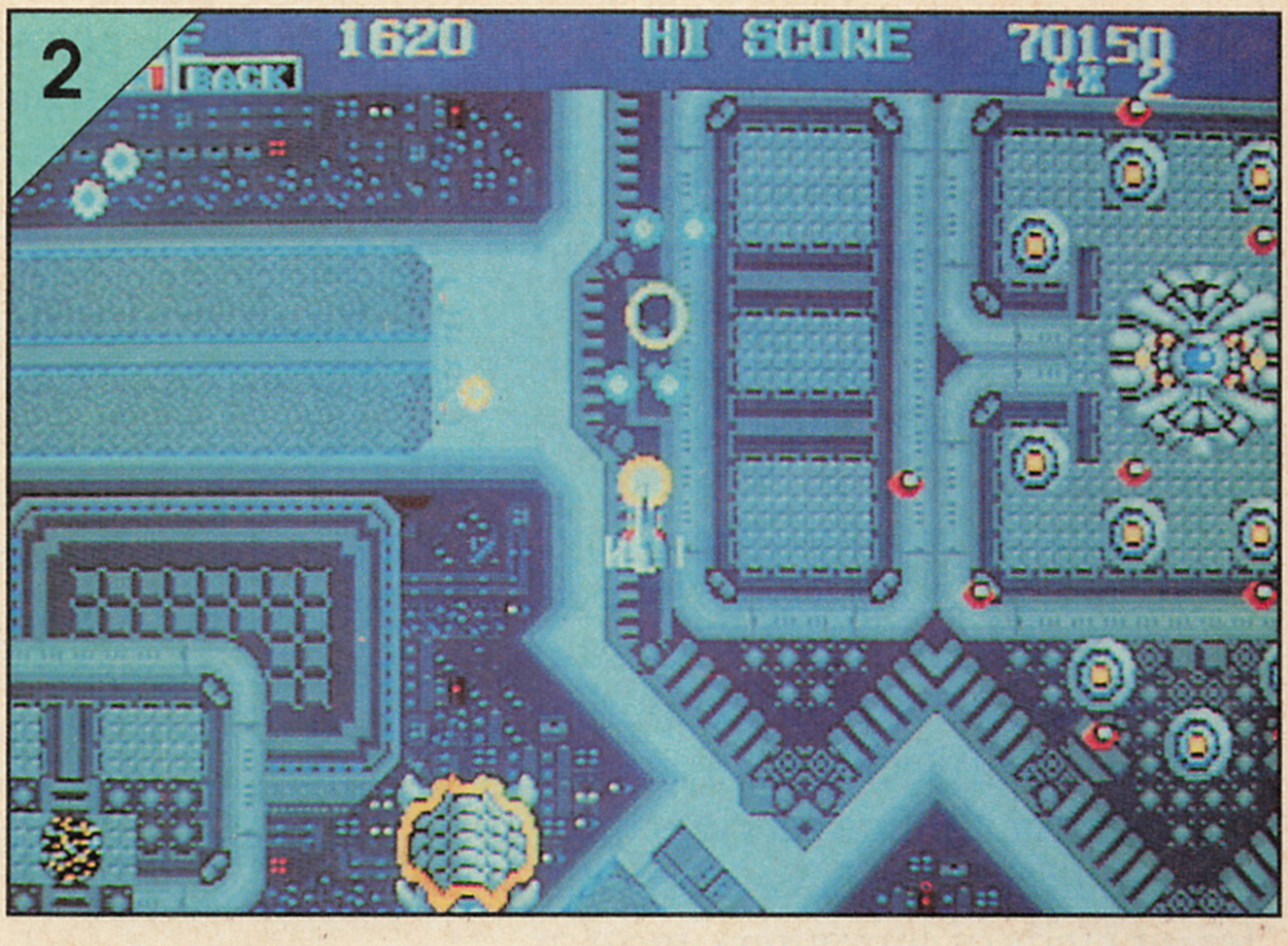
ing the graphics, sound effects, and game play of today's coin-op arcade games.

To prove this, Sega is bringing out home versions of two other arcade hits: *Super Thunder Blade* and *Space Harrier II*. Other games that Sega will introduce this year are *The Last Battle*, *Ghouls 'n Ghosts*, *Super Thunder Force II*, *Tommy Lasorda Baseball*, *Professional Basketball*, *Professional Golf*, *World Class Soccer*, and about 15 other titles. In addition, Sega says that at least 20 independent software companies have agreed to produce games for the Genesis. For instance, Spectrum Holobyte is translating *Falcon*, a jet fighter simulator that's popular on personal computer systems. Genesis game cartridges will be priced at $40-$50.

With the optional Power Base Converter, the Genesis also works with all existing cartridges previously released for the Sega Master System. The $35 Converter plugs into the cartridge slot on the Genesis console, and the Master System cartridges then plug into the Converter. Although the older cartridges cannot take advantage of the Genesis' advanced features — they play exactly like they do on the Master System — this does provide more than 80 additional titles for the new machine.

An even more interesting accessory is the optional TeleGenesis. Essentially, the TeleGenesis is a *modem*, a device used to link computers over telephone lines.





1 The Genesis version of *Altered Beast* is virtually identical to the coin-operated arcade game.

2 *Super Thunder Blade* is another arcade hit that has been adapted for the Genesis — with very little lost in the translation.

Although modems are common accessories for personal computers, this marks the first time one has ever been offered for a home videogame machine in the U.S. The TeleGenesis makes it possible to compete head-to-head against another person over any distance. Both players see different views on their TV screens, and both players have independent control over their on-screen characters.

Each player needs a Genesis, a TeleGenesis modem, a TeleGenesis game cartridge (not all Genesis games will allow this type of play), a TV, and a telephone. The TeleGenesis modem attaches to the Genesis console and is then hooked up to a modular phone line. One player calls the other on the phone, then turns control over to the Genesis. The Genesis machines at each end are now linked together over the phone line. (Ordinary conversation between the two players is not possible after this point.)

When the game starts, each player has his or her own view of what's happening on the screen. For instance, in *TeleGenesis Baseball*, the player who's currently at

SEGA MASTERS

bat gets a view of the diamond from behind home plate. The other player sees a view of the diamond from behind the pitcher's mound, has full control over the pitcher, and decides what type of pitch to throw. The first player controls the batter, and decides whether or not to swing. If the batter hits the ball, both screens instantly switch to an overall view. While one player tries to run the bases, the other player tries to field the ball and throw the runner out.

Although modem games have been available for years to personal computer users who subscribe to online telecomputing services, the TeleGenesis system is far superior. Online services must cater to users who have many different kinds of computers, most of which have relatively poor graphics and sound. With the TeleGenesis, the graphics, sound, and animation are equal to that of any other Genesis game.

Sega says the TeleGenesis modem will be available late this year or early in 1990 for about $100. Since it's not necessary to subscribe to an online service to play TeleGenesis games, there are no additional hourly fees or surcharges to pay. The only extra costs are long-distance telephone charges if the players must make a long-distance call to reach each other. These are billed at normal long-distance rates for calls placed at that time of day. If the players can reach one another with a local call, there are no extra charges for playing a TeleGenesis game.

Technical Details

The Sega Genesis is a powerful 16-bit microcomputer with multiple processors. It is built around a Motorola 68000 running at eight megahertz, the same basic microprocessor found in the Macintosh Plus, Macintosh SE, Commodore Amiga, and Atari ST personal computers. With help from a set of custom 16-bit video coprocessors, the 68000 gives the Genesis enough power to match the graphics capabilities of most personal computers and coin-op arcade machines.

Another coprocessor inside the Genesis is a Zilog Z80 — the only 8-bit chip in the system. The Z80 is responsible for handling the ten-channel sound, which is split between two outputs for true stereo. The console has a Walkman-style headphone jack and volume control for private listening, but no line-level stereo outputs. To route the sound through a stereo system, a cable must be run from the headphone jack and the level adjusted with the volume control. Other outputs on the Genesis include an RF jack for TVs and a composite video jack for video monitors.

The Genesis can display 512 colors on a screen of 320 x 220 pixels (screen dots). This compares to 256 x 216 for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 and 256 x 192 for the Nintendo. To take advantage of its advanced color graphics and sound, Genesis game cartridges typically contain about four megabits (512K) of read-only memory, compared to one megabit for most Nintendo games. Some cartridges will have six megabits, and games with eight or more megabits may appear when memory prices drop.

In Japan, Sega has shown a prototype CD-ROM drive similar to the CD player for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 game machine. Sega's drive is not yet available, however, and Sega says it will not be released until prices drop well below the $400 list price of NEC's drive.

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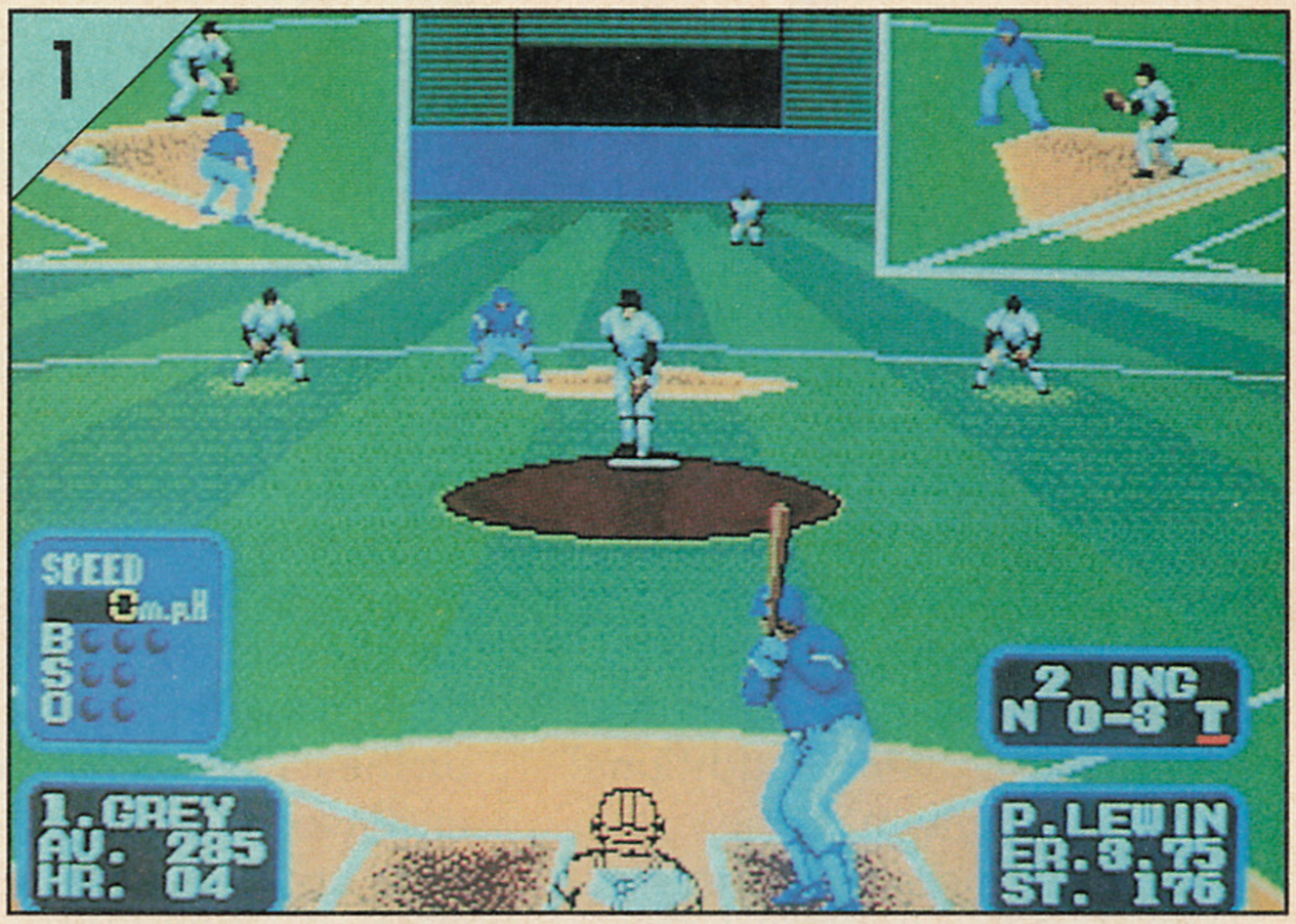
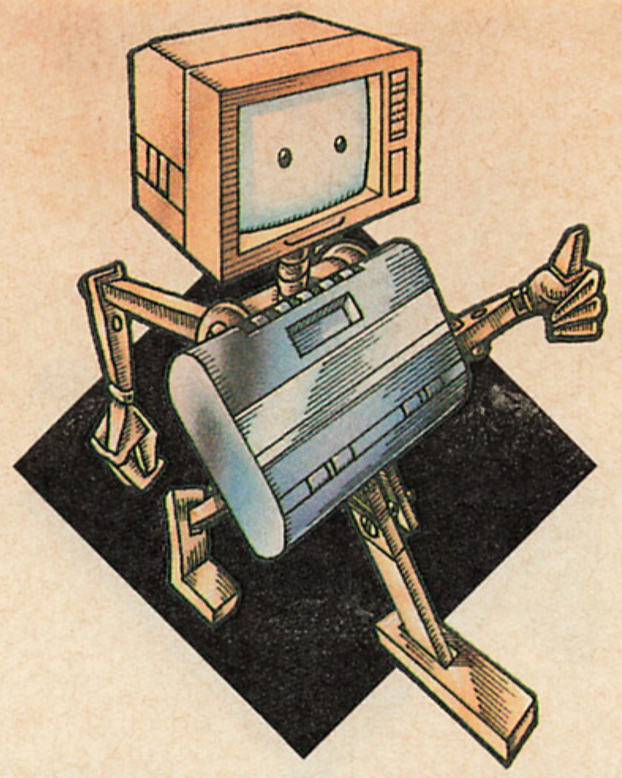


1 Notice the fine detail and multiple views in this screen from *Tommy Lasorda Baseball*.



ATARI SAFARI

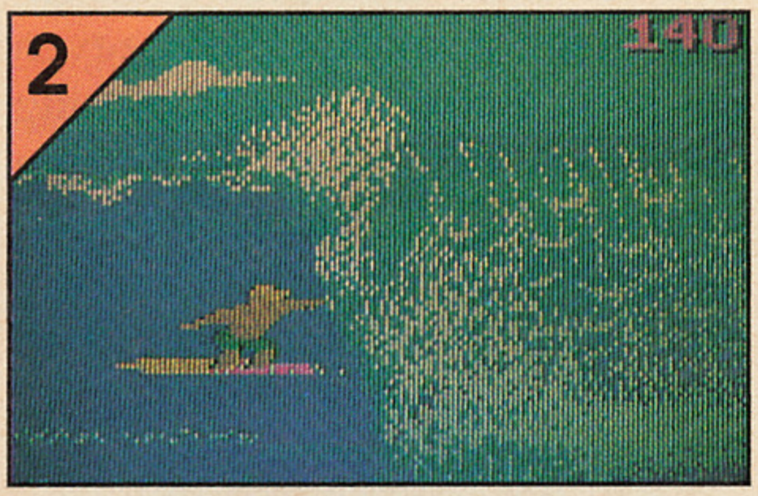
Atari's Colorful Answer To Game Boy

Tom R. Halfhill

Nintendo's new handheld videogame machine, the Game Boy, is getting lots of attention this summer. It's due in stores this fall. But while Nintendo was introducing the Game Boy at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show this June, there was a colorful surprise at the nearby Atari booth — the world's first handheld videogame machine with a full-color screen.

Like the Game Boy, the Atari Portable Color Entertainment System is a battery-powered videogame machine that's small enough to fit into a book bag or briefcase. And like the Game Boy, it has stereo sound and uses game car-

tridges the size of credit cards. But that's where the similarities end. Instead of the Game Boy's 2.5-inch black-and-white LCD screen, the



Atari has a 3.5-inch LCD capable of displaying 4,096 colors.

The difference must be seen to be believed. The accompanying photos show some startling graphics, but the screens are even more impressive when they're animated. We've tried both machines, and the Atari most closely duplicates the experience of playing a full-size videogame. It's like holding a miniature arcade machine in your hands!

1 Atari's portable videogame machine is a bit larger than Nintendo's Game Boy, but has a larger screen that displays full-color graphics.

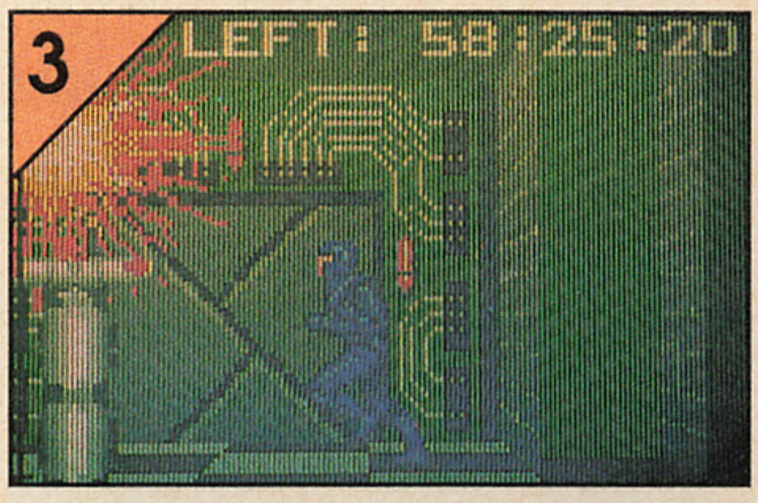
2 The Atari machine comes with Epyx's *California Games*. Atari says five other Epyx games will be available when the portable appears this fall.

3 As seen here, the Atari's color graphics are comparable to those on full-size TV screens. The animation is equally fast and smooth.

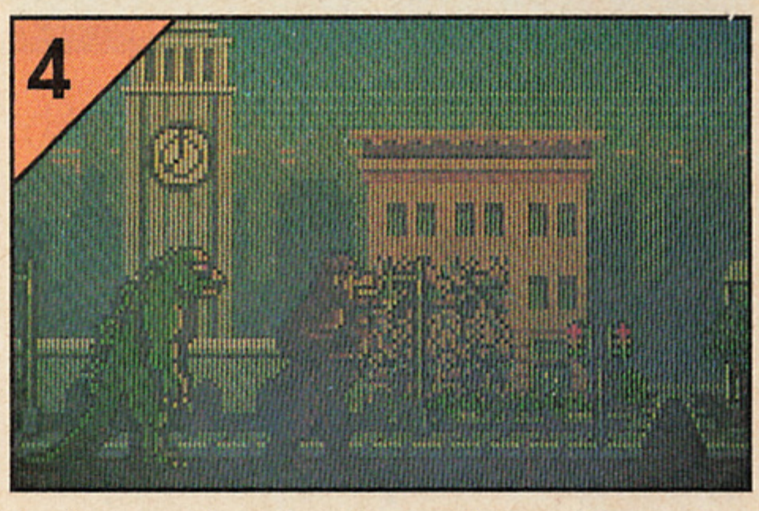
4 *Monster Demolition* is another Epyx game for the Atari portable. Godzilla and King Kong are on the march again.

This shouldn't be *too* surprising, though, because the Atari machine was actually developed by Epyx, a software company that employs several people who helped produce the advanced Commodore Amiga personal computer. Atari is marketing the game machine for Epyx, and Epyx (among others) is providing game software.

The Atari portable requires six AA batteries and comes with an AC adapter, one game card (Epyx's *California Games*), a carrying case,



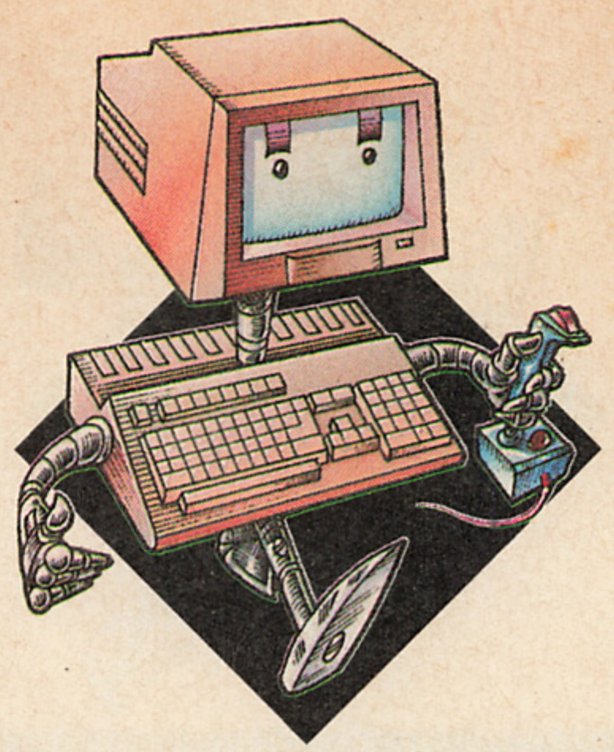
and a special cable that allows up to eight machines to be hooked together. (Everyone can play from a single game card, yet each player sees a different screen view.) There's also a stereo headphone



jack, and a button that flips the screen image upside-down so the machine can be rotated and played by left-handers.

Although at $149.95 the Atari is priced significantly higher than the $89.95 Game Boy, the Nintendo machine does not include a carrying case ($9.95) or AC adapter ($27.95) — or, of course, a color screen. Atari is clearly hoping that avid game players are willing to pay more for the extra features.

GP



AMIGA PLAYERS

DUNGEON MASTER

Sheldon Leemon

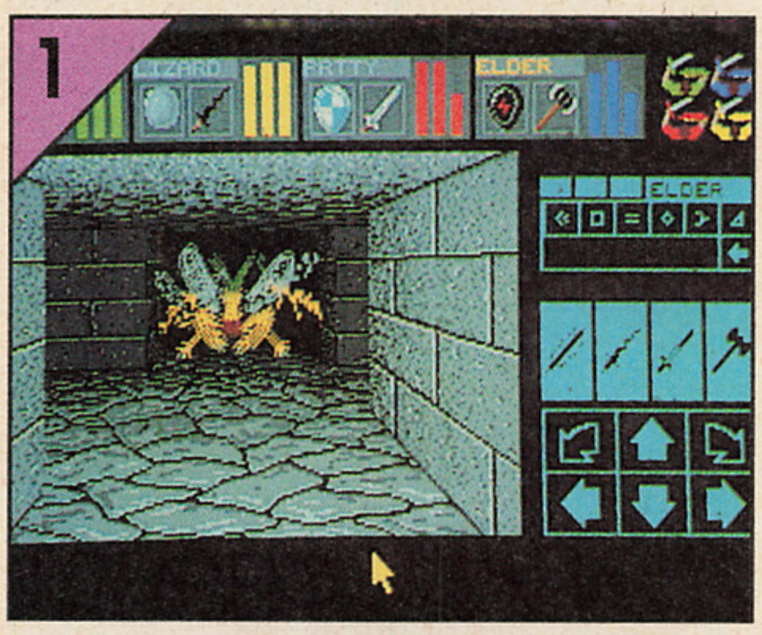
With some fantasy role-playing games, you spend so much time keeping track of strength points, skill points, and health points that you feel more like a bookkeeper than a barbarian. With *Dungeon Master*, however, you really do get to act out your fantasies, rather than just recreate them statistically. The game's uniquely interactive screen display and controls put you right in the middle of the action.

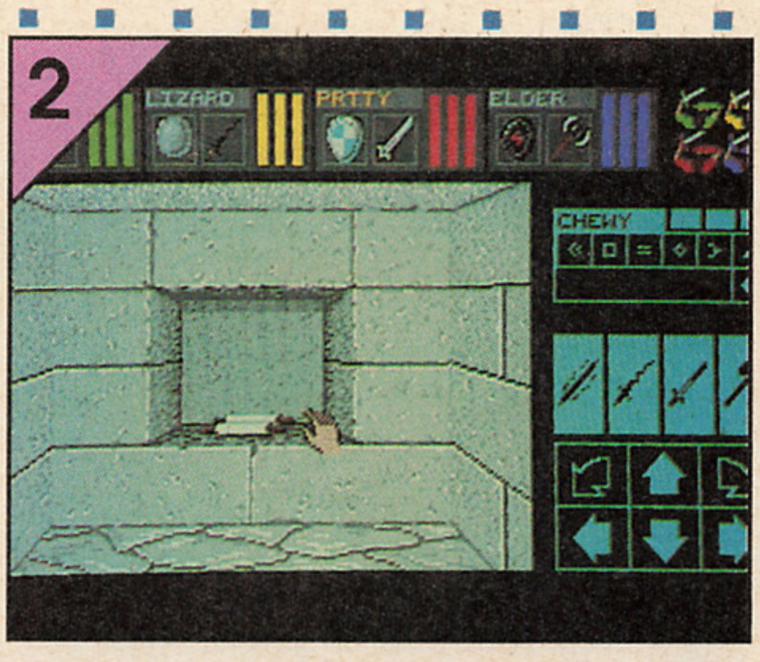
Dungeon Master has all the elements of the typical fantasy-adventure game. You lead a party of four champions through a huge dungeon with 14 different levels. These champions have, in varying degrees, the skills of a fighter (good with heavy weapons), a ninja (good with weapons that require dexterity rather than strength), a priest (good at defense and healing), and a wizard (good at casting magic spells). Each of the champions has personal attributes as well, such as strength, dexterity, wisdom, vitality, resistance to fire, and resistance to magic. And they have resources that include health, stamina, and Mana (the ability to perform magic).

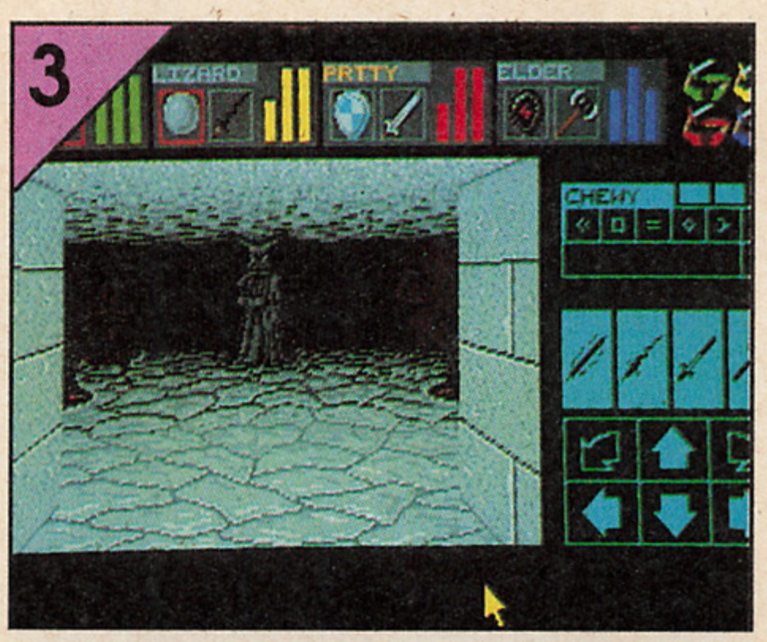
Throughout the adventure, your champions meet up with ghosts, mummies, and blobs—the usual supernatural suspects. They also face puzzles like trap doors, locked doors, hidden doorways, and various traps and obstacles. Fortunately, there are helpful objects hidden within the maze, such as weapons, armor, keys, torches, and food.

What sets *Dungeon Master* apart from other fantasy adventures is not the concept behind the game, but the execution of that concept. First, there is the manner in which you control the game. All actions are simply and intuitively controlled with the mouse and graphic icons. To pick up an object, you reach out a hand pointer and grab it. To eat food, you move the food icon over the mouth icon. To examine an object, you move the icon of the object over the picture of the eye. Although there are a great many icons to manipulate on both the main dungeon screen and on each champion's inventory screen, it isn't long before even the novice adventurer is picking up objects, casting spells, putting on and taking off armor, and brandishing weapons, all at a fairly good clip. This is far easier than learning arcane keyboard commands, and a lot more fun.

One thing that makes the controls so easy to learn is the excellent visual feedback. The views of the dungeon are realistically portrayed from the perspective of the champions, in magnificent detail. The screen updates smoothly as you press the controls to go forward, backward, or sideways. After awhile, it really feels as if you're walking through a dungeon.







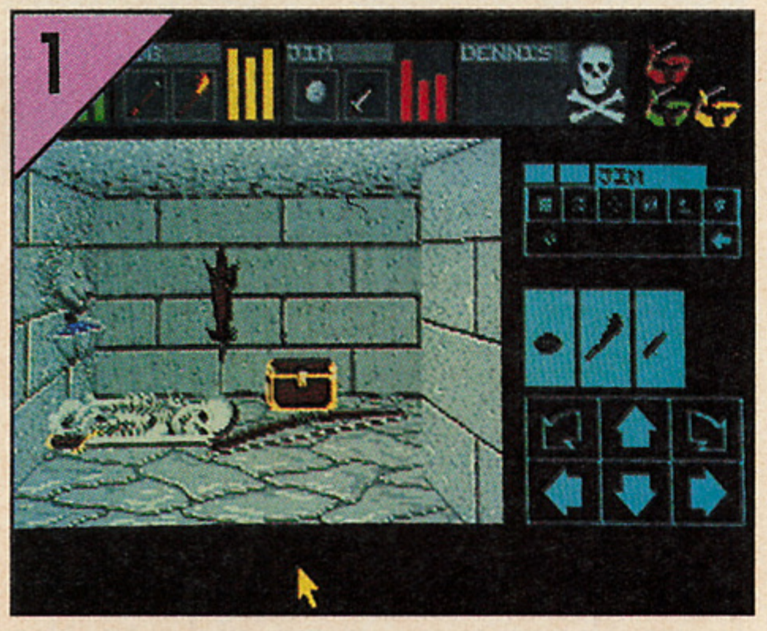
1 Strange and often dangerous creatures lurk in the subterranean passageways of *Dungeon Master*.

2 Notice the hand grasping the scroll, the movement and weapons icons to the right, and the character icons at the top.

3 Your mother was wrong — there *are* monsters in the dark! This goon and his sidekicks are instant trouble.

AMIGA PLAYERS

What's more, the graphics in *Dungeon Master* aren't just some static screens that have been tacked onto a text adventure. When you meet a monster in a dark alley, he's likely to be moving around a little, and when he throws something your way, it comes right at you.



Excellent digitized sound effects add to the realism. Actions often result in appropriate sound effects, and sometimes you'll even hear your enemy's footsteps before you can actually see him.

One of the nicer fantasy elements in *Dungeon Master* is the system of magic. Magic spells are cast by selecting symbols from a chart on the screen. The 24 basic symbols can be combined in such a large number of ways that you must learn which symbols go well together to make effective use of your magic powers. Sometimes you learn a spell by reading scrolls found in the dungeon; at other times, you must experiment. Like any apprentice wizard, you must start with small spells (creating light) before moving on to the more complex ones (casting fireballs).

The fantasy in *Dungeon Master* is made more effective by the elements of realism in the game. Time passes just as it does in real life. Even if you sit and do nothing, your enemies move around and come after you. Your champions must eat, drink, and sleep, just like real people, and they slow down and tire easily when carrying a heavy load. And like real people, their skills improve with practice, just as their abilities are impaired by injuries.

Dungeon Master sets a new standard for fantasy-adventure games. Despite its spectacular assortment of animated graphics and digitized sounds, it fits on one disk (though it does, however, require a megabyte of memory to play). There is enough action to appeal to the arcade buff, puzzles galore for the adventurer, and plenty of swords and sorcery for the D&D crowd. About the only thing the game doesn't provide is enough extra hours in the day to fully enjoy it.

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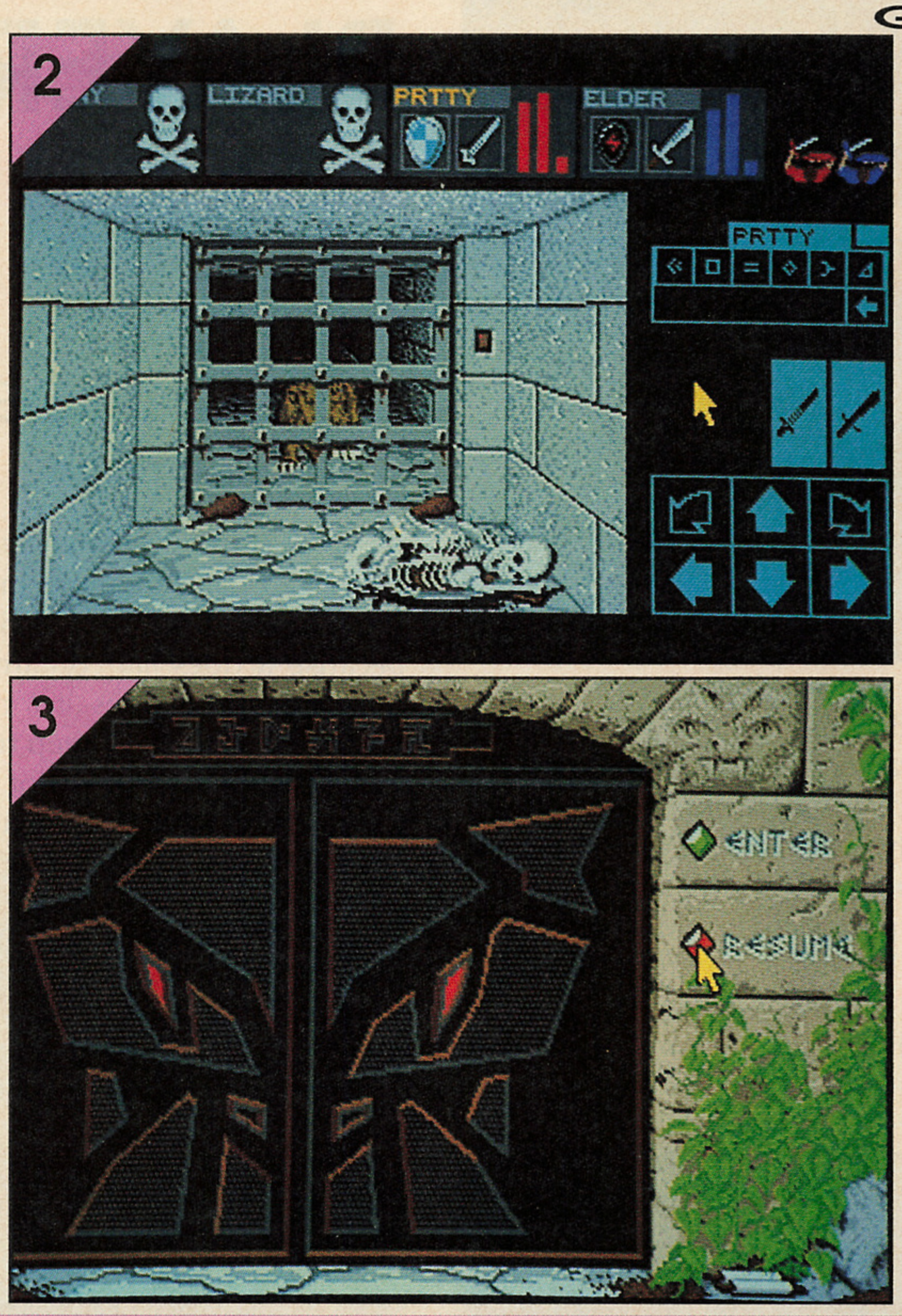
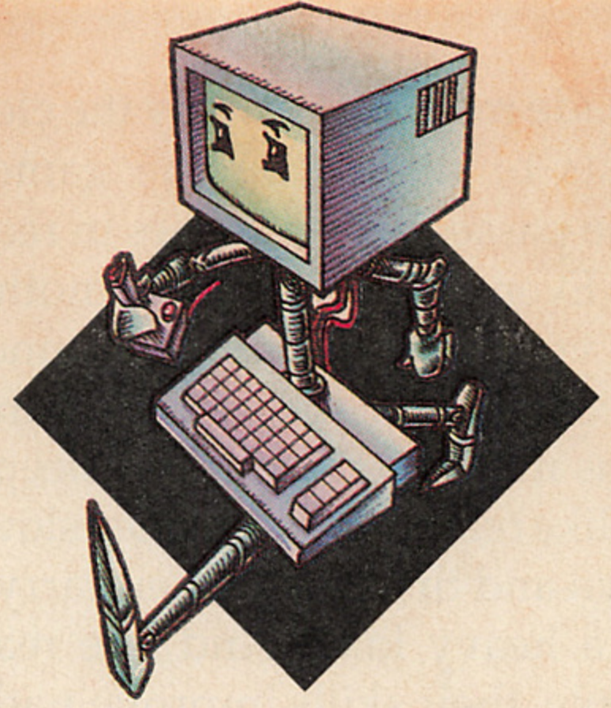


1 Here's what happens when you're not careful. The adventurer Dennis has met his fate and is now a pile of bones in the dungeon.

2 In this game, two adventurers — Chewy and Lizard — have passed on to the Great Beyond. Prtty and Elder are on their own.

3 Fortunately, *Dungeon Master* has a save-game feature that lets you resume play later.

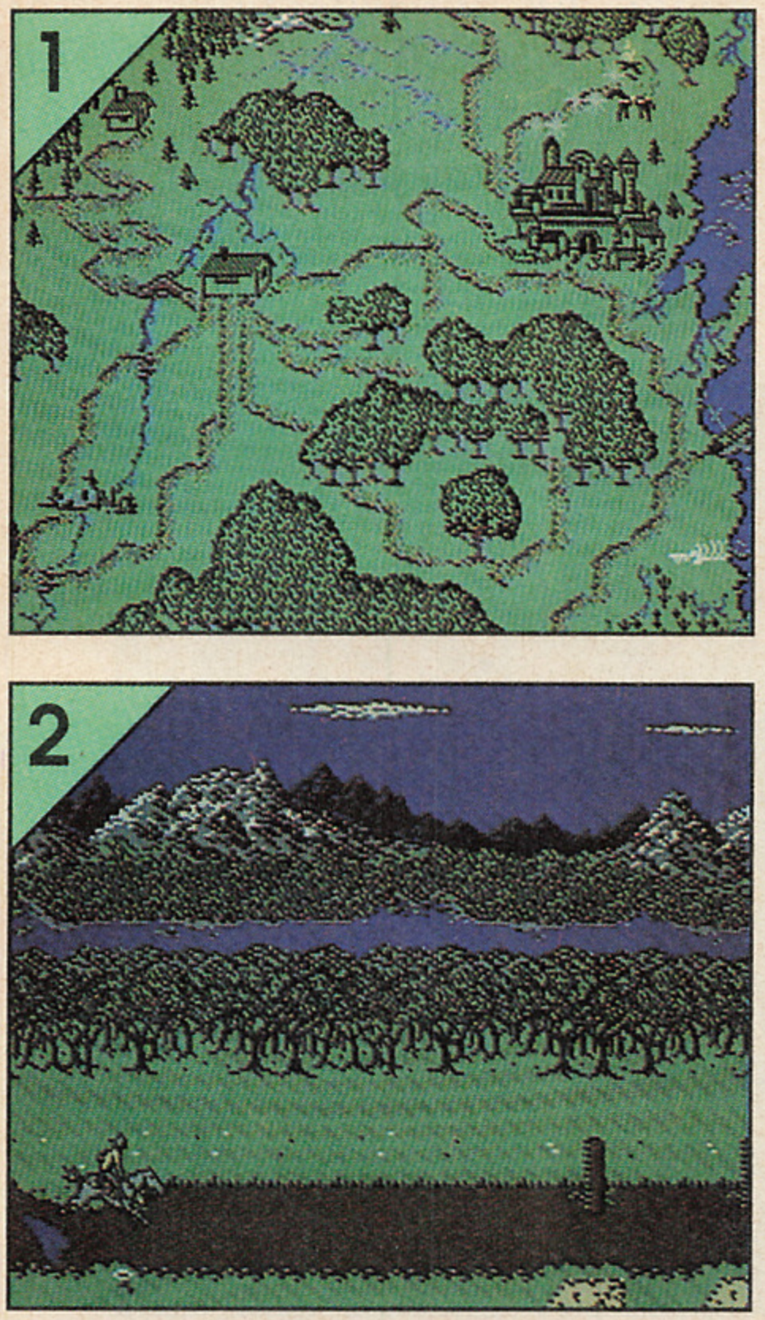


COMMODORE PLAYERS

Hillsfar And *Pro Soccer*

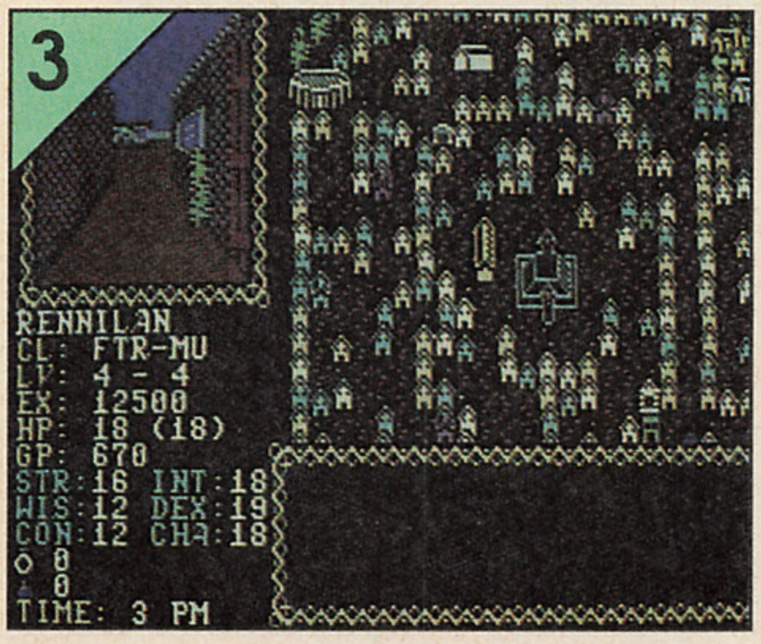
Neil Randall

Hillsfar, the latest addition to SSI's Advanced Dungeons and Dragons series, is the successor to *Pool of Radiance*, *Encounters* (a dungeon master's aid), and *Heroes of the Lance* (a graphics adventure). Three releases, but three entirely different products.

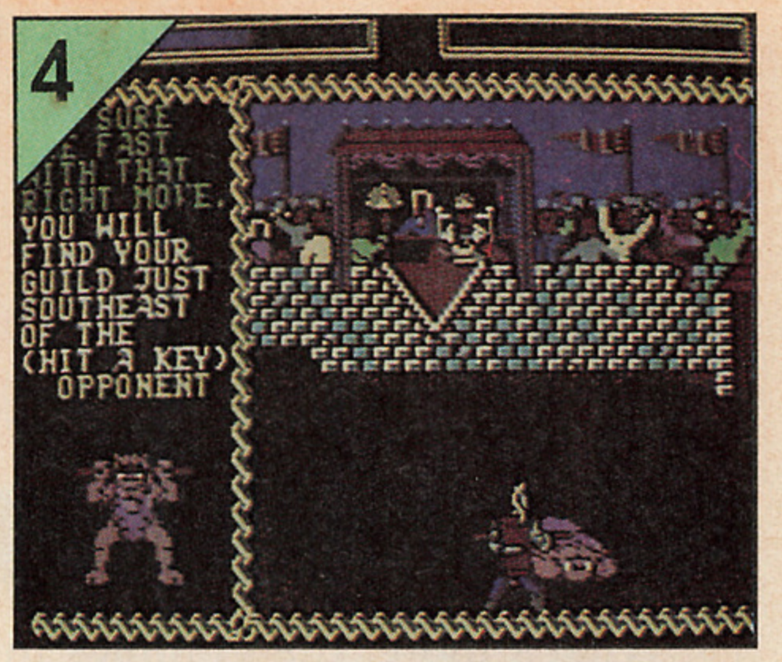


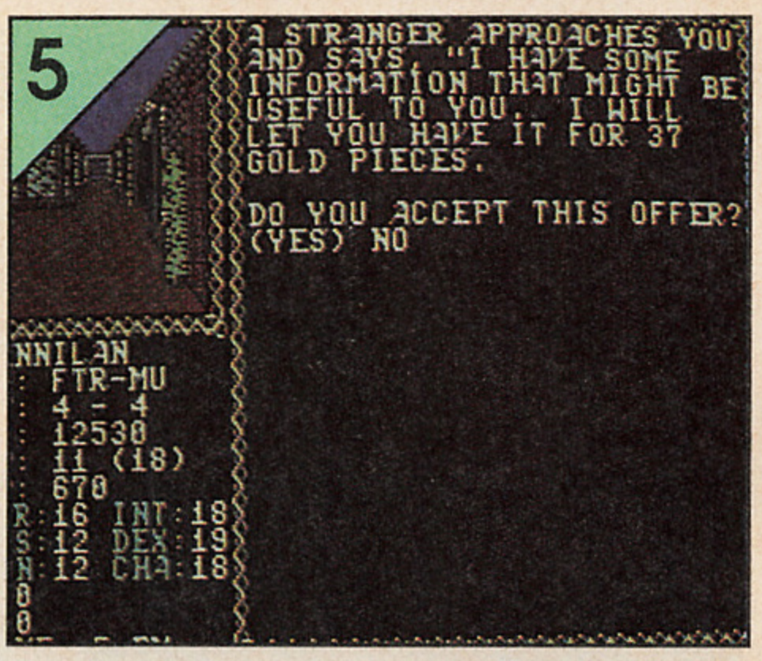
Because *Hillsfar* lets you use characters developed in *Pool of Radiance* (though not vice versa), it might seem like a *Pool of Radiance* sequel. Add to this a character's-eye perspective and a setting in the Moonsea environment (like that of *Pool of Radiance*), and you might be further convinced that *Hillsfar* is indeed a follow-up.

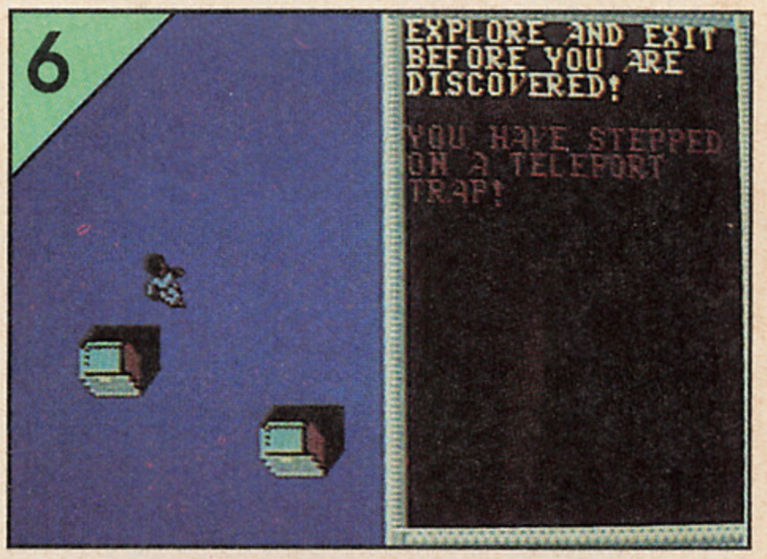
Hillsfar, however, is much easier to play than *Pool of Radiance*. Unlike *Pool*, it is far more suited to the Commodore 64/128, if only because it does *not* contain eight disk sides and does *not* require you to form a party, keep track of an elaborate assortment of weapons, and worry about extensive character advancement. *Hillsfar*, unlike *Pool*, is designed for novice adventurers or those with little time, and that makes it a welcome product indeed.



In *Hillsfar*, you control only one character. You begin in camp, and from there you must ride to the city of Hillsfar. Whenever you move between sites, you travel by horse, and you must frequently jump over obstacles in the road.







1 *Hillsfar*: From the strategic map, choose a route for your character to follow.

2 *Hillsfar*: On the road to Hillsfar, your character's horse leaps over the water.

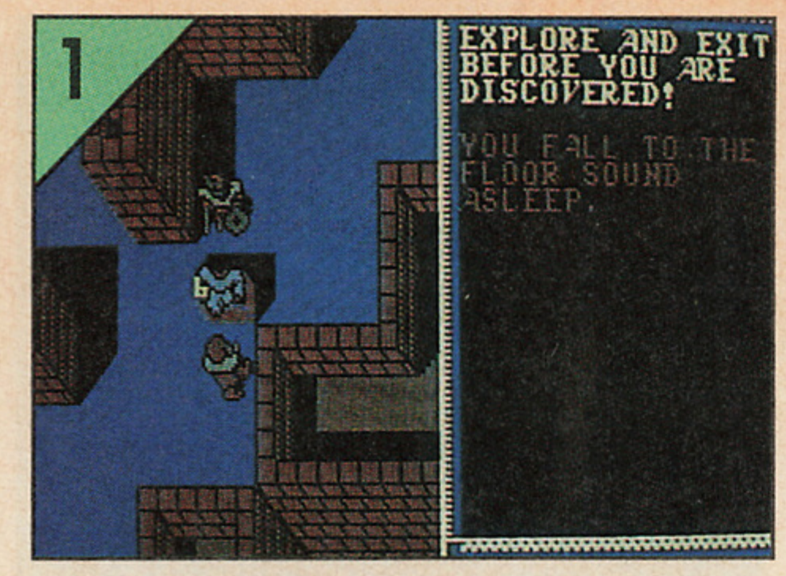
3 *Hillsfar*: The small arrow at the top right shows your location in the city.

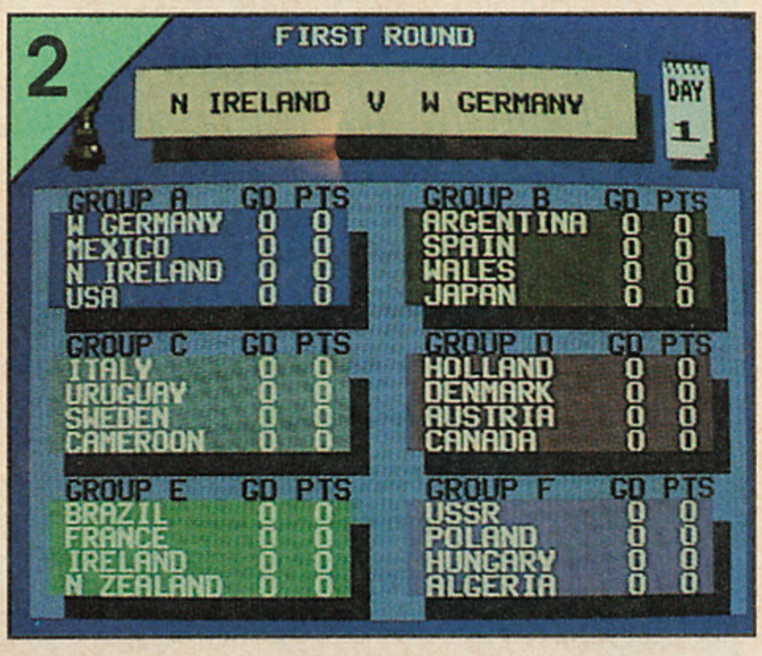
4 *Hillsfar*: Rennilan (your character) has just defeated Lefty the Orc in the Arena.

5 *Hillsfar*: Often you will be approached by other characters. Heed their information.

6 *Hillsfar*: Inside buildings, you must explore quickly and get out fast.

7 *Hillsfar*: Tanna's Target Range: Here is where you build up your accuracy.





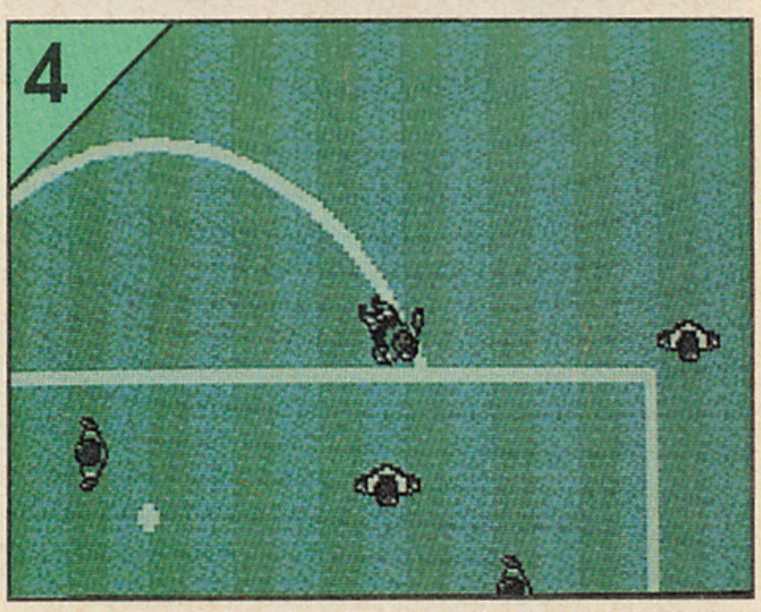
This part of the game is purely arcade-oriented, and it becomes tedious after awhile, mostly because the obstacles are generally unrealistic.

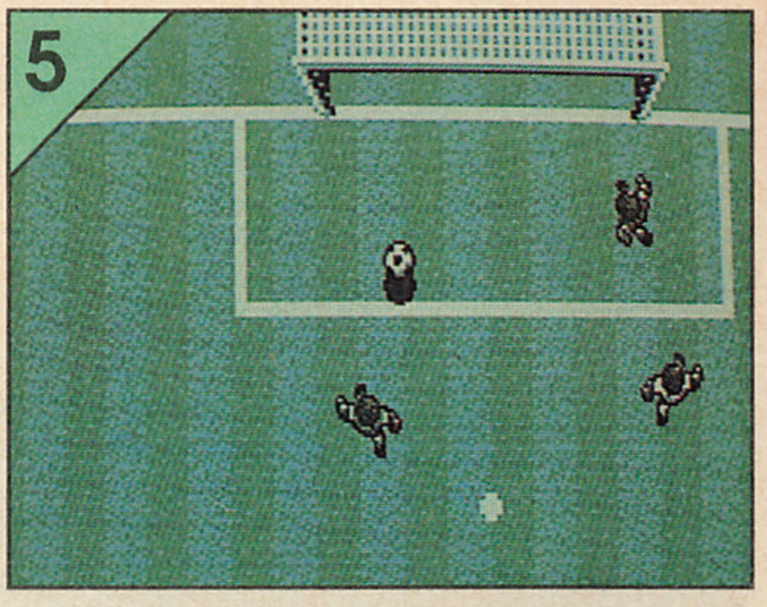
Once you reach Hillsfar, you go from building to building in search of treasure chests, following the map on the back of the manual. Visits to the arena, in which you fight a reasonably complex arcade-style duel, result in greater wealth. Visits to Tanna's Target Range let you compete with marksmen for gold. And true to the AD&D parent game, visits to your guild lead to small, individual quests.

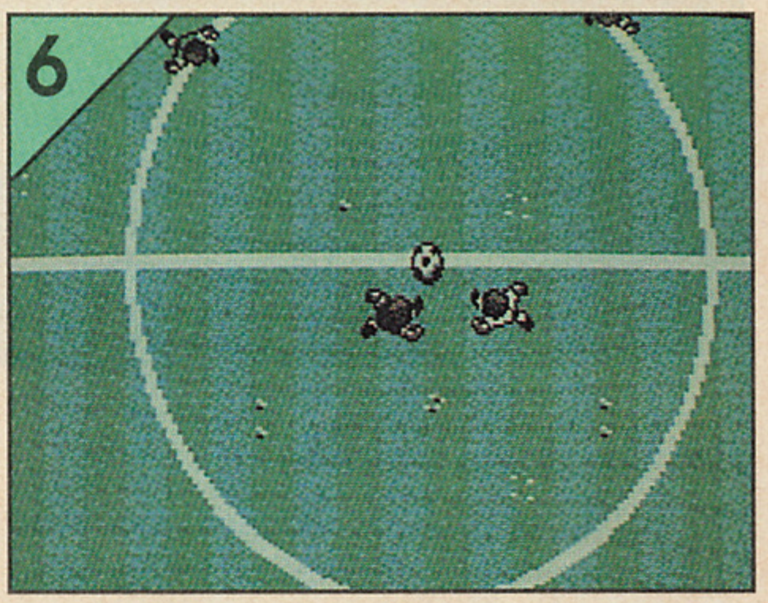
One criticism of *Hillsfar* is that too much of the play is the same. Buildings — even those that purport to be ruins and shipwrecks — all look the same, and the searching and horse-riding episodes drag on after awhile. Also, the only time you can save a game in progress is when your character is in camp.

Hillsfar's pluses, though, outweigh its minuses. Discovering new quests as you play is always an interesting approach, more realistic than simply dispatching an inexperienced adventurer on an all-or-nothing quest to save the universe. The animation in *Hillsfar* is good, as are the character's-eye views of the city.

Most important, *Hillsfar* is ideal for beginners to role-playing games, or even to computer games in general. There are no elaborate magic and weapons systems, and you don't get killed as soon as you meet your first monster. All you do is head for Hillsfar, enter the city, and adventure to your heart's content.







1 *Hillsfar*: Trying to force open a lock, Rennilan has sprung a sleeping gas trap.

2 *Pro Soccer*: As the World Cup tournament opens, the U.S.A. finds itself in a tough group.

3 *Pro Soccer*: The U.S.A.'s first game is against Mexico.

4 *Pro Soccer*: A sliding Mexican takes the ball from the white-shirted U.S. player.

5 *Pro Soccer*: Mexican fires the ball into the net to tie the game.

6 *Pro Soccer*: As the second half begins, so does the rain (the dots on the screen).

Pro Soccer

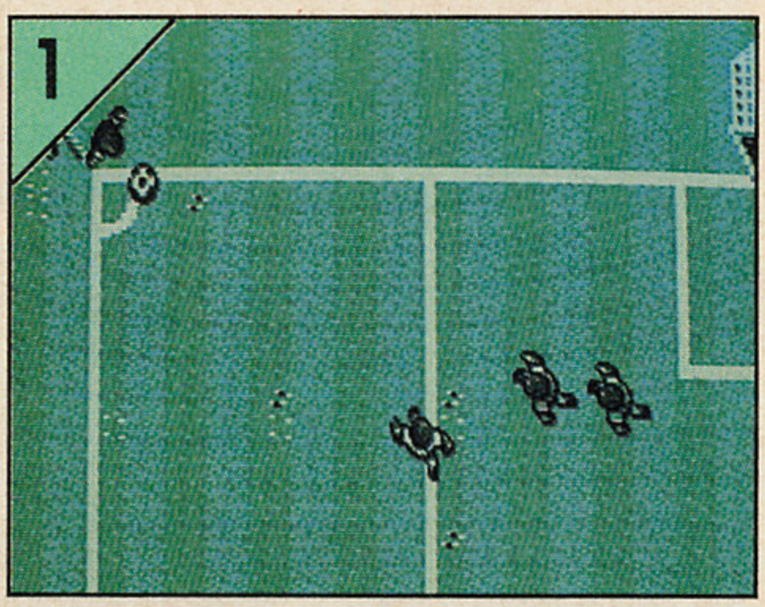
Soccer has never succeeded as a major sport in the U.S. or Canada, but in much of the rest of the world it is clearly the dominant national pastime. The World Cup tournament, mounted every four years, draws TV audiences that dwarf those for the Super Bowl.

Strangely, though, the U.S. has come to accept soccer played indoors. The Major Indoor Soccer League (MISL), formed in 1978, has attracted large crowds, and its popularity even prevented Canadian players from joining their World Cup team in 1986.

I like the outdoor game. Many prefer the indoor version. Fortunately, computer players don't have to choose. Microplay's *Pro Soccer*, designed with the advice of MISL star Keith Van Eron, offers both versions on a double-sided disk.

COMMODORE PLAYERS

Therein lies *Pro Soccer*'s major problem, however. In reality, indoor soccer and outdoor soccer

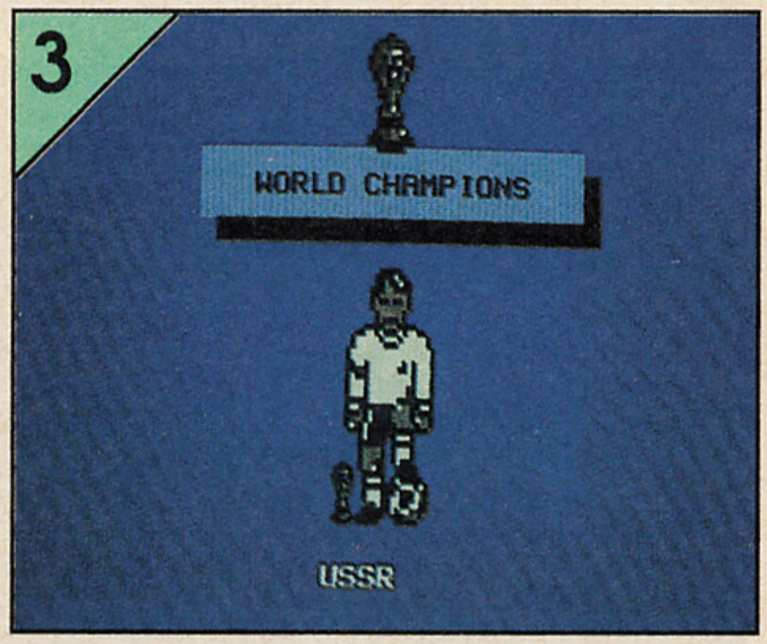


are two very different games. In *Pro Soccer* they are almost identical, and the indoor version gets the most emphasis. The result is a very good indoor game, but a much less impressive outdoor simulation.

In the International Challenge you compete against the computer, starting against the weakest team and then working your way up the ladder. You can play head-to-head against a human opponent, or set up a league with several friends (and the computer), each controlling a separate team. Most times, though, you'll probably want to choose one of the tournaments: All-Star for indoors, and the World Cup for outdoors.

Pro Soccer is impressively detailed, as evidenced by the organization of the World Cup tournament. As in the real tournament, 24 nations participate, and you can choose to be any one of them. You guide your team through a three-game first round, trying to get enough points (wins, ties, and goal differentials all count) to make it to the second round. After that, you must win to advance. Eventually only two teams remain, and the winner receives the prized World Cup.

There's nothing easy about winning the World Cup. Soccer's hierarchy is well known, with nations such as Brazil, Italy, West Germany, and Argentina consistently fielding top-notch teams, and with England, the U.S.S.R., France, and the Netherlands the next rung down. *Pro Soccer* simulates this hierarchy. If you choose a fourth-ranked team like Canada



1 *Pro Soccer*: A corner kick for the U.S. Can they convert for a goal?

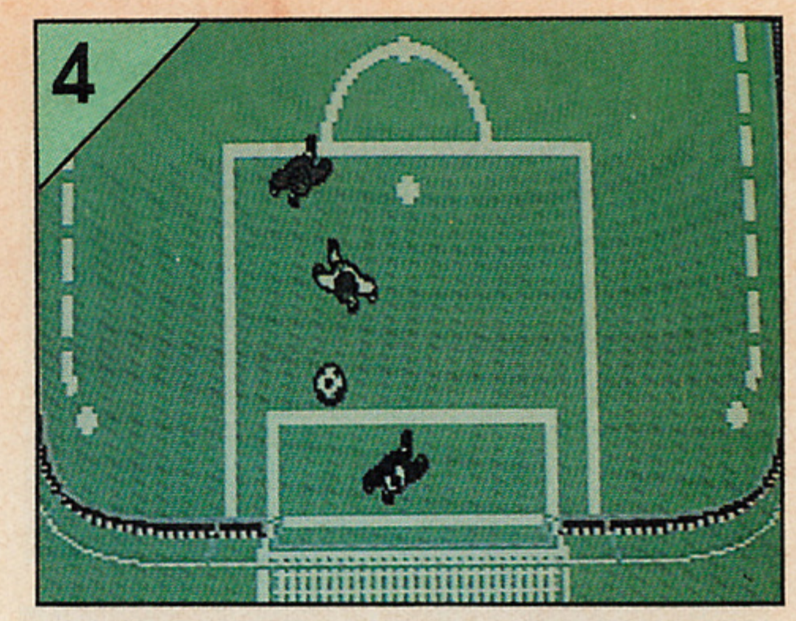
2 *Pro Soccer*: The second round of the tournament begins.

3 *Pro Soccer*: In this tournament, the U.S.S.R. beat Scotland in the final to win the World Cup.

4 *Pro Soccer*: The indoor game is on side 1 of the disk.

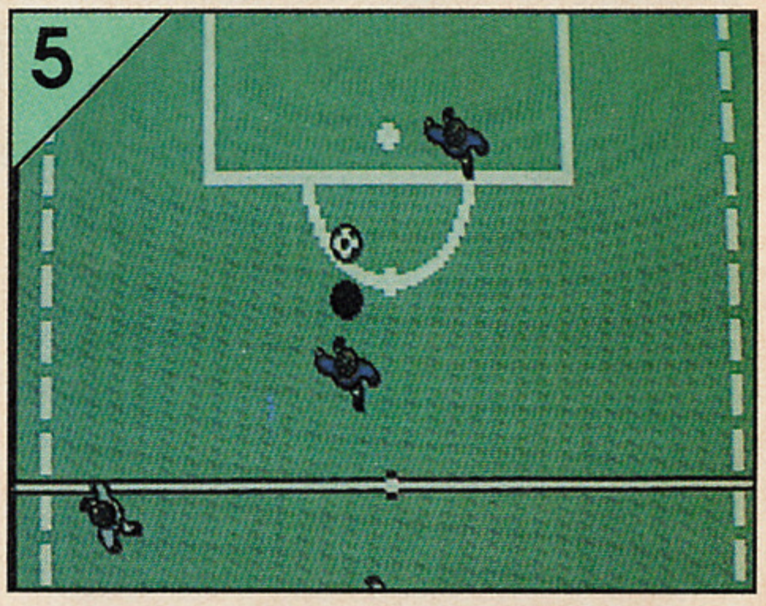
5 *Pro Soccer*: A pass forward into the goal crease.

6 *Pro Soccer*: In the indoor game, even the goalie can carry the ball forward.



or the U.S., your chances of surviving even the first round are low.

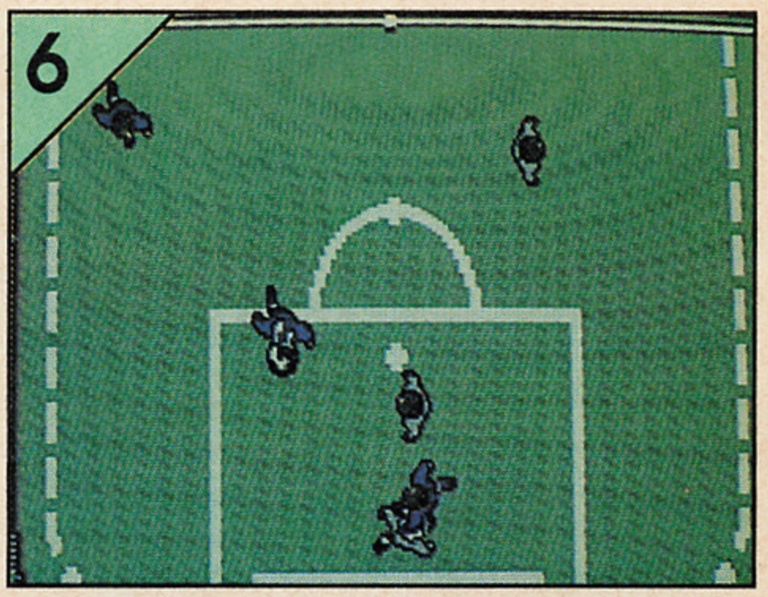
Playing *Pro Soccer* means passing the ball and taking a variety of shots. You can consistently score against weaker goalies by shooting from the corner of the penalty

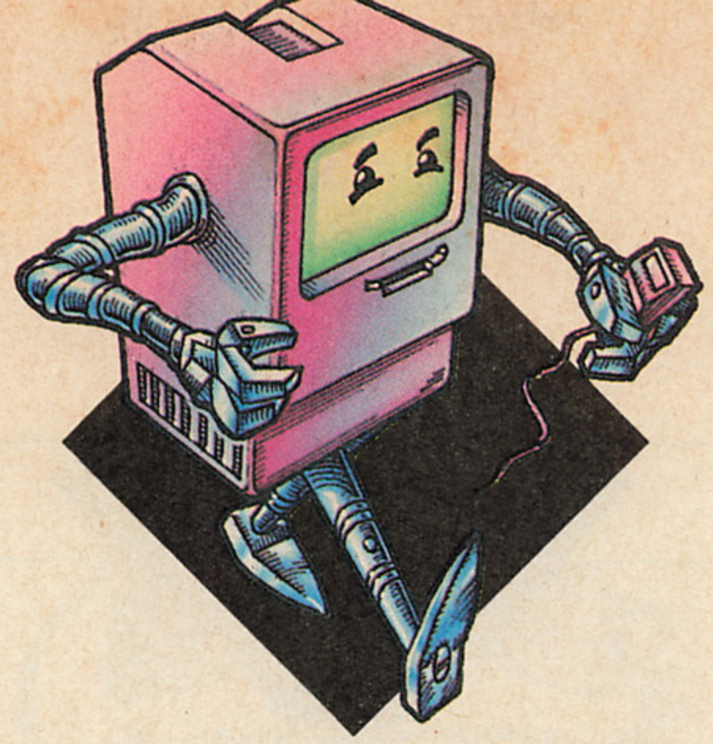


area, a flaw that should be corrected. The outdoor game allows little of the build-up that characterizes real soccer, but the World Cup tournament is great fun nonetheless.

Pro Soccer is very good. I wish there were some way to advance a team from the fourth rank to the second or first, but maybe a future edition will add this feature. In the meantime, it's still a strong game.

GP





MAC PLAYERS

Pucks And Power

Selby Bateman

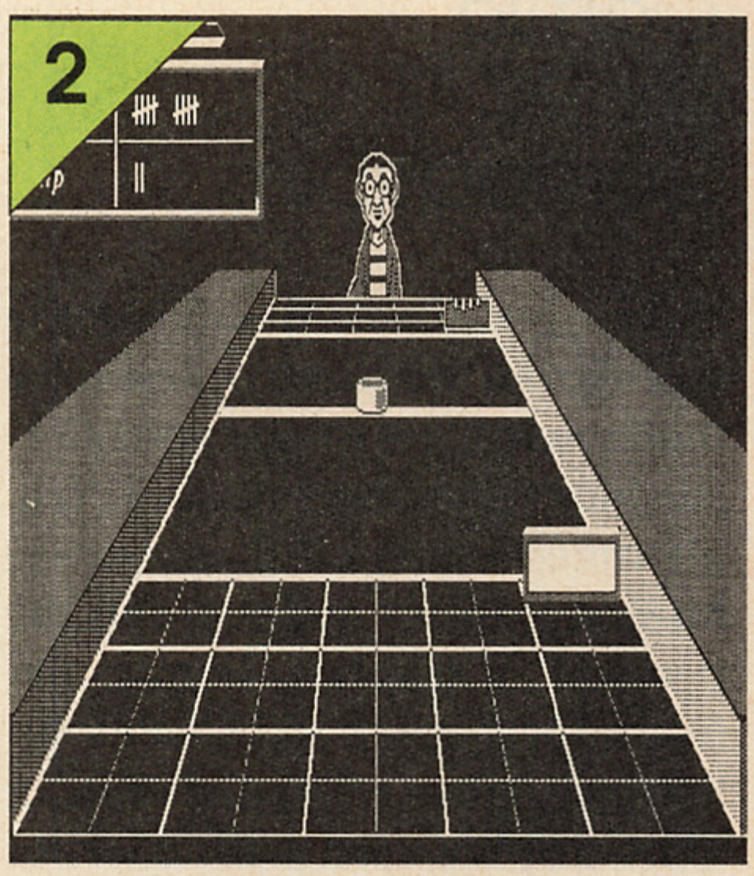
1. Chris Crawford's *Balance of Power: The 1990 Edition* is the updated sequel to his groundbreaking strategy game.
2. Learn to play *Shufflepuck Cafe* against this wimp.
3. You can play air hockey against any of these aliens in *Shufflepuck Cafe*.

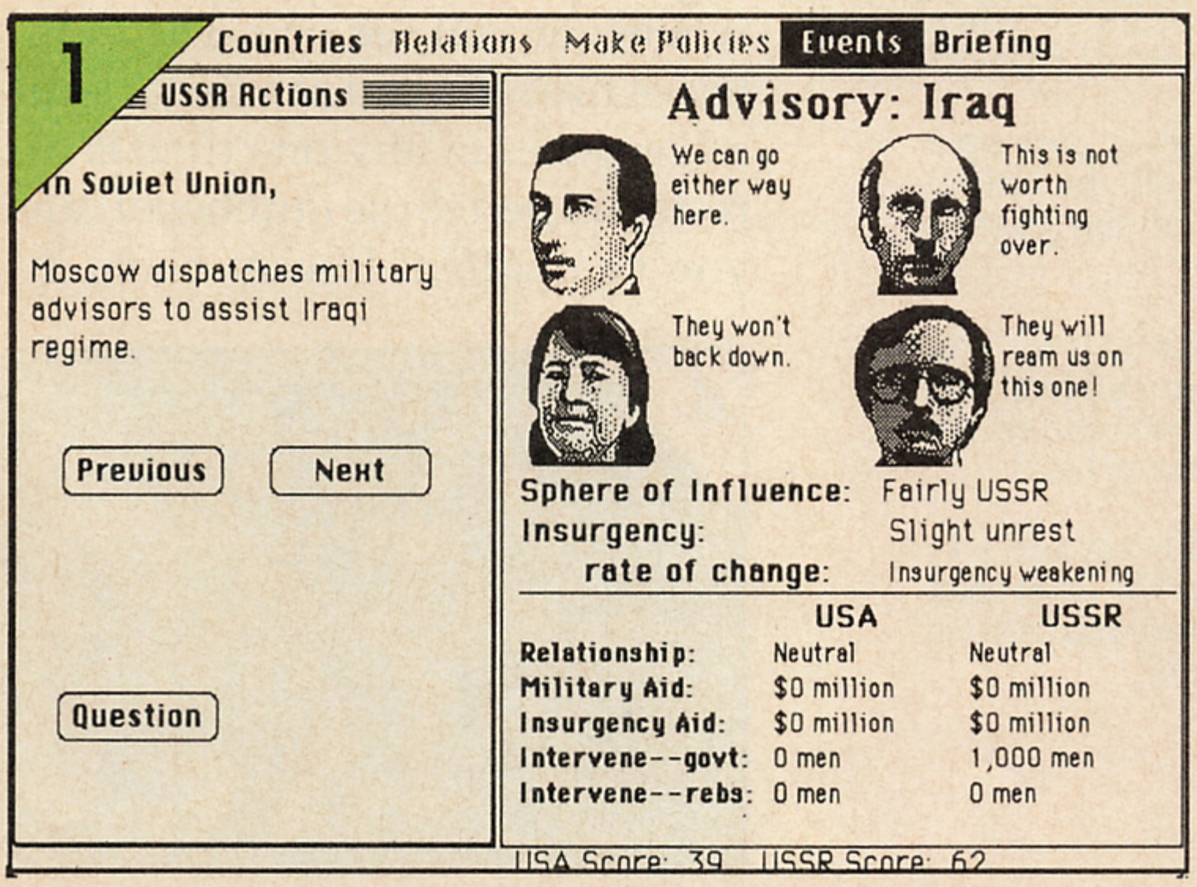
Chris Crawford has always been a few steps ahead of most other computer game designers, as he proved when he created the original *Balance of Power* — an excellent geopolitical *tour de force* strategy game that rewards diplomacy and nukes stupidity.

Crawford overcame his reluctance to write sequels when he produced *Balance of Power: The 1990 Edition* (Mindscape), which updates and extends the original. The new version speeds up certain aspects of game play, has on-screen advisers who help you make decisions, provides updated information based on changes in the real world, and adds a new level called "Multipolar" which offers a richer, more complex environment. The Multipolar game essentially creates a world in which more variables affect the course of events. In answering his critics — some of whom complained that the original *Balance of Power* was too simplistic and pacifist — Crawford has come up with something better without sacrificing the elements that made his earlier game such a breakthrough.

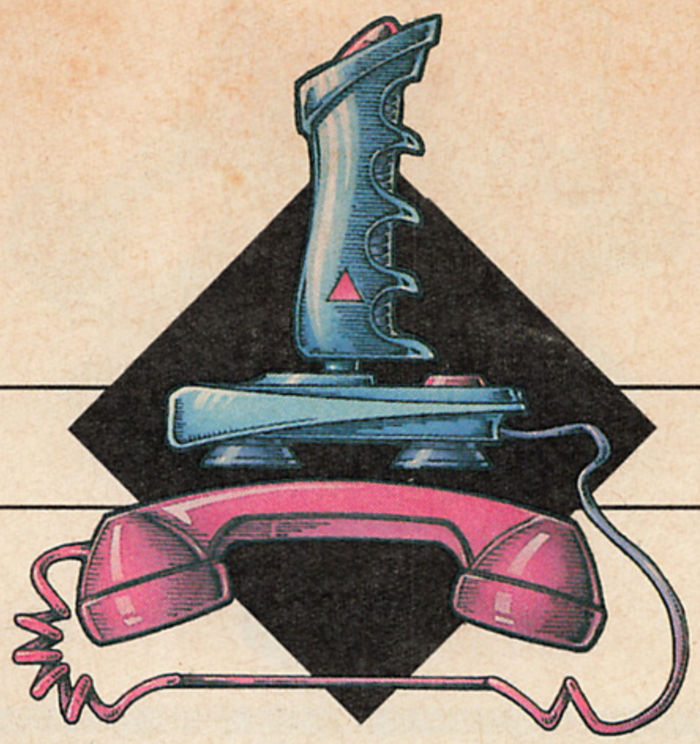
If it's nonpolitical action you're looking for, the unique *Shufflepuck Cafe* (Broderbund) is an action game that's sure to push your fast-twitch muscles to the max. Your mouse moves an on-screen paddle in the most original form of air hockey you're likely to encounter. You take on a collection of alien competitors in an extraterrestrial cafe reminiscent of the bar scene in *Star Wars*. Each opponent has his, her, or its own level of skill — and you'll love the sound effects. At the recent Software Publishers Association symposium in San Diego, *Shufflepuck Cafe* won the award for Best Action/Arcade Game.

GP





The Adventures Of Captain Comic
For PC Compatibles



CHEAP THRILLS

TWO REVIVALS

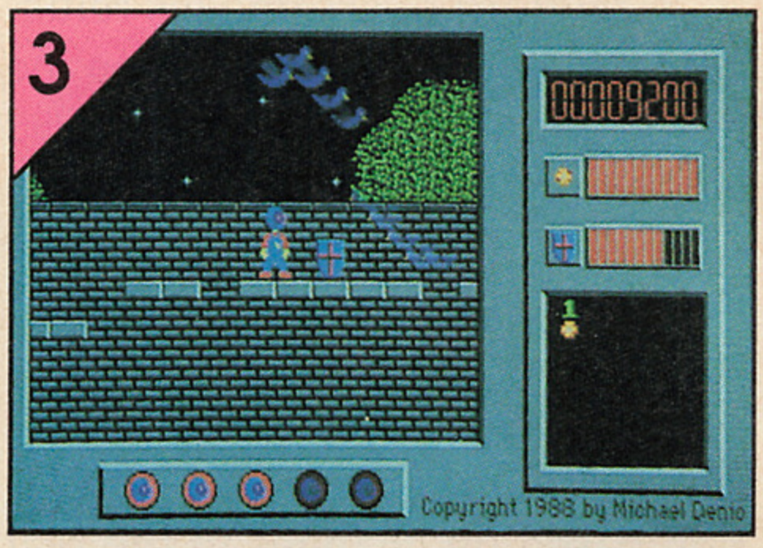
Arlan R. Levitan

Have you given up saving the world from total destruction since the dry-cleaners ruined your electric-blue tights and red cape? Well, it's time to dust off those superhuman powers and assume the persona of Captain Comic, patron superhero of all PC-compatible computers equipped with an EGA display card with 256K of display memory. This is a game cast in the mold of yesterday's adventure comics and Saturday-matinee movie serials.

As we begin *The Adventures of Captain Comic*, the good Captain has just arrived on the planet Omsoc, where a renegade band of aliens has pilfered three priceless treasures. Your job is to recover rare gems, a sack of sacred coins, and a celestial crown, and return them to the guardians of Omsoc. For this you will earn the undying gratitude of millions of tentacled life-forms.

Keyboard controls allow you to run, jump, and blast your way through the obstacles that await you. You gain points by vaporizing enemies and gathering objects on Omsoc's surface. Keep your eyes peeled — you'll need to gather the right tools to make it through the eight challenges of Omsoc.

For instance, you should always grab a can of Blastola Cola whenever you see one. The number of fireballs you can fire at your adversaries at any one time is directly related to the number of cans you've quaffed. Rocket boots in-

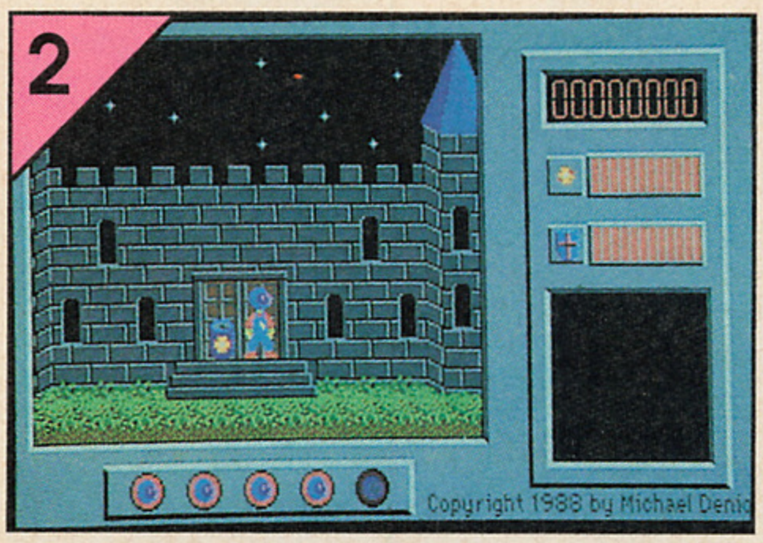


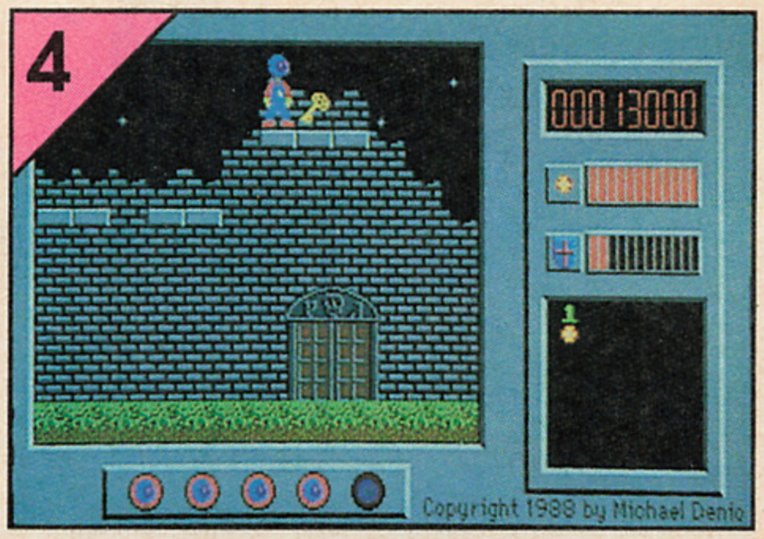
1 *Captain Comic*: Here are some things you're supposed to look for — and *look out* for — when exploring the world of Omsoc.

2 *Captain Comic*: Never pass up a can of Blastola Cola, including the can found on the game's opening screen.

3 *Captain Comic*: Each time you find one of these shields, you restore your life force. But watch out for the birds overhead!

4 *Captain Comic*: This key unlocks a lot of doors. But the door seen here leads to a very dangerous adventure, indeed.





CHEAP THRILLS

crease your jumping power, keys get you through doors, and shields replenish the energy that keeps your cosmic armor effective. Your suit's life-support systems can resurrect you from destruction only four times, so watch your step.

Here are some more hints to help you get through the game:

• Don't ignore anything that comes at you, no matter how harmless it appears. Even the gentle-looking bluebirds may drop acid on your armor and deplete your shield strength.

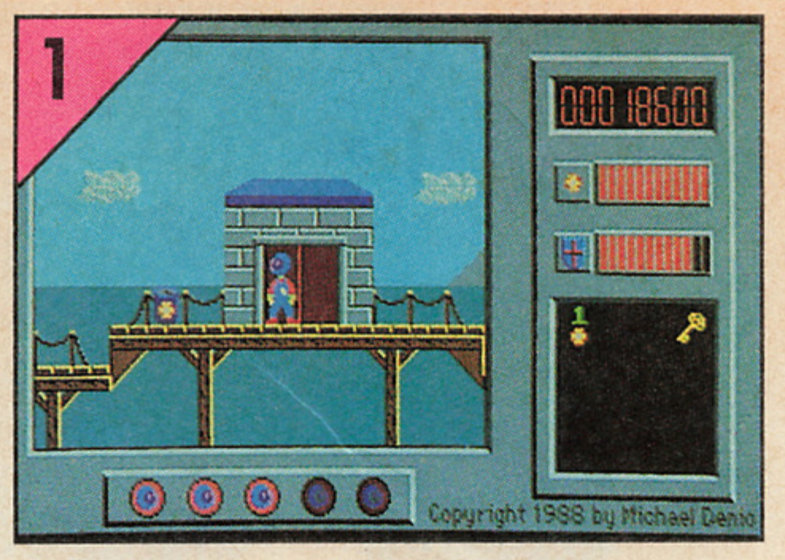
• When the Captain's offensive capability is low, don't jab the FIRE key repeatedly. You'll get maximum firepower in short bursts by keeping the key depressed continuously.

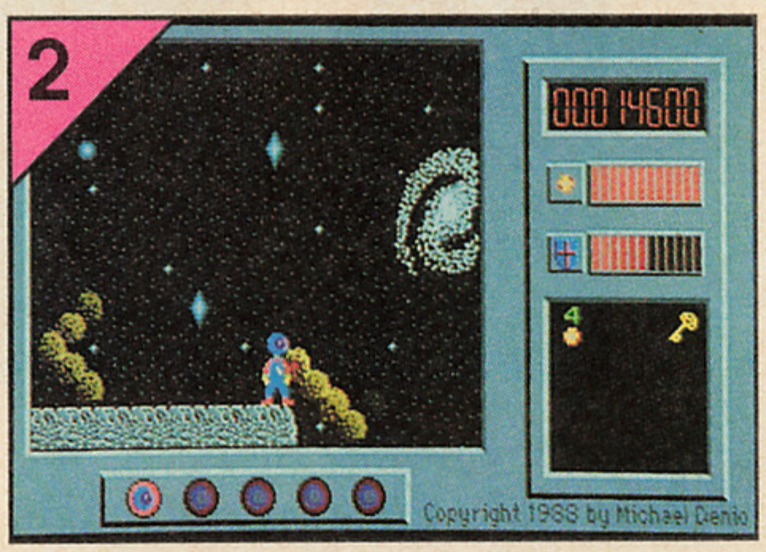
• After you've downed a few cans of Blastola, try firing and jumping at the same time. When executed correctly, this maneuver shoots multiple fireballs at different heights, increasing the likelihood of hitting a moving target.

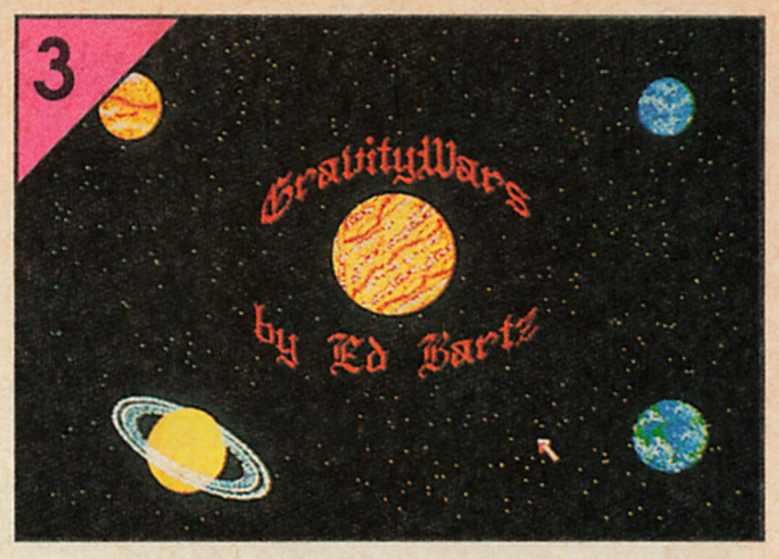
• The Wand of Teleportation lets you move through walls and cross chasms too wide too jump. Don't forget to pick it up, even if it means losing a life.

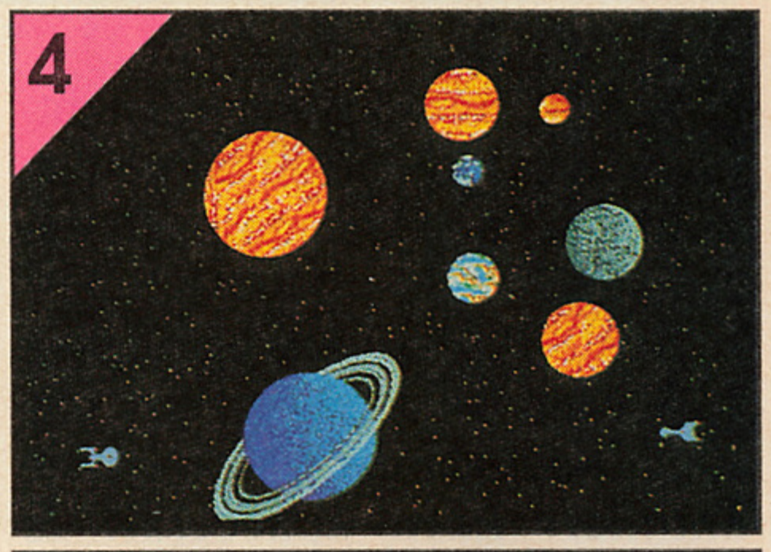
• You gain extra lives each time you score 50,000 points, find some treasure, or pick up a shield when your armor is already at maximum power.

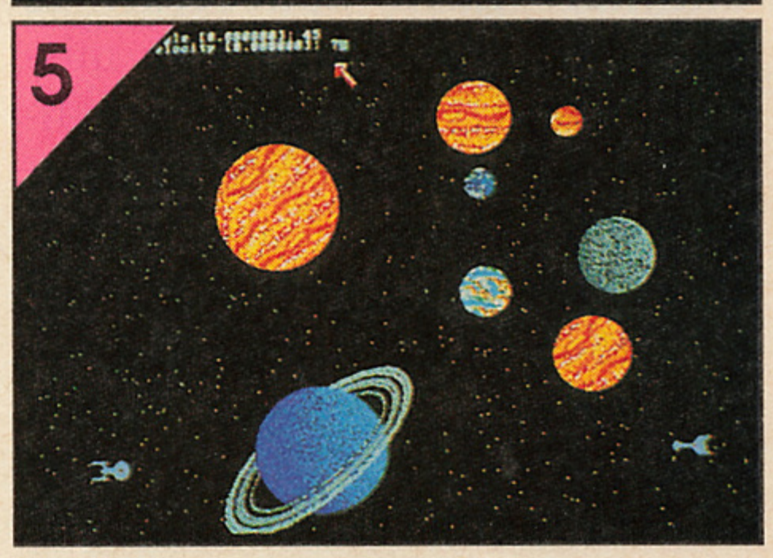
The Adventures of Captain Comic is a shareware program written by Michael A. Denio, who is to be soundly congratulated for creating a colorful and well-thought-out arcade-style game that looks and plays better than some commercial software we've seen. Denio welcomes questions, suggestions, and "contributions toward future products." You can write Denio at 11675 W. Bellfort #102, Houston, TX 77099.











Gravity Wars For The Amiga

One of the earliest games written for personal computers involved two cannons, each manned by a player who selected the angle and velocity of shells to be fired at his opponent. The computer would vary the distance between the two players, and, in later variations, would also change the wind conditions and the altitude of the cannons.

Versions of "Cannon" or "Artillery" were available for almost every personal computer of the 1970s and early 1980s. The game required only rudimentary graphics, was easy to program, and was surprisingly addictive. *Gravity Wars* is a clear descendant of

1 *Captain Comic*: After emerging from this door, do you turn right or left? A can of Blastola Cola beckons to the left....

2 *Captain Comic*: If you take the Moon tour, you'll soon come to this dead-end cliff. Beware of falling asteroids!

3 *Gravity Wars* is an updated variation of the classic "Cannon" and "Artillery" games of years past.

4 *Gravity Wars*: Two players face-off in opposing spaceships. These ships bear a striking resemblance to the starship *Enterprise* and a Klingon battle cruiser.

5 *Gravity Wars*: Using the keyboard, players take turns entering velocity and direction numbers for their missile shots.

CHEAP THRILLS

"Cannon," but adds some delightful twists that make the game much more challenging and engrossing.

Instead of equipping players with cannons, *Gravity Wars* pits two hostile spacecraft against one another. Each spacecraft is equipped with long-range missiles that may be fired in any direction with varying amounts of thrust (velocity). Each player takes turns trying to hit the other by typing in the firing angle (0-360 degrees) and speed for each shot.

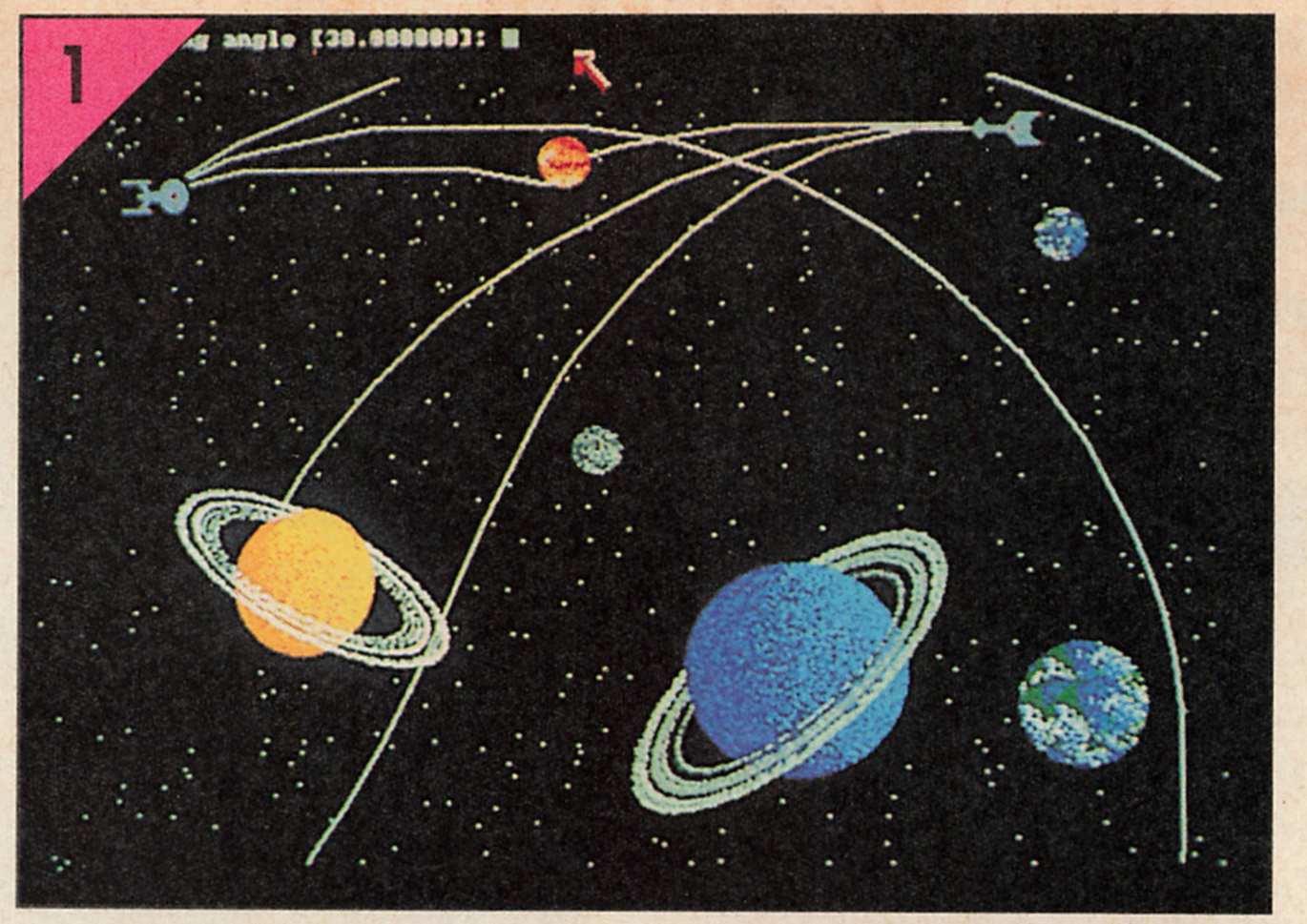
Now for the twists. In *Gravity Wars*, the universe is full of planets that vary in number and size from game to game, plus an occasional black hole. These celestial objects have gravitational fields that bend and warp the paths of missiles that pass near them. Therein lies the challenge of *Gravity Wars*: It might *seem* as though you have a straight shot at your adversary, but you're unlikely to hit him until you learn to compensate for the odd gravitational effects. The planets — and particularly the black holes — can create some truly hysterical missile tracks that weave their way across the screen. We've even seen some missiles come all the way back and hit the ship from which they were fired.

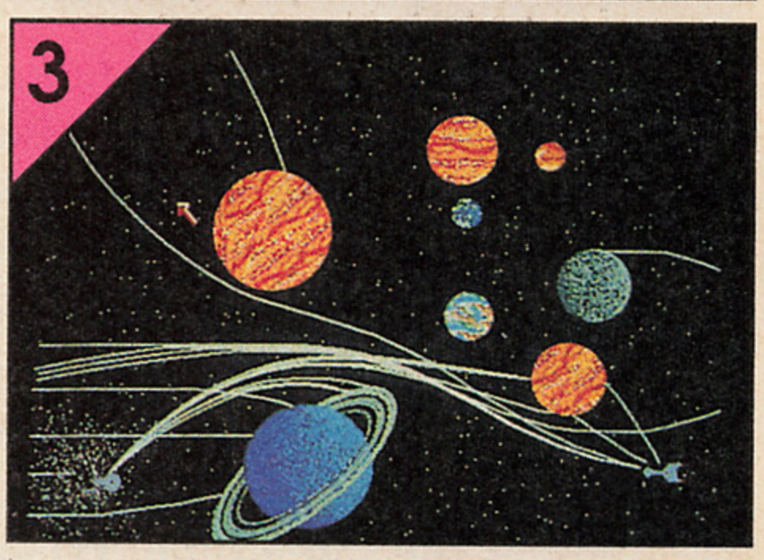
Menus let you control a number of the game's parameters. You can set the maximum number of planets per game, turn the sound on and off, and select a one-player practice mode. If you want to make things really tough, you can tell the computer not to display the vapor trails left behind by the missiles after each shot. You can also change the location of either ship; move, add, or delete planets; and add black holes.

Gravity Wars makes nice, though not spectacular, use of the Amiga's graphics. The high-resolution graphics mode flickers a bit, but is not overly irritating. The game definitely attracts a crowd whenever it is played. Onlookers always have plenty of advice to offer on how you should aim your missile in order to reduce your opponent to pixels.

Thanks to Ed Bartz for making *Gravity Wars* available as Amiga shareware. If you like the game, Ed suggests that you send a $5 contribution to him at 12 Roosevelt Street, South River, NJ 08882.

GP





1 *Gravity Wars*: Notice how the gravitational fields of the planets affect the paths of the missiles. Hitting your target isn't easy.

2 *Gravity Wars*: Pull-down menus let you change game options and get help.

3 *Gravity Wars*: When someone scores a hit, the enemy ship explodes into space dust.

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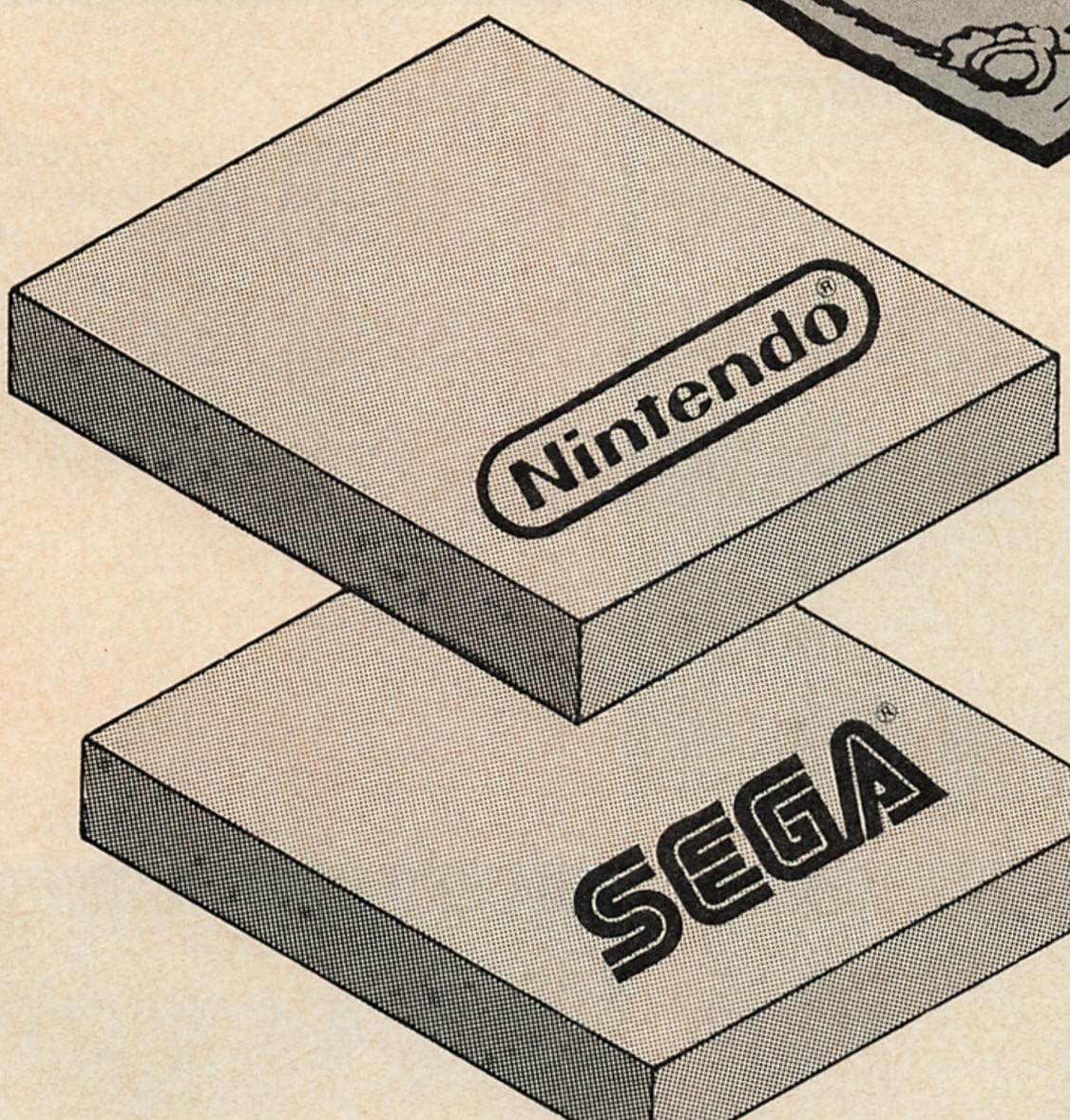

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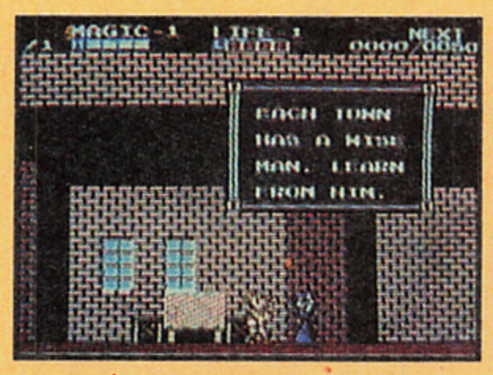
NINTENDO® GAME of the MONTH

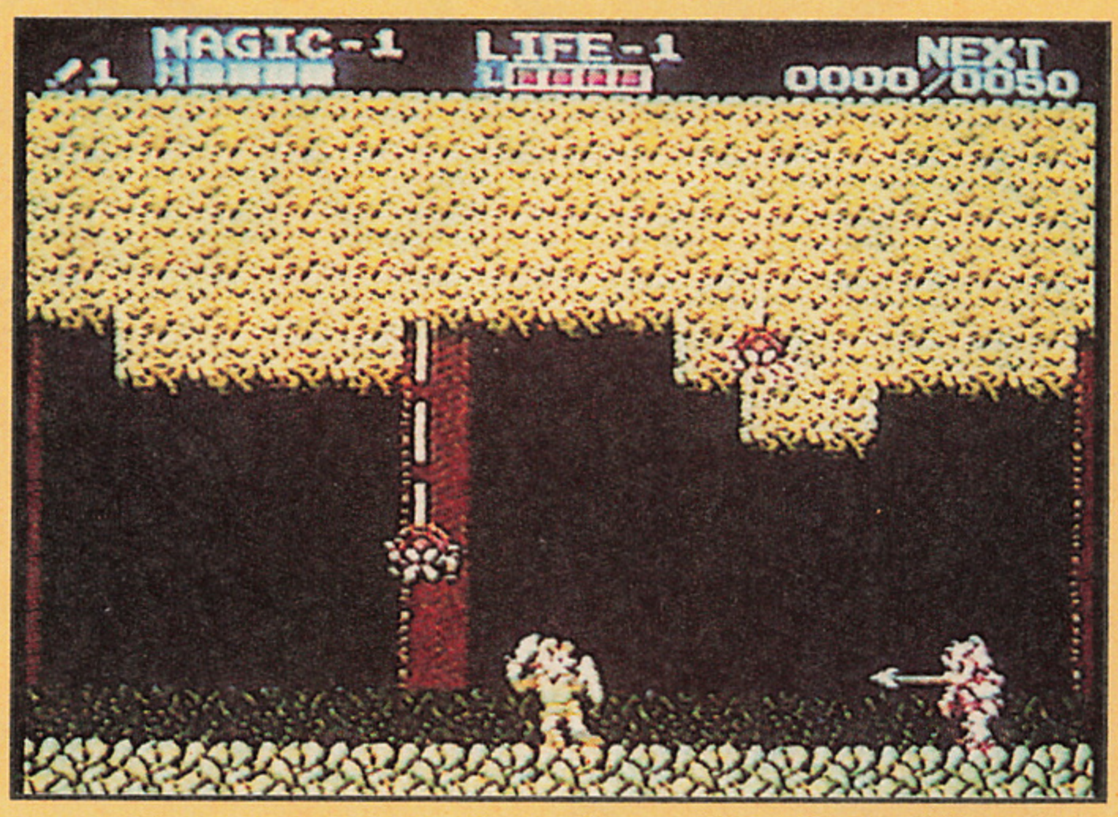
ZELDA II®: THE ADVENTURE OF LINK

More than a few *Zelda II* players are having trouble leading Link to the third element of the Triforce. After all, Hyrule is a vast land, and it's crawling with sinister servants and sentries loyal to Ganon. Here are some hints and tips that can help you wake Princess Zelda from her slumber and free the homeland once and for all.

First, a few general guidelines. Because the palace guardians become increasingly difficult to defeat, you must build up your life and magic levels throughout the game. Also, remember to map your way through the palaces *and* through Hyrule. You don't want to become the missing Link.

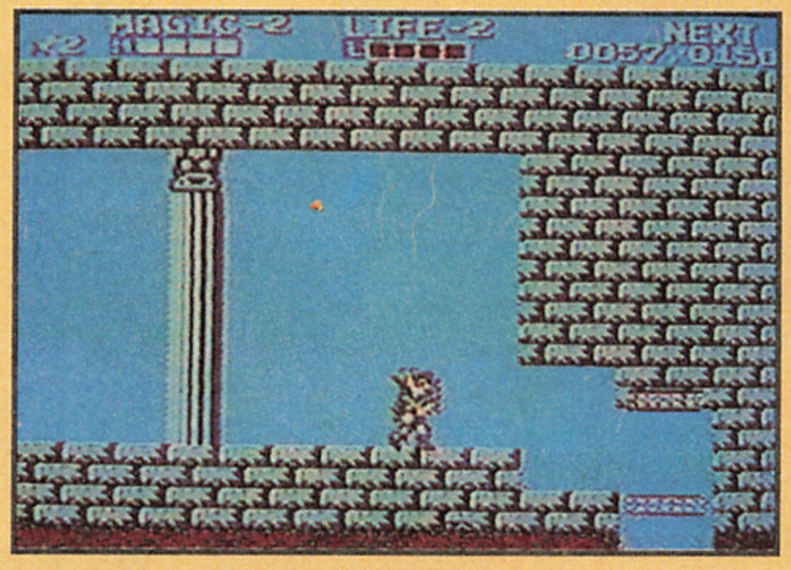


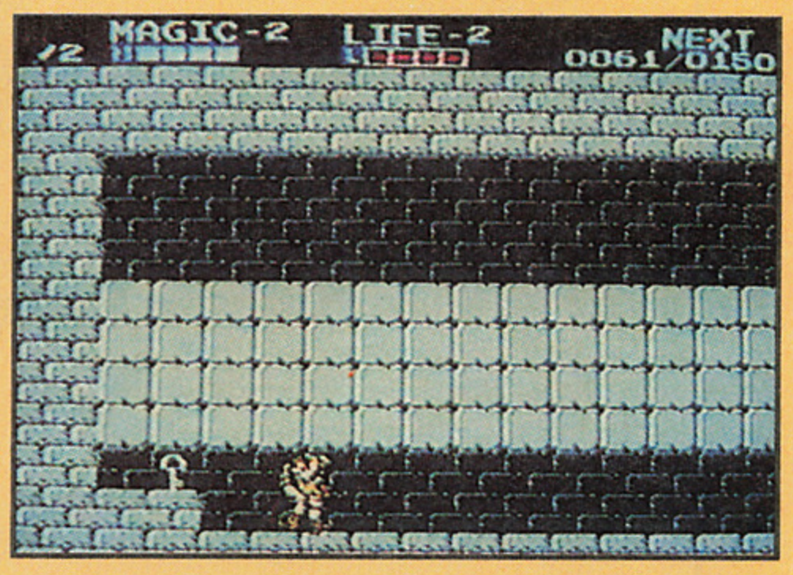
1 After finding a life container in a nearby cave just southwest of the North Castle, go to the town of Rauru. Speak to everyone there to receive valuable hints and to find your shield.

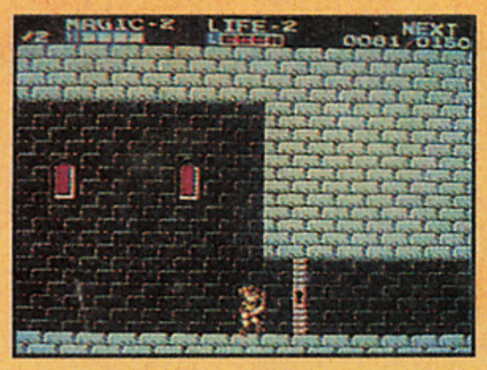


2 When Link takes the road less traveled, it makes all the difference. Off the road, he must battle three screens of enemies. By defeating them, he can increase his experience.

3 Begin your odyssey in the northeast corner of west Hyrule, inside Parapa Palace. After descending in the first elevator, go left to retrieve the first key.

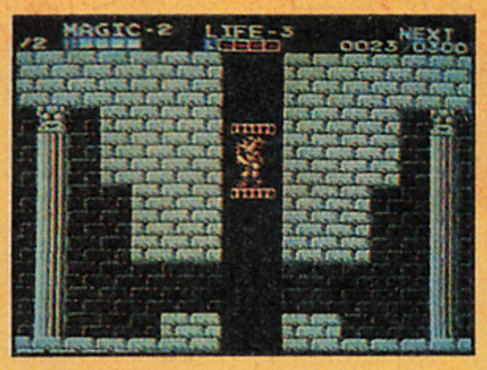




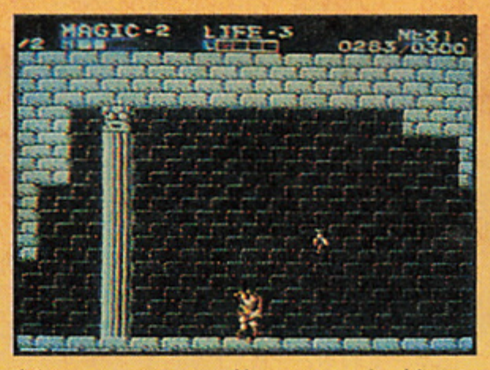


4

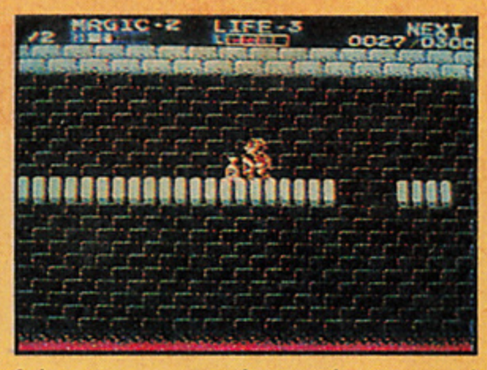
Use the key you just found to unlock the door to the right of the elevator.



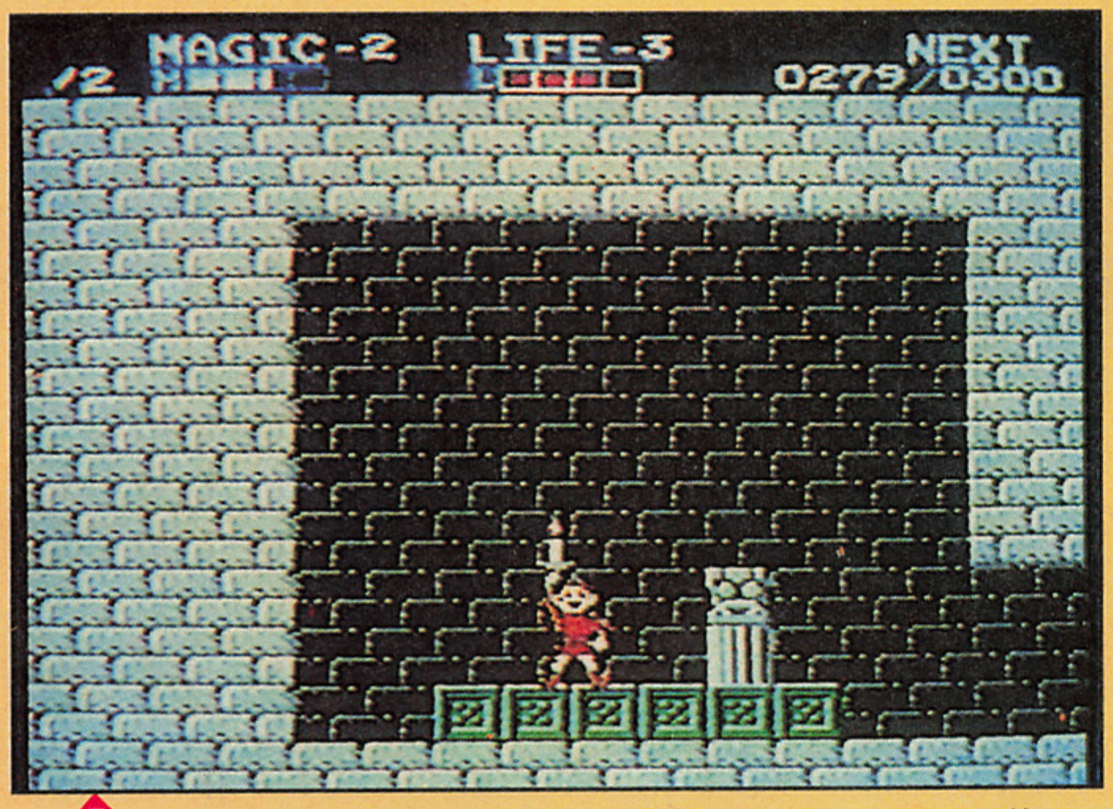
Skip the second elevator to get to the third. Go up one level, where you'll find the second and third keys.



If you walk past the third elevator, you'll find a fairy. Jump up to her — she'll replenish your life level.

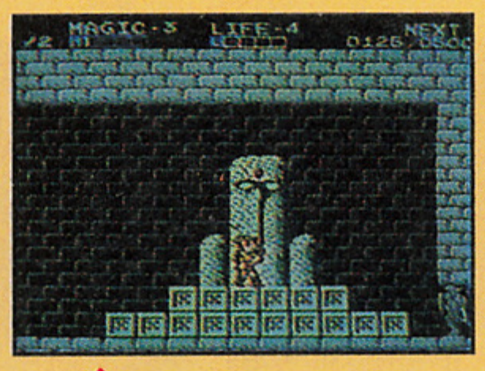


Now go back and take the second elevator down one level. If you walk left, across the disintegrating bridge, you'll stumble on a treasure bag that will boost your score.



5

Across the bridge and through another locked door is the candle. It helps you see exactly what you're up against, especially in dark caves.

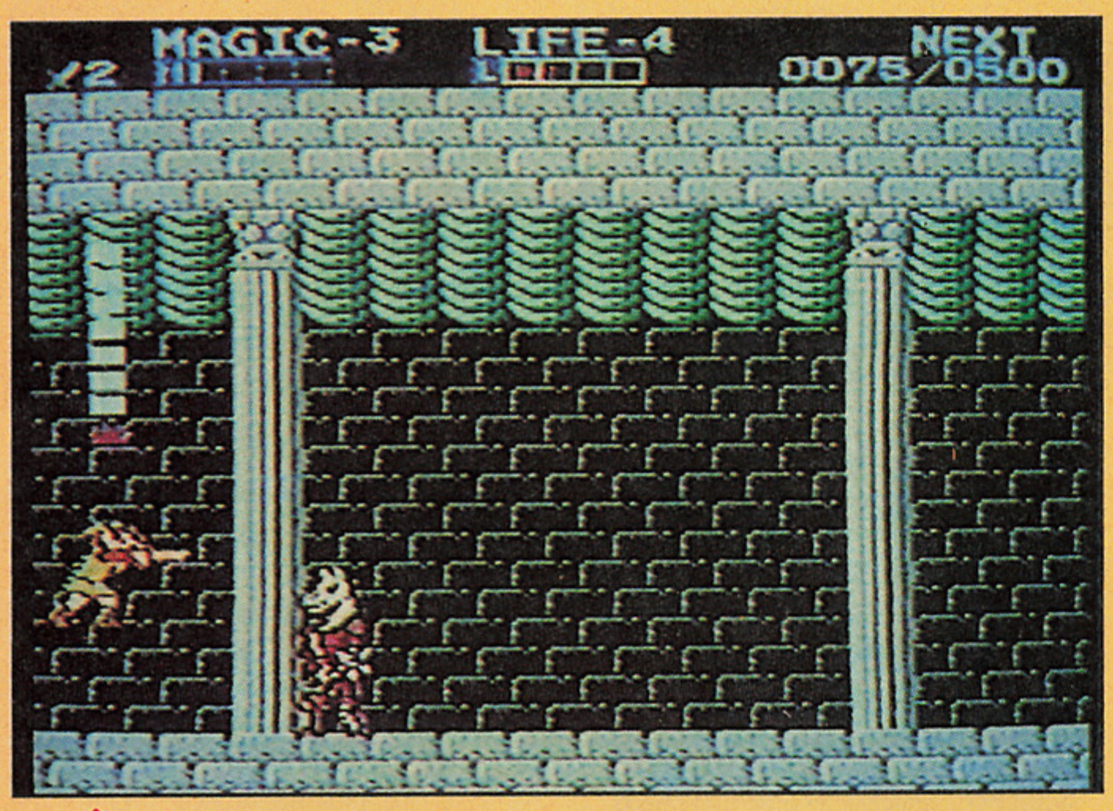


7

Put the crystal in the statue to replenish your life, power, and points, and to exit the palace.

HINT

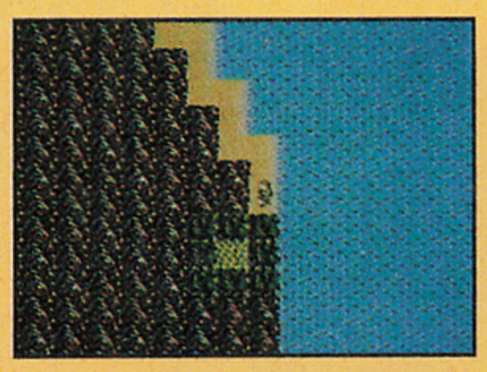
Whenever you exit a palace and it doesn't turn to stone, it means you left something critical behind. It is wise to go back and get it.

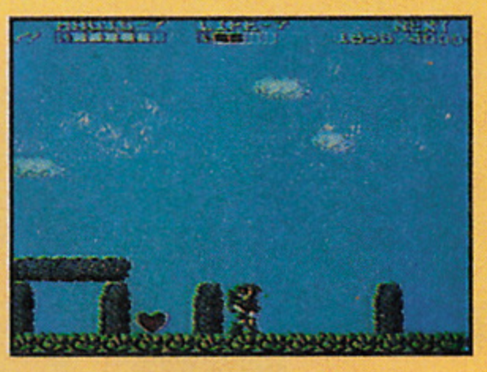


6

Return to the third elevator and take it down one level. Beyond one door waits Horsehead, the guardian of Parapa Palace. If you stay on the far left of the screen, you can reach him with your sword, but he can't reach you.

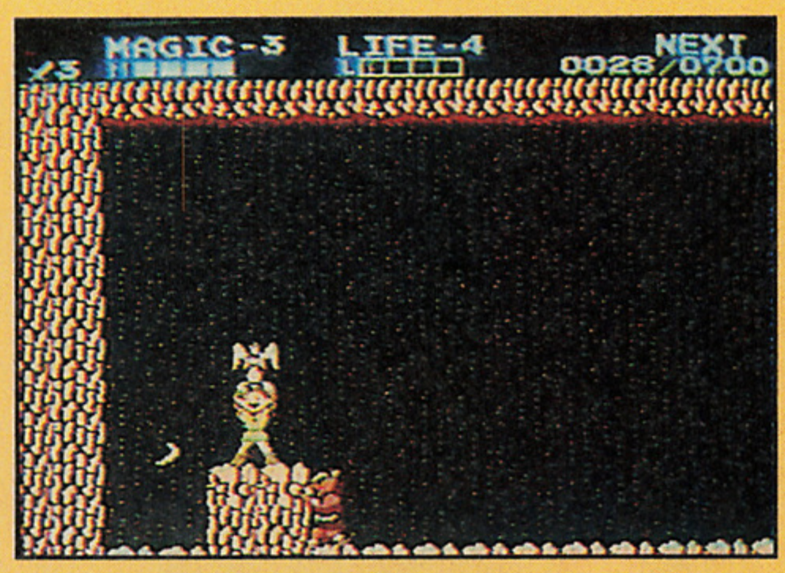
8





South of Parapa Palace, along the east coast, is a small patch of forest land. Explore this area for a life container.

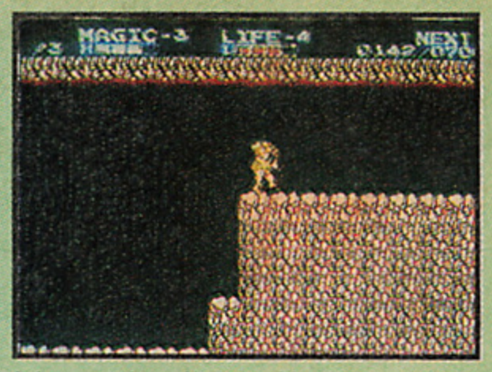
9



On your way to the town of Ruto, stop off in the Tantari Desert and tour one of its caves. Inside you'll find a statue of the Goddess. But be on guard — the boomerang devil will try to stop you.

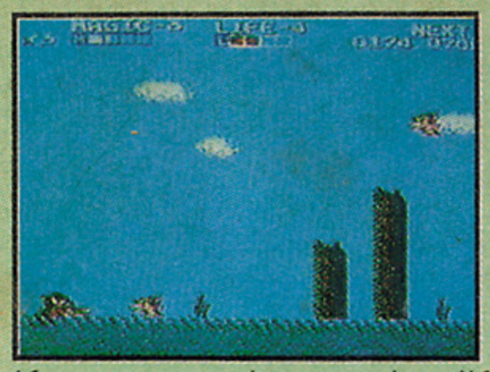
10

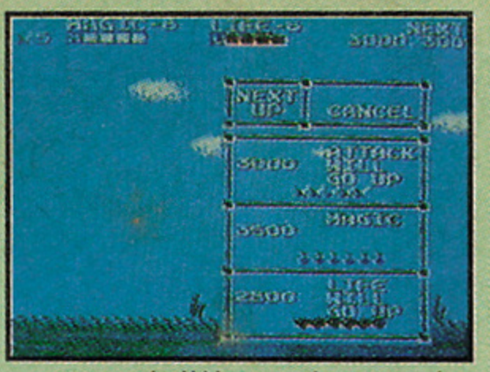
Trophy in hand, talk to the lovely lady in Ruto. Her uncle has a surprise for you.



Head directly south to another of Hyrule's many caves. You'll need your newly acquired jump spell to leap atop this high ledge.

11



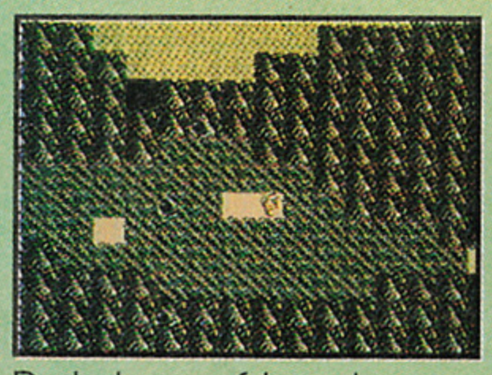


If you need an extra life, or additional magic, find a good spot in the Moruge Swamp for a fight. Killing off mass quantities of Octoroks and Mobies can increase your life and magic levels. The best spot for this is the extreme left edge of the screen. It takes quite a bit of time, but you should try to eliminate enough of them to raise your life and magic levels to at least six.

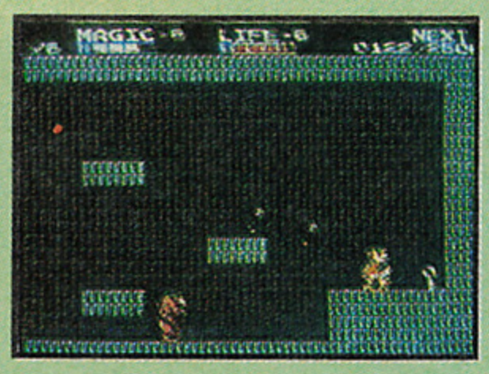
HINT

Each palace has a statue out front. Most statues will reward you with something if you smash them with your sword. There are also statues bearing gifts inside the palaces.

12

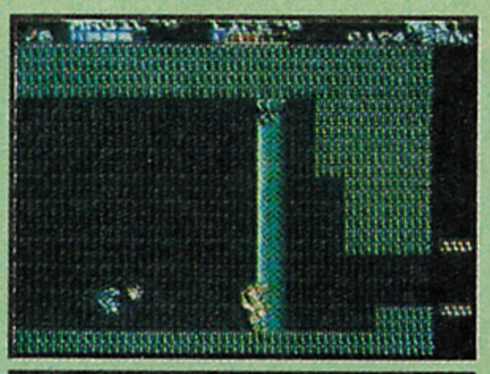


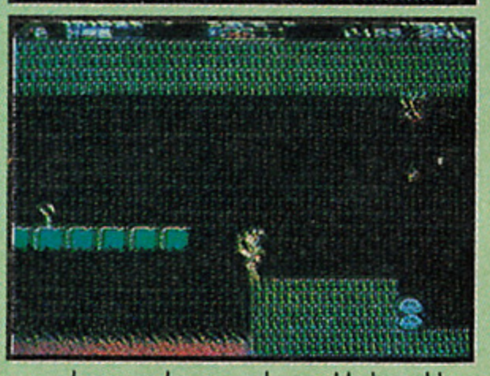
Patches of land can serve as places of refuge as you make your way to Midoro Palace. On one of the patches is a magic jar.



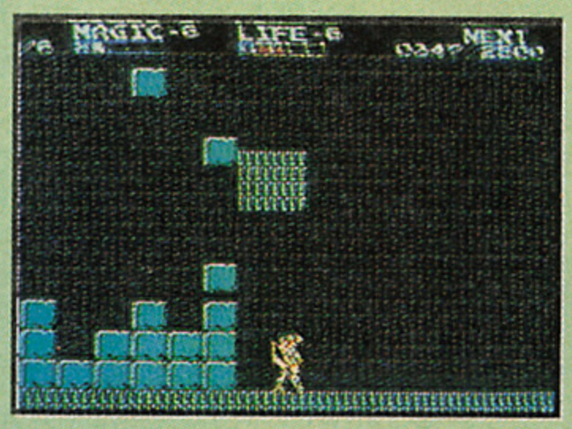
Once inside Midoro Palace, take the first elevator to the very bottom level. To the right is the first key.

13

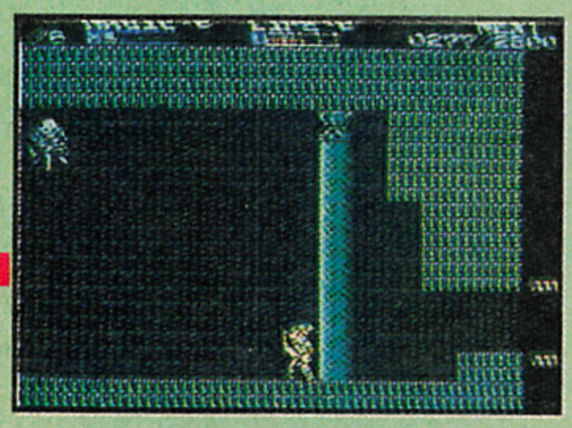


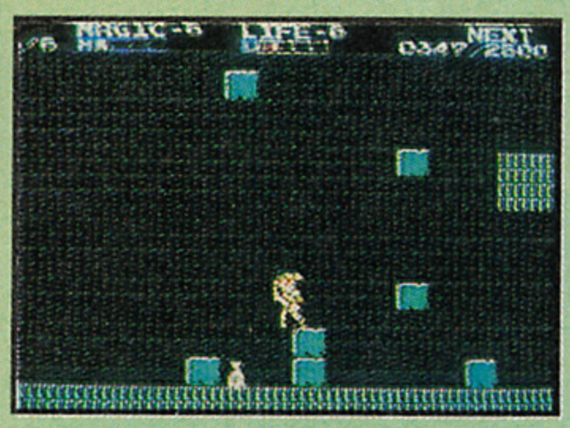


Go back up one level and then left to recover the second key. Go up another level and exit to the left. Just past the locked door is the third key.

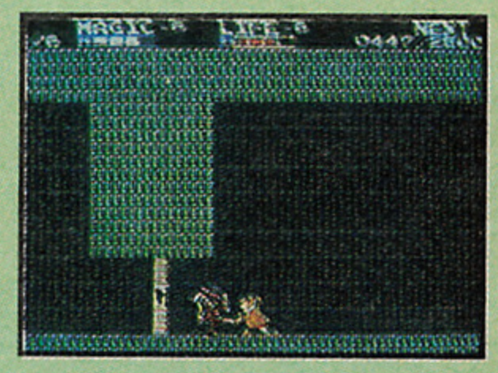


14



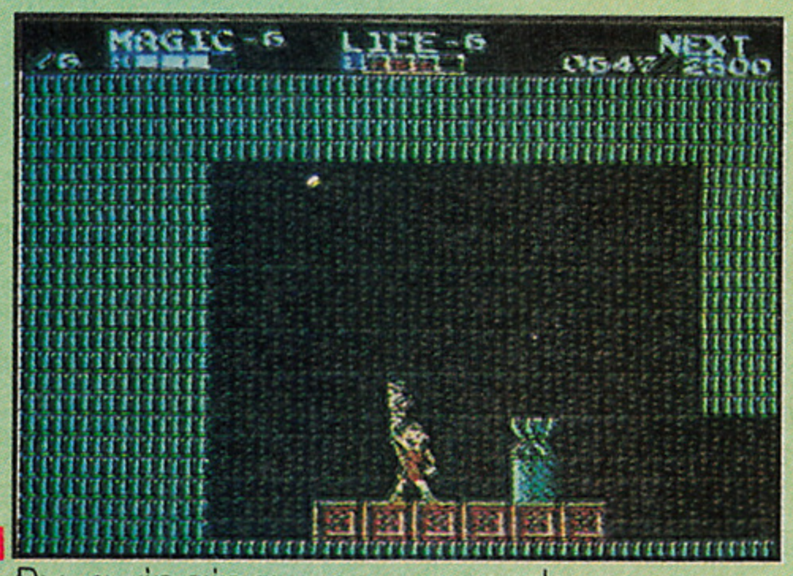


Continue left and take the next elevator down one level. If you exit to the left, you'll encounter falling blocks. If you get completely blocked out, go back toward the elevator until the screen flashes black, then try to run quickly under the blocks.



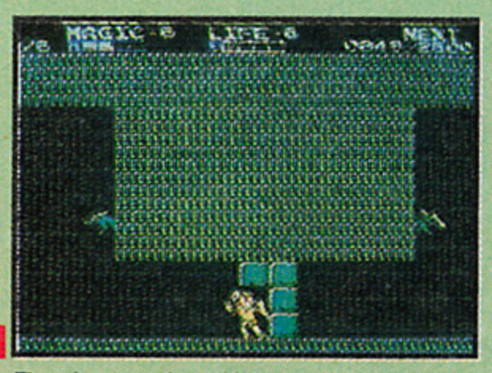
15

You'll have to battle two iron warriors to get to the glove. Low blows and head blows are usually effective against the ironknuckles.



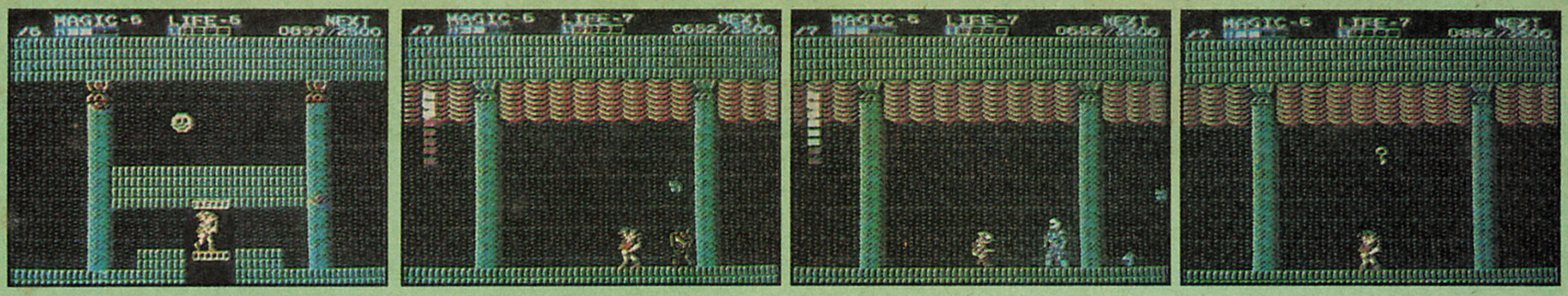
16

By swinging your sword, you can use the glove to break blocks inside the palace. It's impossible to complete your mission without this valuable mitt.



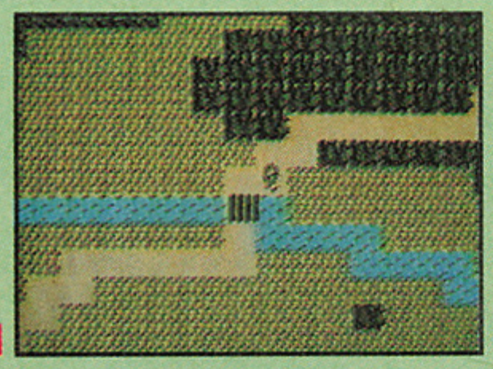
17

Return to the elevator and go to the bottom level. Exit right, past the iron warriors, and use your glove to smash through the blocks.



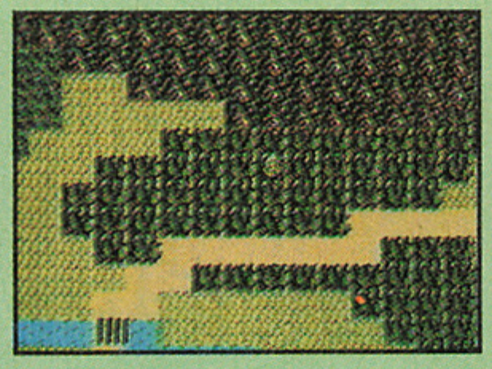
18

Soon you will come to another elevator positioned between two columns. Take it to the bottom level, where you will meet Helmethead. To defeat this enemy, leap in the air and aim for his head. You should be able to knock off his helmet. Repeat this move to remove his chain mail. You can then defeat him by chopping off his head.

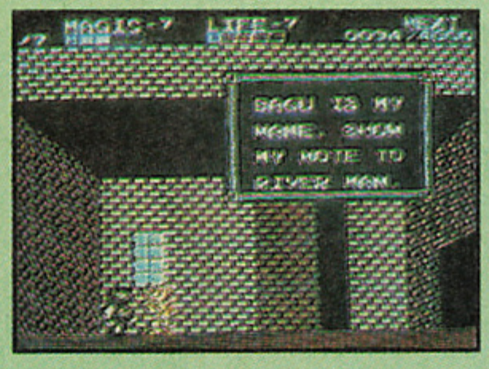


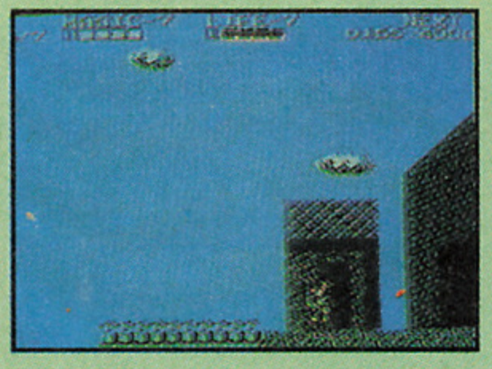
19

Get back on the road south of Midoro Palace and cross the bridge to the Water Town of Saria. Here you must find the mirror in order to get the magic.

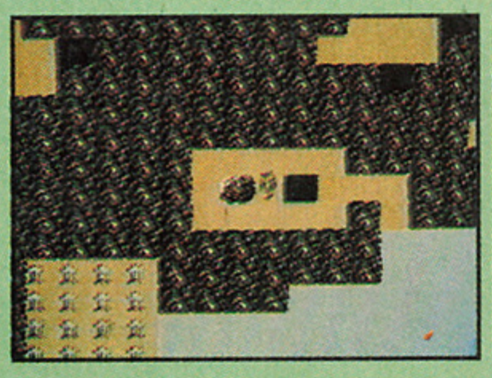


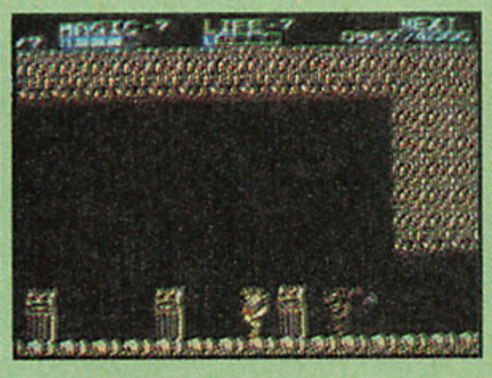
Enter the woods north of Saria and locate Bagu — he can help you. To find him, go to the seventh block from the right on the second row from the top.

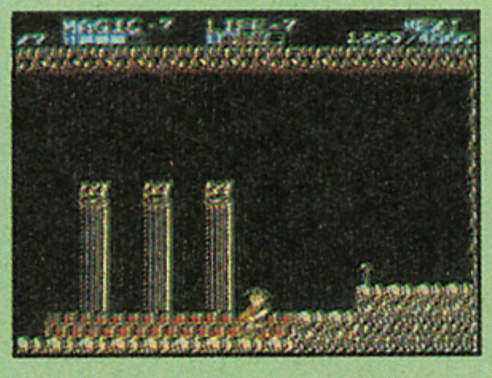


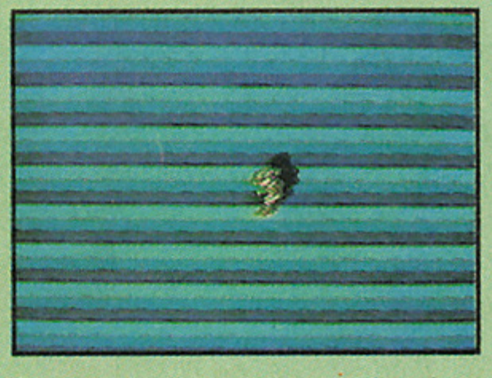


When you return to Saria, the River Man will now happily build you a bridge.



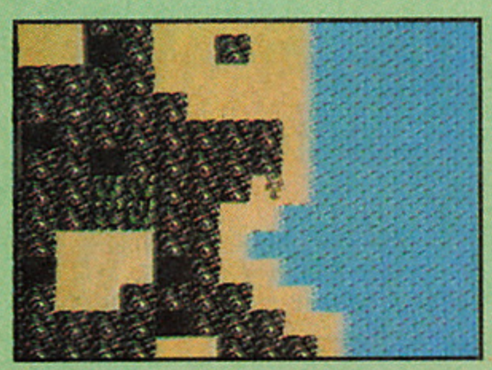


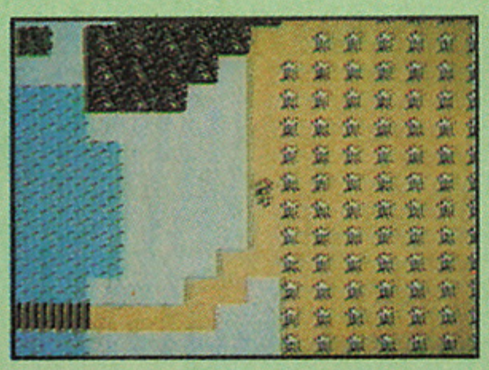


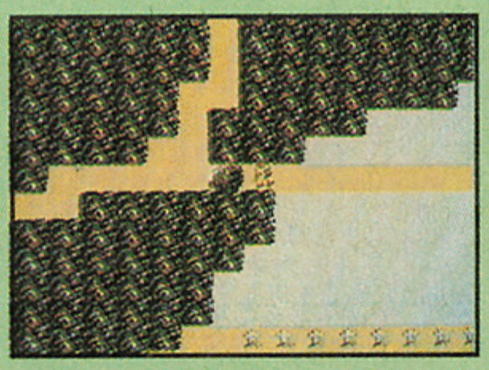


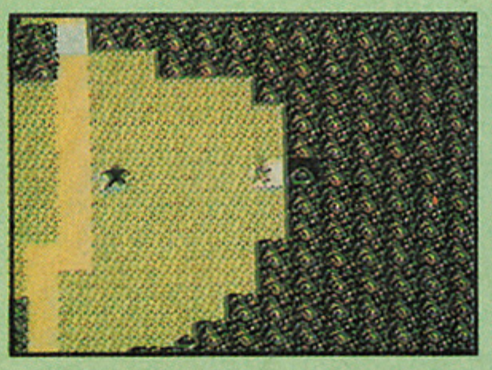
Just south of Saria is Death Mountain, where you can find the hammer. But first you'll have to battle three alligators that hurl axes at you. Keep in mind that your shield cannot protect you from ax blows. When you defeat this terrible trio, you can retrieve the hammer and use it to break rocks and fell trees.

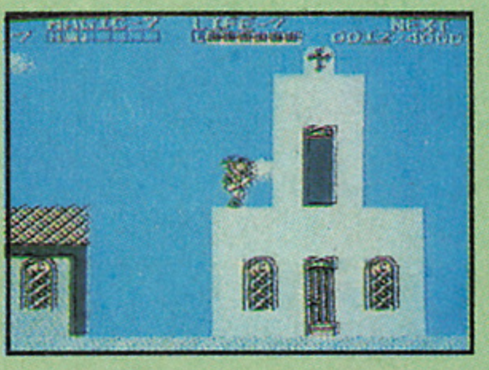
Smash the rock in front of the cave and jump into the chasm. At the bottom you'll find a magic container.











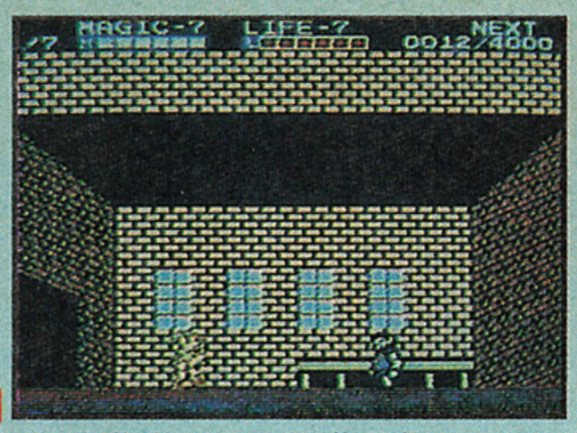
Go north along the coast to avoid the maze of caves. Cross the bridge to the King's Tomb and head northeast along the mountain ridge.

When you reach the road, head due east. When you come to this boulder blocking your way, use the hammer to clear a path.

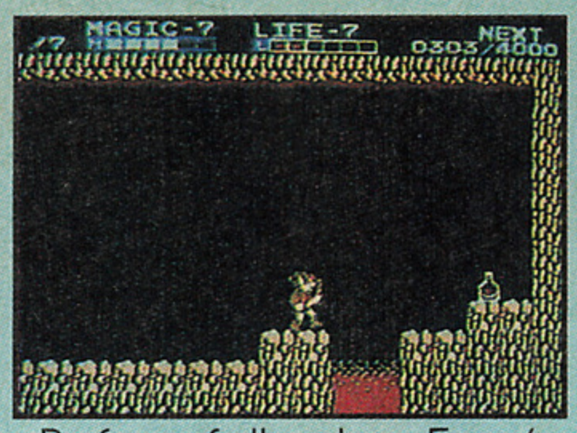
Next, take the first right and head north until you see another cave blocked by a boulder. Inside, you'll find another vital object.

It might be wise now to visit the town of Mido, located to the northeast of the King's Tomb. When you get there, jump up to the bell tower of one of the buildings. Inside you can acquire a very special skill.

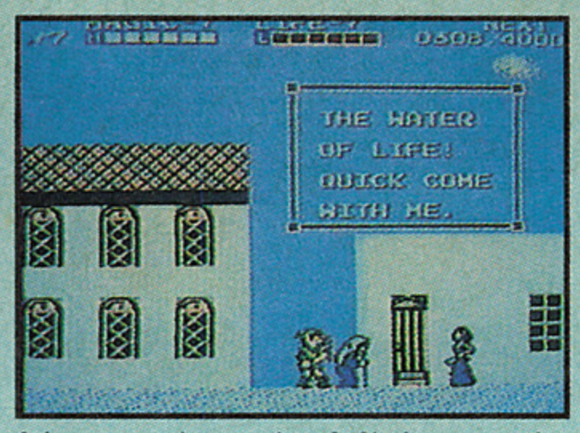
20



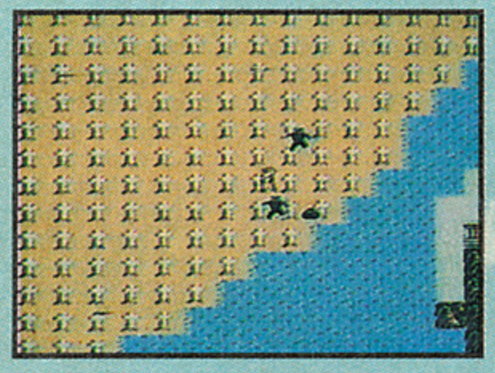
In Mido, you'll discover that a return trip to Ruto is in order. Once you're in Ruto, talk to Error. You can trust him, in spite of his misleading name.



Before following Error's advice, go to the cave located north of Moruge Swamp and due south of the town of Ruto. Inside this cave you'll find the Water of Life.

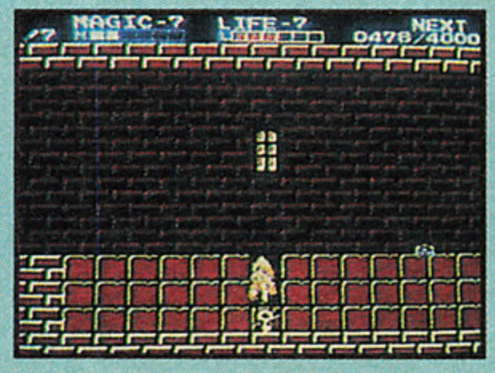


Now return to Mido and go to the hag. Follow her and receive an important magic spell.



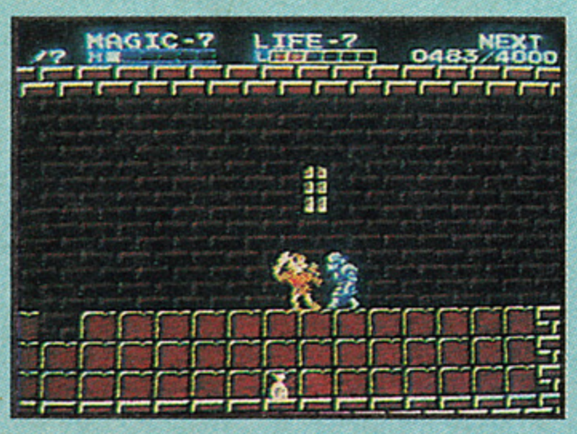
Here, where Link is standing, is an ancient tunnel, which will take you to the Island Palace. Inside the tunnel, use your fairy magic to flutter atop a steep ledge.

The tunnel is the only way to this palace. Mercifully, there are fewer twists, turns, and terrors on this island.



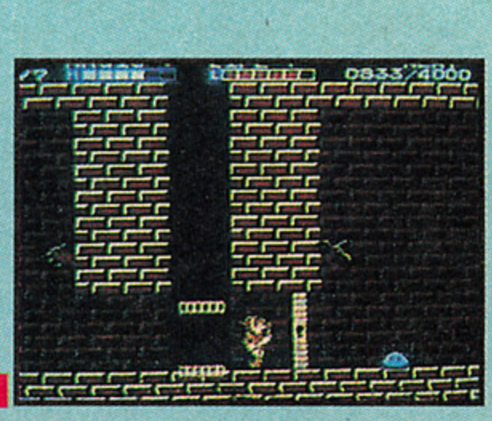
Use your downward thrust to retrieve the golden key.

21

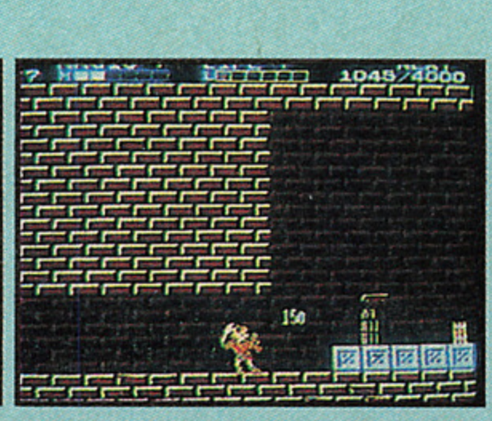


Duck in and out to defeat this chain-hammer foe. You have to move fast, because your shield is worthless against his blows.

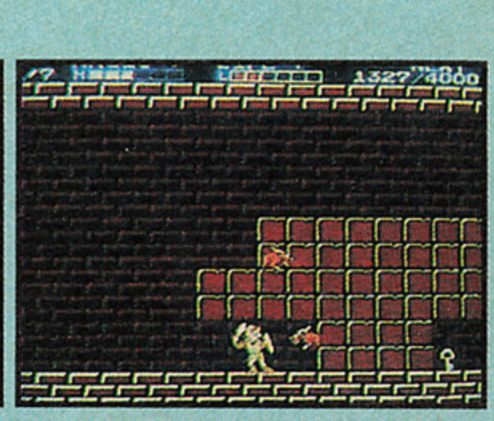
22



After retrieving the silver key, take the elevator down one level and exit to the right. You'll eventually stumble upon the third key.

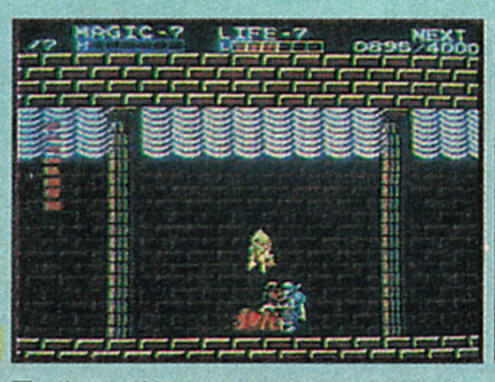


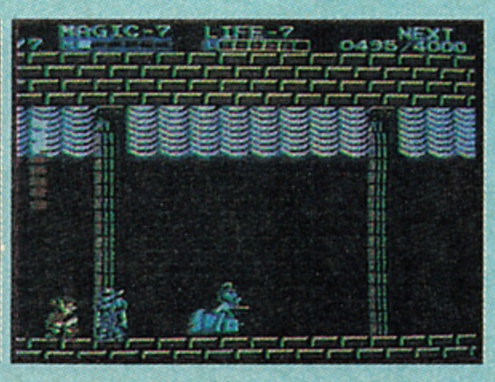
To get the raft, defeat the blue ironknuckle. The blue warriors are more difficult to defeat than the red ones, so you'll have to fight a little harder.



Now go through the two elevators on the left side. Retrieve the key protected by a swarm of dog heads.

23

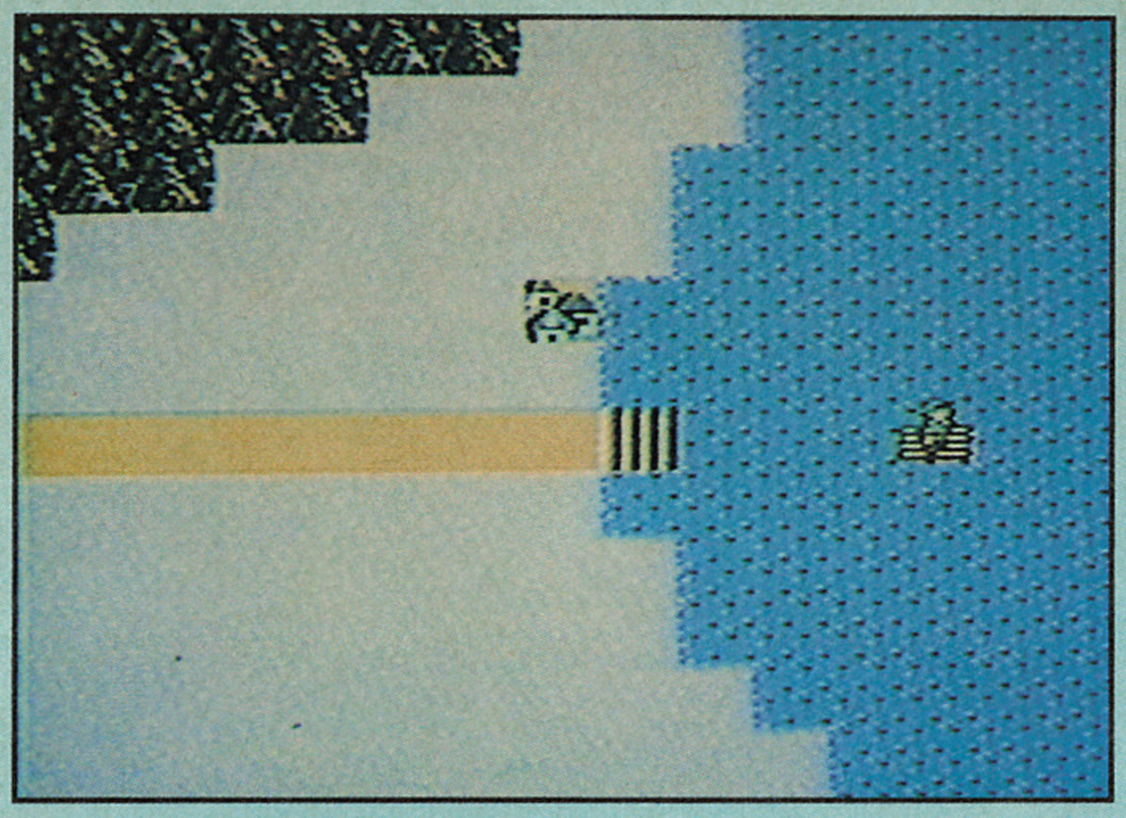




Take the second elevator to the bottom level. Here you'll fight an iron warrior on horseback. To defeat him, you must first knock him off his mare. Then he becomes an ordinary blue warrior. After he's defeated, you can secure another crystal and exit the Island Palace.

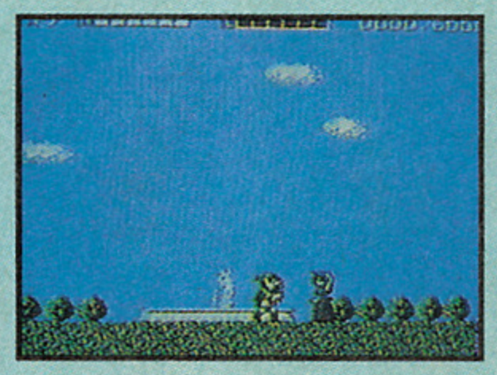
HINT

Surprisingly, it's easier to knock the horseman off his mare if you don't use your jump spell.



24

After restoring your magic and life levels in Mido, go to the shore and launch your raft. You are now on your way to fabulous East Hyrule.



25

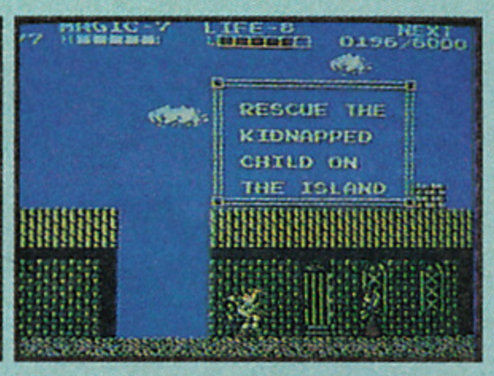
Your first stop on this side of the land should be the town of Nabooru. Quench your thirst at the fountain and follow the lady to her abode. She has a valuable addition to your arsenal.

26

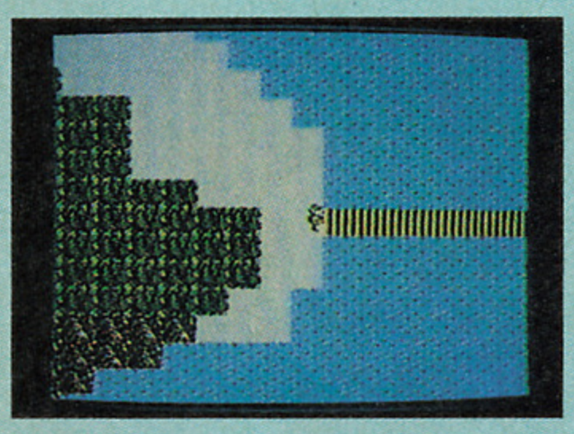
Now make your way to the town of Darunia. You'll have to pass through a cave and deserts to get there, so be prepared for a difficult journey. When you get to town, leap onto the buildings. Use a method of entry made famous by a jolly gift-giver from the North Pole.

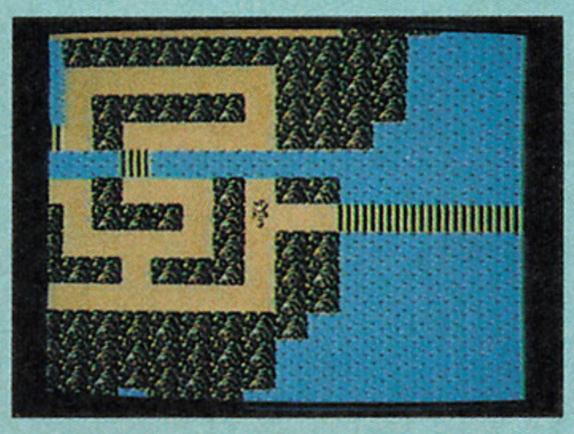
27

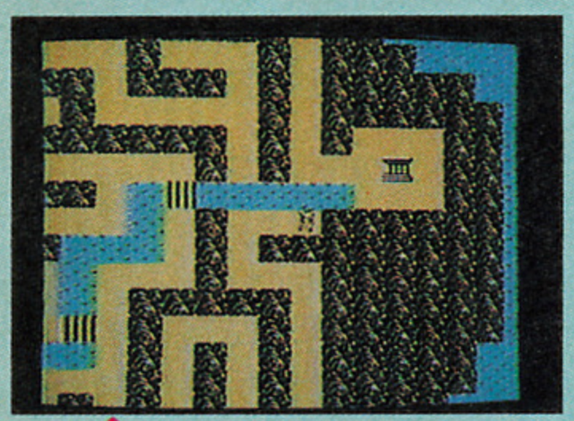
Inside one of the buildings is the upward thrust.

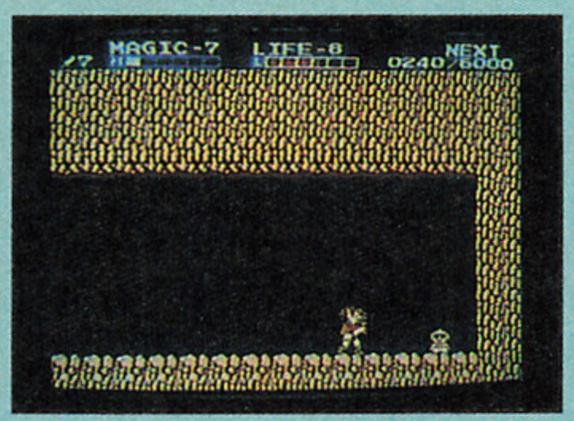


There is trouble in Darunia. Terrorism has hit this small community, and only Link can help.







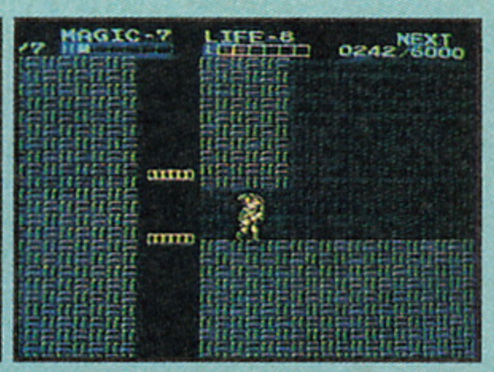


28

Don't dally — a child's life is at stake. Go due east and cross the bridge, which leads you to Maze Island. On the east side of the island is a secret tunnel, where you'll find the hostage.

29

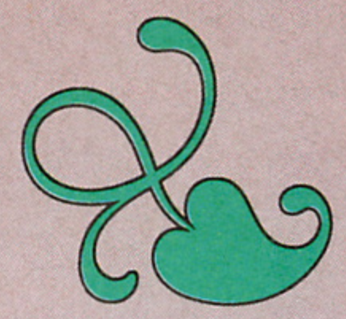
Return the child to the hag in Nabooru. She will reward you for your efforts with an important spell.



Return again to Maze Island and find the secret palace. Take the elevator to the bottom level and proceed right to the next elevator. Go down another level and exit again to the right.

30

On your return trip, after retrieving the key, dive into a deep chasm and enter another tunnel. Hidden at the end of this tunnel is a pair of boots that enable Link to walk on water.



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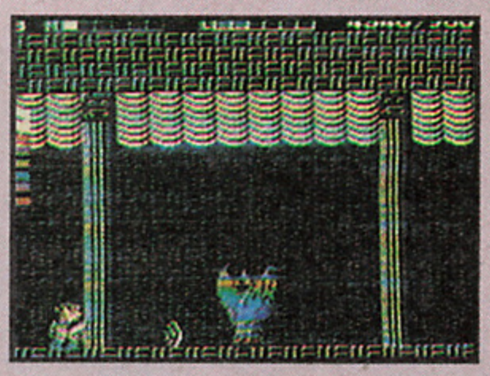
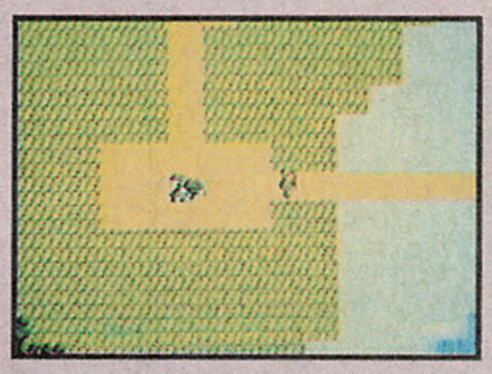
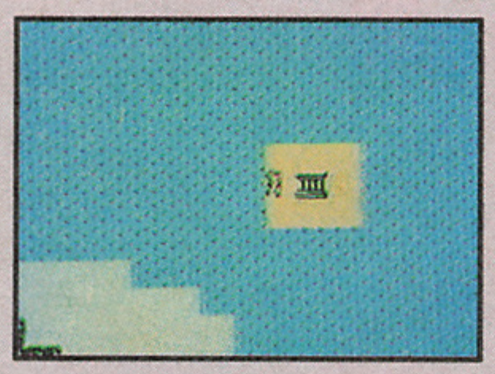


Drop down another chasm and locate another key. Magicians will begin popping up, hurling their spells at you. Use the reflect spell given to you in Nabooru to defend against their attacks. You must retrieve four other keys in this palace before battling Carock, the master magician.

32





After defeating Carock, return to Nabooru and replenish your life and magic levels. Then head east across the sea, using your boots to walk across the water, and go to the Palace on the Sea.

33

When you reach this steep ledge, use your fairy magic to fly up and over it.

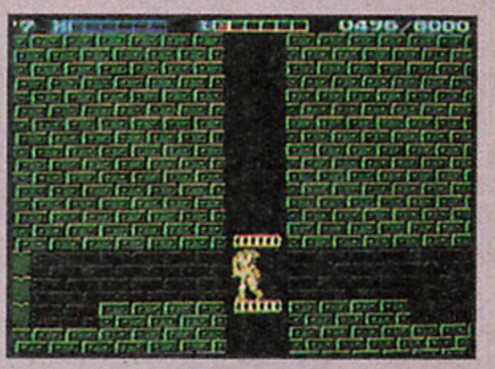
Take the next elevator down and exit left. Take another elevator below and again exit left. Descend a level in yet another elevator and exit right to find the first key.

Continue on this level to the right. After defeating the blue warrior, walk through the green wall. Skip the fourth elevator and make your way to the fifth. Go up one level to retrieve the second key.

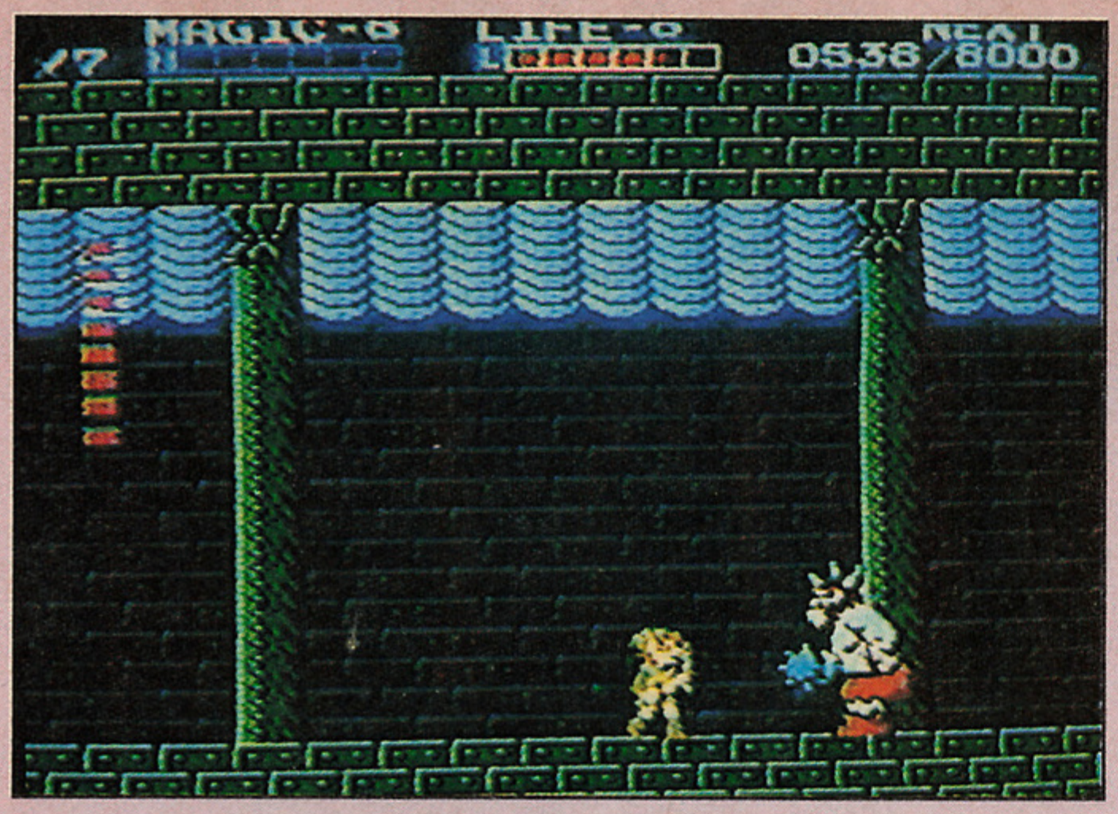
34

Now return to the fourth elevator and drop down one level to search for the magic flute. You'll need this precious instrument to find the last palace, and also to rouse Zelda from her deep sleep.

35



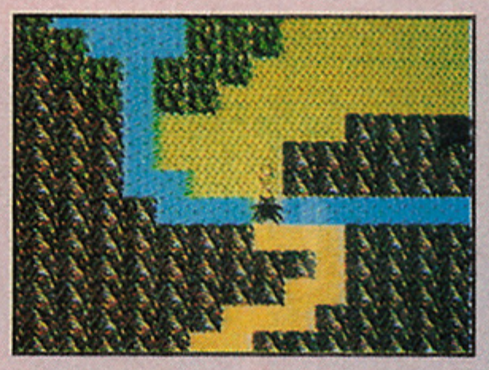
Go back up the fourth elevator and return to the third lift, walking back through the wall. Take this elevator up one level and exit left. Go past the next elevator and smash your way through the green blocks to retrieve the third key. Then ascend yet another level.

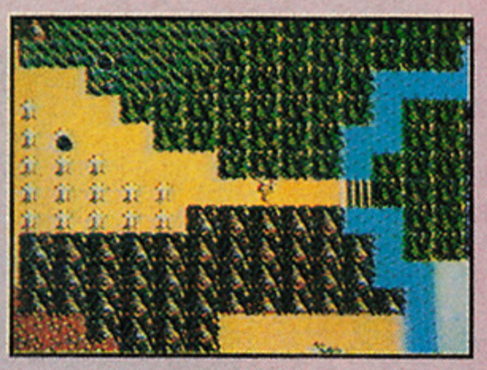


36

Goomya, the guardian of this palace, is dangerous. Try to approach him quickly before he starts swinging his mace (it can penetrate your shield). Strike him quickly, then retreat to safety. Repeat this tactic until Goomya is defeated. Afterward, the fourth key will drop.

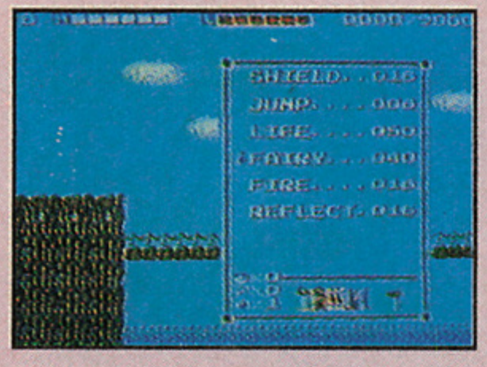
37

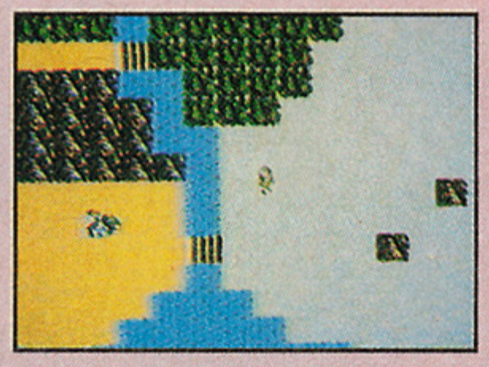




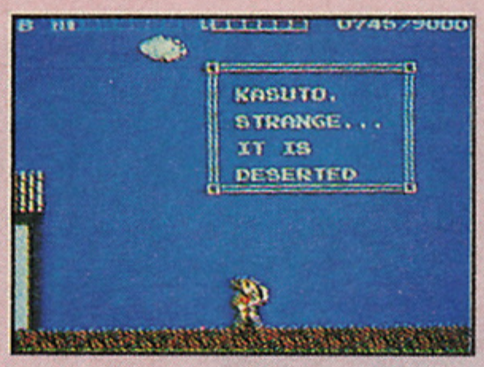
After restoring your meter levels, go south through the field to the road guarded by a huge spider. Play your flute and he'll let you pass. Continue south along the road and walk through the cemetery before heading east across the bridge.

38



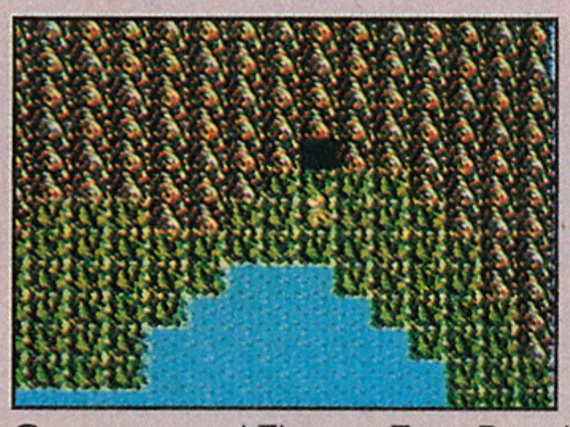


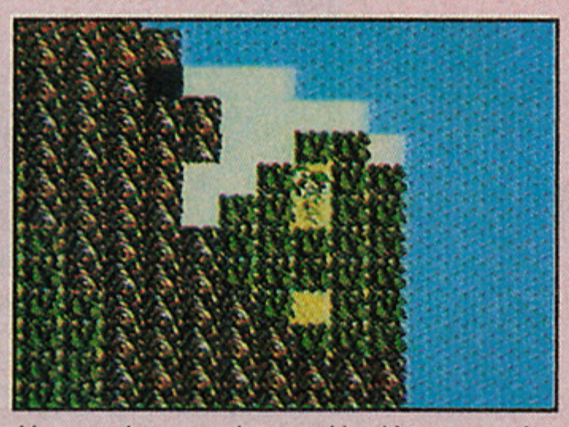
It might be wise to fly over the bridge using fairy magic. Once across, head south to another bridge that will lead you to Old Kasuto Town.



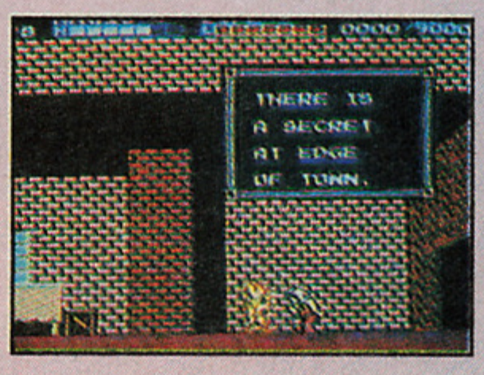
You'll learn that there is something unique about Old Kasuto. The wise man there gives good advice, so heed his words.

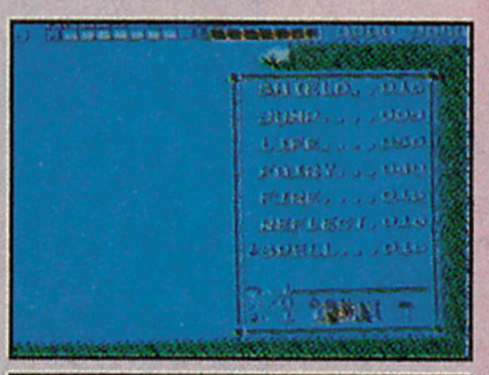
39





Go around Three Eye Rock, then head north through the forest and along the east coast of the lake to a cave. Nearby is a patch of woods. Start clearing the forest — you just might find a surprise.





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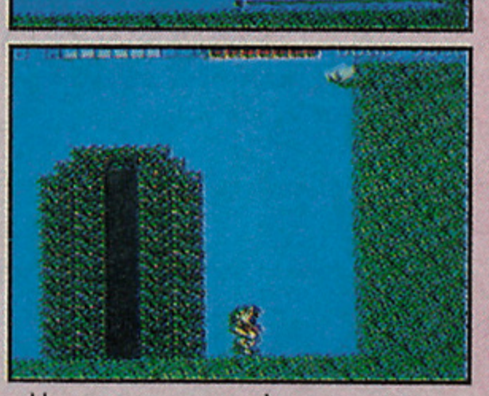
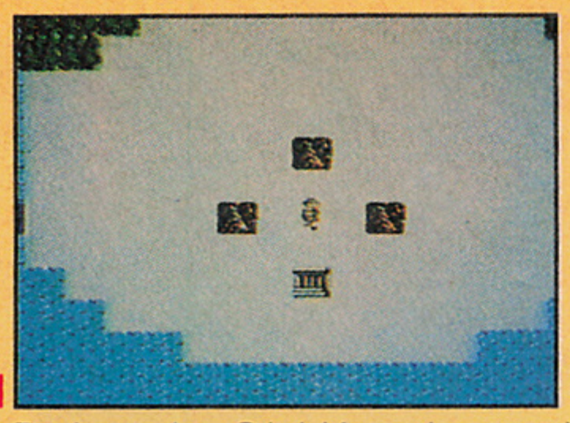


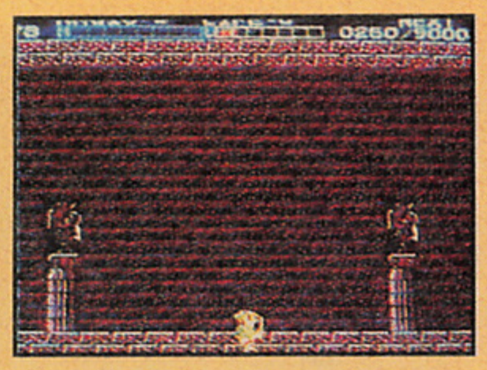
Search the town for clues and hints. When you get to the edge of town, use your newly acquired spell to make a building rise from the ground.

41



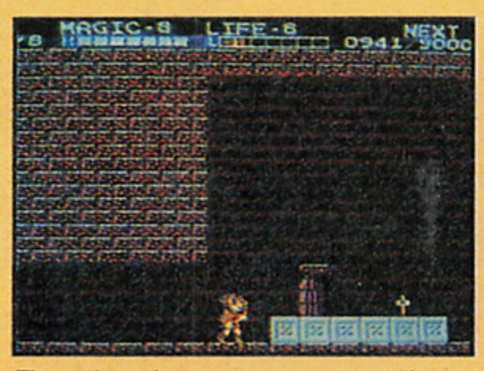
Return to Old Kasuto and talk to the old man. He will reward you with an important spell. Then go to the center of Three Eye Rock and pucker up. Play your flute here to reveal the hidden palace.

42

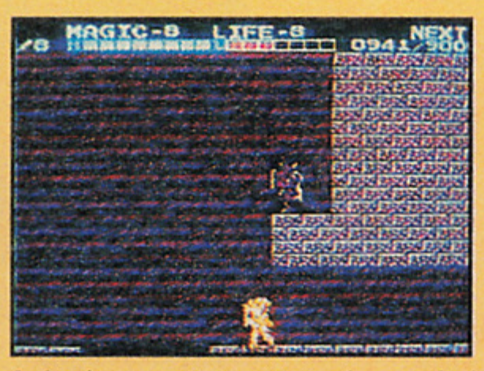


Go to the first elevator and descend to the bottom level. Jump down four chasms, beginning here, and continue to the right. If you fall through the floor between the columns, go left to the elevator, which takes you back to your starting point.

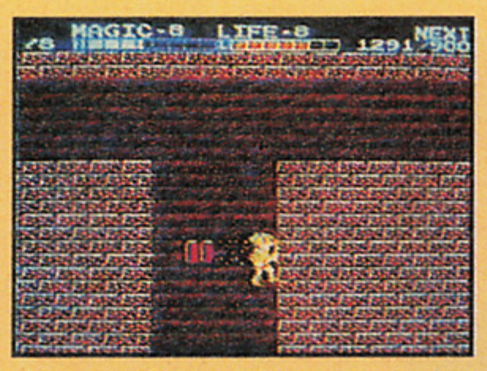
43

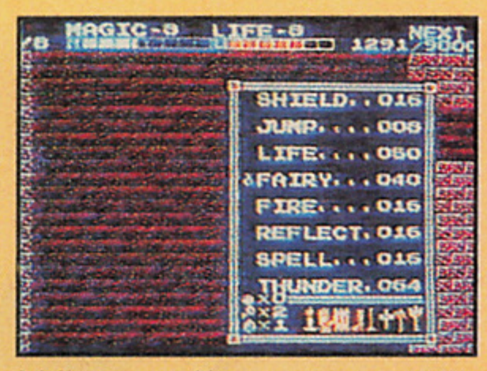


Try to jump over the invisible hole. Afterward you'll have to battle a blue ironknuckle on horseback. He guards the cross, which allows you to see enemies who are cloaked in the safety of darkness.



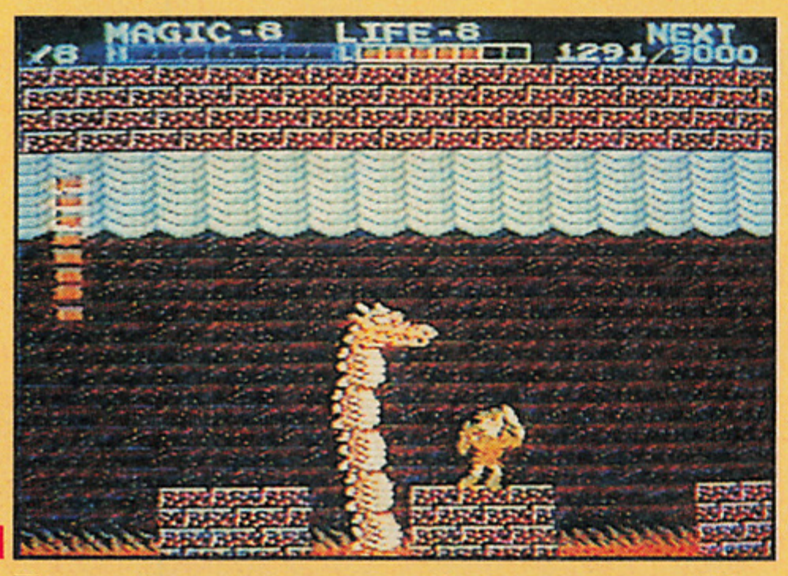
Make your way back to the left and jump into the chasm. Drop two levels. When you reach another wide chasm, use your fairy magic to cross it. Go beyond the elevator to yet another chasm and jump down.





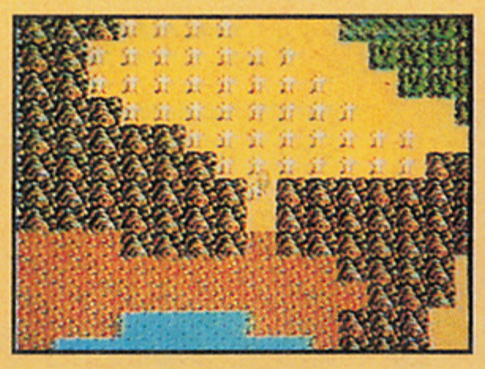
When the screen changes, quickly use your magic to transform yourself into a fairy and fly toward the right.

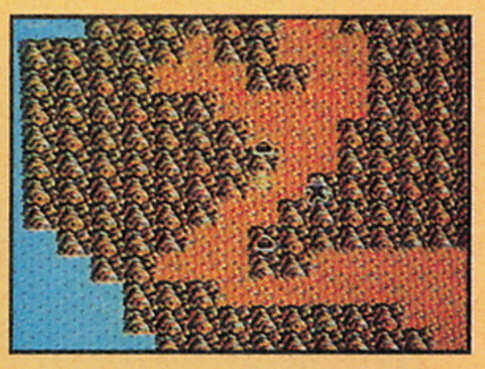
44



The appearance of an enemy life meter is your clue that the Dragon, guardian of the Hidden Palace, is on his way to stop you. To defeat him, remain on the middle column for the duration of the contest. Dodge his fireballs and wait for him to get close. When he does, repeatedly strike him in the head. Repeat this strategy until the reptile is vanquished.

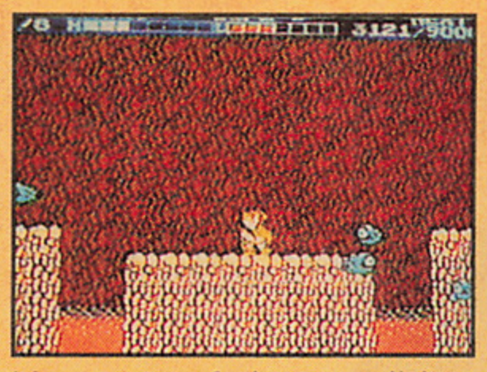
45



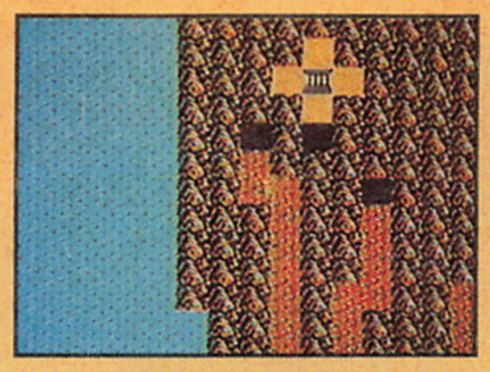


Due east of Three Eye Rock is a life container you will need. Retrieve it and head west back to the cemetery. Go through the graveyard heading south, then go west to the coast. Now proceed north along the coast of East Hyrule to the caves. The action will get heated, so make sure you've stored up a healthy supply of life, magic, and items.

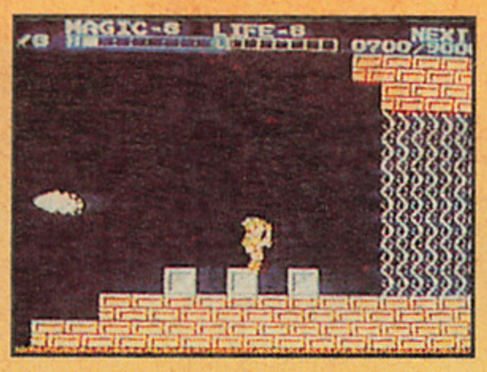
46

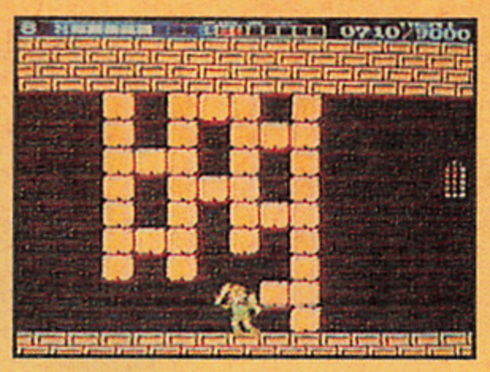


Use your fairy spell to fly through the trap zones found inside the caves. You can also use fire to get past some of the peskier predators.



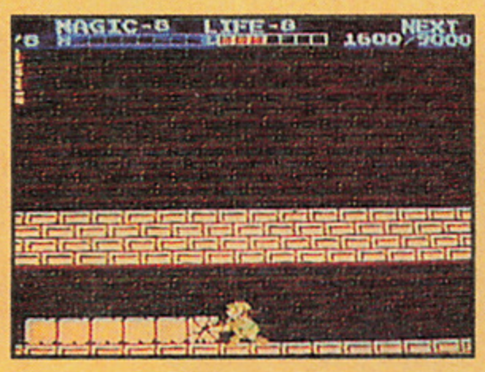
You must pass through two caves to reach the final palace.



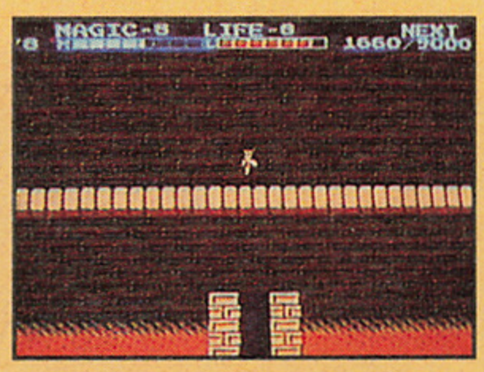


At the last palace, the wall lifts if you have successfully retrieved all of the crystals in Hyrule. Go down in the elevator and move left to another elevator. Descend one level, then exit to the right to a third elevator. Drop another level and exit again to the right. Break through the blocks and continue moving right.

When you come to the fourth elevator, ride it down one level. Proceed to the right and spend some time exterminating blots and replenishing your magic and life levels. Then continue right and descend another level. Move to the right again, then go down yet another level to reach another fairy.



Return to the left and descend another level. Walk left and smash the row of blocks to uncover a secret hole. Use your fairy magic to fly downward between the two pillars under the bridge.



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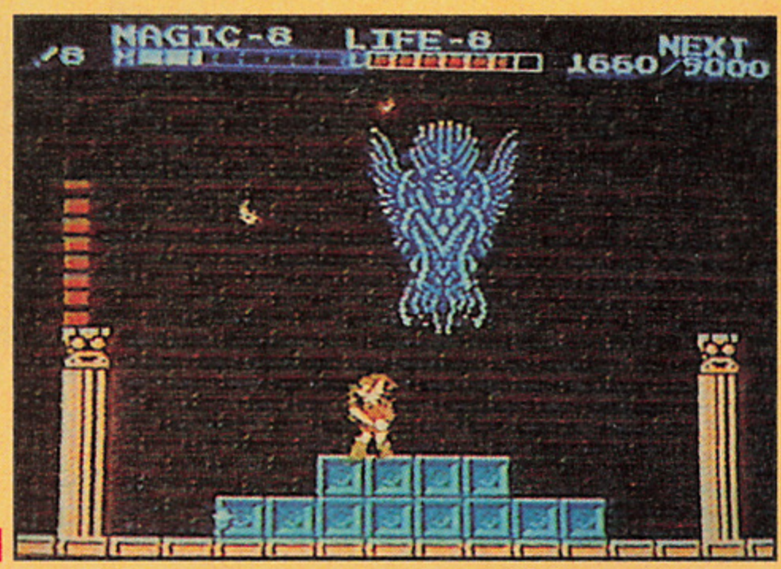
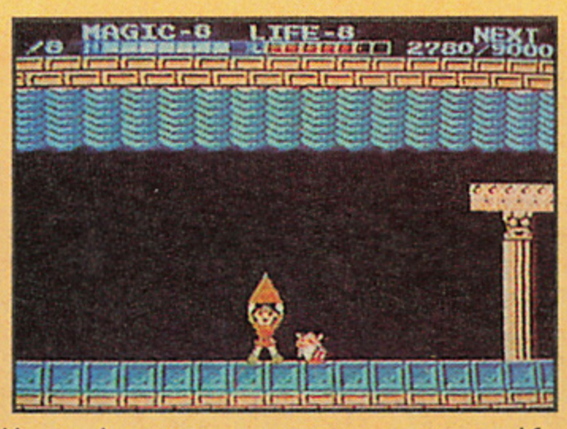


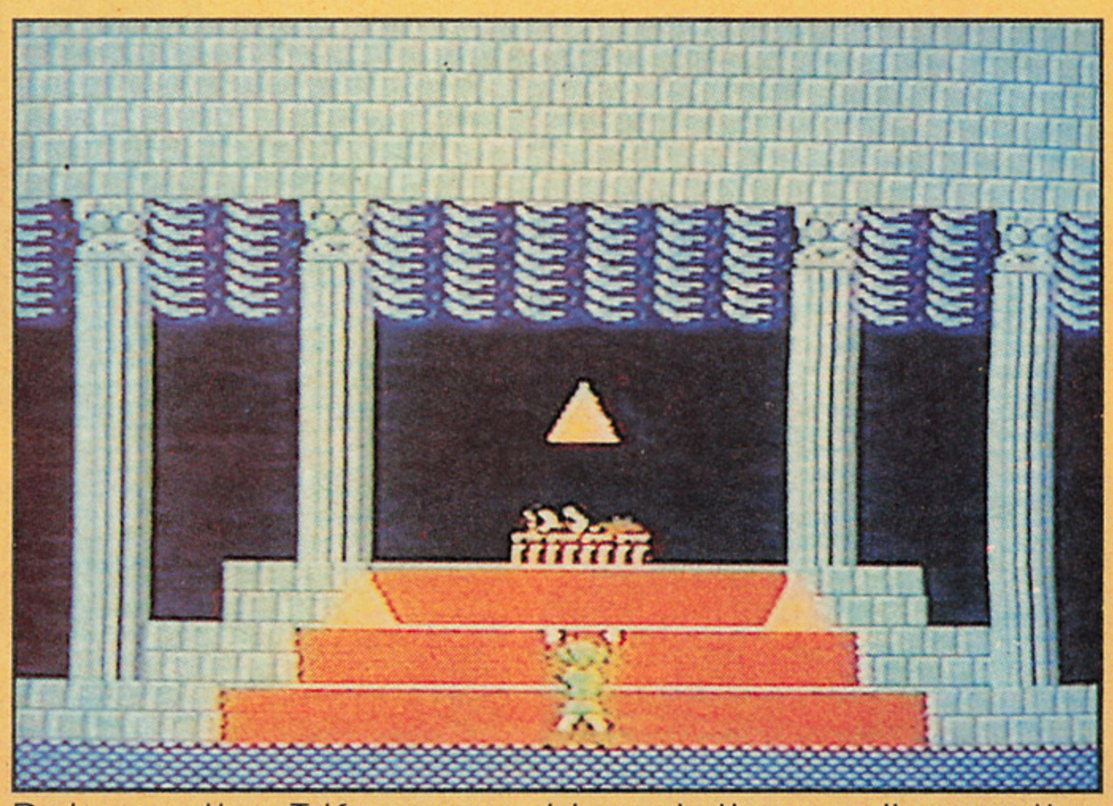
Your next major challenge is a battle with the Guardian Angel. Use your thunder when she first appears and hit her in the face as often as possible. If you stay to the far right of the screen and face left, victory will be yours.

48

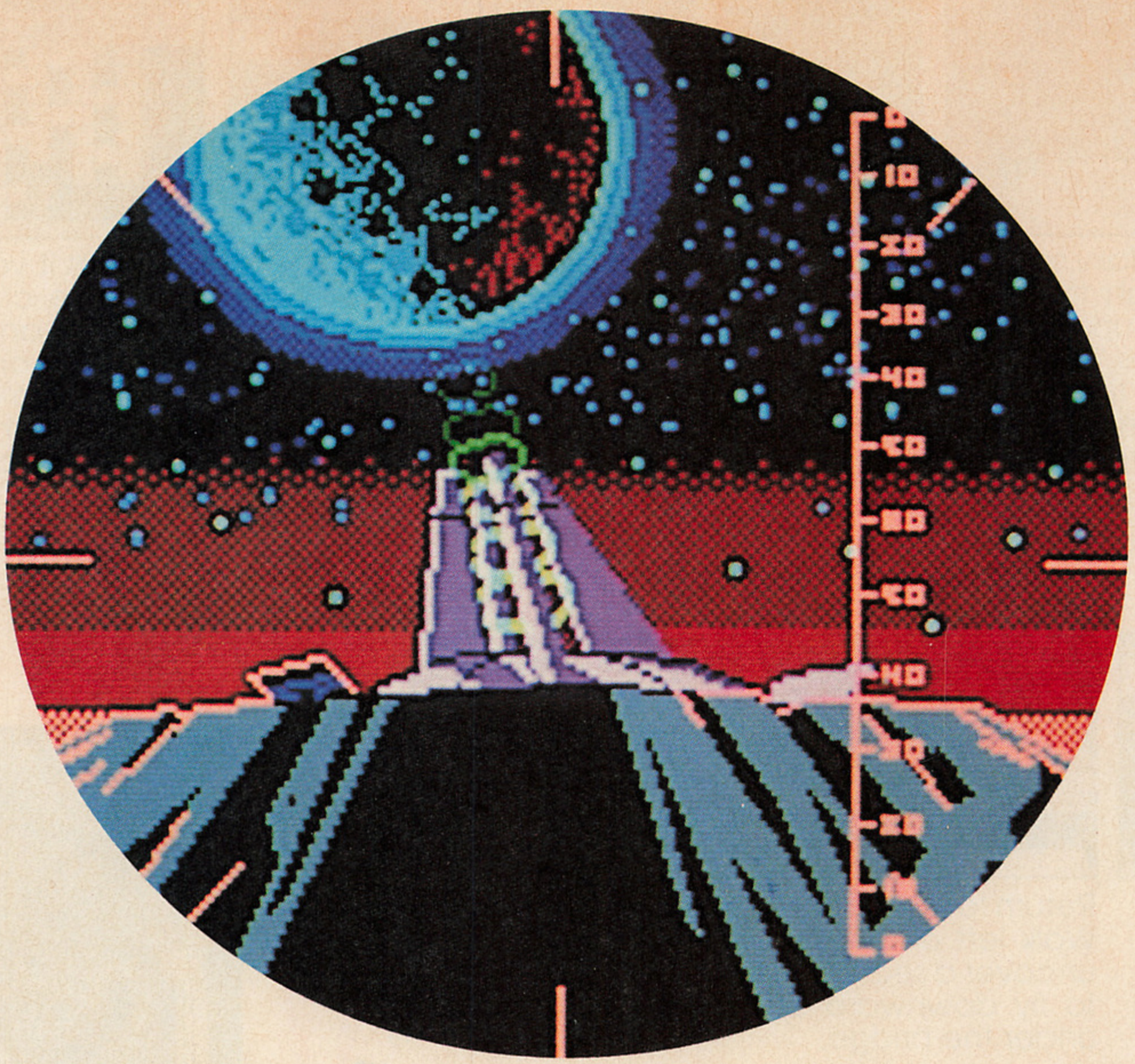


You must now face the ultimate enemy — yourself. The wizard has the last element of the Triforce. To get it, you must first get rid of your alter ego.

49



Release the Triforce and break the spell over the princess. Congratulations! You have saved Zelda and restored order to Hyrule!

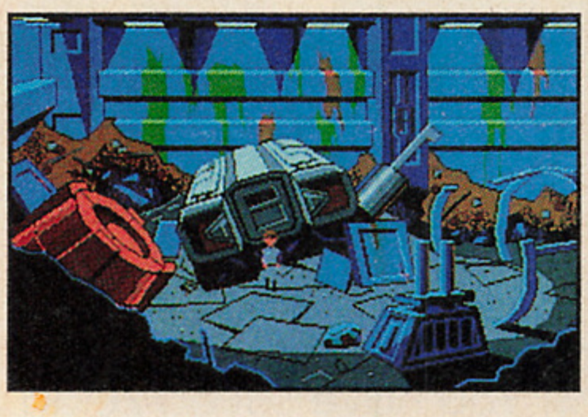


COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH

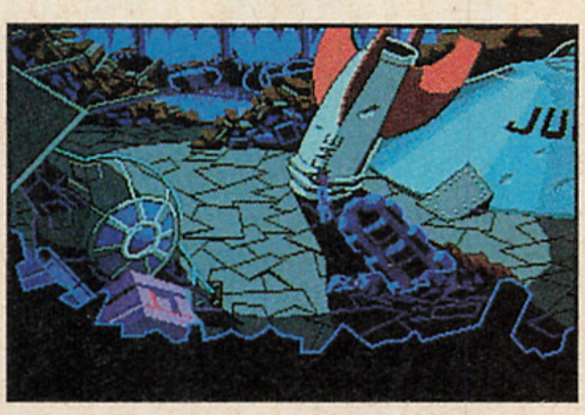
SPACE QUEST III: THE PIRATES OF PESTULON

LESLIE MIZELL

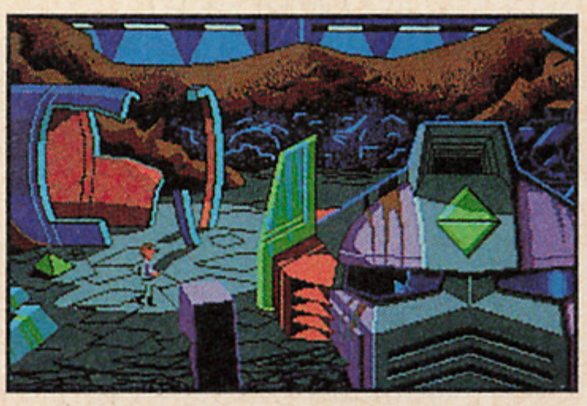
Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; CGA, EGA, MCGA, VGA, Tandy 16-color, or Hercules graphics; mouse and joystick optional; Roland MT-32, Ad Lib, or IBM music cards optional. Sierra On-Line, P.O. Box 495, Coarsegold, CA 93614.



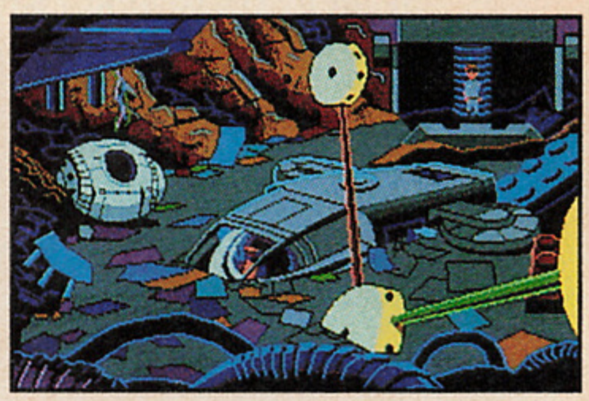
As the game begins, you've crash-landed into a junk freighter. Don't waste time trying to fix your pod — it's beyond repair.



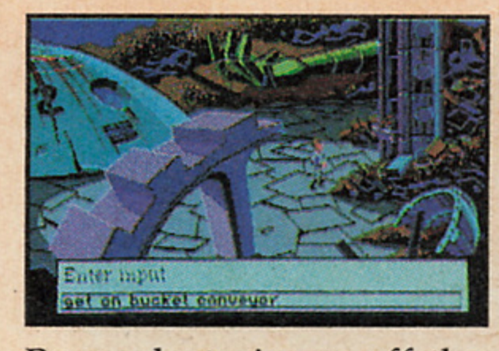
You don't want a spaceship that's a pile of junk, or one that's too unwieldy. Look for a streamlined model in fairly good repair.



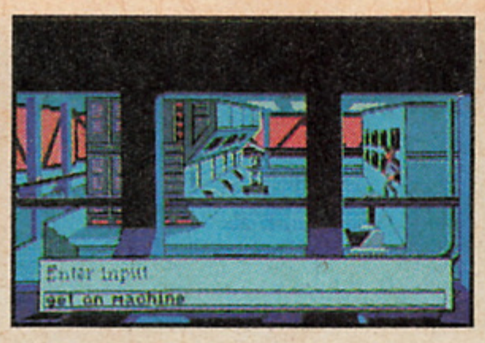
Though it may seem like this room is a dead end, there's an exit staring you in the face. Just use your eyes. Or the statue's.



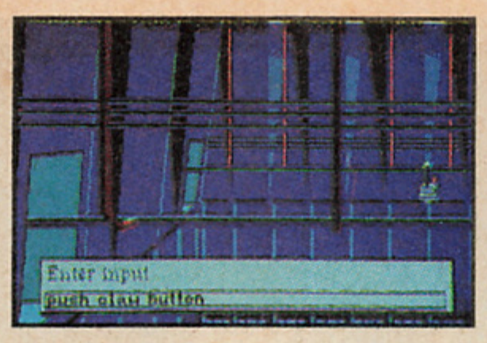
Aha! A sporty little spaceship that doesn't look like it needs too many repairs. Look around the freighter for additional supplies.



Be ready to jump off the bucket conveyor—there's a shredder at the end of its path.

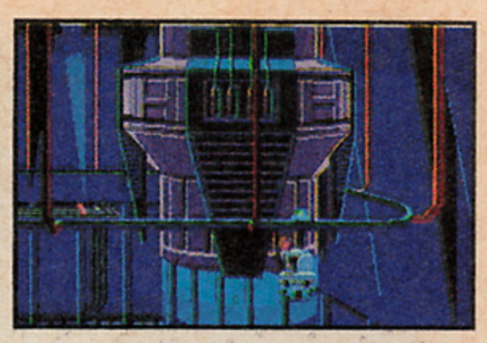


Follow the rail to the right into a computer room. Get on the machine quickly or the robot will zap you.

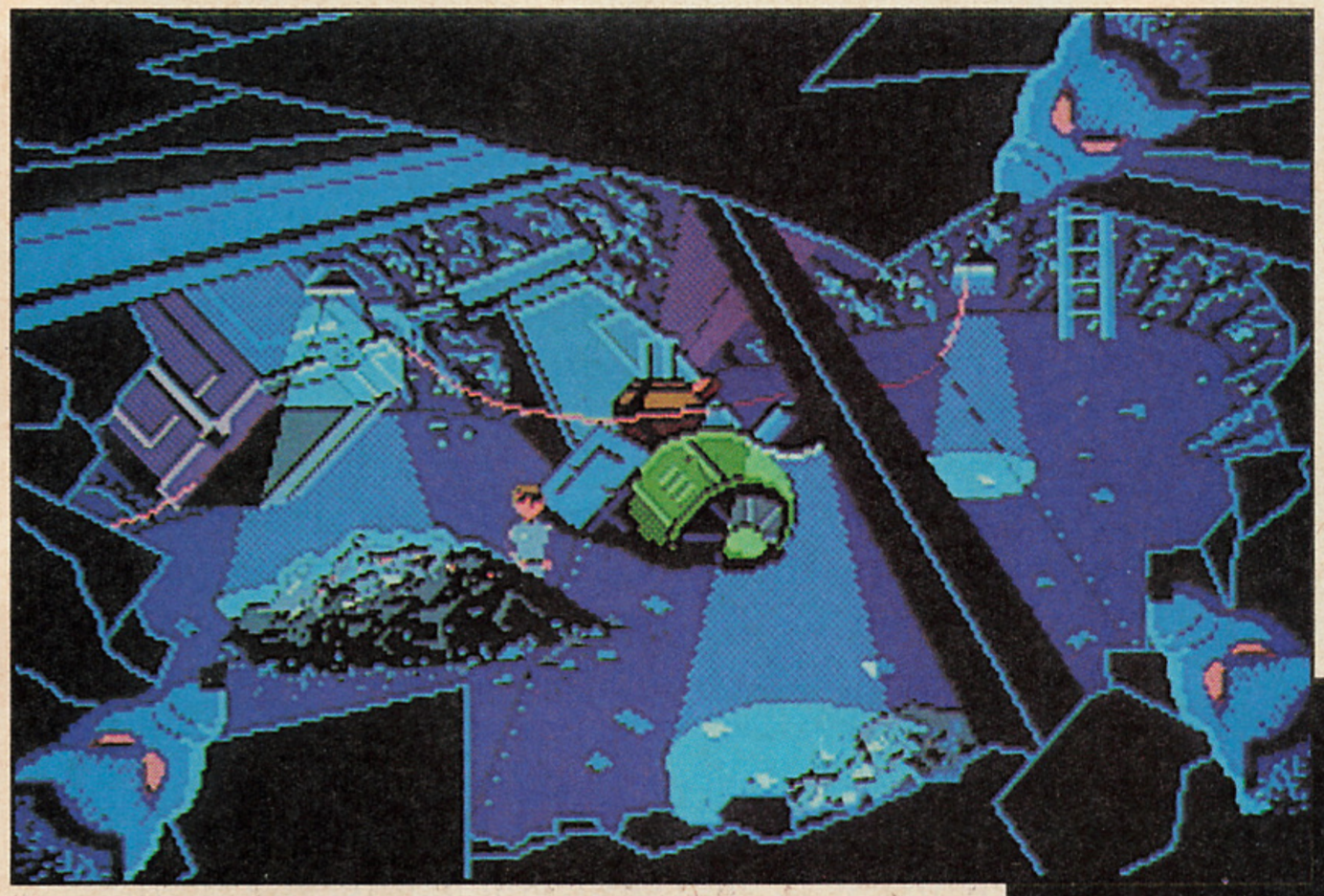


The upper area corresponds to the rooms below, so try to form a mental map of the floor's layout.

When using your claw to grab the generator, you might have to try two or three times before you find the right spot.



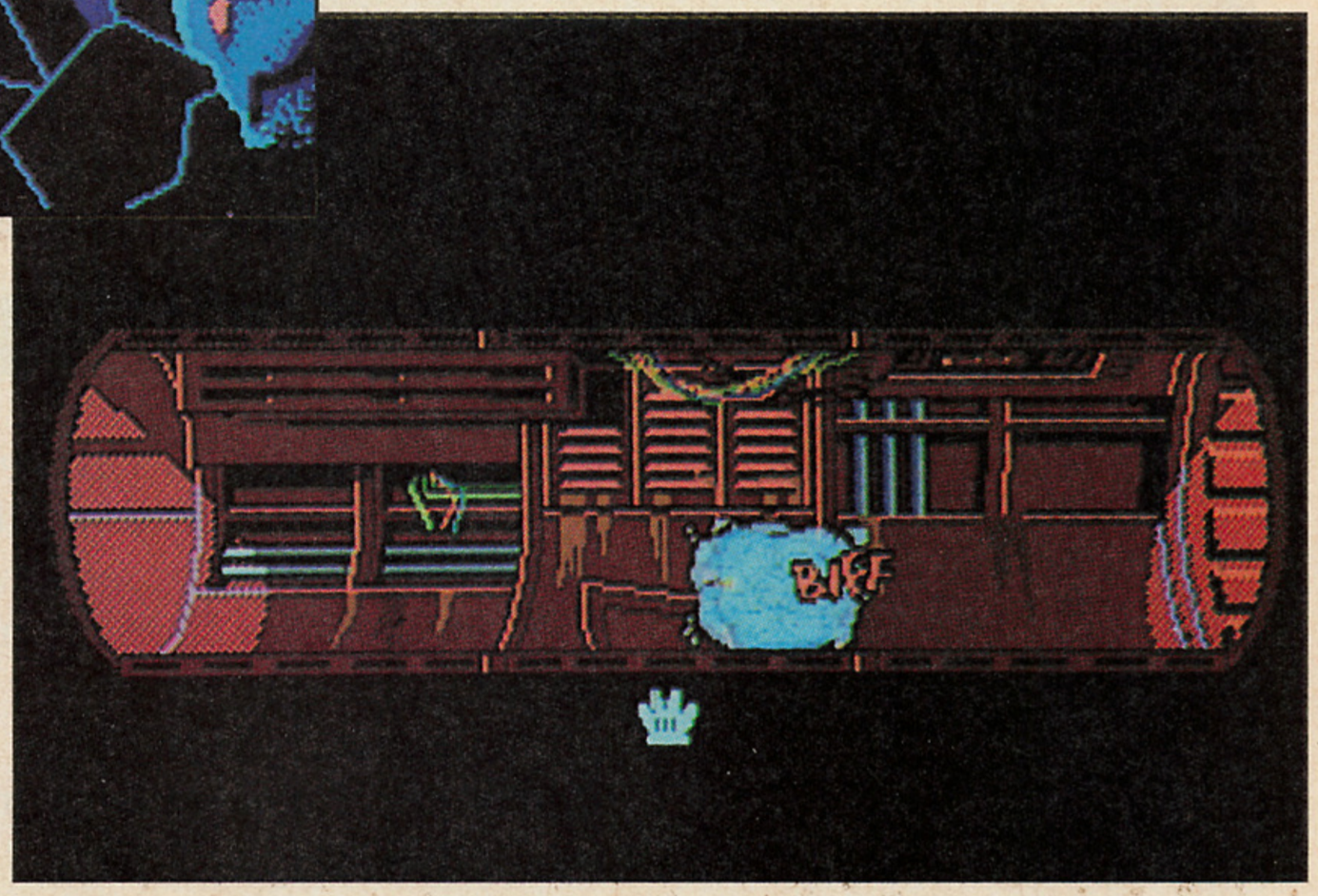
Once you have the generator, install it in your ship. It's easily done with your machine in this position.



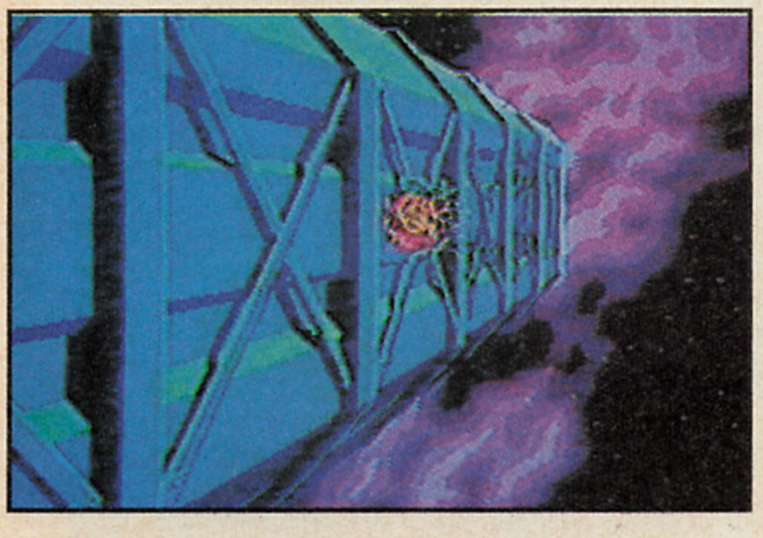
COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH

You don't have to feel threatened when you reach the rats' lair. Calmly go about your business, and the rats will leave you alone. Maybe it's the bright lights that keep them at bay. If you want electricity in your spaceship, you'd better find that light's source.

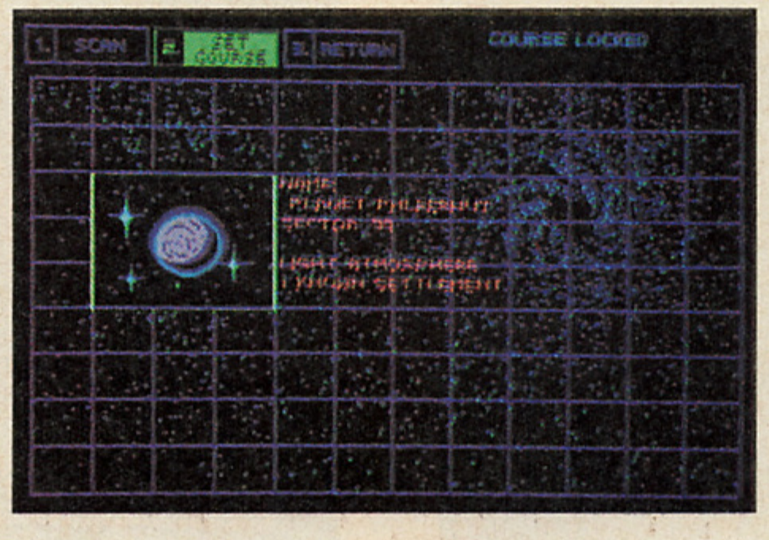
Roger Wilco, space custodian, takes off on his third galactic adventure. Unlike some of Sierra's other interactive adventures (such as the *King's Quest* series), *Space Quest III* has a definite pattern you'll need to follow. So first things first — find and repair a spaceship to replace the one you've crashed. Once you've found a likely model, you'll need three items: some wire, a reactor, and a power generator.



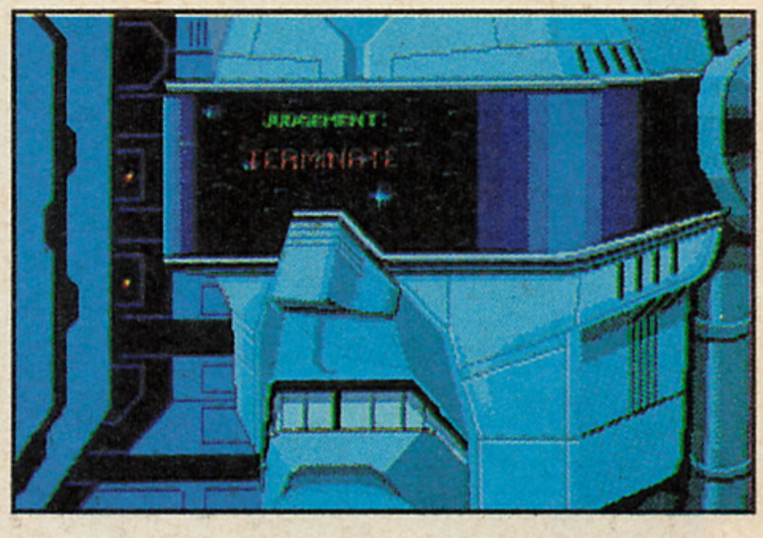
You suffer a certain amount of indignity when you get mugged by a rat, even when it's almost as big as you are. But there's no way to avoid it, and the only way to recover your stuff is to traipse back to the rat's lair. You'd better remember where that hole is.



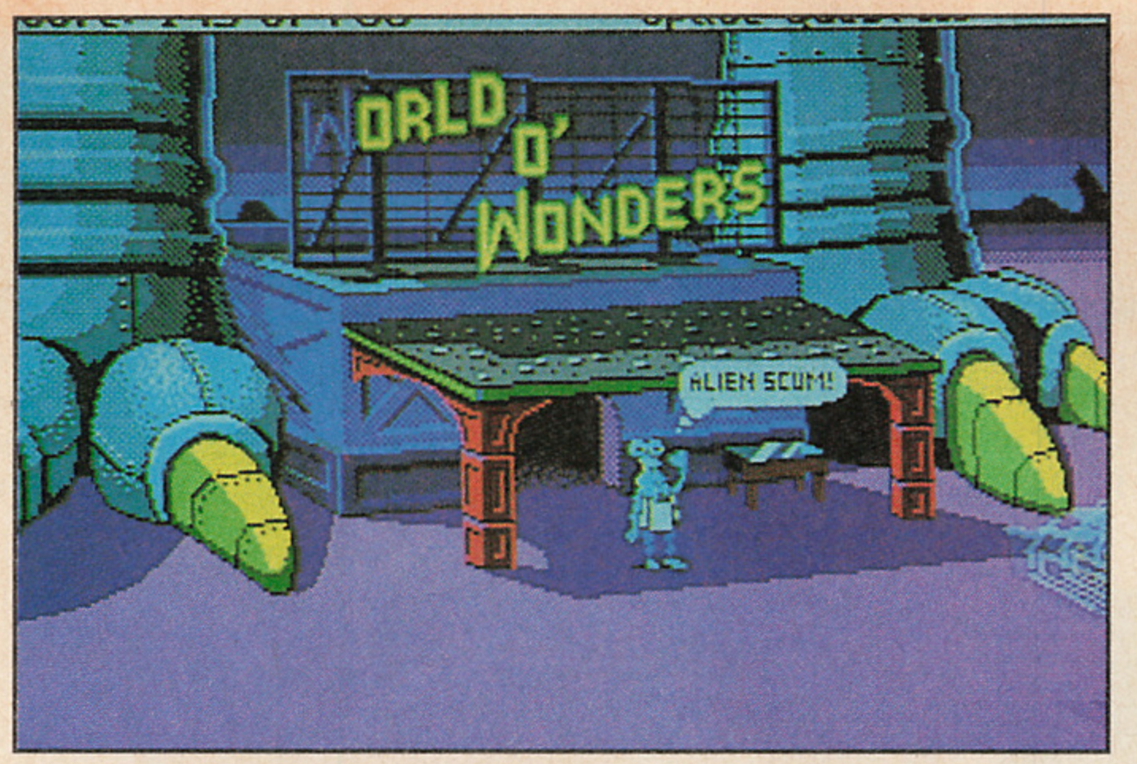
When you're ready to take off, be sure to switch on your radar so you can avoid hitting the ceiling. And before you blast your way to freedom, activate your front shield so you won't pulverize yourself or the hull of the freighter.

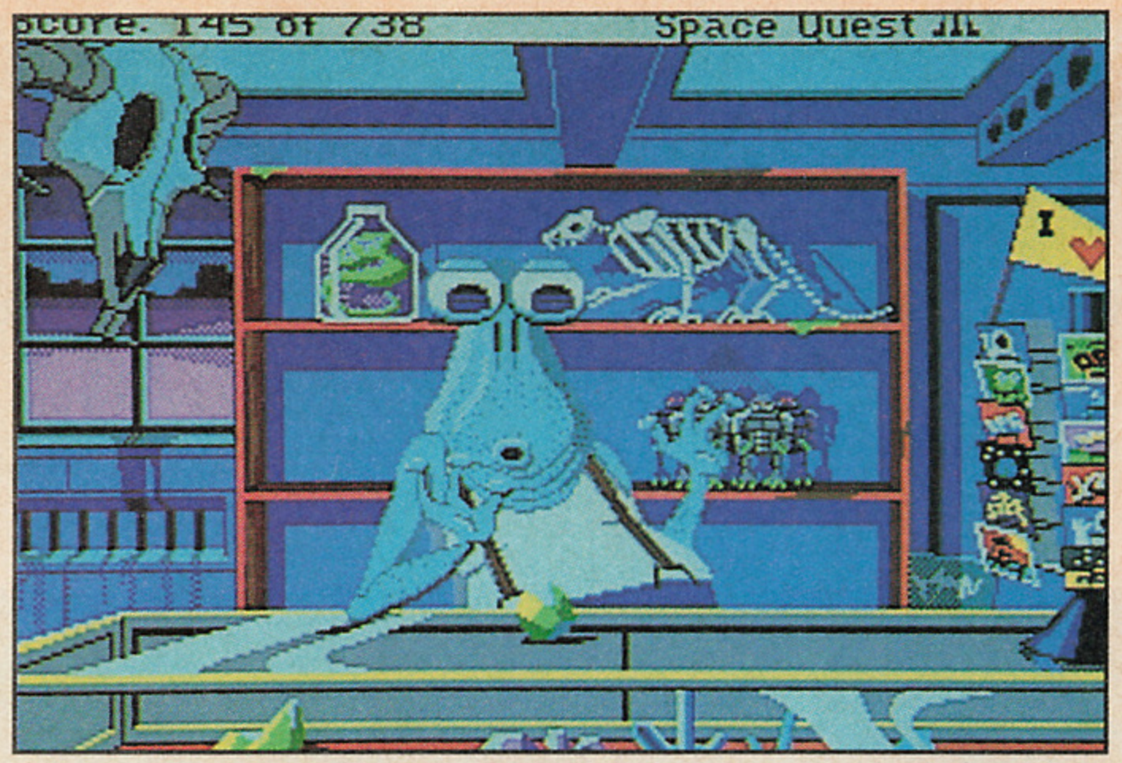


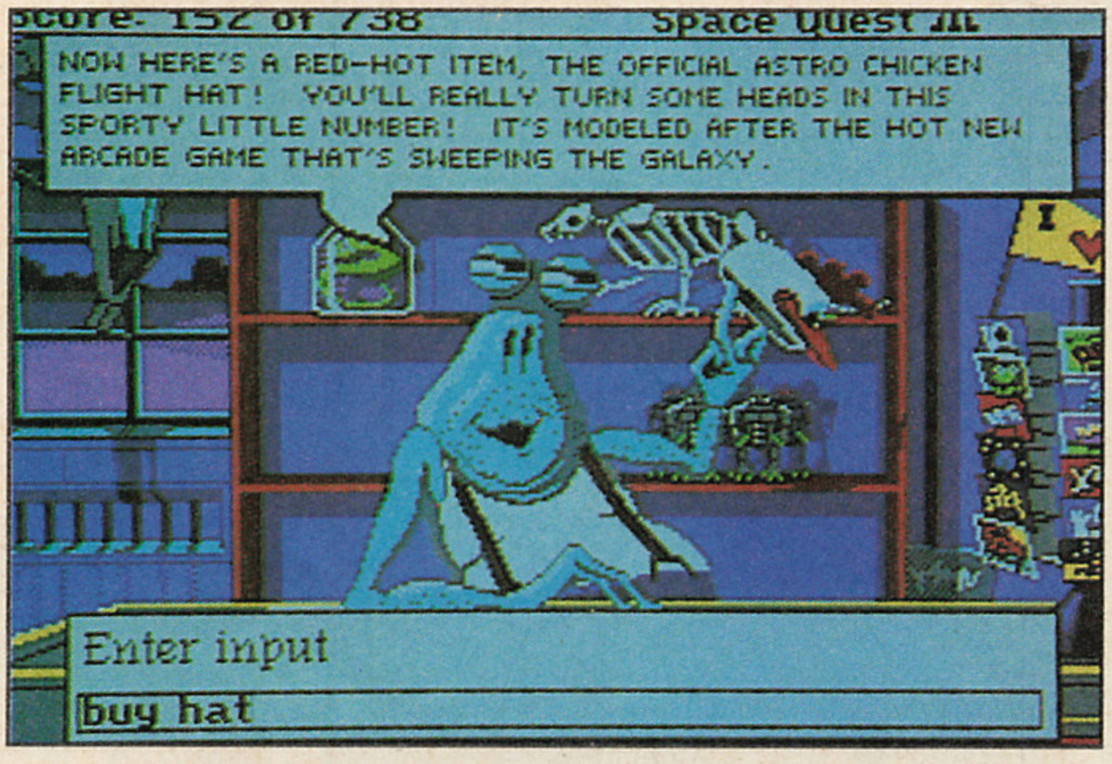
Even space explorers need cash, so you'll need some money. The seven buckazoids you can find by rummaging around in the cockpit aren't enough to get by on. Maybe someone on the planet Phleebhut will be interested in buying your gem.



You may think you've left your past sins behind you, but robots rarely forget. The Terminator is hot on your trail, and the purple sands of Phleebhut aren't going to hide you. Prepare yourself for a *major* confrontation. He's out for blood—yours.







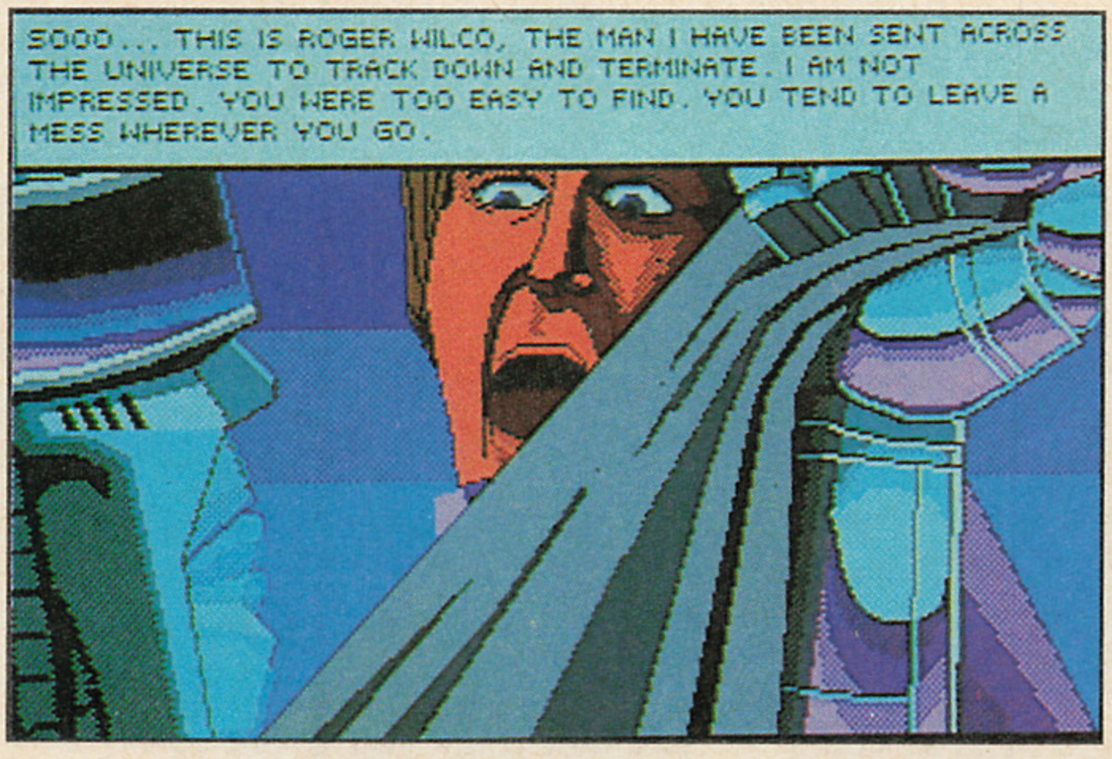
Fester Blatz: Alien Trader

Once you reach Phleebhut, you shouldn't have too much trouble finding Mog or the World of Wonders. Just don't go too far back toward the horizon (where you'll be struck by lightning), or too far forward (where you'll be bitten by snakes). After meeting Fester — who trades with practically everyone in the universe — sell him your gem for 350 buckazoids. Then buy any items he offers you. Most will prove handy. Others, like the *Astro Chicken* hat, will never be used, but you don't want to hurt Fester's feelings by turning him down. Don't worry about money in *Space Quest III* — unless you're incredibly free with your cash, you'll never run short.

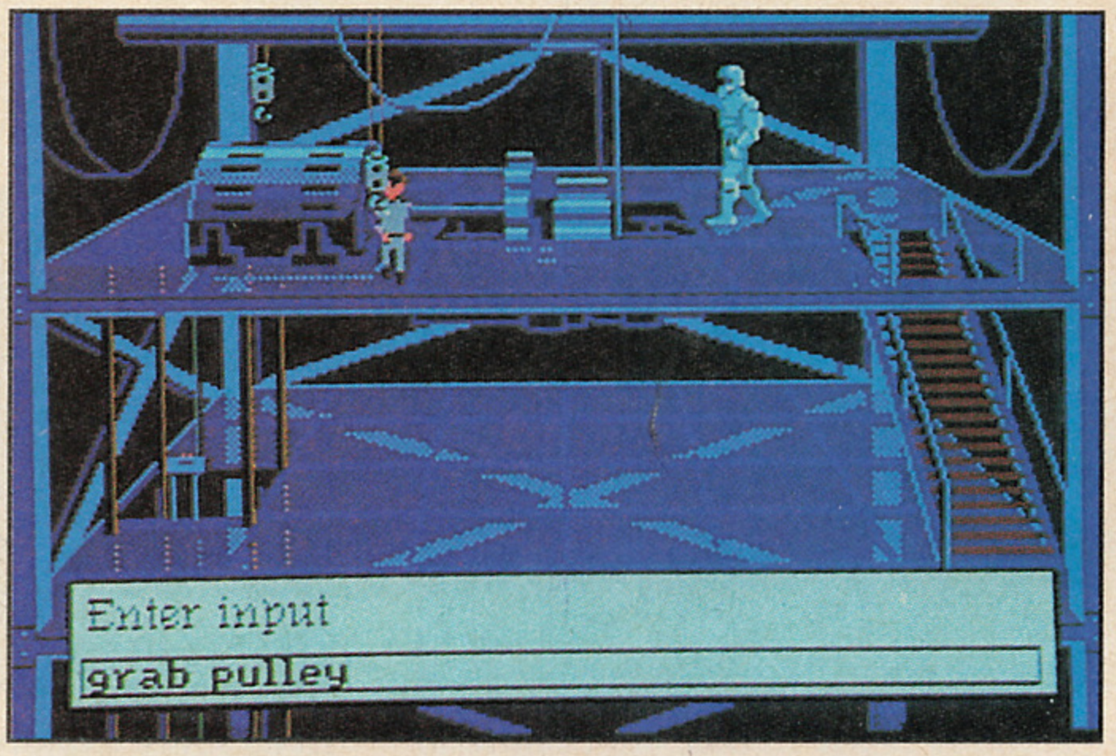
COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH

The scenic planet Phleebhut is the least of your *Space Quest* challenges. It's a good place to get used to the game's commands, to search for clues and items, and just to move around. The scorpazoids are random killers. If you spot one, head for another screen — it won't follow you (unlike the Terminator).

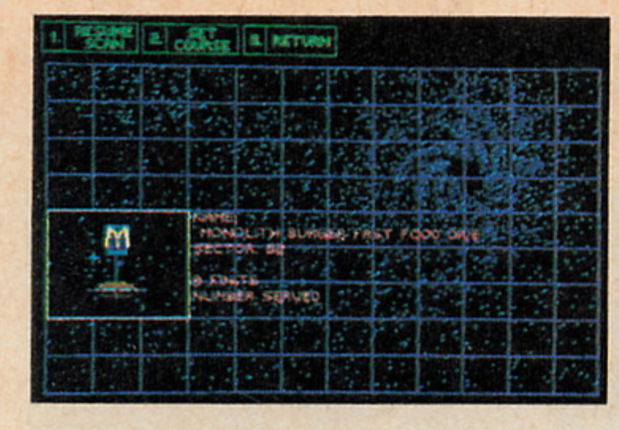
If there still doesn't seem to be a definite *plot* to the game, don't worry. Remember, it takes a long time for things to travel through space.



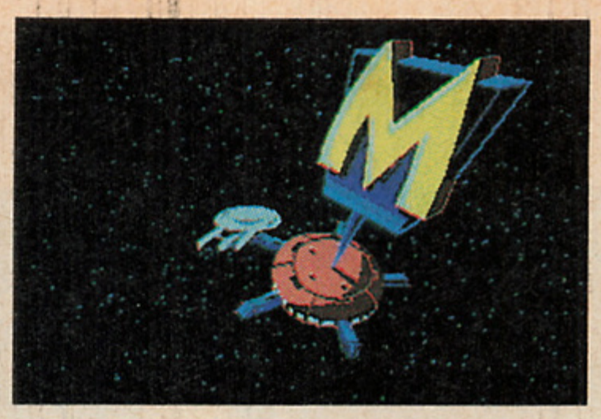
After leaving Fester's, you can't avoid being captured by the Terminator. But the Terminator is a surprisingly fair guy, and he'll give you a chance to escape. Adjust your speed control to make a fast getaway to Mog.



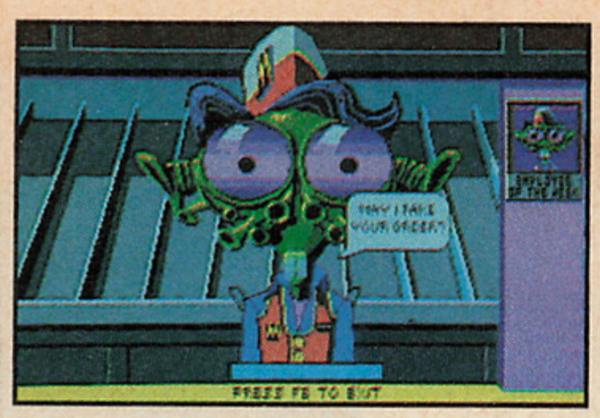
As the Terminator makes his approach, position yourself by one of the two pulleys. Get close, but don't touch it yet. When the Terminator is about to grab you, swing the pulley and recycle that big bag of bolts. Then head back to your spaceship.



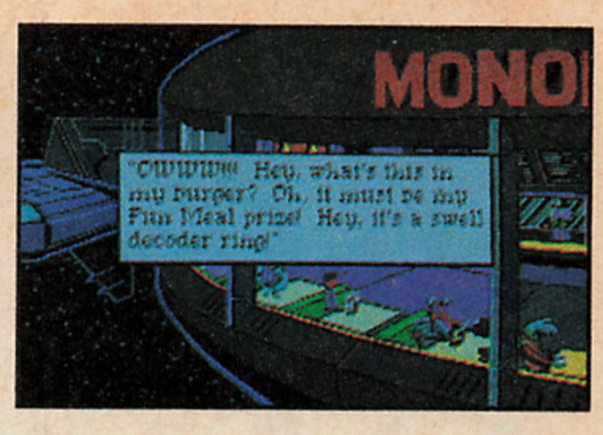
You'll notice that there aren't many stops in this section of the galaxy. The game is easier if you visit them in a certain order, but your ship won't run out of energy if you make a false stop or two.



Narrow escapes make you hungry, so head over to Monolith Burger for some galactic fast food. It may not be *haute cuisine*, but any place the USS *Enterprise* frequents can't be all bad.



The charming hostess will take your order. Study the menu carefully. Price may be no object, but you're not here just for sustenance. Get a meal with a little something extra.

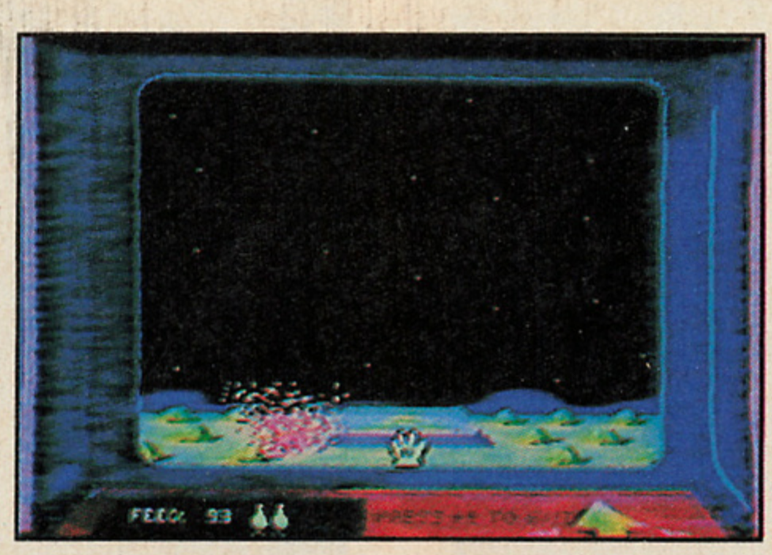


As you eat your cholesterol-filled meal, you'll find the key (OK, the *ring*) to the whole game. Something needs decoding — you just have to figure out exactly *what*.

COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH

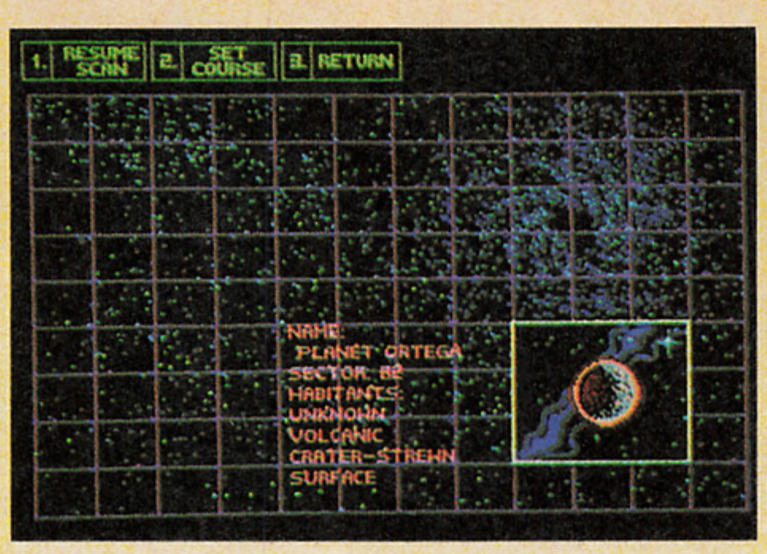
Astro Chicken, if you haven't already noticed, is the videogame that's currently sweeping Roger Wilco's section of the galaxy. If you're good at arcade games, you should have a pretty easy time with this section of *Space Quest*.

It's very important in *Space Quest* to adapt your speed to different circumstances. During escapes, you'll want to go fast; during battles, you might need to slow down. Only experts can beat *Astro Chicken* at normal (4 or 5) speed. Slow down the action to around 12. If you land ten chickens, you'll find the message from the Two Guys from Andromeda that reveals your actual space quest.

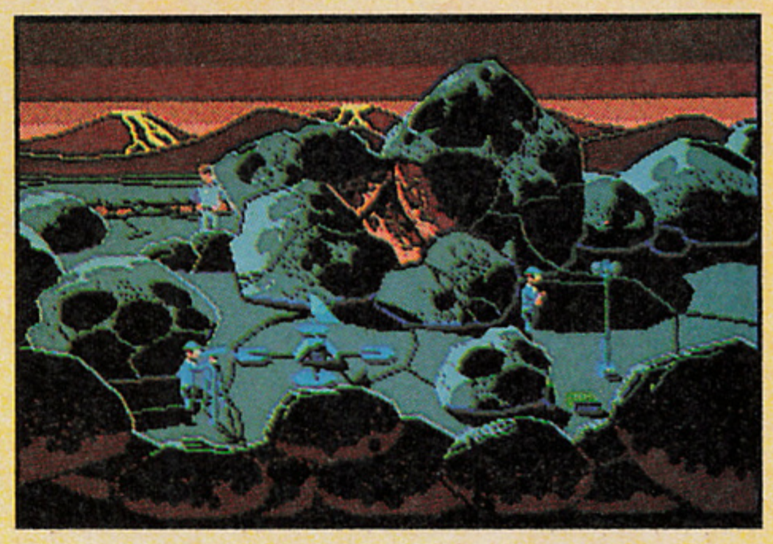


Move the chicken over to the landing pad as quickly as possible. To flap its wings, press the cursor-up key; to move left or right, press the cursor-left or -right keys (unless you have a joystick or mouse). A crash landing results in the worst kind of chicken fricassee. When you've positioned the chicken over the landing pad, straighten it into a landing position by hitting the cursor-down key. For a successful landing, learn how to flap just fast enough to slow down the chicken. Too much flapping lifts the chicken upward off the screen. If your timing is right, you can actually *see* the chicken slowing down as it nears the pad. With practice, this becomes routine, and those Two Guys generously give you additional chickens at certain points in the game

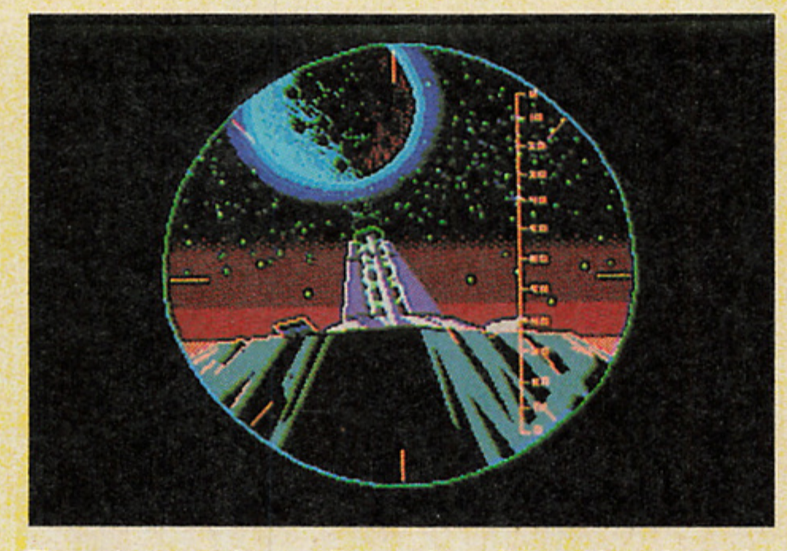
COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH



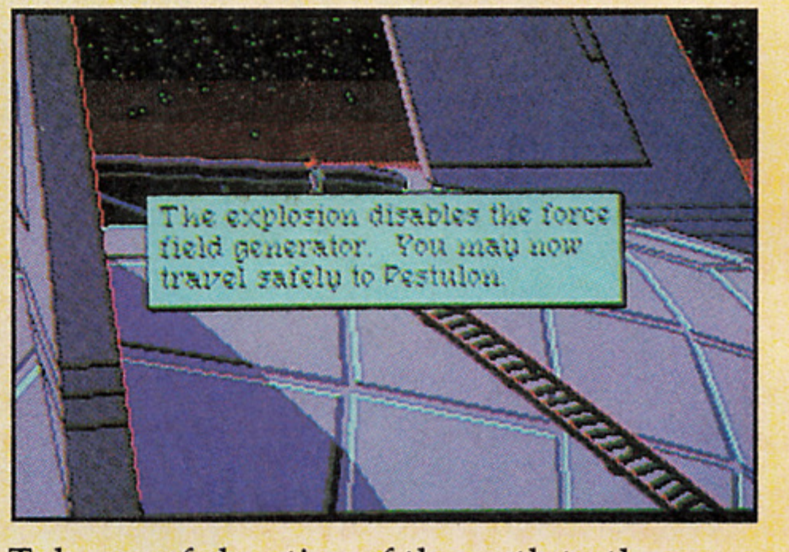
The scanner shows there's only one more stop after Monolith Burgers, so it doesn't take a genius to know that you should set your course for Omega.



Don't barge into the surveying site; wait for the workers to leave. Not much of their equipment will be of use, but look it over. And take a peek through their telescope.



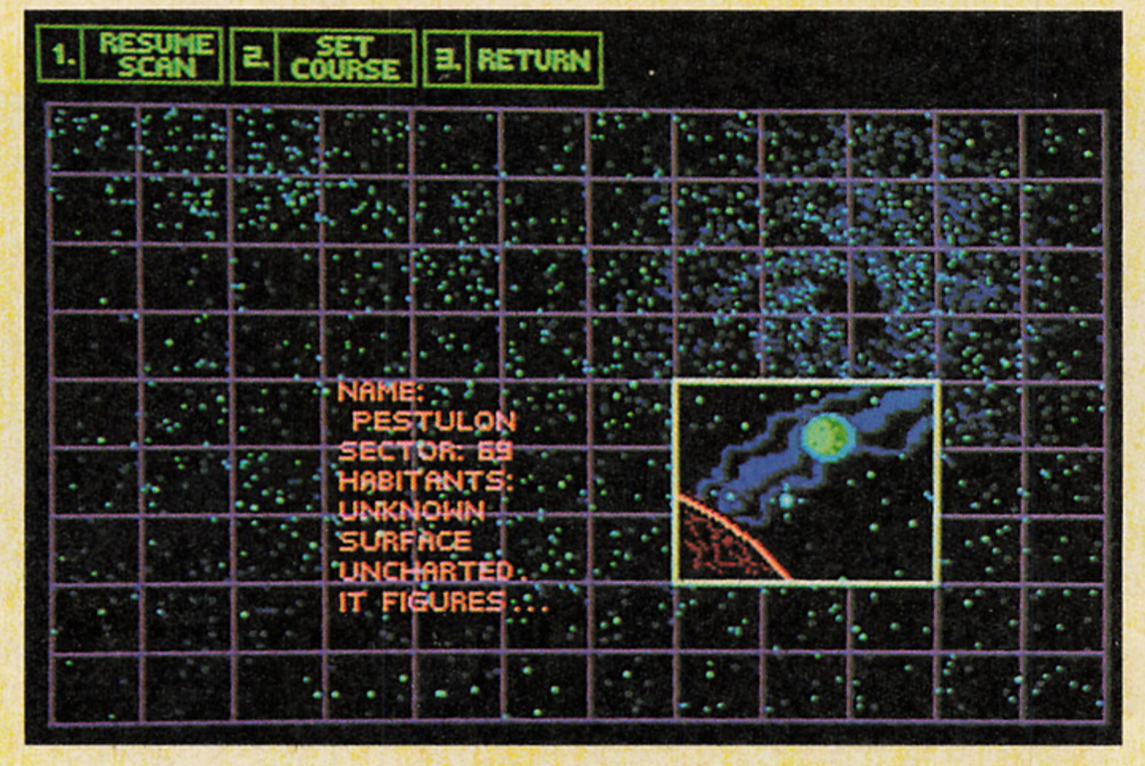
To release planet Pestulon from the shielding ray, you have to blow up the generator. Funny, you didn't pack any explosives. But look around the surveying site.



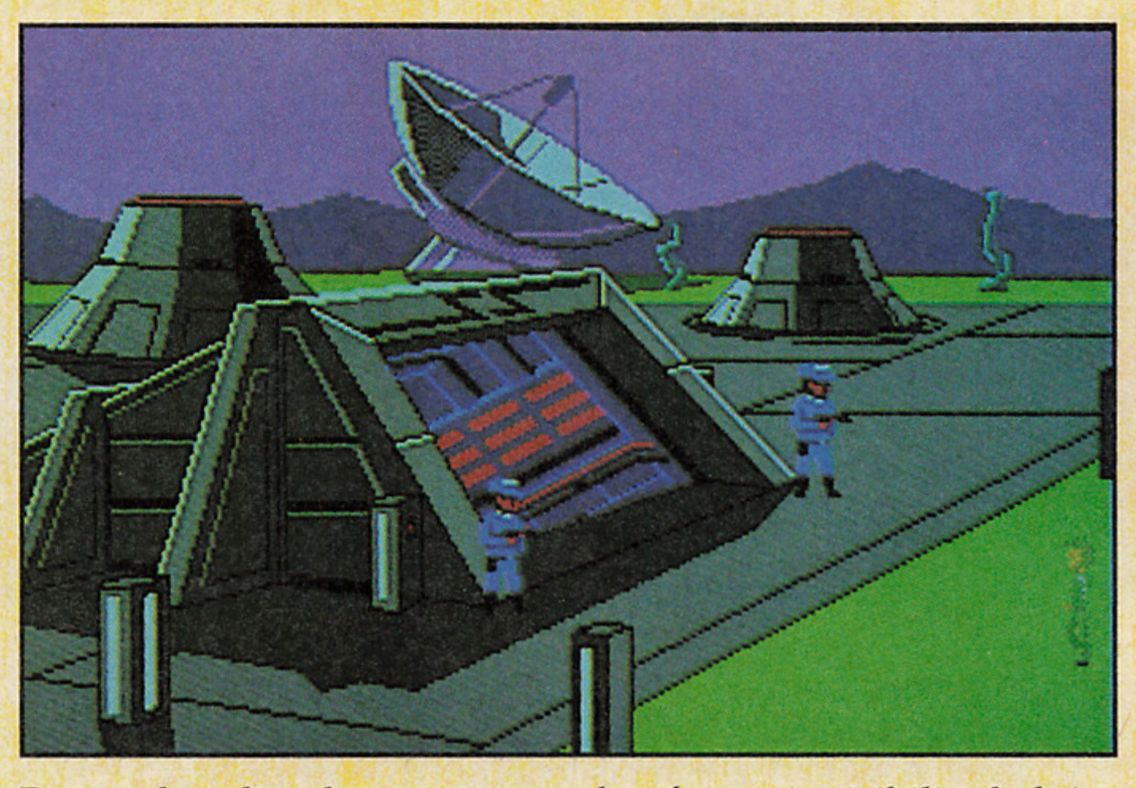
Take careful notice of the path to the generator. Blowing up the machinery is going to upset the balance of this volcanic planet, and you'll need to make a fast getaway.

Once you've set out on your mission to rescue the Two Guys from Andromeda, the action in *Space Quest* really takes off. If you save your game often, you won't run the risk of having to retrace your steps. Hint: There are many random deaths ahead for players who don't wear their temperature-controlled underwear; practice the correct track-and-field moves; develop a good sense of direction; or learn the proper custodian traits.

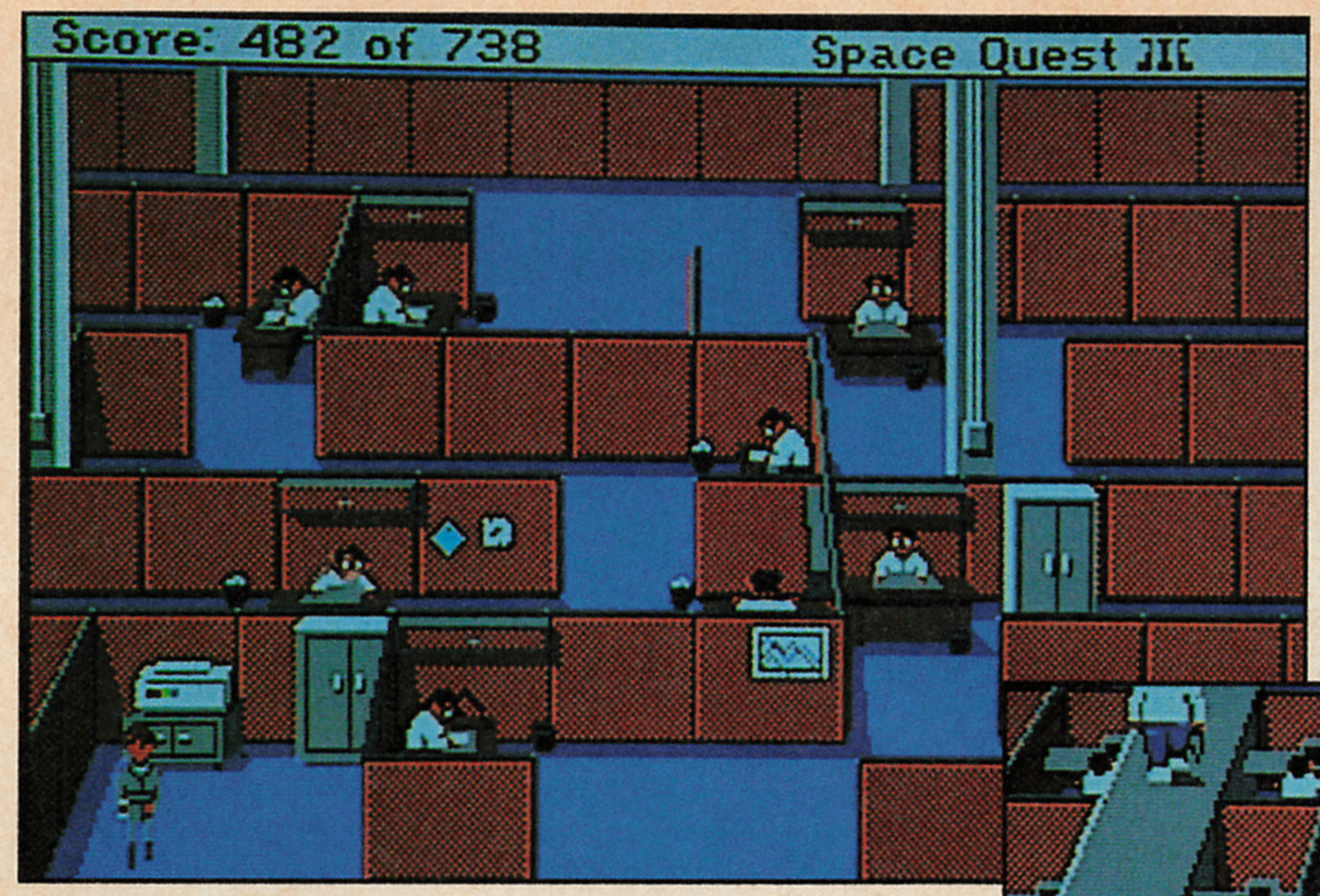
As obvious as it sounds, you should also remember all entrances and exits. Sometimes you can end up wandering around, desperately trying to figure out how you got into a room, a building, or even your own spaceship.



After you've taken off from Omega, you'll find a new area on your scanner. Naturally, your game should end on Pestulon, fighting those pirates — whoever they are.

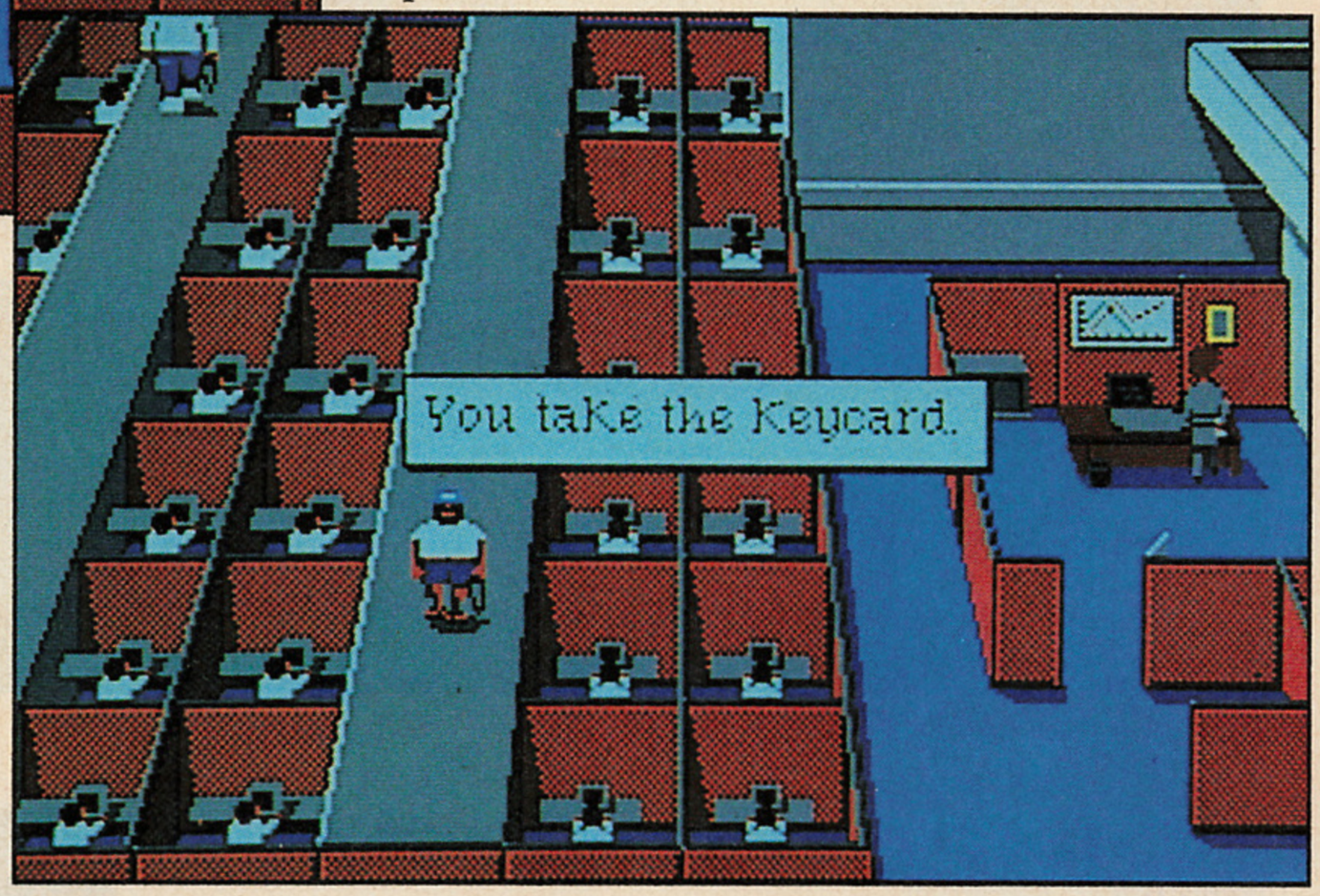


Remember that the power supply of your invisibility belt is *extremely* low. Don't turn it on until you're ready to high-tail it to the Pestulon base.



Inside the Pestulon Base

The accounting area is a huge maze that repeats itself endlessly to the left and right. There are only two items you need inside, but you can't neglect your trash-vaporizing duties while you look. For the most part, the slave-driven workers will ignore you, but they won't hesitate to report a suspected spy. Remember that you're looking for items which will allow you to get past the cell-door scanner. So work your way over to the photocopying area at the bottom of the screen, and Elmo's office at the top.

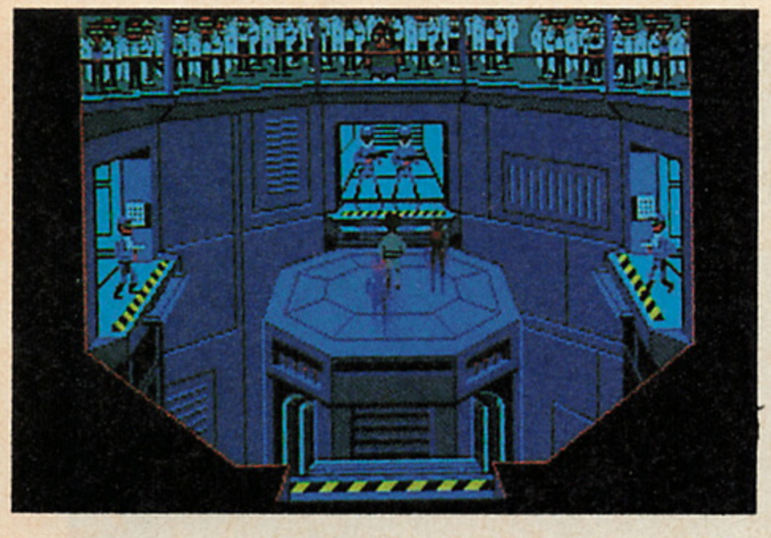


COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH

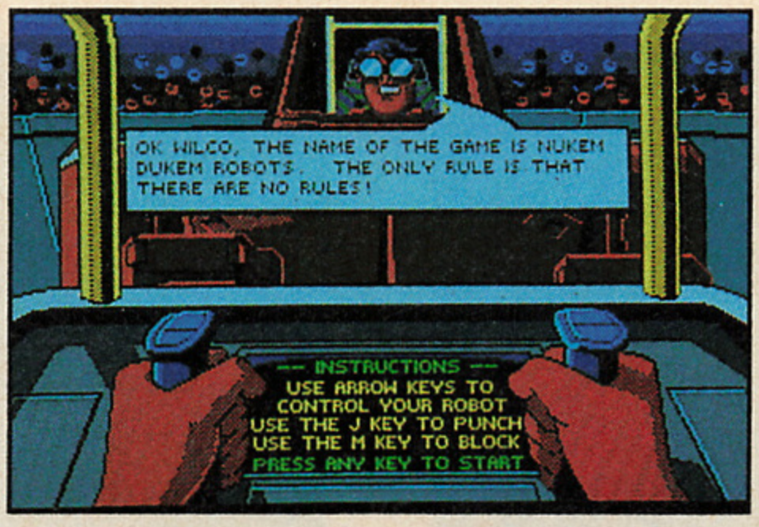
One of the nastier tricks in *Space Quest* is its false ending. Just after you've rescued the Two Guys, your score will shoot up to just one point shy of the required total. As you're celebrating and calling your friends, Elmo sweeps in with his troops, and your score plunges by 200 points. Great.

But the primary game *is* over, and you don't really have to use your brain anymore. You *will* need to dust off your best arcade moves, however. The last two sections of *Space Quest* are similar to those action-filled shoot-and-punch games.

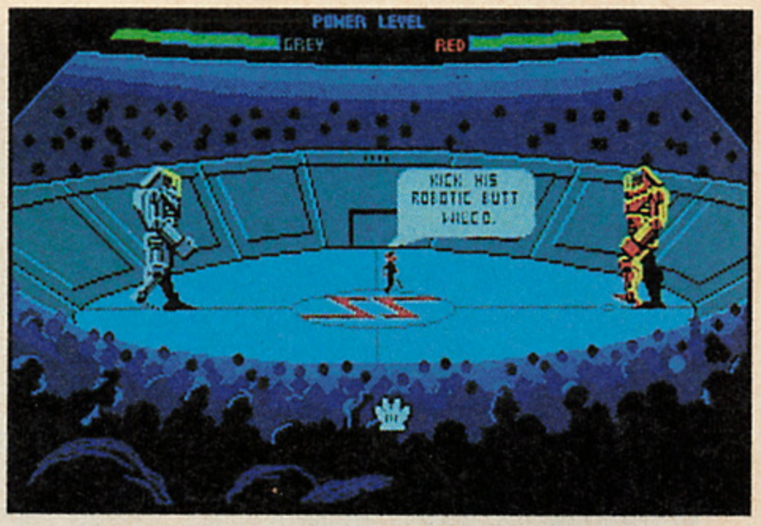
First, in Nukem Dukem, you must punch out Elmo's robot. Then you have to defeat the Pestulon air fleet that follows you into outer space.



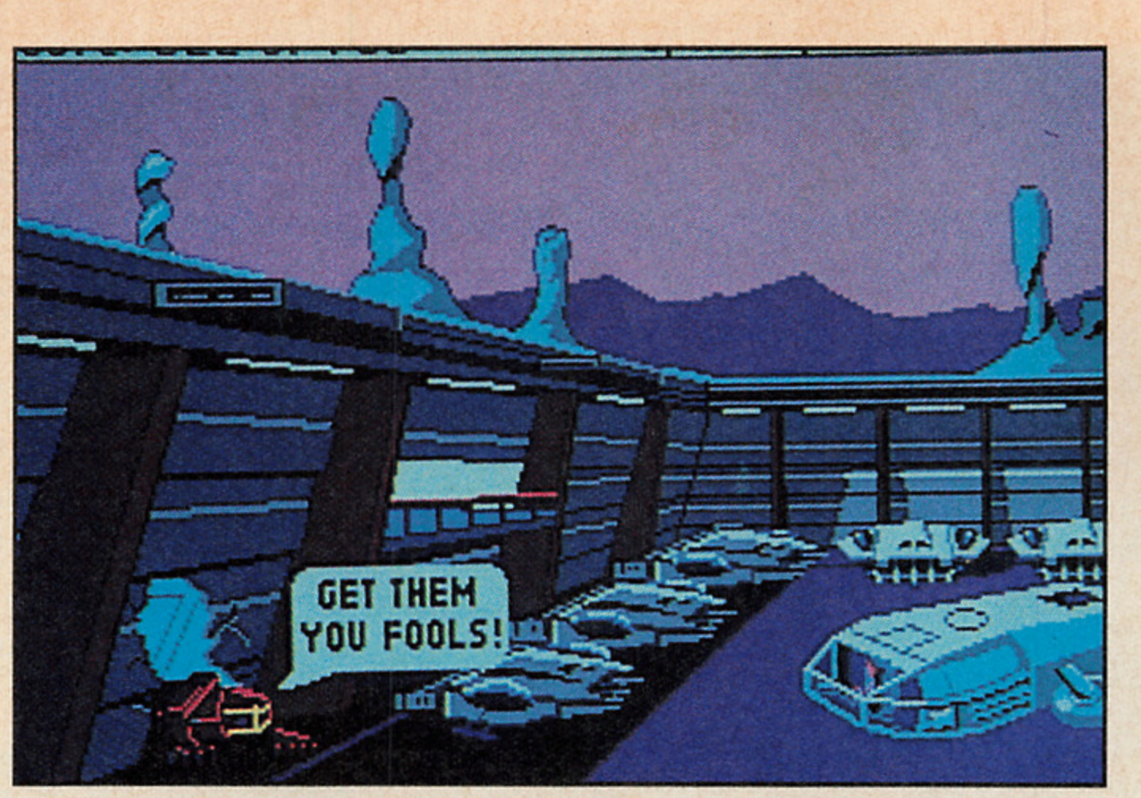
Just when you thought your troubles were over, Elmo captures you and the Two Guys. Don't expect any help from those two airheads, either. As usual, your survival — and that of the Two Guys — depends solely on you.



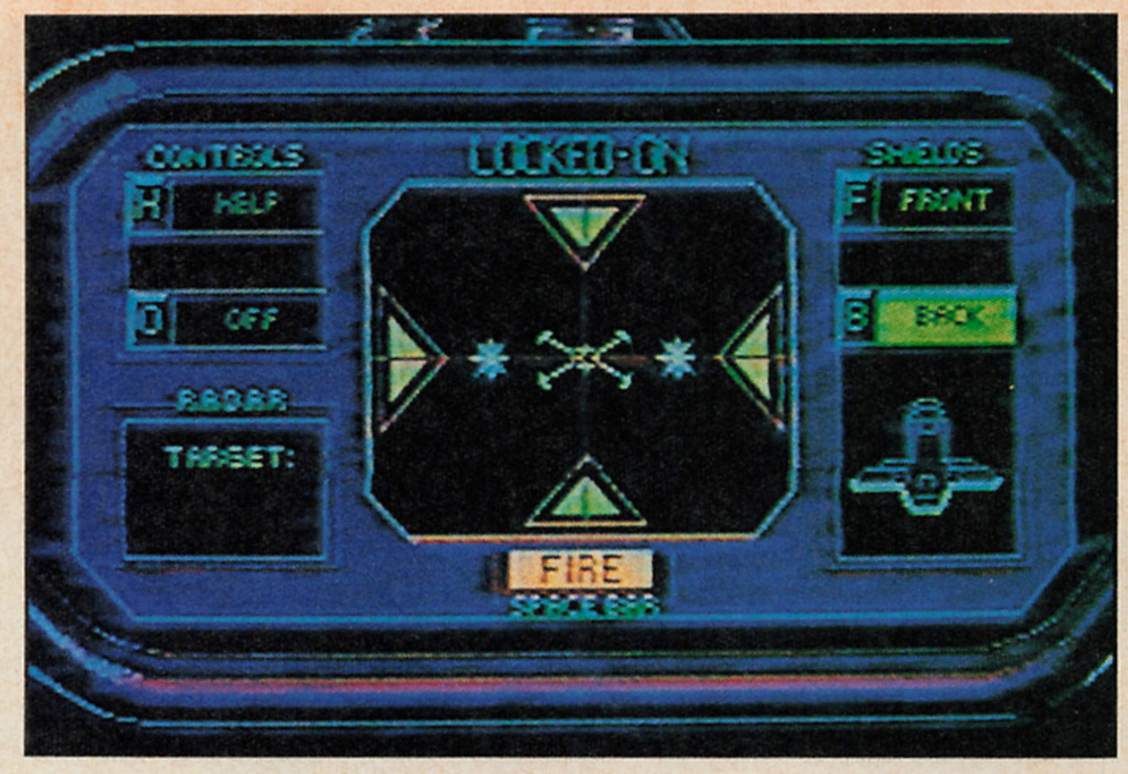
It's important in Nukem Dukem to remember that *any* move on your part saps your energy (unless it's a direct hit on your opponent, which *gives* you energy). So let Elmo's robot come to you, and make each punch count.



If you're using the keyboard, there might be a slight delay between entering a command and seeing the action. Time your punches and blocks accordingly. And watch Elmo — he follows a pattern.



When you try to escape from Pestulon, you'll find that the pirates have sabotaged your ship. Before you can fix your light-speed warp drive, you must fight off the forces of the Pestulon fleet.



Make sure you're at attack speed before checking your weapons system. Then prepare to blow some pirates into space dust. You'll have to destroy at least five of their ships before the rest of the fleet will give up.

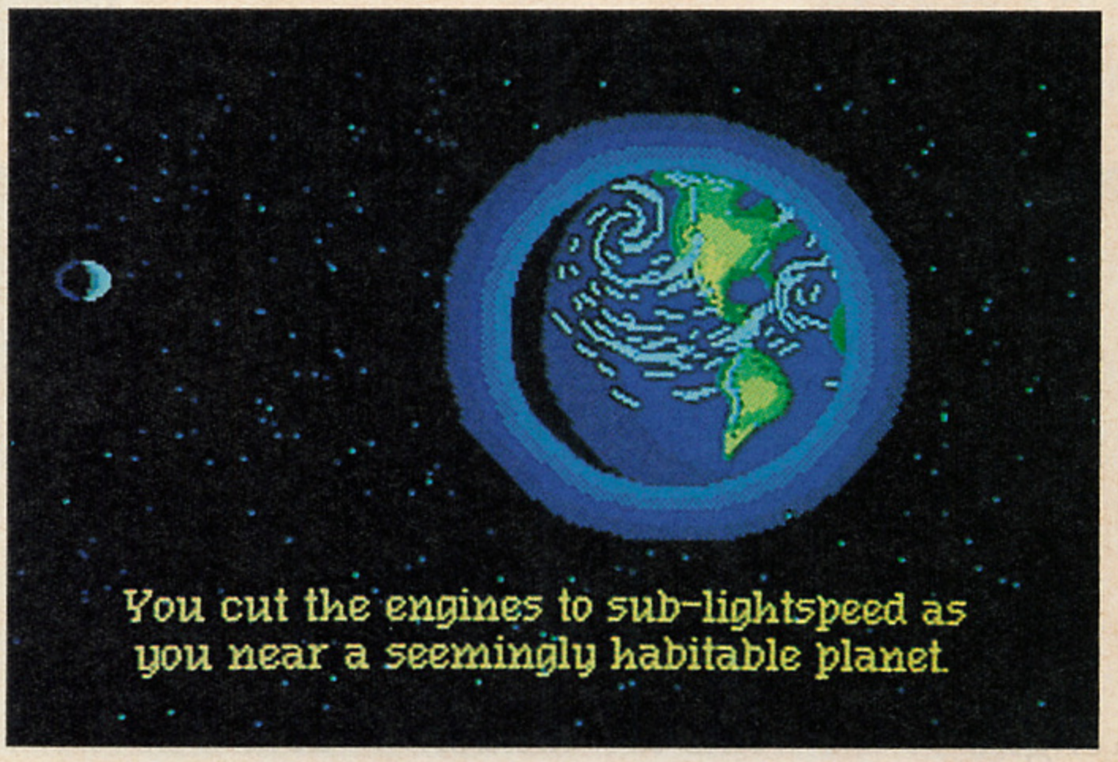
There's a knack to destroying the enemy ships. Actually, it's easier to blow them up than it is to control your own ship's shields. A box in the bottom-left corner of the screen indicates if an attack is coming from the front or rear, so you can adjust your shield accordingly. Then, *immediately* after a ship has left the screen, switch the shield to the second setting (from back to front, or from front to back). Just don't press the same button twice in a row — or the shield will turn off. Don't leave yourself unprotected.

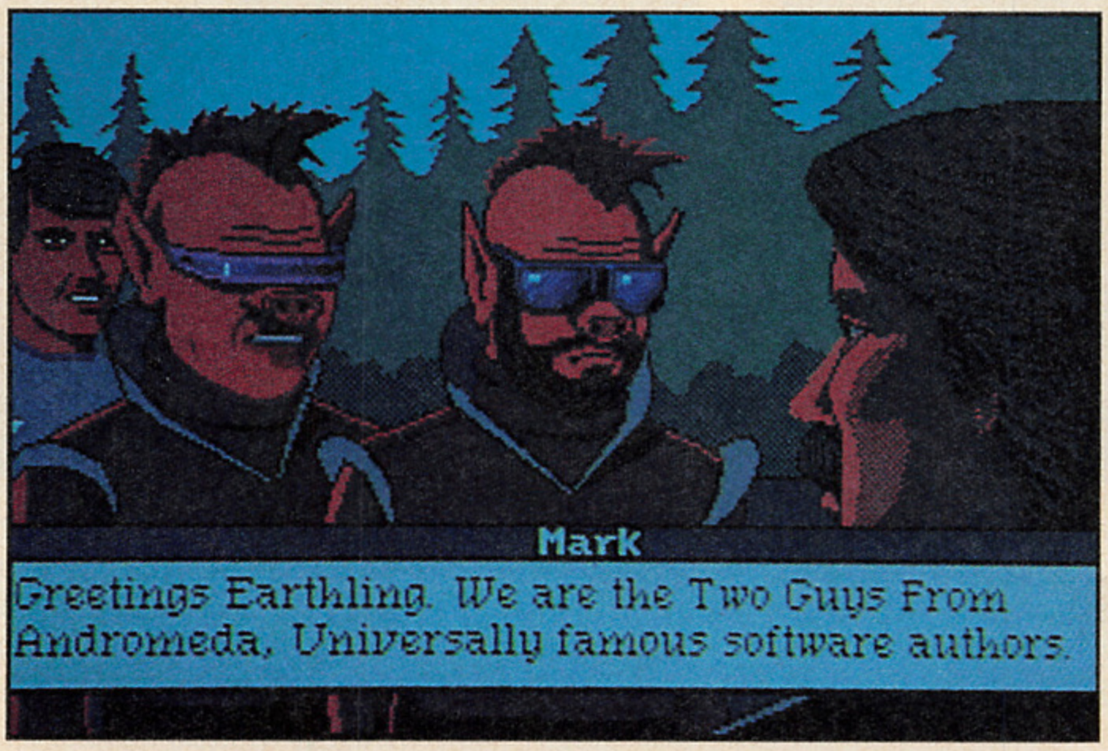
GP

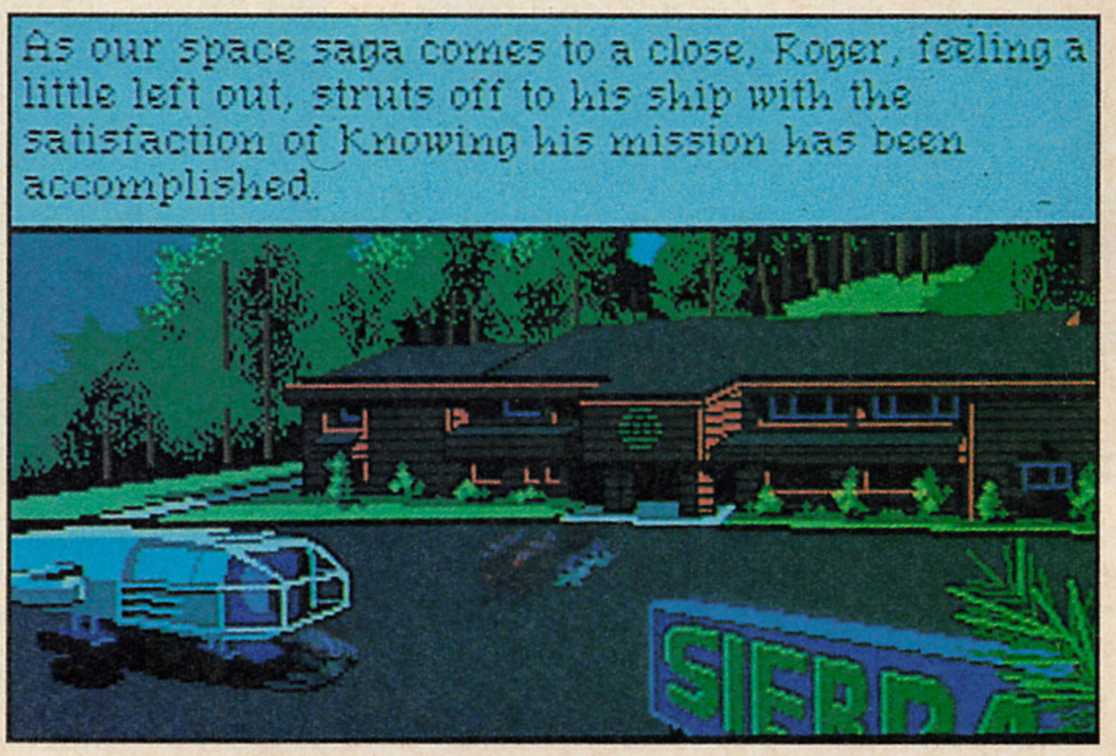
COMPUTER GAME of the MONTH

Afterward

Once you've defeated the Pestulon spaceships, your part in *Space Quest III* is finished. So sit back, relax, and watch the rest of the action unfold. All that's left is to wait for the next *Space Quest* adventure.







REVIEWS

SILPHEED

Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; CGA, EGA, MCGA, VGA, or Tandy graphics; hard disk optional but recommended; joystick optional; Roland MT-32, Ad Lib, and IBM music cards optional. Not compatible with 512K IBM PCjr. Also available for the Amiga, Atari ST, Macintosh, and Apple IIGS. Sierra On-Line, P.O. Box 495, Coarsegold, CA 93614.

Videogames that enjoy a great deal of success in Japan almost always stand a good chance of hitting it big on this side of the planet. *Silpheed*, the latest title from Sierra On-Line and already a blockbuster in Japan, is likely to add further credence to this theory.

What's a Silpheed? Consider it a cross between the *Millennium Falcon* and an F-14 Tomcat. To be more specific, it's a Super Air Fighter SA-08 — a dogfighter commonly used in the year 3032.

Sierra took the Japanese version of *Silpheed* — which is the sequel to another hit game, *Thexder* — and added its own first-rate graphics. The result is an arcade-style shootout that boasts 20 levels of action and more than 30 different kinds of alien attackers.

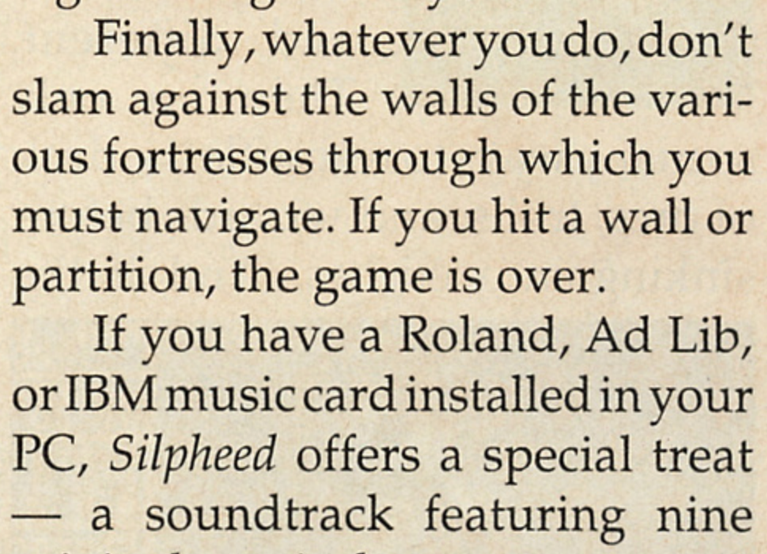
To avoid immediate annihilation in *Silpheed*, you must obtain power-up items whenever possible to boost your weaponry and strength. These items are hidden inside "golans," which you should never confuse with asteroids. It's also important to rack up high scores on each level so you can trade your government-issue cannons for high-power laser beams at the next base station. You can get an additional weapon each time you score 50,000 points.

Often, it's best to meet onrushing enemies as soon as they appear on the screen. For example, if you take the offensive, you can blast the Feizel missile-launchers before they even think about training their sights on you.

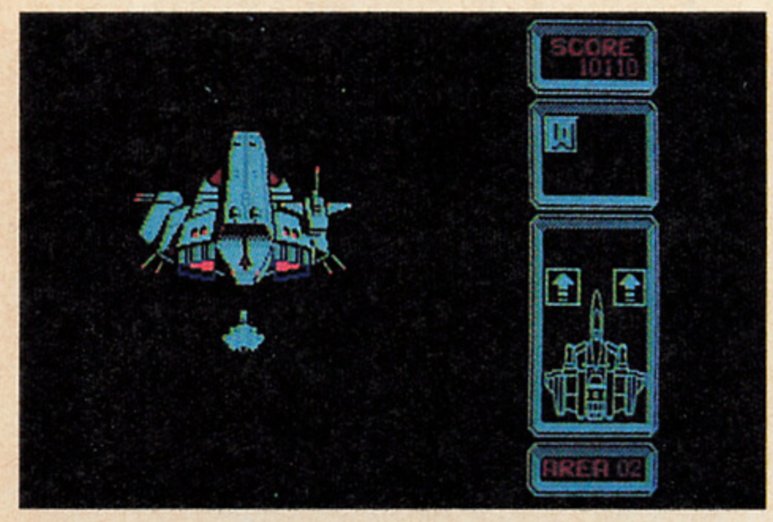
Finally, whatever you do, don't slam against the walls of the various fortresses through which you must navigate. If you hit a wall or partition, the game is over.

If you have a Roland, Ad Lib, or IBM music card installed in your PC, *Silpheed* offers a special treat — a soundtrack featuring nine original musical scores.

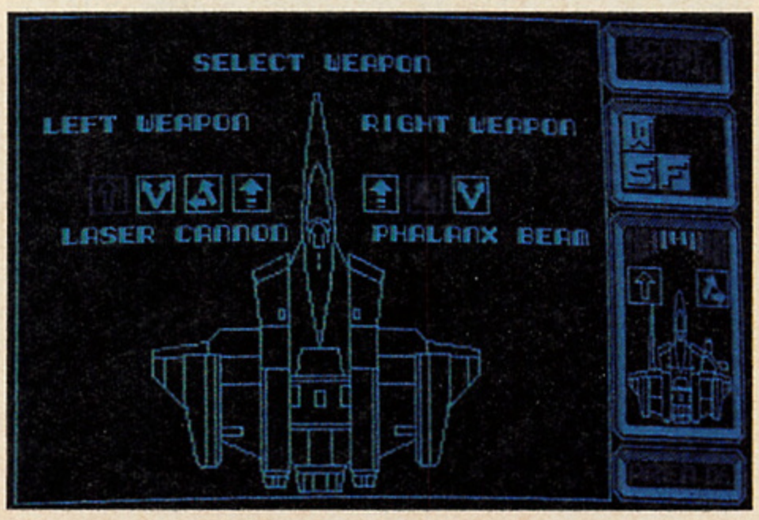
GP



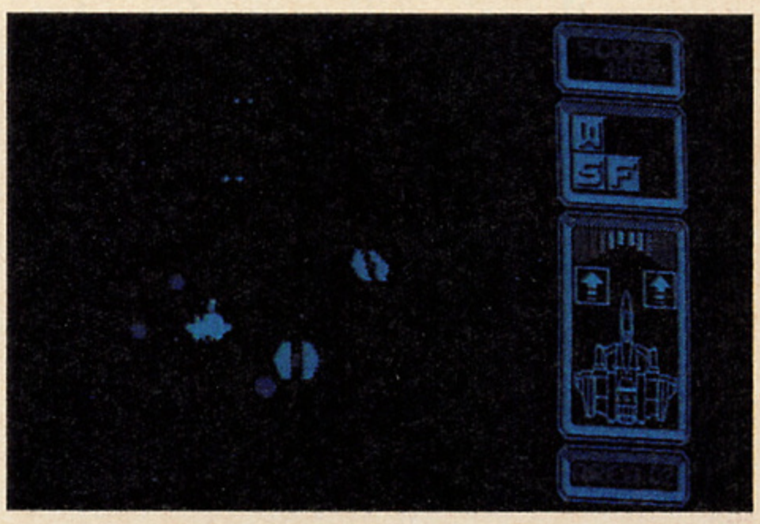
Some enemy ships are protected by a ring of satellites. This makes it even more difficult to destroy the attacking cruisers.



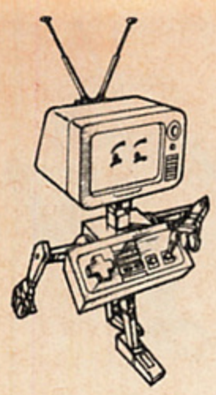
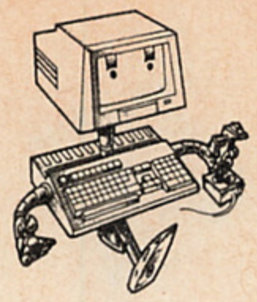
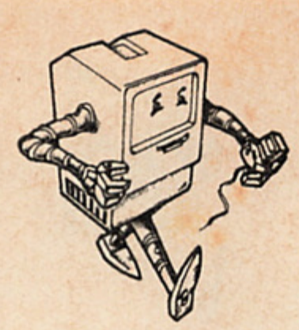
At the end of each level, your ship automatically docks at one of these base stations for repair and rearmament.

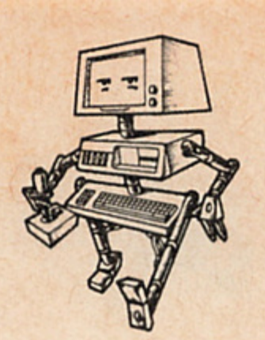
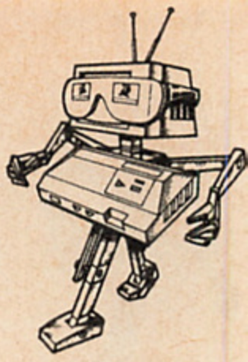


Which new weapon you should choose depends on the kinds of enemies you're going up against.



If you collect the golan labeled "A," your ship will be protected by a belt of asteroids that is impervious to enemy fire.

REVIEWS

THE MAGIC CANDLE

William R. Trotter

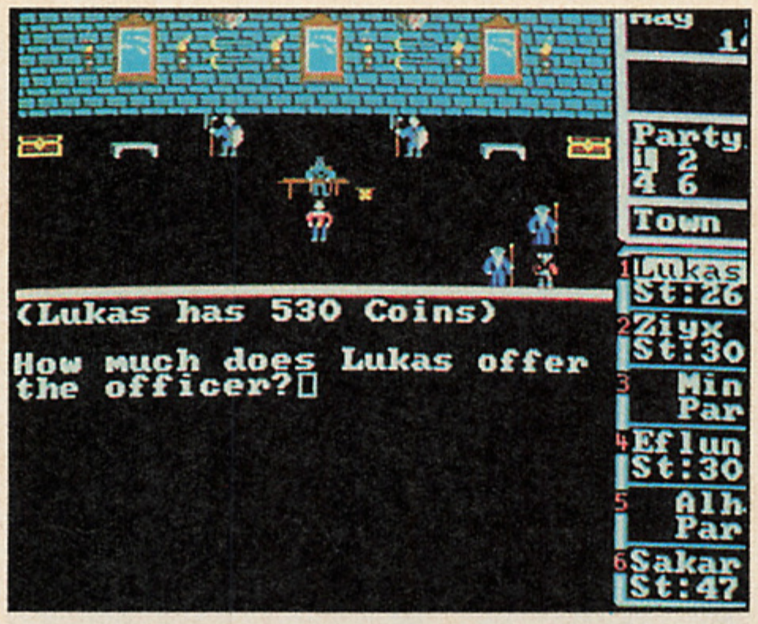
Version reviewed: IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles; 256K minimum memory; CGA or EGA color graphics. Also available for Commodore 64 and Apple II. Mindcraft, 2341 205th Street, Suite 102, Torrance, CA 90501.

The very nature of fantasy role-playing games makes it increasingly difficult for designers to come up with anything radically new and different. There are only so many ways to reshuffle the deck of orcs, trolls, and wizards before sinking into cliches. And if the designers go too far beyond the Tolkeinian ingredients, they run the risk of their game being perceived as *outside* the genre altogether.

After vanquishing your foes, be sure to search them for cash.

The Magic Candle, however, proves there's still room for a traditional fantasy role-playing game, when it's done right. This game breaks no new ground, and it stays comfortably within the familiar sword-and-sorcery parameters. Yet, it combines the basic ingredients with such skill, thoroughness, and attention to detail, that it could well serve as the paradigm of an entire new class of fantasy games.

The Evil One, in this story, is a demon named Dreax, imprisoned ages ago inside a candle that burns perpetually, but never melts. Except that now it *is* melting, and if your brave band of adventurers cannot locate the legendary spell to reimprison Dreax forever, the world of Deruvia will be plunged into darkness.



Sometimes you'll need that cash to bribe a highly placed official.

There are dozens of commands available, allowing you to manipulate your characters with remarkable flexibility, but only those commands which are relevant to a given situation appear on the screen at any time. This kind of sensible, player-friendly attention to detail is typical of the care that has gone into *The Magic Candle*.

Only the commands relevant to a given situation are shown on the screen.

There's plenty of combat in this game, but it doesn't erupt so often as to become an annoying interruption of the story. In fact, you get to enjoy some fairly long interludes devoted to the sheer pleasure of exploration. There are lots of dungeons and towns to explore, and you can map them from a sane and reasonable point of view, not some sadistic jump-cut perspective designed to disorient you as much as possible.

If you basically *like* fantasy role-playing games but have gradually become discouraged by the cloning that seems to dominate much of the genre, give *The Magic Candle* a try. It doesn't do anything new, but it does all the traditional things beautifully.

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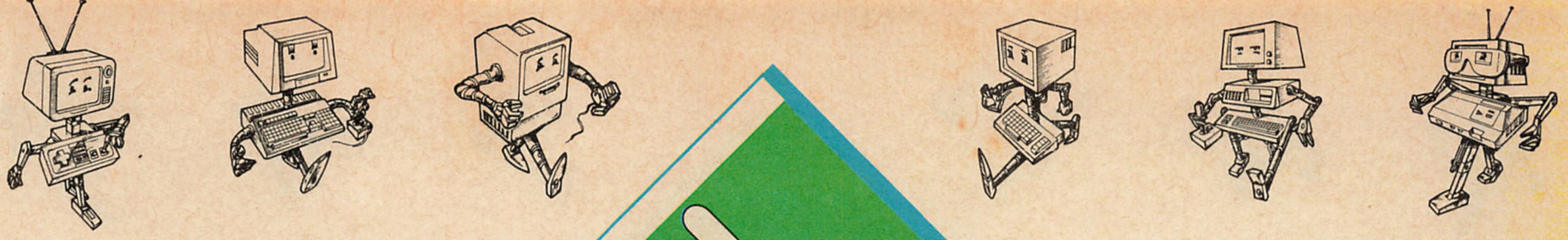


REVIEWS

STEEL THUNDER

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 384K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, MCGA, CGA, or Hercules graphics; joystick optional. Also available for Commodore 64/128. Accolade, 550 S. Winchester Blvd., Suite 200, San Jose, CA 95128.

Computer simulations are becoming more elaborate and powerful, forcing game designers to strike an increasingly delicate balance. Game players want realism in their simulations, but as the simulation gets closer to the actual complexities of piloting a high-tech fighter or controlling the rush-hour sky traffic over O'Hare International Airport, the line between playing a game and going to work becomes dangerously thin.

Case in point: a tank simulator I played recently in which the player was required to perform, singlehandedly and often simultaneously, actions that the U.S. Army trains *four* men to do as a team.

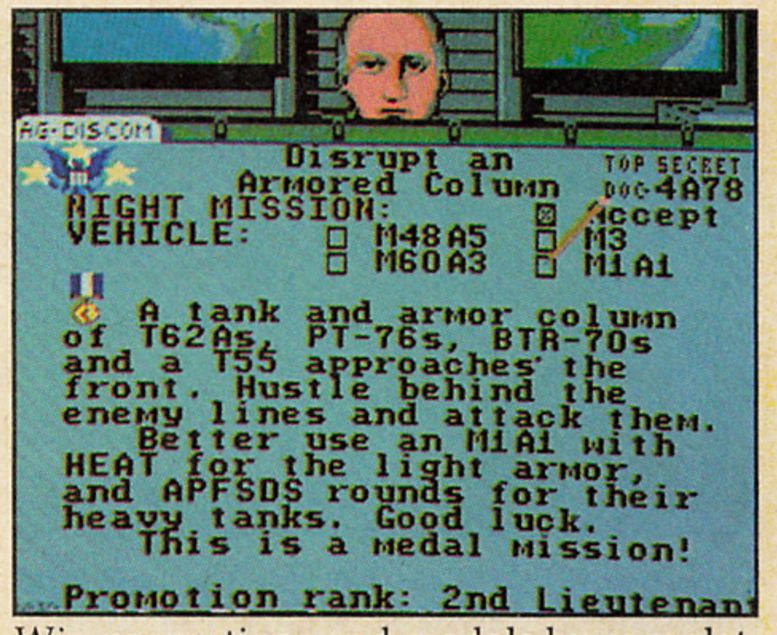
Now comes *Steel Thunder* from Accolade: a game that's clean, sweet, and hot. You can fight in four vehicles (M1 Abrams, M60, the Patton, or the controversial Bradley Fighting Vehicle). You work your way through three theaters and 24 battle scenarios of increasing hairiness. You *can* be the driver, if you want to, but the things you *must* do in order to fight battles with a decent chance of survival are just basic startup procedures. Good documentation and a helpful keyboard overlay make it easy to master all the basic weapons systems, smoke-screen devices, sights, ammo-changes, etc. In combat, you stay busy, but you're not so overwhelmed by the mechanics of play that you can't relish the action.

And the action is outstanding. *Steel Thunder* features detailed bit-mapped graphics (not a polygon in sight!), with superb explosions, muzzle flashes, and bullet-strike effects. The main cannon goes off with a satisfying crunch, and the 25mm gun on the Bradley makes a terrific pom-pom noise as you rake enemy truck convoys.

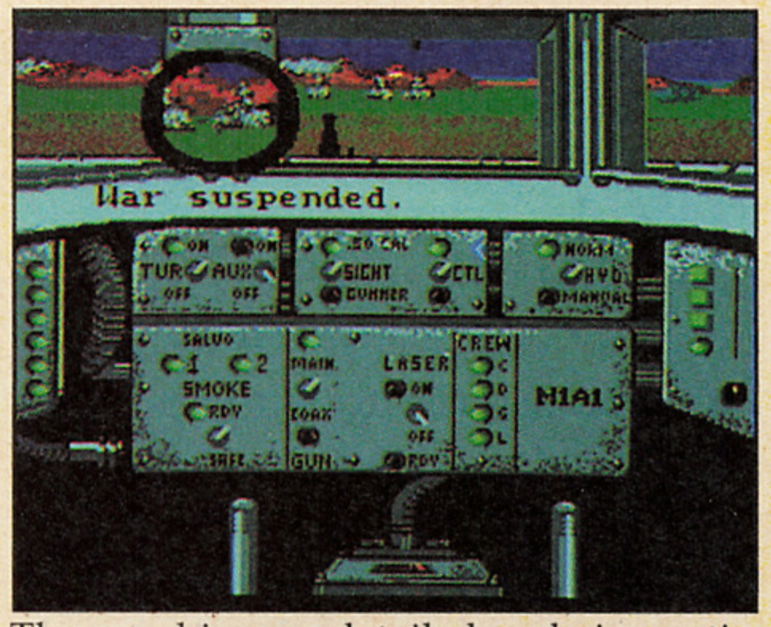
The scenarios, too, are realistic. The enemy never comes at you in endless arcade-game waves. In fact, the enemy vehicles behave as if they're controlled by men just as anxious to preserve their hides as you are, so you get a real chance to exercise good tactics and battlefield savvy.

Playing *Steel Thunder* is like being inside your own private war movie.

Choose from four modern armored vehicles, including the powerful M1A1 Abrams.



Win promotions and medals by completing missions in Cuba, Syria, and Germany.



The graphics are detailed and cinematic — like being inside a good war movie.

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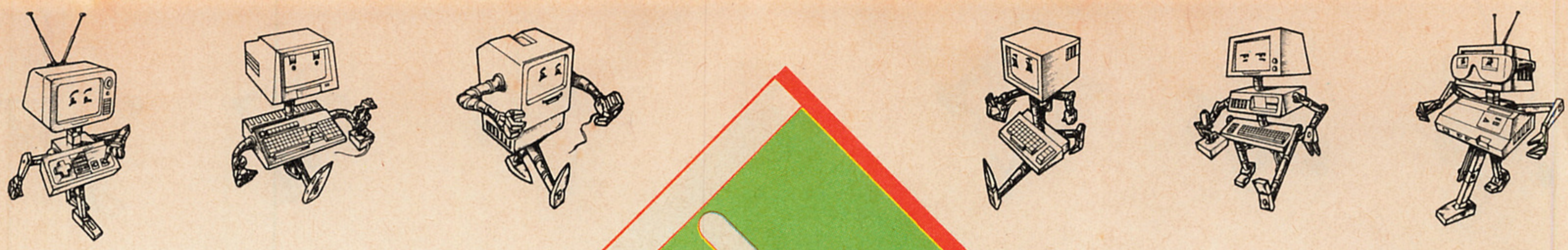


REVIEWS

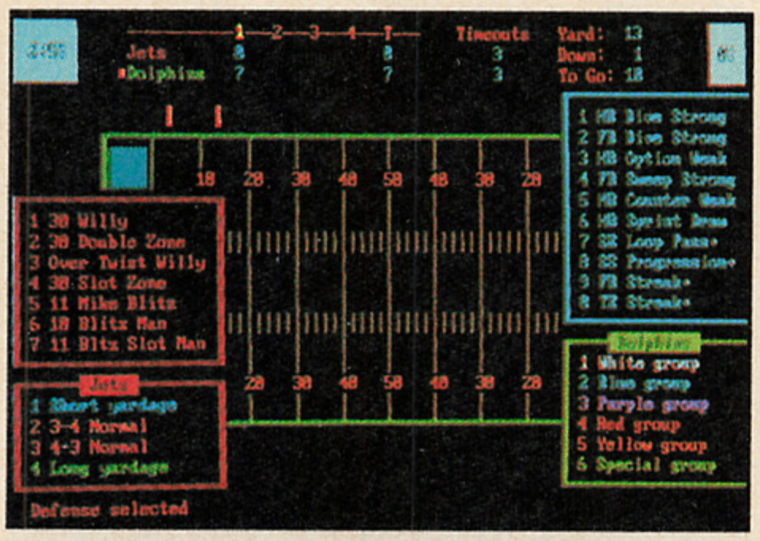
NFL CHALLENGE

Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles; 256K minimum memory; CGA graphics, and a color monitor. Also available for the Macintosh. XOR, 5421 Opportunity Court, Minnetonka, MN 55343.

After you play XOR's *NFL Challenge*, you'll never watch a football game the same way again. This exceptional strategy game takes you beneath the surface and reveals some of the nuances and subtleties of professional football.

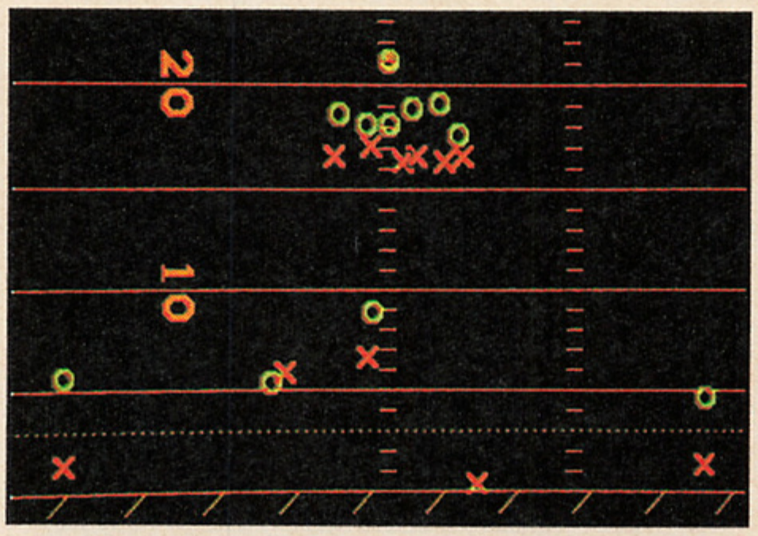
By coaching any of the 28 NFL teams, you'll get a glimpse of what actually transpires on the sidelines and on the field, and why. You will soon be able to recognize when your trench men should stunt and when they should trap-block. Given the multitude of play options and the specialization of players, you'll also develop an appreciation for how intricate the game plans can get.



The options shown on the play menus represent sets of plays, grouped according to formation.

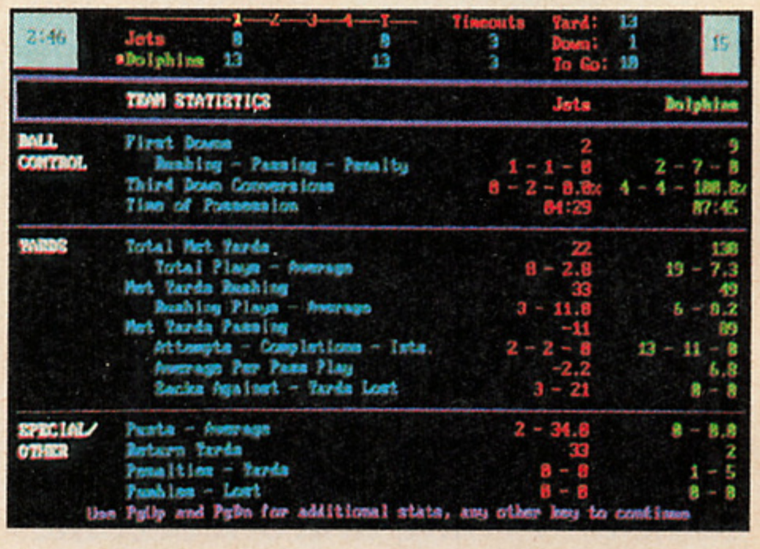
On offense, you have more than 45 plays you can call. The game includes a playbook detailing each option, plus a guide to the 26 defensive plays. Armchair quarterbacks will revel in this literature, enjoying the preparation and strategy as much as actually playing the game.

At any point during the contest, you can call up five screens of statistics about the previous play. This report card will delight football fanatics who are anxious to see how their players are performing, and how well the coach is using his resources. If you decide you aren't getting enough performance at a certain position, you can substitute as you see fit. For example, if Jim McMahon is having a bad day with the Bears, yank him.



In this play, Dan Marino drops back in the pocket before hitting tight-end Ferrell Edmonds for a touchdown.

To call a play, you first choose a group of plays based on your team's formation. Then you select the actual play you want to run. After both coaches make their decisions, the screen switches to the action on the field. Although the players are represented only by X's and O's — a disappointment, considering the computer's graphics capabilities — the symbols are enough to capture the drama of each down.



At any time during a game, you can press the R key to call up a complete statistical report for both teams.

When the play ends, the screen displays a blow-by-blow account of the action, including who ran or caught the ball, how many yards were gained or lost, and who made the tackle. Extracurricular activity is also posted, including penalties and injuries.

So if you think you're a better coach than Don Shula, boot up *NFL Challenge* and prove it. Dan Marino and the Mark II offense are at your disposal.

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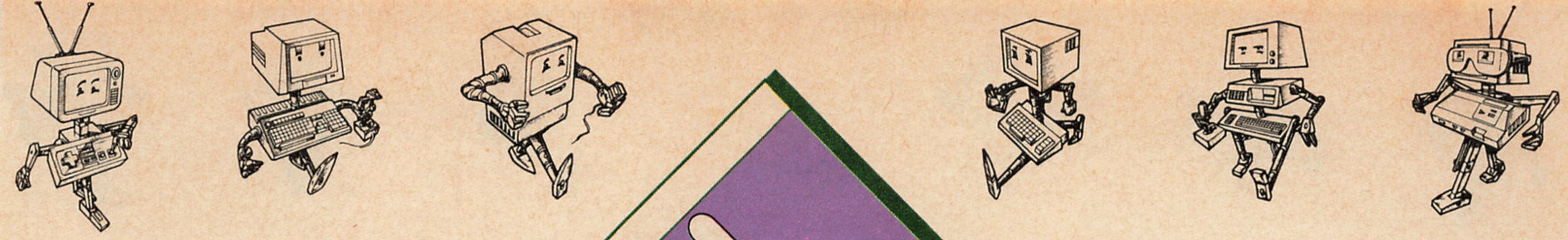


REVIEWS

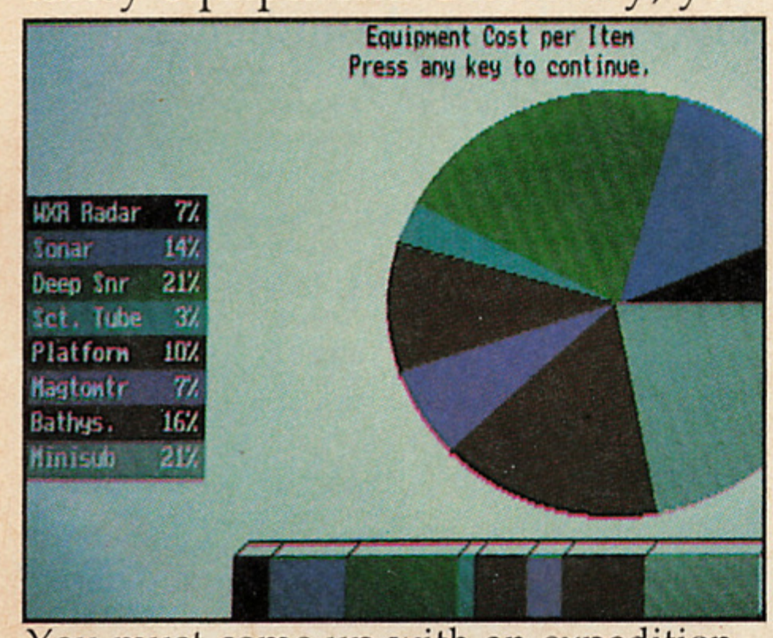
SEARCH FOR THE TITANIC

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 256K minimum memory; EGA or EGA graphics; 256-color VGA version available. Commodore 64 and Apple II versions planned. Capstone (IntraCorp), 14160 S.W. 139th Court, Miami, FL 33186.

This is a very different kind of simulation, one that not only allows you to participate in the most famous undersea expedition of our times, but that also gives you a chance to experience life as an oceanographer. *Search for the Titanic* extends the realm of computer entertainment and stimulates the imagination.

Fortunately, its designers didn't forget to make it highly entertaining. In the full-scale game, you begin as a struggling young oceanographer with a small cash grubstake and a lot of big dreams — but no ship, no crew, and no fancy equipment. Gradually, you



You must come up with an expedition plan that satisfies the dreaded "review committee."

work your way up from exploring shallow wrecks that can be reached by two scuba divers, to deep-sea treasures that can be found only with elaborate, high-tech equipment and the help of numerous specialists. Your "score" is nothing less than your reputation. Once you've completed 10 or 12 successful expeditions, you gain the prestige needed to go after the most legendary shipwreck of the century.

Aside from the sheer fascination of the technology and procedures involved in deep-sea exploration, and aside from the excitement you feel when your divers actually find a pile of gold doubloons, there are surprising twists and turns in some of the games. Obstacles include hurricanes, equipment breakdowns, illness among the crew, and even the sudden incompetence of a highly paid technician. You interact not only with the sea itself, but also with the people you hire and the organizations from whom you must beg, coax, or wheedle the necessary funds.

As your expertise grows, you'll learn how to handle high-tech equipment, such as the deep-water camera platform.

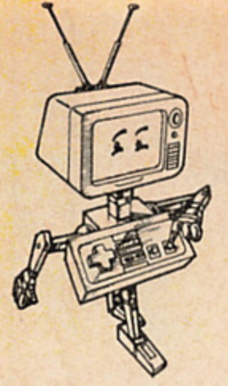
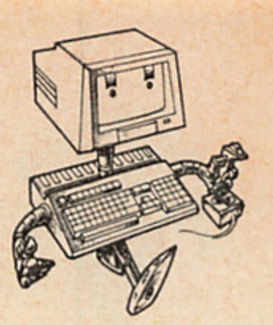
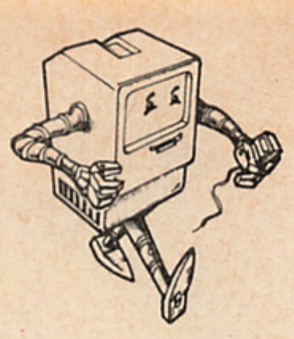
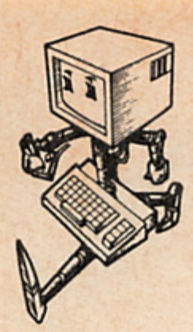
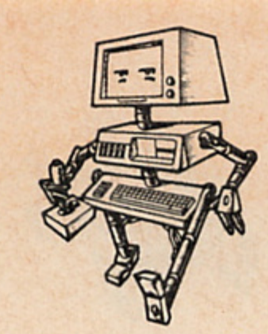
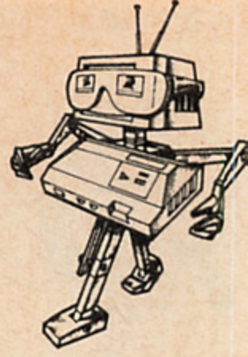
Search for the Titanic was reviewed by the staff of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute —

If you find the *Titanic*, you'll be rewarded with digitized photos of the actual wreck.

the people who found the real *Titanic* — and was given high marks for authenticity. It also deserves high marks for playability, and some kind of Oscar for originality of concept.

This is not a game for everyone. But if you believe that the concept of fantasy role-playing can and should go far beyond the cliches of sword-and-sorcery, *Search for the Titanic* should be hailed as a benchmark in the history of computer gaming.

GP

NINTENDO REVIEWS

AIR FORTRESS

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Hal America, 7873 SW Cirrus Drive, 25-F, Beaverton, OR 97005.

From the nethermost reaches of outer space has come a vast intergalactic fortress. Made up of eight huge, domed sub-fortresses, it drifts through the void like an enormous, sinister jellyfish. Defense forces were mobilized by the previous star systems in its path, but all were massacred by the powerful weapons of the alien stronghold.

There is but one hope. As space-ace Hal Bailman, you must do battle with the fortress in a star fighter equipped with bombs, an armored spacesuit, and a new and powerful light-blaster. First you have to penetrate the outer defenses of each unit of the fortress. This requires a horizontal-scrolling attack through assorted rays, lethal electronic fields, and drifting obstacles. You can pick up energy and firepower modules as you go. Once you land on the fortress, you don the armored spacesuit and proceed through a maze-like environment bristling with killer 'droids, murderous aliens, lethal walls, and a host of other obstacles.

You have to fight your way through all eight sub-fortresses, locate and destroy the power plant, find a rocket sled, and escape by fighting your way back out again. But this time there's a deadline to beat — you must escape before the runaway reaction of the destroyed power plant turns you into space dust.

Although none of this is exactly fresh and different, *Air Fortress* stands out for a couple of reasons. First, the graphics: The screens are genuinely imaginative and richly detailed, realistically simulating an alien high-tech environment. You may find yourself even freezing certain screens just to savor the quality of work on display here.

Second, *Air Fortress* is very playable. It should even hold the interest of players whose intolerance of frustration normally makes them shy away from zap-the-aliens games. *Air Fortress* is certainly not an easy Nintendo game, by any means, but it seems designed to be challenging rather than impossibly difficult. It should find favor with a wide audience.

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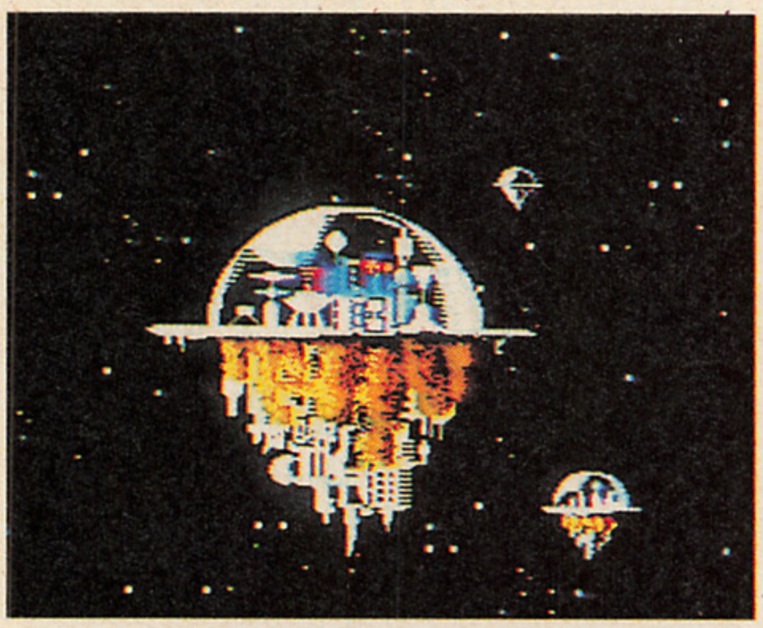
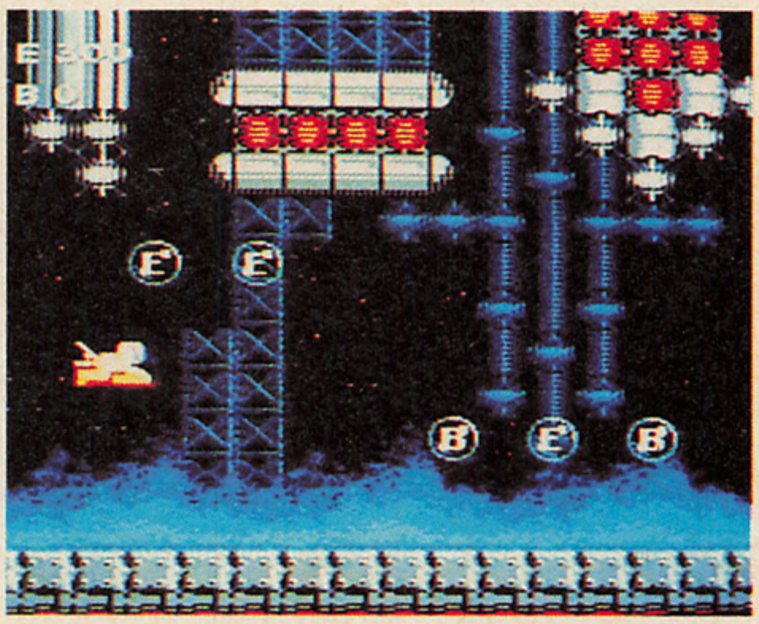
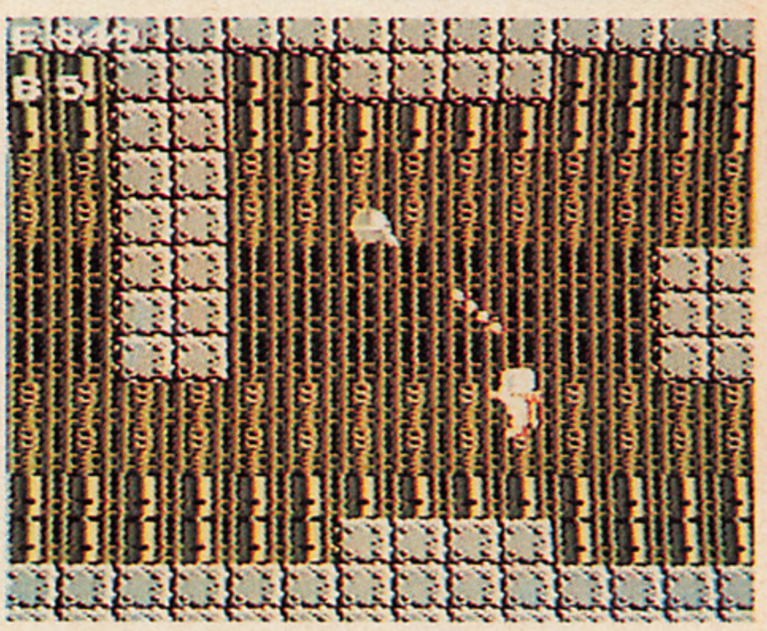


Air Fortress has excellent graphics. Note the sinister, jellyfish-like appearance of the enemy strongholds.



As you penetrate the outer defenses, pick up energy and firepower bonuses. You'll need them once you get inside.



Don't touch the walls or floors of the fortress — some of them contain a damaging energy field.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Bandai America, 12951 East 166th Street, Cerritos, CA 90701.

It's difficult to imagine what Robert Louis Stevenson would think of the Nintendo version of his literary classic, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Maybe he would hope that the videogame would arouse still more interest in his masterpiece, as well as in the internal struggle between good and evil that rages inside all of us.

One thing is more certain, however: Playing the Nintendo version of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* would surely frustrate the Scottish writer, possibly to the point of returning to his grave. Just when you get Dr. Jekyll moving along at a good pace, a cluster of Londoners sends him into the twisted world of the heinous Mr. Hyde, where the other half of the game takes place.

If, at any point in the game, Mr. Hyde progresses further along his path than Dr. Jekyll travels on his, lightning strikes and the game is over. And in *Dr. Jekyll*, lightning *can* strike twice in the same place. It's not a game you will master the first few times, so be patient.

The trick is to keep Dr. Jekyll moving forward as often as possible. For example, in the first few levels of play, you can walk past the bomb maniacs and avoid injury. Don't wait for the action to develop. You should aggressively proceed to the chapel so you can exchange vows with Miss Millicent — the object of the game.

If you allow either your life or stress meters to reach bottom, the transformation into Mr. Hyde will begin. Use your psycho-wave in the world of demons to restore the meter levels and return to England. Firing your weapon while leaping can eliminate the demons before they get too close.

In London, there should be signs posted that read: "Beware of dog." The yellow canines found napping on the sidewalk are light sleepers, so be ready to jump. These dogs also bring out the worst in the black cats that seem to follow wherever you go. When the cats attack, try jumping backward.

It's up to you to stop the vileness of man from overcoming his virtue. So keep a stiff upper lip and get to the chapel before you are overcome by Jekyll's dark side.

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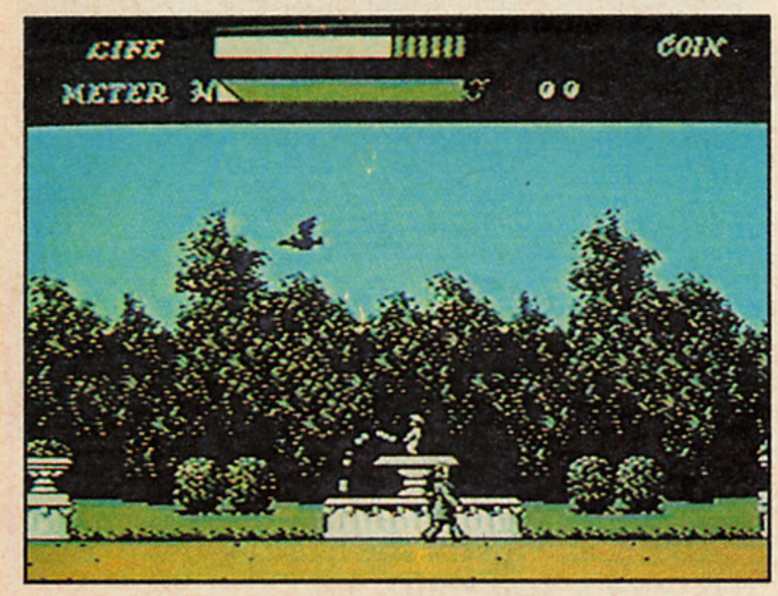
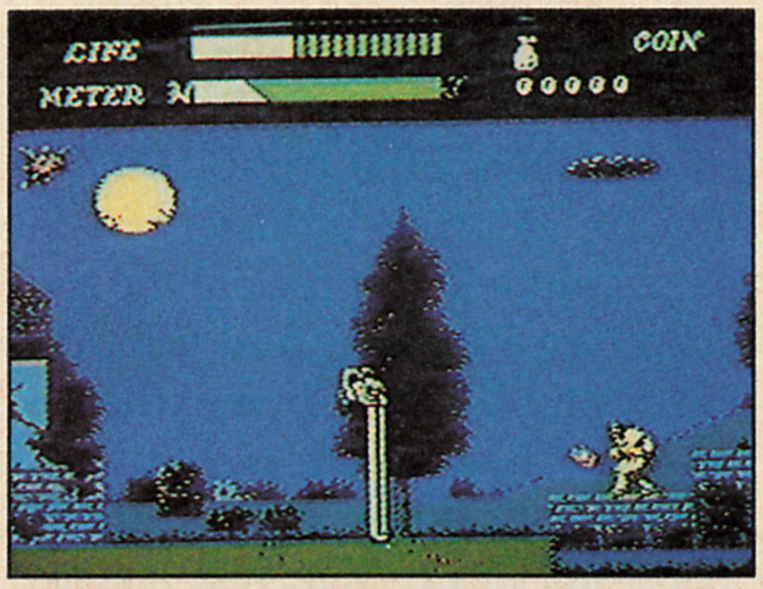
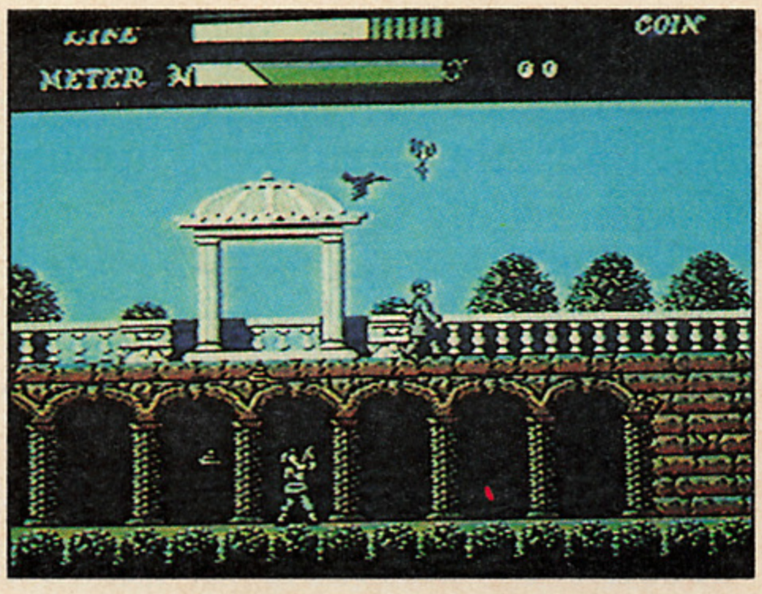


The stress level moves closer to H (for Hyde) every time Jekyll experiences frustration or has an accident.



To defeat Corum, Hyde must attack before the skull opens its jaws and begins spitting fireballs.



Meet Arnold Ebbetts, the enemy of fowl everywhere. You must avoid the steady rain of dead birds Mr. Ebbetts creates.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

HUDSON'S ADVENTURE ISLAND

Leslie Mizell

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Hudson Soft USA, 601 California Street, Suite 2004, San Francisco, CA 94108.

Forget those huge musclemen you're used to seeing as heroes in Nintendo games. The star of *Hudson's Adventure Island* is just a brave youngster.

Master Higgins, boy hero, is on a South Pacific island to rescue the Princess Leilani, who has been kidnapped by an evil witch doctor. It's not a simple rescue. He has to fight through eight levels of creepy enemies. And there's a boss guarding the end of every level, each more fierce than the one before.

In keeping with the story line, the villains in *Adventure Island* are whimsical. With the exception of the level bosses (who, admittedly, are grim, dog-faced creatures), Master Higgins battles critters that are a lot more tame than they sound: cobras, coyotes, skeletons, bats, spiders, frogs, and octopi.

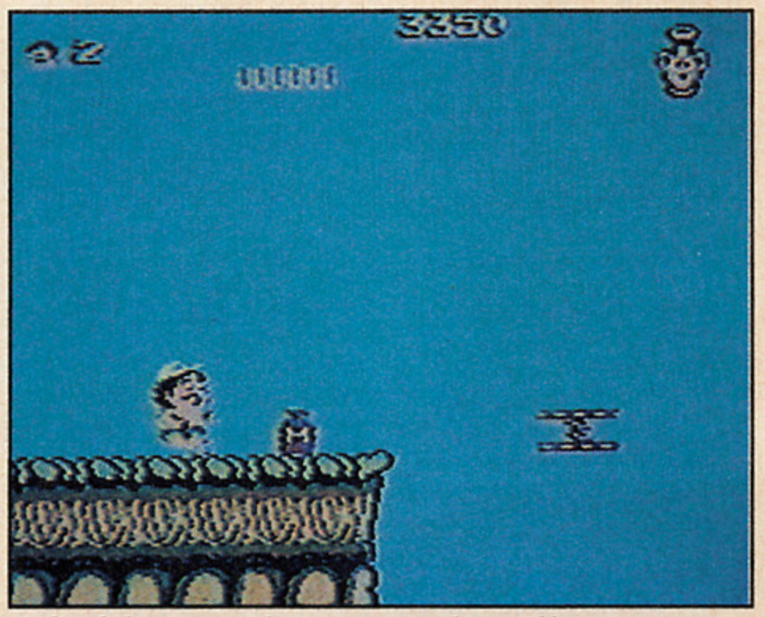
To maintain his energy, Master Higgins can pick up vitamin-packed bananas, pineapples, and other fruits found on the island. And, although he is unarmed when he arrives, he can find weapons and other valuable supplies hidden within eggs.

With the items he finds, Master Higgins can throw either stone axes or fireballs; travel more quickly via skateboard; pick flowers to double the energy of fruit; become invulnerable under the guidance of a honey girl; or drink milk, which (in addition to building strong bones and teeth) will refill all of his energy points. But there's also some hidden eggplant — his least favorite vegetable — which will sap his energy.

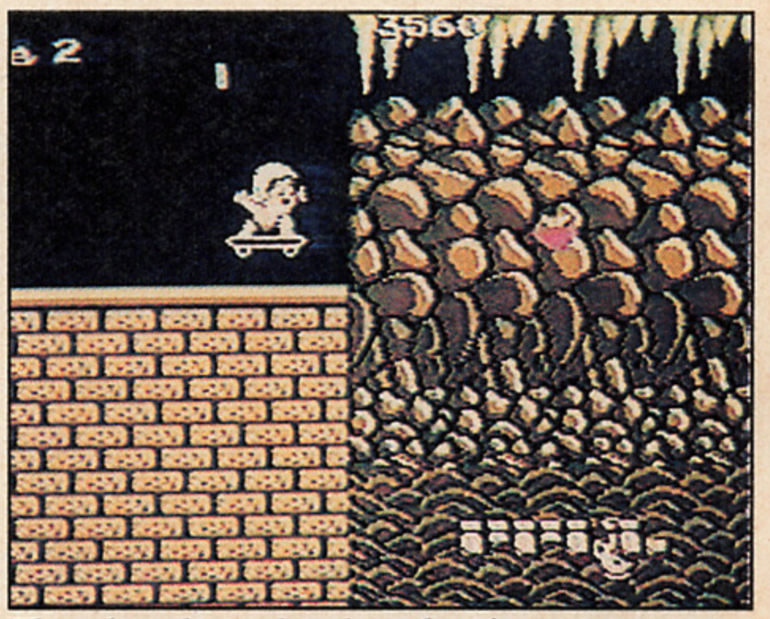
Adventure Island is obviously designed for the younger set, with a refreshing lack of realistic violence. As with all adventure games, there's a certain satisfaction in uncovering hidden items, even if they're as improbable as eggs with skateboards inside.

Novice Nintendo players should have little trouble defeating the assorted monsters in the game and will appreciate the easy "continue" option (find a hidden egg with a bee in it during the first level). Achieving the right timing, however, can be *very* difficult. There are jumps that you'll swear are impossible to make, even after dozens of attempts. But those with perseverance will have fun on their trip to *Adventure Island*.

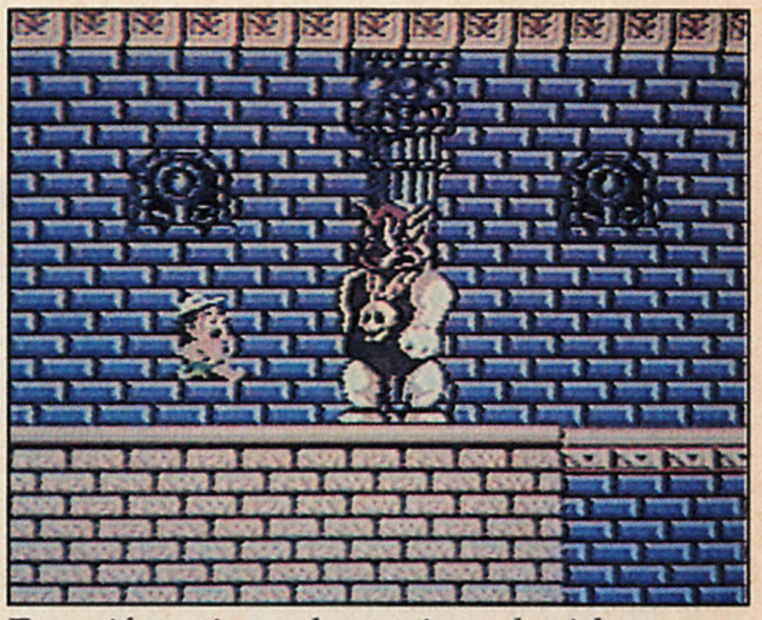
GP



A hidden egg here reveals milk to restore your energy, but it won't help you make the jump to the springboard.



The skateboard is handy if you're covering a lot of flat ground. However, don't use it to jump over chasms, or when you don't know what lies ahead.



Even if you're only equipped with a stone axe, you should be able to defeat each of the bosses. Aim for the head — it will turn red with a direct hit.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

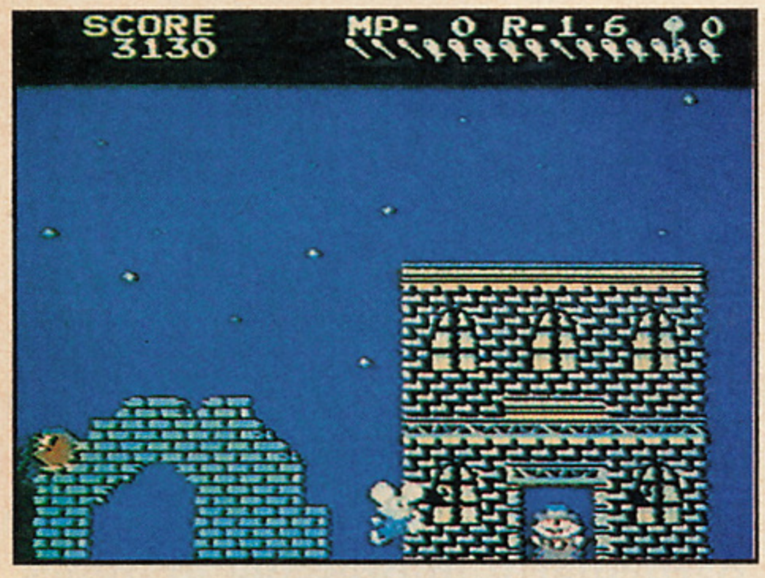
MAPPYLAND

Brian Carroll

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Taxan USA, 161 Nortech Parkway, San Jose, CA 95134.

Mappyland is the story of two mice in love who are being pursued by a gang of killer kittens. Although this plot sounds like fare you might find on late-night TV, it's actually the basis for an endearing new game for the Nintendo system.

This charming amusement features Mappy the mouse using his time off from the police force to collect cheese and Christmas trees for his fiancee, Mapico. To succeed, our comic hero must outrun and outsmart a gang of frisky felines sent to get him. The game has four stories with eight scenarios each, including Western Town,



You'll need to get the cross inside the church so you can scare away the Count and escape Ghost Town.

Ghost Town, Jungle World, and Seventh Avenue.

Sometimes it's necessary to explore sublevels to locate an important item, such as the cross hidden inside the church in Ghost Town. The cross must be found before the vampire lets you continue to the next scenario. Entry into these areas is gained through doorways, holes, or by leaping at a certain moment. For example, the third time you pass through Tropical World, jump onto the trampoline below the doorway to the first hut. You'll discover a secret room.

In each area, you get one type of weapon. You can use pulleys, cannons, and bowling balls to mow down all pursuers in your path and clear an escape route. You can also acquire diversionary weapons that, when left on the ground, buy time while you try to get through a trouble spot. The finicky felines will abandon their pursuit of you to fetch fish, and to dance around toys and coins.

For many game players, *Mappyland*'s most appealing attributes may be its upbeat tone and innocuous content. (There is no xenophobic mass extermination using high-powered instruments of destruction.) *Mappyland* should please parents and game players of all ages with its playful action sequences, bright graphics, and likeable characters.

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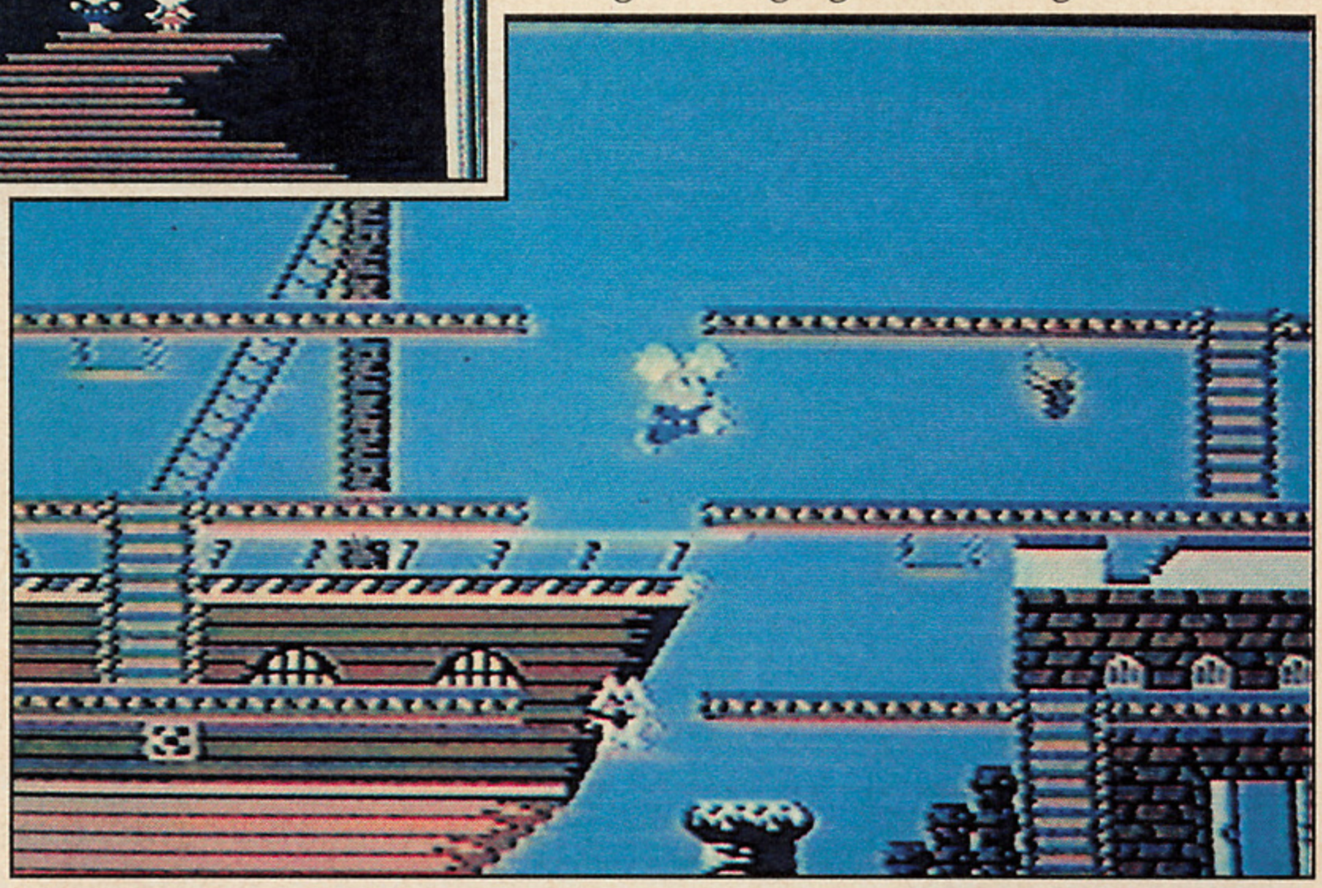
Grab all the cheese and make to Mapico in time to receive a handsome bonus. It will take a clean run to get all of the cheddar before time runs out.



The horizontal bars can be used in Pirates World to swat away the pesky house pets. Run under them and press the A button to begin swinging and kicking.

NINTENDO REVIEWS

THUNDER-CADE

Leslie Mizell

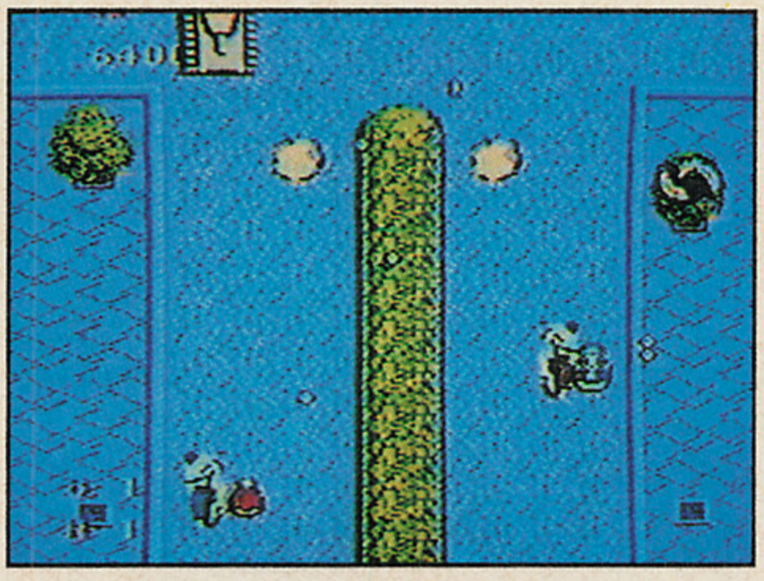
Version reviewed: Nintendo. American Sammy, 20,000 Mariner Avenue, Suite 350, Torrance, CA 90503.

The Atomic Age Terrorist Organization of Miracali (AATOM) has constructed a nuclear power plant and is threatening the world with atomic war. You alone can stop their fiendish plan.

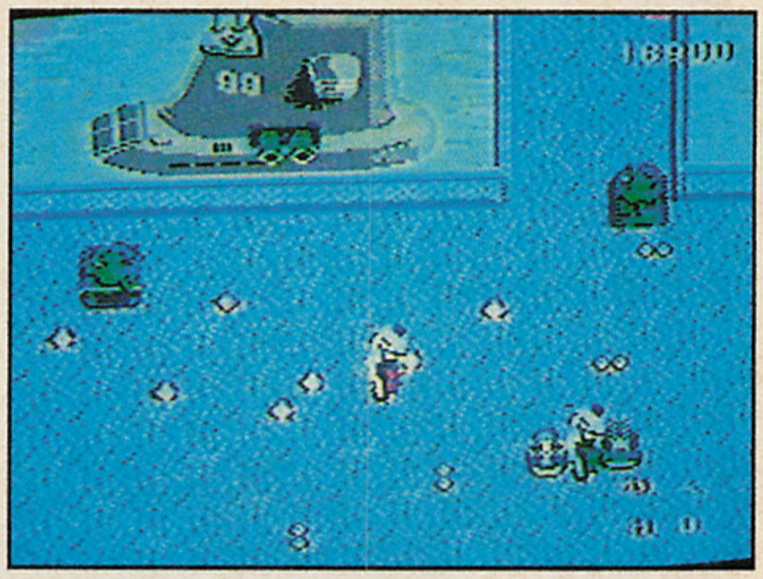
While *Thundercade*'s plot may not be stunningly original — dozens of games share its hero-saves-the-world-singlehandedly story line — the game itself is no pale imitation.

Operation Thundercade is an idea hatched by the world powers to stop AATOM. As the driver of a combat motorcycle, you must infiltrate enemy territory and destroy all of AATOM's strategic targets, including the nuclear power plant.

There are four zones to traverse: a city, a base, woodlands, and a fortress. Dangers include soldiers, mines, tanks, helicopters, and snipers. But your motorcycle is equipped with a machine gun, and there are sidecars scattered around that will increase your firepower. Some sidecars are out in the open, while others are hidden in buildings, trees, bushes, and other places.

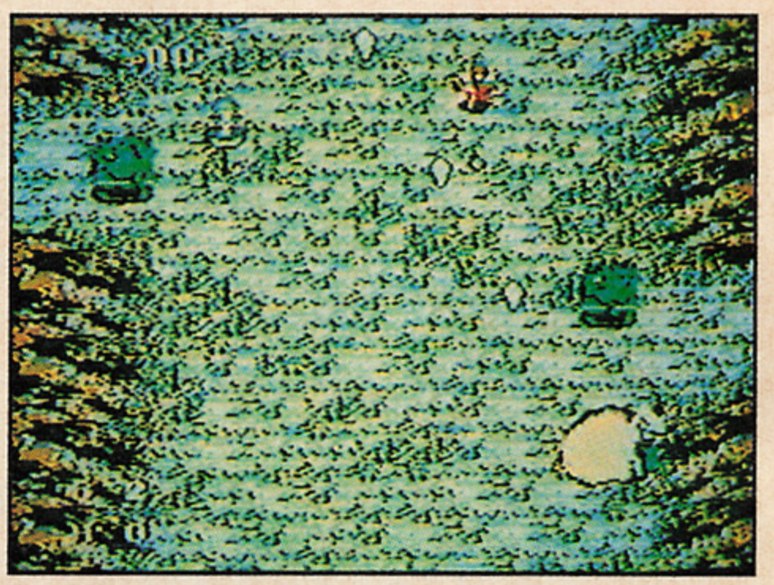


Thundercade is a great two-player game. You'll double your firepower, and you'll never have to worry about accidentally shooting your partner.



The submarine is the first of the strategic targets to destroy. Use three bombs to destroy it quickly.

The sidecars also make it possible to fire in more than one direction at the same time. Some add stronger weaponry for straight-ahead firing, but others let you shoot to the right or left, depending on which side of your motorcycle you pick them up. It's possible to have three different sidecars shooting in three different directions.



Sidecars not only add to your firepower, but can also add lives. A direct hit will usually destroy a sidecar, but not you or your motorcycle.

Every time you pick up a sidecar, it replaces any other sidecar you already have on that side. You need to know the differences between the sidecars so you won't, for example, pick up a chain gun and lose a powerful vulcan cannon.

There is also some limited air support available to help you accomplish your mission. At your call, planes will drop bombs to destroy the enemy.

Thundercade does not have particularly impressive graphics, but it makes up for this in game play. *Thundercade* is also a great two-player game, something inexplicably rare in Nintendo games. With twice the firepower at hand, two players stand a much better chance of winning the game than a solo gamer.

GP

NINTENDO REVIEWS

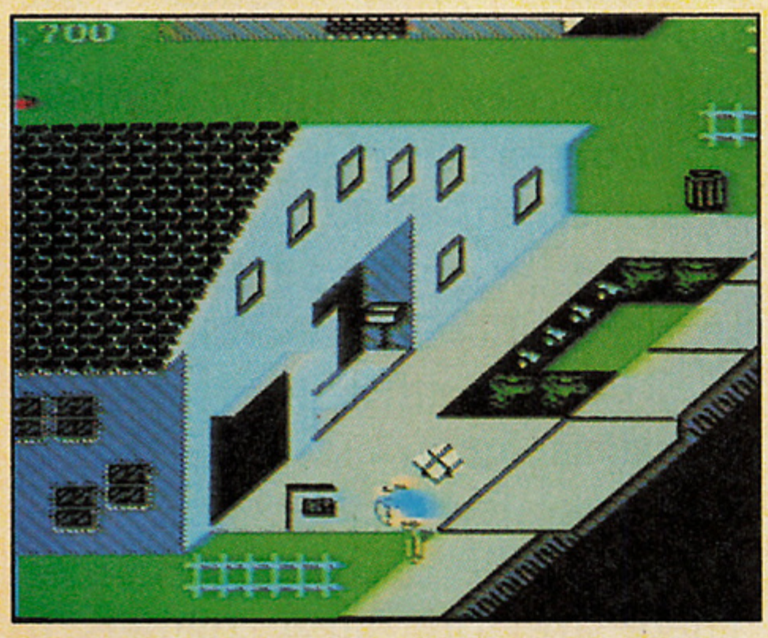
PAPERBOY

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Mindscape, 3444 Dundee Road, Northbrook, IL 60062. Also available for IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles; Commodore 64; Amiga; Apple II; Apple IIGS; and Atari ST.

When it first appeared in the arcades, *Paperboy* attracted a lot of attention by virtue of its subject matter. No star fighters, ninjas, or Rambo clones, just a zany takeoff of a common adolescent experience — the paper route, with all of its trials and tribulations.

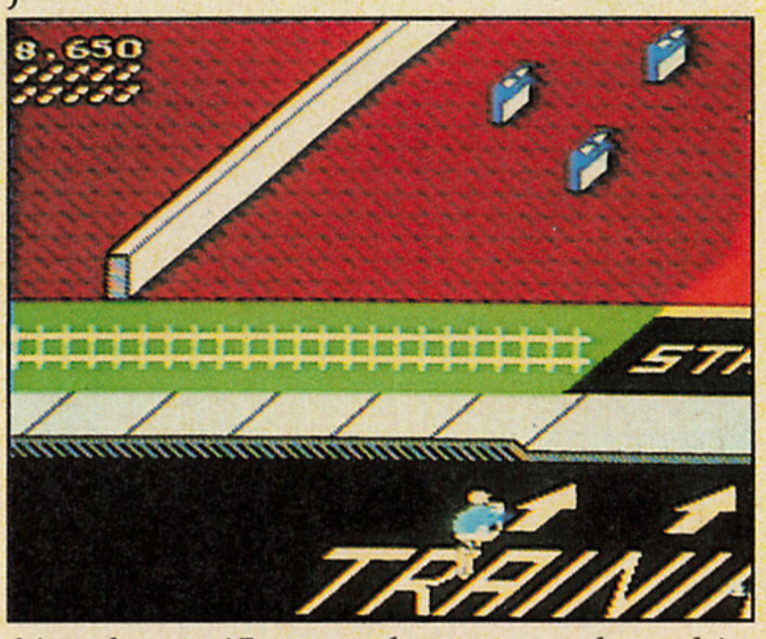
Those tribulations are intact in the home videogame version: yapping dogs, skateboarders, cement lawn frogs, open manholes, break-dancers, wandering



You start the game with only ten papers and must pick up extra bundles as you go along.

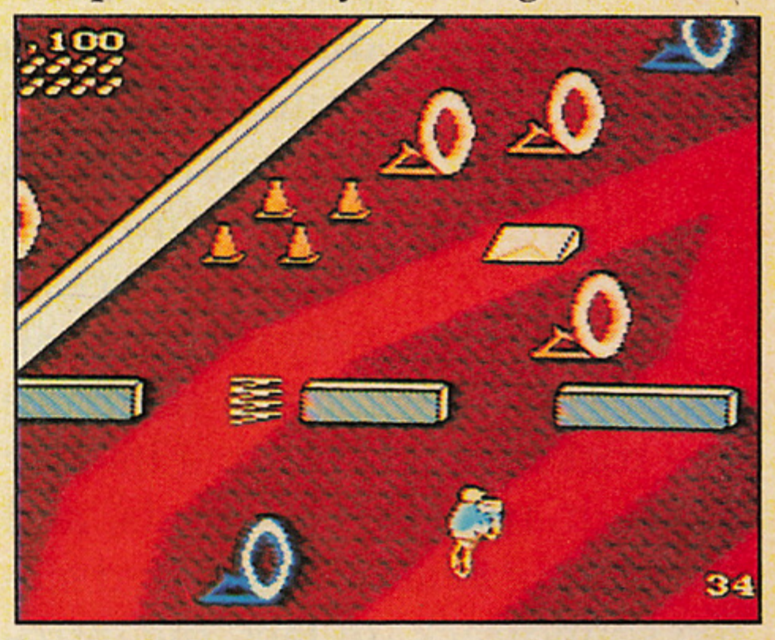
toddlers, and angry homeowners. Moreover, this is a newspaper that is run like Chicago in the '30's. You not only have to make sure all the subscribers get their copies, you're also encouraged to break the windows of all non-subscribers on the block.

You start off with ten papers. To complete your route, you must pick up extra bundles along the way, and some of those bundles were dropped in tricky places. You get bonus points for scoring a bulls-eye on the delivery boxes attached to subscribers' houses. Between blocks, you can sharpen your bike-riding and paper-tossing skills on a training course. At the end of the day, your supervisor reviews your performance and decides whether you still have a job.



You have 45 seconds to complete this training course. Beat the clock to win a useful bonus.

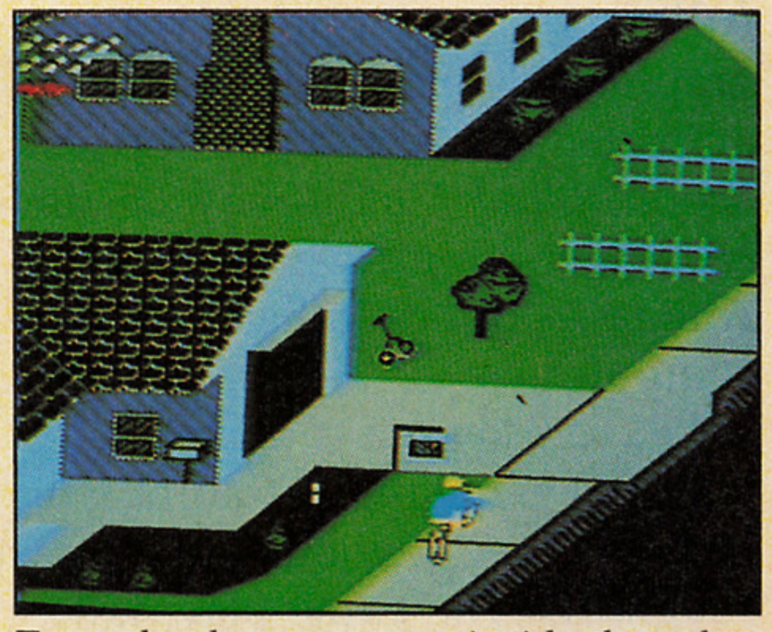
The only thing that suffers in the Nintendo version is the graphics, which have been noticeably simplified. They're still *good*, mind



Hit round targets on the training course for 200 points; hit square ones for 100 points.

you, but some of the clever details that graced the arcade version are considerably pared down. The game itself remains good-humored and entertaining, but also rather limited and repetitious. If you enjoyed the arcade version enough to want your own copy of *Paperboy*, you'll probably be pleased with this remake. If you tired of the arcade version after you'd played it a few times, you won't find anything here to change your opinion.

GP



Try to land your papers inside the subscribers' boxes — it's worth 750 points each time you succeed.

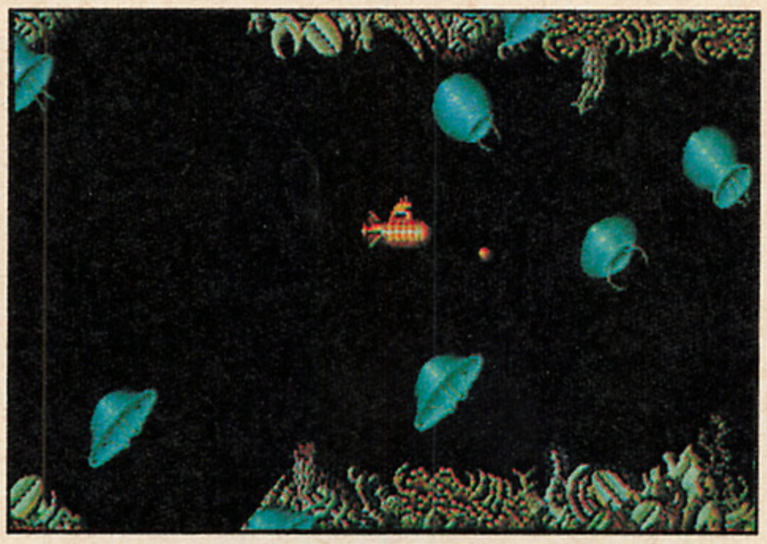
REVIEWS

BLOOD MONEY

Sheldon Leemon

Version reviewed: Amiga. Planned for IBM PCs and compatibles, the Commodore 64, and Atari ST. Psygnosis, P.O. Box 483, Addison, IL 60101.

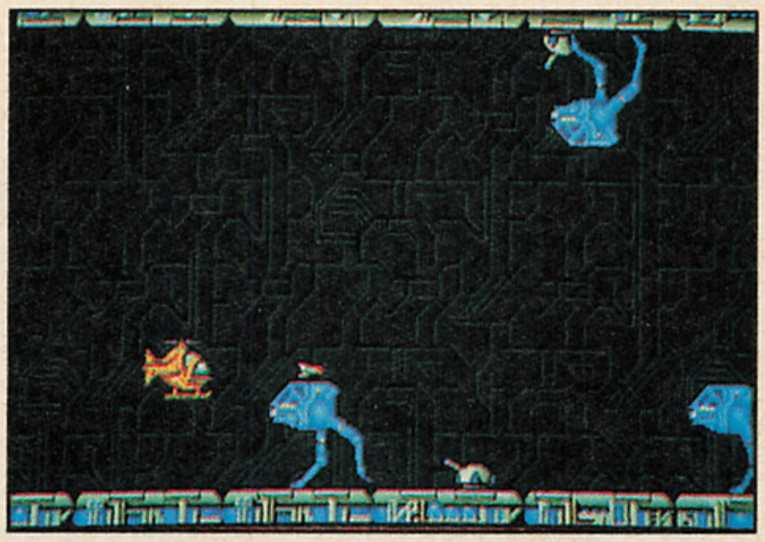
If nothing else, *Blood Money* raises the art of program introductions to a brand-new level. The game begins with ominous digitized voices, a very realistic animated sequence of a rocket ship threading its way through a field of asteroids, and the blaring beat of a digitized stereo soundtrack. In fact, the introduction is so elaborate that it takes up the first disk of the two-disk set.



Still photos hardly do justice to *Blood Money*. The realistic animation of these jellyfish must be seen to be believed.

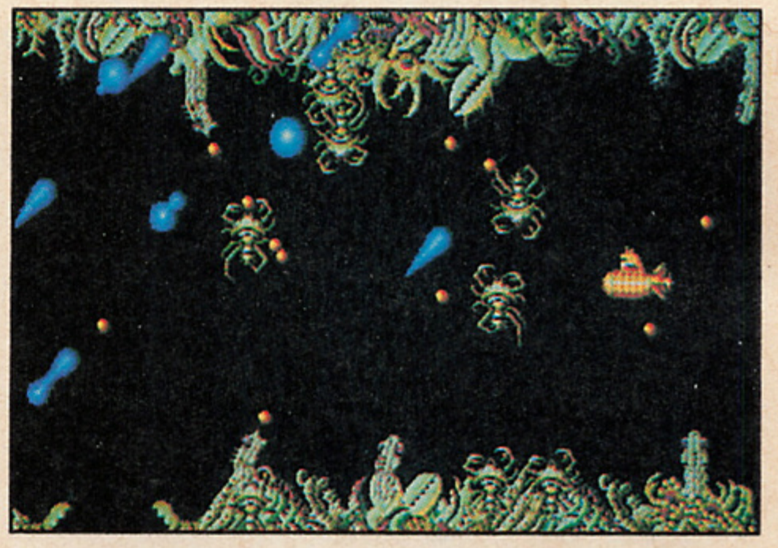
Fortunately, the game lives up to its theatrical introduction. With full-screen, smooth-scrolling graphics, whole tribes of artfully animated aliens, and nonstop fast action, *Blood Money* may be the best shoot-em-up ever seen on the Amiga — or any other personal computer.

Blood Money is a horizontally scrolling game in the tradition of *Menace*, the previous hit from Psygnosis. The game play, however, has been greatly enhanced. Not only must you shoot aliens and duck batteries of ray guns, but you must also collect money. The money appears in the form of coins when you destroy certain bad guys. You can spend the cash at stores to buy additional weapons, more rocket thrust, or even extra lives.



Resembling the Imperial Walkers from *Star Wars*, these robots are relatively easy to kill and are worth $25 apiece.

There are also a number of little tricks to learn, like avoiding monsters that steal your money, shooting doors open, and destroying a radio tower that "jams" your joystick controls, reversing all of the movements. Unlike *Menace*, *Blood Money* also allows two people to play simultaneously. By working together, it's possible for two players to get much further than either player would on his own. (Assigning one player to fight the aliens and gun emplacements at the top of the screen, while the other does battle at the bottom of the screen, works particularly well.)



The crab-like creatures in this undersea cavern are dangerous enough, but the walls fairly bristle with other gruesome hazards.

The difficulty level of *Blood Money* is much closer to that of coin-operated arcade games than to the majority of computer games. There are four large planets to explore, and each one takes a long time to finish. In fact, I've never seen anybody get to the end of any of the planets. But like the best arcade games, *Blood Money* will keep you coming back for more.

GP

REVIEWS

BATMAN, THE CAPED CRUSADER

Neil Randall

Version reviewed: Commodore 64. Also available for the Amiga, Atari ST, and Apple II. Data East, 470 Needles Drive, San Jose, CA 95112.

With a big-budget Batman movie in release this summer, it was inevitable that someone would release a Batman computer game. The problem, surely, was how to do it: Should it be an arcade-action game, a graphics adventure, an interactive comic book, or a strategy game? Data East chose the arcade-action approach.

Batman, The Caped Crusader includes two adventures. The first pits Batman against the Penguin, who is plotting to conquer the world with his entourage of thugs and robot penguins. In the second, Robin, the Boy Wonder, has been kidnapped by the Dynamic Duo's other nemesis, the Joker. Both adventures use comic-book graphics in a fast-paced game of climbing, fighting, and finding objects.

You begin each adventure guiding Batman through the Batcave, picking up objects that you'll need later. You can call up a status screen at any time to drop or use the objects you've found. This screen also lets you check Batman's remaining energy and your overall score.

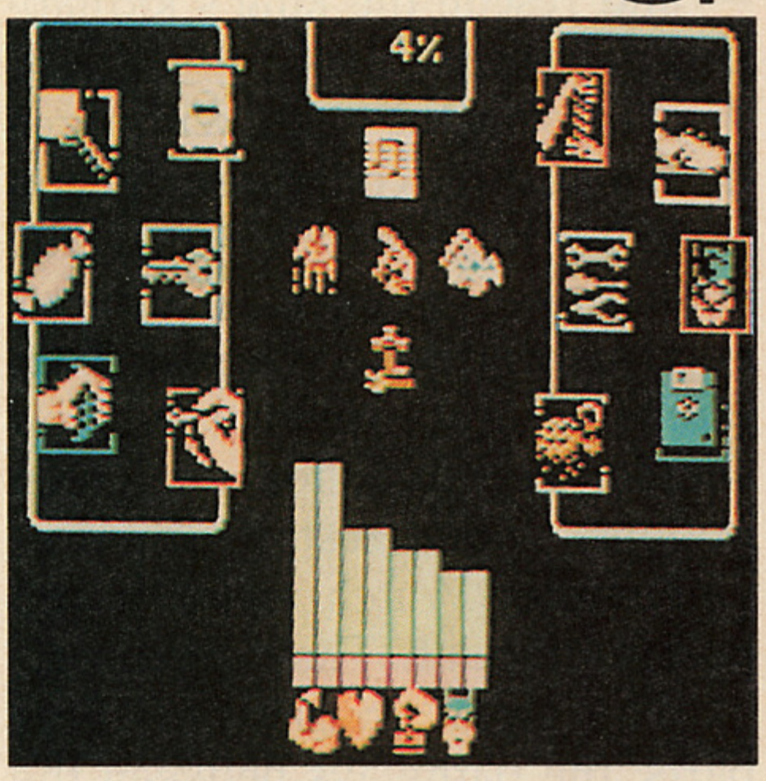
The Penguin and Joker aren't your only enemies. Gotham City is crawling with thugs. You can use the batarang to stun them, then either run past or fight them. After enough punches and kicks, the thugs leave. But most have guns, and hits can sap your strength.

As you move around, clues appear at the top of the screen. For instance, "Take your pick" means you should use the lock-pick you found earlier. Watch these clues carefully, because you won't get far without them.

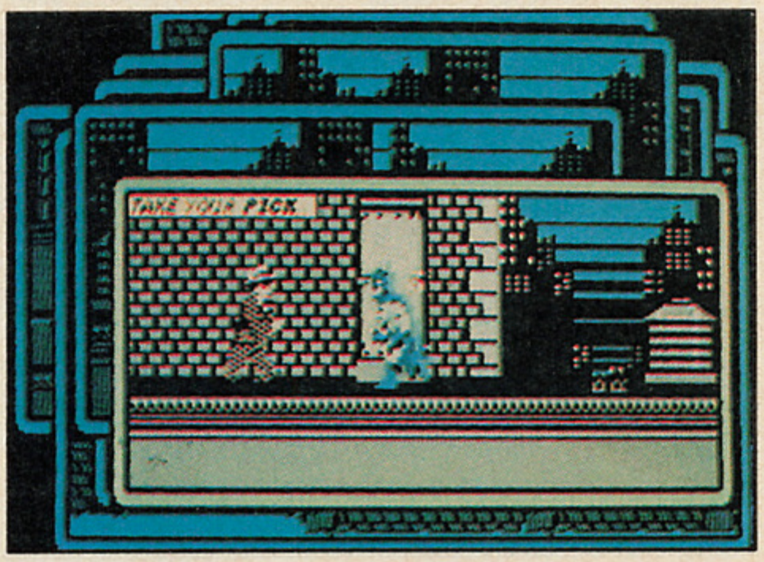
Batman, the Caped Crusader is a cross between a martial-arts arcade game and a computer puzzle, and it demands split-second decisions. Getting to the halfway point is a real challenge, and going further takes a great deal of practice.

Ultimately, though, this game tends to wear thin. Due largely to the sheer number of enemies you must defeat, and the somewhat uninspired game situation, your motivation to finish the game may well diminish over time. The graphics are good, and the player interface is well designed, but *Batman* needs more to be considered top-notch.

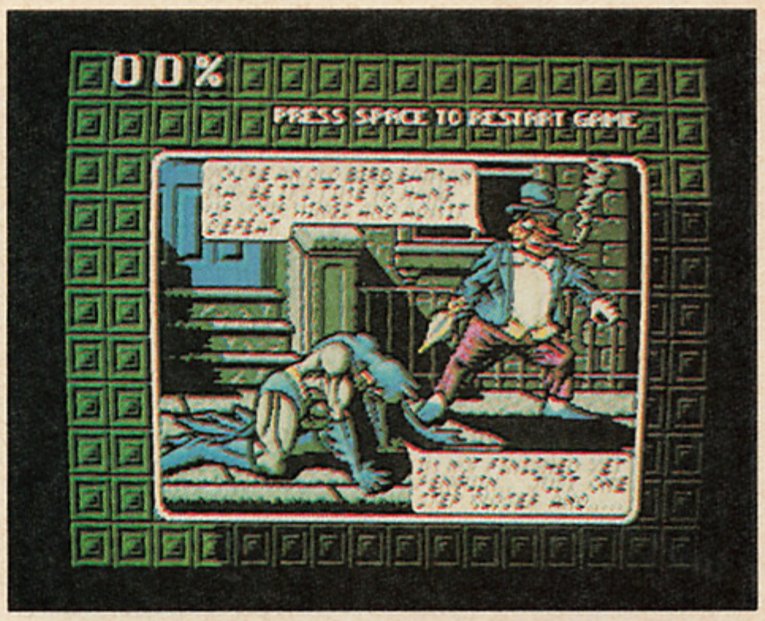
GP



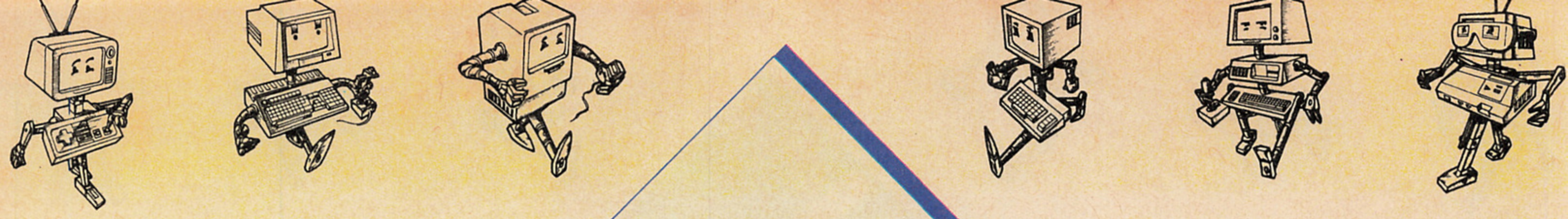
A status screen lets you review your strength, your score, and the objects you've collected.



Pay attention to the helpful clues that appear at the upper-left corner of the screen.



The Atari ST version's improved graphics contribute to the comic-book "feel" of *Batman*.



SEGA REVIEWS

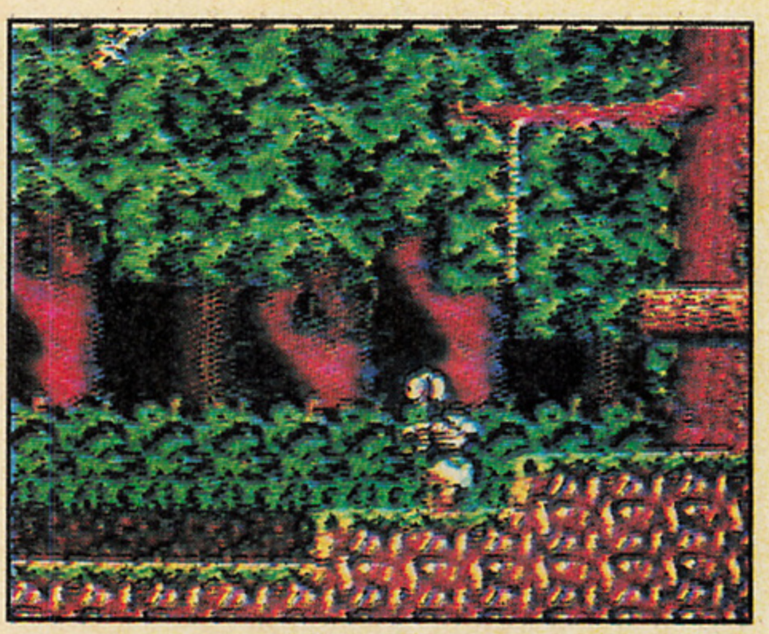
RASTAN

Version reviewed: Sega. Sega, 6000 Clearwater Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55343. Also available for Commodore 64/128; IBM PC, Tandy, and compatibles; Apple IIGS; Amiga; and Atari ST, from Taito Software, 267 West Esplanade, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V7M 1A5.

In *Rastan*, adapted from the arcade game, you are a successful soldier of fortune who will carry out any mission for the right amount of gold. This time, you're working for the king of Semia. His need is urgent, and his pay is worth your attention. The mission seems impossible, though. You must travel to the darkest regions of Semia — nameless places from which no one ever comes back alive — and rescue the king's kidnapped daughter.

You start the game with three lives and three continues. As you progress further into Semia, the enemies get stronger. To survive, you must find better weapons, both offensive and defensive. You should also look for the green potions, which restore some of your energy. Watch out for the red potions, though. They're poison.

The game consists of three parts: the pathways between the cities, the interiors of the castle, and the enemy boss's chambers.



On your way to the castle to rescue the king's daughter, you'll find a more powerful sword hidden up in the trees. Get it!

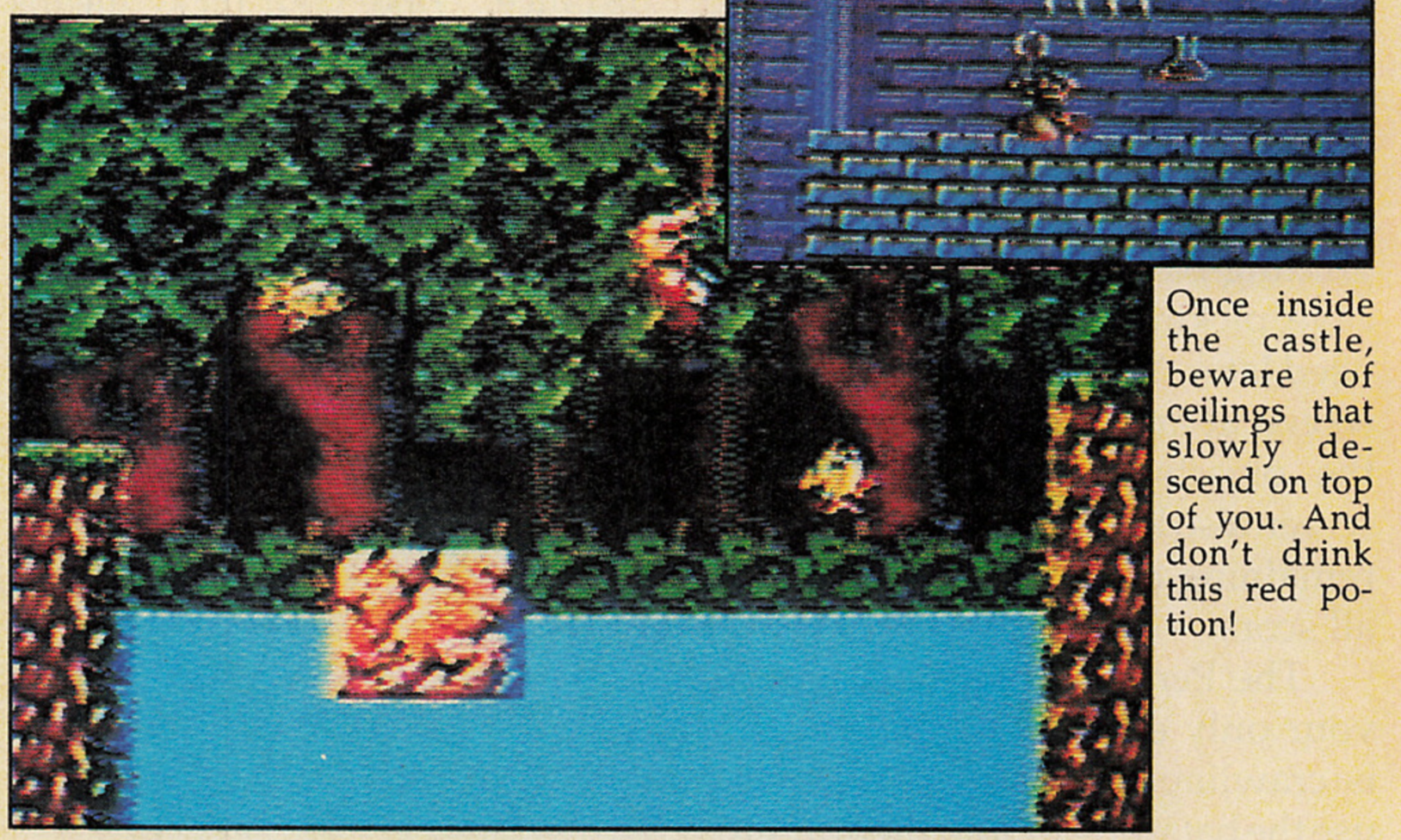
On the pathways, you must run, jump, climb, search for important weapons, and destroy anything that moves. In the castle, you must work through the gauntlet of defensive devices. Spears leap out from the floors or walls; spiked plates fall from the ceiling; sharp icicles drop without warning.

And this is the easy part. When you get to the boss's chamber, prepare for the battle of your life. Nobody said it was going to be easy, and it isn't!

The graphics get better as you advance. The sound effects are good, and the slow transitions from day to night are a nice touch (and an incentive not to take too long finishing a level).

Overall, *Rastan* is worth the price of admission. It's a difficult game, and often you'll wish for more than just three continues. And if you figure out how to beat the second dragon, let me know!

GP



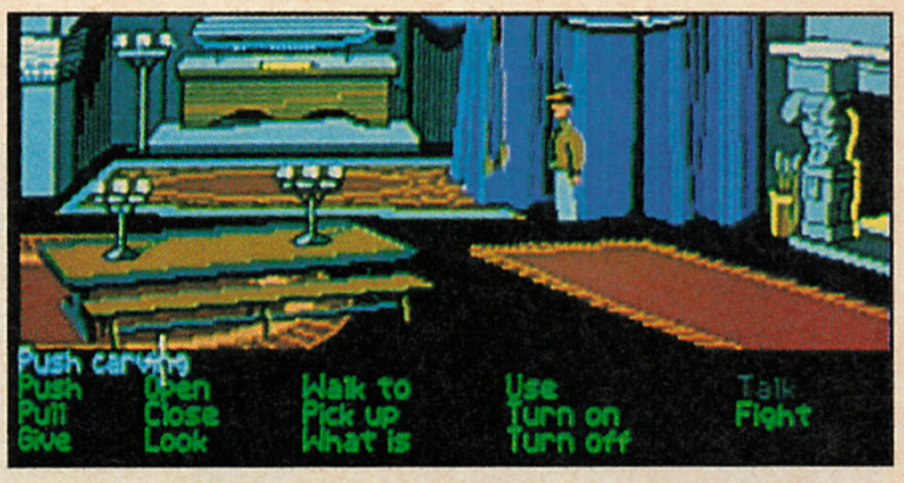
Use the vines to swing across rivers whenever possible. But watch out for the flying piranhas.

Once inside the castle, beware of ceilings that slowly descend on top of you. And don't drink this red potion!

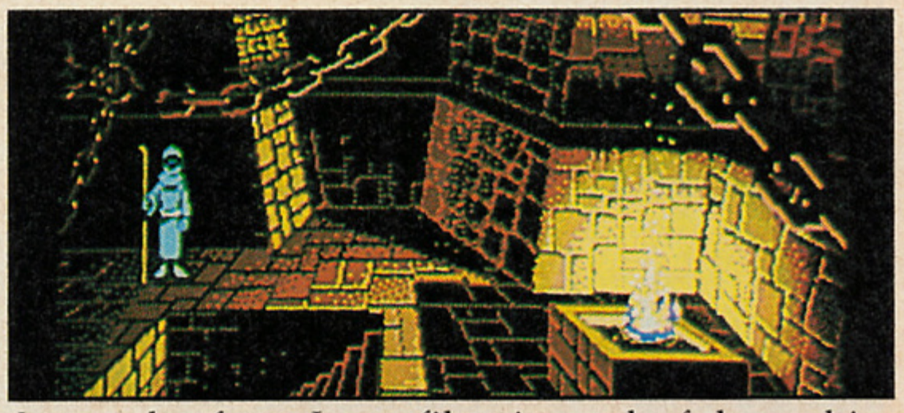
Lucasfilm Debuts *Indiana Jones* And *Loom*

Lucasfilm Games is releasing not one, but two computer games based on the popular George Lucas motion picture, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. One version is an action game for the Commodore 64, Amiga, Atari ST, and IBM-compatible computers, and recreates many of the film's fast-action sequences. The other game, a graphics adventure for IBM-compatible, Amiga, and Atari ST computers, is a colorful quest in which you help Indy search for the Holy Grail. Both games are faithful to the plot and tone of the movie.

Lucasfilm has also announced the fall release of a new magic and mystery game called *Loom*, created by noted game designer Brian Moriarity. With remarkable color graphics and a superb musical score, *Loom* is being touted as a breakthrough game in the graphics adventure field. Versions will be available for IBM-compatible, Amiga, and Atari ST computers.

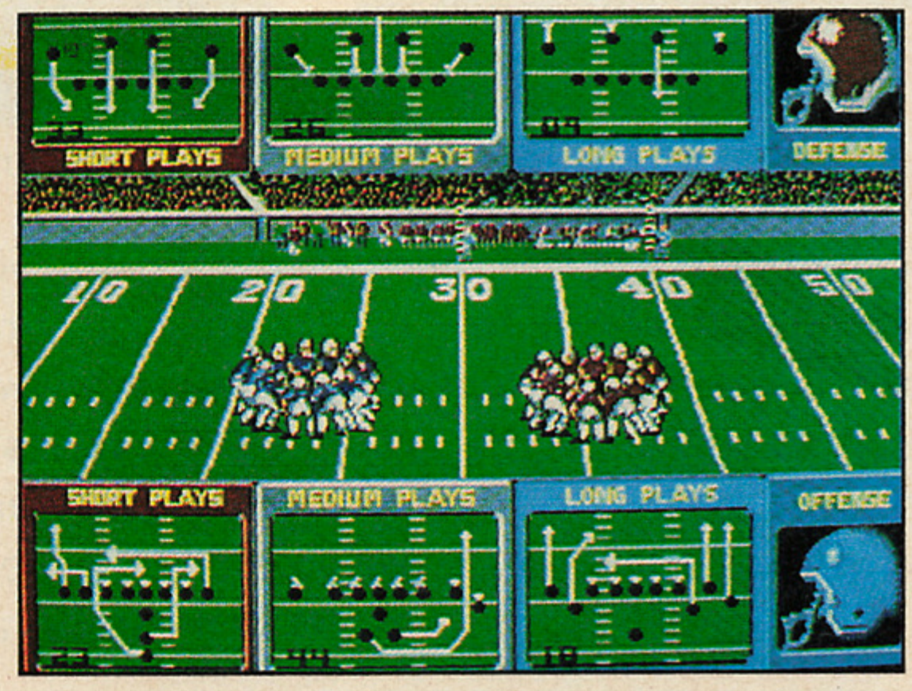


Lucasfilm's *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* is being released as two different computer games.



Loom, also from Lucasfilm, is a colorful graphics adventure.

Data East Kicks Off MVP Sports



Data East's MVP Sports line begins with *ABC Monday Night Football*.

ABC Monday Night Football is the first entry in Data East's new series of MVP Sports simulations for PC compatibles. The football simulation will be released in October to coincide with the fall season of *ABC Monday Night Football* telecasts. The agreement with ABC Sports also provides for the development of an *ABC Monday Night Football* pinball machine, scheduled for release this fall.

The Data East MVP Sports lineup will soon include titles for basketball, baseball, and auto racing. Indianapolis 500 racer Al Unser Jr. has agreed to aid in the development of the racing game.

Gamers Await *Double Dragon* Sequel

The eagerly awaited sequel to *Double Dragon* — *Double Dragon II: The Revenge* — is reported by Virgin Mastertronic to be in the advanced stages of development for the Amiga, with Atari ST, PC-compatible, Commodore 64, and Apple IIGS versions not far behind. Martial-arts fans can plan on getting the *Double Dragon* sequel by Christmas. The Nintendo version will be available from Acclaim Entertainment this fall.

The longtime favorite board game *Monopoly* has been released as part of Virgin Mastertronic's Leisure Genius line of classic games. By the end of August, *Monopoly* should be available for the Atari ST and Amiga computers, as well as PC compatibles.

In response to demand, Virgin Mastertronic has also modified its existing versions of *Scrabble* and *Risk* so they can be installed on hard disks.

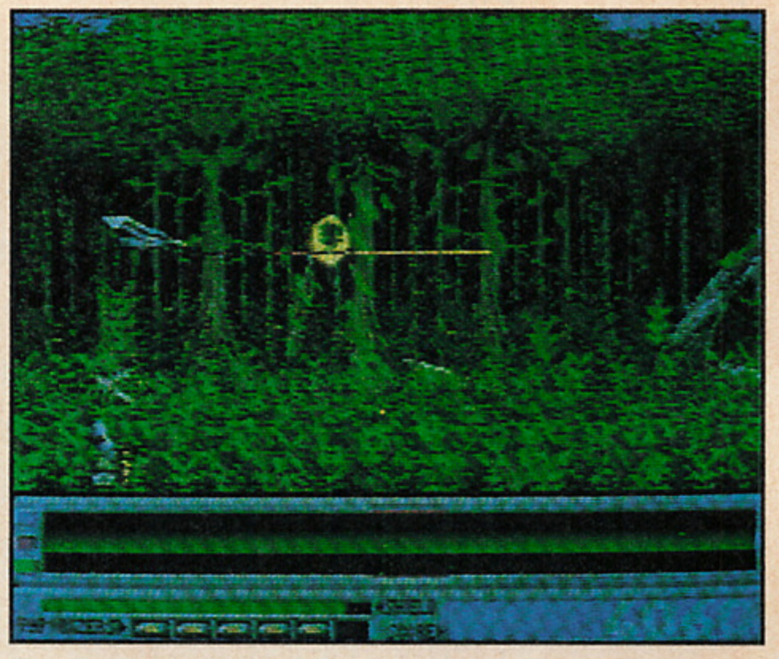
In addition, Virgin has a multi-format version of *Clue* (retitled *Clue Master Detective*) in the works, due to ship in August.

Epyx Hangs Ten Again!

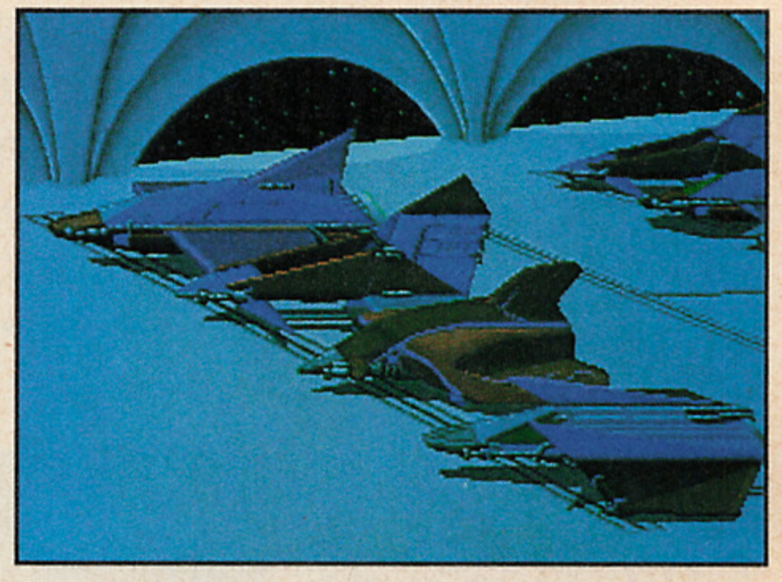
California Games II promises more gnarly action from Epyx.

Epyx has announced *California Games II*, an action game featuring four events: bodyboarding, jet skiing, skateboarding, and snowboarding. This followup to the hit title *California Games* (which sold more than 250,000 copies) will be available in time for the Christmas season.

Epyx is also bringing out a followup to the classic space game *Defender*, called *Revenge of Defender*. It will be available by this fall for PC compatibles and will feature seven missions spanning the galaxy. Players will confront everything from blood-sucking plants to silicon worms.



Revenge of Defender is an updated version of *Defender* for personal computers.



Flyton 500 is a racing game based in outer space.

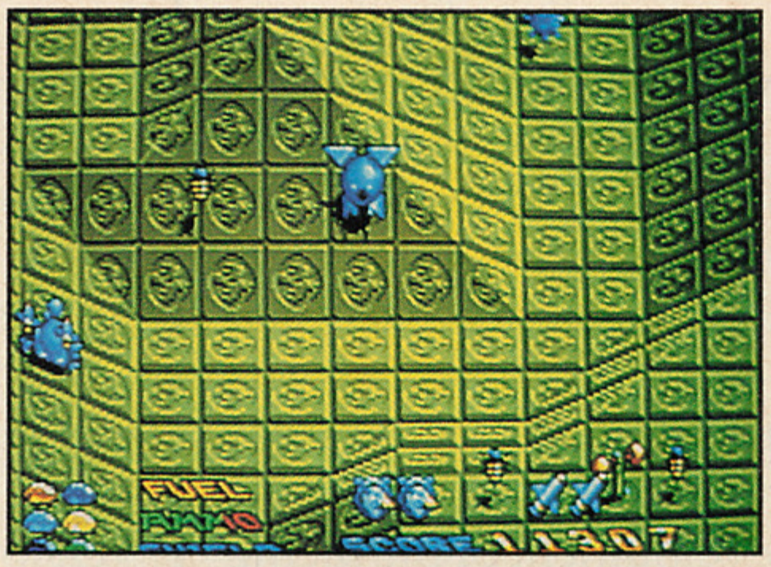
Flyton 500, which Epyx calls "the fastest race game in computer software," will be available for PC compatibles late this year. The futuristic race is staged in space using superconductor-powered vehicles on a tunnel-like track.

StarGoose Flies Into Stores

The planet Nom is the setting for Spinnaker's new adventure, *StarGoose*. The player assumes the role of a secret fighter who must steal six crystals from eight different Nom cities. Combat action, simulated 3-D scenery, and a maze-like landscape are features of *StarGoose*.

Spinnaker has also introduced *Sargon 4*, the latest version of its popular chess program. Special *Sargon* features include two- and three-dimensional graphics, digitized VGA screens, a wide selection of sets and boards, and a piece-sculptor option.

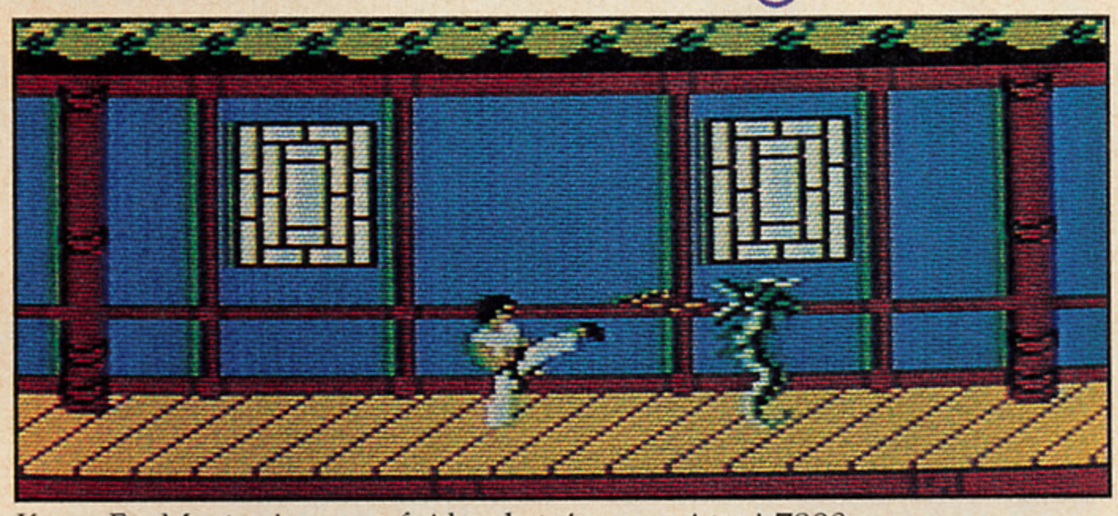
StarGoose is available for PC compatibles, the Amiga, and Atari ST. *Sargon 4* is available for the Macintosh, and PC compatibles.



StarGoose is a fast-paced combat game from Spinnaker.

GAME NEWS AND PREVIEWS

Absolute Adds Videogame Titles



Kung Fu Master is one of Absolute's new Atari 7800 games.

Absolute Entertainment is releasing a variety of games for Nintendo, Sega, and Atari game systems.

Two of the games — the science-fiction adventure *A Boy and His Blob* and the snow-boarding simulation *Shredder* — are Absolute's first Nintendo games.

James Bond 007 will be the first Sega game to feature the suave British secret agent. Absolute will also produce a radio-controlled car simulation, *R.C. Grand Prix*.

New titles for the Atari 7800 include *Tomcat: F-14 Fighter Simulator*, *F-18 Hornet*, and *Kung Fu Master*.

Lo! An AD&D Sequel Appeareth

Strategic Simulations has released *Curse of the Azure Bonds*, a sequel to its highly successful Advanced Dungeons & Dragons adventure, *Hillsfar*.

In this game, the player's party of adventurers awakens in a strange city and finds mysterious azure-blue symbols embedded under the skin of each character's sword-arm. When the symbols glow, the characters must obey any commands they are given. To free themselves from this sorcerous bondage, the party must search the Forgotten Realms for the enemies who are responsible.

There are more than 24 new high-level spells in *Curse of the Azure Bonds*, as well as plenty of dangerous new monsters and interesting new characters (human and otherwise).

It's A Bird, It's A Plane...

Superman, that superhero fighter for truth and justice, stars in Intracorp's new interactive comic book game, *Superman: The Man of Steel*.

Two of Superman's arch enemies, Darkseld and Lex Luthor, have joined together to threaten the safety of the planet. As Superman, you must capture the villains. But wait! Terrorists have kidnapped the governor and Lois Lane. It's a challenge, even for Superman.

And fans of *Miami Vice* won't have to mourn the loss of the TV show when Crockett and Tubbs arrive on their home computer. Follow the undercover cops through eight levels of arcade action in car chases, speedboat rides, dangerous stakeouts, and harrowing fights.

Superman will be available for PC compatibles, the Amiga, and Atari ST. *Miami Vice* will be available for PC compatibles, the Atari ST, Apple IIGS, Commodore 64, and Amiga.

Quests For Day-Trippers

More than eight years of work went into Origin Software's new fantasy role-playing game, *Knights of Legend*. It's designed to appeal especially to players who love role-playing games, but who seldom have enough free time to complete one of the epic 100-hour-plus games on the market.

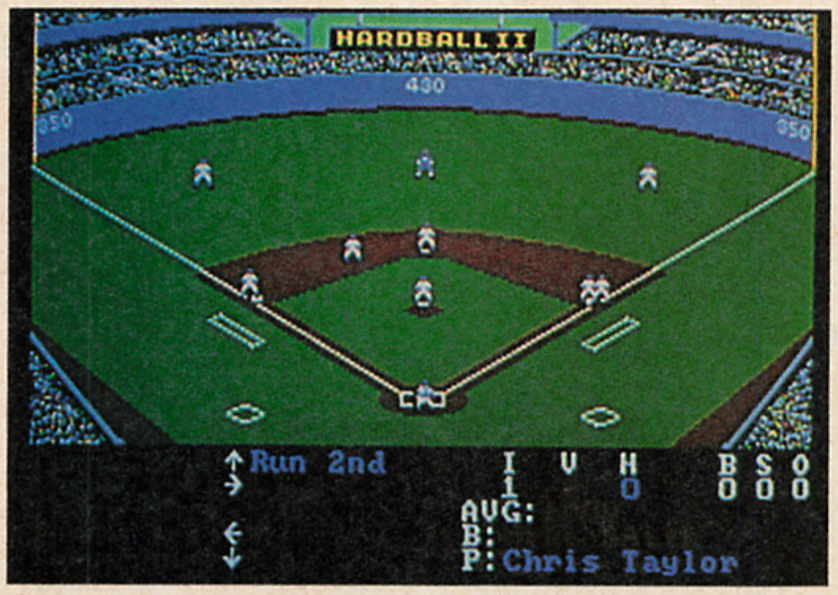
Instead, *Knights of Legend* offers 24 different modestly sized quests — adventures which can be started and completed in a much shorter span of time, without sacraficing the detail or graphics of the larger games.

Knights of Legend is designed to be *modular*: The first package contains the master game and a scenario module entitled "The Realm of Ashtalarea." Four additional scenario modules will be released later, each offering a totally new and different realm for the role-playing characters to explore.

Combat is very elaborate in this game, allowing you to customize the weapons and armor for each of the six main characters, for a total of 729 possible combinations.

Take Me Out To The Ballgame

Accolade's popular baseball simulation *Hardball!* has spawned a successor, *Hardball II*. Available now for PC compatibles, *Hardball II* promises to provide computer baseball fans with even more realistic gameplay, advanced statistical data, and new features.



Accolade's *Hardball II* promises more baseball realism and action.

Accolade says the game provides players a choice of behind-the-batter or behind-the-pitcher viewpoints, instant replays, and the option of building a team from scratch. An Amiga version of *Hardball II* will be available later this year.

Marking Accolade's debut in graphics adventure and role-playing games are three new titles: *Conspiracy: The Deadlock Files*, *The Third Courier*, and *Don't Go Alone*. The PC-compatible versions are available now.

Conspiracy: The Deadlock Files is a new adventure game that uses digitized graphics.

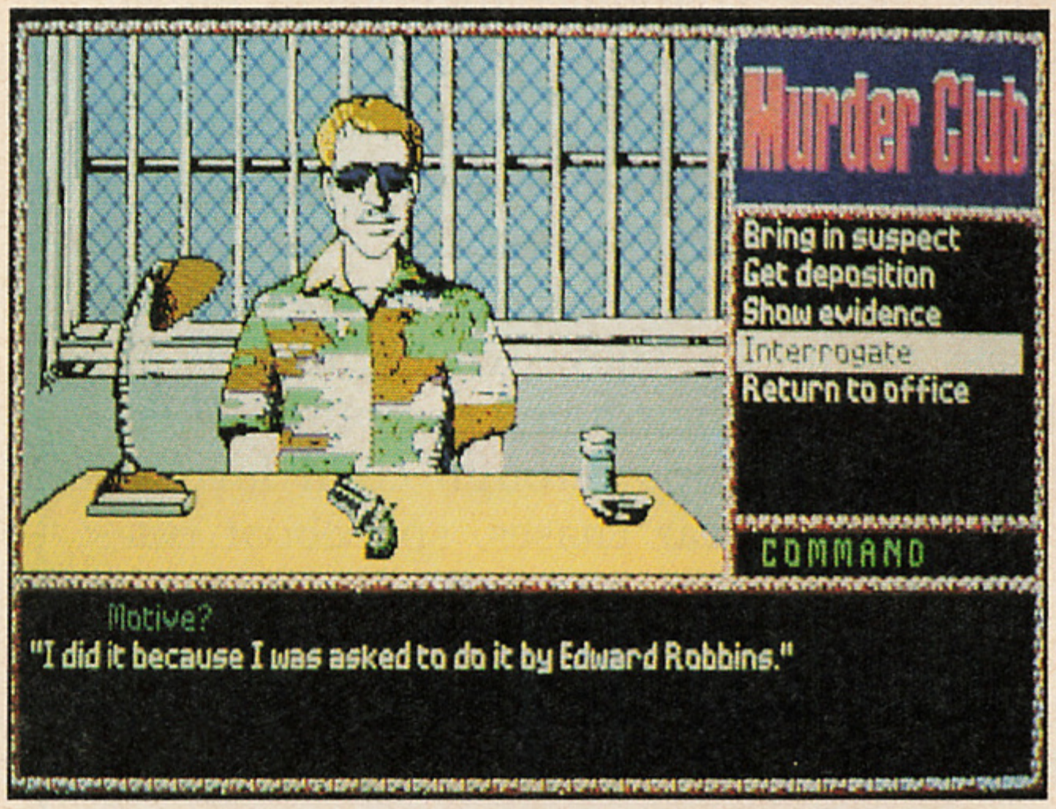
The Deadlock Files is a first-person adventure set in New York City. It includes dozens of highly detailed digitized screens of the Big Apple. As the game starts, you are framed and must prove your innocence. *The Third Courier* is a role-playing espionage game set in both East and West Berlin. *Don't Go Alone* challenges you to combat evil spirits inside a haunted house of horrific proportions.

Guess Whodunnit With Kyodai

Here's a murder mystery in which you can't cheat and read the last page to find out whodunnit. Kyodai Software has released an interactive mystery, *Murder Club*, in which you're assigned to find out who killed Bill Robbins. You'll have to explore the crime scene, interrogate witnesses, analyze evidence, and make the final arrest.

Murder Club is available for PC compatibles, and it supports the Ad Lib music card. Other detective adventures are planned as well.

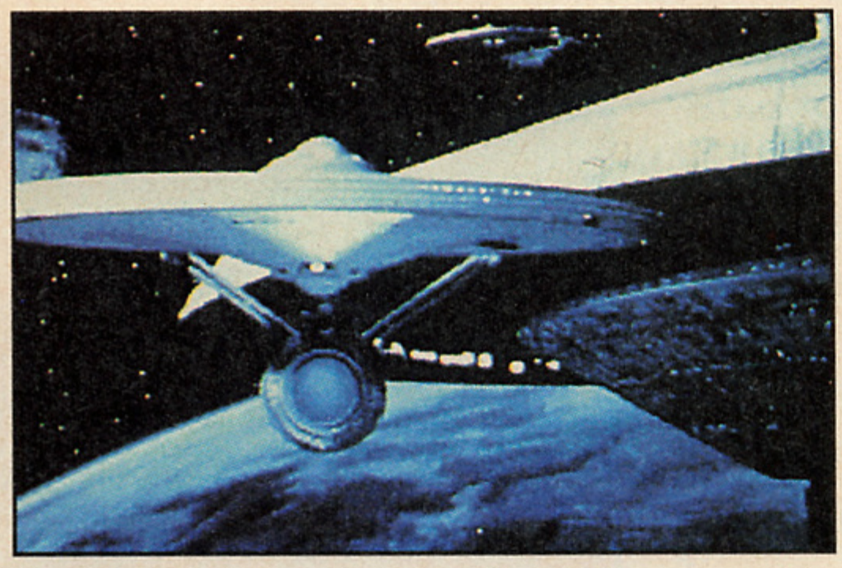
Kyodai has also released a top Japanese hit, *Ancient Land of Ys*. This role-playing game (with arcade action) sets the player on a quest to recover the six stolen books of Ys. Monsters and goddesses are just some of the characters and obstacles you'll face. *Ancient Land of Ys* is available for the Apple IIGS and PC compatibles.



Murder Club, from Kyodai, tests your detective skills.

AND PREVIEWS

Mindscape Offers Variety



Star Trek V: The Final Frontier (PC-compatible version) is warping to a computer near you.

There's something for everyone in the new releases from Mindscape. The new titles include role-playing adventures, circus games, science-fiction action, and a motorcycle simulation.

The fate of the starship USS *Enterprise* rests with you in *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*. Following on the heels of the summer movie, the game features all of the familiar crew members. The PC-compatible version is being released in September, and versions for the Macintosh and Amiga are planned for early 1990.

In *Gauntlet II*, a role-playing adventure, you choose one of several characters to search through dozens of mazes, looking for clues to a vast treasure. It is available for PC compatibles, the Amiga, Atari ST, and Commodore 64.

Fiendish Freddy's Big Top O'Fun is a satiric look at six circus events, from high-wire acts to the human cannonball. It is available for PC compatibles, the Amiga, and Atari ST.

A cross-country trek to a biker rally in Sturgis, South Dakota, is the plot of *Harley-Davidson: The Road to Sturgis*. Cruise along highways and compete in five different bikers' contests to prove you've got what it takes to be a road hog. It's being released in September for PC compatibles, the Amiga, and Atari ST.

"When" In The World Is Carmen?

After making geography fun and educational for millions of adults and kids, the glamorous and elusive Carmen Sandiego is back in a new game that lets her roam freely not just over the world, but also across centuries.

Broderbund Software's *Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?* breaks the pattern of the three earlier *Carmen* games. In the past, charmin' Carmen and her gang of thieves traveled the globe, helping themselves to the world's art treasures and priceless landmarks. In the new game, Carmen gets her elegant hands on a time machine with which she and her cohorts can roam back and forth from A.D. 400 to the 1950s. Now nothing is safe, from any place or year, as Carmen and her gang go after Queen Isabella's jewels or the original copy of the Magna Carta.

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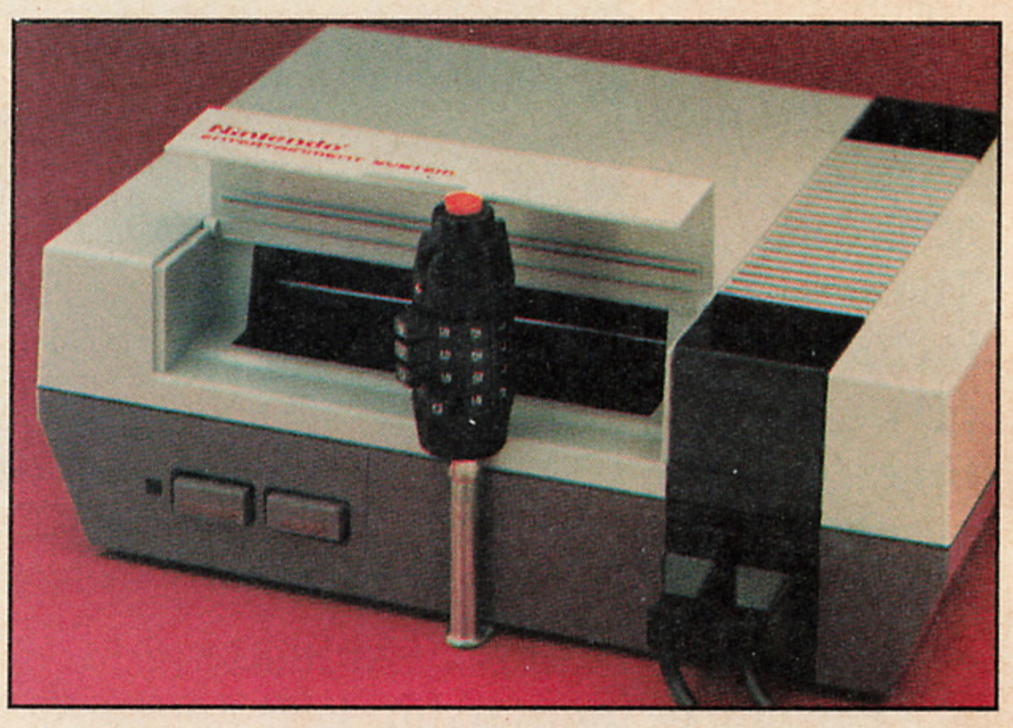
A Cure For Videogame Fever

Perhaps the most unusual Nintendo-related product to hit the market recently is Homework First — a special combination lock that allows parents to regulate use of the family's Nintendo system.

This device fits into a recessed screw socket on the base of the Nintendo machine and prevents a game from being inserted into the cartridge slot. Only someone who knows the combination can remove the lock. It was invented by Safe-Care Products, a company based in Dundee, Illinois.

"Homework First is really a time-management tool," says Tom Lowe, president of Safe-Care. "It gives parents a simple and effective way to manage videogame playing without threats or more severe forms of punishment. And it teaches the child the importance of balance...of setting priorities. When the game lock is in place, they turn their attention to other things — like homework."



Homework First is a locking device for Nintendo videogame machines.

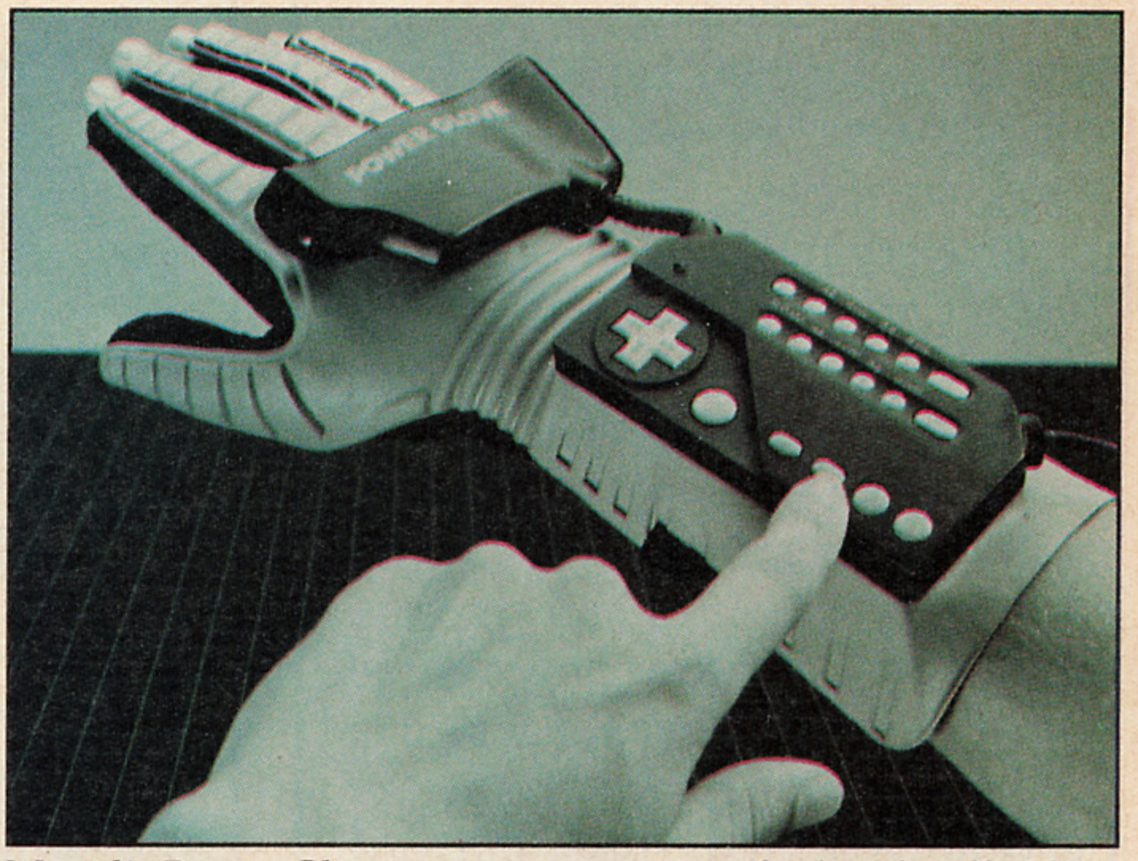
The lock also allows players to prevent saved games from being erased by someone who uses their cartridges without permission.

Hand-To-Screen Combat

Among the growing number of alternatives to the standard Nintendo controller pad is the unusual Power Glove from Mattel Toys. In effect, the glove transforms your entire forearm and hand into a Nintendo controller.

After slipping on the Power Glove and plugging it into the Nintendo machine, you control the action on the screen by moving your hand and fingers. In *Mike Tyson's Punch Out*, for example, you make a fist and throw a punch to make your on-screen character do likewise. In *Rad Racer*, you grasp an imaginary steering wheel in mid-air to guide your car through turns. To hit the brakes, you flatten your hand and push downward.

Other features of the Power Glove include a slow-motion switch, turbo-fire, and the ability to customize hand movements for individual games. Mattel says the Power Glove works with all cartridges currently made for the Nintendo system, and a new line of games — the Glove Gaming Series — will take advantage of the glove's special features.



Mattel's Power Glove comes in two sizes for hands-off videogaming.

THE HOT 100

This list of 100 top video and computer games is updated each issue. The ☆ symbol indicates games added to the list in this issue.

KEY: PC (IBM PC/XT/AT, Tandy, and compatibles); **AT** (IBM AT and compatibles only); **64** (Commodore 64/128); **Amiga** (Commodore Amiga); **Mac** (Apple Macintosh); **Apple II** (Apple II/II+/IIc/IIe); **IIGS** (Apple IIGS); **ST** (Atari ST); **NES** (Nintendo Entertainment System); **Sega** (Sega Master System); **XE** (Atari XE videogame system and 8-bit computers); **2600** (Atari VCS 2600); **7800** (Atari 7800).

☆**The Adventures of Lolo** is a puzzle-solving game that rewards logic and patience. Princess Lala has been kidnapped, and it's up to Prince Lolo to save her. He can do this by clearing a seemingly endless number of rooms in the Great Devil's castle. It's an enjoyable mind-bender for both adults and children. Hal America, for NES.

Airborne Ranger blends arcade shoot-em-up action with a surprisingly realistic simulation of small-unit tactics. Create diversions! Surprise sentries! Steal code books! Blow up stuff! Choose from twelve different missions, some requiring stealth, some firepower. Good animation throughout. MicroProse, for PC.

Amagon is a mild-mannered explorer checking out a mysterious island. But when danger lurks, he can transform into Megagon, a George of the Jungle lookalike. Each level offers a new scenario with deadly foes to vanquish. American Sammy, for NES.

The Ancient Art of War at Sea realistically simulates the tactics of the age of sail. Lets you wage campaigns against Nelson, Blackbeard, John Paul Jones, and other great captains, or make up your own customized scenarios and maps. A different sort of war game, and a rather charming one. Broderbund, for Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC.

Bard's Tale II lets you join those happy roisterers down at the Guild of Adventurers for heavy-duty questing and non-stop encounters with enemies, human and otherwise. For those who can't get enough fantasy role-playing, here's more of what you're looking for. Electronic Arts, for Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, PC, 64, ST.

Battle Chess takes the combat-metaphor aspect of chess and brings it alive with clever, colorful animation and operatic sound effects. We wonder why nobody thought of this years ago. Aside from the novelty, great though it is, this is also a first-rate chess program. Interplay (distributed by Electronic Arts), for Amiga, Apple IIGS, PC.

Battlehawks 1942 recreates World War II combat in the Pacific from the point of view of naval aviators — both American and Japanese. You can choose from an authentic selection of dive bombers, fighters, and torpedo bombers for either offensive or defensive missions. Though highly realistic, game play is emphasized over the details of flight simulation resulting in a game that is entertaining as well as educational. LucasFilm, for PC.

Battle Tech puts you at the controls of a Mech Warrior, an armored vehicle-cum-robot that moves fast and packs enormous firepower. Based on a popular role-playing game of the same name, this is a good game enhanced by excellent graphics. Infocom (distributed by Activision), for Amiga, Apple II, PC, 64.

Beyond Zork updates and expands a computer-gaming classic. The original *Zork* was the avatar of all adventure games; this new version retains zany humor of the original, adds role-playing element and on-screen mapping. Unless text-games repel you utterly, this is irresistible fun. Infocom, for Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC, ST.

☆**Bionic Commando** drops you behind enemy lines to rescue Super-Joe, an ace combat soldier. Using a map of 19 areas, players must save Joe and thwart an evil plan to take over the world. Fast action, great graphics, and variety — this game has it all. Capcom, for NES.

☆ **Blades of Steel** is an ice hockey game that sizzles! Choose an NHL franchise and make a run for the Stanley Cup. If you push too hard, a brawl will ensue. Its playability and good graphics make this game a crowd favorite. Konami, for NES.

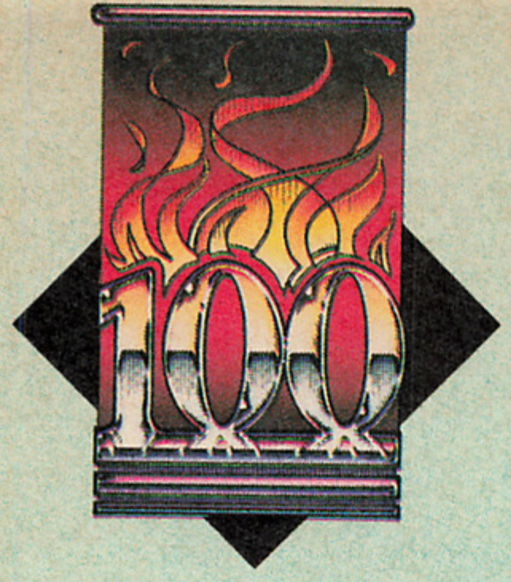
Blaster Master takes you through eight levels of narrow passageways as you try to find and destroy the Plutonium Boss. In your armored vehicle, you struggle against many kinds of radioactive mutants. Most of them can be killed with your car's weapons systems, but to conquer some you must leave the car and fight on foot. Sunsoft, for NES.

☆ **Bomberman** features a skimpy plot, but beefy game play. As Bomberman, you have to blast your way through 50 rooms partitioned off with bricks and infested with a variety of pesky opponents. This maze game is especially good fun for beginning gamers. HudsonSoft, for NES.

Bubble Bobble follows two dinosaurs, Bub and Bob, as they search through hundreds of different rooms for some kidnapped friends. Fun for children and adults, with whimsical graphics. Taito, for NES.

Castlevania II: Simon's Quest returns you to a Nintendo version of Transylvania in search of Dracula's scattered (and well-guarded) remains. Guide your whip-wielding hero through lakes of fire, dank stone villages, and vast haunted mansions. A big, elaborate quest game with good graphics and plenty of challenges. Konami, for NES.

☆ **Chessmaster 2100** is an



impressive, feature-laden sequel to the excellent computer chess program, **Chessmaster 2000.** The chess-playing logic has been improved, and the stunning screen graphics, sound effects, and depth of play should impress novices and experts alike. The Software Toolworks, for PC, Apple II, IIGS, 64, Mac, and Amiga.

Contra is a fast and absorbing military-style fighting game. Scorpion and Mad Dog land in the jungle on a mission to destroy the evil alien overlord Red Falcon. Armed with six kinds of powered weapons, you must cross jungles, snowfields, waterfalls, and fortified bases. You'll face elaborate defensive traps and fanatic alien soldiers at every turn. Konami, for Amiga, NES, PC, 64.

Cyborg Hunter brings to the Sega system a first-rate action maze game in which you guide a bounty hunter against the evil warlord Vipron and his equally evil cyborg minions. The graphics are excellent, the game play exciting, and the action nonstop. Activision, for Sega.

Defender of the Crown is a graphically rich action and strategy game based on civil war in historical England. You have been chosen to lead a group of gallant Saxon knights against the Normans. The ultimate goal is the crown of England. Win, and you gain land, fortune, and your fair maiden. Amiga and PC EGA users, especially, will enjoy the many visual effects. Cinemaware, for Amiga, Apple IIGS, Mac, PC, 64, ST.

Defender II is an updated version of a classic arcade hit, *Defender*. An unvarnished shoot-em-up, it captures all the excitement of the original. The straightforward goal is to blast as many alien invaders as possible before they kidnap the residents of your planet. It duplicates the arcade version so closely that the graphics are somewhat behind the times, but the game play is as challenging and as fun as ever. Hal America, for NES.

Double Dragon is one of the finest games available for those who like their action fast and their enemies relentless. Billy grew up as a streetwise martial arts expert. His girlfriend is abducted by the toughest gang in the city. You'll need all 11 methods of attack, plus the odd weapon, to rescue her. Tradewest, for NES; Arcadia, for Amiga, PC; Activision, for Atari 2600, 7800; Sega.

Earl Weaver Baseball is the World Series of computer baseball games. No matter what level or kind of baseball simulation you're looking for — simple arcade-style action or heavy-duty statistical tracking — you'll find it here. You can play ball with as little or as much control over events and personnel as you wish. New version 1.5 offers playing and graphics improvements. Electronic Arts, for Amiga, PC.

Empire is an award-winning game of global conquest in which you command armies, fleets, and aerial armadas against a very tough computer opponent. Easy to play, yet ever challenging, it is quite addictive and has earned a deserved reputation as a classic. Interstel, for Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC, 64, ST.

Flying Dragon is a martial-arts fighting game with a twist — after level 1, the fighting stops and you find yourself in training school. This extended respite from danger (unusual for a videogame) allows you to learn the fighting techniques you'll need to advance to higher levels. An amazing variety of moves are possible by manipulating the controller in this game, but these complex combinations may be difficult to master for very young children. Culture Brain, for Nintendo.

F-19 Stealth Fighter is an exceptionally high-quality simulation of air combat in the Air Force's top secret plane. You fly from carriers or land bases on combat and reconnaissance missions in Libya, the Persian Gulf, the North Cape, and Central Europe. You control virtually everything in this detail-rich, high-tech craft. MicroProse, for PC.

Friday the 13th brings Jason and his hockey mask into your own home. As a counselor at Crystal Lake, you have to keep the children safe — at all costs. Pretty violent, and you have to like a game in which one of the characters is the head of Jason's mother. LJN, for NES.

Galaga was an arcade hit because it gave you bonuses early in the game and thereby provided more action-satisfaction for your quarter. The NES conversion mimics the arcade version quite nicely. Great fun — an updated *Space Invaders*-type game. Bandai, for NES.

Gauntlet is one of the few role-playing games for NES. As one of four adventurers you'll trek through 100 rooms, battling enemies and looking for treasure. A game equally fun for one player or two players in cooperation or competition. Helpful password feature. Tengen, for NES; Mindscape, for Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC, 64, ST.

Genghis Khan may well be the finest historical role-playing game on the market. Great fun to play, it also teaches some profound lessons about the realities of power. Become one of four 13th-century monarchs and try to rule the world. You get all the power, but also all the problems. Startlingly beautiful graphics. Koei, for PC.

Golgo 13 signals a new direction in Nintendo games, featuring multiple characters, interactive dialogue, and realistic urban settings. The secret agent plot is gleefully incomprehensible, but who cares? Mayhem abounds and the arcade sequences are excitingly staged. Parents should note that **Golgo 13** is extremely violent and the targets are people, not bug-eyed monsters. Recommended, with that proviso. Vic Tokai, for NES.

Guerrilla War lets you overthrow a Third World dictator singlehandedly. Arcade shoot-em-up differs in details from other similar games, but is well done within those limits. Data East, for Amiga, PC, 64, ST.

Gunship features hundreds of missions in four combat zones and puts you at the controls of an AH-64 Apache attack helicopter. With over 35 displays in the cockpit alone, this is a rich simulation with tutorials, maps, scenarios, and fun galore. Microprose, for Amiga, Apple II, PC, 64, ST.

☆**Hostage** jumps right off the front page of today's newspapers. Terrorists have attacked an embassy and captured hostages. You lead a six-man commando squad to rescue the hostages and kill the terrorists. A training mission helps acquaint new players with the game. It's a realistic depiction of a familiar contemporary nightmare. Mindscape, for PC, Amiga, ST.

Iron Tank assigns you the command of one of the new super-tanks, a vehicle that bristles with firepower. It's D-Day and the Iron Snake commandos are leading the invasion. You'll need all your weapons to battle your way through the enemy force of armored trains, infantrymen, minefields, giant bombs, computerized tanks, and subs. SNK, for NES.

Jackal is a well-done arcade-action war game in which you drive around in an armored car and blast hordes

of enemy tanks, infantry, ships, and armored cars while trying not to get clobbered yourself. Excellent graphics and action on Nintendo systems, somewhat less impressive in the computer versions. Konami, for Amiga, NES, PC, 64.

Jeopardy! lets you find out once and for all how you'd fare as a contestant on the top-rated game show. Play against friends or computer opponents and answer questions in categories from "fairy tales" to "explorers." Gametek, for NES; Sharedata, for Apple II, PC, 64.

Jet, in version 2.1, features improved graphics, menus, and speed and flight characteristics. Welcome improvements to a popular flight simulator. Additional scenery disks available. SubLogic, for Apple II, PC, 64.

John Elway's Quarterback has been a popular football game in the arcades, and the new home versions generally offer flexibility of play with a wide range of strategies. Melbourne House, for Apple II, IIGS, PC, 64; Tradewest for NES.

Jordan Versus Bird: One On One is the sequel to one of the most popular athletic simulations of all time: *Larry Bird and Dr. J Go One-On-One*, which has sold over 400,000 copies. The new game offers everything the earlier program had, plus some extras. There are three games here: Bird vs. Jordan; an Air Jordan slam dunk contest; and a three-point shootout. Electronic Arts, for PC, 64.

King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella is a remarkable addition to the *King's Quest* series. The story has King Graham's daughter on a quest of her own to save the king's life. Wonderful graphics combine with fairy tale and mythological allusions to provide dozens of hours of game play. Sierra On-Line, for Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC, ST.

☆ **Kings of the Beach: Professional Beach Volleyball** is the volleyball equivalent of *Jordan Vs. Bird: One on One* in style, design, and overall excellence. Try to master the six-pack slammer, the dig, and the Kong block as you play on beach courts around the world. Electronic Arts, for PC.

Kung Fu Heroes tests your martial arts skills as you fight through dozens of deadly rooms to rescue the Princess Min-Min. A solid action game with challenging mazes and underground bonus rooms. Culture Brain, for NES.

Lee Trevino's Fighting Golf is a thorough and challenging simulation. The control pad becomes a sensitive substitute for a club as you work your way through sand, wind, and the other hazards of 18 holes. Choose your golfer from a menu of four very different players. SNK for NES.

Legendary Wings takes you 20,000 years into the future, to an Earth ruled by a supercomputer gone amok. The skies are filled with mutant

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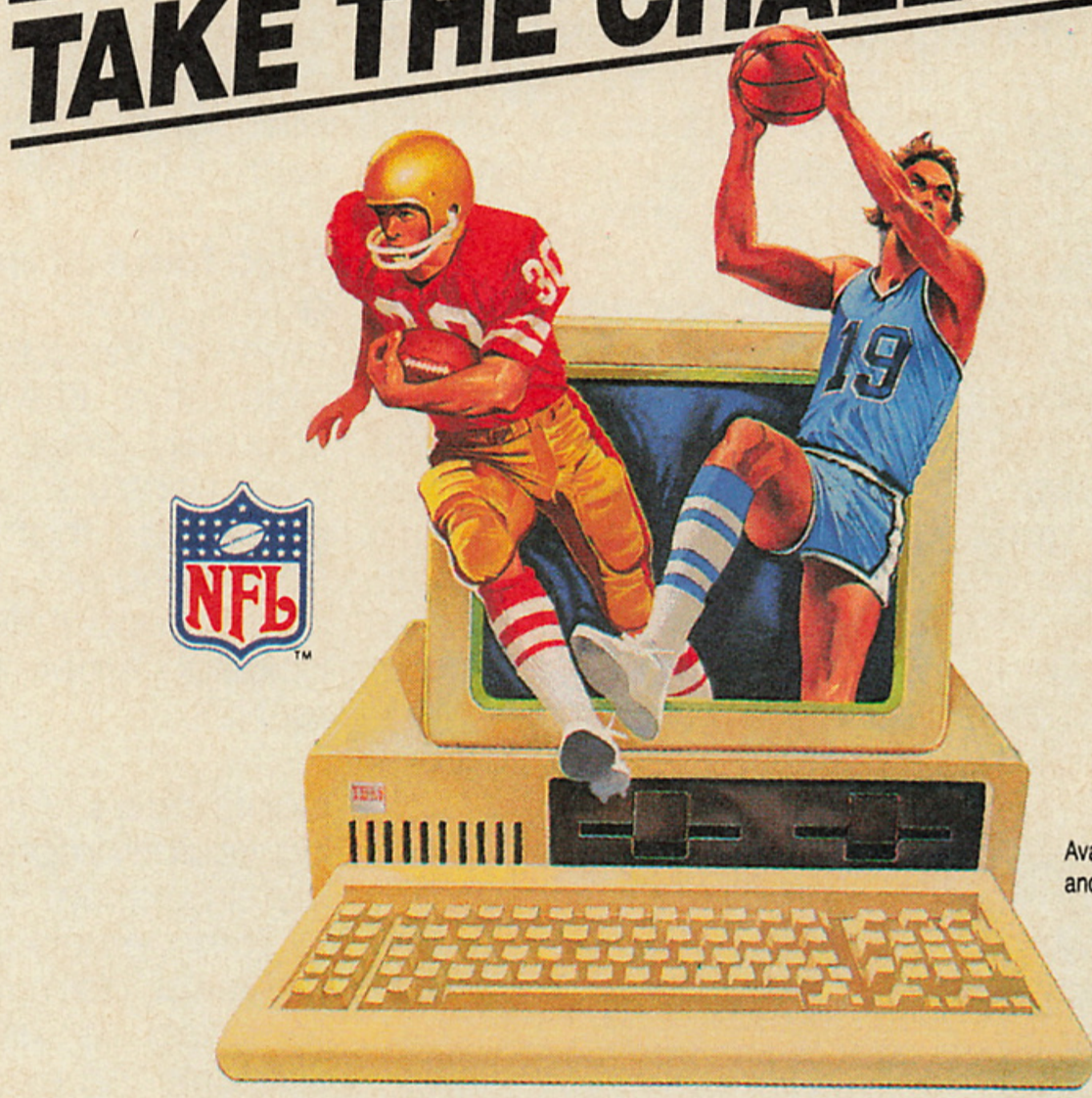

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monsters and robot warships, all guarding the machine's underground fortress. Whatever else you do, avoid the gaping mouth of the hideous Giant Head. Capcom, for NES.

The Legend of Zelda is an immensely popular Nintendo adventure game in which you help Link rescue Zelda and save the land of Hyrule. Fascinating and fun. Nintendo of America, for NES.

☆ **Life & Death** transforms the operating room into an entertaining and educational videogame. As both diagnostician and surgeon, you are responsible for the fate of your patients — for better or for worse. The graphics can be rather explicit, so the squeamish should beware. The Software Toolworks, for PC, Mac, IIGS, Amiga, ST.

MagMax is a robot sent to destroy Babylon, a computer brain controlling earth. MagMax is merely a land/air ship until he picks up the legs, head, and wave beam gun that make him a fierce competitor. Fun combination of search mission and shoot the aliens, as the robot looks for his spare parts before he takes on Babylon. FCI, for NES.

Manhunter, New York is a slightly twisted role-playing game in which the player works for a race of sinister alien overlords. An intriguing blend of quest-adventure and arcade gamelets, laced with black humor and a dash of Orwellian satire. Great EGA graphics. Sierra On-Line, for Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC, ST.

Maniac Mansion involves the player in the eccentric world of Dr. Fred, who is working on brain-sucking experiments. Choose three characters to enter his house and rescue a friend. This complicated adventure evidences a refreshing sense of humor and can be solved several different ways. LucasFilm, for Apple II, PC, 64.

Mean 18 is a fine golf simulation with 12 famous courses, plus a provision for you to design your own. Options include: play with up to four friends; beginner or expert level; match or medal play; and pro or regulation tees. The game includes realistic graphics and overhead views. Accolade, for Amiga, IIGS, Mac, PC.

Metal Gear out-Rambos Rambo. One of the most fearsomely challenging of the many super-warrior/secret mission games for NES. Elaborate maze-like setting and plenty of room for strategy as well as stamina. Ultra/Konami, for Amiga, NES, 64.

Metroid is a very popular Nintendo game in which you guide space hunter Samus through the maze-world of the planet Zebes. Excellent, fast-paced game play. Nintendo of America, for NES.

Mickey Mousecapade brings Mickey and Minnie to life as you lead them through four dangerous levels to rescue a missing friend. You start at the fun house, gathering treasures and weapons to fight off (among others) Pegleg Pete and the evil witch from *Snow White*. Great fun for the young at heart. Capcom, for NES.

Microsoft Flight Simulator is the game that first made entertainment software a best-seller on PC and compatible computers. Version 3.0 offers improved graphics, especially with EGA or VGA. Microsoft, for PC.

Mike Tyson's Punch-Out is one of the most popular Nintendo games ever sold. You battle your way up the ranks of boxing contenders until you get a chance to fight the champ himself. You're Little Mac and can throw jabs, uppercuts, and body shots. Nintendo of America, for NES.

☆ **Montezuma's Revenge** features Panama Joe, an intrepid explorer, searching for treasure in Central America. The action begins when he stumbles into the ancient tomb of Montezuma, an engrossing maze of corridors,

chambers, and horrors. Parker Brothers, for Sega.

Ninja Gaiden promises to become one of the most popular Nintendo games of 1989. Ninja Gaiden is a member of a highly trained secret police force. He can confront any evil with only his sword and Shuriken to protect him. During six rounds he will meet numerous enemy attacks in 20 areas of play. Fast and furious action. Tecmo, for NES.

Ninja Taro is a Nintendo ninja game with some nice touches, including an adorable little title character, unusually clever and amusing monsters, and background art that is startlingly poetic and looks to be based on the woodblock prints of Hokusai. American Sammy, for NES.

Nobunaga's Ambition is a particularly impressive historical simulation. It places you in 16th century Japan as a powerful *daimyo* (lord) attempting to unify warring fiefdoms. An excellent strategy game. Immensely popular in Japan as well as here. Koei, for PC (NES version planned).

Othello is a classic board game that combines the strategy of chess with the simplicity of checkers. It's played on a 64-square board and the object is to capture your opponent's pieces between your own. You can select a two-player game or play the computer. There are four difficulty levels as well. Acclaim, for NES.

Pete Rose Pennant Fever is a unique and powerful baseball simulation. It's a slick pitcher-batter game, but it also boasts excellent graphics and a vivid recreation of the game via a "camera's eye view" both behind the batter and, after a ball is hit, behind the fielder. Challenging, realistic, well-thought-out. Gamestar, for PC, 64.

Pharaoh's Revenge is a classic (yet original) addition to the maze-chase genre. Fully the match of arcade-style games on other computers, *Pharaoh's Revenge* takes you through a maze of ancient passages to find the golden Egyptian ankhs. If you liked *Pac-Man, Lode Runner, Donkey Kong, or Mario Bros.*, you'll love this one. Publishing International, for Apple II, PC, 64.

Platoon recreates the deadliness and dangers of jungle combat. Through a complex jungle maze, a hideous tunnel, and a bunker — you avoid trip wires, hidden mines, ambushes, trapdoors, and enemy snipers who pop up everywhere. Don't waste ammo; it's not unlimited. Sunsoft, for NES; Data East, for Amiga, Apple II, PC, 64, ST.

The President Is Missing is a tough, complex, sophisticated game of intrigue, deduction, and suspense. The terrorist plot involves more than just a few kidnappings — a lot more. Sift evidence (including a 30-minute audio cassette) and separate disinformation from real leads, as the world nears the brink of nuclear war. Don't expect to solve this one in a single weekend. Cosmi, for PC, 64.

☆ **Presumed Guilty!** requires you to unravel an intricate international plot of mystery and intrigue — before you get framed for a crime you didn't commit. If you like spy novels and mysteries, this spine-tingler will keep you on the edge of your seat. Cosmi, for PC, 64.

Rad Racer is fast and furious road racing, with eight different courses to conquer. Has a 3-D mode. Quite popular. Nintendo of America, for NES.

Reach for the Stars, 3rd Edition is an expanded update of the classic conquer-the-galaxy strategy program from the game pros at Strategic Studies Group. The game uses SSG's charts-and-menus system, and there's a wealth of playing options. SSG (distributed by Electronic Arts), for Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC, 64.

Rocket Ranger makes you the hero of a 1940's science fiction serial. The Nazis will win World War II unless you can rescue a scientist. Don't worry! You've been sent a jet pack from the future. Terrific graphics, great game. Cinemaware, for Amiga, 64, ST, PC, IIGS.

☆ **Rollerball** is good old-fashioned pinball, adapted for the modern video screen. Play the silver ball on a huge, four-screen-high pinball machine with flippers and many other classic features. Hal America, for NES.

Romance of the Three Kingdoms asks that you undertake the modestly challenging job of unifying medieval China. No Sunday stroll. Start as a provincial warlord and end up as emperor. A classy, sophisticated game that conveys a rich sense of historical texture and teaches fascinating lessons about the realities of power. Koei, for PC.

Serve and Volley is a fast, furious tennis simulation that requires quick thinking and even quicker reactions. Ball placement, timing, and form will mean the difference between winning and losing. Options include: three difficulty levels; a practice session; three surfaces; choice of strengths; and various serves and returns. Accolade, for IIGS, PC, 64; Jaleco, for NES.

Shadowgate is an excellent graphic adventure, with a fascinating interactive environment and ingenious puzzles to unravel. Very challenging and well designed. Mindscape, for Amiga, Apple II, Mac, PC, 64, ST.

Shanghai allows you to play the ancient game of Mah-Jongg without having to round up other people, although you can play with one or more friends. It's simple to match the stacked tiles and remove them from the board, but winning is not that easy. Engaging, strategic — and habit forming. Activision, for Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC, Sega, 64, ST.

Skate or Die brings home the excitement of "cement surfing." There are radical moves and raunchy settings galore, including a distinctly *punk* atmosphere. Graphics are good for NES, extra-nice for PC EGA version. Ultra, for NES; Electronic Arts, for IIGS, PC, 64.

Solitaire Royale will gradually absorb all your spare time if you're any kind of card fan. Eight different games for adults and three for children. The good news is that you don't have to shuffle or set up tableaus; the bad news is that you can't cheat. Spectrum Holobyte, for Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC.

Star Saga: One may be the *biggest* PC game around, weighing four pounds and packing 800 pages of text, plus maps. A huge sprawling space opera-cum-role-playing game, *Star Saga: One* keeps tongue firmly in cheek while delivering plenty of excitement. Wonderfully clear documentation for such a big game. MasterPlay, for PC.

Star Trek: The Rebel Universe is a gripping adventure among the advanced worlds and beloved characters of the famous science fiction series. The Klingons are up to their old tricks as they create a renegade zone, full of rebelling starships. Using a telepathic amplifier, they threaten the peace-loving United Federation of Planets. Simon and Schuster Software, for PC, ST.

Super Mario Bros. is a classic, extremely popular Nintendo game in which you help Mario rescue Princess Toadstool from the Koopa turtles so that she can save the Mushroom people. Adults and children alike are captivated by Mario and the challenges in his wacky world. Nintendo of America for NES.

Tecmo Baseball is well-thought-out, offering room for strategy and a set-up that enables you to play an entire season or a single game. Animation is crisp and reasonably lifelike, especially the pitching. A must for hardcore baseball fans. Tecmo, for NES.

Tecmo Bowl offers a rowdy, colorful, action-packed football simulation for the NES. Teams in the game mirror strengths and weaknesses of real-life NFL teams, giving ample scope for coaching strategy. Definitely for adults as well as kids. Tecmo, for NES.

Tetris, a game developed in the Soviet Union, is habit-forming. Place the seven shapes of falling blocks into horizontal rows. When you finish one row, it falls from the screen and the next blocks start falling faster. Simple to learn, but always challenging. Equally good in all formats. Tengen, for NES; Spectrum Holobyte, for Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, PC, 64, ST.

The Three Stooges are more than willing to assist Ma as Mr. Fleecem, a no-good banker, attempts to evict her (and Mary, Leona, and Cynthia, her three beautiful daughters). To raise funds, the Stooges take a variety of odd jobs, similar to some of their finest shows, such as *Hoi Polloi* and *Punch Drunks*. Lotsa *nyucks*. Cinemaware, for Apple II, PC, 64; Activision, for NES.

Thud Ridge — part flight simulator and part aerial combat game — puts you in the skies above Vietnam as you fly sorties over Hanoi and fight off swarming Soviet-made MiG jets in your own F-105 Thunderchief fighter-bomber.

An interesting simulation with great graphics. Three-Sixty, for PC.

Time Soldiers, adapted from the arcade hit, is a challenging, complex game in which you fight enemies in the past, present, and future. This game exercises your brain as well as your reflexes. A friend can play along with you in a cooperative mode. Sega, for Sega.

☆ **TKO** is a unique boxing game that actually puts you inside the ring with a first-person point of view. Peg your opponent under the eye to draw blood, or snap his head back with an uppercut to the chin. Anyone who appreciates a good prizefight should give this slugfest a try. Accolade, for PC, 64, Amiga.

Track and Field II recalls last fall's Olympic fever. Play 15 games of skill, stamina, and savvy. Chalor the computer in pole vaulting, archery, gymnastics, fencing, swimming, and many other exciting contests. Choose any sport you want, do well, and listen to the cheering crowds. Konami, for NES.

The Train lets you save art treasures from the Nazis, with the help of the French Resistance. Intriguing premise, well thought-out, lots of room for strategy, and plenty of action. Based on splendid John Frankenheimer film of same name. Accolade, for 64, PC.

The Twilight Zone combines plots from old episodes of the television classic in a text adventure with some graphics. Explore your neighborhood, but don't be surprised if you end up on a desert island or in a battle with Death. First Row Software

Publishing, for PC, Amiga, 64, Apple II.

Ultima V is the latest in a deservedly popular series of fantasy role-playing games. Its alternate-universe, Tolkeinian world is much better thought-out and internally consistent than is usual in this crowded genre. Charming tapestry-like graphics and smooth playability make this a winner. Origin Systems, for PC.

Universal Military Simulator offers armchair generals the chance to re-fight actual battles, re-fight them as you think they *should* have been fought (or generate your own maps and armies). New scenario discs are being added to the basic set, making this a powerful program indeed. Rainbird, for Amiga, Mac, PC, 64, ST.

☆ **Wayne Gretzky Hockey** is one of the most realistic sports simulations ever designed for personal computers. It successfully captures the fast-paced feel of NHL hockey as you play either the 1972 Montreal Canadiens or the Boston Bruins. A game as good as its namesake. Bethesda Softworks, for Amiga, PC, 64, Mac, ST.

Wheel of Fortune is the game show brought to life, complete with your own letter-turner. The child's game of Hangman made glitzy and glamorous. For solo or multiple players. Sharedata, for Apple II, PC, 64; Gametek, for NES.

Where in Europe Is Carmen Sandiego? is a learning tool that actually manages to provide hours of fun as well. You'll be surprised how much geography you'll learn while scouring Europe for a band of art thieves. Broderbund, for Apple II, IIGS, PC, 64.

Wizardry V: Heart of the Maelstrom is the latest game in the acclaimed *Wizardry* fantasy role-playing adventure series. Beginners and experienced players alike will find plenty to enjoy in this game. Sir-Tech Software, for Apple II, PC, 64.

Wizards and Warriors takes place in the deadly forest of Elrond, home to the evil wizard Malkil. Guide the warrior Kuros through seven levels of adventure as he tries to free the princess from Malkil's Castle IronSpire. Use the magic sword to battle monsters, killer insects, and the undead (among others). Acclaim, for NES.

Wood & Water Rage offers a rad-bad skate boarding and surfing challenge for Nintendo players. Lots of action, plus excellent color graphics. LJN, for NES.

World Class Leaderboard is world-class golf, played on actual championship courses. Exceptional graphics and a "kids" level of play which allows parents and children to play the same game on two different levels of difficulty. One of the best of its type. Access Software, for Amiga, PC, 64.

Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders allows you to become a top journalist for the *National Inquisitor*. Journey to Egypt, the Bermuda Triangle, Mars, and other exotic locales in your attempt to stop aliens from turning the population into idiots via the telephone company. Lots of puzzles and lots of fun. LucasFilm, for Apple II, PC, 64.

Zelda II: The Adventures of Link is the sequel to the super hit, *The Legend of Zelda*. You'll be amazed at the depth and challenge of this immense, rich new adventure game. Link once again fights against the powers of darkness in the land of Hyrule. Roam with him from the North Castle to Death Mountain...and beyond. Nintendo of America, for NES.

Zoom! pits your little Zoomer against a mass of nasty aliens and black holes. Race around different mazes, painting the grids. Finish one and you'll blast off to one of the other 49. Also has a co-operative/competition mode for two players. Moves almost too fast on AT compatibles. Discovery Software, for Amiga, PC, 64.

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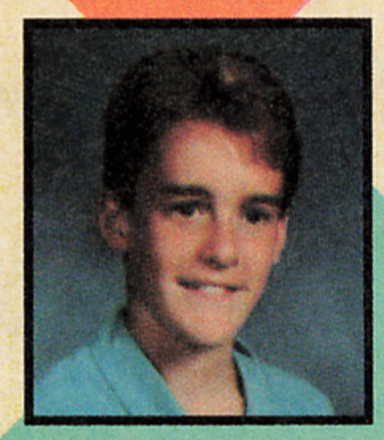


Jeremy

Jeremy, of Enka, North Carolina, is an expert at more than eight games for the Sega system. Among those he has completed are *Phantasy Star*, *Kenseiden*, *Shinobi*, *Rambo III*, *Zillion*, and *Zillion III*. He spent five months mastering *Phantasy Star*, and he now anxiously awaits *Phantasy Star II: Spellcaster*. When he's not playing videogames, 13-year-old Jeremy enjoys swimming, soccer, and writing his own illustrated adventure stories.

Nick

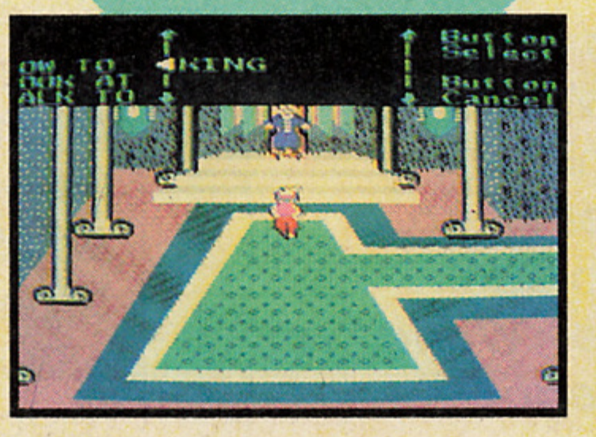
Nick, age 10, of Wyckoff, New Jersey, likes to play baseball, football, the saxophone, and Nintendo games. His current favorites are *Tecmo Bowl*, *California Games*, and *Pro Wrestling*. He also enjoys playing computer games on his Apple IIGS. *Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?* and *Micro-League Baseball* are two of his favorites. Nick's best subjects in school are language and reading, and he likes to build things out of wood.

Sarah

Sarah, a 13-year-old honor student in Floral Park, New York, likes Nintendo games that make her think and solve puzzles. Her favorite titles are *Anticipation*, *Wheel of Fortune*, and *Super Mario Bros. 2*. She spends much of her free time with two of her best friends — two miniature schnauzers. She also loves to write and cook.

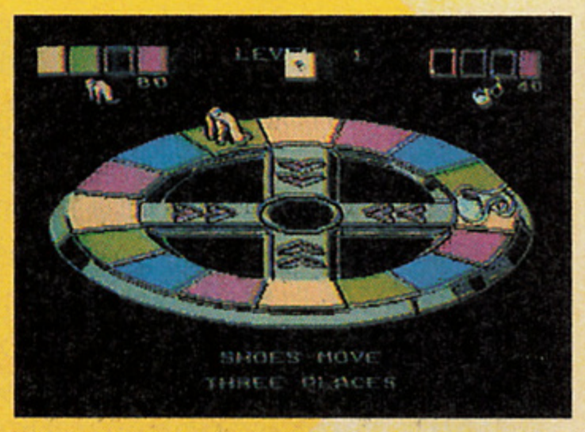
Steven

Steven, of Swan Lake, Manitoba (Canada), is an ace at Sega's *Alex Kidd: In Miracle World*, which he has completely finished. He also likes *California Games*, *Alf*, *Casino Games*, and *King's Quest*. Steven enjoys reading, "being a mini-detective," and participating in several sports. His favorite subject in school is math.



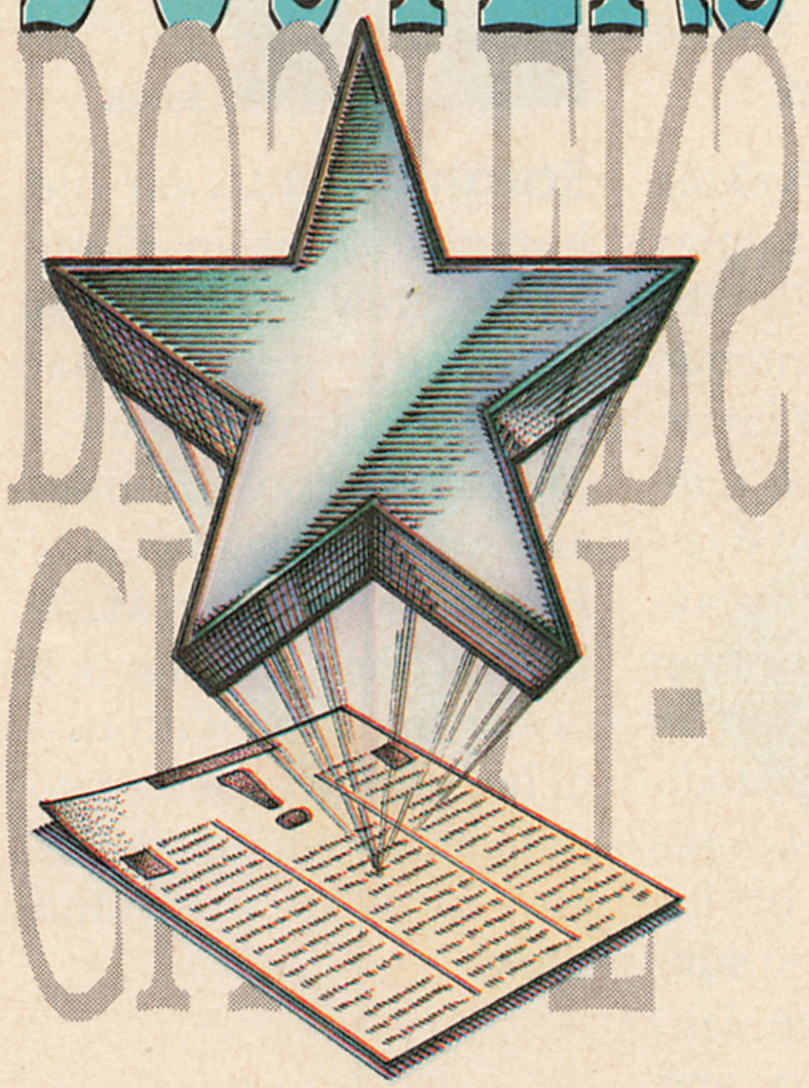
Among Steven's favorite games is the action-adventure *King's Quest*.

Nick takes time out from football practice to play Sega's *California Games*.



Sarah likes the mental challenge of guessing the meaning of drawings in *Anticipation*.

CHART-BUSTERS



A sampler of some of the most popular computer games, from several current bestseller lists.

SPA PLATINUM

(Computer games with more than 250,000 copies sold, as certified by the Software Publishers Association; includes only participating member companies. Listed in alphabetical order.)

California Games
Epyx
Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer
Electronic Arts
Dr. J and Larry Bird Go One On One
Electronic Arts
F-15 Strike Eagle
MicroProse
Gunship MicroProse
Hardball Accolade
Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy
Infocom
Karate Champ Data East
Karnov Data East
Lode Runner
Broderbund
Pinball Construction Set
Electronic Arts
Ring King Data East
Silent Service MicroProse
Skyfox Electronic Arts
Summer Games I Epyx
Test Drive Accolade
Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?
Broderbund
Winter Games Epyx
ZORK I Infocom

BABBAGE'S TOP TEN

(Provided by the Babbage's chain of software stores.)

1. ***Hillsfar*** (Electronic Arts)
2. ***Red Storm Rising*** (MicroProse)
3. ***The Duel: Test Drive II*** (Accolade)
4. ***Space Quest III: The Pirates of Pestulon*** (Sierra On-Line)
5. ***688 Attack Sub*** (Electronic Arts)
6. ***Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?*** (Broderbund)
7. ***Pool of Radiance*** (SSI)
8. ***Where in the USA is Carmen Sandiego?***
9. ***King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella*** (Sierra On-Line)
10. ***F-19 Stealth Fighter***

SOFTWARE ETC.

(Provided by the Software Etc. chain of stores. Listed in alphabetical order.)

Battle Chess (Interplay)
The Duel: Test Drive II (Accolade)
Hillsfar (Electronic Arts)
King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella (Sierra On-Line)
Might and Magic II (New World Computing)
Red Storm Rising (MicroProse)
Silpheed (Sierra On-Line)
688 Attack Sub (Electronic Arts)
Space Quest III: The Pirates of Pestulon (Sierra On-Line)

READERS' POLL: NINTENDO AND SEGA TOP TEN!

Here's your chance to let other Nintendo and Sega game players know your favorite games! Send us a card or letter listing your top three Nintendo and/or Sega games. We'll print Top Ten lists for both Nintendo and Sega systems in an upcoming issue!

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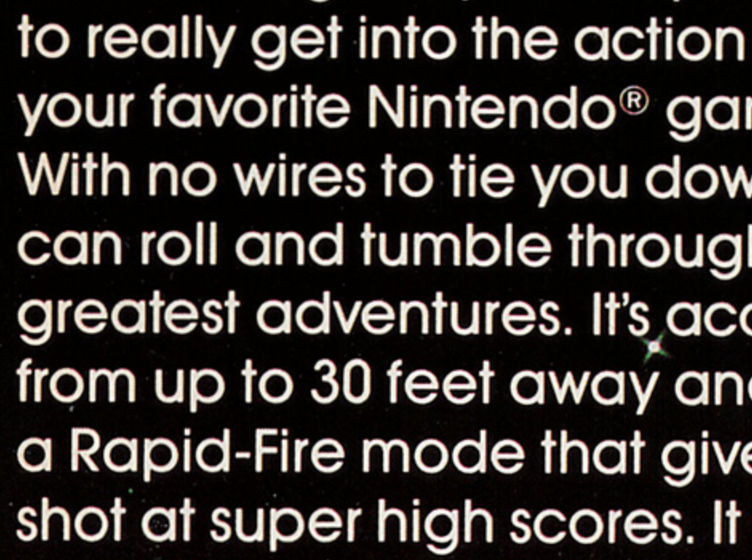

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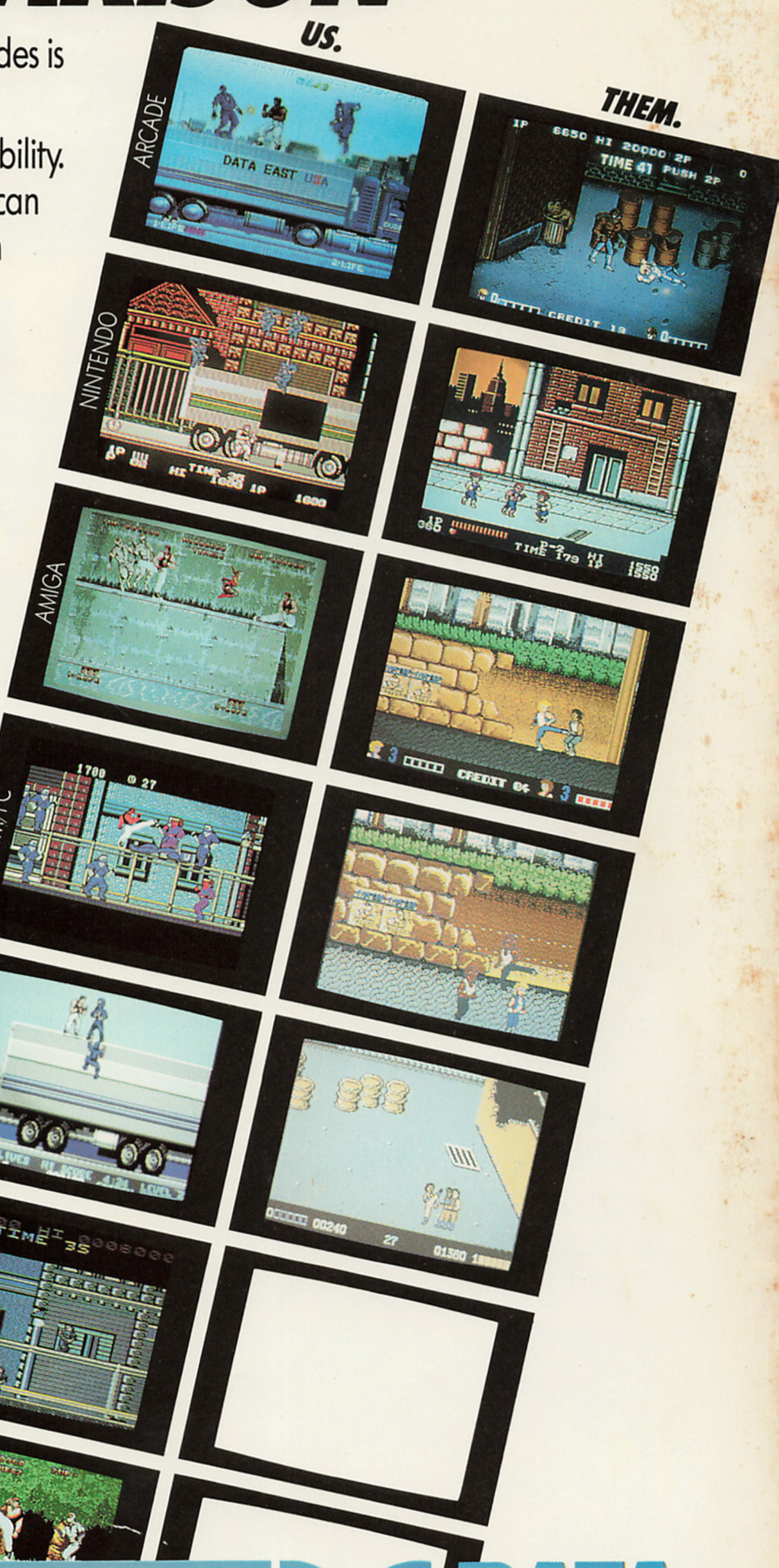

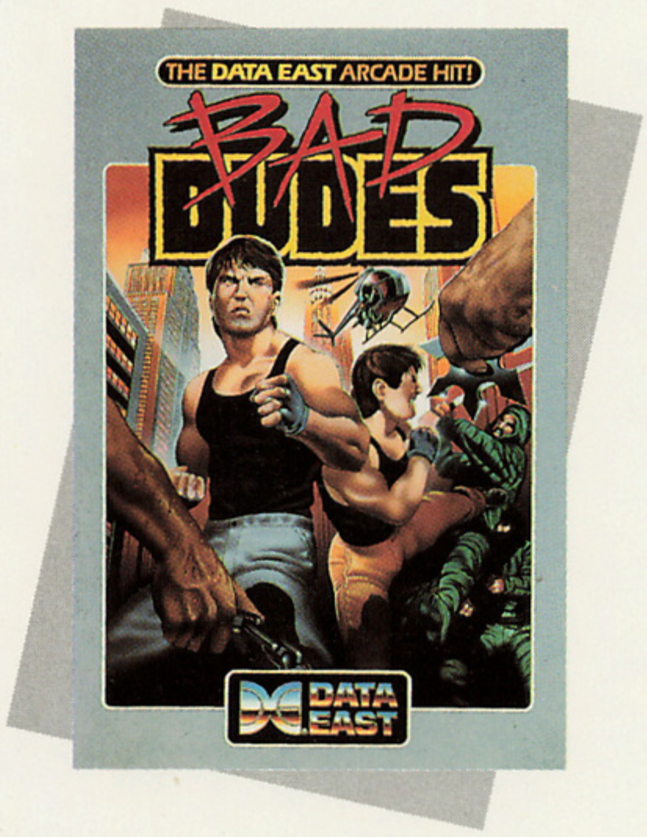

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