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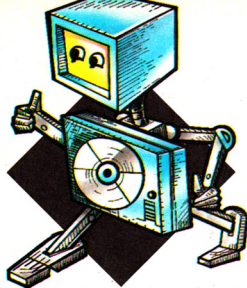
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Last month we covered *Magical Dinosaur Tour*, the first CD for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 that really takes advantage of CD-ROM's unique capabilities. But even *Magical Dinosaur Tour* seems almost primitive compared to the subject of this month's column: *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective*. This landmark CD points the way to what could be the future of all electronic games, on all videogame and computer systems. And as soon as you play *Sherlock Holmes*, you'll realize that it's a future with an enormous amount of promise.

In terms of actual game play, *Sherlock Holmes* isn't necessarily more advanced or more impressive than earlier CD games, or even



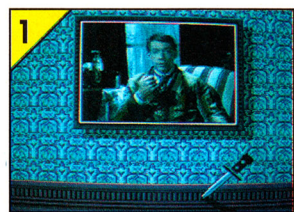
TURBO PLAYERS

Sherlock Holmes

Neil Randall

difference, until you realize we're not talking about conventional computer animation here. The *Sherlock Holmes* CD contains scenes that have been filmed and digitized. Each scene stars real actors and actresses who move, gesture, and speak, complete with a soundtrack of real voices.

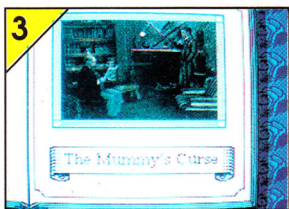
The game opens, for example,



many cartridge games. In fact, it's basically a computerized version of a board game. But thanks to the capabilities of CD, the computerized version is superior to the board game, largely because it's more realistic.

Where the board game has you read a character's comments from a book, the TurboGrafx version allows you to meet the character on the screen with full-motion video and sound. You can actually see and hear the character's responses.

That might not seem like such a huge



with Sherlock Holmes explaining the case to you. This isn't the usual animated computer drawing, but rather a video of Holmes sitting in a chair, pipe in hand, speaking to you in a very Londonesque accent. Except for a brief pause every few moments (an unfortunate limitation of the TurboGrafx system, which can't handle the transfer of large amounts of data very quickly), it's very much like watching a movie on TV!

In fact, *Sherlock Holmes* is so impressive that two of my friends who have no interest in electronic games immediately wanted to



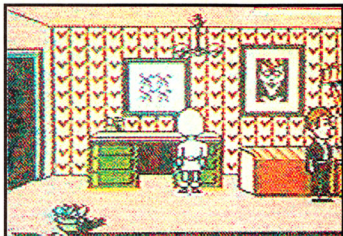
During the introduction, Holmes talks about London and its people. He also gives you ideas about how to proceed.

Here's a list of the people and places always available to you. Holmes will explain the function of each.

At the start of the Case of the Mummy's Curse, Watson reads the paper while Holmes makes his comments.

This depiction of London is the "playing board" of the game. From here you direct your entire investigation.

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The EDITOR'S VIEW

One of the most interesting games we've seen in quite a while is reviewed in this month's "Turbo Players" column on page 45. It's called *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective*. Even if you don't have an NEC TurboGrafx-16 and don't plan to get one, you might want to read about it.

What makes this game so special? For one thing, it's the first compact disc game from NEC that really takes advantage of the fledgling CD format.

For the past year and a half, NEC has been doggedly selling the only CD-ROM drive aimed at the mass consumer market. Sony, Philips, Commodore, Sega, Nintendo, Tandy, and many other companies have been inching toward consumer CD-ROM, but NEC was the first to take the plunge. It's been rough going, however. The \$399 price of NEC's TurboGrafx-CD — while lower than that of any other CD-ROM drive — is still beyond the reach of many game players. And the relatively few CD games from NEC haven't been much different from the usual cartridge games. As a result, the TurboGrafx-CD hasn't caught on in North America (though it's been more successful in Japan).

Now, with *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective*, NEC finally has a CD game that couldn't be done on a cartridge, or even a floppy disk. *Sherlock Holmes* is the first game to offer full-motion video and synchronized speech of real actors and actresses. Although some computer games have used some of these elements, no other game brings them all together as *Sherlock Holmes* does.

That's why every serious game player should be interested in *Sherlock Holmes*. It's a significant step toward a long-predicted vision of the future in which electronic games become interactive movies.

Icom Simulations, which created *Sherlock Holmes*

for NEC, went to great lengths to produce the game as if it really were a movie. Icom hired a cast of 35 actors and actresses, designed 70 Victorian-era costumes, constructed 25 sets, and wrote more than 80 pages of dialogue. Scenes were acted out, videotaped, edited, and digitized. The video was then painstakingly synchronized with digitized speech and combined on the CD with conventional computer graphics. The entire project cost more than a million dollars.

The results are impressive and go beyond anything ever seen in a home videogame or computer game.

But *Sherlock Holmes* also raises some questions. Is it overkill? And does it truly represent the future of electronic gaming?

NEC probably hasn't sold enough CD drives in the U.S. to justify a million-dollar production, but Icom is spreading out the cost by developing versions of *Sherlock Holmes* for other CD formats, including Commodore's CDTV, Fujitsu's FM-Towns (available only in Japan), and Sony/Philips' CD/I (expected this fall). Due to technical limitations, however, the full-motion video in *Sherlock Holmes* occupies only about one-fourth of the screen and is low resolution. Will anyone really notice that the costumes were specially made, instead of rented off the rack?

Perhaps the creators of *Sherlock Holmes* were trying a little too hard to imitate filmmaking, and that brings us to the second question: Will the electronic games of the future *really* be like interactive movies? That vision is taken for granted in many quarters. In fact, it has been pursued so ardently by some software companies that they've modeled themselves after movie studios, even referring to project managers as "producers." But it remains to be seen if that's what most game players want. When a throwback game like *Tetris* comes along and sells a zillion copies, it tosses a monkey wrench into all the visionary predictions.

Nevertheless, there's no doubt that *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective* is a bold move toward one possible future of electronic gaming. For that reason alone, it deserves a close look.

Tom R. Halfhill
Editor, *Game Player's*

GP

Game Player's: The Leading Magazine of Video and Computer Entertainment (ISSN-1042-3133) is published monthly by Signal Research, Inc., 300 A-E South Westgate Drive, Greensboro, NC 27407, USA. Application to mail second class postage pending at Greensboro, NC, and additional mailing offices. Newsstand distribution is handled by the Curtis Circulation Company. Subscriptions: 12 issues US: \$26.50. CANADA: Add \$1 per issue. Outside U.S. and Canada: Add \$2 per issue. For subscription customer service, call 1-800-222-9631. POSTMASTER: Please send changes of address to *Game Player's*, P.O. Box 56254, Boulder, CO 80322-6254.

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June 1991

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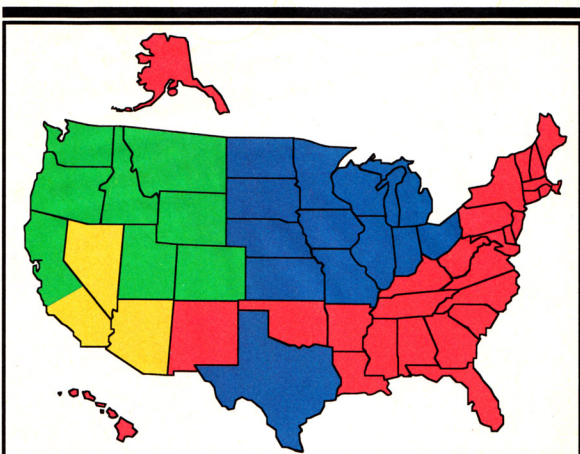
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The Editors welcome company product information for all video and computer games. Such materials should be addressed to: Editor, *Game Player's*, P.O. Box 29364, Greensboro, NC 27429, USA. Overnight delivery parcels should be addressed to 300 A-E South Westgate Drive, Greensboro, NC 27407. Editorial telephone and FAX numbers are noted above. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned or acknowledged.



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IronSword

I have been playing *IronSword: Wizards & Warriors II* for NES for a long time now. I am at the end of the game, and I haven't been able to beat the four elementals: wind, water, fire, and earth. Could you tell me how to beat them?

Here is a tip to get the crown in the fire level. First find the fleet foot spell, then find the door that has a ledge right by the door. Use the fleet foot spell, and then just push to the right.

James Paulie
Ohio

Go up the side of the mountain just far enough to attract one of the elementals. Lure it down the mountain before try-



ing to fight it. After defeating the first elemental, head back up the mountain to attack the next one. Continue this until you've beaten all four.

And thanks for the tip!

Final Fantasy Legend

I recently purchased a Game Boy game called *Final Fantasy Legend*. It is very exciting. So far I have gotten to world 2 (5F), but I can't find the door to teleport to the northeast island where the brothers await. Can you tell me where the door is and when to use it?

Bill Ewan
Wisconsin

There's a cave north of Ocean Village. Inside, you can find the airseed, which allows you to breathe underwater. Now dive into the whirlpool. You'll find what you need to know there.

Quick, turn the page!



StarTropics

Help! In *StarTropics* for Nintendo, I can get the worm in level 5. I give it to Peter the parrot, but I can't make any sense out of his message. Please tell me what it means.

Also, how do you get past the fire in Captain Bell's memorial? And what's the giant organ for?

Mark Legault
Quebec, Canada

Go back and talk to Peter the parrot again. He may sound like a crazed fowl, but he's actually telling you which notes to play on the organ. If you play them in the right order, the fire in Captain Bell's memorial will go away.

*Incidentally, don't miss our six pages of hints and tips for *StarTropics* in this issue's "Nintendo Game of the Month" feature!*

Keith Courage in Alpha Zones

I'm an NEC TurboGrafx-16 owner, and I haven't been able to beat the boss, Mr. Robot, in level 4 of *Keith Courage in Alpha Zones*. Can you tell me how?

Salvador Rosales
California

Wait for him to charge at you, then jump up and hit him two or three times. Be sure to duck as soon as you land.

RollerGames

I'm having a little trouble destroying the boss of the second round in *RollerGames* for Nintendo, where you're on this platform with a man under it with a long spear. He's trying to poke it up through the holes in the platform, trying to kill me. Meanwhile, I'm trying to kill this jumping guy. What do I do?

Jojo Silva
Texas

First you need to beat up all the enemies on top of the platform. When the enemy with the spear comes to fight you, use your jumping attacks on him.





The Amazing Spider-man

I recently purchased *The Amazing Spider-man* for the Game Boy. Could you please tell me how to defeat Rhino at the end of level 4?

I also have a tip for the game *Bionic Commando* for Nintendo. If you're falling from a building or a ledge, and it is impossible to latch your bionic arm to something, you can press the Start, A, and B buttons at the same time. You'll return to the map screen, where you can start that level or another level over again without losing a life.

Michael Swanson
Wisconsin

As you've probably found, the web weapon doesn't work against Rhino in The Amazing Spider-man. But like the other bosses, Rhino follows a particular pattern of attack. Study the pattern to find a safe spot to stand, then launch a punch-and-kick attack.

Thanks for the Bionic Commando hint!

Dragon Warrior

In *Dragon Warrior* for Nintendo, I've found the Stones of Sunlight, the Staff of Rain, and Erdrick's Token. What else do I need to make the Rainbow Bridge, and where do I find it?

Stephen D. Arnold
Alabama

You need the Rainbow Drop to make the Rainbow Bridge appear. To get the drop, travel through the cave where you found the princess, then continue south. Eventually, you'll come to a stairway leading to an underground room. You'll find the Rainbow Drop there.

Ultima: Quest of the Avatar

I need help! I've been playing *Ultima: Quest of the Avatar* for Nintendo, and I've looked all around for the lighter-than-air machine, the rune of spirituality, and the hidden entrance to the dungeon Hythloth.

Eric Giesbrecht
Alberta, Canada

You just missed him!



To find the dungeon Hythloth, follow these directions: Go into Castle Britannia and walk straight up to the wall; walk all the way to the right; go up through the wall and take a passage to the left; walk through the upper wall. When you're finally outside, take the stairs to the dungeon.

To leave the dungeon, use the exit spell. You'll be transported to a new world where you can find the lighter-than-air balloon. The runes are in a hidden room within Castle Britannia.

Reader Tips

Here are a couple of tips for two great games. First, here's a method to get 13 lives in *Super Glove Ball* for NES. Just type in this code: 042158. Second, to get the wizard from the second level, hold the

Select button when you see the arrow and go down until you drop to level 43, then hit the tile in the upper left-hand corner by the black hole. It will warp you to room 24 and through the back wall to room 28 — and there's the wizard.

I also have a stage-select formula for *Afterburner II* for the Sega Genesis. When you see the start option screen, press and hold buttons A, B, and C, then press Start. The aircraft carrier will appear. To select the stage you want, move left and right on the control pad.

David Richardson
Missouri

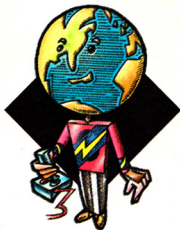
Thanks for the tips!

Do you have any questions about your favorite videogames or 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.

GP



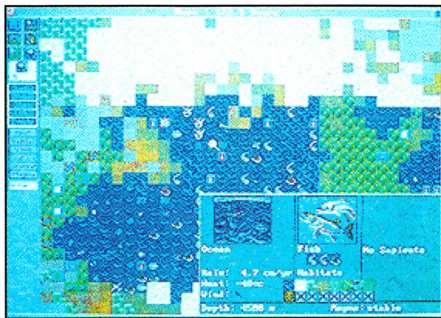
PLAYER'S WORLD



SPA ANNOUNCES 1990 GAME AWARDS

Tom R. Halfhill

Computer games swept all the awards for entertainment software at the recent spring conference of the Software Publishers Association in San Francisco. Winning titles for 1990 included *SimEarth*, *King's Quest V*, *Links*, *Faces...Tris III*, *Railroad Tycoon*, *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego? (Deluxe Edition)*, and



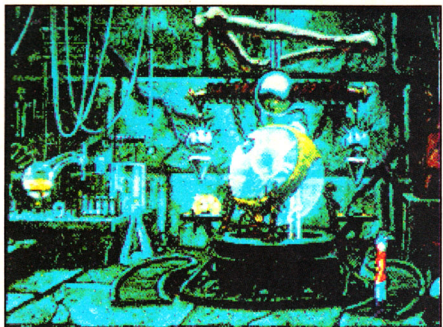
Mixed Up Mother Goose.

Cartridge-based videogames were noticeably absent from the SPA awards, even though cartridges dominate the market for entertainment software. Not a single Nintendo game made the final ballot,

SimEarth from Maxis won two SPA awards: Best Simulation and Best Secondary Education Program.

You have to be faster than that!





King's Quest V from Sierra was judged the Best Fantasy Role-Playing/Adventure Program of 1990 by the SPA.

though a few Sega Genesis games made the ballot and failed to win. This isn't too surprising, however, because the SPA is an industry organization consisting largely of computer software companies. Only a relative handful of SPA

members are involved in the videogame market.

The annual SPA awards are decided by a secret vote among SPA member companies. *GAME PLAYER'S*, which is a member of the SPA, participated in the voting.

This year's biggest winner was Maxis Software's *SimEarth*, which

captured awards in two different categories: Best Simulation and Best Secondary Education Program. *SimEarth* (reviewed in last month's issue of *Game Player's*) lets you control the environmental and biological development of an en-

tire planet. Other games nominated in the Best Simulation category were *Test Drive III: The Passion*, from Accolade; *Stunts*, from Broderbund; *Wing Commander*, from Origin; and *DragonStrike*, from Strategic Simulations (SSI).

King's Quest V: Absence Makes the Heart Go Yonder, from Sierra, won the SPA award for Best Fantasy Role-Playing/Adventure Program. *King's Quest V* is the latest installment in a long-running series by game designer Roberta Williams. Earlier this year, it won the *GAME PLAYER'S* Award for Best PC Graphics Adventure Game of 1990, and was selected as the Computer Game of the Month in the March 1991 issue of *Game Player's*. Other games nominated by the SPA in the Best FRP/Adventure category were *Countdown*, from Access; *The Lord of the Rings*, from



Interplay; *The Secret of Monkey Island*, from Lucasfilm; and *Ultima VI: The False Prophet*, from Origin.

Links, a realistic golf simulation from Access, won the SPA award for Best Sports Program. Earlier this year, *Links* won a GAME PLAYER'S PC Excellence Award for

1990 and was covered in the "PC Players" column in March. Other games nominated by the SPA for Best Sports Program were *Jack Nicklaus' Unlimited Golf & Course Design*, from Accolade; *Wayne Gretzky Hockey 2*, from Bethesda Softworks; *John Madden Football* for

the Sega Genesis, from Electronic Arts; and *Joe Montana Football*, a Genesis game from Sega of America.

The SPA award for Best Action / Arcade Program went to *Faces...Tris III*, from Spectrum HoloByte (reviewed in the September 1990



Faces...Tris III from Spectrum HoloByte captured the SPA award for Best Action/Arcade Program.

issue of *Game Player's*) was created by Soviet designers Alexey Pajitnov and Vladimir Pokhilko. Pajitnov is also the creator of *Tetris*, *Welltris*, and *Hatris*. Other games nominated in this category were *Star Control*, from Accolade; *Wings*, from Cinemaware; *DuckTales: The Quest for Gold* (computer version), from Disney; *Castle of Illusion: Starring Mickey Mouse*, a Genesis game from Sega of America; and



Links from Access won an SPA award for Best Sports Program.

Okay, who's the wiseguy that hit pause!

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Super Solvers Outnumbered!, from The Learning Company.

The SPA's Best Strategy Program was *Railroad Tycoon*, from MicroProse. Created by veteran game designer Sid Meier, *Railroad Tycoon* is a historical simulation of early railroading. Earlier this year, it won the 1990 GAME PLAYER'S Award for PC Game of the Year. It was covered in the August 1990 issue of *Game Player's* and selected as Computer Game of the Month in September 1990. Other games nominated by the SPA in this category were *Shanghai II: Dragon's Eye*, from Activision; *Battle Chess II*, from Interplay; *Flight of the Intruder* (computer version), from Spectrum HoloByte; and *Second Front*, from SSI.

Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego? (Deluxe Edition), an enhanced version of the educational

computer game from Broderbund, took the SPA award for Best Home Learning Program. Earlier this year, it won a 1990 GAME PLAYER'S PC Excellence Award. Other nominees were *College Application Essay Writer*, from Scholastic; *New Math Blaster Plus*, from Davidson & Associates; *Mickey's ABC's*, from Disney; and *Super Solvers Challenge of the Ancient Empires!*, from The Learning Company.

Mixed Up Mother Goose, an educational game from Sierra, won the SPA award for Best Early Edu-



Railroad Tycoon from MicroProse won the SPA's prize for Best Strategy Program.

cation Program. Nominees included *The Berenstain Bears Learn about Counting*, from Britannica; *Mickey's 123's*, from Disney; *Katie's Farm*, from Lawrence Productions; and *Clifford's Big Book Publisher*, from Scholastic.

GP



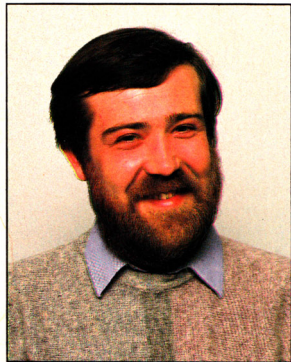
PLAYER'S

WORLD



FACE TO FACE... WITH ALEXEY PAJITNOV

Jason R. Rich



Alexey Pajitnov is the Soviet designer of *Tetris* and the co-designer of *Hatris*.

In 1990, *Tetris* was one of the top ten best-selling games for the Nintendo Entertainment System and Game Boy. Yet it was created by someone who doesn't consider himself an avid videogame player, mainly because he comes from a place where videogames are almost unknown.

Tetris was created by Alexey Pajitnov, a 34-year-old computer programmer who lives in Moscow, USSR, with his wife (an English-language teacher) and two sons, ages 7 and 3. In addition to *Tetris*, Pajitnov also designed two sequels for home computers (*Welltris* and *Faces...Tris III*), and co-designed *Hatris* for the NES and Game Boy.

"I have been programming computers since I was 16," says Pajitnov. "Here in Russia, people don't have videogames or computers for entertainment. The idea for *Tetris* came to me because I like

computers, and I love solving puzzles and mathematical problems. I tried to combine these interests into a game."

The original version of *Tetris* took only three weeks to develop. "When I started writing the game, I had no idea it would become so popular," Pajitnov recalls. "As I started watching other people play, I began to develop expectations for the game's popularity. A good game is one that people will want to play over and over again. A game should also give the player a sense of accomplishment. I believe a good game has to be interesting and challenging, but not too difficult that nobody can beat it."

The first home computer version of *Tetris* was released in 1987 in the U.S., Great Britain, and Europe, and it caught on fast. When the NES and Game Boy versions followed in 1989, *Tetris* became a megahit. Every Game Boy sold since the hand-held game system made its debut in August 1989 has included a copy of *Tetris*, catapulting sales into the millions. But ironically, the game is rarely seen in Pajitnov's homeland, because personal computers and videogame systems are almost unknown in the Soviet Union.

Another irony is that Pajitnov is not a *Tetris* expert. "On the Game Boy, I can finish the game on the

eighth level, but I have seen many players who are better than me. There are no real secrets for getting higher scores in the game. The key is to practice."

Because Pajitnov has become something of a celebrity among game players, his likeness has been included in the NES version of *Hatris*. Watch for him at the top left corner of the screen. If you manage to stack five sets of five derbies, wizard hats, or crowns, Pajitnov will help you the next time you're in a tight situation. He'll pull as many as five hats from the bottom of the stacks and throw them away.

Pajitnov is working with Bullet-Proof Software (the publisher of *Hatris*) to develop more non-violent games for the NES and Game Boy.

He also thinks videogames are here to stay. "I believe that videogames reflect the culture of the 20th century. I think right now the games are limited to the capabilities of the machines they are running on. With more powerful videogame systems, there will be much more complex and detailed videogames. I believe that the Nintendo Super Famicom and other 16-bit game systems are where the videogame industry is heading."

GP

A Signal Research Publication
\$3.95 \$4.95 Canada Vol. 2 No. 8

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PLAYER'S STRATEGY GUIDE to NINTENDO GAMES

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& MANY MORE



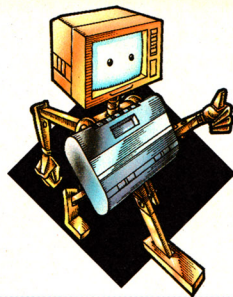
THE ANSWERS YOU NEED

FILL OUT AND MAIL IN THE SUBSCRIPTION CARD TODAY

Good news for Lynx fans — not only are we seeing more games reaching the stores, but we're also seeing more kinds of games. Not that there's anything wrong with shooters and bop-'til-you-drop action-adventures. But even the most ardent gamers need to give their thumbs a break now and then.

Last month's surprise was Atari's *Warbirds*, the first true flight simulator for a home videogame system. This month it's *The Fidelity Ultimate Chess Challenge*, an outstanding chess program from Telegames.

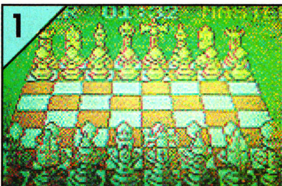
Computer chess programs have been around since the 1950s, when computers were warehouse-size dinosaurs powered by thousands of bulky vacuum tubes. Miraculously, *Fidelity Chess* comes on a flat cartridge that's smaller than the paper punchcards those mon-



ATARI SAFARI

Chess, Anyone?

Tom R. Halfhill



ster computers used to eat. When you plug that cartridge into a Lynx, you've got a chess computer that fits in your hand and works virtually anywhere.

But don't judge this game by its size. *Fidelity Chess* plays like a demon. Its intelligence was supplied by Fidelity Electronics, a leading manufacturer of chess computers. Telegames added the graphics and numerous options to make *Fidelity Chess* a well-rounded game for a wide range of players.

For instance, you can switch back and forth between two different views of the board: the stan-

1 The *Fidelity Ultimate Chess Challenge* from Telegames offers both 2-D and 3-D views of the chessboard.

dard top view as seen in chess books and magazines, and a "3-D" view that shows the board from behind and slightly above the pieces.

There are 17 levels of difficulty, and three different ways to adjust the difficulty. In *time mode*, you tell the computer how much time it has to make its next move. The computer will work as hard as it can to find the best move in the allotted time. There are eight different time settings in all.

In *depth mode*, you tell the computer how far ahead it should think before making its next move, no matter how much time it takes. There are eight of these settings,

too, so if you pick depth mode 1 (the easiest setting), the computer thinks ahead only one move. In depth mode 8, the computer plans ahead eight moves.

Finally, there's *infinite mode*, in which the computer can take as much time and think as far ahead as it wants. This slows the game to a crawl, but will challenge all except the best chess players.

Even on the easiest settings, however, *Fidelity Chess* plays a formidable game. It's remarkably aggressive and unforgiving. In fact, it may be too difficult for some beginners. Because it also lacks a teaching mode such as those found in some other chess programs, *Fidelity Chess* may be more suitable for "advanced beginners" or intermediate players rather than those who are completely new to chess.

In addition to adjusting the difficulty, you can also display a time clock, set up chess problems, decide who makes the first move, switch sides during a game, turn the sound effects and message windows on and off, and review (in standard chess notation) every move made since the game started.

There's only one major feature missing from *Fidelity Chess* — you can't save a game in progress. Unfortunately, the Lynx has no provision for cartridges with battery-backup memory, although Atari is rumored to be working on it. In the meantime, the only alternative is to write down the board positions before turning off the machine, then use the setup option to reconstruct the game later.

Aside from this problem — and the ever-present danger of exhausting your batteries before finishing a particularly engrossing game — *Fidelity Chess* is an excellent chess partner, and it makes the Lynx an even more versatile game system.

GP

King of Casino

"...I have to admit that NEC's King of Casino is the most complete gambling simulation I've seen...from checking into a fancy hotel to hawking cash at a casino, it's all there."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

Last Alert

"...features cinema-type intermissions and real voices. Last Alert is a very good CD game with good animation. The potential for 3D technology shows another one with good shoes."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

Legendary Axe

1989 Video Game of the Year
—Video Games & Computer Entertainment Magazine

"Legendary Axe has a little of everything: loads of axe-swinging action, layer upon layer of high-quality music and smooth, colorful animation. The combination of these elements brought this action adventure to the top of the video-game heap like rising cream."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

Legendary Axe II

"Legendary Axe II is quick, action-packed, and enjoyable."

—Game Player's

Military Madness

1990 Best Military Strategy Game Award
—Video Games & Computer Entertainment Magazine

1990 Best War Game Award
—Game Player's Magazine

"Military Madness is an excellent introductory war game. It's extremely playable and easy to learn, and it does its job better than several computer war games currently available. If you're looking for a different kind of gaming experience on your TurboGrafx—one that takes good advantage of the system's capabilities..."

—Game Player's

"Military Madness is a game that puts you in exciting and unpredictable strategic combat situations...Tactical stress-sold, realistic battle simulations, and awesome graphics are only a few of the reasons why Military Madness is an interesting addition to any TurboGrafx collection."

—GamePro

Monster Lair

1990 Best Shooter Game
—OMNI Magazine

"Monster Lair is a fast and colorful game that's even more fun when played by two people...And because the game is on CD, the stereo soundtrack is superb. Monster Lair has enough charm to last through many playings."

—Game Player's

Moto Racer

"Up to five human players can race for the finish line in this high-speed challenge. The options are many with several different race tracks, six different futuristic vehicles and several different music scores."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

Neutopia

"If the TurboGrafx 16 is your first game machine, don't miss Neutopia"

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

"...Neutopia will offer hours of excitement."

—Game Player's

Ninja Spirit

1990 Best Game of the Year (TurboGrafx-16) Award
—Electronic Gaming Monthly Magazine

1990 Excellence Award
—Game Player's Magazine

"...the level of intensity is unmatched, with multiple weapons, options and showdowns all coming into play. The bonus anime and fill the screen and truly provide a testament to what this system can do... Ninja Spirit stands out...and earns our Turbo Game of the Year award."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly, 1991 Video Game Buyer's Guide

"Forget 'Bokkun', this is a true martial art action. Awesome weapons and power-up and intense ninja action. Excellent graphics and authentic Japanese BGM. Great gameplay and cool bosses. Best Turbo card yet."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly, 1991 Video Game Buyer's Guide

"Ninja Spirit is so good that it might even appeal to gamers who don't think they like ninja games. Its fast and varied, and the challenges get more difficult as the game goes on. Ninja Spirit is probably the best martial arts game to appear so far on the TurboGrafx-16—and one of the best on any video game system."

—Game Player's

Power Golf

"...the best one (golf game) is Power Golf for the TurboGrafx-16 system. Power Golf has outstanding graphics...on some latest shots you can see the dimples on looking at the balls. Most of the game is played from an overhead perspective, when you're ready to hit, a small screen inset opens up showing your stance and the power bar. The game is quick-paced and fairly realistic. One nice feature is that after you hit a shot, the overhead view tracks the flight of the ball...Power Golf should keep you glued to your couch."

—Sports Illustrated

Psychosis

1990 Best Sci. Fi. Game (Honorable Mention)
—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

"From a purely visual standpoint this cart is worth its weight in gold. The graphics are gorgeous."

—GamePro

R-Type

"The legend has never looked better than on the Turbo! All eight levels of monstrous play grace this four-meg masterpiece!"

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

"One of the best arcade-to-home translations we have ever seen comes in the form of R-Type."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective

"...for the first time in video game history, thanks to the huge memory in a CD, you will be able to play a game that will contain real video footage! There is perfect speech with synchronized lip movement and it will be difficult to believe that this is a video game!"

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

Space Harrier

"...they tuned to NEC's channel for arcade quality Space Harrier action, and you can solve this cliff hanger for yourself!"

—GamePro

Spatterhouse

1990 Best Coin-up Game Award
—Video Games & Computer Entertainment Magazine

"Spatterhouse...is another fantastic example of how good Turbo games can be. The game is challenging and graphically outstanding...I love it."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

"Talk about tension and suspense, wow! Spatterhouse has plenty to go around. Excellent graphics and challenging game play make this seven-level nightmare game true...Very entertaining..."

—GamePro

Super Star Soldier

"Massive amounts of firepower...lots of power-up, huge bosses and great graphics..."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

"...features eight vertically scrolling stages of gorgeous graphics, non-stop interstellar space fighting, four different weapons, two defense systems, and numerous power-up possibilities..."

—GamePro

At times there is so much action on the screen you can get lost in...the rockets, bullets, attacks and shrapnel streaking across the screen. If you're looking for a hot action shooter...it will keep you sweating."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

Super Volleyball

"...Incredible, gorgeous graphics...the best sports game I've played for the TG. 'Nuff said."

—Digital Games Review Digest

"Sports fans can enjoy solo play or two-person competition in Super Volleyball. The big-screen view, crisp detail, and startling depth of this game's graphics almost convinced us that we were watching a live game on TV."

—Game Player's

"NEC's Super Volleyball brings the popular sport to the TurboGrafx-16 with lots of options, a comfortable user interface and, most of all, loads of athletic action on-screen. All in all, Super Volleyball is a good, challenging simulation. If you're a fan of a ball game, you'll want to take your place among the world's volleyball heroes. Super Volleyball may be right in your lounge."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

Takin' It to the Hoop

1990 Best Sports Game Award
—Game Player's Magazine

"...a well-balanced and entertaining sports game..."

—Game Player's

"Hardware sys rams know there's no substitute for an honest-to-goodness game of hoops. Takin' It to the Hoop has all the thrills, none of the spills, and some top notch video ball. Call time out and give it a try."

—GamePro

Tiger Road

"A multitude of vertical and horizontal scrolling adventures...clean graphics and sound...bonus rooms and secret worlds...best up both strategy and options."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

Timball

1990 Best Strategy Game Award
—Video Games & Computer Entertainment Magazine

"...if you like puzzle games, Timball has it all. It's highly recommended."

—GamePlayer's

TV Sports Football

1990 Parents' Choice Seal of Approval
—Parents' Choice Council

1990 Best Sports Video Game Award
—Video Games & Computer Entertainment Magazine

1990 Excellence Award
—Game Player's Magazine

"TV Sports Football has been built around a unique TurboGrafx-16 system: 5-player simultaneous action! As such it's a lot of fun with everybody getting into the action...think of it as a party football game..."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

"TV Sports Football is simply one of the finest football simulations available for any game system. Its football combines realistic sound effects, crisp graphics, and awesome action."

—Game Player's

Voigues Tactical Gladiator

"Voigues is a fighting vehicle like no other you've seen before...it can glide niftily, pivot, loop and fly through air...it's a canny one until...there's plenty of good old fashioned shoot-em up, but the key...is how well you strategize."

—GamePro

"The game play makes Voigues a solid fun game...that will keep you bouncing on your robotic toes..."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

Victory Run

"Probably one of the best driving games to come along for any system. Victory Run has true 3-D effects, including hills and curves, and enough variety in the courses to keep you occupied for some time. The car handles like a race car should and the power drifts are better than any racing game to date...Very exciting!"

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

"This high-speed game is a version of the Paris-to-Dakar road race. You start out by sticking up on parts like bricks, suspension and engine, then slip through the countryside outside of Paris. Colorful screens will take you from mid-day to night and back to morning. Controls let you accelerate, brake and shift gears while displays give you constant updates on speed and engine RPM."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

World Class Baseball

"This game allows two players to compete against one another, or use against the computer. You get the best seats in the stadium, behind the catcher, or on an overhead view. Digitized voices add to the realism, along with realistic scoreboard images and player movement."

—Video Games & Computer Entertainment

"...World Class Baseball is very close to perfect."

—Game Player's

World Court Tennis

"A visually stunning tennis game that plays well and offers head-to-head competition!"

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

"World Court Tennis combines the action of top notch Singles and Doubles tennis with the shimmy of an unusual tennis adventure. It's game, set, and match for NEC!"

—GamePro

Ys - Book I & II

1990 Best Role Playing Video Game Award
—Electronic Gaming Monthly Magazine

1990 Best Background Music and Sound in a Video Game Award
—Electronic Gaming Monthly Magazine

1990 Best Role Playing Game Award
—OMNI Magazine

1990 Best Sound Award
—Video Games & Computer Entertainment Magazine

1990 Best Fantasy Role-Playing Game Award
—Game Player's Magazine

"This graphic adventure is one of the most detailed, involved games I have ever played...It's the best musical soundtrack I have ever heard! The dozens of scores are on the CD. If I have to give Ys a 10 for the sound/music rating, then the next best game I ever play with good music will probably get a 1. The intro to the game itself is so good, I find myself watching it over and over again. This is...the best reason to buy the TurboGrafx CD player if you don't have one. No one can ever claim that CD-ROM games are just a gimmick ever again!"

—Les Pappes, Video Games and Computer Entertainment

"Over 42 minutes of top stereophonic, high fidelity background music...two full long tracks containing 1700 different screens...in addition to over 20 minutes of onscreen type intermissions..."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

"If you're a role-play adventurer who's been waiting for a reason to invest in a TurboGrafx-16 CD-ROM unit, here it is...It has got it all...great graphics, engaging RPG game play and a brain draining quest."

—GamePro



TurboExpress

1990 Best New System of the Year Award
—Electronic Gaming Monthly Magazine

1990 Best Game System of the Year
—Chicago Tribune

1990 Best Top 100 Products of the Year Award
—Popular Science Magazine

"NEC's TurboExpress, which is much more sophisticated than anything else on the market and features more entertaining games than any other portable..."

—Los Angeles Times

"...a hand-held game machine that boasts high-quality color graphics and superior sound. Even better, it uses the same cartridges as the NEC TurboGrafx-16. An optional attachment turns the unit into a TV that fits in the palm of your hand. Unfortunately, the system has proved to be so popular that you might have to be patient to get your hands on one...stores all out their stocks quickly..."

—Chicago Tribune

"This powerful pocket system is the most remarkable hand-held yet appear, with several amazing features that elevate it above the rest of the pack. First and foremost is the quality of the screen display...the screen, and more important, features the Express ability to play all existing TurboGrafx-16 game software...This actually gives the Express the largest library on the portable scene. The price is steep, but for the upscale gamer who wants the best, the TurboExpress is the ticket to take. BEST NEW SYSTEM OF THE YEAR."

—Electronic Gaming Monthly, 1991 Video Game Buyer's Guide

TurboGrafx-16 System

Macaulay Culkin plays Kevin McCallister, who has to defend his house against a pair of bumbling burglars in the movie Home Alone...Macaulay plays his primary goal in life is to get his own TurboGrafx-16 video game system..."

—New York Times News Wire Service

"...The TurboGrafx-16 has the most impressive graphics, color and sound of all the new systems."

—San Francisco Examiner

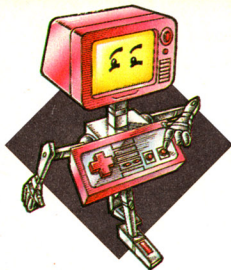
There are a lot of games available for the NES, but one kind of game that's never been well-represented is the fantasy role-playing adventure. Known to their fans as FRPs (fantasy role-players) or RPGs (role-playing games), they demand pure strategy instead of arcade skills. Although you often have to defeat enemies in combat, it's usually done by selecting commands and carefully managing the abilities of your characters, rather than by beating the enemy to death with a joystick.



RPGs make up a healthy chunk of the games available for personal computers, and they are proving popular on 16-bit videogame systems like the Sega Genesis as well. However, there are only a few "true" RPGs for the NES: *Shadowgate*; the Ultima series; the Dragon Warrior series (known as *Dragon Quest* in Japan); and the occasional oddballs, such as *Princess Tomato in the Salad Kingdom* and *Maniac Mansion*.

Why aren't there more RPGs for Nintendo? One reason may be that RPGs are so different from most other Nintendo games, which emphasize fast action and arcade skills. Also, RPGs tend to appeal to somewhat older players.

At any rate, Nintendo fans now have two more RPGs to choose from: *Deja Vu* from Kemco-Seika, and *The Bard's Tale* from FCI. Both are based on well-known computer games. In some ways, they represent opposite ends of the RPG



NINTENDO NEWS

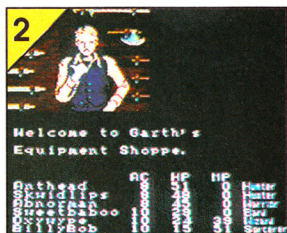
The Bard's Tale and Deja Vu

Jeff Lundrigan

spectrum — and not just because one is set in the mythical city of Skara Brae while the other is set in Chicago.

The Bard's Tale

This game was a breakthrough when it was first released by Electronic Arts for home computers in the mid-1980s. To begin with, it was one of the first RPGs that let you select commands from a list or "menu" of possible actions. Most earlier RPGs required players to type their commands on the keyboard. (The typical command was a short two-word sentence, such as "Get lamp.") *The Bard's Tale* also offered a "view window" on the screen with a first-person perspective. The view window, a small screen-within-a-screen, gave



The first-person view window is one of the most interesting features of *The Bard's Tale*. The view window makes it look as if you're walking through the city.

Don't be stingy in Garth's Equipment Shop. The more an item costs, the better it works, so spend as much as you can — your life depends on it.

The Temple is a place of ultimate healing. You can recover health and magic points, cure a party member who's been turned to stone, and even resurrect dead characters.



players the illusion of walking through a mysterious city and its underground mazes.

The background story in *The Bard's Tale* is pure RPG. It seems that the city of Skara Brae is under a curse of perpetual winter. Its people are locked behind the city gates, held in the frozen grip of a creature known as Mangar, the Archmage. Their only hope is the Adventurer's Guild, an ancient organization of heroes. To save the people of Skara Brae, a small group of adventurers prepares for a dangerous descent into the catacombs of the city. Their mission: to search

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NINTENDO NEWS



for the keys to Mangar's tower and the powers to defeat him.

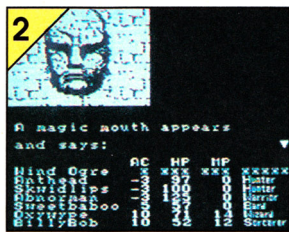
The game begins in the Adventurer's Guild, where you create a band of six heroes by choosing from the six different professions available (wizard, rogue, warrior, and so on). Once the party is assembled, you exit the Guild Hall and travel up the street to Garth's Equipment Shop, where you outfit your characters with the best weapons and armor you can afford.

But you're not ready to take on Mangar just yet. When you begin the game, your characters are relatively weak. To gain combat experience, you have to fight monsters — lots of monsters. The computer version of *The Bard's Tale* was also one of the first RPGs that forced you to battle against whole herds of evil creatures. The Nintendo version is much the same. You can't walk ten steps anywhere in Skara Brae without being attacked.

In fact, winning *The Bard's Tale* doesn't depend as much on finding the right items as it does on fighting your way to them. The key is to manage your characters'

powers well enough to survive. This is both the game's strongest and most annoying feature. While there are hundreds of monsters and lots of interesting weapons, there's no way to keep the battles from getting boring. Eventually, you'll probably wish you could just find what you need without having to stop and fight every two minutes.

In many of the computer RPGs which have followed *The Bard's Tale*, game designers have tried to keep the constant fighting from becoming so tedious. Some games require less fighting; others make the combat more integral to the game's storyline; and some just make the battles more interesting to watch. The NES version of *The Bard's Tale*, however, simply duplicates the original combat system found in the computer game. The same strategic challenge is there, but so is the monotony. Still, *The Bard's Tale* isn't a worse offender than the *Dragon Warrior* games, for example.



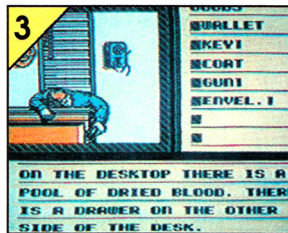
1 Watch out for fighting Dopplers. They can disguise themselves as someone in your party, and you won't know it until they begin attacking the other members.

2 Magic Mouths offer clues, but only in the form of poems or riddles. They're one reason why you should search every square inch of the dungeons.

3 *Deja Vu*: So you think you've got problems? This guy's having a really bad day. Because you can't remember anything, you might very well be the one who killed him.

The Bard's Tale isn't as large a game as *Dragon Warrior*, but it's still got the goods, and it'll probably take you quite awhile to finish. In fact, it's surprising how well the NES game compares to the computer version. True, FCI has made a few changes: Skara Brae is a little smaller, there are fewer classes of characters, and a new on-screen display more or less eliminates the need to draw your own maps. But otherwise, everything is much the same.

If you've never played this sort of game before, *The Bard's Tale* makes a good introduction. If you're already an RPG veteran, you should find enough here to hold your interest.

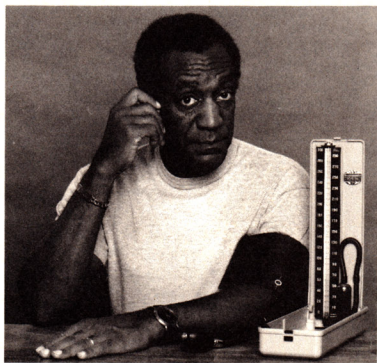


Deja Vu

Taking a completely different approach is Kemco-Seika's *Deja Vu*, which is based on a computer game by Icom Simulations. Kemco-Seika also released the popular *Shadowgate* for NES, and *Deja Vu* is played almost exactly the same way. An on-screen window shows a picture of what your character sees while you select your actions from a menu of commands. *Deja Vu* is "role-playing" in the strictest sense, because you play a single character in what is essentially an interactive story.

The setting is Chicago in the 1930s, when gangsters were running wild. At the beginning of the game, your character wakes up — in a restroom stall, of all places — and you can't even remember *who*

THIS IS ONE TIME BILL COSBY DOESN'T WANT HIGH RATINGS.



Bill Cosby is a man who aims high. But not when it comes to his blood pressure. That's because Bill Cosby knows high blood pressure increases risks of heart attack and stroke. Which is why it's important to have your blood pressure checked regularly, exercise, cut down on salt and take your blood pressure pills if the doctor prescribes

them. After all, this is one time when a low score wins. To learn more, contact the American Heart Association, 7320 Greenville Ave., Box 25, Dallas, TX 75231.

*You can help prevent heart disease.
We can tell you how.*

American Heart Association 

NINTENDO NEWS

you are. There's a needle mark on your arm, and you feel as if you've been drugged. It seems obvious that your lack of memory is the result of foul play, not cheap gin, but who's responsible? If you were that much trouble, why didn't they just kill you? And just *who* are you in the first place?

Deja Vu has a definite storyline. Little by little, you figure out not only who you are, but also who left you in this sorry state and why. It's a classic RPG — as you move through the game, you find the right item that leads you to the next piece of the puzzle.

Actually, this game is so structured that you *can't* progress unless you find all the clues. When you get stuck, it's usually because you're looking for something that's small and easily missed, or because you haven't figured out the right way to get the item using the game's commands.

The story in the NES version is

very similar to that of the PC version, although it has been adapted slightly to fit Kemco-Seika's player interface. The game has colorful graphics and a good sense of humor, and it's not very difficult. Because the route you have to take from clue to clue is so rigidly defined — A leads to B leads to C — all you have to do is find the right item. *Deja Vu* is thoroughly enjoyable, but RPG veterans will probably find it little more than a snack.



Hope for the Future

In spite of these latest two entries, there are still very few RPGs available for Nintendo. Will RPG fans see more of them for the coming 16-bit "Super NES"?

It's a good bet. For one thing, 16-bit systems seem to attract more players who have a few years of gaming under their belts — the same kind of players who tend to like RPGs. (Note that two of the most popular games for the Sega

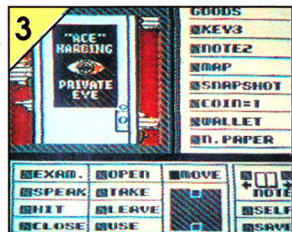
Genesis, *Phantasy Star II* and *Sword of Vermilion*, are RPGs.) Also, RPGs are easier to design for the more powerful 16-bit systems.

For instance, one thing you'll miss in the NES version of *The Bard's Tale* is the little clips of animation that were sprinkled throughout the

computer game. In the computer version, the orcs swing their clubs around, the wizards make mystical gestures, and so on. There probably wasn't enough room in the NES cartridge to include these scenes.

For an adventure to really *sprawl*, you need a lot of memory, more than an 8-bit machine can easily handle. An 8-bit system also has a difficult time producing the kind of stunning graphics that give an RPG much of its appeal. It may simply be that the NES isn't technically suited to this kind of game. If this is the case, maybe the coming 16-bit Super NES will mean a windfall of RPGs for Nintendo players. Until then, either *The Bard's Tale* or *Deja Vu* will whet your appetite.

GP



One annoying thing about *Deja Vu* is the occasional wrong turn that leads to a "Bang! You're dead!" conclusion. There's no way to tell what's around the corner.

1

A 400-pound woman whom you may or may not have tied up is in the trunk of a car that may or may not belong to you. But if you can make her tell the truth, she'll give you a vital clue.

2

Now we're getting somewhere. Could this be *your* office? Maybe, but either way it seems already occupied, so just waltzing in there isn't a good idea.

3



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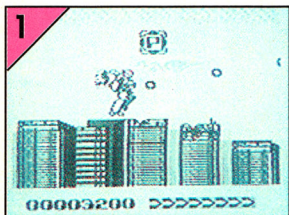
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Those darn aliens! After thousands of years of war and strife, mankind finally learned how to live in peace — only to be attacked by invaders from another planet. Just our luck. The war that followed was hard fought and even harder won. Thankfully, however, humanity triumphed and the aliens were defeated. Or were they?

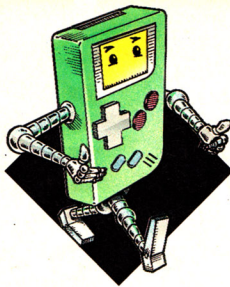
Unfortunately, the dreaded Greins only *seemed* to go away. They sought refuge underground, where they've been waiting to take their second shot at conquering the Earth. Now they're almost ready to launch their assault. Are you just going to roll over and play dead?



Of course not. You're going to strap on your battle-ready jet-pack and take off for action in Jaleco's *Battle Unit Zeoth*.

The game scrolls over enemy terrain as you fly your jet-pack and aim your powerful lasers at alien targets. You can jazz up your firepower with a smart bomb that clears the screen of all enemies, but it puts a heavy drain on your energy supply. In all, there are five stages filled with combat against the ugly Grein menace.

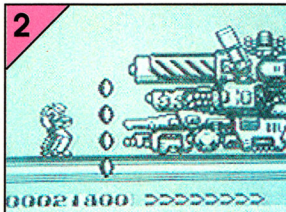
Battle Unit Zeoth is one of six new games we've recently seen for the Game Boy. Most of them are action games, but there's a fantasy role-playing adventure, too. Let's take a look at *Burger Time Deluxe*, *Final Fantasy Legend II*, *Fortified Zone*, *Maru's Mission*, and *Power Mission*.



GAME BOY PLAYERS

Six New Games

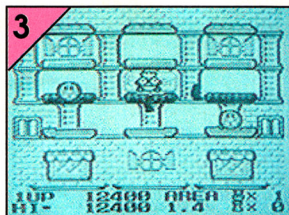
Phill Powell



Burger Time Deluxe

Serving up eats in the fast-food industry is hard work, and no one knows that better than Peter Pepper, the embattled chef of *Burger Time Deluxe* from Data East. Talk about a tough job. This guy not only has to *make* the food — he has to *run* from it, too!

You see, Peter is being chased by foods and condiments we once

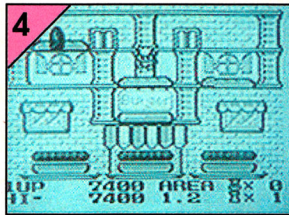


thought were friendly. His pursuers include the sour Mr. Pickle, the rotten Mr. Egg, and the envious Mr. Hot Dog.

Burger Time Deluxe is actually a fast-action puzzle game in which you have to build hamburgers while your enemies approach you from different parts of the restaurant. The concept is simple, but proven; *Burger Time Deluxe* is the Game Boy version of *Burger Time*, a popular arcade game from the early 1980s.

Final Fantasy Legend II

Role-playing games often take

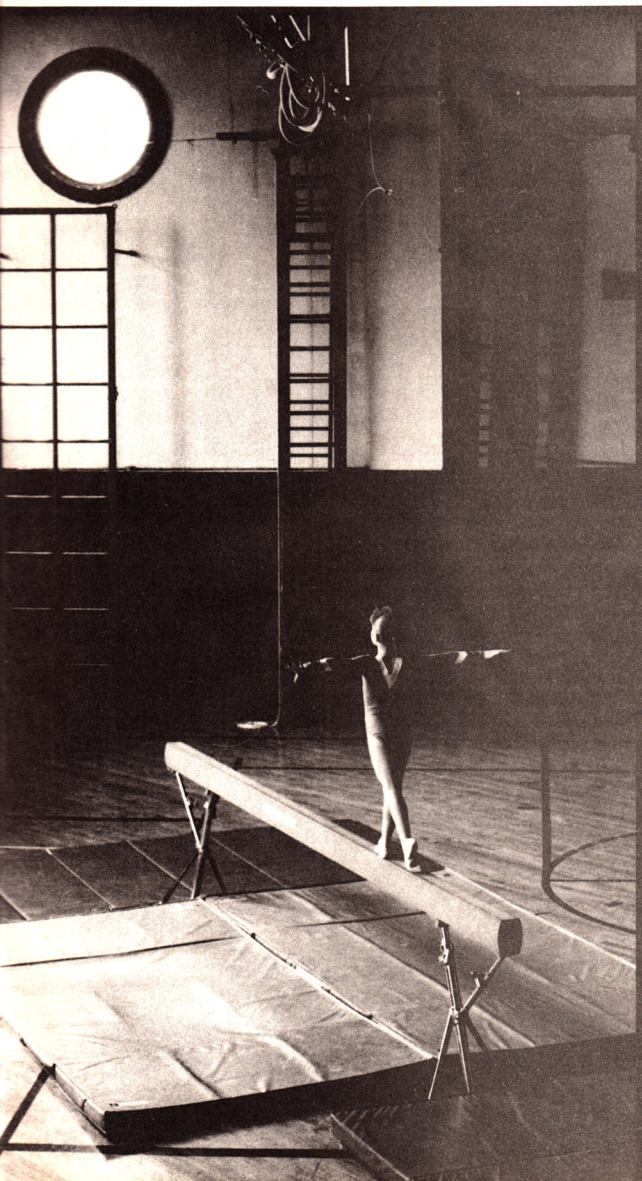


1 *Battle Unit Zeoth*: Power-ups like this one improve your chances (and the Earth's).

2 *Battle Unit Zeoth*: It appears that this Grein behemoth is aiming to put you out of commission. Perhaps now would be a good time to use your jet-pack.

3 *Burger Time Deluxe*: Peter Pepper's eyes bug out when he's hit by the lunch-crowd crush.

4 *Burger Time Deluxe*: You'd better get moving if you want to build those burgers and complete this area.



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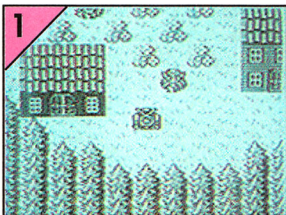
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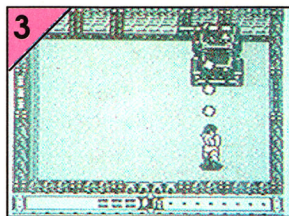
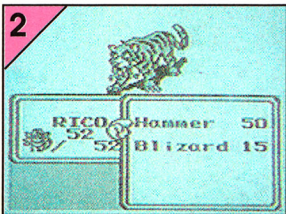
GAME BOY PLAYERS



longer to design because they contain entire worlds that must be explored, not just a limited number of stages or levels. They also require more time to play, because they're so rich in detail and story.

Both of the above apply to *Final Fantasy Legend II*, Square Soft's sequel to the hugely popular role-playing fantasy epic. If you're a fan of the original *Final Fantasy Legend*, you won't want to miss this new adventure.

This time, your quest involves a search for magi, a mystical power left behind by the ancient gods. The only problem is that the ancient gods split the magi into 77 pieces and scattered them everywhere. At the beginning of the game, you've received just one of the pieces. It's not much of a start, but it'll have to do.



You move through nine worlds in *Final Fantasy Legend II*, and you aren't allowed to leave a world until you've uncovered all the magi it contains. As in the original *Final Fantasy Legend*, you put together a band of adventurers that you lead on the journey.

Final Fantasy Legend II adds two new enhancements: a save-game feature that lets you store up to three different games, and a memo device that lets you record information you find and want to keep.

Fortified Zone

Anything fortified has been strengthened and protected against attack. A fortified zone is an area built to withstand a military invasion. Anyone bold enough to try to penetrate a fortified zone would have to be either very brave or very stupid, right? So where does that leave you?

In Jaleco's *Fortified Zone*, the heart of an enemy fortress is your target. You control two highly trained commandos — one male, one female — who must infiltrate an area in which they are definitely not welcome.

Your commandos enter the fortified zone on gliders, under cover of night. You guide them silently and quickly through mazes and dangers. The male commando is a sharpshooter, and his female companion possesses agility and quickness. You'll need all of these talents to stand a chance against the enemy patrols guarding the fortress.

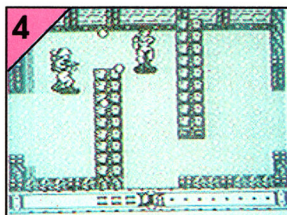
The mission's final destination is an underground dungeon. This is the only place where you can bring the enemy forces to their knees by actually destroying the fortified zone.

Fortified Zone offers both one-player and two-player games. In the two-player mode, each person controls his or her own commando. The twist is that both players can be working through different areas of the game simultaneously. An auto-mapping device helps you keep track of your progress within a certain stage.

Maru's Mission

Action-adventure games are always in demand, and now there's one more: *Maru's Mission* from Jaleco.

The story begins innocently enough. A boy and his girlfriend are walking in Central Park when they're ambushed by lowlifes who knock out the guy and kidnap the girl. Maru — the wronged boyfriend and seeker of revenge —



1 *Final Fantasy Legend II*: Scenic backgrounds highlight your quest to reassemble 77 pieces of the broken magi.

2 *Final Fantasy Legend II*: When it's time to rumble, it's up to you to decide which weapon you should use.

3 *Fortified Zone* sends you on a virtual suicide mission into battle against heavy artillery.

4 *Fortified Zone*: You're not alone in this maze, so keep an eye on your surroundings.

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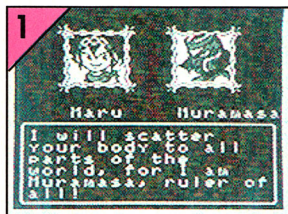
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wakes up, locates the criminals' trail, and follows it until he finds Cori, his girlfriend.

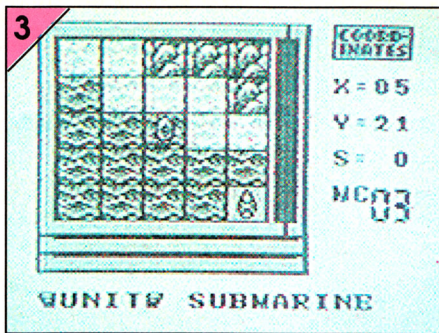
As Maru, the long and winding journey you face takes you to six different countries, including such exotic locales as Egypt, Greece, Brazil, and Japan. Each country occupies one of the game's six levels. Along the way, you'll wage war against strange and fantastic monsters, all of them sworn to keep you forever apart from your beloved Cori. Three of the levels feature underwater action, so you'd better pack a swimsuit.

As in most action-adventure games, you can find weapon power-ups and other special items. For instance, there's a wagon that makes you invincible, a healing potion that boosts your score, and an amulet that can be adapted to a number of different purposes.

Power Mission

Have you ever played the board game Battleship? If so, you may experience feelings of déjà vu when you play NTVIC's *Power Mission*. Essentially, this is Battleship for the Game Boy.

The object of *Power Mission* is to



discover and sink the enemy fleet while protecting your own ships. The ocean in which *Power Mission* takes place has been divided up into a grid map, similar to the boards in Battleship.

Your first order of the day is to select the ships that will comprise your fleet. You can choose them from a variety of vessels: submarines, destroyers, battleships, and so on. This requires some strategic thinking, because the ships carry different weapons and can travel

at different speeds. One of your choices is particularly significant — the flagship.

Although your fleet can expect to suffer some damage and perhaps lose some ships, your flagship must be protected at all costs. In *Power Mission*, the flagship is like the king in a chess match.

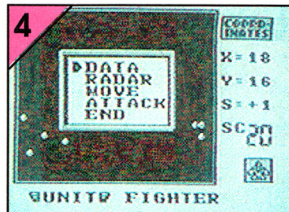


1 *Maru's Mission:* Won't you help the little guy on the left rescue his missing girlfriend?

2 *Maru's Mission:* Your enemies are working against you, and in some areas, so is the terrain.

3 *Power Mission:* Seek and destroy, but don't let it happen to you. Those are words to sail by in this game.

4 *Power Mission:* You're loaded with as many options as you have weapons. This screen helps you use them.



You begin your offensive by exploring enemy areas and conducting radar searches for hostile targets. When it's time to do battle, you engage the enemy much as you would in Battleship — by attacking one grid at a time. In the standard one-player mode, you play the computer; in two-player mode, you challenge another person by hooking two Game Boys together with a Game Link Cable.

GP

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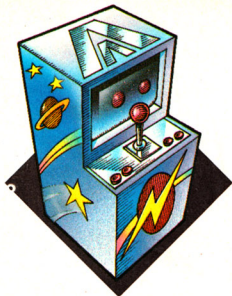


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Usually I don't go for "cute" games — you know, the ones with happy little creatures bouncing around the screen collecting hearts and flowers and other nauseatingly wholesome things. Once in a while, however, some enterprising company adds a clever new twist to an old formula and *presto!* — a classic is born. That's what Bally/Midway has done with its new four-player adventure, *Trog*.

The action takes place on the island of Og, where you must guide a cute little dinosaur through a maze of bones to collect eggs. As in *Pac-Man*, this simple task is hindered by roving bad guys, in this case hungry, one-eyed cavemen called Trog. Other hazards include tar pools and bottomless pits, plus the ever-present danger of falling off the island.

What sets *Trog* apart from other maze-chase games is a remarkable new animation technique invented by Bally/Midway. Called *playmation*, it combines digitized computer graphics with another animation technique known as *claymation*. In claymation, small figures are fashioned out of modeling clay and then animated with stop-action pho-



ARCADE ACTION

Trog Breaks New Ground

Scott Wolf

tography. Examples of claymation include TV commercials starring the California Raisins and the Domino Pizza "Noid" character. Clay figures are also used in *playmation*, but the photographs are digitized

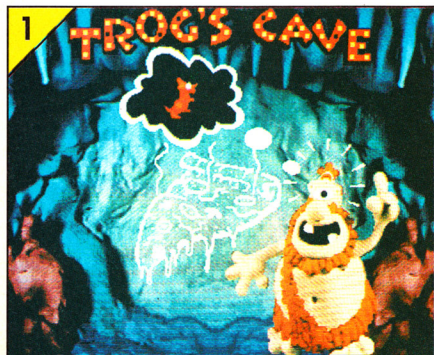
with a computer. The digitized images are then displayed on the screen in rapid succession to create the illusion of movement.

Using *playmation*, Bally/Midway's designers have created some of the most sophisticated action in videogame history. Pick your dino — red Rex,

blue Bloop, yellow Spike, or purple Gwen. Then start collecting the dino eggs that will lead you home. Soon the hungry Trog's will appear, climbing out of the very earth. If they catch your dino, they'll quickly carve him up and eat him, leaving behind nothing but a skeleton.

But the dinos aren't defenseless. They pack a mean punch, and when they eat hot chili peppers, they can breathe fatal fireballs. Best of all, like the flashing power pills in *Pac-Man*, pineapples allow the dinos to turn the tables on their pursuers. After eating a pineapple, your friendly dino temporarily becomes a rampaging Tyrannosaurus, gulping down the panicking Trog's in one bite.

When you've collected all of the eggs, your dino's home appears, and getting him there safely ends the round. (In a game with two or more players, the first dino who gets home wins the round.) Between rounds, the frustrated Trog retires to his cave and starts drawing on the wall to illustrate the problem he's having. For instance, he might draw symbols that mean "Trog hungry!", then come up with the solution: "Trog hungry



1 Bally/Midway's *Trog* uses a new animation technique that combines digitized computer images with claymation.

2 The object in *Trog* is to collect all the eggs with your dinosaur while avoiding the hungry cavemen.



ARCADE ACTION



— eat dino!”

The cute playmation, the background music, and the constant introduction of engaging new elements combine to make *Trog* an appealing game — even to a crab like me.

Strikeforce and Harley-Davidson

If you prefer mindless save-the-universe blast-a-thons, they don't get much better than Midway's *Strikeforce*. It's the same old story — a race of giant Saurian lizard men have overrun the New Earth Solar System colonies. Now human captives on 22 planets are being mutated into reptiles for slave labor, all under the command of

the Saurian Mega-Star, Apocalypse. Gosh, do you think your mission might be to free the colonies and destroy Apocalypse?

Strikeforce is a brilliant update of Williams's classic *Defender*, featuring two-way horizontal scrolling and one- or two-person play. The eight-way joystick allows full maneuverability as your ship skims over the planet surface, and there are four buttons for firing weapons. You decide which planets to attack, which weapons to use, when to purchase additional firepower, and, ultimately, when to take on Apocalypse. Your allies include infantry soldiers equipped with jet-packs and the latest in lethal weaponry. Between planets, there's a nice sequence that shows your fighter jumping to lightspeed, as seen from the cockpit of your drop ship.

Pinball wizards should take a look at Bally's new *Harley-Davidson* game. The premise seems to be a cross-country motorcycle run from Los Angeles to Laconia, New Hampshire, complete with speed traps, rest stops, and police harassment. But, to tell the truth, I don't care about the premise. All I know is that when you insert your coin, the whole pinball machine rumbles to life, growling and vibrating like a real hunk of Milwaukee iron.

If you close your eyes and press the flipper buttons, you can almost feel 1340cc's of American-made motorcycle rev at your command. When you pull back the plunger and shoot the ball, you'll practi-

cally smell the rubber as the H-D breaks free and roars off into the wind. This isn't just a game — it's a way of life!

GP

1 Up to four people can play *Trog* at once. The winner is declared Top Dino.

2 Midway's *Strikeforce* pits you against ruthless lizard men who are converting human space colonists into reptilian slaves.

3 The horizontal scrolling action in *Strikeforce* is reminiscent of *Defender* as you fly your spaceship over the surface of each planet.

4 Bally's *Harley-Davidson* pinball game roars to life like a real motorcycle when you drop in your quarters.



Colonizing and conquering planets has always been a popular subject in science fiction. The general idea is that humanity will go forth unto the stars and find planets suitable for human habitation, thereby easing some of the pressure on an increasingly overpopulated Earth. Once past these initial colonizations, however, things get more complicated.

For instance, if we meet other intelligent civilizations who are also colonizing the galaxy, there's a pretty good chance we'll have a wee squabble over who gets first dibs on the choicest planets. And that brings up the messy business of establishing garrisons, building space navies, and even sending space marines to invade and conquer the other guy's territories.

The conquest of space has been a popular theme in computer games as well. Omnitrend's *Universe I* and *Universe II* (but not the third installment) dealt with galaxy management on a complex level, and SSG's *Reach for the Stars* also captured the imaginations of PC gamers. Now come two more



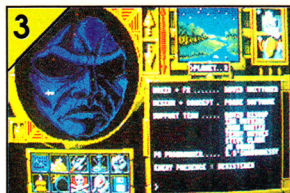
PC PLAYERS

Overlord and Imperium

Neil Randall

efforts, and both are very good. They're also very different from each other.

Imperium, from Electronic Arts, is closer to the *Universe* series and *Reach for the Stars*. Although it replaces the spreadsheet-like menus of those earlier games with much more attractive screen windows, and also includes a sophisticated alliance system, *Imperium* continues the tradition of conquering by numbers. Basically, you adjust the



money you want to spend on various activities, then push the game to the next turn and see what happens.

Mastertronic's *Overlord*, on the other hand, puts more emphasis on graphics. The entire game can be played with a mouse (you scarcely touch the keyboard), and there are no alliances to worry about. Instead, it's just you against the evil empire, which is trying to expand the same way you are. The graphics are strong, and the player interface, for the most part, works very well.

Overlord

This is a fast-moving game with a very fixed set of objectives, and that's extremely welcome. *Overlord* makes you feel like a ruler with a mission, and time and events are conspiring against you.

As the absolute ruler of Epsilon, you are up against four newly discovered enemies. You must defeat them one at a time, which means taking control of their starbases. Once you've captured an enemy starbase, you can amass troops and ships in preparation for conquering the next foe. You win by defeating all four of them in succession, thereby remaining supreme commander of the known universe.

Although you can open the contest against any one of the four enemy commanders, the apelike Wotok is the most obvious choice. Wotok's planetary system, Hitotsu, has only eight planets to worry about, and Wotok isn't particu-



Overlord: Of the four opponents you have to face, Rorn is the most dangerous. He's also the most mysterious.

You can buy several different kinds of equipment. This battle cruiser is one of the most important.

The main screen displays the solar system, a picture of the current planet, an icon bar, and a sinister face looking down at you.



PC PLAYERS

larly bright.

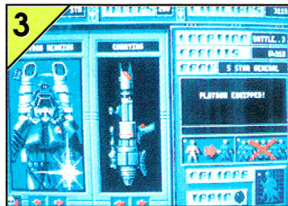
Once you've conquered Wotok, move on to the Futatsu system and its leader, Smine. Here, 16 planets await your, uh, liberation, but Smine is smarter than Wotok. Next comes the 32-planet Mittsu system, whose reptilian commander, Krart, is very good at strategy. Finally there's the mysterious and brilliant Rorn, who rules the 32-planet Yottsu system. If you get past him, you've won the game — but doing so is anything but easy.

At the beginning of each stage, you have control over nothing but your starport, a planet which serves as your base of operations. Your opponent has control of his starport as well. Between the starports are planets waiting to be colonized. Each planet is a worthless shell,



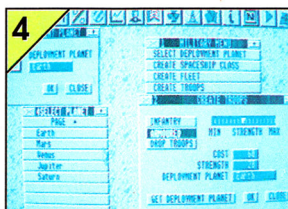
and your first task is to build an atmosphere processor to "format" the world. Once a planet is formatted, you can send equipment to begin making it a productive part of your empire.

You also start with a certain amount of money, with which you must purchase the atmosphere generator and other equipment. You can buy such items as solar



satellite generators, mining stations, horticultural stations, cargo ships, and battle cruisers. You can purchase as many of these items as you can afford, but you'll need only one atmosphere generator (you send it from planet to planet).

Your starport needs mining and horticultural stations, as well as a solar generator, to build up its economy and improve the quality of life. Eventually, all formatted planets will need the same things, and some will need two or more of each item. As ruler of the empire, you must maintain firm control over the resources of your colonies, transferring the money they earn back to your starport and making sure that all planets have enough food for their growing populations. Each world also must have enough energy to make the materials it needs to survive and prosper.



Although it's important to strike out early and establish colonies, the game is won or lost militarily. As soon as possible, you must begin recruiting troops and purchasing battle cruisers and cargo ships. Clicking on various icons takes you to separate military screens, where you can form platoons from the local civilian population, train and equip the troops, assign them to duty on your starport, or send them to other planets for defensive or offensive operations.

To equip your platoons, you can select from four different types of armor and three different kinds of weapons. The main question is whether you have enough money to pay for all this equipment.

The trick to playing *Overlord* successfully is learning to move quickly and decisively — not only from planet to planet, but also from one game screen to the next. There are eight different screens in all, and each allows you to perform a variety of tasks. All are selected by clicking on icons, and you don't need the keyboard for anything but typing in the names of equipment and planets.

Overlord moves very quickly. While you're building troops, your enemy isn't waiting around. The only problem is that it gets difficult to remember which piece of equip-

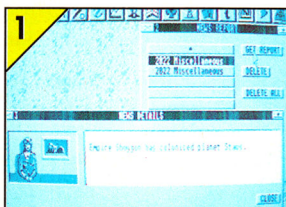
1 This planet has one mining site and two horticultural stations. You'll need more to keep the population thriving.

2 The docking bay screen lets you select which ship you want to crew, fuel, and dispatch.

3 The fifth platoon has 200 troops, very well armed. A five-star general leads the troops, and their training is at 100 percent.

4 *Imperium*: This typical multi-windowed screen shows how to go about creating troops.

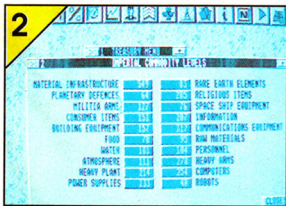
PC PLAYERS



ment is stationed on which planet or in which orbit, so be sure to go around and check frequently. Otherwise, you might find one of your planets suddenly conquered, simply because you forgot to tell your five crack platoons to leave the docking bay and deploy as a garrison. There's lots to do in *Overlord*.

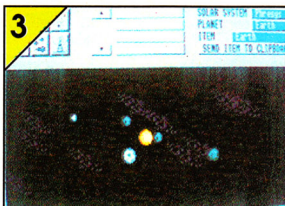
Imperium

At first glance, *Imperium* is less attractive than *Overlord*. Colorful graphics are not to be found, and the game is more difficult to get into. The main player interface is a series of screen windows with dialogue boxes, and your main task is to move from window to window, adjusting numbers and assigning tasks to various personnel, fleets, and diplomats.



Unlike *Overlord*, this game does not operate in "real time." You can call up the windows in any order you choose, do whatever you want, and finally select Next Turn. The computer then performs your actions and those of the computer opponents. When the next turn begins, you get a series of reports telling you what transpired.

As the manual explains, your role as Earth's elected leader is to make our planet the most important world in the galaxy. Your specific objectives are to remain popular; to manage the economy (both internally and by trading with other empires); to succeed both militarily and diplomatically against rival empires; to expand through colonization and con-



quest; and, perhaps most importantly, to keep yourself alive a long, long time by finding and maintaining supplies of nostrum — the galaxy's life-extending drug. If you conquer all of your enemies, or if you survive for a thousand years (each turn is one year), you win the game.

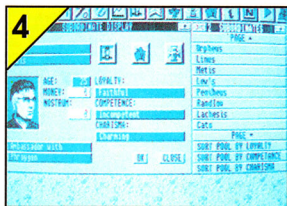
By clicking on icons that run across the top of the screen, you can set taxation levels, build alliances, place embargoes of various kinds against misbehaving empires, call for elections, get reports, build and dispatch troops and fleets, and retrieve the galaxy map. The map is the only real graphics feature of *Imperium*, but thanks to its ability to rotate planets around the stars in each system, it's impressive.

Within most windows, you can

- 1 You want news, you've got news. The reports tell you who is aggressive and how your empire is faring.
- 2 Sometimes it all comes down to finances. The commodity levels tell you a great deal about what you have to do to improve the empire's economy.
- 3 This typical map shows the location of the planets.
- 4 Often, your subordinates take charge. Delegate well, because nobody's perfect for all jobs.

also click on other icons to select details or give orders. It is through these subsystems that *Imperium* takes on its complex shape. For instance, you must select the right subordinates for the important jobs of military, economic, and diplomatic expansion. You must also pay constant attention to reports, and act on them immediately and decisively.

All this makes *Imperium* a rich strategic game. It places more emphasis on diplomacy than *Overlord*, and in almost all details it's consid-

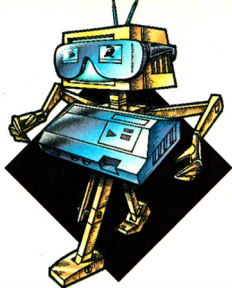


erably more complex. But it's also longer and less instantly gratifying than the graphics-rich *Overlord*. *Imperium* is clearly aimed at a different kind of player.

With either game, though, you're in for a number of enjoyable and exasperating hours as you work your way through the problems of running a galactic empire. It's a tough job, but somebody has to do it.

GP

Accolade is regarded as one of the top computer game publishers around. So when we heard last year that Accolade was producing Genesis titles, it came as very welcome news. Considering the company's expertise and considerable catalog of best-selling computer games, Accolade could conceivably become as important a force in the Genesis arena as Electronic Arts, another computer software company that's taking the Sega market by storm.



SEGA PLAYERS

Star Control

Matthew A. Firme



Ishido: The Way of Stones was Accolade's first Genesis title. And in a way, it was the company's last, because Accolade has just announced the formation of a new label, Ballistic. According to Accolade, Ballistic is the company's "premium brand of 16-bit software," and will stress top-notch animation, graphics, and sound, along with challenging and enjoyable game play. Ballistic's first titles will be designed for the Genesis, although the company plans to publish games for the Super NES and NEC TurboGrafx-16, too.

Star Control

As though to emphasize how serious Ballistic really is about producing "premium" 16-bit games, the first title the company sent us was the very impressive *Star Control*. At 12 megabits, it's by far the largest Genesis game ever produced. Even more impressive than the size of the game, though, is the game itself.



Star Control is a science-fiction war game that pits the Alliance of Free Stars against the Ur-Quan Hierarchy. The Hierarchy is an ancient conglomeration of the ruthless Ur-Quan slave traders and their associates. The Ur-Quan are an evil, conquering race, and their lives are committed to subjugating every other race they come across.

The Alliance, on the other hand, is a democratic federation of cultures which believe in peaceful co-existence and negotiation. For centuries the Alliance monitored Ur-Quan aggression, using military defenses and negotiations to

safeguard Alliance planets.

During all this time, the planet Earth remained isolated from alien cultures and was unaware of any other intelligent life in the universe. Only after centuries of international warfare was Earth finally able to achieve a peaceful world government. One day a scout ship for Star Control, the military arm of Earth's government, reported the incredible — contact with an alien vessel. The vessel was piloted by members of the Chenjesu, the most powerful race in the Alliance of Free Stars. The Chenjesu told the humans aboard the scout ship that Earth



1 *Star Control* offers beautiful closeups of each ship. This is the Androsynth Guardian.

2 The Chenjesu Broodhome actually grows the weapons it uses against the enemy. It's a slow and sluggish ship, but it can beat just about anything the Ur-Quan Hierarchy puts up against it.

3 Armed with fighter squadrons and fusion blasts, the Ur-Quan Dreadnought is a nightmare to the Alliance ships that must face it.

4 The Earthling Cruiser is crude by most standards, but its MX missiles and SDI-surplus lasers can be fairly effective.

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was in danger. The Ur-Quan were advancing toward Earth's solar system.

Earth's top officials, a bit disturbed that they hadn't been contacted by the aliens sooner, invited an Alliance delegation to Earth. As *Star Control* begins, Earth has joined the Alliance and the Ur-Quan are closing fast on our solar system.

This background story might sound like the plots of other games you've played. But while so many games use an elaborate story as an excuse for a simple side-scrolling shooter, *Star Control* lives up to its space-opera proportions.

The backbone of *Star Control* is an assemblage of 14 types of space vessels, divided into two fleets of seven ships each. Each ship is built and manned by a different alien race, and each ship has its own special characteristics. The ships are so distinctive and their crews so alien that you'll have a hard time forgetting you're playing a game of intergalactic

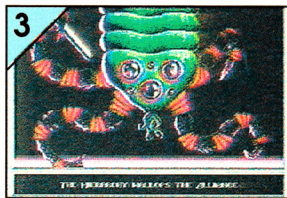
lactic scale.

Consider the Chenjesu's Broodhome, a massive ship that's the premier weapon of the Alliance. Like the Chenjesu themselves, the Chenjesu ship is a crystalline structure fed and controlled by electrical energy. Their weapons are living crystals, generated on board the Broodhome. The main Chenjesu armament is an enormous crystalline form that explodes on command. Their secondary weapon is the DOGI, a very fast doglike creature that zips through space, homing in on an enemy ship. Once a DOGI makes contact, it begins yipping like an annoying dog and draining energy from the opposing ship. If the Chenjesu can throw enough DOGI's at the enemy, the helpless ship will be unable to fire its weapons in reply.

The Hierarchy's counterpart to the Broodhome is the Ur-Quan Dreadnought. This enormous ship fires fusion pulses — very powerful projectiles that can destroy smaller ships with a single hit. The Dreadnought also carries a squadron of small fighter ships. On command, these fast little fighters will zip from the Dreadnought and begin peppering the enemy vessel with laser blasts. If the enemy ship can't ward off the incoming swarm, the Ur-Quan fighters can destroy it without help from the mother ship.

An especially troubling mem-

ber of the Ur-Quan Hierarchy is the Androsynth. These humanoid clones were motivated to join the Ur-Quan out of intense hatred for their creators — Earthlings. Some time before the Chenjesu contacted Earth, Earth scientists had created the droids for physics experiments. But the Androsynth revolted and established their own culture. Their ship, the Androsynth Guardian, is hailed as a masterpiece of engineering. It fires an acid-based bubble into space, and the bubbles erratically home in on the enemy (usually Earth cruisers). An entire field of these bubbles can be re-



When two ships approach each other, the screen zooms in for a closer view of the action. Here, a Shofixti scout ship attacks a Mycon Pod.

1

In the Full Game scenarios, battles occur only when enemy ships find themselves in orbit around the same planet. The winner takes control of the planet.

2

The only time you'll get a close look at the Ur-Quan is when they've walloped you.

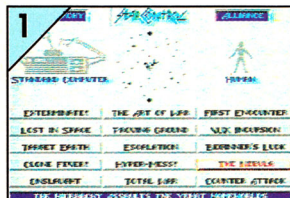
3

Star Control offers impressive options. You can control the entire game, or handle only the strategic or battle portions.

4



SEGA PLAYERS



leased, creating a kind of dead zone. If an enemy maneuvers into the zone, he can expect extensive damage.

The Guardian has one other unique ability: It can transform itself into a blazing comet, speeding directly into the enemy. It keeps smashing into the enemy's hull until the Androsynth ship runs out of fuel. This attack can destroy even the large Broodhome.

All of this space combat is played out against a very convincing cosmic background. Unlike most videogames, *Star Control* insists that spacecraft obey the basic laws of physics. With the exception of a few inertialess designs, the ships can't simply stop and turn. Once your vessel is in motion, you have to use thrusters to turn and maneuver until you're facing in the direction you want.

The game simulates gravity, too. When you move near a planet, your ship is tugged toward it. The bigger

the ship, the greater the attraction. You can even use a planet's gravity to "slingshot" your ship at great velocity. This is especially useful when a slower ship is fighting a faster one, or when you're low on fuel and need a cheap burst of speed.

Star Control lets you pit any two of the 14 ships against one another, or compete in a "melee" — one entire fleet against the other. But there's also a strategic game that examines interstellar warfare in much greater detail.

In the 15 strategic scenarios, you again choose to play as either the Ur-Quan Hierarchy or the Alliance of Free Stars. But this time, each side occupies a certain section of a rotating star field. Each player takes turns moving his ships, exploring new planets, and either colonizing, mining, or fortifying those planets.

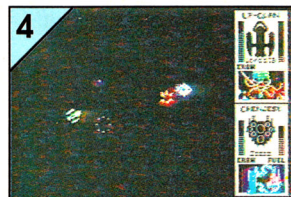
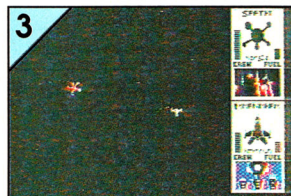
In most scenarios, each side controls a star base as well. With income from mining expeditions, you can build new ships to keep the heat on your opponent. You can refuel and re-crew ships on colonized planets.

Of course, the enemy will try to destroy your colonies and mines. Whenever the two sides meet in orbit around a planet, the ships fight it out, just as they would in a Melee battle.

When you begin to realize how important it is to protect your mines

so you can produce more ships — and to protect your colonies so you can supply your ships — *Star Control* takes on an even greater dimension. Suddenly there's more to this game than just blasting one another's armadas (although you'll do plenty of that, too). You can play *Star Control* on so many different levels, from dogfighting to intergalactic power struggles, that you'll probably be playing it long after you've beaten your other games.

GP



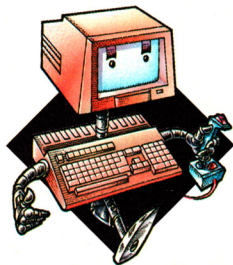
- 1 The game's menu offers 15 complete scenarios.

As you explore planets in your star cluster, you'll sometimes find relics of a lost civilization known only as the Precursors. These relics give your ship improved abilities.

- 2 The inertialess Spathi Discriminator closes with the Mmrnmhrm X-Form. The Mmrnmhrm are a race of robots, and the X-Form is actually an individual Mmrnmhrm.

The ultimate battle — the Ur-Quan Dreadnought faces the Chenjesu Broodhome. The outcome depends on the skill of each ship's captain.

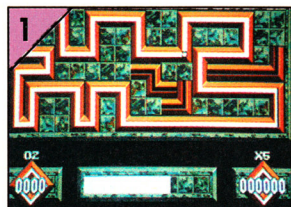
It may be just my imagination, but ever since *Tetris* became such a huge hit, it seems like more games have been starring brightly colored blocks instead of bug-eyed monsters. While these puzzle games may look more like the ancient videogame *Pong* than the latest arcade epic with scrolling 3-D graphics and stereo sound, their appeal is simple to explain — they're easy to learn and fun to play. Two good examples of these time-eaters are Ubi Soft's *Pick 'N Pile* and Mindscape's *Loopz*. Either one



AMIGA PLAYERS

Pick 'N Pile and Loopz

Sheldon Leemon

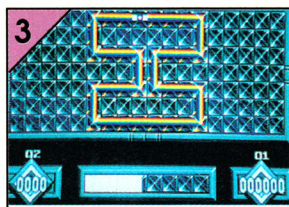


will keep you going long into the night.

Loopz is sort of a cross between *Tetris* and Lucasfilm's *Pipe Dream*. In *Loopz*, straight and curved pieces of track of varying shapes and lengths appear one at a time, and you must place these pieces on the board to form continuous loops. In the standard game, each time you form a loop, its pieces disappear from the board. If you fail to place a piece within the time limit,

you lose a life. When you lose three lives, the game is over.

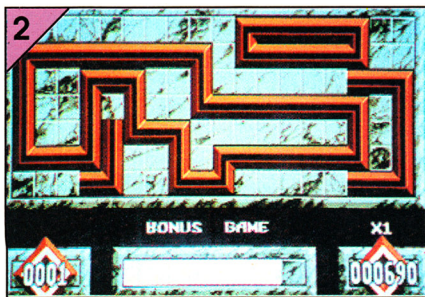
Strategic thinking and the ability to plan ahead play key roles here. The longer the loop you build, the more points you win; but the longer you go without finishing a loop, the more crowded the board gets. You don't want to fill up the



board with unconnected pieces, because they're deducted from your score at the end of the game. Fortunately, you occasionally get a bomb piece that allows you to destroy an uncompleted loop that's logging up the board.

Although the standard game is pretty entertaining, there are several other options to keep things interesting. In a variation known as Game B, you move up a level every time you complete ten loops, and you gain an extra life for every 25 loops. Game B also has two bonus rounds in which the play is slightly different. If you clear the board of all pieces, you enter a bonus round in which the loops aren't removed when completed. And if you exceed your bonus point quota, you play another bonus round which is essentially the same as Game C. In this variation, you briefly see a completed loop from which several pieces are then removed. Your goal is to duplicate the original loop, using the exact pieces that were taken away.

The graphics in *Loopz* are only



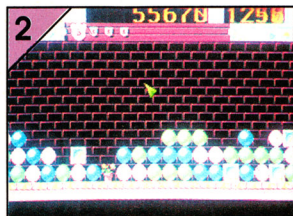
average and the soundtrack is less than inspiring, but what this game lacks in flash it more than makes up for in playability. It also offers versatile controls, allowing you to play with a joystick, keyboard, or mouse. There are even a couple of two-player modes, one in which both players place pieces simultaneously, and another in which the players cooperate and take turns placing their pieces. Since the game is password-protected, it can be installed on a hard drive.

Pick 'N Pile

Although *Loopz* imposes a time limit on placing each *piece*, a single game can go on for quite some time. Not so with *Pick 'N Pile* — each board must be completed within a strict time limit. You get about two and half minutes for the first board, and less time as you progress to higher screens. If this sounds like a frantic pace, it is!

At the beginning of each round,

AMIGA PLAYERS



balls of three different colors drop from the top of the screen and pile up at the bottom. Your job is to make all of the balls disappear by stacking them into columns of the same color. The higher you stack a column, the more points you earn. Of course, it's not quite as simple as it seems. For one thing, the law of gravity is in full force, which means that if one column is higher than its neighbor, the top ball will roll off.

In the colored to the colored balls, other strange and mysterious objects can fall out of the sky. Some are helpful, such as the bonus blocks that add points or multiply column values; the hourglasses that add about ten seconds to your time; and the bombs that destroy up to eight other objects at once. But watch out for the flames, which prevent you from finishing a column and quickly spread to other squares; and the skulls, which



cut your time in half if they hit the bottom of the screen. Some objects, such as the stone blocks, can be either a help or a hindrance — the stones prevent a column from clearing, but can also be used to prop up a column that would otherwise topple.

You can clear the early boards by stacking the balls only two levels high, but later screens contain a lot more objects, and require both speed and planning. If you end up with a single ball of one color, you have to add more objects to the board, greatly decreasing your chances of success. Although tall piles and bonuses can pump up your point total, they also eat valuable seconds. So it's best to get the easy columns out of the way as quickly as possible, rather than try for fancy arrangements.

Pick 'N Pile lets you play with a joystick, the keyboard, or a mouse, so you can choose the type of controller you like best. There's also a two-player mode in which the contestants take turns on alternate screens.

Games like *Loopz* and *Pick 'N Pile* don't particularly show off the Amiga's capabilities, since they could probably be done just as well on an IBM compatible, a Nintendo, or even a VIC-20. Tell that to your aching hand, though, after "just one more game" turns into an all-day session.

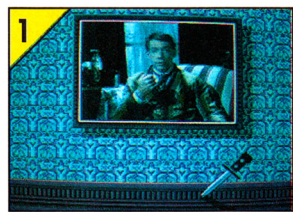
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- 1 *Pick 'N Pile*: Like all puzzle games, this one starts out easy, with only a few colored spheres to match.
- 2 Before long, the piles get deeper and the job gets tougher.
- 3 On the higher levels, rapidly spreading flames threaten to bury your spheres more quickly than you can dig them out.

Last month we covered *Magical Dinosaur Tour*, the first CD for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 that really takes advantage of CD-ROM's unique capabilities. But even *Magical Dinosaur Tour* seems almost primitive compared to the subject of this month's column: *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective*. This landmark CD points the way to what could be the future of all electronic games, on all videogame and computer systems. And as soon as you play *Sherlock Holmes*, you'll realize that it's a future with an enormous amount of promise.

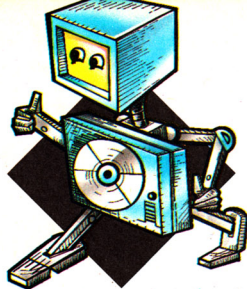
In terms of actual game play, *Sherlock Holmes* isn't necessarily more advanced or more impressive than earlier CD games, or even



many cartridge games. In fact, it's basically a computerized version of a board game. But thanks to the capabilities of CD, the computerized version is superior to the board game, largely because it's more realistic.

Where the board game has you read a character's comments from a book, the TurboGrafx version allows you to meet the character on the screen with full-motion video and sound. You can actually see and hear the character's responses.

That might not seem like such a huge



TURBO PLAYERS

Sherlock Holmes

Neil Randall

difference, until you realize we're not talking about conventional computer animation here. The *Sherlock Holmes* CD contains scenes that have been filmed and digitized. Each scene stars real actors and actresses who move, gesture, and speak, complete with a soundtrack of real voices.

The game opens, for example,



with Sherlock Holmes explaining the case to you. This isn't the usual animated computer drawing, but rather a video of Holmes sitting in a chair, pipe in hand, speaking to you in a very Londonesque accent. Except for a brief pause every few moments (an unfortunate limitation of the TurboGrafx system, which can't handle the transfer of large amounts of data very quickly), it's very much like watching a movie on TV!

In fact, *Sherlock Holmes* is so impressive that two of my friends who have no interest in electronic games immediately wanted to



During the introduction, Holmes talks about London and its people. He also gives you ideas about how to proceed.

Here's a list of the people and places always available to you. Holmes will explain the function of each.

At the start of the Case of the Mummy's Curse, Watson reads the paper while Holmes makes his comments.

This depiction of London is the "playing board" of the game. From here you direct your entire investigation.

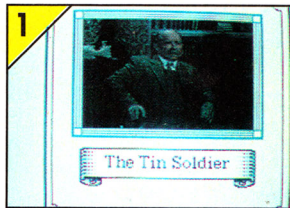
1 This scene opens the Case of the Tin Soldier. Pay close attention to what the inspector says, or you'll have no place to start.

2 The notebook shows the names of people and places you might want to visit during your investigation.

3 Ellis reveals a bit of useful information, but nothing that will send you immediately to the right source.

4 Here's how you receive information from the Baker Street Irregulars. Often it's helpful, but not this time. Except, perhaps, for the cane....

jump in and play. No longer were they forced to endure a game programmer's crude renditions of human beings. Now they had full-motion video, something that's far more familiar to most people.



As you might expect, the point of *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective* is to solve mysteries. You do this the same way Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson did in the famous short stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle — by gathering information and making deductions. In *Sherlock Holmes*, you can draw on such diverse sources of information as your personal files and the *London Times* (which, just to distract you, sometimes contains nothing of interest).

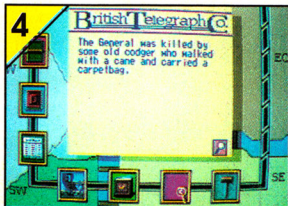
Also available are the Baker Street Irregulars, a hodge-podge collection of young toughs who, for a fee, collect information of varying reliability. Most impor-

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tantly, you can personally visit suspects, witnesses, and officials.

Obviously, the more time you spend investigating, the greater your chances of solving the case. But as in real life, you are often working against severe time restrictions. This is simulated in the game by a points system. It costs only five points to turn to the Baker Street Irregulars, but a full 20 points to visit a person or a location personally. At the end of the case, you are judged according to how many points you expended to arrive at a solution. The lower your score, the better.



I'd prefer a system in which each investigative activity takes a certain (somewhat random) amount of time, but the effect of the points system is important. Even after you've solved a case, you can play it again to see if you can solve it with a better score.

The *Sherlock Holmes* CD includes three different cases that gradually get more complex. Greater complexity means you'll spend more time searching for and weighing evidence, which in turn means you'll expend more points before reaching a solution. When you think you've solved the mystery, you go before a judge and make your accusation. If you're right, the case is over. But if you're wrong, you accumulate additional penalty points.

Each case opens with a scene in which Holmes and his sidekick, Doctor Watson, discuss the case (or at least the beginning of it). They're usually joined by at least one other character. Your task dur-

ing these introductions is to listen closely to what's being said, and to jot down the names of people, places, and any other details you think might be relevant.

Note that the information you re-

ceive here — and the information you later get from people throughout the game — is spoken aloud, not printed on the screen. You must listen to what they're saying and pay attention. Taking notes is vital.

After the introduction, the actual casework begins. The screen displays a simple "game board" with symbols representing Holmes's personal files, the Baker Street Irregulars, a horse-drawn coach, the *London Times*, the London Directory, and a notebook. You start your investigation by moving an on-screen pointer to one of the symbols and selecting it by pressing a button on the controller. Usually you'll begin by reading the *Times*. You can also read the paper copy of the *Times* supplied with the game, and this is often more efficient if you're a fast reader.

After collecting this information, you'll turn to the notebook or the London Directory and begin sorting out clues. The notebook contains the names of important information sources, including such famous institutions as Scotland Yard (the national police). The London Directory lists dozens of names, organized alphabetically, and you must decide which of these people you wish to question, or on which people you wish to receive a report.

When you select a name, the symbols representing the horse-drawn coach, Holmes's personal files, and the Baker Street Irregulars are highlighted. You then decide which of these three information-gathering methods you will

TURBO PLAYERS

try, keeping in mind how many points they cost.

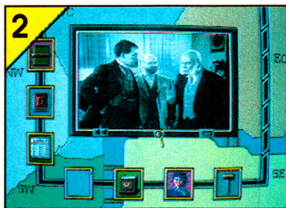
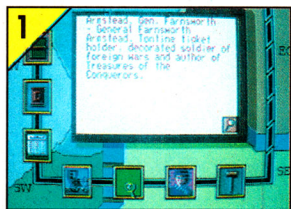
If you select Holmes's files or the Irregulars, you'll get a printed report. If you choose the horse-drawn coach symbol, you'll make a personal visit to the person or location, and that leads to another movie scene.

In each scene, Holmes and/or Watson pay their visit and engage in conversation. This reveals additional information which may or may not help your case. Again, you must take notes of important details, people, and places, because you may have to follow these clues to visit other people and locations. If you visit a location that turns out to be unimportant, Holmes usually makes an understated comment that the whole trip was a waste of time.

Not only are the mysteries in *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective* fun to solve, but the game absolutely shines in its use of CD-based multimedia. The producers (Icom Simulations) went to enormous expense to create this game, and it shows. Icom hired a cast of 35 actors, designed 25 Victorian-era sets and 70 original costumes, and wrote more than 80 pages of dialogue. Each scene features a sepia-tinted London that abounds with authentic detail, and in most respects the British accents and use of language are convincing.

If more games like *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective* are released on Turbo CD, the CD player will quickly become a must-have accessory. As it is, *Sherlock Holmes* is a must-see for all electronic gamers.

GP



Holmes's file says little more about the general than you already knew. But often these files are priceless, and even this one has some nice little tidbits.

The general's butler tells you about the general's large collection of miniatures, revealing a strange fact about the figure of Napoleon.

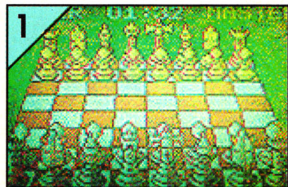
Your visit to Lord Fitch yields a series of drawings, a common occurrence in the game.

For some reason, the judge is a conventional computer drawing rather than a digitized image of an actor. Anyway, his answer is final.

Good news for Lynx fans — not only are we seeing more games reaching the stores, but we're also seeing more kinds of games. Not that there's anything wrong with shooters and bop-'til-you-drop action-adventures. But even the most ardent gamers need to give their thumbs a break now and then.

Last month's surprise was Atari's *Warbirds*, the first true flight simulator for a home videogame system. This month it's *The Fidelity Ultimate Chess Challenge*, an outstanding chess program from Telegames.

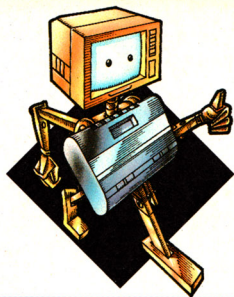
Computer chess programs have been around since the 1950s, when computers were warehouse-size dinosaurs powered by thousands of bulky vacuum tubes. Miraculously, *Fidelity Chess* comes on a flat cartridge that's smaller than the paper punchcards those mon-



ster computers used to eat. When you plug that cartridge into a Lynx, you've got a chess computer that fits in your hand and works virtually anywhere.

But don't judge this game by its size. *Fidelity Chess* plays like a demon. Its intelligence was supplied by Fidelity Electronics, a leading manufacturer of chess computers. Telegames added the graphics and numerous options to make *Fidelity Chess* a well-rounded game for a wide range of players.

For instance, you can switch back and forth between two different views of the board: the stan-



ATARI SAFARI

Chess, Anyone?

Tom R. Halfhill

1 The *Fidelity Ultimate Chess Challenge* from Telegames offers both 2-D and 3-D views of the chessboard.

dard top view as seen in chess books and magazines, and a "3-D" view that shows the board from behind and slightly above the pieces.

There are 17 levels of difficulty, and three different ways to adjust the difficulty. In *time mode*, you tell the computer how much time it has to make its next move. The computer will work as hard as it can to find the best move in the allotted time. There are eight different time settings in all.

In *depth mode*, you tell the computer how far ahead it should think before making its next move, no matter how much time it takes. There are eight of these settings,

too, so if you pick depth mode 1 (the easiest setting), the computer thinks ahead only one move. In depth mode 8, the computer plans ahead eight moves.

Finally, there's *infinite mode*, in which the computer can take as much time and think as far ahead as it wants. This slows the game to a crawl, but will challenge all except the best chess players.

Even on the easiest settings, however, *Fidelity Chess* plays a formidable game. It's remarkably aggressive and unforgiving. In fact, it may be *too* difficult for some beginners. Because it also lacks a teaching mode such as those found in some other chess programs, *Fidelity Chess* may be more suitable for "advanced beginners" or intermediate players rather than those who are completely new to chess.

In addition to adjusting the difficulty, you can also display a time clock, set up chess problems, decide who makes the first move, switch sides during a game, turn the sound effects and message windows on and off, and review (in standard chess notation) every move made since the game started.

There's only one major feature missing from *Fidelity Chess* — you can't save a game in progress. Unfortunately, the Lynx has no provision for cartridges with battery-backup memory, although Atari is rumored to be working on it. In the meantime, the only alternative is to write down the board positions before turning off the machine, then use the setup option to reconstruct the game later.

Aside from this problem — and the ever-present danger of exhausting your batteries before finishing a particularly engrossing game — *Fidelity Chess* is an excellent chess partner, and it makes the Lynx an even more versatile game system.

GP

NINTENDO GAME of the MONTH



Mike wasn't looking for a dangerous adventure. All he wanted was to spend some time with his Uncle Steve on C-Island. Steve Jones was a great archaeologist, and Mike didn't get to see him very often. But when Mike got off the helicopter on C-Island, his uncle wasn't there to greet him.

At the island's only village, Coralcola, none of the people knew where Uncle Steve was, either. All

Jeff Lundrigan

they could say was that he'd been looking for some lost ruins out in the Coral Sea.

Then the village chief told Mike the bad news — Uncle Steve had been abducted! The chief and his sister, the village shaman, also told Mike a strange tale of weird lights in the sky and dangerous new creatures that had suddenly appeared in the ocean.

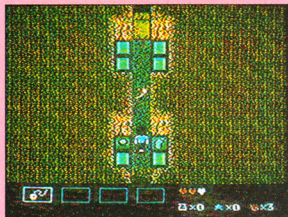
Mike decided to rescue his

Uncle Steve. To help Mike defend himself, the chief and the shaman gave him Coralcola's only weapon: the Island Yo-Yo. Thus armed, and protected by the magic of the Southern Cross, Mike set out to find his uncle and solve the mystery of the Coral Sea.

Nintendo of America
P.O. Box 957
Redmond, WA 98073



You'll have to talk to everyone in Coralcola before going to see the chief. Luckily, the chief is a good friend of Uncle Steve, and he'll get you started on your journey.



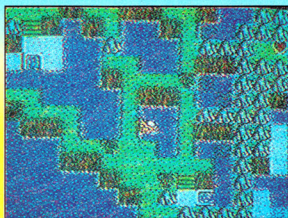
Fire is the first special weapon you'll find. Use it as little as possible. You'll discover another chest with fire a few rooms down, and the more fire you have when you face the C-Serpent, the better.



The C-Serpent can be hurt only when its mouth is open. Throw some fire down its throat, then jump out of the way to dodge its fireballs.



After setting out in Uncle Steve's submarine, the Sub-C, you'll hear a plea for help from a very worried dolphin. If you help her, she'll help you in return more than once.



There are a lot of secret passages on Lighthouse Island, both in the water and through the mountains. Push against every barrier until you find a way through. You'll find passages on most of the islands this way.



There are passages in the underground tunnels, too. If you look closely, sometimes you'll see a faint shadow where the passages are. Push against the walls in every new room — you might be surprised.



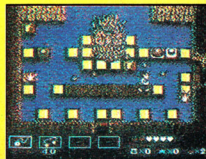
The young dolphin is being held prisoner by Octo the Hedge. Jump over the deadly ink he spits at you and wait for him to charge into range. Freeze him there with the magic snowman, then pound him with the bat or yo-yo.



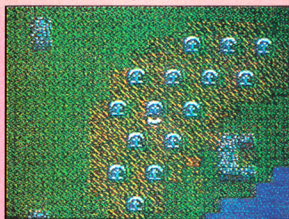
The dolphins will lead you to Miracola Island. The tunnel to the village contains tiles that rise and sink. Be sure to hit both of these tiles on either side—you'll be rewarded with a pair of double hearts.



Boneheads can jump over water, but they stop for a second before leaping. Hit one a few times, then jump out of the way, always keeping the water between you and the Bonehead. Then turn and hit it again.



Magma the Fierce is invulnerable to attack, but you can douse his fire by sinking the platform beneath him. All you have to do is step on two trigger tiles and two switches — while avoiding his deadly fireballs.



The fortuneteller wants her crystal ball back, and you'll have to brave the dangers of Ghost Village to find it. The way lies underground, and you'll find the entrance beneath this tombstone.



The Ghost Tunnels are filled with invisible monsters called Minies. You can't hurt a Minie unless you can see it, so if a door won't open or you're being attacked by something you can't see, use the Rod of Sight.

You can find your way across this dark room without much trouble. Be sure to hit this switch and go south — you'll find the lamp in that direction. Then come back and head east.

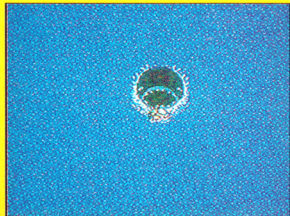


There's a switch to open the door to this room, but use the Rod of Sight anyway. Killing this Minie will open a door to a room with a pair of double hearts.





One last Rod of Sight will reveal a boss named Maxie. He's big, but not very tough. Dodge the fireballs from the mini-volcanoes and give Maxie a serious thrashing with your bolas.

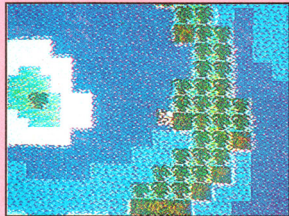


After leaving Miracola, you'll promptly get swallowed by a whale! Getting out of the whale is a mazelike journey. Just remember that the Sub-C can submerge in the "tunnels" inside the whale.



Halfway across this room, you'll trigger an earthquake that begins crumbling the tiles. Leap over this gap to give yourself enough time to exit. And don't forget to grab all three hearts!

Once off Bellcola Island, you'll have to pilot the Sub-C through a series of passages both underwater and through the islands. Search all the islands: There's a big heart hidden on one, and the natives have clues.



The fortuneteller will provide help and send you to the hermit's cave. The entrance tunnel contains this apparently unreachable chest, but if you jump for it, you will make it — trust me.



This geyser is your ticket to Hermit's Mountain. Notice that this side of the room has no door, but you can get in through a secret passage in the room to the immediate right.

On Bellcola Island, Pete the Parrot knows the tune that opens the underground passage. The message he gives you is really a set of musical notes. If you can remember your do-re-mi's, you can play the tune.



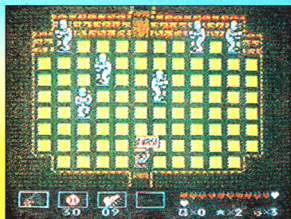
In the room above, you'll find a passage that links these two "notches." Look closely along the left-hand wall for the shadow of a passage to the next room. This roundabout route is the only way to continue.



The Red Megaton Ball is the fastest and deadliest of Captain Bell's three bowling balls. Your shooting star can stop it for a second, so use that precious time to get out of the way.



The Lost Ruins are guarded by the Giant Turbross. His attack pattern is almost exactly like that of Octo the Huge, except you can't freeze the Turbross. But don't despair — your shooting star makes it a fair fight.



This roomful of Muumus is the ideal place to use your spikes. Spikes are probably the most spectacular weapons you'll find in the whole game, so don't pass up a chance to use them!



Broken Joe is vulnerable in only one place — his open mouth. Throw Horse Hide Baseballs as fast as you can, but don't forget to jump over the snakes he spits at. His touch is deadly, so don't get too close.



The entrance in the tunnel past the Big Rock is a decoy. Don't go north unless you like wasting time. The true path lies through a passage in the lower right corner of the entrance room.



Don't even try to fight the enemies in this room — the combination of the Rockys and the power-sapping Fuzz is too much to handle. There's a passage in the center of the left wall, so head straight for it.



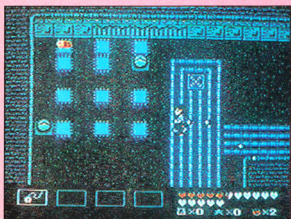
The Twin Sumocho statues can be beaten with Asterisks. Stay on one of the center tiles and jump in place over the Twins' shots. Beating them is partly a matter of luck — sometimes their shots are out of sync.



You've finally found Uncle Steve, but you're not finished yet! Your uncle tells you about the space aliens who kid-napped him, and he sends you into their spaceship to find the three magic crystals.



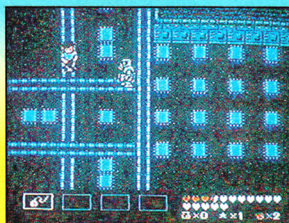
The first room in the spaceship is a bit of a maze. Grab those hearts and head north.



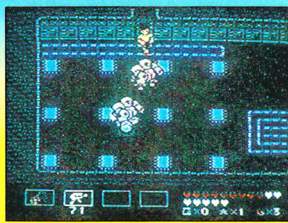
Continue north and you'll wind up here, ready for your first taste of the mysterious Vitamin X. (You'll like it a lot.) Ignore the teleport tile, grab the capsule, and head east.



If you continue east over these tiles, you'll find both a ray gun and a dead end. Grab the gun and come back here, then go south.

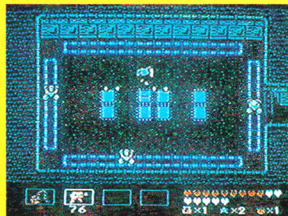


When you get here, go east again over the tiles. Use the teleport tile at the far end. It leads to a teleport crossroads, which then leads to a walkway that goes south.



Destroying these robots is mostly a matter of patience. Do what damage you can and concentrate on staying alive.

Any sections of the spaceship's walls that are cracked can be destroyed. They lead to side rooms containing special items.



You can damage these turrets only when they open up to fire. Jump over their shots to avoid being hit, and destroy them one at a time.



The white satellites act like the Noctos you fought underground, but watch out for the red satellites — they shoot back.

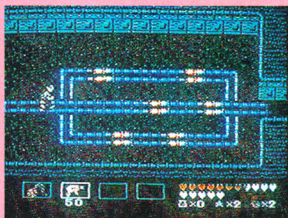


This big robot has a habit of charging all the way down to the south end of the room, and its touch is instantly fatal. Keep out of its way, and shoot it with either the Wide-Beam Gun or the Super Nova.



As you make your way across these tiles, you'll be attacked by a swarm of red satellites. The Wide-Beam Gun is your best bet here. It doesn't have much range, but it covers a lot of area.

You'll have to hop between the walkways here, since you can't jump forward. Hop, step forward, then hop again, and keep going until you reach the other side.



Although this robot flashes when hit, it doesn't suffer damage. Jump over its shots and keep firing, forcing it backward until you can hit both switches. When the end of the walkway disappears, push the robot back again until it falls off.

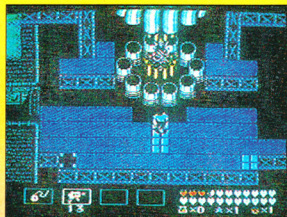
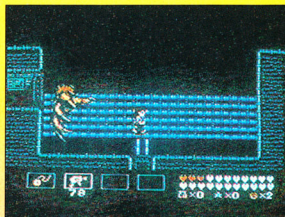


Now you're almost ready for your first encounter with the evil Zoda, the dark and dangerous leader of the alien invaders.



As soon as you appear, grab the gun you'll find on this platform. When Zoda's head shows up, stand to the side and shoot it. Be ready to dodge when he throws his eyes at you.

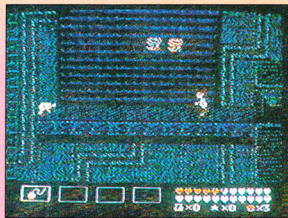
When Zoda's head disappears, quickly move to the center of the platform. If a hand appears, immediately run away from it, then go back to the center. Continue shooting Zoda's head and dodging his hands until he's defeated.



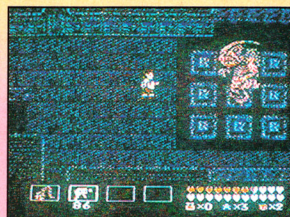
It's not over yet! Fight your way past Zoda's guard-bots until you reach the reactor core. Hop onto the center platform and blast away at the core, but watch out—the platform opens.



If you fall through the platform, you'll wind up here. This room isn't as dangerous as it looks, but don't hang around. Grab the Vitamin X and run for the exit. In fact, if you get low on energy, you can drop down here on purpose.



With the reactor destroyed, the ship will begin to crack up. Run to the far end of this platform and wait for these jumping blobs to attack you. When killed, they give up hearts and stars. Stay there until your energy meter is full.



Now begins the final battle with Zoda—in his true form! Keep your distance and use the Super Nova, which can reach across the room. If you get too low on hearts to use the Super Nova, use the gun. When Zoda throws more blobs at you, destroy them as quickly as you can.

Good luck!



SEGA GENESIS GAME OF THE MONTH

Lisa M. Bouchev

CASTLE OF ILLUSION: STARRING MICKEY MOUSE

Walt Disney probably would have been pleased with the characters and animation that bring this game to life on the Sega Genesis. With its classic Mickey Mouse character, its dancing trees and mushrooms, leaping pink dragons, and marching toy soldiers, *Castle of Illusion: Starring Mickey Mouse* offers some of the best graphics available in any home videogame.

Like many of Disney's cartoons, the story behind this game finds a damsel (Minnie Mouse) in distress, and a hero (Mickey Mouse) determined to save her. As Mickey, you must find the seven gems of the rainbow to free Minnie from her prison. Your search for the jewels will take you through the Castle of Illusion and many rooms that hide enchanted forests, an upside-down toyland, and a library honeycombed with secret passages.

Thanks to its lack of violence, colorful cartoon animation, and bewitching story, *Castle of Illusion* is an excellent game for younger players. But as in most Disney cartoons, there is magic here for players of all ages.



Five doors inside the castle lead to five different worlds of illusion. The Enchanted Forest is behind door number 1. Dancing trees and seed-spitting tulips are just two of the dangers lurking in this shadowy world.



Watch out for the giant apples rolling down this hill! If you jump at the bottom of the ramp, the apples will roll harmlessly beneath you.



Swinging through trees like Tarzan is the only way to traverse this neck of the woods. Pick up the mouse ears at the lower right to get an extra life.

Sega of America, 573 Forbes Blvd., P.O. Box 2167, South San Francisco, CA 94080.



You face spiders and butterflies in the second stage of the Enchanted Forest. Jump from leaf to leaf to avoid their deadly sting.

Reach this nest of loot by jumping on the floating ghosts — the limb is too high to reach by climbing the tree. Afterward, make your way down the tree and look for an underground stash of diamonds.



When the boss of the Enchanted Forest curls into a log and rolls into the tree, he shakes loose a dangerous shower of acorns. If you stay on the far left side of the screen, the acorns will bounce harmlessly around you.



You can't destroy the boss when it looks like a log. Wait until it turns into a face, then pelt it with apples. Hit it 10 times and the red gem will be yours!

If you can't reach something by jumping, try bouncing off an enemy for extra lift. Hold down the C button while jumping to leap higher.



When you find the key in Toyland, the uphill climbs will change into downhill slopes that are studded with diamonds. Press the control pad in the direction Mickey is heading to make him run faster.



Use whatever items you have in your arsenal to destroy blocks in the walls. You never know where you might find an extra life or power bonus.



The easiest way to make it across this jellylike substance is by bouncing. But watch out for jack-in-the-boxes and low-flying toy airplanes.

See that switch near the toy airplanes? When you hit it, the room—along with everything inside—turns upside down. The game is harder to play upside down, but the controls still work the same way. Hit the switch again to return things to normal.



When you reach this area and find two bags of items and a power star, throw something at the lowest yellow block to the right. Another power star will appear.

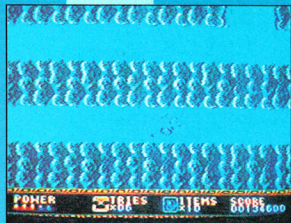
Runaway unicycles can work *for* you or *against* you. If you time it right, you can knock out more than one enemy with a single bounce attack. But if you allow the unicycles to run loose, they might come rolling back to haunt you.



Duck and stay to the left while battling the clown boss. When he throws his springs at you, use them to jump on his head, then bounce back to the left. Repeat these moves until the orange gem is yours.



A violent storm lurks behind door 3 in the castle. If you enter the first cavern you come to, you'll find a stash of diamonds and other items. This is one of the few chances you have in this world to stock up on items.



There's only one way through the first stage of this world — swimming underwater. After crossing the second bridge, jump into the first cavern you find. The underwater passage will lead to the exit.

By picking up a power star when your power gauge is full, you'll learn 1,000 points. Racking up more than 40,000 points gains you an extra life.

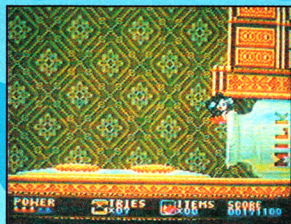


Flash floods are a hazard in this cave. When only light blue water remains on the screen here, make a dash for the next high-and-dry spot. But be careful — if your timing is off, you'll be washed down the river.

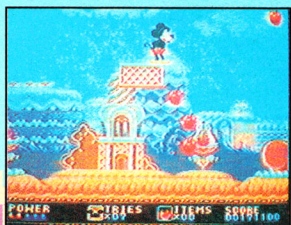


When the first two green monsters attack, jump on them from the left side of the screen. To battle the remaining monsters, stay near the middle of the screen. When they jump over you, pepper them with marbles.

Huge books, tall glass jars, and giant bookworms fill the shelves in the library, but it's a pretty strange place to find a milk bottle. Climb inside to see what's floating around.



To get through this stage, jump on the floating desserts and stay out of the milk. Time your jumps to avoid the candy dolphins.

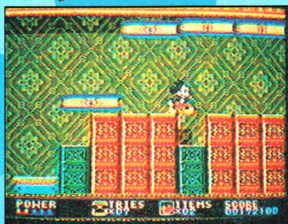


Grab all the apples you can while you're inside the milk bottle. You'll need everything you can get to make it through the library.

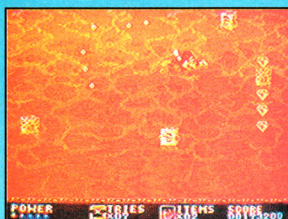


It's time to swing like Tarzan again — this time from the lamp cords in the library. The lights will turn on and off as you swing, and watch out for a low-flying airplane when your feet hit solid ground.

There are two ways to get past these giant falling books. You can run straight across the shelf, or stop and duck in the gaps formed by the smaller books. Running straight across is easier than trying to duck at the right time.



There's more than one secret room in the library. You'll be able to pause for two tea breaks in this stage to score extra points.



If you dive into the teacup, you'll find diamonds floating among the sugar cubes. But watch out — each time Mickey takes a hit (even from a sugar cube), he loses power.

This mouse hole leads to a secret room where two alphabet guards are protecting two power stars and a bag of items. If you manage to collect 20 items and find another bag, you'll earn ten more items plus 1,000 points.



This pink dragon might *look* friendly, but he's guarding the blue gem. Stay on the middle cake island and wait for the dragon to pop up, then jump on his head.



In this part of the castle, floating chunks of granite block your path. If you watch how they fall, you can figure out the best way to get past them.



To jump over this rolling iron ball, follow it toward the wall. When it starts to roll back toward you, leap over it to safety.

You'll have to time your jump just right to grab this star. If you land in the blue goo, you'll lose a life, no matter how many power bulbs you have.

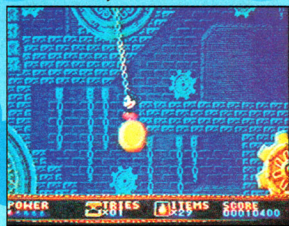


The second rolling ball is easier to avoid. Follow it along its path until it rolls into the wall. When it reverses direction, duck into the nearest cubbyhole until it rolls over you, then jump to safety.



The purple-tinted blocks will fall once you jump on them. When this one starts to fall, jump left to safety. If you jump straight down, you'll find yourself in a puddle of blue goo.

If you find a safe spot, you might want to just hang around for a while and figure out how things work. It'll be easier to defeat the enemies and get past the barriers if you know how they move.



Stay as close as possible to this boss, then duck under his punches and jump on his head when he's not attacking. If you defeat him, the violet gem — the last jewel of the rainbow — will be yours.



Look for an opening between the ghostly guardians flying around Mizrabel. Whenever you get a chance, jump on her head. If you can keep it up, you'll beat the wicked witch and set Minnie free.

GP

COMPUTER GAME
of the MONTH
Gary Meredith

Eye Beholder of the

When you first set out on a life of adventure, you dream of noble quests and valiant battles, all played out in a fantasy land of verdant fields and azure skies. So how did you manage to end up slogging — cold, hungry, and wounded — through knee-deep sewage?

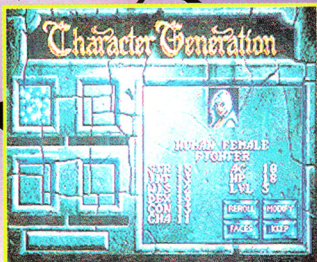
Well, the quest business isn't what it used to be, and you're probably lucky just to have a job. But ferreting out the evil that dwells in the sewers beneath the

city of Waterdeep isn't exactly what you had in mind.

Eye of the Beholder is the first in a new series of graphics-based Advanced Dungeons & Dragons games from SSI. It takes you down into the dark recesses and forgotten passages of ancient Waterdeep, a city from the Forgotten Realms series of fantasy role-playing games. You and your hardy band of adventurers have been commissioned to find the



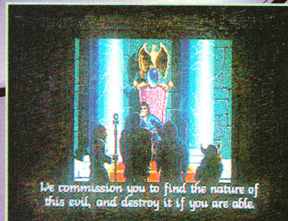
The growing terror of the populace moves the council of Waterdeep to issue a call for adventurers. From among the many petitioners, one group will be chosen to save the city.



Your choice of group members should take into account all eventualities, but your primary concern should be for a couple of good, tough warriors.

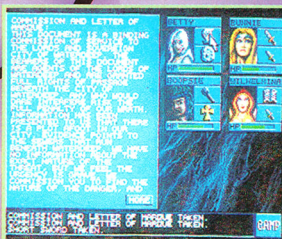
IBM, Tandy, and compatibles: 640K minimum memory; CGA, EGA, MCGA, VGA, or Tandy 16-color graphics; hard disk and mouse optional but recommended; supports Ad Lib and Sound Blaster boards. Strategic Simulations, Inc., 675 Almanor Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

Eye of the Beholder

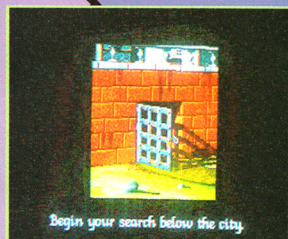


We commission you to find the nature of this evil, and destroy it if you are able.

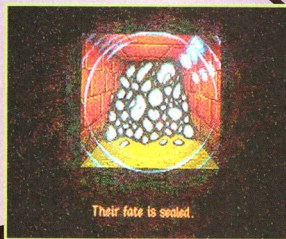
The mayor of Waterdeep gives your group its final instructions and once more warns you of the dangers that await beneath the city.



The charter scroll awarded by the city council authorizes you to use all means, both natural and supernatural, to combat the evil in the city sewers.



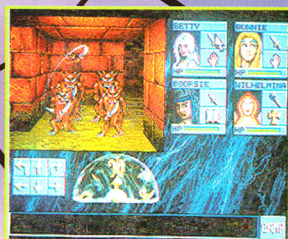
Begin your search below the city.



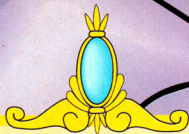
The evil and mysterious Xanathar watches your every move and traps you within his domain by collapsing the exit tunnel.



You won't get much respite from attack, even at the beginning. After picking up whatever items you find in the first room, you'll be confronted by this fellow, hiding behind the door on the left.



Kolbolds are pesky characters who, unfortunately, seem to travel in groups. They're not very tough, however, and usually one good swing of your sword is enough.



source of the evil emanations recently detected in the city. Legends tell of criminals, wizards, zombies, and undead skeletons, and of a mysterious being known only as Xanathar. All too soon, you discover that these creatures are not mere legends. Now you're battling your way through hordes of ghouls while searching for the secrets of Waterdeep's catacombs.

It's not all fighting, however. The mazelike sewers have mechanisms for rerouting the city's wastes, and these devices present a variety of puzzles to be solved. To further confound the would-be adventurer, many of the passages have obviously been transformed by magic. Add the aforementioned creatures and it's easy to see why the city fathers had such a hard time finding someone to take on the job.

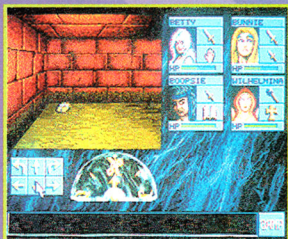
The variety of dangers and problems makes your choice of traveling companions critical. A group normally consists of four active adventurers, plus two optional nonplaying members. Your first two choices (including yourself) should be capable warriors. They will head up the group, so you'll want to make sure they can handle any aggression you encounter.

All six races (dwarfs, elves, gnomes, half-elves, halflings, and humans) can be fighters or paladins, but humans, thanks to their adaptability and aggressiveness, probably make the best warriors. The advantage of being a paladin is having magical abilities, though there's also a disadvantage: Paladins won't join a group that includes evil members. (All adventurers must be aligned with either good or evil, and with lawful, true, neutral, or chaotic tendencies.)

Besides the two warriors, you'll also need at least one group member who's adept at casting clerical spells, and another who can handle mage spells. Clerics and mages can be from any race, but humans aren't as qualified as those from the more contemplative and patient races.

You may also find that it strengthens your group to include a thief, although thieves are often a liability in tight situations.

As with any AD&D adventure, you're wise to keep track of your characters' abilities, strengths, weaknesses, and levels of attainment. (Everyone starts at the second level, but can progress to the 11th or 12th level, depending on the character class.) This is especially true of your mages and clerics, since you'll find spell scrolls throughout your



Carefully search every room and corridor you enter, since you'll need to augment your supplies as much as possible. Food is always a problem, so don't overlook any ration packs, such as this one.



When you see or hear strange movements, always investigate further. In most cases, these occurrences will remain mysteries, however.



Examine all the walls as you progress deeper into the labyrinthine sewer system. Often you'll find helpful messages carved into the walls by earlier adventurers.

Eye of the Beholder



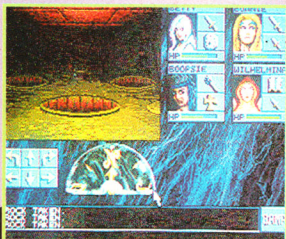
Keep a close eye on the floor as well. Many of the door mechanisms are actuated by these pads. Be sure to collect all the rocks you find — they're perfect for holding down the pads.



Some doors are opened by simply pressing a nearby button. In the dampness of the sewers, however, a door may be rusted shut. Just keep pushing until it budes.



The Kuo-Toa, an ancient race of fish-men, inhabit some of the lower levels of the sewers. Their total animosity toward humans makes them particularly ferocious enemies.



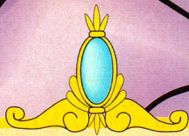
If you press the pads in the correct order, you can cross the cistern openings. But if you walk into an open hole, you'll fall into a nest of deadly creatures.



After a major battle, you should probably camp and rest your group. Then you can heal any life-threatening wounds. Remember, however, that you'll still use up food while resting.



Flinds usually travel alone, but they're a handful just the same. Weapons you can throw — knives, spears, or even rocks — work best. If you have an archer, so much the better.



quest, and you'll need to know exactly what sorts of spells you can count on. Camp often — not only to heal wounds, but also to allow your mages and clerics the opportunity to work up some new spells.

Of course, you shouldn't ignore your warriors. Many of your vanquished foes will provide you with extra weapons, so you should always check your characters to make certain they're carrying the most effective weaponry possible. Keep in mind that fighters are skilled with all weapons, while paladins prefer the "personal touch" of melee weapons, such as swords and maces. All your characters should be well-armed, but clerics and mages are limited as to what they can use.

You are provided with maps of the entire sewer sys-

tem, but be aware that these maps are either out of date, incomplete, or just plain wrong. It's a very good idea either to start your own map, or modify the maps you've been given to reflect what you've learned on your quest. Hundreds of years of neglect have allowed the evil forces below the city to redesign parts of the sewer system. False walls, hidden doors, and misleading directions are just a part of the large puzzle you must solve.

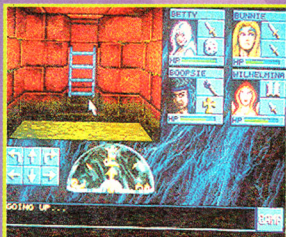
Keep a sharp eye on your compass. Many of the passages have been magically altered to switch directions without warning. There's a particularly frustrating room on level 2 that traps you in a seemingly endless loop by subtly switching directions when you least expect it.

Like other AD&D games, *Eye of the Beholder* is a very deep, time-consuming adventure. It features

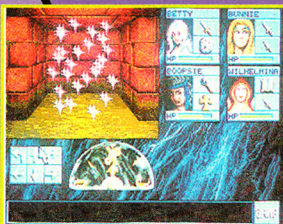
hundreds of rooms and corridors, nearly all of which contain puzzles or creatures for you to confront. The big news is the graphics, which are stunning. They add a new (and very welcome) dimension to the series. The first-person viewpoint is quite effective, and the animated creatures you face are a cut above anything that's gone before in the AD&D series. The great soundtrack is icing on the cake.

Eye of the Beholder was actually designed by Westwood Associates, which created last year's marvelous *Circuit's Edge*. The intimate feel in *Circuit's Edge* has been carried over to this game. *Eye of the Beholder* should satisfy hard-core AD&D fans and provide the perfect introduction for players who are new to the series.

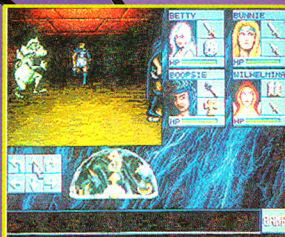
GP



Your immediate goal is to progress to the next lower level. Ladders like this one usually lead to the next level, but be sure you've completely explored the current level before going on.



Beginning on the second level, you can use the RATS (Rapid Access Teleport System). This instantly whisks you from one area of a level to another, but sometimes with unfortunate consequences.



Don't enter the museum until you're very strong and well-armed. The seemingly inanimate displays can quickly turn into swarming enemies if you venture too far into the room.

Maniac Mansion

Stephen Poole Vince Matthews

At a distance, the sprawling mansion where Dr. Fred and his family live may not look much different from any other big house. Once you step past the front gate, though, you'll soon realize you've entered a topsy-turvy world where weirdness abounds and danger lurks behind every door.

Somewhere in that crazy mansion is Sandy, a young college student. Sandy disappeared a few days ago, and her boyfriend, Dave, strongly suspects that Dr. Fred kidnapped her for one of his diabolical brain-siphoning experiments. So Dave, accompanied by his friends, sneaks into Dr. Fred's mansion to carry out a dangerous rescue mission.

Maniac Mansion for Nintendo has been available for

about six months, but it still generates more reader mail to *Game Player's* than almost any other Nintendo game. We receive all sorts of questions, from how to play the videogames in the mansion's arcade room to what kind of after-dinner drink the Green Tentacle prefers.

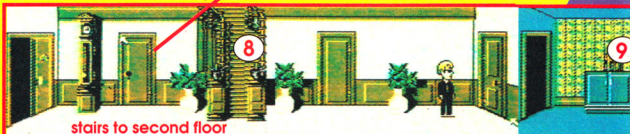
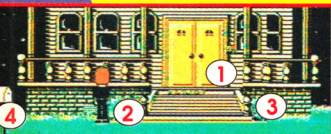
Why are so many players puzzled? For one thing, *Maniac Mansion* is a fiendishly clever game that's difficult to solve. And unlike most games, *Maniac Mansion* has more than one solution. In fact, there are four different ways to prevent Dr. Fred from carrying out his brain-suction operation on Sandy.

In the next few pages, you'll find a detailed map of the mansion that will help you find the items you need to save Sandy. You'll also find a step-by-step guide to one of the game's most

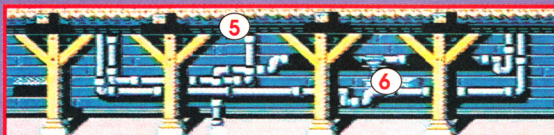
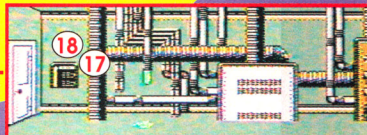
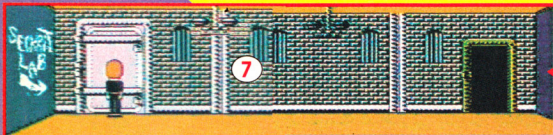
difficult puzzles—how to mail a letter from the mansion. We chose that particular puzzle because it's crucial to two of the game's four solutions.

Finally, we've included a list of several things you should definitely avoid, unless you want to see one or more of your kids pushing up daisies in Dr. Fred's front lawn. (Incidentally, almost all of these hints and clues also apply to the computer versions of *Maniac Mansion*.)

Good luck, and don't forget to give our regards to Nurse Edna!

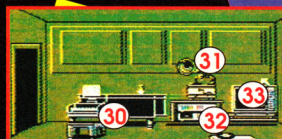
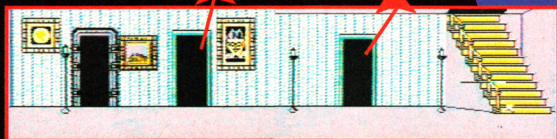


stairs to second floor

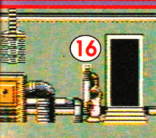
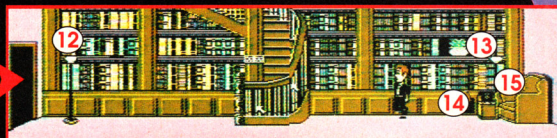
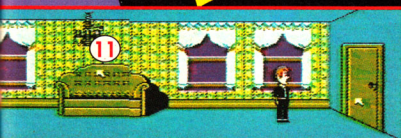
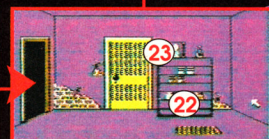
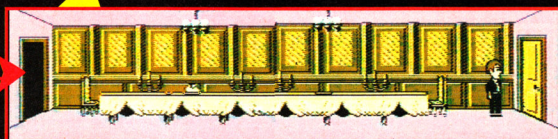
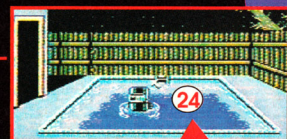
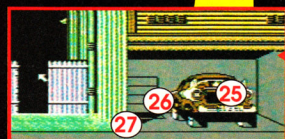


Nintendo version by Jaleco, 310 Era Drive, Northbrook, IL 60062. Also available for IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; Amiga; Commodore 64; Atari ST; and Apple II. Lucasfilm, P.O. Box 2009, San Rafael, CA 94912.

second floor



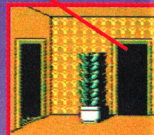
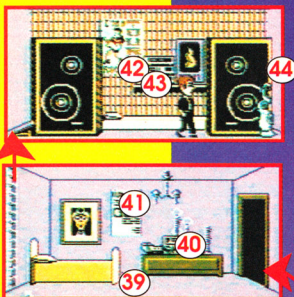
second floor





1. Key to front door under doormat.
2. Grate behind bushes — remove to get under house.
3. Ed's undeveloped film. (It won't show up until he mentions it.)
4. Package with uncanceled stamps.
5. Grate in pantry floor; film developer will spill onto floor directly below it.
6. Water valve to drain or fill swimming pool.
7. Loose brick that opens dungeon door.
8. Push the gargoyle to open basement door.
9. Vacuum tube from radio can be used to fix shortwave radio.
10. Cassette player — use to play high-pitched noise, breaking chandelier.
11. Key to dungeon door is hidden in chandelier.
12. Shed some light on the subject with this lamp.
13. Chuck the Plant — can't be used to solve any problems.
14. Open loose panel to find a blank cassette.
15. Broken phone — repair it with tools from Edsel.
16. Light switch.
17. Silver key, opens door inside pantry.
18. Fuse box turns the power to the house on and off.
19. Use flashlight while fixing wires in attic when the power turned off.
20. Use the microwave to steam open the envelope.
21. Raid the fridge and grab everything you can.
22. Grate through which the film developer leaks.

23. Grab all the items on the shelves.
24. Drain pool to get radio in pool chair (batteries for flashlight are in radio) and a key to secret lab's outer door.
25. Tools in trunk of Edsel.
26. This faucet handle fits the bathroom shower.
27. Move cement slab to reveal a one-way passage to the meteor.
28. Wax fruit; feed to the Green Tentacle.
29. Use this paint remover on wall in den.
30. Syd or Razor can play piano. Record a tune and impress the Green Tentacle.
31. Use the Victrola to play the record of high-pitched noise.
32. Cassette recorder; make a tape of Syd and Razor, as well as high-pitched noise.
33. Watch TV to get mailing address.
34. Manuscript in desk is vital to an adventure involving Wendy.
35. After Dr. Fred plays *Meteor Mess* videogame, high score will be combination to inner door of secret lab.
36. Use key from Edna's room to open *Meteor Mess* videogame



and retrieve your quarter (if you need to play again).

37. Give the Green Tentacle wax fruit and fruit drink, and he'll let you pass.
38. Darkroom. If Michael isn't involved in your adventure, this room can be ignored.
39. Grab dime on floor to use in telescope.
40. Only Bernard can fix the shortwave radio and call the meteor police.
41. Check the wanted poster to get number for meteor police.
42. Record of high-pitched noises.
43. Cassette recorder — play Syd or Razor's demo tape for the Green Tentacle.
44. Key to Weird Edsel.
45. Key to videogames.
46. Move painting to reveal a safe

47. Card key behind hamster is essential to winning the game. Grab the key — and the furlball, if you like.
48. Open piggy bank to find more dimes for telescope.
49. Use the Hunk-O-Matic so you can open objects like grates and garage doors.
50. Turn on shower to move Cousin Ted.
51. Edna's phone number.
52. This sponge is awfully handy for cleaning up spills.
53. Use typewriter to address a letter or edit a manuscript.
54. Man-eating plant; give it pool water and Pepsi to safely reach hatch in ceiling.
55. Use paint remover here to reveal a secret door.

56. Fix wires in attic to make videogames work. Make sure power is off to avoid a shocking experience.
57. Turn telescope twice to the right to see combination to safe.
58. If you've made friends with either Ed or the Green Tentacle (and to get this far you must have), they should come down and move the pesky Purple Tentacle.
59. Take radiation suit from locker and move quickly to next room.
60. Throw this switch to bring the mad doctor to his senses.
61. Grab meteor (or have Bernard call the meteor police). Disposing of meteor in the old Edsel outside sounds like a good idea. The door to the right leads to the Edsel.



SECRET LABS:



GRAVE MISTAKES: THREE WAYS TO BITE THE DUST

Each kid in *Maniac Mansion* can perform special duties or tasks, and that affects the way you approach the many puzzles in the game. No matter which kids you choose, you'll always make minor mistakes that'll get you tossed into the dungeon. Keep this in mind when playing, and save the game at any point where you might be venturing into the unknown.

Some mistakes, however, can mean more than the inconvenience of a trip to the dungeon. They can cost you a kid — instantly!

For example, when you steam open the envelope you found in the wall safe, be careful where you get the water to fill the glass jar. You might think the swimming pool is a nifty place to find water, but think again. The water in

the pool is *radioactive*, and if you cook it in the microwave, the radioactive steam will spell doom for one of your kids.

Another fatal mistake also involves the swimming pool. You'll have to send one kid under the house to drain the pool so another kid can collect valuable items. But you can't leave the pool drained indefinitely without causing a nuclear meltdown. So when the alarm sirens start going off, don't panic and turn the water back on without first getting the kid out of the pool. None of the kids can swim — and even if they could, the water is too radioactive for a dip.

A third fatal mistake involves Weird Ed's pet hamster. If you happen to be one of the first people who bought the



If you use swimming pool water to steam open the envelope, you can say goodbye to one member of your team.

SIGNED, SEALED, AND DELIVERED

One of the most complex problems in *Maniac Mansion* is mailing a package from the mansion. You've got to find an envelope, a stamp, an address, and a way to write the address on the envelope. Oh, there's one other thing — you have to decide *what* you're going to mail. We'll leave that up to you.

You can find the stamps you'll need early in the game. Keep one of the kids close to the mailbox, and when the doorbell rings, send that kid to the mailbox. You'll find a package with some uncanceled stamps.

Next, head for the music room on the second-floor landing, then go to the TV at the far right side of the room. When you turn on the TV, you'll see the address where you can send your package.

There are a lot of steps involved in finding an envelope. First, go to Dr. Fred's room and pick up the dime on the floor. Next, send a kid to Weird Ed's room. When Ed hauls that kid to the dungeon, another kid can go into Ed's

room and get another dime from the piggy bank.

Now pull the same trick on Edna. While Edna takes one kid to the dungeon, another kid can go into the attic above her room. Go to the painting and move it to one side to reveal a wall safe.

Send a kid to the swimming pool, but make sure he has the glass jar from the pantry. Fill the glass jar with pool water, then head to the den on the third floor. Use the pool water on the plant to make it grow, then give it the can of Pepsi from the fridge to make it burp. Go to the hatch in the ceiling that leads to the observatory, but be sure the kid you send up has two dimes.

Find the coin slot on the wall, insert a dime, and press the right button. Repeat the process, then look through the telescope to see the combination for the wall safe. Use the combination to open the safe — inside you'll find an



You must refill the pool, but don't let any of your kids get wet in the process.

envelope. You can address the envelope with the typewriter in the den, but be sure to let the kid who saw the address on TV do the typing.

Finally, head for the kitchen. Place the envelope, stamps, and a glass of tap water in the microwave, then turn it on. The envelope will be steamed open, and the stamps will stick to the envelope. Place your package in the mailbox and raise the flag. The U.S. Postal Service should take care of things from there.

'MANIAC MANSION' IS CRAZY ON TV, TOO

Tom R. Halfhill

Nintendo version of *Maniac Mansion*, you may have a collector's item. Why? Because due to an oversight, early versions of the game allow you to put the hamster into the microwave. Neither Jaleco nor Nintendo endorses the mistreatment of animals, of course, but somehow it slipped by.

Weird Ed really loves his hamster, and if you nab it, he'll probably ask any kids he's friendly with if they've seen his pet. If you *did* microwave the little critter, don't dare show it to Ed. He'll fly into a rage, and the kid who had the nerve to break the news to Ed will wind up buried under a tombstone in the front lawn — along with any items he or she picked up during the game.



Only mean kids put animals in microwaves — and Weird Ed doesn't like mean kids.

The Edison family (clockwise from left): Dr. Fred, Casey, Tina, Aunt Idella, Ike, and Turner. Not shown: Uncle Harry, the human-headed housefly.



Are you going nuts trying to find your way through Dr. Fred's mazelike mansion? Do you know what to do with the can of Pepsi in his fridge? Have you figured out how to take advantage of the paint remover?

If you're stumped by these or the hundreds of other puzzles to solve in *Maniac Mansion*, maybe it's time for a break. Turn off the game for a while and watch TV — but not just any TV. Try "Maniac Mansion," a comedy series that airs on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays on the Family Channel.

Watching "Maniac Mansion" won't help you beat the game, but you might at least get a few laughs. Since its debut last fall, "Maniac Mansion" has attracted some enthusiastic reviews from TV critics. *Time* magazine called it the "looniest, sweetest family comedy of the year," and included the series in its year-end list of the ten best TV shows of 1990.

The TV version of "Maniac Mansion" is an offshoot of the popular computer game from Lucasfilm,

which was later released for Nintendo by Jaleco. Although the TV show has a few things in common with the game — including a wacky mansion, a mad scientist

named Dr. Fred Edison, and a bizarre sense of humor — much of the story was changed for TV.

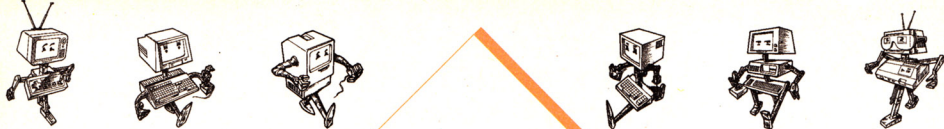
For instance, the mansion is now inhabited not only by Dr. Fred, but also by his whole family. There's his wife, Casey, who's probably the most normal member of the clan; their 15-year-old daughter, Tina, who's a boy-crazy genius; a 10-year-old son, Ike, who dresses like 1950s movie star James Dean; and a 4-year-old son, Turner, who was accidentally transformed into a 6-foot-4, 250-pound preschooler by one of Dr. Fred's wayward experiments.

Oh, yeah, there are two other members of the household as well: Uncle Harry and Aunt Idella. You might have a little trouble seeing Uncle Harry, because Dr. Fred accidentally transformed him into a housefly. All except for his head, that is. Dr. Fred still hasn't figured out what went wrong with that experiment.

"Maniac Mansion" stars Joe Flaherty as Dr. Fred; John Hemphill as Uncle Harry; Deborah Theaker as Casey; Mary Charlotte Wilcox as Aunt Idella; George Buza as Turner; Avi Phillips as Ike; and Kathleen Robertson as Tina. Flaherty, Hemphill, and Wilcox are all veterans of *Second City TV*, where Wilcox won an Emmy for writing.

The half-hour show airs at 6:30 p.m. on Sundays, and repeats at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and 11 p.m. Saturdays.





or more than 60 years, the Harlem Globetrotters have amazed and amused fans of all ages with their outrageous brand of

basketball. Their trademarked blend of slapstick comedy and polished basketball moves has taken them from arenas around the world to TV shows and movies. They even starred in their own Saturday morning cartoon.



The slam dunk may not be fancy, but it's an almost certain two points.

Thanks to *Harlem Globetrotters* from GameTek, the Clown Princes of Basketball are now holding court on Nintendo. You can play as the Globetrotters or the Generals, the hapless team that travels and plays against the 'Trotters. Using an adapter, up to four people can take part in the action, with one or two players per team.

Almost all the rules of real basketball apply in *Harlem Globetrotters*, including the five-second limit on inbound passes and the ten-second limit to advance

NINTENDO

REVIEWS

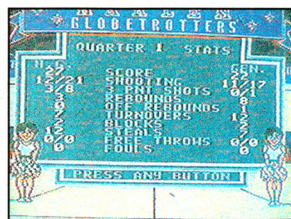
HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS

Stephen Poole

Version reviewed: Nintendo.
GameTek, 2999 NE 191 Street, Suite
800, North Miami Beach, FL 33180.

the ball past the half-court line. Don't worry about double dribbling or traveling, though — players dribble automatically as you move them with the directional pad.

The amount of control you have over the players is fairly limited, however. In single-player mode, you control the ball handler. You can move around the court, pass to a teammate, or take a shot. In two-



After each quarter, you see the stats for the Globetrotters and the Generals.



All the trick shots, including the kick shot, are more accurate inside the three-point line.

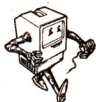
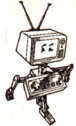
player mode, you split ball handling with the second person. On defense, you can try to steal the ball and block shots.

If you play as the Globetrotters, you have a few extra tricks at your disposal. You can punt the ball through the hoop, bounce it off the court toward the basket, launch a half-court hook shot, or ride piggyback on a teammate before taking a shot. You can also throw a behind-the-back pass, and roll the ball over your shoulders or spin it on your finger before passing.

Because it tries to simulate basketball and the antics of the 'Trotters, *Harlem Globetrotters* falls a little short in both areas. Sure, there are trick shots and passes, but they're randomly chosen for you — you don't know which stunts your team will try until the deed is done. It would be a lot more satisfying if you could perform them yourself.

It's the stunts that make the real-life Globetrotters so much fun, and a little more attention to that part of the game would have gone a long way.

GP



SEGA

REVIEWS

SHADOW BLASTERS

Richard Lashley

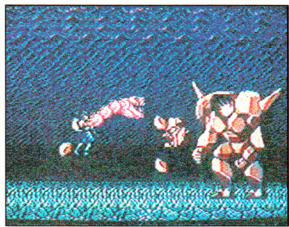
Version reviewed: Sega Genesis.
Sage's Creation, 12062 Valley View,
Suite 250, Garden Grove, CA 92645.



Asura, the King of the Evil World, doesn't like humans. In fact, he takes sadistic pleasure in watching his troops invade our

fragile planet to do what they do best — destroy.

Earth is ripe for plundering, because mankind has fallen from the graces of its patron gods. With the protective shield of the gods dissolved, even the mightiest human warriors run from Asura's soldiers.



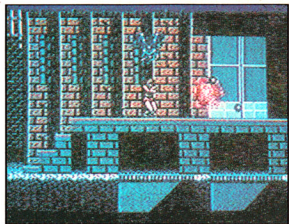
Kallus is the rocklike boss of the Castle Garden stage. To defeat him, dodge the boulders he throws and blast his head.

Not all of the patron gods are sitting on their divine hands, however. Hyprion, the most powerful god, decides to grant awesome supernatural powers to four humans: Horatio, Marco, Leo, and Tiffany. Together, they pool their martial-arts skills in a desperate attempt to snatch Earth from Asura's grip.

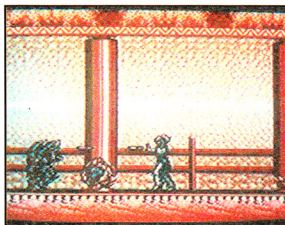
The battle spans nine stages, from the slummy waterfronts of a big city to the breathtaking pan-

oramas of the Heavenly World. You can jump directly to any of the first six stages, but you have to tackle the final three stages of the Heavenly World in their proper order.

Shadow Blasters accommodates one or two players, and you can freely switch among the four different characters throughout the game. Unlike some two-player games, though, *Shadow Blasters* may be easier to tackle in single-



Flying demons, collapsing sidewalks, and diving bats are constant threats in the City stage.



The Heavenly World's vivid scenery disguises the danger you'll face there.

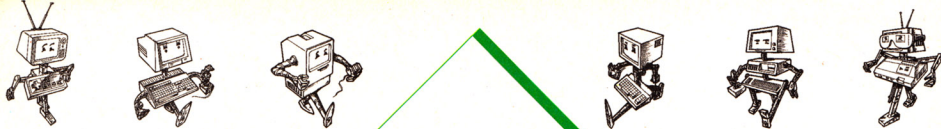
player mode. The screen is less crowded with one player, and there's less danger of two of the four characters dying simultaneously.

The ability to switch characters adds a lot to *Shadow Blasters*. For example, you can fully energize Horatio, then use him solely as your main boss-buster. Also, whenever a character grows weak, you can temporarily switch to a stronger character. Later, when you find some life energy power-ups, you can revitalize the weakened team member.

Each of your characters has a special power that destroys all enemies on the screen, and that's particularly effective against bosses like Vallevo. Saving your special powers for the bosses is a good strategy. In the final round, you'll need a lot of power for the showdown with Asura.

Shadow Blasters isn't a run-of-the-mill, slash 'em, trash 'em ninja game. Its handsome graphics and character-switching feature make it very rewarding to play — not just another rerun.

GP



NINTENDO

REVIEWS

CASTELIAN

Gary Meredith

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Asmik, 50 North La Cienaga Blvd., Suite 214, Beverly Hills, CA 90211.

won't be easy, however. The towers have an ingeniously designed system of platforms, passages, and elevators that spell certain death for the unwary. And not only that, but the towers also swarm with various guard machines, such as I-Balls and Hexalons, which make climbing a veritable nightmare.

You are equipped with Carbon-obombs, which can destroy or stun some of the guards, but your most effective defense is good timing. Knowing when to jump on a platform or duck into a doorway is essential to survival. Even then, *Castelian* can be a mighty frustrating game to play. While the action can hardly be called blazing, it is nonstop and very unnerving, even for experienced players.

If you do manage to make it to

S

ome things always seem to come in the middle of the night — wrong numbers, babies, alien invasions. Of course, to the good citizens of

Jemmerville, an alien invasion seemed only a matter of time. The wealth of their tiny island nation was the talk not only of the rest of the planet Centrus, but also of the entire Triangulum galaxy.

So it wasn't much of a surprise when your boss, the president of Domoloco and Sons, called you with the news that aliens were surrounding Jemmerville with a series of towers. Seven of the structures were already built, and when the eighth was finished, Jemmerville and all its riches would belong to the aliens. And that's where you, Julius, come in.

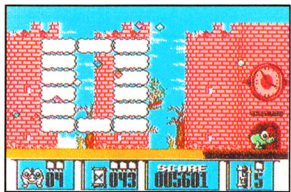
It's up to you to scale each tower and demolish it with a well-placed Destructo Bomb. Getting to the top



Think fast! If you wait more than a couple of seconds before moving past the I-Ball a Hexalon will come along and knock you into the drink.



Be ready to act whenever you emerge from a door. Here, for example, you must immediately turn and fire at the Spheroid headed your way.



The gems in the bonus stage can be cashed in for points which, in turn, can be traded for extra lives. But keep an eye on the time clock!

the top of a tower in one piece before time runs out, you'll visit a bonus round. This lets you pick up extra points, in addition to the points you earned on the tower by eluding the guards. You can trade these points for extra lives, and considering the ample opportunities for getting snuffed in this game, it's a very necessary feature.

Castelian — a close translation of a British computer game called *Tower Toppler* — isn't for anyone with a short fuse. But the graphics are quite cute, and the rotating towers give the game a unique look. If you make it to the top of the final tower, you'll feel that you've really accomplished something.

GP

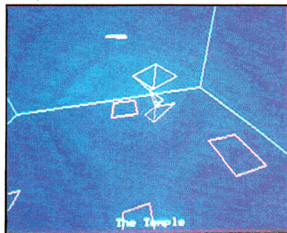


REVIEWS

CONTINUUM

Stephen Poole

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles (ten megahertz or faster computer recommended); 512K minimum memory; CGA, EGA, VGA, Hercules monochrome, or Tandy 16-color graphics; joystick optional; several sound boards supported. Data East, 1850 Little Orchard Street, San Jose, CA 95125.



You can change solid objects to wire forms for an even greater challenge.

you land on the colored platforms found in each room. Once you reach a suitable height, you can propel the Mobile to another platform, and eventually out of the room.

It's not the movement of the Mobile that might make you lightheaded — it's the game's unique point of view. Your view of

the room and of the Mobile constantly changes as a "camera" moves along a 180-degree vertical arc. The sweeping camera angles, combined with the movement of the Mobile, create such a realistic 3-D effect that you'll feel as if you are the one doing all the moving.

Continuum also offers different modes of play. "Action mode" pits you against a clock (and another person, in a two-player game) in a race to rack up points, collect objects, and make it from one room to the next.



The camera offers views directly above or below the Mobile, and anywhere in between.

"Emotion mode" takes a completely different approach. The rooms are grouped into regions, each representing a human emotional state. You can explore any region you wish — Dream, Energize, or Adapt, to name a few — without the worries of time limits or point totals.

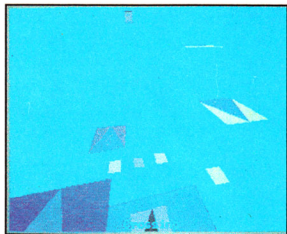
Continuum skillfully blends arcade skills with the mental challenge of mazes, creating a deeply engrossing experience. Check it out — it's well worth a try.

GP

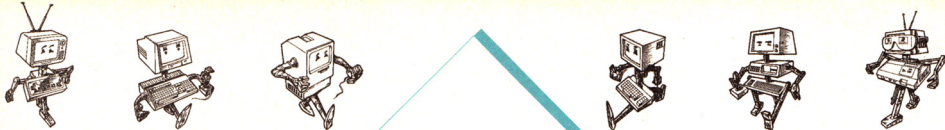
A better name for *Continuum* might be *Vertigo*. The definition of vertigo — "a dizzying sensation of tilting within stable surroundings, or of being in tilting or spinning surroundings" — describes this game almost perfectly.

It's hard to believe that a computer game could have such an odd effect on you. But the animation and simulated 3-D graphics in *Continuum* are so smooth and convincing that if you're the kind of person who gets queasy at the sight of a roller coaster, you might want to check your supply of motion-sickness pills before you start playing.

The game's concept is simple. You control a craft called a Mobile, and with it you'll visit the more than 250 rooms that make up the world of *Continuum*. Although your Mobile has only forward thrust, it will bounce (higher and higher as you gain momentum) if



Platforms with geometric symbols have special properties. These move back and forth between two points.



n the year 2056, a mutant virus invades Earth's defense computer and threatens to seize control of our nuclear weapons. To destroy the virus, scientists come up with a desperate plan: Using a

new, untested invention, they'll convert a human being into raw data so he can enter the computer's circuits and fight the invader on its own turf.



To defeat the round 1 boss, trade in all of your chips for extra life energy and jump into the air when he sets the floor on fire.

If this story sounds familiar, maybe you're thinking of *Tron*, a 1982 movie about a human programmer who enters a computer and hunts down an evil program.

But *Kabuki: The Quantum Fighter* is even more bizarre. The man selected for the dangerous mission is Colonel Scott O'Connor, a 25-year-old computer expert. When his atoms are reassembled inside the computer, O'Connor is stunned to discover an odd side effect—he has taken the form of a Japanese kabuki actor, complete with whiteface makeup, flowing white robes, orange booties, and waist-length red hair!

NINTENDO

REVIEWS

KABUKI: THE QUANTUM FIGHTER

Tom R. Halfhill

Version reviewed: Nintendo. HAL America, 7873 S.W. Cirrus Drive, Building 25-F, Beaverton, OR 97005.



Fast-flowing waterfalls throughout round 2 make your movements more difficult.

It's not exactly regulation uniform for a military officer, but Colonel O'Connor makes the best of it. He soon learns that he can destroy most of his enemies by whipping them with his long red hair. Armed with this unusual weapon and other things he finds along the way, O'Connor sets off on a romp through six sections of the infected computer.



Round 3 scrolls vertically and requires you to make a long series of tricky jumps.

Despite the strange background story, *Kabuki: The Quantum Fighter* is a real firecracker of a game. O'Connor is an amazingly nimble character who can run, jump, kneel, punch, kick, climb walls, hang from precarious perches, swing from handhold to handhold like Tarzan, lash enemies into submission with his deadly hairdo, and throw various kinds of lethal projectiles. Yet the game controls are simple and easy to use. The animation is smooth and realistic, and the background graphics are extremely detailed.

The variations on enemies you'll face are imaginative, too. The mutant virus has multiplied into menacing creatures of every description, and they force you to constantly revise your tactics. Rounds 1 and 2 are a moderate challenge, but the higher rounds quickly get more difficult. Overall, this is a game for intermediate to advanced players.

Kabuki: The Quantum Fighter is loaded with nice touches. The designers obviously paid attention to every little detail, and it shows.

GP



GAME BOY REVIEWS

BALLOON KID

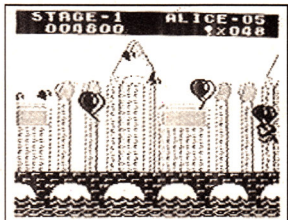
Leslie Mizell

Version reviewed: Game Boy. Also available for Nintendo as *Balloon Fight*. Nintendo of America, 4820 150th Avenue NE, P.O. Box 957, Redmond, WA 98052.

If ever a game cried out for a password feature, this is it.

Balloon Kid is a charming, nonviolent game that would be perfect family fare, but its upper levels are beyond challenging—they're nearly impossible.

You play Alice, who lives with her brother, Jim, in the peaceful town of Pencsylvania. One day Jim blows up too many balloons, and a strong wind carries him away. Instead of dialing 911, Alice blows up her own balloon and follows him through the air.



If you catch 20 balloons without missing one, double balloons appear and are worth twice as many points.

Although Jim leaves behind a trail of balloons, he's not that easy to find. For one thing, he has evidently taken the most difficult route imaginable. You must zip through clouds, dodge under platforms, and sometimes even drop your balloons to scoot through narrow passages.

Other obstacles include spiked ceilings and strange creatures bent on popping your perilous mode of

transportation. You're not helpless, however. You can earn extra lives in bonus rounds and catch special balloons that make you invulnerable for a short time. But it's still tough going for balloonists.

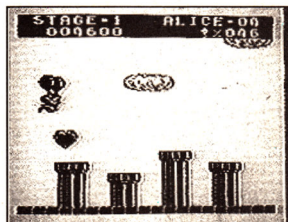
In fact, there are several places in *Balloon Kid*'s eight stages which demand such precise timing that you probably won't clear them on the first try—or maybe even the fifth. If you enter, say, the fourth stage with a healthy seven lives, you might lose them all trying to cross one treacherous patch of sky. Then you must return to the very beginning of the game (not just the stage) to build up another seven lives, and you might lose them all again at the same spot. Argh!

Things ease up a bit in the two-player game. When two Game Boys are hooked together with a Game Link cable, one player controls Alice while the other controls a

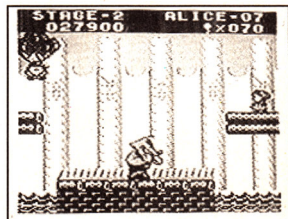
character named Samm. You race each other to the finish line, and there aren't as many obstacles to overcome. If one player manages to break the other player's balloon, so much the better. The first player to win three games is the *Balloon Kid* champ.

But whether you're playing solo or with another person, it's too bad that a game obviously intended for younger players should lack the password feature commonly found in easier games. *Balloon Kid* is a good game—but only if you've got the patience.

GP



You'll earn this heart balloon and an extra life if you grab all the balloons in the bonus round.



To defeat this boss, just drop him on his noggin. But make sure you don't rebound into the water.



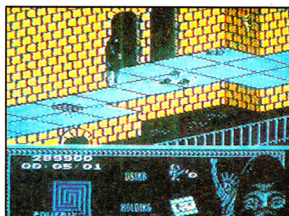
NINTENDO

REVIEWS

THE LAST NINJA

Richard Lashley

Version reviewed: Nintendo.
Jaleco, 310 Era Drive, Northbrook,
IL 60062.



The sewers are dangerous — even for a ninja. If you don't time this jump correctly, the rats will crawl all over you.

stage, the clues are given as riddles. It takes clever searching and thinking to find and use the objects.

Those who are familiar with role-playing games know how complex these kinds of puzzles can be. Solving the riddle is often more difficult than finding what you're looking for. Fortunately, *The Last Ninja* shouldn't prove overly frustrating for most players. The riddles are effective, but not too difficult.

Stage 1 is particularly rich with important items. Among other things, there's a key, a map, and a shuriken. The key has an obvious importance, but the map's value is less evident. (It briefly illuminates hidden objects and passages when you enter a stage or a room.) The shuriken is valuable, too, because you'll need *all* of them for the final showdown with Kunitoki in stage 6.

The Last Ninja probably won't set any new standards for ninja action. However, it does what many ninja games do not — it exercises your mind as well as your thumbs.

GP

If being different helps make a game entertaining, then *The Last Ninja* certainly gets off to a good start. It's a ninja game that doesn't rely solely on

jaw-breaking fights. It has an interesting story and a nice touch of puzzle-solving, too.

The Last Ninja begins in an ancient era when Japan's proud empire is overthrown by the evil Shogun Kunitoki and his silent legions of ninja assassins. The only person who has the skill to stand against Kunitoki and his soldiers



Central Park in stage 1 is full of surprises. Knock out this thug in the leather jacket, then head for the hamburger stand to get an extra life.



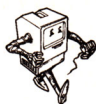
In this room in stage 2 you'll find a Katana sword hanging on the wall. It's a powerful weapon against Kunitoki's henchmen.

is Armakuni, a master of ninjitsu (the ninja form of the martial arts). But during a fight, Armakuni and Kunitoki are suddenly surrounded by a flash of light.

In the blink of an eye, the two most powerful ninjas in the history of ninjitsu are pulled through a rift in time — to downtown Manhattan in 1991! Armakuni and Kunitoki suddenly find themselves thousands of miles (and many centuries) away from Japan.

Before Armakuni and Kunitoki can face each other for their final showdown, Armakuni must use both his physical and mental powers to work through six stages of puzzles and thugs. Only then will he reach Kunitoki.

Each stage includes hidden objects, weapons, and passages. Although the game manual tells you what you must find in each



WARLORDS

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 640K minimum memory; EGA or VGA graphics; hard disk and mouse optional. SSG, 1747 Orleans Court, Walnut Creek, CA 94598.

reinforcements.

There's an economic dimension, too. It costs a lot to maintain a large army, and if you don't have enough income from loot and taxes, you'll have to disband some units until the books balance again. Naval power also plays a role. Ships can carry infantry to strike deep inside the enemy's heartland.

Fortunately, you can adjust the belligerence of your computer op-



You can play against seven computer-controlled enemies or a combination of human and computer opponents.



Illuria's terrain is marvelously varied, and rich with military possibilities.

ponents. On the easiest setting, your enemies tend to be cautious and predictable. On the most ferocious setting, you'd better be prepared to think fast and fight hard.

Although the combat graphics aren't very exciting (a box with flashing icons accompanied by a few sword-clanking noises from the speaker), the game permits some fairly sophisticated military tactics.

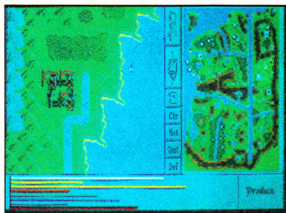
Warlords' point-and-click player interface is simple but effective. The graphics are crisp and colorful, including a lovely map of Illuria that shows how the strategic situation shifts from turn to turn. The excellent manual tells you everything you need to know to jump in and start conquering. And with eight different starting points to choose from, the game stays fresh for a long time.

Even on its least aggressive settings, Warlords is an action-packed and high-spirited game that's very hard to stop playing once you start.

GP

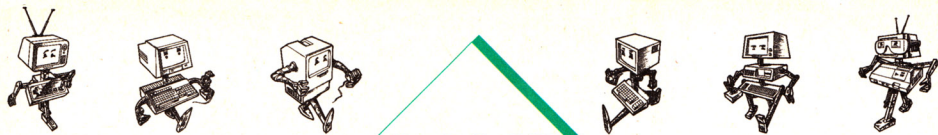
The experienced game designers at Australia's Strategic Studies Group have produced a new strategy game that's easy to learn, dynamic in play, and darn near as addictive as *Empire*.

The setting is a mythical world called Illuria. Eight nations are vying for domination of Illuria, and only a fragile truce has kept the peace. But now that truce has collapsed, and each of the eight warlords (controlled by the computer or up to eight players) has but one objective: to slaughter the other seven and emerge as the sole ruler.



Bar graphs (bottom) show how your production of troops compares to that of your foes.

The warlords are represented by heroes who can move swiftly through the land to uncover hidden artifacts and supernatural weapons. Their armies come in various types, including wolf-riding cavalry and flying dragons. There are 80 cities to be conquered, some neutral and some controlled by the enemy, and each city can produce one of several types of



GAME BOY REVIEWS

SKATE OR DIE: TOUR DE THRASH

Phill Powell

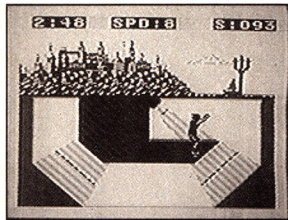
Version reviewed: Game Boy,
Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway
Drive, San Mateo, CA, 94404.

require careful manipulation of the controls as you work the directional pad and the A and B buttons in a variety of combinations.

The other event, the Stale Fish Tour, is far more structured and pressured—but it's also more fun. Racing against a strict deadline, you must travel the entire length of a city sewer pipe in the shortest

possible time. To make things worse, each pipe contains a number of barriers you have to jump. It's easy to clear some of the barriers, but others don't leave you much room. And there's no map of the pipe, so you can't anticipate which obstacles lie ahead—they just appear. During moments of panic, this game could be called *Jump or Die*, because those become your only choices.

You begin the Stale Fish Tour in Los Angeles, which serves as an easy introduction. But the challenges get progressively wilder and more difficult as you move on to other cities. How else can you explain a tour that makes stops in such diverse places as Las Vegas, Nevada, and Chernobyl, USSR?



You'll have to do a lot of heavy shreddin' before you can ride the pipe on the lost continent of Atlantis.

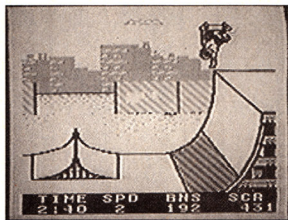
Skate or Die: Tour de Thrash emphasizes action, not strategy. It's a hand-eye workout with its own sense of style and excitement. When you come out of a wicked curve and shoot through a hole in a concrete board-trap, *Tour de Thrash* makes you feel like you're there—way out there.

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ummer's here, and it's time to take it to the ramp. The sun's hot, but you're only a skateboard ride away from a cool breeze.

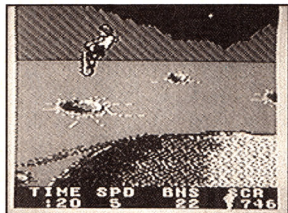
But what if the weather turns bad, and you still want to skate? No problem—*Skate or Die: Tour de Thrash* is the next best thing. The game's designers obviously studied up on this free-form sport before adapting it to the Game Boy. The results are realistic and a heckuva a lot of fun.



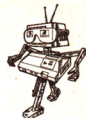
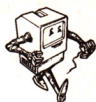
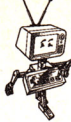
One of the classic moves for the Retro-Rocket Ramp is the Hand Plant Invert.

Tour de Thrash lets you choose between two types of skateboarding. There's the traditional stunt ramp, with points awarded for the flashy execution of tricky moves. Or you can go speed-racing through the giant sewer pipes of eight famous cities.

Each event demands different skills. The Retro-Rocket Ramp offers the most free-form style of competition—you decide which moves you want to try, and in what order you'll try them. All moves



If you're good enough to rack up a bunch of points, maybe you can thrash on the moon, too.

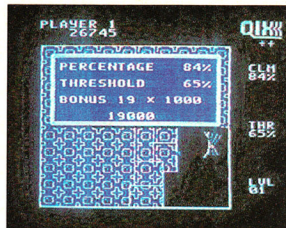


NINTENDO REVIEWS

QIX

Tom R. Halfhill

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Also available for IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; the Amiga; Atari ST; Commodore 64; and the Apple II and IIGS. Taito, 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090. Also available for the Game Boy from Nintendo of America, Inc., P.O. Box 957, Redmond, WA 98073.



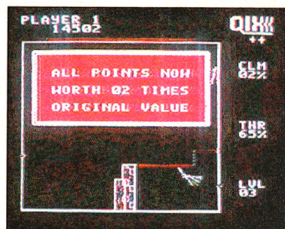
When you get close to the "threshold percentage" (in this case, 65 percent), finish the screen by filling a large section — you'll get more bonus points.

game with very simple graphics.

Each stage begins with a nearly blank screen. Your goal is to fill as much of that screen as possible by moving a small marker. At first, your marker can move only along the screen border. But when you hold down the A or B button, you

can move off the border into the open area of the screen, leaving behind a trail. When you move back onto the border or a previously drawn trail, the area you've enclosed is filled with color.

To advance to the next stage, you must fill a certain percentage of the screen. Points are based on how much of the screen you filled and how fast your marker traveled.



On higher levels with multiple Qixes, you can double your points by separating the Qixes from each other.

To stop you, a sweeping pattern of lines called the Qix roams the screen and attacks your marker. Other enemies include the Sparx (twinkling objects that chase you along the borders); the Spritz (starlike objects that patrol the screen); and the Fuse (a flame that burns up your trail if you move too slowly).

That pretty much sums up the whole game. It's quite challenging, but changes little from round to round. There are no power-ups, warp zones, or stage bosses. *Qix* is definitely a game for older fans of the arcade classic or those who can do without flashy graphics and 1990s-style action.

GP



NINTENDO

REVIEWS

FLYING WARRIORS

Richard Lashley

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Culture Brain, 15315 N.E. 90th Street, Redmond, WA 98052.



You can buy important tools and information at the Shunran Shop.

Demonyx in a final showdown.

That's a tall order, even for a Flying Warrior, so take advantage of the practice mode on the beginner level. There you can develop your martial-arts skills in a safe environment.

Once you're confident of your skills, enter either the tournament mode or battle mode. In tournament mode, you can compete against seven of your friends, but battle mode offers the greatest



Sometimes one of the other Flying Warriors volunteers to fight a certain opponent, so listen to their advice.

challenge. Hulking zombies, diving bats, and nightmarish goons spill out of an ominous landscape that scrolls horizontally and vertically.

Despite its exciting challenges, *Flying Warriors* has some disappointing limitations. For example, although flying is useful and the game's title suggests that it's used a lot, you can't fly until you've obtained a Windyshoes charm. Even then, the predetermined destinations to which you can fly are few, and the charm expires after one use. Also, the only time you use all of the characters is when you're fighting a boss or one of Demonyx's elite soldiers (pieces of the Talisman are won in these battles).

Flying Warriors is a big game, and it offers a nice blend of role-playing and martial arts. But the restrictions on flying and on using all of the characters might keep it from getting off the ground.

GP

Downtown Hong Kong, high noon. For weeks, a mysterious black fog has shrouded the city. Along streets snarled with traffic, headlights mix with the dull glow of streetlamps.

The fog signals the return of Earth's most ancient enemy: Demonyx. Centuries ago, Demonyx was defeated by Dragonlord, the champion of the Light Dimension. Sealed inside the Mandara Talisman (a magical prison), Demonyx was exiled into the cold isolation of space. Afterward, Dragonlord recruited an elite team of kung fu masters, the Flying Warriors, to protect Earth from future attacks.

Flying Warriors is the call-to-arms of this specialized team. When Demonyx breaks out of his prison, only the Warriors can stop him. But the Warriors' leader, Rick Stalker, begins this mission alone. It's your job to help him find the other Warriors, reassemble the shattered Talisman, and defeat



Don't pass up the practice mode in this game. You must spend time mastering the commands for your warriors.



SEGA

REVIEWS

PGA TOUR GOLF

Matthew A. Firme

Version reviewed: Sega Genesis. Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway Drive, San Mateo, CA 94404. Also available for IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; the Amiga; and the Macintosh.

swing is very important.

The backswing is important, too, since it determines the power of your stroke. If you press the button after the indicator passes the maximum power line on the meter, you'll "overpower" the swing. The ball will fly a lot farther than it would at maximum swing,



Keep an eye on that wind gauge! The winds can gust up to 20 miles per hour, and sometimes they'll reverse directions in a matter of seconds.

You don't have to be a golfer to enjoy *PGA Tour Golf*, but it helps, since you'll have probably developed a tolerance for the frustrations of golf. You'll be used to hooks and slices, and to gusting winds that toss your ball around like a kite. Golfers expect such "challenges," and *PGA Tour Golf* does an exceptional job of simulating them.



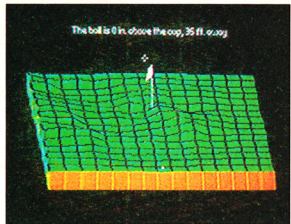
There are four different professional courses, guaranteed to test your skills with plenty of bunkers, trees, and water hazards.

As in many video golf games, you control your swing by pressing buttons while watching a power meter at the bottom of the screen. But the power meter in *PGA Tour Golf* is a bit more demanding than most. It's small, so you have to make your decisions quickly. You press the B button once to begin your swing, a second time to set the power of the swing, and a third time to actually hit the ball. And where you hit the ball determines whether it hooks, slices, or flies straight, so the final part of the

but you lose control. Until you get the hang of using the power meter, consistently making good shots is very difficult — perhaps as frustrating as learning how to play *real* golf.

PGA Tour Golf has some features not found in many other golf games, such as fly-by hole previews, TV-style announcers, and instant replays. You can play an entire PGA season, and the battery-powered memory in the game cartridge saves your progress automatically.

On the greens, a grid is projected onto the putting surface to indicate slopes and curves, and it's touches such as these which give the game most of its realistic feel.

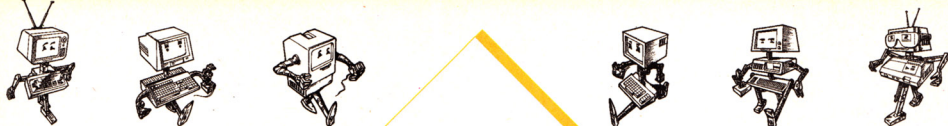


This grid view of the green can help you make some great putts. It's also a good idea to take a look before you chip up to the green.

The graphics are good and convey a unique TV perspective, but they are not as detailed or as realistic as the graphics in *Arnold Palmer Golf* for the Genesis.

PGA Tour Golf isn't perfect, but it's faithful to the look and feel of real golf — complete with all of the frustrations and triumphs.

GP



NINTENDO

REVIEWS

THE LONE RANGER

Jeff Lundrigan

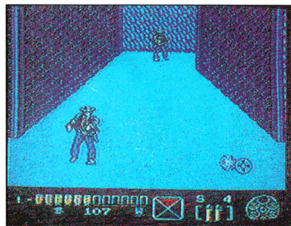
Version reviewed: Nintendo.
Konami, 900 Deerfield Parkway,
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089.

in the style of *Ikari Warriors*, but every so often there's a first-person, shooting gallery sequence as well. The shooting gallery scenes are meant to be played with Konami's Laserscope Optical Command Headset (see *Game Player's*, January 1991), but you can also use a Nintendo Zapper or a standard controller.

Actually, the shooting gallery scenes are the game's only flaw.



Talk to everyone you meet. Not all the townsfolk will offer clues, but you can't complete the game without their help.



During the shooting gallery scenes, it helps to have a controller with turbo-fire. Better make sure you have a good supply of bullets, though.

Shooting is rather awkward with a regular controller, and our testers found it equally difficult even with a Laserscope. Since you have to play a stage over from the beginning when you die, this can mean a lot of frustration.

Other than that, *The Lone Ranger* is a fine game, although the action gets pretty weird at times. The Old West setting is unusual for a Nintendo game, but Konami apparently didn't think the story could stand on its own. As a result, the Lone Ranger finds himself fighting ninjas, of all things, and the final stages in Butch's hideout are filled with high-tech equipment. None of this was ever seen in the Lone Ranger TV shows and movies. We can only assume that Butch Cavendish was the uncredited inventor of the steam-driven computer.

Despite this lunacy, however, *The Lone Ranger* has excellent graphics, exciting action, and combines enough different kinds of game play to hold the interest of even the most jaded gamer.

GP



he Lone Ranger is certainly an ambitious game. It combines simple role-playing with two different kinds of arcade-style

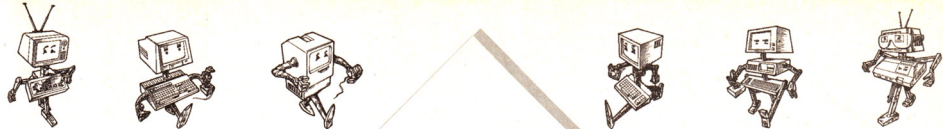
action. It has eight stages, and in each one you ride from town to town, questioning the locals about outlaws in the area.



Keep an eye on your revolver (lower right) during shootouts. Don't get caught with an empty chamber in a gunfight.

The most vicious outlaw of them all is Butch Cavendish, whose latest and most daring crime was kidnapping the president of the United States. Years ago, it was Cavendish who also ambushed and wiped out the Texas Rangers. So as the Lone Ranger, you have a personal score to settle. By following all the clues, you'll eventually find the outlaw gang's hideout, leading to a final showdown with Cavendish.

Along the way, of course, you'll have shootouts with thousands of lesser bad guys, even in the "friendly" towns. Most of these stages play like a scrolling shooter



NINTENDO REVIEWS KLASHBALL

Lisa M. Bouchey

Version reviewed: Nintendo. SOFEL,
1333 Ocean Avenue, Suite B, Santa
Monica, CA 90401.

wins the match. If you defeat ten opponents in a row, you're the *KlashBall* champion.

In League play, your team goes a single round against one opponent, once a week, for an entire season. Rankings are based on the number of matches won and lost. If you finish in the top three, a trip to the Power Bowl finals determines the season champion.

For two-player games, you can choose between single-round matches or two-out-of-three Knockout competitions.

Whenever your team wins a round, you get a bonus coin for each goal you scored during the game. You can use the coins to improve your team's performance and chances of winning. Two power coins will extend the time of a round, and eight coins are good for an extra goal.

Warp tunnels and bounce domes can help you win games, too. Warp tunnels are located at

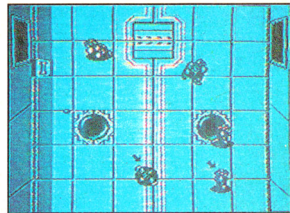
SELECT TEAM		
TEAM VERNA	TEAM LACATA	TEAM DRACO
STAMINA 050	STAMINA 040	STAMINA 040
POWER 100	POWER 200	POWER 100
SKILL 140	SKILL 140	SKILL 170

Keep an eye on the power, skill, and stamina levels displayed at the start of each round — they differ for each team.

the midpoint of each side wall. Use them to pass the ball to teammates on the other side of the arena. Bounce domes rise above the floor and emit electrical energy that repels the ball, sending it bouncing off the walls.

No matter which way the ball bounces, *KlashBall* is an entertaining addition to any game collection. Crisp graphics and clear ball movement make it easy to play, and it's a nice change from the "primitive" sports available in the 20th century.

GP



The rotating squares that appear on the field from time to time are power-ups. For instance, the "I" tile will increase your team's stamina.

The latest futuristic sports game for Nintendo sends you crashing into the 23rd century for a round of *KlashBall*. Based on

the "ancient" sports of soccer, basketball, and hockey, *KlashBall* pits two squads of armored gladiators against each other in an arena filled with space-age twists.



In one-player games, your team wears red and faces the goal at the top of the screen. An arrow indicates the player under your control.

Each team consists of four players and a goalie, and you can play against the computer or a human opponent. Either way, you'll need all the speed and strength you can muster to send the three-kilo energy sphere (or, in primitive terms, a 3.6-pound ball) into your opponent's goal—a four-foot hole in the back wall of the arena. The winner is the team that scores the most goals in a limited time period.

When playing alone, you can choose between Knockout and League play. In the Knockout game, two out of three victories

The Hot 100 is a list of video and computer games covered in recent issues of *Game Player's*. The ✱ symbol indicates games added in this issue.

KEY TO VERSIONS: **NES** (Nintendo Entertainment System); **Game Boy** (Nintendo Game Boy); **Sega** (Sega Master System); **Genesis** (Sega Genesis); **NEC** (NEC TurboGrafx-16); **PC** (IBM, Tandy, and compatibles); **AT** (IBM AT and compatibles only); **64** (Commodore 64/128); **Amiga** (Commodore Amiga); **Mac** (Apple Macintosh); **Apple II** (Apple II+/IIc/IIe); **IIIGS** (Apple IIIGS); **7800** (Atari 7800); **2600** (Atari VCS 2600); **XE** (Atari XE game system and 8-bit computers); **Lynx** (Atari Lynx); **ST** (Atari ST). The first version listed in each entry was the version reviewed.



THE HOT 100

Adventures in the Magic Kingdom is like six games in one. There's a trivia quiz plus five different action sequences that take place on amusement-park rides at Disney's Magic Kingdom. The object is to collect silver keys so Mickey Mouse can unlock the Enchanted Castle. A good game for younger players, although the graphics don't stack up to other Disney games for Nintendo. Capcom, for NES.

Aero Blasters ain't no peace mission. As you pilot your supercharged jet through hostile skies, tunnels, and caverns, you'll face more bombs, bullets, and missiles than you can count — or probably dodge. This one- or two-player game is a frantic shoot-em-up of the first order. By demanding a variety of arcade skills, it remains fresh throughout. NEC, for NES.

Arch Rivals is a basketball game that might better be called *Michael Jordan's Punch-Out*. Are you up against a tough opponent? No problem — just deck him with a rabbit punch and steal the ball. There's no such thing as fouls in *Arch Rivals*. Yet despite the free-for-all rules, you can still dribble, pass, fake, shoot, steal, snatch rebounds, block your opponent's shots, and perform slam-dunks. Fast-moving and entertaining. Acclaim, for NES.

Balance of the Planet is game designer Chris Crawford's expansive follow-up to *Balance of Power*. This time you play a United Nations high commissioner who controls all decisions affecting

Earth's environment. It's an awesome job, because you soon learn the complex relationships between scientific research, industrial and agricultural production, pollution, conservation, family planning, overpopulation, and much more. Not just a game, it's really a first-class educational tool that's also interesting to play. Chris Crawford Games (distributed by Accolade), for PC, Mac.

Bandit Kings of Ancient China makes you a chieftain in 12th-century China. You must eliminate an evil warlord before barbarians invade from the north. This is the latest in a series of historical simulations from Koei, and like its predecessors, it's a deep, sophisticated, utterly absorbing game of strategy on the grandest scale. Koei, for NES, Amiga, PC.

✱ **Bane of the Cosmic Forge** is actually *Wizardry VI* with a new, improved look and feel. It continues the fantasy role-playing adventure that started nearly a decade ago with the original *Wizardry*, but with jazzier graphics and an easier-to-use player interface. The combat gets a bit heavy as you move deeper into the game, and the puzzles can sometimes be frustrating, but overall it's a good effort. Sir-Tech, for PC.

✱ **Base Wars** is futuristic baseball with artificial athletes. Team rosters include robots, flybots, cyborgs, tanks, and intelligent motorcycles. The computerized pitchers can throw incredible

curves and supersonic fastballs. But these players don't stop swinging when they drop the bat — they duel for extra bases and fight over close calls, sometimes destroying each other in the process. A pleasure to watch and fun to play. Ultra, for NES.

Bombberman is an oddly addictive action-puzzle game. As the robot Bombberman, you have to run through 50 mazes, planting time bombs in the paths of the nasty creatures who live there. Unlike most games, it requires a good sense of timing instead of dead aim. Though it seems simple, it gradually gets more difficult. NEC, for NES; Hudson Soft, for NES.

Bonk's Adventure is NEC's answer to Nintendo's popular *Super Mario Bros.* series. The star is a cute cave man named Bonk who subdues enemies by bashing them with his rock-hard head. Bonk is on a quest to save Princess Za from the evil King Drool, and he encounters numerous prehistoric obstacles. A charming, cartoonlike game for all ages. NEC, for NES.

✱ **Castle of Illusion: Starring Mickey Mouse** features the world's favorite rodent on a quest to rescue Minnie Mouse from the clutches of a wicked witch. Five doors in a castle lead to five different worlds, and Mickey must make his way through all of them. Violence is downplayed, and the spectacular graphics would almost be at home on a movie screen. Recommended for all

ages. Sega, for Genesis.

Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse goes back in time to the beginning of the Belmont family and the start of their troubles with Dracula. As Trevor, an ancestor of Simon (the star of *Castlevania* and *Castlevania II*), you must stop Dracula from conquering all of mankind. Good graphics and action make this "prequel" a worthy addition to the *Castlevania* series. Konami, for NES.

The Chessmaster is an extremely versatile chess opponent who's always ready to play. An unusually wide variety of options let you fine-tune the game to your own skills. You can tell the computer how much time it gets to think about its next move, take back and replay any number of moves, set up the board any way you want, and much, much more. Hi Tech Expressions, for Game Boy; The Software Toolworks, for PC, Amiga, ST.

Devil's Crush is the sequel to *Allen Crush*, and it's an even better pinball simulation than the original. The three-screen-high pinball table is crawling with spectacular animated graphics — among the best we've seen for the TurboGrafx-16. Skulls, demons, gargoyles, dragon ladies, and frightening little monks are just a few of the attractions. NEC, for NES.

Double Dragon III: The Sacred Stones once again stars Billy and Jimmy Lee, two brothers who are expert martial-arts fighters. This time, their beautiful friend Marion has been kidnapped by a brutal gang of ninja thugs. To rescue her, you must fight your way from the alleyways of America to the Egyptian desert. Lots of action, good graphics, and a two-player mode make this sequel another winner. Acclaim, for NES.

Dr. Mario relegates the Italian plumber of *Super Mario Bros.* fame to a bit part — a doctor who tosses colored vitamin capsules into a jar of unruly viruses. Only by aligning the capsules to match colors can you eliminate the viruses and save Dr. Mario's runaway medical experiment. Like *Tetris*, its inspiration, *Dr. Mario* is fun, fast-paced, and very, very addictive. Nintendo, for NES, Game Boy.

Dragon Warrior II is a gripping role-playing adventure — the second installment in the most popular series of Nintendo games



In Japan. As the descendant of Erdrick the Great, you have to free a stricken land from the evil sorcerer Hargon. One of the largest and most complex RPGs available for Nintendo. Enix, for NES.

Dragon's Lair, an arcade classic, now comes to the NES as an action game with kick. As Dirk the Daring, you descend into the domain of Singe the dragon to rescue the beautiful Daphne. State-of-the-art graphics and animation make a challenging game that's recommended for experienced players. CSG Imagesoft, for NES, Game Boy.

DuckTales delightfully captures the spirit of Walt Disney cartoons. You guide Scrooge McDuck (with cameo appearances by other Disney characters) throughout the world on a quest for five legendary lost treasures. The amusing graphics are vintage Disney, there's no gruesome violence, and the skill level is challenging without being too difficult. Capcom, for NES, Game Boy.

Elvira, Mistress of the Dark stars that pneumatic nymph of naughtiness, horror-movie host Elvira. After inheriting a huge castle from an uncle she hardly knew, Elvira finds herself in a life-or-death battle against an evil ancestor from beyond the grave. It's an intriguing blend of fantasy role-playing and animated graphics adventure, with a touch of risqué humor. The graphics are gorgeous, but very gory. Accolade, for PC.

★ **Final Zone II** is a scrolling military shooter on CD for the TurboGrafx-16. As a Rambo-type hero, you must battle against ZOD, an evil army that wants to conquer the world. Your commando is armed with a variety of weapons, and your enemies are both numerous and aggressive. Although *Final Zone II* is a decent shooter, it doesn't really show off the CD format. NEC, for NEC.

G.I. Joe makes you a member of an elite team of super-commandos, ready to defend the world

against the evil terrorist forces of Cobra. In this six-level action game, you get to pick your own three-man assault squad and destroy Cobra's hidden bases. Colorful graphics, fast-paced action, and an interesting element of strategy combine to make it a winner. Taxan, for NES.

Gargoyles' Quest is basically a quest game with heavy doses of action. Firebrand, the guardian gargoyle of the Realm, must search the kingdom for the sole heir to the Red Gargoyle. A fast-paced adventure that should challenge experts as well as beginners. Capcom, for Game Boy.

Gremlins 2: The New Batch follows the action of the movie pretty closely. As Gizmo, you must save Clamp Center from certain doom at the hands of a horde of evil Gremlins. This game has some of the best graphics around in a scrolling action game for the Game Boy, and even experienced gamers will find the last two stages challenging. Sunsoft, for Game Boy, NES.

HAL Wrestling gives you the chance to use many of the same moves as pro wrestlers—without having to put on a silly costume. You can choose from a number of different wrestlers, each with his own set of moves. The wrestlers are all distinguishable and their moves show a flair for the dramatic. Players of all skill levels should find this game a challenge. HAL America, for Game Boy.

Hatris is the latest fast-paced puzzle game from the Soviet creators of *Tetris*. As random pairs of hats drop down from the top of the screen, you have to stack them up to match five hats of the same type. The stack then disappears and you win points. It's an average puzzle game, but not as interesting as *Tetris*. Some players find the Game Boy version more challenging. BulletProof, for NES, Game Boy.

The Hunt for Red October puts you in command of a Soviet nuclear submarine trying to escape to America. As you zigzag your way across the Atlantic Ocean, the entire Soviet Navy tries to stop you. To fight back, your sub has guided missiles, torpedoes, and other high-tech defenses. Fun for one or two players, this game is an exceptionally well-designed shooter. Hi Tech Expressions, for Game Boy, NES.

★ **Ikari Warriors III** continues the story of Paul and Vince, this time on a mission to rescue the president's kidnapped daughter

from an evil organization known as Crime Ghost. But Paul and Vince have lost their weapons, turning this installment into a punch-and-kick game instead of a shooter. A limited range of moves puts a dent in the action, but it's still a worthwhile game. SNK, for NES.

Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf unites 18 of the Golden Bear's favorite holes into one ultimate course. From St. Andrews to Augusta National to Pebble Beach, it does a great job of simulating pro golf. Wind conditions, hazards, and the club you choose all play a part. Although the lack of an overhead view makes putting more difficult, this is a first-class golf game. Konami, for NES; Accolade, for PC, 64, Amiga, IIGS.

Jack Nicklaus Turbo Golf is available for the TurboGrafx-16 as both a cartridge and a CD. The two versions are nearly identical, except the CD has five courses instead of one, plus Jack's digitized voice and two more musical soundtracks. Either way, you can't go wrong. Unlike NEC's *Power Golf*, this is a true simulation that adheres closely to the computer version—its more realistic and more difficult. Accolade, for NEC.

John Madden Football is probably the best football simulation around. You can choose from 17 different NFL teams, each with real-life strengths and weaknesses. Unequaled graphics, bone-crunching sound effects, and a perfect blend of strategy and action make this game a real winner. Electronic Arts, for Genesis.

★ **Jones in the Fast Lane** is a tongue-in-cheek look at what it takes to succeed as a yuppie. Choosing from four male and female characters, you start by setting your goals in life, balancing wealth, happiness, education, and your career. Then you rent an apartment, go to school, borrow money, and generally go about building your future. Essentially a board game, it's fun, witty, and clever, but also limited. Sierra, for PC.

Jordan vs. Bird lets you step into the basketball shoes of either Michael "Air" Jordan or Larry "Sharpshooter" Bird for a climactic one-on-one match, a slam-dunk contest, or a three-point shootout. Your opponent is controlled by either the computer or a friend. The three-point shootout is a bit tiring, but the one-on-one match is the highlight of the game. Milton Bradley, for NES; Electronic Arts, for PC, 64.

King's Quest V: Absence Makes the Heart Go Yonder is the latest chapter in Roberta Williams's long-running saga. This time, King Graham has returned from a pleasant walk in the woods to find that his castle has completely disappeared. It's your job to solve the mystery. This is the first Sierra game to feature VGA graphics, and although the screens load very slowly, they're simply amazing. Sierra, for PC.

Klax is a fast-action puzzle game that's really a second-generation *Tetris*. As colored blocks clatter down a ramp, you have to catch them with a paddle and arrange them at the bottom of the screen for points. It's simple, challenging, and engrossing. And like *Tetris*, all versions are equally good. Tengen, for NES, NES, Genesis, Lynx, PC, Amiga, ST, 64.

Lakers versus Celtics is a basketball game for fans of real basketball. Many of the game's statistics reflect those of the real world, and the more you know about the actual teams, the better you'll be at choosing the right offense and defense. This is one game that successfully captures many of the thrills of real NBA basketball. Electronic Arts, for Genesis.

★ **Lemmings** is an instantly addictive and incredibly cute action-puzzle game. Large numbers of harmless but stupid creatures will blindly march to their doom unless you guide them to safety. By turning a few lemmings into roadblocks, tunnelers, carpenters, and even parachutists, you can try to save the others. Each level gets more difficult until it finally seems impossible—but there's always a solution. Psychosis, for Amiga, PC, ST, Mac; coming soon for the NES and 16-bit Nintendo from Sunsoft.

Links clearly attempts to be the golf simulation to end all golf simulations. The graphics are absolutely stunning—although they do take quite awhile to load. The simulation itself rewards real golfers without being too difficult for non-golfers to play. Access, for AT.

Little Nemo: The Dream Master is a gentle game starring a turn-of-the-century comic-strip character. As Little Nemo, a sleeping kid in a nightshirt, you journey through an odd fantasy world, dealing with enemies by tossing candy at them or turning yourself into various animals. Recommended for intermediate players; experienced gamers will probably consider most of the game a warm-up. Capcom, for NES.

☆ **M.U.L.E.** revives a 1984 computer game in which one to four players colonize an undeveloped planet. The object is to see who can finish with the most money and property. Each player must decide how much food to grow, how much energy to generate, and how much valuable ore to mine. Surpluses and shortages are handled via auctions. Entertaining and clever, but disappointingly, the graphics haven't changed since 1984. Mindscape/The Software Toolworks, for NES.

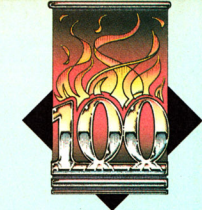
☆ **M.U.S.H.A.** is an arcade shooter that may not achieve anything new, but it does everything right. The backgrounds have style and depth, and the action is engagingly busy. It's difficult to imagine the next step up — with action this addictive and graphics this flawless, you may well wonder what more can be done on the home videogame screen. Seismic, for Genesis.

☆ **Magical Dinosaur Tour** isn't really a game — it's a dinosaur encyclopedia on a compact disc. As the first educational program for the TurboGrafx-16, it sets a high standard. You can call up information, pictures, and even animated cartoons of your favorite dinosaurs. Attractive graphics and an easy-to-use interface make it entertaining as well as educational. NEC, for NEC.

Magician follows the adventures of an eager apprentice wizard who embarks on a quest to fight villains and hone his magic powers. Unfortunately, he's being chased by the evil wizard Abaddon. Although *Magician* is a nice introduction to role-playing games, the pace is uneven, and it needs more hocus-pocus for experienced players. Taxan, for NES.

Mega Man 3 follows the same winning formula as the first two installments. The android Mega Man travels from world to world, defeating enemy robots and capturing their weapons for his own use. This time, though, the evil Dr. Wily has turned good (or has he?). Its great story, outstanding graphics, and exciting game play make it the best Mega Man game ever. Capcom, for NES.

Mercenary Force is an arcade shooter set in 19th-century Japan. You must pick your four-man team from different types of mercenaries and select their formations as you battle across 72 different screens with more than 50 kinds of enemies. This game is one of the most com-



plex and elaborate shooters available for the Game Boy. Meldac, for Game Boy.

Metal Storm is a side-scrolling shooter with a twist. By pushing a button, you can reverse the pull of gravity and allow your warrior to "fall" upward and walk on the ceiling. This comes in handy when moving through the game's well-designed layouts of platforms and barriers. Dynamic boss enemies, outstanding graphics, and attention to detail put this game head-and-shoulders above the average shooter. Irem America, for NES.

Michael Jackson Moonwalker features one of the greatest pop stars in history on a mission to rescue the children of world leaders from the fiendish Mr. Big. You'll delight at the way Jackson's videogame character glides, dances, and moonwalks his way through this expansive action-adventure. The animation is so realistic it's like interactive MTV. Sega, for Genesis; soon for Sega.

☆ **Mickey's Dangerous Chase** stars Mickey Mouse in a gentle action-adventure with G-rated violence. Mickey's goals to track down Big Bad Pete, who stole a gift that Mickey gave to Minnie Mouse. Although most of the game is suitable for younger players, the final stages will challenge experienced gamers, too. A bouncy soundtrack and nice graphics add to the fun. Capcom, for Game Boy.

Moonbase: Lunar Colony Simulator puts you in charge of developing a lunar settlement. You have to juggle your human and natural resources, produce liquid oxygen, build power-generating capacity, and maintain thermal control. It's not easy, and because the game is almost too realistic, it's frequently frustrating. But extremely detailed graphics and information windows make it a fascinating exercise. Wesson International, for PC.

Muppet Adventure No. 1: Chaos at the Carnival is the first in a pro-

jected series of Muppet games. Miss Piggy has been kidnapped, and it's up to Kermit and a band of Muppet adventurers to rescue her. While the level of challenge is suitable for players of all skill levels, the game is marred by surprisingly flat and unimaginative graphics. Hi Tech Expressions, for NES.

NBA All-Star Challenge lets you choose from four different variations: a one-on-one match between two NBA players; an accuracy shootout; a friendly game of H-O-R-S-E; or a free-throw contest. *NBA All-Star* does a fine job of squeezing these tall guys onto the Game Boy's tiny LCD screen, although the court is a bit small. Authentic and fun. LJN, for Game Boy.

Nightmare on Elm Street is a wild adaptation of the hit horror films starring the frightening Freddy Krueger. Now you are the only one who can stop Freddy, and your only hope is to gather and incinerate his bones. But your mission is blocked by hordes of ghouls, ghosts, and monsters. With its attractive special effects, this game is almost as much fun to look at as it is to play. LJN Toys, for NES.

Ninja Crusaders takes the ninja formula and adds an interesting transformation feature plus two-person play. By picking up various weapons, you can transform into a tiger, scorpion, hawk, or dragon. Choosing the right animal is crucial to getting through certain stages. Though it doesn't go beyond other ninja games and has rather choppy animation, the transformation feature is a nice twist. American Sammy, for NES.

Ninja Spirit is a large martial arts adventure that is NES's answer to *Ninja Gaiden* (NEC) and *Revenge of Shinobi* (Genesis). Your goal is to find and destroy the half-man, half-wolf creature that murdered your father many years ago. The action moves horizontally as you fight enemy ninjas and creatures while picking up weapons and power-ups. All of the screens are extremely detailed, with dark, brooding backgrounds. One of the best martial-arts games available for any system. NEC, for NES.

☆ **Nobunaga's Ambition II** is a tightly woven strategy game based on the power struggles of 16th-century Japan. As an ambitious warlord, you pursue various military, political, and economic strategies to strengthen your realm and absorb others. In terms of graphics, playability, and sophistication, it's a big improve-

ment over the first game. Historically accurate and intellectually stimulating. Koei, for NES, PC.

☆ **Operation C** stars Scorpion, the trigger-happy hero of *Contra* and *Super Con* on the NES. In this game, Scorpion must fight his way through five stages on a lush tropical island to defeat the Black Viper, an evil alien who wants to conquer Earth with an army of mutant creatures. Thanks to excellent graphics, sound, and action, *Operation C* is a true marvel. Ultra, for Game Boy.

Orb-3D is an odd game that combines action, puzzle-solving, and 3-D glasses. To navigate your spaceship through 30 different puzzle screens, you have to bounce off all the visible targets without running out of fuel. The 3-D effects are not very dramatic and the glasses may cause eyestrain, but luckily you can play without them. The puzzles offer variety, but the maneuvers are repetitive. Hi Tech Expressions, for NES.

PGA Tour Golf seems to be designed for those who watch golf on TV. It automatically shows you the reverse angle, so you can watch the ball soar through the air, land, and come to rest. The graphics are astounding, and it's also a very forgiving simulation — the tradeoff between speed and accuracy seems exactly right. Electronic Arts, for PC, Genesis.

Phantasy Star II is a role-playing adventure that delivers all the fun and challenge of the original *Phantasy Star* for the Sega Master System, plus the added depth and complexity that 16-bit technology can offer. Gorgeous graphics, a compelling story, and a very welcome save-game feature nominate *Phantasy Star II* as one of the best titles available for the Genesis. Sega, for Genesis.

Pipe Dream is an appealing strategy game that offers an interesting combination of logical challenges and fast, nonviolent action. The object is to build the longest possible network of pipes before a liquid called *flood* reaches the end of the pipeline. Big scores require long, complex networks. Lucasfilm, for PC, Mac, Amiga, ST, NES, Game Boy.

☆ **PowerBall** is a souped-up version of soccer with elements of hockey and football. Almost anything is legal: You can steal the ball with a diving tackle, leap into the air and land on the ball carrier, or slam into him with a tornado-like spin. Whether you're playing the computer or a friend, the sleek graphics and riveting action should keep your adrena-

line pumping. Namco-America, for Genesis.

Powermonger borrows many of the concepts in *Populous* but takes them a step further. To rule the world, you must conquer 195 different lands one by one, contending with rival warlords, bad weather, and starvation along the way. Excellent graphics and sound effects combine with challenging strategy to make this game a real winner. Electronic Arts/Bullfrog, for Amiga, PC.

☆ **Prince of Persia** is an action-adventure straight out of the 1001 Tales of the Arabian Nights. You play a sword-swinging swash-buckler who's trying to save a beautiful princess from the clutches of an evil vizier. What sets this game apart, though, is the remarkable cartoonlike animation, which is based on motion studies of real people. It's fun to watch and to play. Broderbund, for Amiga, PC, Apple II.

The Punisher is based on a Marvel Comics character whose family was gunned down by mobsters. Now on a lone rampage against crime, The Punisher must fight his way through New York City and ultimately defeat Kingpin, the gangster boss. This full-throttle shooter offers nothing new, but is a good-quality game with no major flaws. LJN, for NES; Paragon, for PC.

Glix is an excellent revival of a classic arcade hit from 1981. A very simple game with very simple graphics, it translates well to the Game Boy's small screen. Your goal is merely to fill in sections of the screen by drawing lines with the cursor—while avoiding some persistent enemies. It's fun, but some of today's gamers may find this golden oldie a little foosible. Nintendo, for Game Boy; Taito, for NES, PC, Amiga, 64, ST, II, IIGS.

Railroad Tycoon is a truly exceptional game that combines rich historical accuracy with the fun of *Monopoly*. Starting in the early 19th century, you begin building your railroad empire from scratch. The simulation encompasses everything from rate wars and corporate takeovers to train-dispatching and urban development; yet is amazingly easy to play. A real standout. MicroProse, for PC.

☆ **Red Baron** is one of the best World War I flight simulators we've seen. Rather than bogging you down in historical and aeronautical detail, it lets you control almost every variable so you can add as much realism as you want. You can fly single missions or a whole campaign in a variety of

aircraft on either side. You can even duel such famous aces as Georges Guynemer or Baron von Richthofen. Dynamix/Sierra, for PC.

Rescue of Princess Blobette is the sequel to the popular *A Boy and His Blob* for the NES. Princess Blobette has been taken prisoner by the Antagonistic Alchemist, and it's up to a young Earth boy and his friend Blob to save her. While not a huge challenge for experienced players, the game retains most of the charm and nearly all the playability of its NES predecessor. Absolute Entertainment, for Game Boy.

☆ **Robocop 2** continues the crusade of Alex Murphy, a severely wounded Detroit policeman who has been rebuilt as a cyborg. This time, Robocop is after Cain, a criminal mastermind who is ravaging Detroit with a new drug called Nuke. In each stage, you have to stomp on Nuke canisters while fighting numerous bad guys. Good action and graphics make this game a successful sequel. Data East, for NES.

☆ **S.C.A.T.** pits the Special Cybernetic Attack Team against Vile Malmort, an alien conqueror whose mutant armies are invading Earth. Five stages begin in the ruins of New York and end up in the heart of Malmort's spaceship. Two people can play simultaneously, choosing from male and female characters. With its remarkable graphics and action, this challenging shooter looks and plays more like a 16-bit game than an 8-bit game. Natsume, for NES.

The Savage Empire is a role-playing adventure inspired by the lost-world tales of the 1930s. You awaken, suffering from amnesia, in a strange land of dinosaurs, Stone Age tribes, Aztec-like civilizations, and lizard men. Several quests eventually lead to a grand finale with man-eating ants. Spectacular graphics and incredible detail prove once again that Origin is a master at world-making. Origin, for PC.

☆ **Shadow Dancer: The Secret of Shinobi** is the third installment in the popular Shinobi series (the second for the Genesis). This time, ninja hero Joe Musashi dons his Shinobi uniform to battle the Union Lizard, a criminal gang which is terrorizing New York. Shinobi, accompanied by Yamato, a faithful dog, punches and kicks his way through several stages of enemies while rescuing kidnapped children. An excellent continuation of the Shinobi series. Sega, for Genesis.



Shingen the Ruler is probably the best strategy game yet seen for Nintendo. You play a 16th-century warlord who's trying to unite Japan's 21 separate provinces. The military, political, and economic aspects have the depth and richness of a good computer game, but with the simplicity of play for which Nintendo games are famous. It's not for everyone, but it's a game many Nintendo fans have been waiting for. Hot-B, for NES.

Silent Service II is an outstanding sequel to the popular WWII submarine simulator. Multiple skill and realism levels are complemented by enjoyable ease of play. The graphics define a new state of the art. Overall, *Silent Service II* is not only a worthy sequel, but a classic in its own right. Microprose, for PC.

☆ **SimEarth** puts you in charge of a planet from its birth to its death. You control everything from its water distribution and plate tectonics to the beginning of life and evolution. You can start with a new planet or tackle an existing world gone awry. Ecological issues such as global warming, the ozone layer, and pollution suddenly become more than abstractions in this complex and intriguing simulation. Maxis, for PC.

The Simpsons stars America's rowdiest brat in his very own Nintendo game. Space aliens are invading Springfield, but only Bart Simpson—with his X-ray glasses—can see them. Unable to convince skeptical adults, Bart begins a one-boy battle against the creepy mutants. Cartoonlike graphics and lots of action make Bart's first videogame a success. Acclaim, for NES.

☆ **Sinistrion** is a futuristic shooter in which you pilot a tiny space-fighter against a huge, living spaceship that has an appetite for planets. You've got to fight your way to its evil brain before it can gobble up the whole solar system. There's nothing new here, but *Sinistrion* is a demanding shooter with colorful graphics

and plenty of action. IGS, for NEC.

Skate or Die: Bad 'n' Rad for the Game Boy departs from the NES version of *Skate or Die*, which emphasized skateboarding stunts. Instead, *Bad 'n' Rad* is an action-adventure that pits you against bad guys and lethal hazards during your quest to rescue a damsel in distress. Although some of the flavor of California skateboarding has been lost, it's still a dynamite action game. Konami, for Game Boy.

Skate or Die 2 begins after you accidentally run over the mayor's wife's poodle with your skateboard. In retaliation, the city demolishes your skateboarding ramp, and now you have to earn enough money to build another. Your quest takes you to shopping malls, city streets, and beaches. A much-improved and worthy successor to a million-copy bestseller. Electronic Arts, for NES.

Slime World raises slime to an art form. On a putrid planet awash in scum and sludge, you can choose from six different missions. Most require you to escape from mazelike caverns dripping with goo and haunted by slimy creatures. Some missions demand arcade skills; others emphasize exploration. Up to eight Lynxes can be hooked together for multiplayer games. Delightfully disgusting. Atari, for Lynx.

Snake's Revenge is the worthy sequel to *Metal Gear*. Once again you play the role of Snake, an elite commando. Your mission: Stop Colonel CAtaffy, who together with the Higharolla Kockamamie is threatening the world with the Ultra-Sheik Nuclear Attack Tank. Really a cross between a role-player and a shooter, this is a big game with countless items and clues to discover and zillions of enemies to fight. Ultra, for NES.

☆ **StarTropics** combines action with fantasy role-playing on a chain of tropical islands in the Coral Sea. As a teenage adventurer, you embark on a dangerous search for your missing uncle, an archaeologist. Numerous enemies and hazards block your path, but you're armed with a lethal yo-yo, and you can find more powerful weapons and magic spells along the way. Lots of fun and lots of surprises. Nintendo, for NES.

Strider, adapted from an arcade game, is the story of a young warrior who is assigned the awesome task of thwarting an alien invasion of Earth. The Sega version of this game, at eight megabits, is the largest Genesis car-

tridge yet released. Lots of action and excellent graphics make it a winner. Sega, for Genesis; Capcom, for NES.

Super C is the sequel to *Contra*, one of the most popular Nintendo shooting games of all time. Once again, Sergeant Bill Ko and his comrade, Corporal Lance (alias Scorpion and Mad Dog) face a showdown with their old enemy, Red Falcon. Defeating him is easier if you tackle this one- or two-player game with a friend. The graphics and action are top-notch. Konami, for NES.

Super Mario Bros. 3 is the latest and most eagerly awaited chapter in the adventures of Mario and Luigi. Once again you must rescue Princess Toadstool from the clutches of the evil Bowser and free the Mushroom Kingdom from domination. Elaborate worlds, pipes, warp zones, and power-ups justify the unprecedented popularity of this massive game among Nintendo fans. Nintendo, for NES.

Sword Master is a sword-and-sorcery game that's heavy on the swordplay. As a lone warrior, you must battle against the evil forces of Vishok the serpent god. Your enemies include bats, dragons, and wicked wizards. When your sword isn't enough, you can transform into a sorcerer and cast spells. Although the game contains no surprises, it has sharp, smooth-scrolling graphics and lots of action. Activision, for NES.

The Sword of Hope is the largest and most complex role-playing game available for the Game Boy. As Prince Theo of Riccar, you must find the fabled Sword of Hope to free the kingdom from an evil dragon. This game delivers a role-playing experience as satisfying and expansive as most role-players for the NES, and is certain to broaden the Game Boy's horizons. Kemco-Seika, for Game Boy.

Sword of Sodan is a side-scrolling action game with large-sized characters and very colorful scenery. As a sword-wielding warrior (male or female), you must avenge your father's death to save your land from an evil sorcerer. You can swallow various magic potions to boost your power. It's a beautiful and challenging game, but the graphics are unusually good. Electronic Arts, for Genesis, Amiga.

Sword of Vermilion is a fantasy role-playing game in the tradition of *Phantasy Star* and *Phantasy Star 2*. When the evil Isakon invaded peaceful Excalabria, the king entrusted his infant son

to a servant and sent them away. You play a young man who has no idea of his true identity, but your life is about to change. This adventure has the colorful graphics and involved storyline we've come to expect from Sega's RPGs. Sega, for Genesis.

Takin' It to the Hoop is a full-court, five-on-five basketball simulation that strikes an intelligent balance between action and strategy. You can't win without skillful manipulation of the control pad, but it also matters how you rotate your players from the bench to the court. Despite so-so graphics and drab sound effects, it's realistic and very entertaining. NEC, for NEC.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Fall of the Foot Clan brings the famous foursome of Leonardo, Donatello, Michelangelo, and Raphael to the Game Boy. Once again, the nefarious Shredder has kidnapped the beautiful April O'Neill, and the Turtles are rushing to her rescue. Incredibly, the graphics are even better than in the original NES version, and the stereo soundtrack is superb. Ultra, for Game Boy.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles — The Arcade Game is a bodacious sequel that's patterned after the arcade version rather than the original Nintendo version. All your favorite characters are here: the four Turtles, April, Splinter, and Shredder. This time the Turtles must rescue April and Splinter from the grip of brainwashed ninjas working for Shredder and a new villain, Krang. As action-packed and as much fun as ever. Ultra, for NES.

Test Drive III: The Passion puts you behind the wheels of three supercars — the Lamborghini Diablo, the Pininfarina Mythos, and the Chevrolet CERV III. Sit back and enjoy the northern California scenery as you compete in a road rally. New features include inclement weather, working wipers and headlights, and even off-road driving. But watch out for the cops! A must for auto nuts. Accolade, for PC.

Time Lord pits you against space aliens who are meddling in Earth's past. By time-traveling to England in 1250, the Caribbean around 1650, the Wild West of 1860, and France in 1943, you must thwart their plans to change history and conquer the world. The ending may seem a bit anticlimactic, but *Time Lord* has good graphics, an intriguing plot, and smooth game play. Milton Bradley, for NES.

✦ **Totally Rad** is an action-ad-

venture that stars Jake, a teenage skateboarder on a rescue mission. Jake's girlfriend and his girlfriend's father have been kidnapped by an evil wizard who's planning to invade California. Luckily, a good wizard teaches Jake some magic, including how to transform himself into a lion, eagle, or fish. Superb graphics and playability, and the magic adds a bit of strategy. Jaleco, for NES.

Trampoline Terror! is an action-puzzle game that takes place on a grid of tiled sidewalks that's floating high above a threatened planet. To save the world and its kidnapped queen, you must destroy the grid by setting explosive switches. That means jumping from square to square while avoiding enemy guards and treacherous gaps. It's a good game that will challenge players of all ages. DreamWorks, for Genesis.

Ultimate Basketball is the first NES basketball game to put a full ten players on the court. All ten have their own statistics, and you have to keep them in mind when selecting plays. Although it's not really the *ultimate* basketball videogame, it is a very realistic one. American Sammy, for NES.

Unreal is the latest challenger for the title of top action game for the Amiga. In terms of graphics, sound, and difficulty, it's certainly an impressive contender. The 2-D side-scrolling scenes are incredibly detailed and beautiful. The 3-D first-person scenes — in which you fly on the back of a dragon — are somewhat less detailed, but amazingly fast. Overall, a striking display of 16-bit power. UBI Soft, for Amiga.

✦ **WarBirds** is a breakthrough — the first true flight simulator for a home videogame system. This World War I combat game lets you perform almost any maneuver that a real pilot can, including climbs, dives, turns, loops, and rolls. Your plane has real instruments, and you can look in any direction. You can duel the computer or hook as many as four systems together for wild multi-player dogfights. *WarBirds* blows everything else out of the sky. Atari, for Lynx.

Wing Commander lets you pilot four different types of spacecraft and pits you against the might of the Kharathi empire. The course of the entire war rests with you. Simply the best space-combat simulation ever made for PCs, *Wing Commander* combines the tense excitement of an arcade shooter with a role-playing story of surprising depth and swash-



buckling melodrama. Origin, for PC.

Ys: Book I and II is the first role-playing adventure to really take advantage of the TurboGrafx-CD player. It's actually two complete games in which you must defeat Dark Fae and collect the six books of Ys before continuing to Solomon's Shrine and taking on the evil Darm. The smooth player interface is enhanced by excellent graphics and CD-sourced sound and music. NEC, for NEC.

GP

A N D P R E V I E W S

DISNEY CHARACTERS ON NES AND GAME BOY

Capcom is releasing two titles starring popular Walt Disney movie characters. *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* brings the Touchstone Pictures movie to the Game Boy. In this mystery-adventure, Roger is searching for his wife, Jessica, who has been kidnapped by the evil Judge Doom. Helped by the police and a private eye, Roger nabs Doom's five henchweasels and forces them to cooperate.

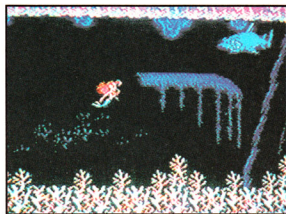
Roger's investigation takes you through six levels, including visits to the Mansion, the Ink & Paint Club, and Acme's home. Roger solves the case with nonviolent brainwork — he finds clues by in-

teracting with other characters and examining his surroundings.

The Little Mermaid, based on the Disney Studios movie, brings to Nintendo the love story of Ariel the Mermaid and Eric the Sailor. Ariel wants to marry Eric, but she must first become a human being. So Ariel gives her beautiful voice to the wicked octopus witch Ursula, who in return makes Ariel human. But Ursula has a diabolical plan up her tentacles. Ursula tricks Eric into believing that *she* is Ariel, and plans to marry him.

The Little Mermaid has seven levels of underwater action featuring Ariel, Eric, Ursula, Sebas-

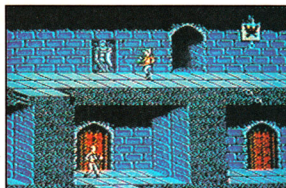
tian, Flounder, Scuttle, and other characters from the movie. The game's soundtrack includes "Under the Sea" and other songs from the film.



Ariel defends herself from one of Ursula's hungry minions in *The Little Mermaid*.

INDIANA JONES JUMPS TO NES

Help the daring archaeologist Dr. Indiana Jones find the legendary Holy Grail in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, from Taito. The



Explore the hazardous catacombs of Venice in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

Nintendo game, which follows the plot of the movie quite closely, takes Indy through six levels in his quest to find the Grail and rescue his missing father.

Indy must retrieve the Cross of Coronado, explore the catacombs of Venice, escape from Castle Brunwald, travel to the Desert of Iskenderun, speed along the road to Berlin, and ultimately make his way to the Lost Temple of the Grail. You move through each level by following clues written in the Grail diary kept by Indy's father. If you lose the diary, you'll have to use

precious time traveling to Berlin to recover it.

Among the obstacles you must overcome are a multitude of greedy archaeologists, Nazis, minefields, machine-gun nests, and ancient riddles. But by using Indy's fists, whip, and brains, you can find the Grail.

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade lets you choose the order in which you want to play the stages. As your skills improve, the game's difficulty levels automatically adjust.

A N D P R E V I E W S

BILLY THE KID FOR COMPUTERS

Buckle on your six-shooter and saddle up in *Billy the Kid*, a Wild West adventure from Ocean. You can play as Billy, as Sheriff Pat Garrett (Billy's enemy), or as an ornery but good-hearted gunslinger. The game includes a gunfight, a train heist, a barroom brawl, an encounter with a cardsharp, and even a love interest.

Billy the Kid has digitized graphics and a 30-minute MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) soundtrack. It's available for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers, as well as the Amiga and Atari ST.



Old West shootouts are among the many adventures in *Billy the Kid*.

MARU'S MISSION FOR GAME BOY

Maru and his girlfriend Cori were enjoying a pleasant stroll through Central Park when the unthinkable happened — a strange man grabbed Cori and vanished with her. Afraid to tell the authorities, Maru decided to track down his sweetie himself.

In *Maru's Mission* from Jaleco, you play Maru as he travels from the United States to Romania, Greece, Egypt, Brazil, and Japan. As you follow the kidnapper's trail, you'll meet weird and malignant creatures such as mummies, healing foxes, Japanese sumo wrestlers, the Eyeclops, Medusa, and Isis. To defeat these fiends, you must find and use healing potions, magical amulets, bombs, and magic scrolls.

BILL & TED TRAVEL TO NES

Those two awesome time-traveling dudes are at it again in *Bill & Ted's Excellent Video Game* from LJN. Once again, Bill and Ted are trying to get certain historically important people back to the proper time zone. If they succeed, their radical

band — the Wild Stallions — will get to perform a concert.

Using their time-machine phone booth, Bill and Ted learn important information by interacting with other characters in such places as ancient Egypt. But some totally bogus individuals want to sabotage the duo's bodacious plans. So Bill and Ted must use cakes, firecrackers, gym socks, and other weapons to foil their enemies.



Watch out for strange creatures as you travel through the fourth dimension in *Bill & Ted's Excellent Video Game*.

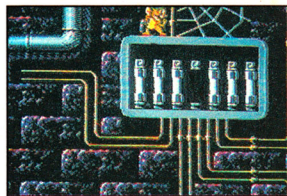
AND PREVIEWS

TOM & JERRY ON NES

Jerry has always managed to avoid becoming Tom's midnight snack. But this time Tom has planned an extremely cunning surprise for his mousey enemy.

In *Tom & Jerry* from Hi Tech Expressions, you play the mouse, Jerry. You travel through Basement World, Water World, and Pipe World in your attempts to elude the world's best mousetraps.

On your way to Tom's supper dish, you'll find energy pills and power-ups throughout the mazelike levels. And the mouseholes not only take you to bonus rounds, but also provide shortcuts to different levels.



Jerry must scurry through dangerous wires and cables in *Tom & Jerry*.

BATTLE UNIT ZEOOTH FOR GAME BOY

Forty-two years after the nations of Earth formed a federation, its armies had to repel an attack from the alien metallic-skinned Greins. Now, ten years later, the vile aliens have returned from their secret base.

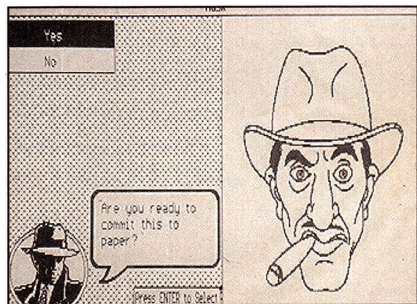
In Jaleco's *Battle Unit Zeoeth*, your assignment is to use the most advanced anti-alien technology available to destroy the Greins. You pilot the Battle Unit Zeoeth through five stages, chasing Greins through city streets, underground bases, and their command headquarters. In addition to using the Zeoeth's armaments, you can find smart bombs and canisters during battle.

And if the Greins zap you to smithereens, no problem — *Battle Unit Zeoeth* has unlimited continu-
ues.

PRINTING PROGRAM FOR PC AND 64

With Disney Software's *Dick Tracy Crimestoppers Print Kit*, you can make your own "wanted" posters, banners, greeting cards, invitations, masks, wrist radios, and police badges. The program includes 50 different images, including Flattop, Prune Face, Itch, Lips Manlis, Big Boy, and Dick Tracy. There are also 15 decorative borders and six different typefaces.

Dick Tracy Crimestoppers Print Kit is available for IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers, and for the Commodore 64. It works with a wide variety of popular printers.



Make your own cops-and-robbers masks with Disney Software's new printing program.

A N D P R E V I E W S

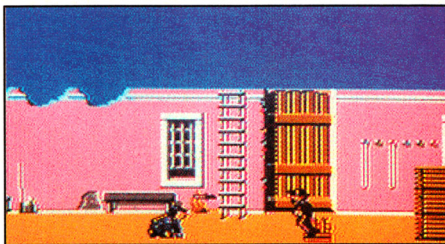
CIVIL WAR COMES TO NINTENDO

North and South by Kemco-Seika lets you refight the American Civil War and change history. You start by picking any year from 1861 to 1864, and the year you choose determines the strengths and weaknesses of each side's armies and governments. (The year 1865 isn't included because the odds were too heavily against the South by then.)

Following your own strategy, you can march from state to state, destroy opposing armies, demolish bridges, capture forts, and commandeer trains. To win, you must use your artillery, cavalry, and infantry units to their best military advantage. Your performance and morale can be affected by Indian and Mexican attackers, European reinforcements, and natural disasters.

North and South is for one or two players. There are three levels of difficulty which can be set separately for each side.

GP



Protect your fort from invading enemy soldiers in *North and South*.

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GO ONE-ON-ONE WITH ISIAH THOMAS.

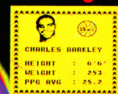
SHOOT OUT WITH PATRICK EWING.

STAR IN YOUR OWN NBA ALL-STAR TOURNAMENT.

MATCH FREE THROWS WITH CHRIS MULLIN.

PLAY ALONE OR HEAD-TO-HEAD AGAINST A FRIEND.

Take the NBA® All-Star Challenge on Game Boy™

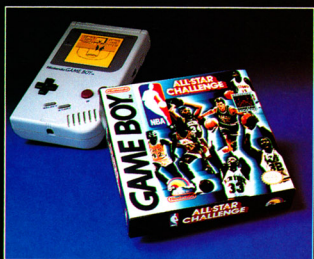


Hooked on Pro Basketball?
Your best shot is LJN's NBA®

All-Star Challenge™ for Game Boy™ with 27 (not a misprint) of the NBA's greatest stars (one from every team) in five action-packed events.



This is Game Boy™ action for real basketball fans...the players look real...their moves look real, and the sounds are real. So, what are you waiting for? The 24-second clock is running and the action's FAN-TASTIC!

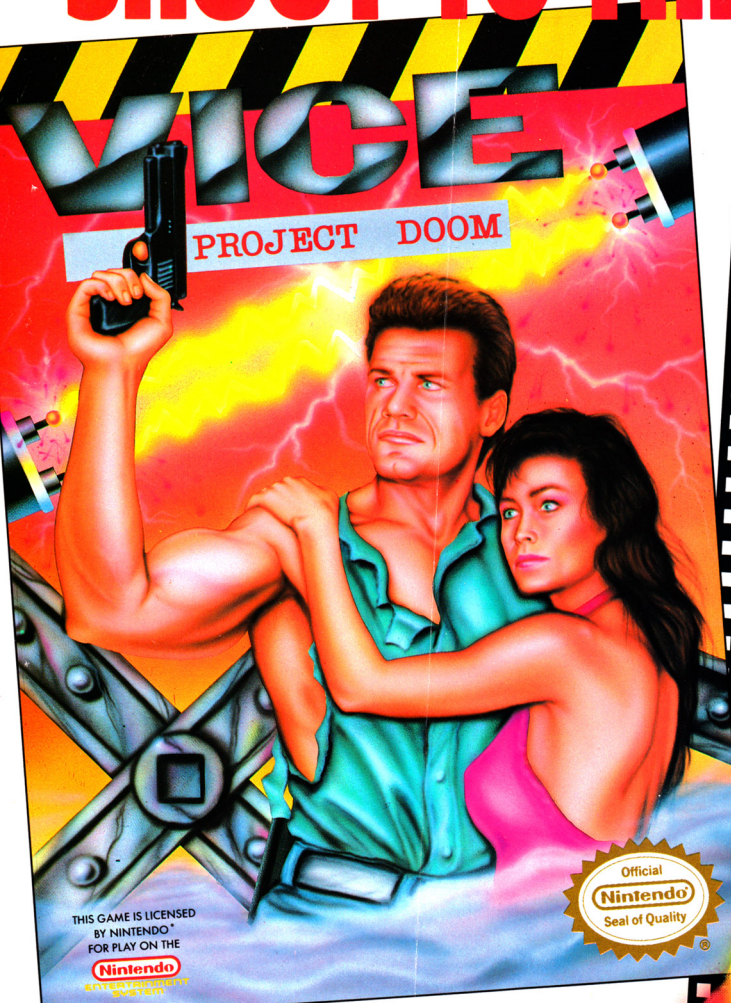


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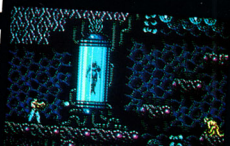


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SHOOT TO THRILL!



Take to the highway in your Super-Charged Street Machine!



Blast, whip, and bomb your way in to action!



You and your .44 in a warehouse packed with stolen merchandise and deadly assassins.



A storyline to keep you plastered to the action.



Vice officer Quinn Hart is on an assignment unlike anything he's ever seen! Weird bodies are turning up dead, top secret weaponry is missing, and organized crime is at an all time high. But Hart's up against something more than the Mob, street gangs, or even hostile terrorists.

A new force has risen and Hart finds himself plunged into a conspiracy of terror!!



American Sammy Corporation

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