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PLAY METER

Volume 5, Number 21

November 15, 1979

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PLAY METER

Vol. 5, No. 21
Nov. 15, 1979

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PLAY METER

Operators Reduce Machine Inventory, Route Locations 20

It's been a tough year for operators, but they've not only survived—they've flourished. PLAY METER has the complete story.

AMOA Show Comes of Age..... 26

The little AMOA "baby" show has grown up to be an adult—call it a convention now. Trace the steps on page 26.

And Make it Funny, Dick..... 38

Comic Writer Dick Welu (who sometimes disguises himself as an operator) takes a zany look at the trials of gathering material for a story. David Pierson requested that he come up with something light, and Welu took him at his word.

Dumping Old Dogs..... 84

Operators, take heart. Business Writer Charles Ross shares tips on how to get rid of equipment without taking a tax loss. You probably can't afford to miss this one...

First Triple Tournament Set in Minnesota..... 94

Kirk McKennon of Hanson Distributing gave PLAY METER advance information on the first triple tournament for novice foosball, pool and pinball players. Set for April 4, 5, and 6, the skill test will be held in Bloomington, Minnesota, with contenders hailing from a six-state area.

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COVER CREDIT:

Russell Nelson of R&N Silkscreening in San Jose, California designed this month's cover.

From the Editor

The amusement machine industry often has been referred to as being in its infancy. Born out of the depression era of our country, its golden anniversary is fast approaching. Having sustained itself—and indeed flourished—over the past half century, it seems no longer proper to refer to it an an infant industry.

Over the past decade, we have seen a number of changes that have affected the nation's economy as well as the industry. Equipment costs have almost doubled, inflation has eaten away at operator's profits, new machines are becoming technically more sophisticated, and gasoline prices are soaring past the $1 per gallon mark.

Times have changed. The industry is growing up and approaching the "age of reason."

From all indications, operators everywhere are getting smarter. They're reacting intelligently to problems they've been faced with. Of major importance is the fact that operators have successfully been able to over increase their revenues over the past several years. Realistic pricing policies, better commission arrangements, the establishing of weekly minimums and superior equipment produced by manufacturers all have contributed to the increase in operator revenue.

In a certain sense, the high cost of equipment has turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Higher priced equipment served to wake operators up—they had to open to their eyes to the fact that, in order to survive, they must insist on a higher percentage of the take. Much of the operator's surprise, the task of dealing with locations turned out to be easier than they thought.

Much to the beaten location owner's surprise, the higher priced new equipment generated considerably more play appeal. The anticipated loss in revenue as a result of the new commission structure was offset by higher earnings from new machines.

The operators reasoned that if they are to survive, they must deal honestly and openly with their locations. They have already seen a great number of recessions and the trend, unfortunately, is ongoing. To those of you who have risen above the commission structure of 50 years ago goes our deepest appreciation and utmost admiration. Your efforts have paved the way for a more prosperous future for the industry. And, for that, we should all be thankful.

As this is our AMOA convention issue, we would like to invite those of you who will be attending the show to stop off at the PLAY METER booth located in C-57 in the Continental Room. Our staff will be on hand to assist you in any way possible. For those of you who will not be able to make the convention, rest assured we will have complete coverage of the show detailed in next month's issue.

And the show promises to be one of the best ever...

Ralph C. Lally II
Editor and Publisher

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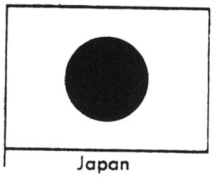
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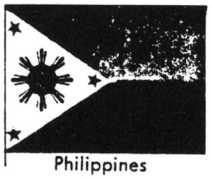
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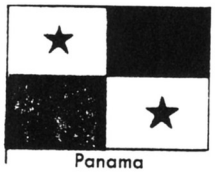
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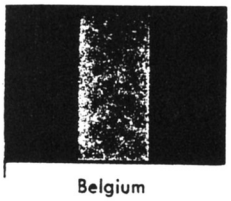
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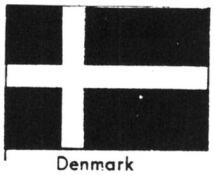
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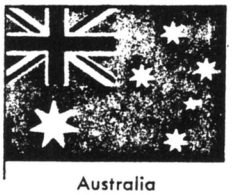
Around the world Coin Industry Professionals recognize WILDCAT products as the answer to equipment maintenance. With equipment costs rising, you should use the finest products to maintain your equipment and give it the best protection for a longer life.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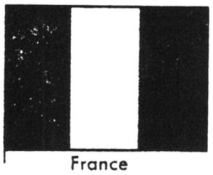
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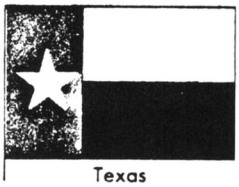
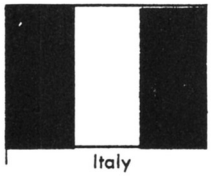

Texas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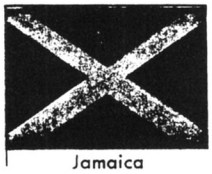
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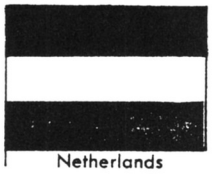
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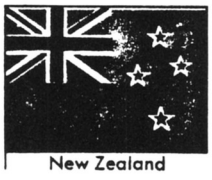
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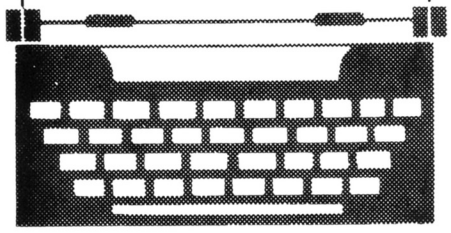

Hitting hard

I was so impressed with your coverage of the industry—the things that count, anyway—that I decided to get your magazine regularly.

I've received other amusement industry magazines but too often they use half the pages going over and over coming conventions and they seem frightened to print anything detrimental about any game or manufacturer.

I like honest coverage, even when you hit operators between the eyes. Some of us deserve it for being greedy. It's ridiculous to give a location 60 percent or even 70 percent plus cash and material gifts. Twenty years ago, I ran a restaurant and received 20 percent on my two pinballs and was happy with that—it paid my electric and gas bill.

Here an operator brought in two expensive and attractive games and he never charged me a dollar no matter how often he had to come in and make repairs. I thought that was a good deal especially when I thought about the $50 a month or so I paid out to keep my refrigeration and air conditioning in repair.

I'll be looking forward to my PLAY METER.

John Franklin
Franklin Amusement Co.
Myrtle Beach, SC

Kansas taxes

I noticed in the state licenses and taxes in your September issue that you list Kansas as having no license fee and no sales tax.

On September 11, the state of Kansas, through a Mr. Holmes, audited my books back three years on use tax at 3 percent when I delivered a new machine into the state of Kansas and a 3½ percent sales tax on total gross sales of $31,000.

The machines I operate are 25-cent kiddie rides, 10-cent target guns, 25-cent bull strength testers, 25-cent capsule machines, and penny weighing machines.

They told me that the only machine which was exempt was a stamp vending machine.

I am being billed for about $1,500 back use and sales tax plus interest and penalties. If you can help me in any way, it would be appreciated.

Andrew H. Reed
Raytown, MO 64133

P.S. The city of Kansas City, Kansas has a $50 per year on any amusement machine, even a penny kicker and catcher. They are slowly putting me out of

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[Editor's Note—We suggest you contact Harlan C. Wingrave of the Kansas Amusement and Music Association, 309 Neosho, Emporia, Kansas 67213, or telephone him at (316) 342-7242. If your regular state association (we're assuming you're a member) can't handle the problem, your prospects look very dim at this stage. Either way, inform us of your state association's action on this matter.]

Computer lauded

Recently, our firm purchased a TRS-80 Mini Computer for our amusement business and it is amazing the amount of time it saves in record keeping and revenue reporting. It allows me to analyze the performance of my games and locations.

I feel the computer has a great future in our business because the games themselves are programmed computers.

Daniel Dever
Helix Enterprises
San Marcos, TX

Artist freebies

Several years ago a local artist gave me records, free of charge, to put on my jukeboxes. Since he was a customer and I felt the record had some merit, I complied with his request.

Last week this individual approached me requesting some kind of letter of verification that these records were indeed on my phonographs for a certain period of time. The basis for this request, I suppose, is for the Copyright Tribunal, which is remunerating artists who are not necessarily involved with the large collection societies (BMI, ASCAP, etc.) but who can produce the necessary documents to verify their performances.

I, of course, refused his request advising him that I would have to contact legal counsel first since all operators are fiercely fighting the right of the Tribunal to exist altogether. Needless to say, this did not make him too happy but I am certainly not going to contribute to something I am trying to destroy.

My question to you is, are other operators aware that a slush fund of this nature exists for these local talents who are trying to reach the heights of the record world?

I don't know exactly what position this situation represents for you as counsel to the AMOA but it certainly bears looking into and may require some very serious, definitive action on your part.

Gerald J. Gesiorski
Hanover, PA

[Editor's Note—This letter was sent to the AMOA Council, with copies sent to industry trade papers in order to alert operators of new governmental wranglings.]

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Coinman of the Month

WAYNE HESCH

Every year at AMOA show time, PLAY METER features the outgoing AMOA president in its Coinman of the Month interview. It's an ideal time, we feel, to interview the association president because, invariably, his answers draw upon the wide range of experience he has gained over the past year while traveling about the country, talking with other operators and appearing before governmental and regulatory bodies.

Without exception, the AMOA presidents we have interviewed have turned out to be, in every sense of the word, professionals—sharp, business-like, articulate, responsive, and knowledgeable. This year AMOA's outgoing president, Wayne Hesch, of A.H. Entertainers, Inc. in Rolling Meadows, Illinois, is no exception.

Wayne, who is 42 years old, grew up in the industry. His father owned a route; so, when Wayne was still in high school, he was already lending a hand. Then, after he was graduated in 1957 with a Business Education degree from Illinois Wesleyan University, he went into the business full-time.

Like all past AMOA presidents, Wayne was a member of the national association's board of directors for a long time—nine years—before becoming president.

His biggest pasttime right now is scuba diving, though on summer days his interest often turns to hitting a little white ball about 95 times on a golf course. He's quick to add, however, that he's been known to hit the ball even more than that on especially trying summer afternoons.

Wayne Hesch comes across as someone who is truly concerned about the industry as a whole, and not just his own little niche within that industry. That's the reason he got involved in association work in the first place. "This is a great industry," he told us, "but it's an industry that has a lot of problems. And everyone has to pitch in and solve those problems. I'm doing my part."

Besides being a long-standing member of the AMOA, he's also a member of the national vending association (NAMA) and a past president of both the Associated Buyers Club and the Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association.

Wayne is especially well-versed in the issues surrounding the jukebox copyright battle, of course. In his Coinman interview, he has some thought-provoking answers for those who think an operator's location list is not a very confidential piece of business information. The scenario he paints of what could happen if your list fell into the wrong hands, is truly disturbing.

Also, he has some things to say about the Copyright Royalty Tribunal which might just raise a few eyebrows in the industry and make one wonder if operators are playing against a stacked deck.

Before you decide — look inside!

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PLAY METER: During your term as AMOA president, what success has the association had as far as recruiting new members?
HESCH: We're now at an all-time high of about 1,250 members. It seems we get new members at almost every state association meeting, even though we don't actively solicit for new members at these functions.

PLAY METER: But there are about 8,000 operators in the country. So that still leaves a lot of operators who do not belong to the national association. Why should they join?
HESCH: I believe everyone that's in the music and games field should be a member of the AMOA, and they should also be a member of their state associations. The reason for joining the AMOA should be that, if they're in this industry, they should help out any organization that is fighting for their livelihood.

There might not be any direct benefit that they'll see this year, but unless their association is strong it can't defend their point of view when their point of view comes up to be defended. It's hard to get members. Our state association in Illinois, by comparison, only has about a twenty percent membership rate; I think that's because a lot of people don't want to join anything. I don't agree with those people who have a lot of reasons for not joining. I think they should join just to help out their industry because, at some time or another, their industry is going to be tested, and it's going to matter to them. And unless they have a strong association, there won't be anybody to fight for them.

PLAY METER: What does an operator gain by joining the AMOA?
HESCH: There are different programs which the AMOA puts on for its members. Of course, there's the insurance program, the monthly newsletter, and the Notre Dame seminars. And then there's the annual trade show. You'll find most of the people who go to the show are AMOA members. And, I'm sure they find the show to be a real advantage. You get to see almost everybody in the industry who has something to display. You get to see all the new products and all the services that are available to this industry. You can see the latest innovations. You can find booths where they can teach you how to convert games. You can go to the seminars at the show. It's really a good program. In this respect, by the way, the Notre Dame seminars have also been tremendously successful for operators.

But, basically, the advantage of joining the AMOA is that it assures an operator that there is somebody at the national level who can fight industry problems if the need arises. It's a lot easier to fight a problem with a group that's established than to try to establish a group after a problem arises.

PLAY METER: What new programs did the AMOA institute over the past year?
HESCH: The new programs that were instituted in the last year include the state association program where we've invited all the state associations to come together on the Thursday before the AMOA show to discuss their mutual problems so that they can see how to improve their effectiveness. We're hoping this platform, whereby they can communicate with one another, can help make the state associations more successful.

Another thing that's come out this year is that we've added two operator seminars—one on Saturday morning and another on Sunday morning. These should give the operators an opportunity to pick up some helpful hints and share ideas on common problems. I've talked to a lot of operators over the year, and it appears they would like to

"True, the AMOA didn't do anything as far as fighting to rescind the gambling stamp. But, you have to remember, no one brought it up."

"A competitor who wants to expand could, by getting his hands on my location list, conduct a direct mail solicitation to all my locations."

"We felt we didn't get a fair shake because we had a shorter period of time to testify. Besides, we weren't testifying to the whole committee."

come to a convention and talk more business than they have. So we're taking advantage of this convention to give them that opportunity.

PLAY METER: Do you feel the AMOA should expand its role to become more actively involved in the games part of the business?
HESCH: The AMOA wants to be actively involved in the games business. For instance, the AMOA sponsors the Don Miller service school program, and that is designed basically for the games segment of the business. Yet, even though we offer this service school all around the country, it's hard sometimes to fill the classes on a regional basis.

We are also committed to take action on any problem that affects the games industry. But it just so happens that there hasn't been anything on a national level that has come up concerning the games industry. Now, if there are some other projects which we think could really do people a service, we would definitely take a good hard look at how to handle those projects.

PLAY METER: But there have been games issues that have been national in scope. The IRS gaming tax stamp which makes pinball tournaments technically illegal throughout most of the country is a national problem that concerns the games segment of the industry. Why didn't the AMOA get involved and help get that law rescinded?
HESCH: True, the AMOA didn't do anything as far as fighting to rescind the gambling stamp. But, you have to remember no one brought it up. No one asked the AMOA to do anything about it. If a member had come forward with a request for the national association to become involved in this area, I'm sure the AMOA would have made a decision to become involved in it. It would have had to be discussed by the AMOA's board of directors, and they would have had to decide what direction to take.

PLAY METER: So, how can a member operator go about filing a complaint in order to get the AMOA to act on a problem like this?
HESCH: I should point out that if just one person complains about something that doesn't mean we're going to run out and do something about it. But if the industry itself feels something has to be done, the AMOA would tackle it. What someone should do if he wants the AMOA to act on a problem that's national in scope is write down his complaint and send it into our office.

Everything that comes into the AMOA office, in the form of suggestions, is considered at the annual board meeting. A member could also contact a board member personally and explain to him why he thinks something should be dealt with by the AMOA. I guess he could even call the president of the national association and talk to him and explain his view, and then it would be taken up by the association. It's rare, but we have had occasions in the past where we've invited an AMOA member to a board meeting to express a certain concern or make a statement. I would say that if someone was very adamant about something, it's very possible

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he could present his case in person.

PLAY METER: We hear talk of manufacturer associations, arcade associations, distributor associations. Do you feel these moves challenge the viability of the AMOA?
HESCH: I don't think they challenge the AMOA. I think they could be worthwhile if they can perform a service for the industry. We've heard a lot of talk about them, but I have to say this, I haven't seen anything develop from all that talk. I'd also like to add that we've offered all these people the opportunity to set up their own meetings the day before the AMOA show. We've even said we'll set up the room for them, just like we're doing for the state association meeting. That way they can have their own separate meetings because they're all going to be there at the show anyhow. However, up until this time, there have been no takers.

Actually, we would like to see any group, whether they are formal or not, get together and discuss their problems on the Thursday before the show. That's the best time for something like that because it wouldn't interfere with the exhibition hours; so they could still see the whole show. You see, the AMOA is trying to represent the entire industry whenever it can. Basically, it has always been an operators association, but that's because we've found that, in general, whatever was good for the operators was good for the other segments of the industry. We encourage all elements of the industry to be members of the AMOA and give us their requests for services, and we will try to handle them. Each individual request from a manufacturer, for instance, would be considered by the AMOA directors.

PLAY METER: Do you feel the AMOA could offer itself as a clearinghouse of information on business and legal matters for the industry?
HESCH: That would have to be something the AMOA board would have to decide if it could do effectively. Right now, if we get a call for assistance on a local problem, we refer that person to his state association because the state association would know a whole lot more about how to handle that specific problem in that specific area than we would. In my home state of Illinois, for instance, when we have a problem in a city, my knowledge of what goes on in Illinois is very helpful in knowing how to approach those city councils. The state associations have a much better chance of helping a local operator with a local problem than the national association. That's why we'd like there to be fifty strong state associations.

PLAY METER: Turning to the matter of the copyright law, collections for the legal action fund to fight the location list requirement have only netted one-third of the money the AMOA says it needs. Why do you feel there has been such a poor response?
HESCH: I feel the response is low because a lot of operators don't really understand what the effects would be if their lists became public. If they understood those lists could put them out of

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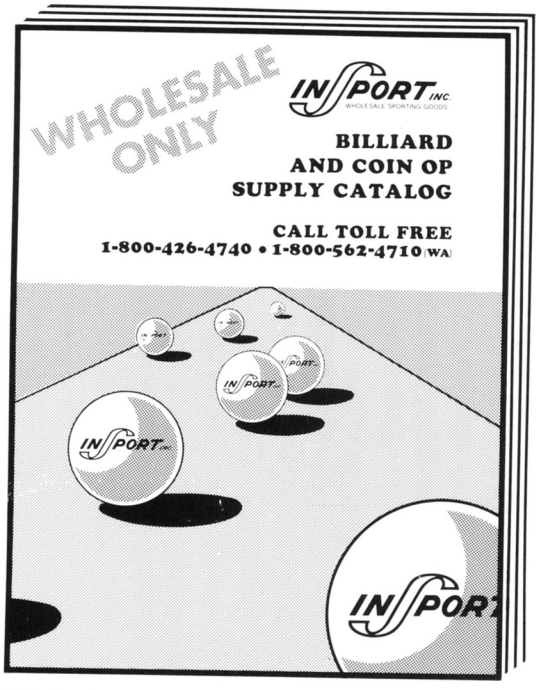

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business, if they became public, they would readily donate to the AMOA's legal action fund.

PLAY METER: Why do you feel the location list requirement is so threatening to the coin-op amusement industry?

HESCH: It's threatening because if it were to become public it could provide a perfect list for any competitor who wanted to attack an operator's business. You see, we've developed our lists over a period of many, many years, and I don't see why we should be singled out to give our lists to a federal agency which really can't guarantee that it will even keep those lists confidential.

You see, in the process of our soliciting locations, we get a lot of denials—locations that don't want coin-op amusement equipment. Now if the federal government makes these public, any newcomer could step right in and benefit from all my hard work. He could get my list from the government and see right away where to funnel his efforts and where his efforts will probably be wasted. He could see which locations are interested in amusement equipment and which ones are not—without even having to check out those locations in person. So the federal government, by making me give them my location lists, is forcing me to make it easier for someone to run me out of business. It would be giving someone who didn't work for the information a tremendous advantage over us operators who had to work for that information. A competitor could put me out of business three times faster if he had my location list.

I should also point out that this regulation doesn't affect just an operator's jukeboxes; it also affects his games business. As any operator can tell you, if he is required to give up a list of his phonograph locations, he is also being forced to give up a rather complete list of his games locations.

PLAY METER: But how could someone use your location lists against you?

HESCH: It's conceivable that a competitor or someone in the business today who wants to expand could, by getting his hands on my location list, conduct a direct mail solicitation to all my locations. He would probably make deals to my locations that would look a lot better on paper, and I wouldn't even know about it or able to deal with it until it was too late because I couldn't deal with all my locations in just one day. He could do some direct selling to locations, for instance, or maybe work out deals where he would lease to the locations—things like that. Of course, there are drawbacks to schemes like that, such as the fact that the locations often find out too late that they aren't getting any service with their equipment.

But the locations never find out things like that until they've already bought the program. And then, after they find that out, they'll turn sour on the whole idea of music and games in their locations. The industry will get a bad name because the company that sold or leased them the equipment didn't live up to its promises, and the operator loses the location. So it's a bad thing for the entire industry.

PLAY METER: As you know, the Copyright Royalty Tribunal (CRT) and the performing rights societies have taken the position that operators already know where their competitors' machines are. Is this true?

HESCH: I think that's an exaggeration on their part. I know a lot of places that have my competitors' equipment in them. However, even in my own area, I don't know where all my competitors' machines are. A location list is an operator's closely guarded secret. It's the last thing he gives you when you buy his route. For instance, when you buy a route, he'll take you in so you can find out what his gross business is, what his mix of machines is, the number of jukeboxes he has, the number of games he has, the kinds of games, the kinds of phonographs, a general idea of the geographical spread of the operation—things like that. But you don't get the actual list of the operator's locations until you put your money on the table and get the keys from the man. Then the operator who is selling out hands over the keys and the list of his locations. Up until that time, he guards that list so that his competitor can't go straight out there and take the locations away from him without buying his business.

PLAY METER: Do you anticipate the per-box assessment to be raised, lowered, or maintained, when the CRT conducts its rate review hearings in January?

HESCH: In 1980 when the revision rate is considered by the CRT, we expect it's very possible the CRT will ask for a significant increase. We, of course, will fight either to maintain the status quo or to lower the rates. We expect quite a battle along those lines. I don't know what ASCAP will be arguing when they appeal for a rate hike, but they will probably be arguing from a position of inflation and, possibly, a comparison of the rates here with the rates in other countries—that, by the way, doesn't make any sense to me because there are a lot of different factors to take into consideration when you compare what is happening in foreign countries to what is happening in the United States.

For our part, though, we will have to tell the CRT that the music business as such has been coming down, and this they could see for themselves from the record sales of late. Our music business is not what it was a long time ago. Any increase in the rate could decrease the number of machines the CRT can expect to get payments on.

Actually, though, we still haven't put our defense together for the rate review. We will definitely do a lot of work on that after the convention. But, up until now, we've been working mostly on the location list battle.

PLAY METER: You have said at several state association meetings over the past year that you don't feel the CRT gave the AMOA a fair and complete hearing. Could you explain yourself on this point?

HESCH: When we went to Washington to testify before the CRT, we were the last ones to be heard. The meeting started at nine o'clock in the morning,

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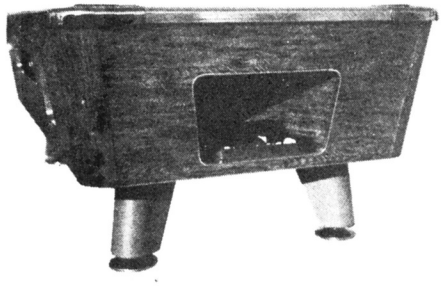

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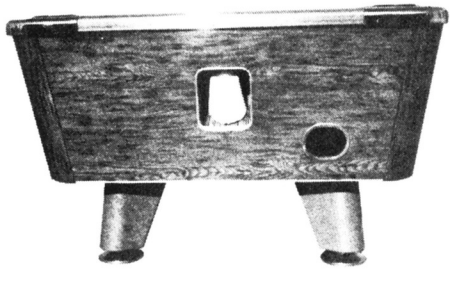

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and the performing rights societies went first. We didn't get a chance to be heard until about four o'clock in the afternoon, and the meeting was over at five. So we don't think we had a fair opportunity to present our case.

PLAY METER: Do you think the AMOA should argue for equal time in the rate review hearing so that sort of thing won't happen again? By equal time, I mean time equal to the sum total of all the time the three performing rights societies are given to present their cases.

HESCH: I would certainly hope we would have equal time before the CRT. I will say this—we did have equal time before the Copyright Office in our hearings before them, and we were able to accomplish a whole lot more with them. But we didn't get equal time before the CRT. In fact, some of the Copyright Tribunal members left before it was our turn to talk. So, consequently, they weren't all there when we were presenting our case.

There are five members on the CRT, but I don't think we ever really had five members listening to us. And many times we had only two present during our testimony. They were all there for a little bit of the time, but this is one of the reasons why we felt we had a bad hearing. The CRT members just kept walking in and out of the room. Of course, it's not uncommon for things like this to happen in hearings before federal agencies, but we felt we didn't get a fair shake because we had a shorter period of time to testify and, besides that, we weren't testifying to the whole committee. It was usually the chairman plus one or maybe two members.

PLAY METER: That's very disturbing. Did that give you the feeling the CRT members had already made up their minds about the matter, that is, prejudged the case before the AMOA had its turn to present its case?

HESCH: I'll say this—the CRT didn't seem to be listening very hard to our arguments.

PLAY METER: Has the CRT made any attempts since then to understand the operators' business?

HESCH: Well, awhile back they made a trip down to Memphis with the performing rights societies to visit the country hall of fame. After that, they contacted us and said they had learned some things about the other organizations and now they wanted to learn something about the jukebox business.

So very recently four of the CRT members visited a jukebox operation in the United States to learn more about how the jukebox business is really run. The only CRT member who didn't go was Clarence James. The other four spent about six hours with an AMOA member operator, asking him questions and observing how his business was run. I certainly hope from that exposure to an operator's situation, in an operator's office, the CRT members were able to see what an operator is confronted with. And, if so, then maybe the CRT will take that experience into account and give us a much better hearing the next time.

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Operators reduce machine inventory, route locations

Cost-conscious operators cut back on their number of machines and route locations in 1979, according to PLAY METER's annual survey.

The escalating cost of fuel, together with the continuing rise in the cost of equipment, have apparently forced operators to strip away marginal locations which they might have held onto if fuel costs weren't so high. That conclusion was made by PLAY METER Magazine, following its annual operator survey which draws the largest sampling of operators nationwide. PLAY METER's industry survey examines such specifics as per-piece earnings, pricing and commission structures, new game and phonograph purchases, free game ratios, etc.

Those reporting represented a wide sampling of operators across the country. Operations varied in size from those with only two games to some with approximately 3500 pieces.

The PLAY METER poll once again registered an excellent response rate (seven percent), according to polling standards. But the response this year was down because of recent changes in postal regulations which delayed mailing.

Fewer pieces, fewer stops

The survey revealed the average operator reduced his on-location inventory of coin-operated amusement equipment from 298 pieces in 1978 to 261 pieces in 1979.

So, based on a total of 7,500 operators in the United States today, PLAY METER has estimated there are about 1,957,500 coin-operated amusement devices on location today. This represents a 12.4 percent decrease from last year in the total number of pieces on location.

Another indication that cost-conscious operators are trimming marginal stops from their routes is the sharp decline in the average number of locations. Last year each operator had an average of 116 locations on his route, but this year that total has dropped to 97. It follows that, with higher fuel costs, operators are taking harder looks at locations they would have carried in the past.

Together with this, in an apparent attempt to increase collections at those locations that were maintained, operators have increased their average number of pieces per location. In 1978, the average location had 2.56 pieces, but in 1979 that average climbed to 2.69.

Per-piece earnings

Per-piece earnings climbed in 1979, except for foosballs and wall games, both of which registered noticeable declines in their earnings for 1979. The average weekly per-piece gross in 1979 was $55.99, a small increase over 1978's average of $53.94.

Videos registered the most dramatic increase in collections in 1978—a 28 percent jump from $50 per week in 1978 to $64 per week in 1979.

Breakdown of Amusement Equipment

	% Total Equipment			Avg. No. Pieces			Weekly Gross			New Purchases		
	'77	'78	'79	'77	'78	'79	'77	'78	'79	'77	'78	'79
Phonographs	25%	20%	17%	50	59	44	$46	$52	$54	5	5	5
Pinballs	33%	33%	35%	66	99	91	$44	$62	$65	13	21	19
Videos	15%	21%	22%	30	62	57	$44	$50	$64	12	12	9
Pool Tables	12%	12%	11%	24	35	30	$41	$53	$57	0	5	5
Foosballs	5%	5%	5%	10	15	13	$39	$41	$31	5	3	2
Shuffleboards	2%	2%	2%	4	6	6	$29	$32	$41	1	1	1
Wall Games	1%	2%	1%	4	4	4	$33	$34	$29	1	1	0
Cocktail Tables	*	2%	2%	*	6	3		*	$49	*	*	1
Air Cushion Games	1%	*	1%	2	3	2	*	*	$27	*	*	*
Arcade Games	5%	3%	4%	10	9	11	*	*	*	*	*	*

*Not Computed

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Preferred Manufacturers

Editor's Note: The following percentages do not in any way reflect the manufacturers' share of various markets.

Phonographs	*'77*	*'78*	*'79*
Rock-Ola	29%	29%	38%
Seeburg	38%	39%	32%
Rowe	28%	25%	26%
NSM/ Wurlitzer	*	7%	4%

Pinball	*'77*	*'78*	*'79*
Bally	53%	57%	64%
Williams	22%	11%	17%
Gottlieb	23%	26%	12%
Stern	*	3%	4%
Atari	*	3%	2%
Others	*	*	1%

Video Games	*'77*	*'78*	*'79*
Midway	31%	27%	49%
Atari	59%	69%	47%
Others	10%	4%	4%

Pool Tables	*'77*	*'78*	*'79*
Valley	57%	62%	65%
Dynamo	5%	7%	13%
Irving Kaye	7%	10%	11%
U. B. I.	8%	6%	4%
U. S. Billiards	10%	7%	4%
American	4%	3%	3%
Others	9%	5%	*

Foosball	*'77*	*'78*	*'79*
Tournament Soccer	31%	46%	46%
Dynamo	27%	22%	24%
Irving Kaye	3%	6%	7%
Tornado	*	*	6%
Rene Pierre	7%	6%	5%
Deutsch Meister	13%	7%	5%
Others	19%	13%	7%

Wall Games	*'77*	*'78*	*'79*
Gremlin	89%	75%	70%
Sunbird	*	23%	30%
Others	11%	2%	*

**Not Computed*

For the second year in a row, pinball was the top earner for the operator. The average weekly per-pinball gross in 1979 was up to $65. Last year it was $62. Pinball's lofty status as the operator's top earning piece turned out to be profitable for pinball manufacturers in 1979—forty percent of all new equipment purchases in 1979 were pinball purchases.

As for pool tables, earnings climbed from $53 in 1978 to $57 this year. Foosball suffered a significant drop from $41 in 1978, to $31 this year. Shuffle and bowling alleys registered a healthy gain to $41, while wall games dropped to $29 per week gross earnings. And cocktail pins, on which PLAY METER had no conclusive figures last year, averaged $49 per week in 1979.

Phonographs

Phonographs also registered small gains in 1979, but it wasn't enough to keep pace with the leaders. Two years ago the jukebox held the distinction as the highest earning piece on location, but last year it fell to third place—behind pinball and pool—and this year it fell to fourth place as video games made their big jump.

Even a two-dollar increase in gross collections to $54 per week hasn't helped the phonograph very much, as more and more operators are beginning to phase out of the music business. In fact, 22 percent of all operators taking part in the survey this year said they do not operate any phonographs. An interesting sidenote on this is that, for the first time, there wasn't a single operator who reported that he handled jukeboxes alone.

A similar decline is reflected in phonograph purchases. Thirty-six percent of the operators said they bought fewer units in 1979 than they did in 1978, while only 32 percent reported that they bought more. This is a rather discouraging note, especially in light of the fact that 1978 purchases were down from the year before.

On the other hand, game purchases continued their phenomenal climb. Sixty-nine percent of the operators said they bought more in 1979 than they did in 1978—and 1978, remember, was a "bull" market for game purchases.

The combination of these two facts—that operators are buying fewer phonographs and more games—indicates that capital which in the past, went to purchase new phonographs is now being re-channeled to buy products from

Equipment Life

Editor's Note: The following percentages are based on operators' responses to the usual lifespan of various types of equipment.

Phonographs
1-4 years..... 16%
5-8 years..... 50%
9 years and over..... 34%
Most Common Response ..... 10 years (27%)

Pinballs
1-2 years..... 24%
3-5 years..... 62%
6 years and over..... 14%
Most Common Response..... 3 years (26%)

Videos
1-2 years..... 34%
3-5 years..... 60%
6 years and over..... 6%
Most Common Response..... 3 years (28%)

Pool Tables
2-4 years..... 15%
5-7 years..... 49%
8 years and over..... 36%
Most Common Response ... (Tie) 5 years and 10 years (25%)

Foosball
1-2 years..... 20%
3-5 years..... 63%
6 years and over..... 17%
Most Common Response..... 5 years (23%)

Shuffleboards
1-4 years..... 23%
5-7 years..... 45%
8 years and over..... 32%
Most Common Response ..... (Tie) 5 and 10 years (26%)

Wall Games
1-2 years..... 38%
3-5 years..... 54%
6 years and over..... 8%
Most Common Response ..... (Tie) 2 and 5 years (27%)

Bally, Williams, Exidy, Midway, Gottlieb, and others.

Commission arrangements

Though gross collections remained somewhat the same in 1979, there were indications that operators are beginning to make some headway in the area of commission arrangements. Solid state pins and the top earning videos are the pieces most often commanding better commission arrangements for operators here, with the usual inroads being sixty-forty.

Thirty-six percent of the operators reported they are getting commission splits of better than fifty-fifty on some of their equipment. One operator, in fact, reported an astounding commission arrangement where he garners 85 percent of the gross.

As a further hedge against increased costs, thirty percent of the operators reported they have been successful in negotiating weekly minimum guarantees for themselves. The most common weekly minimum is $25 (a figure that appears to guarantee the operator, in most cases, a fair return on his equipment). Weekly minimums, however, ranged from $13 to $45.

Only four percent of the operators were able to establish weekly service charges for themselves. But the rate, for those who did, usually was five dollars.

Sue Buck

Of course, the leading question this past summer was "Where do you buy your gasoline?" But the hottest topic after the gas lines went down was the dollar coin—the "Sue Buck," as the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin is coming to be called.

Fifty percent of the operators approved of the Sue Buck, apparently seeing in the new coinage increased chances for new profits. But thirty percent of the operators harbored strong negative feelings about the coin, and twenty percent still had not made up their minds.

Miscellany

There were a couple of changes in brand loyalties in 1979. Rock-Ola supplanted Seeburg as the most preferred manufacturer of phonographs, and Midway shot past Atari as the preferred video game manufacturer.

But Bally (for pinballs), Valley (for pool tables), Tournament Soccer (for foosballs), and Gremlin (for wall games) maintained their statuses as the manufacturers of preference in their various product lines.

In the field of free play percentages, 34 percent of the pinballs that are on such an arrangement have the plays percentaged at less than thirty percent of the total. Fifty percent of the pins are percentaged with free plays of between 30 and 35 percent, and fourteen percent of the pins are percentaged between 35 and 40 percent. Two percent of the games that have free plays percentaged into them are set on liberal percentages of more than forty percent.

Seven percent of all the pins in the United States are not set on free plays.

Two other unrelated but interesting pieces of information gleaned from the survey this year were the following: 26 percent of an operator's income is spent on wages and jukebox operators change an average 3.3 records per jukebox per week.

In all, it would appear that operators have been somewhat successful in cutting away losing locations—since their earnings continued upward. This would indicate that today's operator is more cost-conscious than ever before, not only because he's sharper than his predecessors, but also because he has to be cost-conscious to survive in today's economic climate.

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The Winners of '79

'Flash' and 'Space Invaders' head the lists

It comes as no surprise that Williams' Flash *and Midway's* Space Invaders*—two games which keep players busy all year long—ended up as the top earning pieces in their respective categories. The verification of what everyone already knew came in PLAY METER's annual operator's survey, which asks operators to list in order their top three earning pinball games and their top three earning video games. The deadline for this year's survey was September 30. Late-released games generally show better results in the following year's poll. By the way, for critic's of the "critic," Roger C. Sharpe's ratings for the top earning pingames is listed behind each entry.*

Top Pins

1. **FLASH** (Williams) 4
2. **PLAYBOY** (Bally) 4
3. **SUPERMAN** (Atari) 4
4. **KISS** (Bally) 4
5. **PARAGON** (Bally) 4
6. **LOST WORLD** (Bally) 3¾
7. **PHOENIX** (Williams) 3¼
8. **MATA HARI** (Bally) 3½
9. **EIGHT BALL** (Bally) 4
10. **CHARLIE'S ANGELS** (Gottlieb) 4
11. **SUPERSONIC** (Bally) 4
12. **STAR TREK** (Bally) 3½
13. **MIDDLE EARTH** (Atari) 2¾
14. **SINBAD** (Gottlieb) 4
15. **COUNT-DOWN** (Gottlieb) 4
16. **SOLAR RIDE** (Gottlieb) 3½
17. **DRACULA** (Stern) 3¾
18. **CLOSE ENCOUNTERS** (Gottlieb) 4
19. **DISCO FEVER** (Williams) 3¼
20. **HOT HAND** (Stern) 4

Others worthy of note: Bally's **Six Million Dollar Man** (2¾); Williams **Tri Zone** (3); Gottlieb's **Joker Poker** (3¾); Stern's **Wild Fyre** (3); Game Plan's **Sharpshooter** (not reviewed).

Top Videos

1. **SPACE INVADERS** (Midway)
2. **FOOTBALL** (Atari)
3. **STAR FIRE** (Exidy)
4. **SPACE WARS** (Cinematronics)
5. **HEAD ON** (Gremlin)
6. **SPRINT II** (Atari)
7. **CRASH** (Exidy)
8. **SUPER BREAKOUT** (Atari)
9. **STAR HAWK** (Cinematronics)
10. **VIDEO PINBALL** (Atari)
11. **NIGHT DRIVER** (Atari)
12. **SPRINT I** (Atari)
13. **SEAWOLF II** (Midway)
14. **BASEBALL** (Atari)
15. **SPEED FREAK** (Vectorbeam)
16. **F-1** (Atari)
17. **SEAWOLF** (Midway)
18. **FIRE TRUCK** (Atari)
19. **SUPER BUG** (Atari)
20. **BASKETBALL** (Atari)

It comes as no surprise that Williams' Flash *(top picture) and Midway's* Space Invaders *were the leading earners of 1979.*

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AMOA show comes of age

Like last year, gaming equipment will be on display at the AMOA Show.

The AMOA show is being called a convention this year-- for a change

In the past, they called it the AMOA Show. This year it's being called a convention—and rightly so, it would seem.

Actually, it has always seemed a wasted opportunity—thousands of operators all gathered together for three days yet hardly with the opportunity to share ideas on how to make their businesses more efficient or more profitable. But, with the addition of two "mini-seminars" (one on Saturday morning and another on Sunday morning), it appears the AMOA leadership has decided to take some moves to make its annual expo more than just a show of the latest coin-op amusement equipment.

The convention, in fact, starts well before the show does. Thursday, November 8, the day before the convention, there will be a state association meeting. The conference, which will be held in Parlor A at the Conrad Hilton Hotel from 3 to 5 p.m., is designed to analyze what makes a state association succeed (and, it follows, what makes a state association fall apart).

The meeting is a noble idea in that it tries to show operators how they can fashion their state associations to be more responsive and effective. However, the program will have to overcome two possible shortcomings—hours and format.

It appears as if interest in this meeting is at a peak, and it is doubtful if much can be accomplished in the allotted two hours. There's a possibility, it would seem, that the meeting could extend for some hours past that time, if things get on the right track. Let's hope so.

Also, in the questionnaires sent out to the various state associations, it appeared as if the meeting could get bogged down in parlimentary trivia such as the number of board of directors, how often the membership meets, codes and bylaws, etc. While all these topics are, of course, necessary in the establishment of any functioning association, it is hoped this meeting will provide operators with a chance to examine how they can make the associations work for them...and not restrict the discussion to a recital of how associations work.

Then on Friday, before the show begins, Dr. William C. Freund, the senior vice president and chief economist for the New York Stock Exchange, will deliver this year's keynote address—"What Lies Ahead for American Business." His speech,

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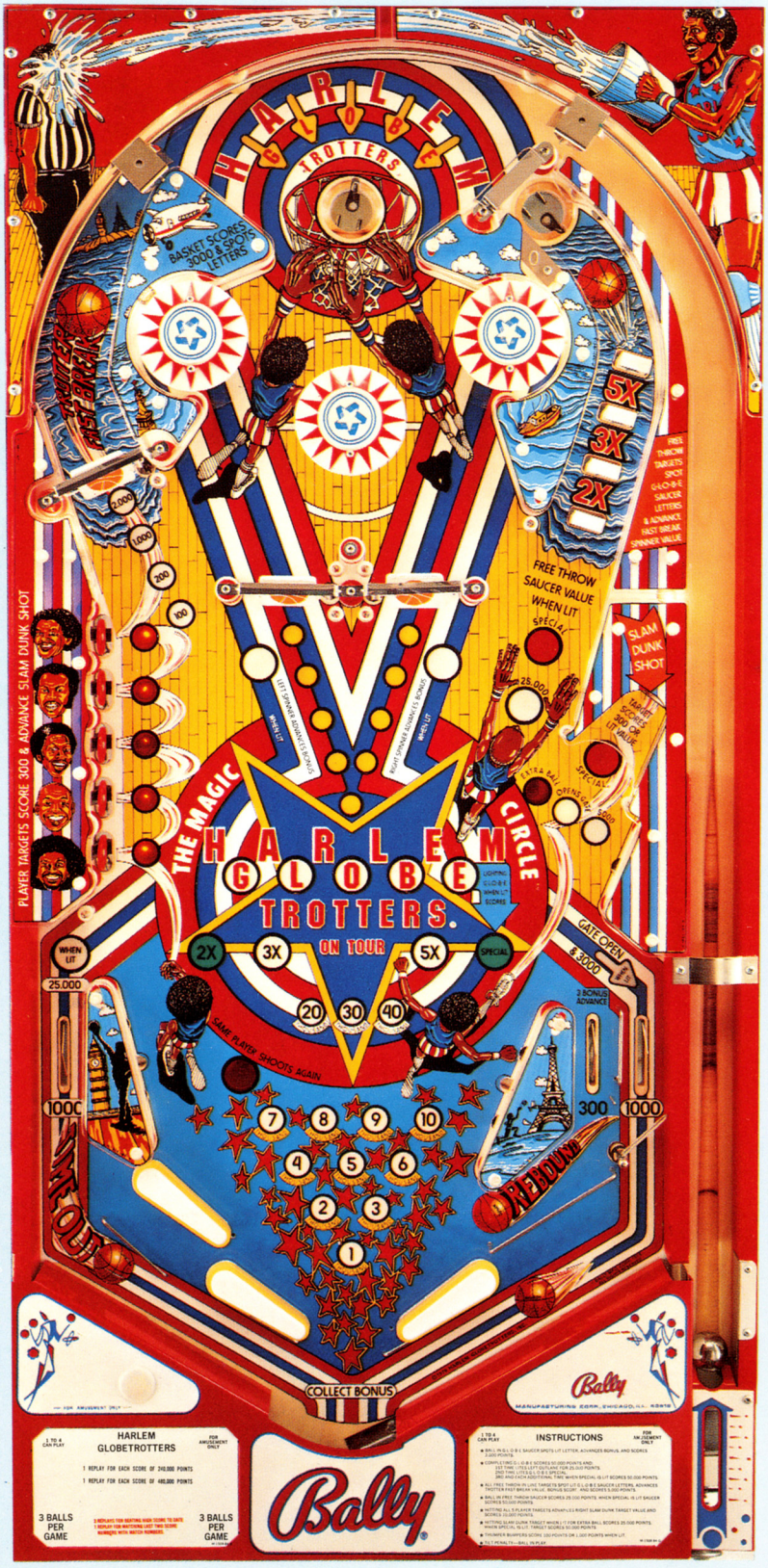

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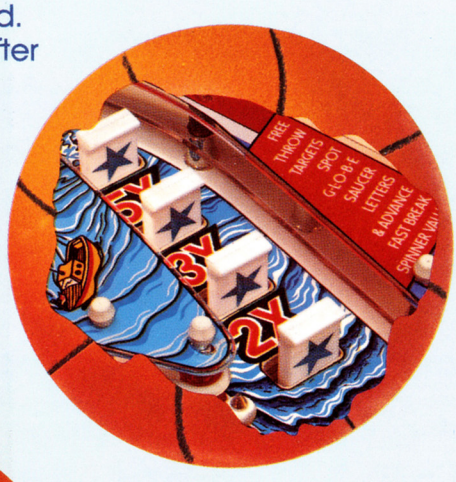

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If you like nuclear holocausts, extra-terrestrial warfare, and fun things like that--you will probably find a few games there to whet your tastes.

which will probably be somewhat general in nature, will be followed by a panel discussion in which Freund and two successful operators, Russell Mawdsley and John Trucano, will examine Freund's observations and analyze what affect those economic conditions will have on this industry. That seminar is scheduled to end at 12 noon when the show opens. Don Van Brackel, AMOA's immediate past president, will be the seminar moderator.

Exhibit hours for the show this year will be from 12 noon to 6 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

The first of the two "mini-seminars" will deal with a very timely subject—vehicle and gas-saving techniques. Van Brackel and John Estridge will be the panel members on this meeting, which runs from 8: 30 to 10 a.m.

The second "mini-seminar," also scheduled to run from 8: 30 to 10 a.m. on Sunday, will deal with delegation of authority. Panel members for that discussion will include Norman Pink and Fred Collins.

After the show itself has closed Sunday at 4 p.m., the AMOA will conclude its annual festivities with a banquet and stage show. This year, for the first time, national television will be on hand to tape the JB Awards presentations. Hopefully, the glare of the television cameras will draw the JB Award winners to appear and accept their awards this year instead of delegating some lower echelon recording industry people to pick up the plaques for them.

A ladies luncheon will be held in the Waldorf Room Friday at 12: 30 p.m., followed by a program entitled "Images of Women in Film, 1930-1945."

The registration desk opens at 8: 30 a.m. November 9 and will stay open until the show closes on the first day. For Saturday and Sunday, the registration desk will open at 8: 30 and stay open until 10 a.m. on the remaining days of the show.

But, as always, the show's the event. Everyone wants to know what the manufacturers have up their sleeves this year. Last year the video game wonder was hidden in Midway's and Taito's booths, but the game hardly got any attention until it hit the locations—then it took off. So, operators and distributors alike will probably be looking harder at games they might have written off last year. And as for the question on everyone's mind—will there be a *Space Invaders II*? Yes, but probably not at the show.

But if you like nuclear holocausts, extra-terrestrial warfare, and fun things like that—you will probably find a few games there to whet your tastes. Yes, that's right, the space theme is still with us, though probably not as distinct as it was last year.

In pinball, Williams will be hard pressed to follow up its *Flash* success of one year ago. But with its new machine, *Gorgar*, it'll draw more

Steve Kirk

Game designer: METEOR™

Author: All about Pinball

PINBALL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA INC. PAA

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The space theme is still with us, though not as distinct as last year.

than its share of second looks. After all, a talking pinball machine? What's this world coming to? The game reportedly utilizes a magnet to hold the ball when scoring some of the features. It appears as if this game may have enough novel twists to hold some attention at the show as well.

From Bally, there will be two celebrity pinballs, *Dolly Parton* and *Harlem Globetrotters*. But, in addition to a fair sprinkling of bingo pins and slots, check out Bally for a new wide body pin that will create a new "Mania" in the industry.

From Gottlieb, there'll be *Genie*, of course, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *Buck Rogers*. And Stern will be showing its pinball machine, *Meteor*, which has been getting a lot better reviews than the motion picture by the same name. And from the manufacturers of *Stars*, and *Meteor*, look for a new one, *Galaxy*.

And then there's Game Plan. On the heels of its successful entry into the upright pinball market, this company will be debuting *Coney Island* and *Super Nova*, plus a sitdown pin, *Vegas*.

In videos, Midway can be counted on to show *Phantom* for those with jet fighter pilot hangups, *Submarine*, *18-Wheeler*, and (all bow your heads) *Space Invaders*.

Exidy will be showing its new video offering *Fire One*, which was previewed recently at the Japan Show, and *Sidetrack*, which will take its first bow at the show. Gremlin can be counted on to show its *Head On* and there'll probably be another surprise or two from the people at Sega/Gremlin.

Last year Atari issued small footballs to visitors to its booth in connection with the release of *Football*. This year it might not be a bad idea for the company to issue shoulder pads since they've taken *Football* one step further and made it a team game. Add to that the latest sports game from this manufacturer, *Soccer*. Why not? They've done all the other sports.

The Sunnyvale, California manufacturer also will be showing *Asteroids*, a video game which has a theme vaguely reminiscent of *Space Invaders*.

Cinematronics/Vectorbeam will be showing *Sundance*, which has absolutely nothing to do with bank robbers, and *Warriors*, which features swordfighters.

Other surprises at the show—yes, gambling equipment will be on display again this year—will include a robot (Amico Marketing will be featuring it) which you should check out...that is, if it doesn't check you out first. A wide assortment of computer and office systems will be on display, as well.

And, finally, check out Phonograph Row. Rumor has it that some phonograph manufacturers may be offering a disco package which is designed to compete with the current disco rage. The disco packages they would be offering are reportedly automated alternatives to disco formats which use disc jockeys.

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How to tell at the show which games will be winners on location

By Zac Oliver

At the AMOA Show, you will enter the world of coin-operated equipment, in its largest display. The aisles will be full of visitors who hail from all over the world. The booths will exhibit products, equipment, and services associated with the coin-machine industry.

It is a time of congregation—the peak of the gregariousness of the coin-machine industry personnel. You'll have the opportunity to meet the faces and voices usually behind "Ma Bell" devices. These are the people that make the industry tick—marketing, sales, technical support, designers and owners. They will all be there at one time or another, backing up their products and reaching out for new customers.

The expo has a flavor of party time. It's a fair, really, where pleasure interacts with business and beyond, so characteristic of this industry—an excellent opportunity to observe, play, and examine new equipment and products.

As you enter the booth area, the hubbub of the crowd and operating equipment sets the pace. The roar of engines, explosions, shots, pings, pongs, screeching of tires, and the remaining miscellany of electronic generated sounds blends with the human murmur of the crowd to create a unique audio-visual impression. Enough, at any rate, to keep the first-time visitor clear of any serious business approach.

The maze of booths spread in a large area and in such an environment, a visit to every booth can be tiring. As I have mentioned before, the party flavor is definitely there. So, in order to leisurely enjoy the visit to the exposition and check out new products as one strolls around, here are a few suggestions:

Visit the expo area at different times. The crowd will also be different, giving one the opportunity to observe the new games and their audio-visual response to the players. Early in the morning, when there's no large crowd, the equipment can be played and its construction and internal components can be discussed with various technical representatives.

Playing or operating the equipment is, to say the least, imperative in order to have a "feel" of its potential. For instance, last year Atari's *Football* was a crowd-gatherer all the way through the expo duration. The same was not true for Midway's *Space Invaders*. As we all know, both games are collection record-breakers.

At mid-day and early afternoon, when the crowd reaches its peak, observe the games, and which ones are the most popular. Make notes, and take a break to visit less crowded booths. You'll certainly find new products interesting for your business.

Later in the afternoon, observe the crowd and the equipment. Which machine is still attracting people? Which one is down, and if possible, why? Make notes. By now, one will probably be carrying a large assortment of printed material, general information, and/or souvenirs. It is advisable to bring some type of carrying case.

Visit your favorite manufacturers first. Select the pieces you want to scrutinize later. Then, visit the other booths. Use the guides from the magazines or the ones available in the lobby areas. Make sure you do not miss any display related to your business.

When checking out equipment, divide your attention in three main areas: external, game play or operation, or internal components.

Observe the external looks of the game, its overall shape, size, and artwork. Check the cabinet and player operated controls. Note materials used in its construction. Try to operate the machine as customers would. Imagine situations like drink spills, physical abuse and other similar conditions and the possible effects on the machine in focus.

As I have mentioned before, play them and watch the players.

To visually inspect the machines in display at the convention is not always possible, although some manufacturers do display the interior of their products, and welcome the interested viewer.

In the area of microprocessor controlled games, it is convenient to know which microprocessor is employed and what hardware approach was taken. How the control circuitry is distributed inside the cabinet, and how the mechanical hardware is interfaced and designed. Also check the power supply, location, design, and construction. All of the above items should be focused upon.

How about accessibility to the machine's main components and subassemblies? What type of display systems are used and how diverse or similar are they to the ones now being used? What if you have problems in the future and what kind of services can one expect from the distributors and manufacturers?

What about parts? Was any improvement made on earlier designs? What about the new systems? Will there be compatibility?

These and many more questions should be raised. Some will be answered, some may not. Sometimes your choice in a good piece of equipment may be divided by its money-making power and the technologies applied in its construction. Is it profitable to add a machine to your route when its basic hardware differs from what you already operate?

Let's face it. If you want to compete in the market today, every good piece of equipment is a must, regardless of diversity.

However, the size and type of your route, your technical personnel, the technical support from your distributor, and parts availability certainly will be determining factors in your overall analysis.

The AMOA convention offers the unique opportunity to view practically every product manufactured in the game industry, and more. Take advantage of it. Enjoy it.

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This is a preview story?

"...And make it funny, Dick!"

By Dick Welu

When David Pierson, editorial director of this sterling publication, called me to ask if I would write an article previewing the AMOA for this issue, I was impressed. After all, PLAY METER must have been springing two or three bucks for the phone call from New Orleans to Dubuque.

"Make it humorous," David suggested offhandly, as editors are wont to express themselves in order to justify their big salaries and to show they were doing more in journalism school than making passes at the coeds.

Now normally such instructions don't bother me. I can be funny on demand. Ask my wife. Heck, I'm a funny guy.

Who else would shop around for months to buy his first video game and then select a *Spitfire* from Innovative Coin? It takes a funny guy to fall in love with Brunswick's *Block-a-Shot*. And only a nut would think Williams' *Argosy* was a good pinball game.

"Deadline for the article is October 10," David said. "Can you make it?"

Three weeks? I could write *War and Peace* in three weeks. No sweat, David: one humorous article previewing the AMOA before October 10th coming up.

Then a very unfunny doctor put my right arm into a cast. The doctor said, "It'll have to be on about three weeks, but you'll be able to do almost everything you normally do with that hand."

The doctor must have thought I normally sat around with my hand in my lap, playing *Breakout* with my feet. I could hold a pencil but my writing resembled an Atari video game test pattern. Typing, another prerequisite for a writer, was as likely as bringing back step-up units.

Perhaps the worst was the mental blue funk my dehabilitation had brought on.

No, humorous is not the word for the way I was feeling—surly more appropriately described it. Not because I might fail to get an article into PLAY METER, you understand, that would be David's tough luck. The big depressant was the fact that duck season was opening in Iowa and I couldn't lift a gun to my shoulder.

I hit upon an idea. Fresh out of personal funny, I decided I'd call on some local folks in the coin machine business and tape some of their humorous anecdotes from past AMOA shows. And from the tapes, my wife could type up the article.

My wife thought it was a good idea—except the part about her typing the article.

"Big Bertha" runs F&F Amusements. Some of her peers had had imaginative variations as to what the F&F stood for, but actually it was the initials of her ex-husband, from whom she'd split some years ago. Bertha had a reputation as a constant bitcher but she was honest.

"The AMOA show," she said, "never miss it."

"Why do you go," I asked?

"Beats cleaning rubber rings and replacing potentiometers," she said. "A woman gets lonely and old doing that."

"Meet a lot of men in Chicago?"

"Are you kidding? I wouldn't get involved with one of those idiots if I had to spend the rest of my life selling stock in Chicago Coin. All they talk about is machines and they think the way to impress a woman is to tell her how they were the first operator in town to have an Atari *Tank*. And cheap? How would you like to go on a big date with a guy whose pocket is bulging with quarters? I know from experience. Ever meet my husband?

"But you said you never missed the show."

Bertha snorted and lit up a cigarette, blowing smoke in my face. "Don't. I love to chew on the factory reps. You know, the suits standing around grinning with their hands out. They'd shake with a leper. I keep a list of all the bad games and poor engineering jobs done by each company, and when they grab my hand and say, 'Hi, I'm Joe Schmaltz from Finicky Games,' I check my list and say, 'So you're the turkeys who put out that machine whose steering wheel fell off every time someone dropped a quarter in.' That gets a conversation going. But shoot, they don't care. As long as the company expense account doesn't run out..."

Big Bertha was a barrel of laughs but I had to move on. Willie the Weeper was a long time operator in town. Rumor had it he'd once shaken Harry Williams' hand. Fact was he was still using some of Harry's original machines on his route.

"Hey, Willie, *que pasa*?" I said.

"Inflation and recession, inflation

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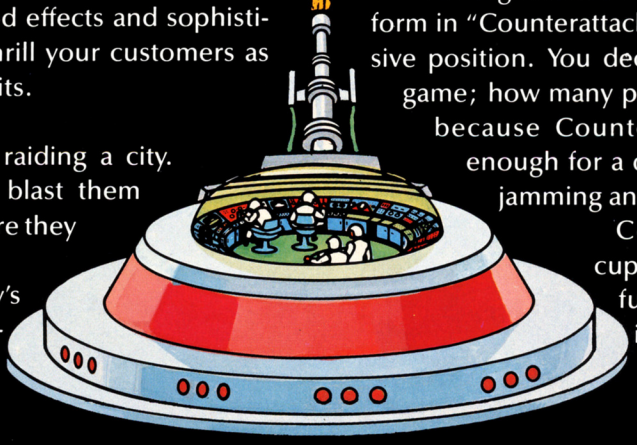

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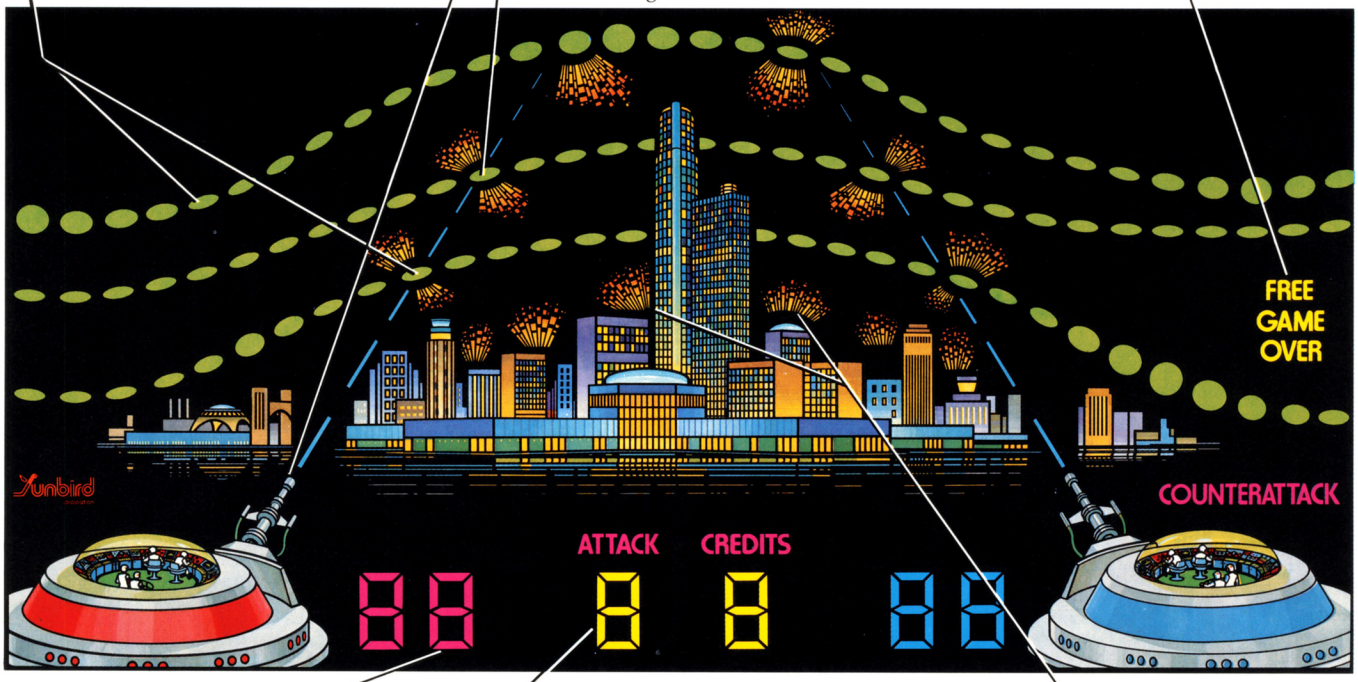
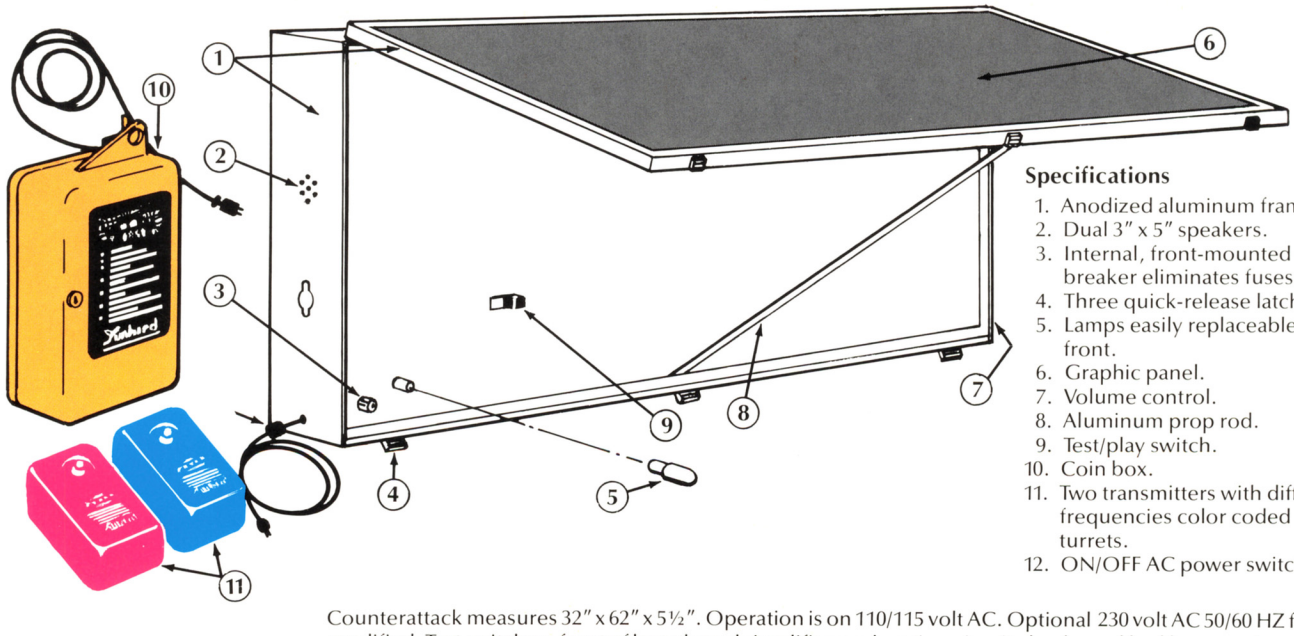


- Accurate shot scores 1 point. If saucer is missed, but hit by opponent, opponent scores 1 point.
- Attacks remaining indicate time left to play.
- Inaccurate shots cause flying saucers to fire on city.



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and recession. Man can't afford to stay in business anymore."

"Not going to the AMOA show then, Willie?"

"Naw, hell, I can't afford to join the AMOA. And if I could, I couldn't afford the gasoline to drive to Chicago. And if I could, I couldn't afford to buy anything I saw there."

"When was the last time you went to the show?"

"Oh, heck, not too long ago...let's see, it kind of stands out 'cause it was the same year I bought my newest game, a Bally *Road Runner*. Must have been '72 or '73, about there. Helluva game, Bally *Road Runner*."

"Uh, they had some pretty good new games come out since then, ya know, Willie."

"Yah, I've heard that, but I'm doing all right and everything is paid for, but with the prices on these new electronic things—I just can't see it. I'll go back to the AMOA show when I can buy a pinball again for $995."

Didn't look like Willie was going to any AMOA shows for a long time so I took my leave while Willie began touching up the playboard on a Gottlieb *Scuba* for the sixth time.

Thumbs Hendlman was a crackerjack serviceman who claimed to be able to fix broken spaghetti and Chicago Cub fans' hearts, not to mention every machine to come down the pike.

"Sure, I go to the AMOA every year," Thumbs mumbled while sucking on a solder gun burn.

"Bet you pick up a lot of technical help there, huh?" I pursued, inspired by Thumbs' seeming eagerness.

" 'Bout the only thing I don't pick up," said Thumbs.

"Whaddya mean?"

"Well, I usually start my tour of the exhibition hall by picking up a free plastic bag to carry goodies around in...then I head straight for the Wico booth and latch on to a half dozen apples to keep up my strength...then I look for free T-shirt booths—go back a couple of times...then it's ball point pens, pocket flashlights, pencils, buttons, stickers, balloons, flyers, candy, magazines, free cleaning samples...and I usually top it off by trying to pick-up one of the hostesses for a night on da town."

"But no technical information?"

"I'm too busy to mess with that stuff."

I knew Slick Hemsley wouldn't let me down. Slick was one of the "new breed," an arcade operator who prided himself on knowing all the latest equipment and running an up-tight business. Slick was making money. Slick was a pain in the neck.

"I go to the AMOA," Slick bellowed, "and I can pick every winner and every loser after one tour around the floor. I never miss. Never miss."

"Really," I replied, in awe of such mystical power.

"Who was the first guy last year to pick *Flash* as a big, big winner?"

"You?" I guessed wildly.

"Never miss. Guess who picked *Starfire* and *Football* as hits? Guess who picked *Playboy*?"

"You pick all the toughies, don't you, Slick?"

"Never miss."

"Weren't you one of the last guys in town to get a *Space Invaders*, Slick?"

Slick faltered a split-second. "Shipping problems, shipping problems. I picked it as a hit before the Japanese. Never miss."

Slick is a pain in the anatomy.

Hometown Harry was one of the smaller operators around but he had a solid jukebox and pinball route. He was a quiet guy who just did good work and never made the news.

"I love the show," he said, "the great displays, the new games, the giveways, the crowds, the big city atmosphere, the dinner, the entertainment, the foreign visitors, the seminar—I mean, I just like everything about it!"

I could see Harry was really impressed. "Doesn't one thing stand out about your annual visit to Chicago?" I inquired further.

"Oh, yes," Harry answered, "the porno shops."

"The porno shops!"

"Go one block east of the Conrad Hilton and head north another block. There's some dandy little shops along there." Harry's eyes were gleaming. "I bought a leather outfit and a whip last year and this time I'm going to—"

"Thanks, Harry," I interrupted, "I think I get the picture."

"They got pictures too."

I felt that I had almost enough material for an article but I complained to my wife that something seemed to be missing. "This article needs a capper," I complained.

"How about you?" she said.

"What about me?"

"You never miss the AMOA. Why do you go?"

"Honey," I said, putting my mouth right next to her ear, I will let you in on a secret I've never told anyone before..."

"Yes?"

"Every year, just before the AMOA show, I write an article for PLAY METER. Then at the show I can always pick up my check in person at the PLAY METER booth. I wouldn't miss that show for anything. Otherwise you wait for months for those guys to pay."

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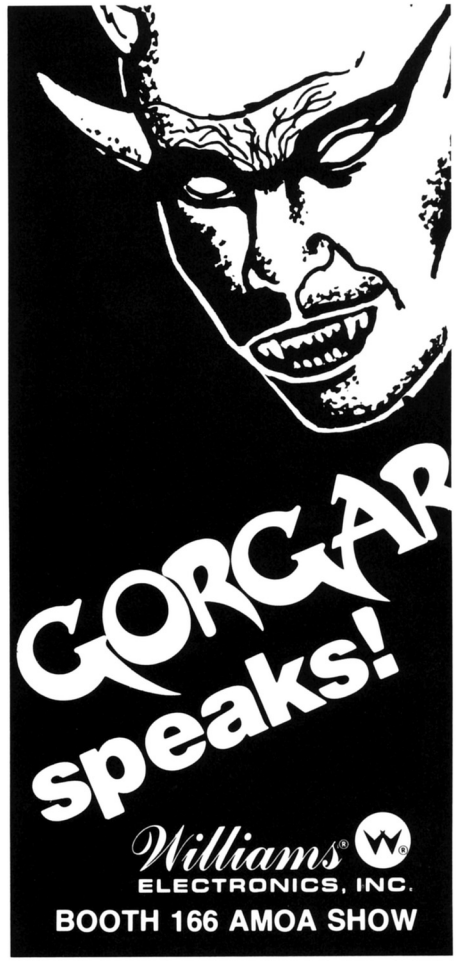

The sharpe guide to chicago

Or how to see the windy city on more than $5 a day

By Roger C. Sharpe

So you're in the Second City. After the show's over and the hustling and bustling between the Hilton and the Plaza is over, what is there to do?

Plenty. As has become an annual affair by this writer, I'd like to think that maybe, just maybe, I can offer you some sights well worth seeing, other than games, hospitality suites, the insides of hotel rooms, the insides of cabs and an occasional jaunt to this restaurant or that bistro.

For a person with an ongoing love affair with this great city, the show is a time to get reacquainted with familiar sights and old friends. And although your time may be limited, there are some things to do which might just change this visit into something out of the ordinary.

Catch some of the action if the Bulls or BlackHawks are in town and see how the midwest "does it" for their sports teams. Even the Bears on Sunday, if it's a home game, will be worth the effort, if for no other reason than to see the sweetness man himself—Walter Payton—in action.

The Art Institute is near the Hilton, and a short tour might get you looking at some other masters of art besides those found on backglasses, cabinets, and playfields.

You say you're hungry? The choices are varied even if you don't have a car and a lot of time. The Pinnacle atop the Holiday Inn on the Outer Drive used to have pretty decent food, but the view is worth the price no matter what the quality of food. You'll take in a 360 degree turning dining area for a panorama of Chicago, and the beauty of the lake—it's breathtaking.

Pizza lovers unite—there is only one (well, really two) places to go for the "best of the best." Une's and Due's right near the Medinah Temple off Michigan Avenue has the best deep dish pie you've ever sunk your chops into. One local tip (which the tourists never know) is to call your order in ahead, which will cut down on the waiting time and whisk you ahead of the long lines (which are sure to be there, incidentally, no matter when you go).

In the heart of town and just this side of the new State Street Mall in progress is the timeless Berghoff's restaurant which features prime ribs of beef that will leave you more than satisfied at prices you can afford to swallow.

Of course, most of the action is going to be near Oak Street around the Hancock Building and the Continental Plaza. So take a walk over to the Rush Street madness of Faces, Zorines, and any number of bars and eateries that typify the swinging lifestyle of Chicago. Mister Kellys may be gone, but there's more than enough to fill up anyone's free hours and late night boogie fever.

Try walking down the Magnificent Mile, if the weather isn't too cold and do some window shopping and when you've had enough of civilization, stroll along the lake for some refreshing time away from the maddening crowd.

I have a valuable tip if you're going to be commuting back and forth between the Hilton and those other locations farther north. When traffic has you and the meter in your cab going up the wall because your driver likes the vista of Michigan Avenue—he's no fool, he knows you're not a local—surprise him. Tell him to get on Wabash (only one block west) and watch the ride take on a more rapid pace. The Outer Drive also may be better to get where you're going before the day ends.

And, if you're driving that rented car and find the parking lots near the Hilton a bit too expensive and crowded to boot, go underground. That's right. The walk may be a couple of blocks, but under Michigan Avenue there's a great wealth of space and inexpensive all-day parking with your closest access being right near Chief Pontiac. Just head into the lot and park at the farthest southern point and row you can. It's cheap, convenient, and sure to save you the hassles of those two parking lots we've all come to know and hate.

If you're wondering about locations in the city, arcades to see, or what life is like in playland, there are some around town, near Rush and Division, off of Franklin (which is near the city center and Wacker when Wacker is running north and south); near the public library (with an entrance down on Randolph Street at the Illinois Central station); and as in any good train station, there's an arcade down amid the shops and ticket windows.

Hopefully, these tips will come in handy when you're in town. If you're lucky enough to get a chance to extend you visit, stop at the refurbished Lincoln Park Zoo or drive by the Bahai Temple near Wilmette on Sheridan Road, just north of Evanston.

In fact, a drive along Sheridan Road and the Gold Coast should be experienced traveling north past spectacular high-rises, Loyola University, Northwestern, and a slew of suburbs with tree-lined streets and endless patches of green and nature. To the south are the museums, of which the Museum of Science and Industry is a must in the Hyde Park area of Chicago.

This and more is waiting for you if you get a chance to get way away from the thoughts of coin-operated equipment. But if you can't enjoy it, I'll see you at the show of shows...in my kind of town.

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The President's Report:

A Plea for Support

AMOA has moved forward on many fronts during the past year—intensifying the copyright fight, developing new services, improving the annual exposition, planning future projects. In all of this it has been my privilege to serve with countless numbers of dedicated people who have been responsible for these accomplishments. Many thanks to our loyal members, the board of directors, our AMOA staff, and those in the industry at large who have come to our aid.

Our primary goal has been to remove a regulation of the Copyright Royalty Tribunal requiring music operators to submit locations lists. This regulation became effective in November 1978, and the AMOA immediately challenged it. We are now at the federal court of appeals level, and we may have to go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court to reach an equitable decision. A legal action fund of $80,000.00 was established to support this action, although our goal of $250,000.00 has not yet been reached. As you can see, we need the support of everyone. This location listing requirement could change the entire operator approach to our industry as we now know it.

Another direction the AMOA has focused on this year has been education, because most operators are very concerned about future profitability. This was evidenced by the unprecedented huge turnout for the AMOA Notre Dame Seminar. A panel of three very qualified operators presented solutions to operating challenges, in addition to the advice of Notre Dame professionals. The response was terrific. We will continue with this format in 1980. The positive response for more information has sparked two extra seminars on Saturday and Sunday mornings during our annual exposition. I hope all of you will take advantage of these shirt sleeve sessions.

AMOA has always tried to help state associations. This year we have added a new direction for stage associations by having a special information and idea exchange. State associations have been very important in combating local and state legislation, and since regulations are on the rise, their importance looms ever greater in the future. We also recognize that state associations are strong supporters of AMOA. Without them, AMOA would not be the successful association it is today.

Next year and the years beyond hold many challenges for our industry. Increasing regulations from the government, soaring inflation, and changes in technology will require adjustments by everyone. Success will be measured by cooperation. We must continue to be united in all our endeavors. AMOA will continue to be the organizing force to insure our mutual success.

Wayne E. Hesch
National President

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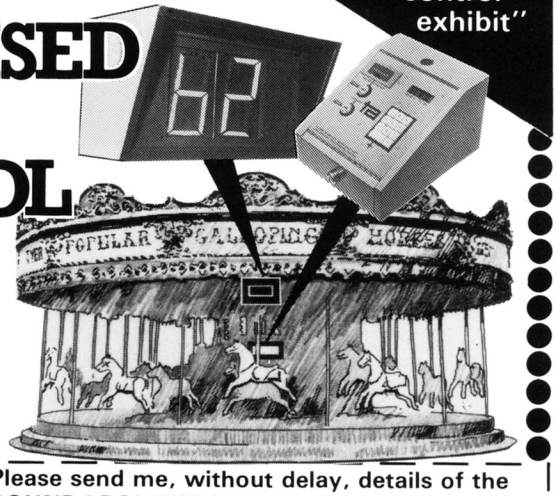

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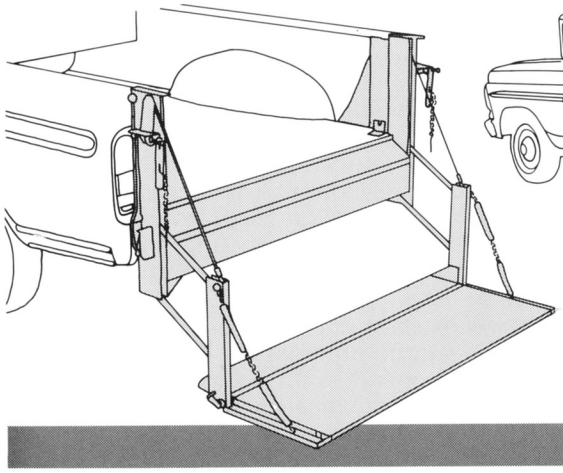

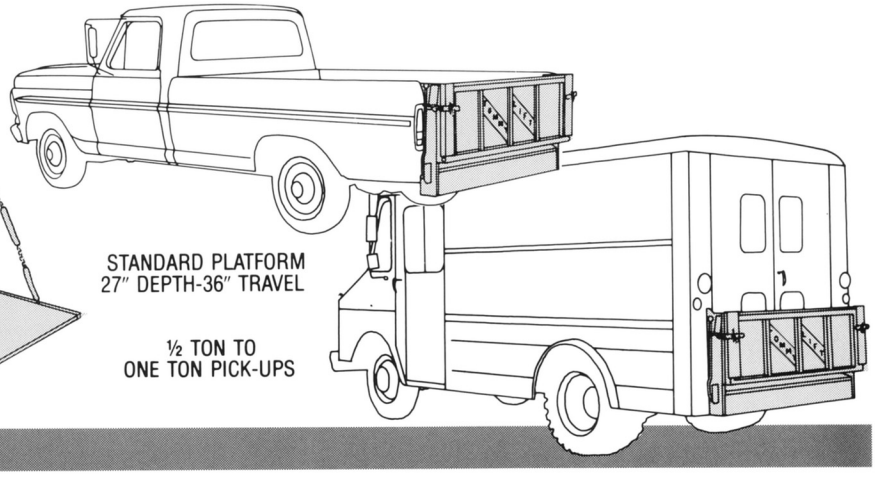

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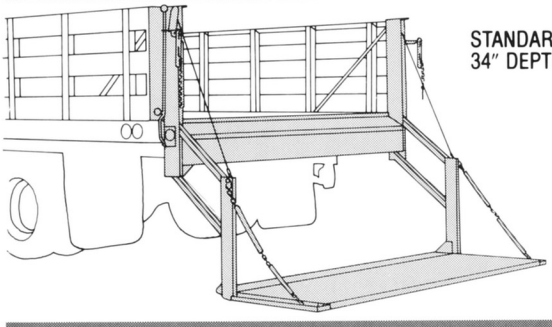

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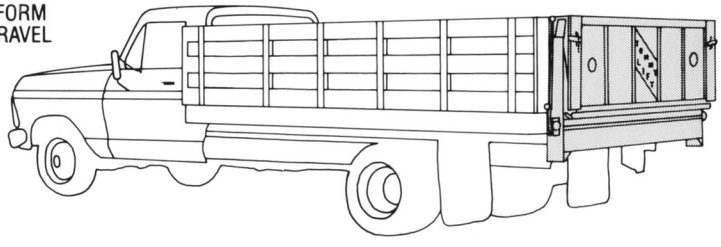

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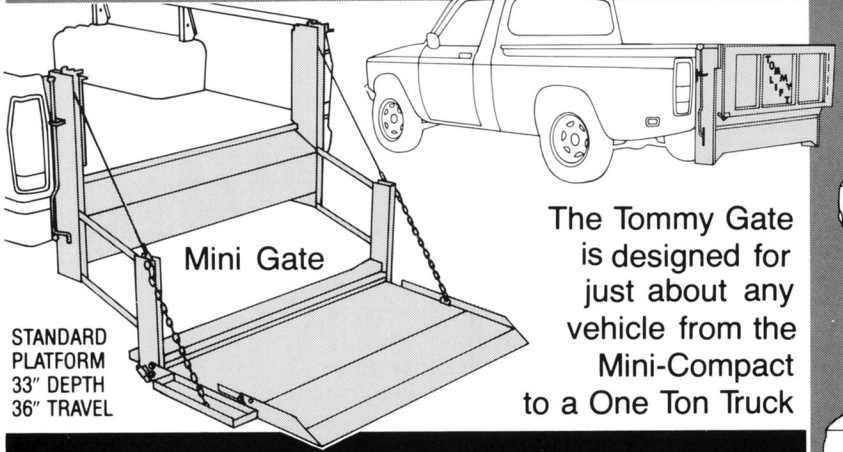

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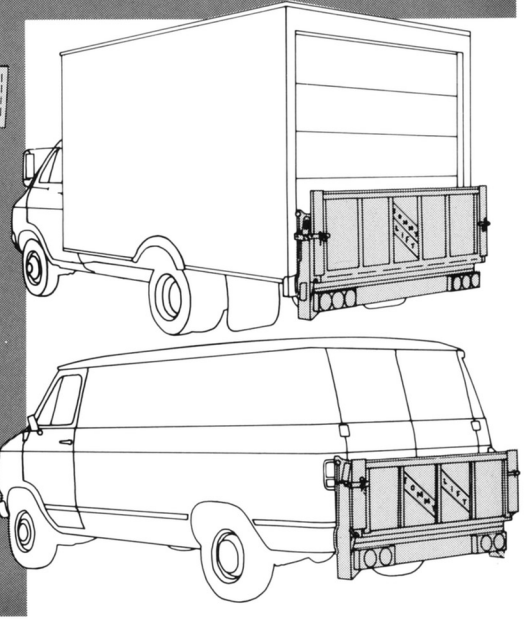

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The Director's Report
An Operator's Role

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The operator must be a capable administrator, have a knowledge of bookkeeping, maintain bank and finance company relations, and understand depreciation schedules. He must administer an office, supervise a shop, and have technical know-how; a small operator is his own mechanic. He must be a good salesman. He must have a feel for public relations and demonstrate interest in the welfare of his community. He must maintain good relations with his elected officials. And finally he must comply with a multitude of federal, state, county and city regulations.

During this very active year, it has been my privilege to work with and learn from one of the best educated and most experienced operators in the business—President Wayne E. Hesch. Nobody has worked harder and more effectively to serve the operator's needs. I think we should all make it a point to thank this man for his efforts to make AMOA a more effective association, not only for the operator, but for the whole industry.

Frederick M. Granger
Executive Vice President

The Committee's Report:
What's at the show

The 1979 exposition provides more services for the operator than ever before. The core and principal service of the exposition, of course, is the trade show of exhibits from both the U.S. and abroad. But we are using free time, when the exhibit floors are not open to provide services which we think will be of value to the operator. We urge you to take advantage of these services.

Beginning Thursday afternoon, there will be a conference of state associations for the exchange of information on the subject of state association development. Industry related organizations are invited to meet then, if they wish. Friday morning is the exposition seminar on the all-important subject of the economy. For the ladies, there is a luncheon and program at noon. Saturday will see a mini-seminar in the morning, with the general membership meeting brunch set for 11:30. Sunday morning marks another mini-seminar, with the gala banquet and stage show scheduled for Sunday night.

We are proud of our distinguished list of exhibitors, most of whom will have engineers and technicians on hand to answer questions.

If you work this show carefully, if you take advantage of all that it has to offer, we are sure that you can become more proficient in your business. Make every hour count by seeing and learning from this once-a-year event.

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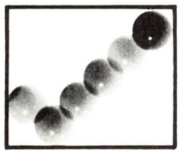

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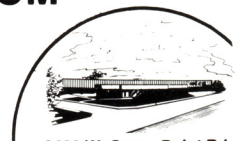

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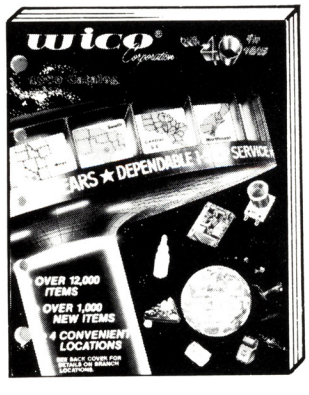

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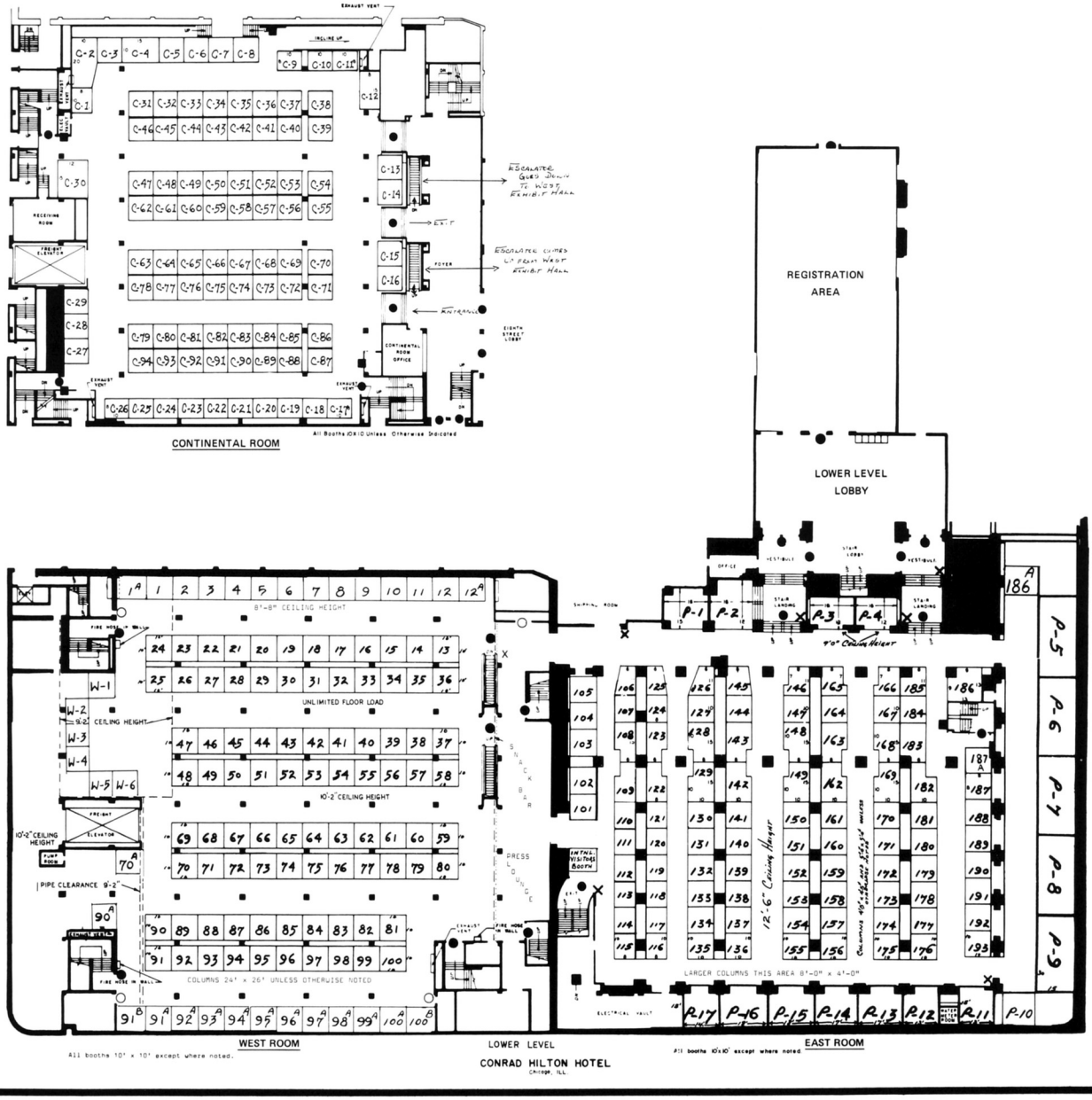

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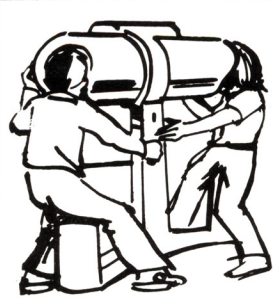

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Kenny Rogers wins five JB Awards

Kenny Rogers swept five of fifteen awards at the AMOA jukebox awards show this year, while Donna Summer was tapped for three.

The number of awards were tripled for the performers of the year's top jukebox hits.

The project of expanding the awards, together with the selection of finalists in each of those categories, was undertaken by the national association's awards committee.

Winners were as follows: most promising new talent of the year—John Conlee, ABC records; pop record of the year—"Three Times a Lady," Commodores, Motown; pop male artist of the year—Kenny Rogers, United Artists; pop female artist of the year—Donna Summer, Casablanca; country record of the year—"The Gambler," United Artists, Kenny Rogers.

Country male artist of the year—Kenny Rogers, United Artists; country female artist of the year—Crystal Gayle, United Artists; rock record of the year—"Heart of Glass," Blondie, Chrysalis; rock group of the year—Bee Gees, RSO.

Soul record of the year—"Three Times a Lady," Commodores, Motown; soul male artist of the year—Rick James, Motown; soul female artist of the year—Donna Summer, Casablanca; record of the year, all categories—"The Gambler," Kenny Rogers, United Artists; artist(s) of the year, all categories—Kenny Rogers, United Artists; and disco record of the year—"Hot Stuff," Donna Summer, Casablanca.

Formerly only five awards were given each year, including artist of the year, record of the year, pop, soul and country records of the year.

The expansion of the categories appears to indicate an initiative on the part of AMOA to recognize the new and diverse talents emerging in today's recording industry.

AMOA's JBs on TV by NBC

Television coverage by NBC-TV of the AMOA Jukebox awards presentation and stage show, a first for the organization.

The firm of Bob Stivers and Associates approached Fred Granger, executive director of the AMOA, earlier this year to set up a meeting exploring feasibility of the project.

Stivers, president of the firm, and two of his colleagues, Bob Parkinson and Alvin Ross, ironed out details with ad hoc committee members Wayne Hesch, chairman; Bob Nims; Don Van Brackel; Fred Collins; Russell Mawdley; Hirsch de La Viez; and Granger.

The producers, who sent out telegrams to alert the industry, promised to deliver the "best stage show ever."

The show, held on November 11, was taped and aired the following Thursday, November 15.

AMOA Expo '82 set for Las Vegas

AMOA's 1982 exposition will be held at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, from October 31-November 5, Fred Granger, executive director of the AMOA announced recently.

The show will remain at the Conrad Hilton in Chicago through 1981.

Granger said the AMOA board of director discussed future sites at the annual meeting last April and appointed a special committee to investigate the options of remaining in Chicago, moving to New Orleans or Las Vegas.

Committee members were President Wayne E. Hesch, chairman; Don Van Brackel; Robert E. Nims; James I. Mullins; and Leoma W. Ballard.

"The only reason we opted for Las Vegas was because of the more favorable dates," Granger said.

The Conrad Hilton secured the AMOA booking in 1972. "Until that time we were bouncing around inside Chicago, and we caught hell from the exhibitors for that because neither of the two hotels we tried served our needs very well. Everybody was satisfied," Granger said.

"The problem was that our show kept expanding. When we first went to the Hilton...we used only the East Room and we didn't even fill that up. Then we quickly expanded into the West Room. And then we had to go to the Continental, and that's when people really started to complain," he noted.

"People said we were spread out all over, that we should go to a modern facility where we could have everything in one big room," Granger said.

The show will be at the new, spacious Hilton Flagship Hotel in 1983.

Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas—site of the 1982 AMOA convention.

"1979 Music Operator of The Year" award was presented to Eugene Wagner, right, of Target International Coin Co., Novi. Mrs. Joyce Wagner, left, received the "Association Pride" award. Music Operators of Michigan President Mike Benson, center, of Michigan Nickle Co., Wyandotte, presented the awards.

MOM ushers in officers

Music Operators of Michigan elected officers and directors recently. Mike Benson, Michigan Nickel Co., Wyandotte, was re-elected to the presidency; Fred Hunt of Ace Music Company, Muskegon, was elected vice president; and John Roszatycki, American Amusement Company, was elected secretary-treasurer.

Directors re-elected by a vote of MOM membership were Bill Swanson, LaFoilles Coin Machines, Manistique; Eugene Wagner, Target International Coin Company, Novi; Mike Leonard, Leonard Amusement and Vending, Detroit; Terry Meier, Dolphin Coin, Mt. Pleasant; Tom Koosis, Hellenic Automatic Vending; Detroit; and Bill Hewitt, Bill Hewitt and Son, Conway.

Directors elected for the first time were Steve Pierce, Great Lakes Music and Vending, Lansing; Pat Cleary, Soo Coin, Sault Ste. Marie; and Tom Venettis, Stereo Music Company, East Detroit.

Continuing as director-at-large is Ed Schultz, Ed's Distributing, Lansing.

Also in the news at MOM is a fall meeting planned for members and other interested operators.

The one-day program will feature speakers on the AMOA-Copyright Tribunal legal battle, the Michigan legislative situation as it concerns amusement machine operators, personal property tax assessment practices in local communities, plus other informative subjects.

Ohio meeting set for this month

The Tangier Supper Club, 532 W. Market St., Akron, will be the site of the Ohio Music and Amusement Association's annual dinner-drawing on November 28.

The fund-raising committee, chaired by Edward P. Elum and staffed with members Raymond E. Lonsway and Jim Schlarb, sent every active member a letter on September 4 and enclosed one ticket.

Returns to date, the OMAA notes, look like the event will be a sell-out.

Members are asked to remit as soon as possible.

The OMAA also slated a digital mechanics school at the Imperial House North, 900 Morse Rd., Columbus on December 3-12.

A maximum of 20 students will be accepted, and the OMAA reports the quota is fast filling up. Interested parties are requested to act quickly in registering.

In the event the registration form and information flyer sent in early September was misplaced, call or write the OMAA office so that another may be sent.

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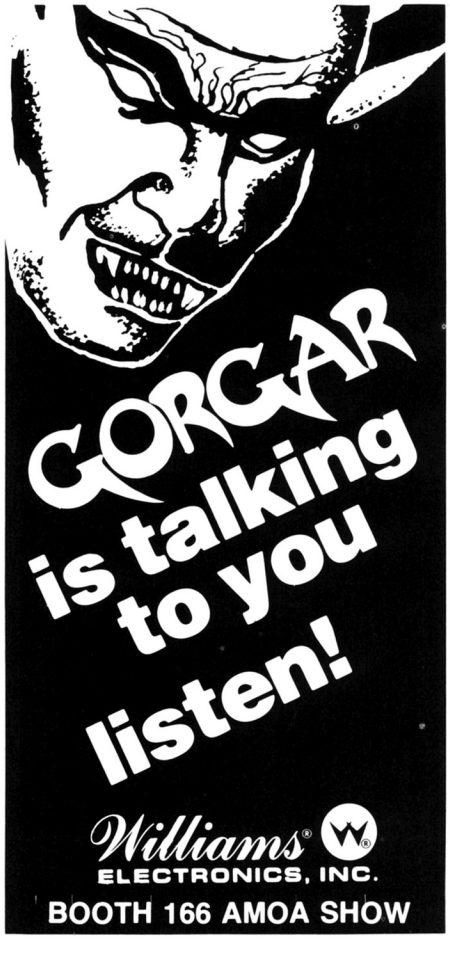

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NAMA convention held last month

From October 25-28, more than 7,000 industry members were expected to register at National Automatic Merchandising Association's 1979 national convention-exhibit of vending and foodservice management in Chicago at McCormick Place.

Two hundred exhibitors displayed the latest models of vending and foodservice equipment.

NAMA Chairman Paul F. McClinton provided the opening address at 10 a.m. on Thursday, October 25.

Topics for the seminar included "Nothing Happens Until a Sale Is Made," "Supervision Is a Sales Activity," "What Wins in Labor Relations," "Case History of Computer In-Use," and "What's Happening with the Anthony Dollar and Other Coinage Matters."

Siben Holding buys Amico

Siben Holding Corporation added Amico Marketing International Corporation to its family of companies recently.

Siben, a diversified company holding real estate, leisure sport centers, and export financing facilities, is headed by Morris B. Nahum.

Patrick Hopper, a native of South Hampton, England, has been appointed coordinator of Amico activities.

Hopper has wide experience in the fields of export, financing, and marketing in Africa and Asia.

"We are sure that he will be a great asset to our organization," Nahum noted.

Iowa Marine sets world record for pingame play

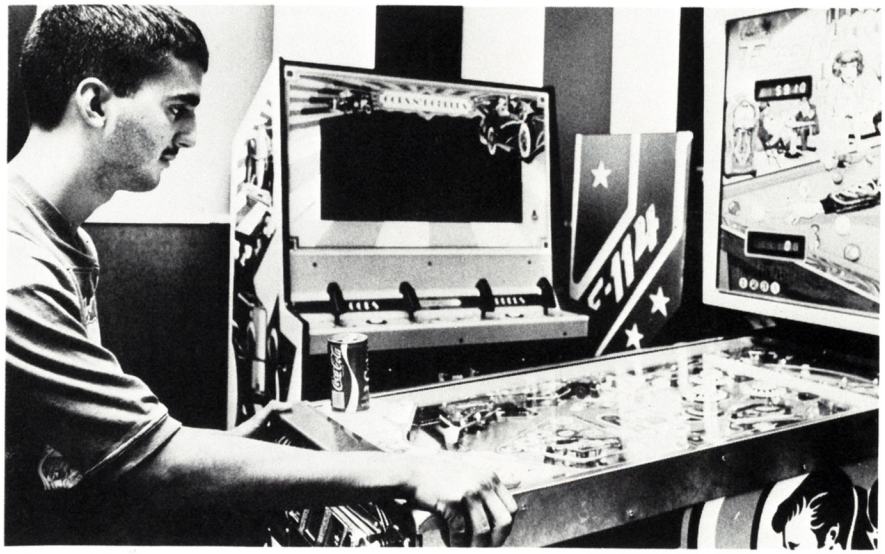
A Mason City, Iowa, man, home on leave from the Marine Corps, set a new Guinness world record for continuous play on a pinball machine.

Ben Owens, 18, broke the previous record by eight hours, which marked a total of 5,648 games with a high score of 1,001,660 points during the 233-hour marathon.

Owens spent ten days sleeping five minutes an hour and two hours each night at the Coin Chute in Regency Square Mall. Hart and Leola Johnson were the operators of the arcade.

Owens, who can also read the newspaper while playing pinball, plans a military career in public relations.

Or was that pinball relations?



Iowa Marine Ben Owens set a Guinness world record with his 233 hour marathon pinball play. He broke the previous record by eight hours.

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Louisiana operators plan state association

A movement, spearheaded by Bob Nims, new AMOA president and a New Orleans operator and distributor, is underfoot among Louisiana operators to form a state association.

The group, which met at the Fountain Bay Club Hotel during the Rock-Ola-Gottlieb service schools October 2-5, sponsored by Nims' A.M.A. Distributors Inc., was primarily concerned with operators' difficulties with taxing, licensing, and unfavorable legislation.

Perhaps the most striking example of the operators' inability to organize against detrimental legislation, Nims reported, may be seen in the proposed revision of the Louisiana licensing tax bill.

The bill, which would have resulted in operators paying a more favorable tax on gross income, rather than the present per machine tax, was introduced in the state legislature.

The bill emerged from the House Ways and Means Committee but ran into non-industry opposition on the House floor. One representative opposing the bill, Nims said, misunderstood the bill and thought he was representing the operators' interest.

"We really had no communication," Nims complained. "We need a voice, some sort of association."

What Nims and his group envision is an association to provide the unity to aid or oppose legislation effectively. A representative from their ranks will go to the state association meeting the Thursday before the AMOA show to see how other states handle the same problems.

One idea being kicked around is to award associate memberships to location owners to create a larger fund for the state association.

Nims said the Louisiana operators association of ten years ago lacked proper direction and local interest. "I feel the operators recognize that there's a need for a public relations and communications effort on behalf of the coin machines industry in Louisiana as well as a better line of communication with each other."

He said for the new effort to be successful about sixty percent of the state's operators would have to unite. He pointed out there would have to be a large associate membership as well.

"I think we will be successful because we're making an effort to give it better direction and find someone who is familiar with trade associations to manage our association," he said.

Some operators have already expressed interest in attending the state associations seminar, Nims continued. "I feel they will come away from that with constructive ideas on how to develop our state association.

"We're looking to have a definite plan of action program established by January, 1980," he said.

Wayne Hesch, guest speaker at the meet, noted "I hope this group can somehow get together to form an association. Combined you can beat those regulations. You'll have a helluva time as individuals, so I strongly suggest you unite."

Hesch reminded the participants of how the successful organization of Illinois operators helped defeat adverse legislation.

The service schools, which ran throughout the week, were highlighted by the debut of Gottlieb's new four-player pinball machine *Buck Rogers*.

Rock-Ola was represented by instructors Bill Findlay and Shuja Haque, both service engineers. Covered in the two day course were the audio-mechanical and electronic aspects of Rock-Ola's solid state microprocessor phonographs, such as the new model 477, *Max*, and model 478, *Mystic*.

George Offshack, Gottlieb service engineer, reviewed solid state system design and operation with an emphasis on on-location troubleshooting and repair procedures for Gottlieb solid state pingames, including *Totem* and *Genie*.

Bob Nims is spearheading the attempt to unite Louisiana operators.

Louisiana operators took the opportunity to check out Gottlieb's new pin, Buck Rogers.

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BMI bestows country awards

One hundred fifteen writers and 66 publishers of 83 songs have been presented with Broadcast Music, Inc. citations of achievement for popularity in the country music field, as measured by broadcast performances for the period from April 1, 1978 to March 31, 1979.

The awards were made at ceremonies in Nashville, Tenn., recently by BMI president Edward M. Cramer and Frances Williams Preston, vice president of BMI's Nashville office.

The 10th annual Robert J. Burton Award was given to "Talkin' In Your Sleep," by Roger Cook and Bobby Wood, and to Chriswood Music and Roger Cook Music, publishers. The award honors the late BMI president.

Billy Sherrill was the leading country writer-award winner with four songs, followed by Bob McDill, Dolly Parton, Ben Peters, and Rafe Van Hoy with three awards. Steve Davis, Stephen Dorff, Larry Gatlin, Wayland Holyfield, Curly Putman, Eddie Rabbitt, and Even Stevens received to awards each.

Tree Publishing Company, Inc. was the leading publisher-award winner with 10 citations, followed by The Welk Music Group with eight awards, Pi-Gem Music Publishing Co. with five and Algee Music Corporation with four.

Acuff-Rose Publications, Inc., Briarpatch Music, Debdave Music, Inc., Velvet Apple Music, and Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corporation each won three awards. American Cowboy Music Company, Ben Peters Music, Duchess Music Corporation, First Generation Music Company, Peer International Corporation, Peso Music, Rightsong Music, Inc., Shade Tree Music, Inc., Stigwood Music, Inc., and Window Music Publishing Co., Inc. each took two awards.

Video treat for British radio

British radio listeners were treated to a special report on the video game phenomenon in America recently.

The report, compiled by Tom Tim Lott after a recent trip to the U.S., was featured on the Nicky Horn Show, a popular youth program on "Capitol Radio 194," the largest commercial station in London.

Included in the program were comments from Sue Elliott, international sales manager for Atari.

Keenan joins Bushnell at Pizza Time Theatres

Joseph F. Keenan, formerly chairman of the board of Atari, Inc., Sunnyvale, has been named president of Pizza Time Theatre, Inc., Cupertino, according to Nolan K. Bushnell, founder of the chain of family entertainment centers.

Keenan became president of Atari in 1974 when Key Games, Inc. of Santa Clara, which he founded, merged with Atari. He assumed the position of chairman of the board in January of 1979, when Bushnell left to take over the operation of Pizza Time Theatre.

Keenan, a resident of Los Gatos, holds a B.S. degree in accounting from La Salle College, Philadephia. Prior to starting Key Games in 1973, he worked for International Business Machines and Applied Logic, Inc. in sales and sales management. Keenan will remain on the Board of Atari, Inc. and is a director of Discover Technology, Inc. of Santa Clara.

He and his wife, Patricia, are the parents of four children.

Keenan replaces Nolan K. Bushnell, who continues with Pizza Time Theatre as chairman of the board. "We intend to repeat the phenomenal success we had with Atari," Chairman Bushnell notes.

During its first year of operation, Pizza Time Theatre was a division of Atari, a company Bushnell founded in 1972 and which is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Warner Communications.

In June, 1978, Bushnell purchased all assets and rights from Atari and formed Pizza Time Theatre, Inc. as a California corporation.

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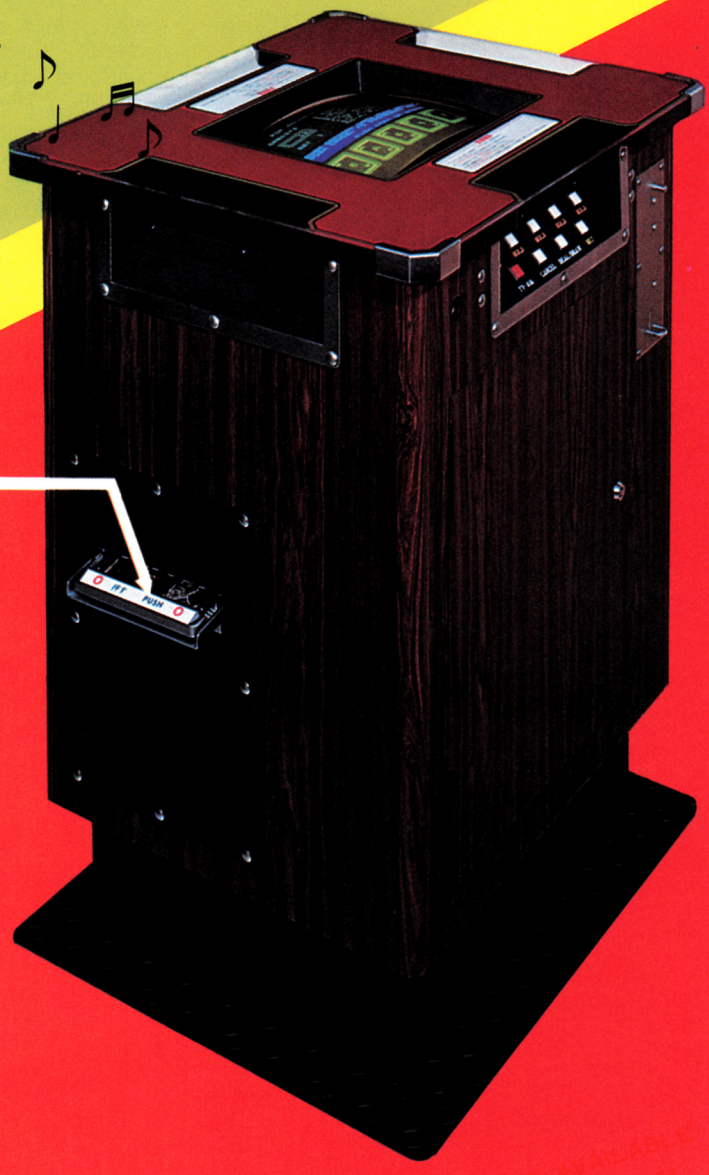

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ARA chairman honored

Luncheons and receptions were scheduled recently in twelve cities in advance of the national industry dinner which honored William S. Fishman, chairman of ARA Services, Meyer Gelfand, president of Macke Corporation, served as general chairman.

The first luncheon, held in Chicago last August 24 and co-chaired by Howard C. Miller, president of the Canteen Corporation, and Alvin W. Cohn, chairman of CFS Continental, led to Israel bond and note sales of more than $600,000, Gelfand reported.

Fishman will receive the Israel Prime Minister's Medal at the national dinner for "his distinguished service to the industry, his service to public and humanitarian causes and his support of Israel."

Leaders in the linens and laundry, periodicals distribution and health services industries joined representatives of the automatic merchandising industry in sponsoring the local events.

Among the events and their respective hosts were Indianapolis—September 18—Dick Howard of ARA Services; Boston—September 19—Lou Risman of Mystic Automatic Sales and Irving Shapiro of Concession Enterprises; Phoenix—September 19—Lee Cohn of Big '4' Restaurants; and Los Angeles—September 27—Julian Silverstein and Ed Watcher of California Cigarette Concessions.

Connecticut—September 25—William Malzone of Colonial Vending Service, Waterbury and Edward Isenberg of Hartford; St. Louis—October 2—S. Leslie Flegel of ARA Periodical Distribution Group; and New York—October 3—Allan Lucht, Chairman of Servomation Corporation; Cleveland—October 3—Ted Bonda of Penroil Corporation and Bert Wolstein; Minneapolis—October 3—John Edgerton of Automatic Products; and Baltimore-Washington—October 11-Meyer Gelfand and Merrill Bank of Maryland Cup.

Two meetings were held in Philadelphia under the leadership of Al Rodstein of Banner Specialty and Herman Gitlow of Rentex Corporation; a linens and laundry event in New York; and a meeting in Dallas where Wayne Calloway of Frito-Lay and Don Stahl of Lone Star Grocers were the hosts.

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"I hate these computer pinball machines! They can't flash a simple 'Game Over' . . ."

Play Meter Equipment Poll

Here are the November results of PLAY METER's subscriber survey ranking pinball and video games. Rankings are compared with games' standings in last month's poll.

Top Pins

NOVEMBER	OCTOBER
1. FLASH/Williams	1
2. KISS/Bally	2
3. PARAGON/Bally	3
4. SUPERMAN/Atari	5
5. PLAYBOY/Bally	4
6. SHARPSHOOTER/Game Plan	10
7. STAR TREK/Bally	14
8. TOTOM/Gottlieb	15
9. TRI ZONE/Williams	—
10. (tie) HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS/Bally	—
(tie) SINBAD/Gottlieb	—
(tie) METEOR/Stern	—
13. HOT HAND/Stern	10
14. LOST WORLD/Bally	8
15. (tie) GENIE/Gottlieb	—
(tie) CLOSE ENCOUNTERS/Gottlieb	—
(tie) COUNT-DOWN/Gottlieb	6
(tie) SUPERSONIC/Bally	9
19. MATA HARI/Bally	13
20. MIDDLE EARTH/Atari	—

Top Videos

NOVEMBER	OCTOBER
1. SPACE INVADERS/Midway	1
2. SPRINT/Atari	3
3. FOOTBALL/Atari	2
4. HEAD ON/Gremlin	4
5. SPACE WARS/Cinematronics	6
6. STAR FIRE/Exidy	4
7. CRASH/Exidy	9
8. LUNAR LANDER/Atari	—
9. SEA WOLF/Midway	10
10. BASKETBALL/Atari	10

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

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British exhibitors will offer a wide range of equipment at this year's Parks Show

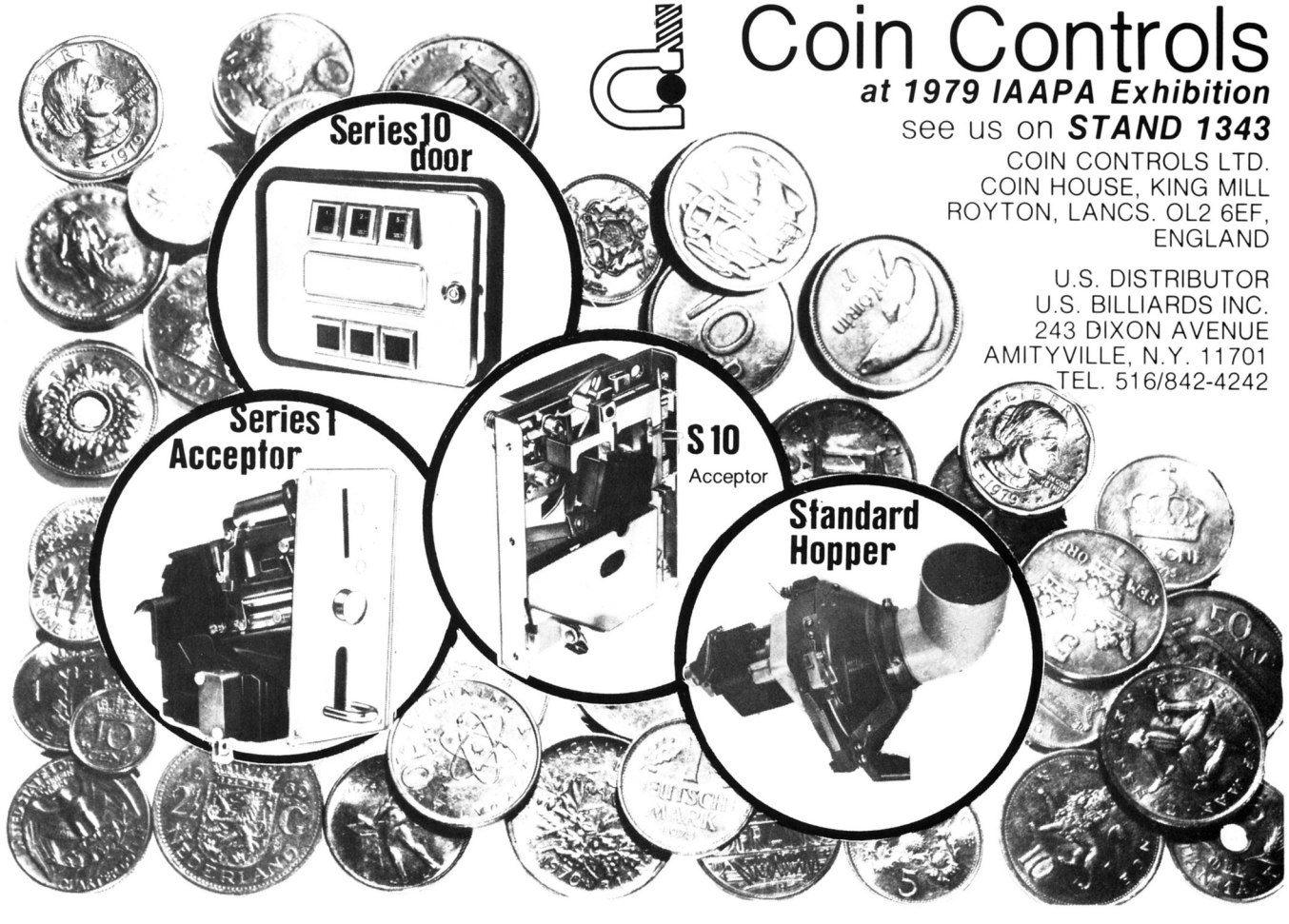
Products ranging from kiddie cars to cash dispensers will be displayed by the 24 British exhibitors at the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (I.A.A.P.A.) Convention and Trade Show in New Orleans' Rivergate Exhibition Center, November 17-19, 1979.

Among the diverse new items will be a modular dance floor from Major-Matics Ltd. with multi-colored flourescent lights electronically programmed to pulsate to the beat of whatever music is playing.

Two first time exhibitors at the IAAPA show will be Gayton Games with the Lucky Eggs Mark 3 children's novelty vendor which dispenses multi-colored, surprise-filled, plastic eggs and Newborough and Co. Ltd. with children's rides.

Seven firms will show machines appropriate for arcades. The Alfred Crompton Group will have five models on hand, the *Grand Canyon*, *Splashdown*, *Flippa Winna* and two versions of *Penny Falls*. Five games from Streets Automatic will include *Marksman*, *Apollo*, *Swagrab*, *Rifleman* and *Supercrane*. Kentucky Derby and Wamstar will share a stand to promote a horse race game, while Barry Noble (Coin Machines) Ltd. will highlight new amusement machines and cabinet video games. Ace Coin Equipment will have a new fully micro-processed multi-coin 4 to 1 machine while Whittaker Bros. (AR) Ltd. will exhibit coin-operated children's rides *Ancillary Products For the Trade*.

Among the ancillary products for the amusement industry will be a coin acceptor from Coin Controls Ltd. with special security and anti-jam features.



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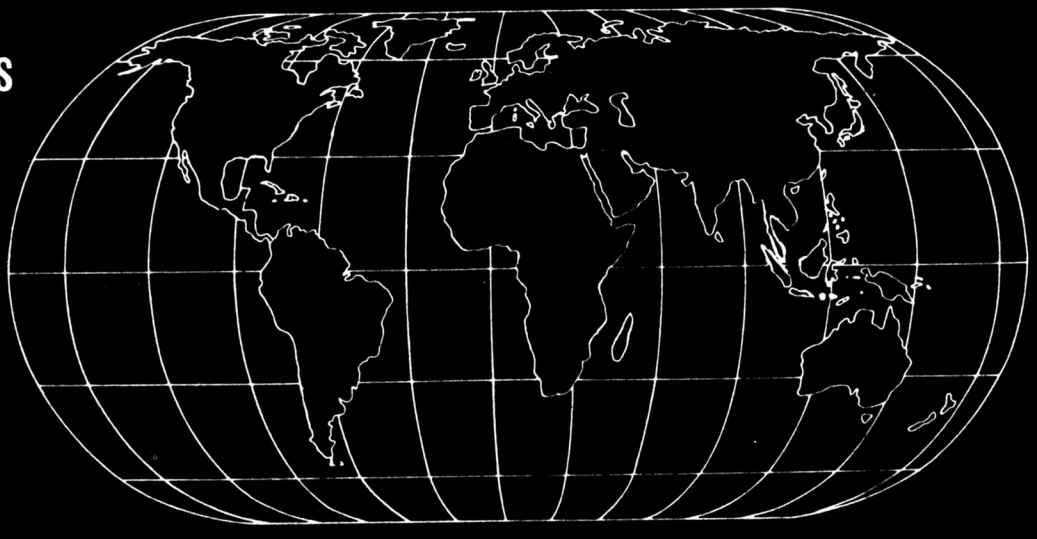

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An aerial view of Rock-Ola's plant.

Rock-Ola Close-up:

There's something in a name

It's peculiar enough when you run into a man named Barber who cuts hair for a living. But when you hear about a man who started out manufacturing coin-operated weighing scales, army carbines, motor scooters, aircraft engine parts, and parking meters; but who, nevertheless, ended up manufacturing jukeboxes and vending machines for bottled and canned beverages—and then you learn that man's name was Rockola—you've got to believe some men are fated by their names.

After all, it would be hard to find another name which would describe as accurately the two enterprises David C. Rockola finally settled on. *Rock* suggests music, or course, and *Ola* suggests a soft drink which should have a *Coca* or *Pepsi* hypenated in front of it.

A hyphen was, in fact, later added to the name for trademark purposes, and so it is that outsiders often express surprise that Rockola is actually someone's name. It just fits all too neatly, they say.

The company is housed in a mammoth manufacturing complex at 800 North Kedzie in Chicago (the entire area covers 750,000 square feet). David Rockola bought the plant during the Depression. Actually, things are getting to be a little bit of a tight squeeze at the North Kedzie address, but company officials insist they still have the ability to double their present capability in both phonograph and vending.

Hard looks

Actually, it's no secret that in recent years operators, caught up in the games explosion, have been buying less phonographs. But, oddly, Rock-Ola reports that its sales have gone up.

The reason? It may indicate a shift, says Ed Doris, Rock-Ola's executive vice president. Operators may be starting to take a long, hard look at the profitability of their pieces and seeing the advantages of re-investing in coin-operated phonographs.

And, looking at it from another perspective, it appears Rock-Ola may be taking a hard look at itself as well. Doris hinted that the company might expand its product line into other areas of the coin-op business.

"Yes," he told PLAY METER, "Rock-Ola has indeed investigated other avenues in the coin-op business." However, he would not elaborate nor say what decision, if any, was made as a result of that investigation.

It should be remembered, though, that Rock-Ola once produced coin-operated amusement games (for example, *Lucky Strike*, *Sweepstakes*, and a game that took the industry by storm back then—*World Series*). As a sort of reminder of Rock-Ola's early days in the game business, a *World Series* machine still stands in the company's display area.

So, if Rock-Ola were to make an appearance in the games market, it would not be the company's first venture.

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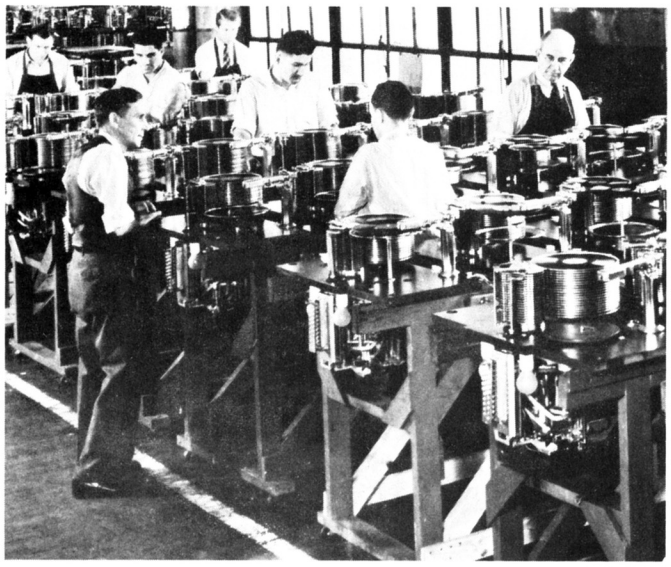

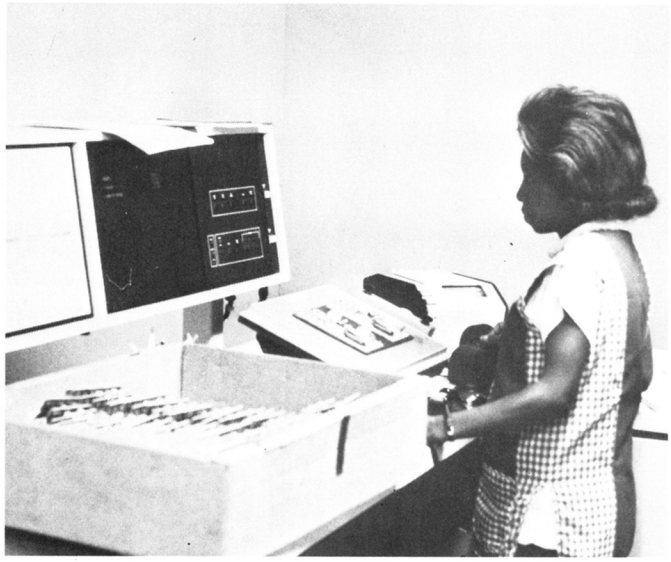

In the past, Rock-Ola had to rely on the workers to get it right. Now it has test monitors to make sure they do.

fair share of the operator's dollar has left its mark on Rock-Ola's thinking in other ways, too.

Last year the company made a basic change in its philosophy toward the jukebox, shifting from an emphasis on the aesthetics of the machine to a new emphasis which is designed to make the jukebox a more aggressive music merchandiser. Such features as "Bonus" play and the listings on the machine of the top location hits, Rock-Ola officials say, should go a long way to help the phonograph shake its image as a silent earner.

The theory behind the innovations is that the "Bonus" feature will attract additional play, thus increasing collections, and the list of the location's top hits can make the jukebox less intimidating for customers who aren't sure their musical tastes are the same as everyone else's.

Philosophy

As for the company's basic manufacturing philosophy, simply stated it's to rely as little as possible on the outside world. For that reason, Rock-Ola, in its manufacturing of coin-operated equipment, starts from scratch, using the rawest of materials, and goes outside itself only for such items as speakers, transistors, and diodes (which the company finds are more economical for them to purchase ready-made than if it were to manufacture the parts in-house).

Of course, with the introduction of solid state technology into this industry, Rock-Ola has found itself, like other manufacturers, in a situation where it has had to introduce its innovations slowly so that distributing and operating personnel can keep pace with all the advancements.

Still, the company's engineering and designing department has to stay ahead of the times—about two years ahead, according to Doris—because it takes a lot of lead time to put the whole phonograph package together. For instance, it takes a year just to have the chips made according to the company's specifications.

Sophistication

Sophisticated equipment is more often the rule than the exception in a plant like Rock-Ola's. For instance metal is fed off large rolls into even larger machines where it is cut and pressed into specific molds. At one particular station, a Wiedmatic machine performs about 100 different operations to a sheet of metal—without any interference by a worker.

The jobs at Rock-Ola are almost clearly defined as men's jobs and women's jobs. But there's nothing

At left, women are used to handle the small, detail jobs. At right, all Rock-Ola's jukeboxes go through the "over" for final testing.

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There seem to be as many reasons for reading Play Meter as there are readers.

PLAY METER

sexist in it.

Because of a woman's dexterity when dealing with smaller items, they are used exclusively to perform the smaller, intricate functions on the production line—such tasks as connecting wires to plugs, attaching component parts to the boards, and operating the board soldering machines.

And men are left to perform the heavier jobs—the carpentry, the painting, the lifting, and carrying.

Quality control

It's a long, tedious process from converting wood and metal sheets and chips and wires into a coin-operated phonograph. And with operators demanding better, more reliable equipment—it's placed a tough order on manufacturers. The result has been strict quality control methods.

In the past the intracacies of putting a phonograph together correctly and efficiently was based largely on the hope that the workers would "get it all right." Now Rock-Ola, with the aid of solid state technology, has been able to incorporate a number of quality control devices of their own making to act as checks against faulty workmanship.

It's obvious that if a worker is charged with the task of connecting a series of wires to the same boards day in and day out, his margin of error increases because of the boredom associated with his job. However, with the installation of specially-designed testing device at the worker's station, the situation can be improved. For example, at some stations lighted testing devices signal the worker when the right connection is made, and fails to respond when the wrong connection is made.

There are numerous such testing devices throughout the production line—all of them designed by Rock-Ola to suit its own particular needs.

This system has helped in other ways. Said one company official, "In the past, for some of the functions, it would take about three or four weeks for the worker to learn all the various steps that had to be performed at that station. But, with the addition of systems like these at those critical stops along the production line, we can actually reduce the learning curve dramatically."

Rock-Ola seems especially test-conscious, constantly checking the new components at every station along the way.

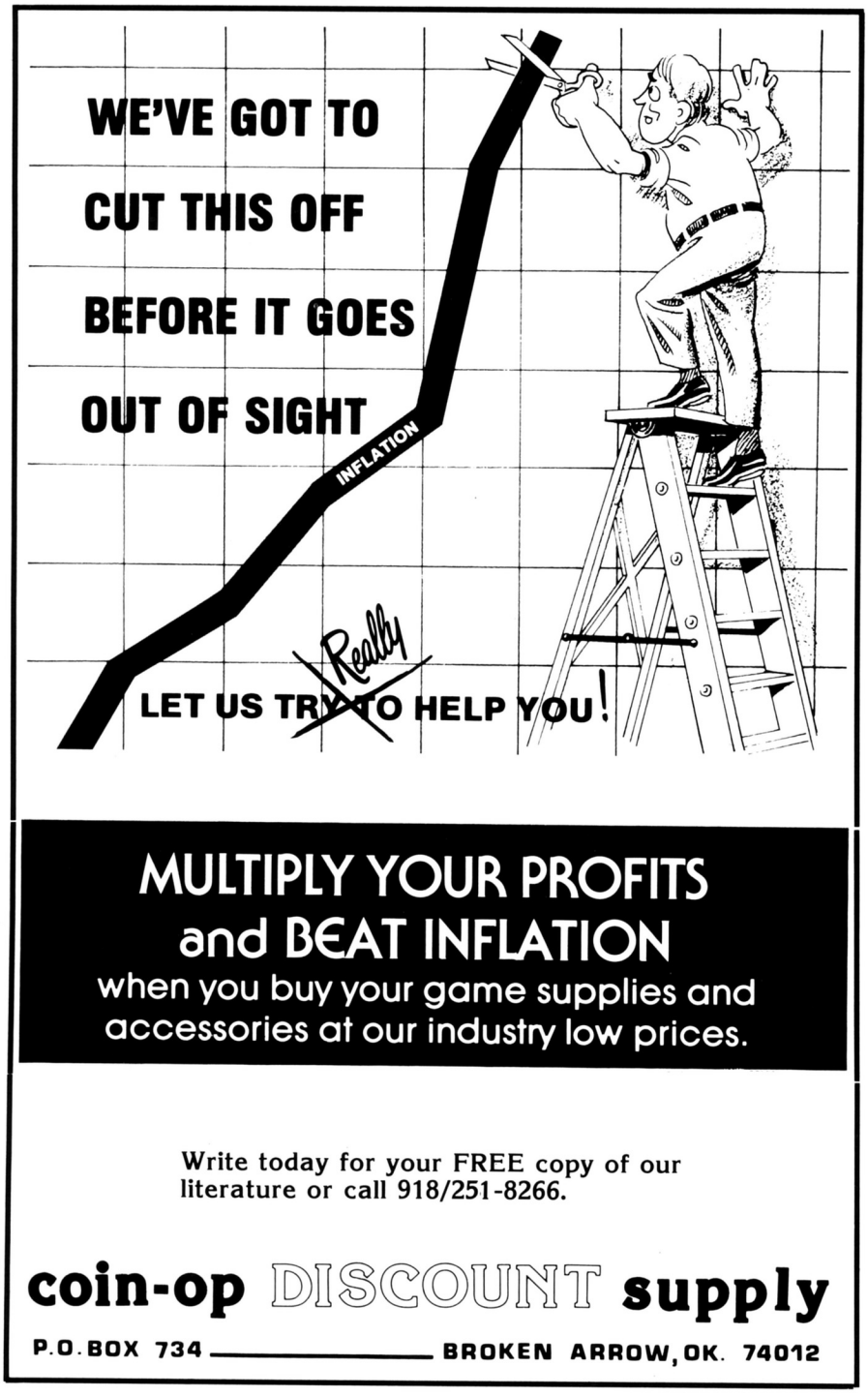
Further, to insure the reliability of the product, Rock-Ola (again, like most manufacturers) puts its machines through a "burning in" process whereby plant workers can spot malfunctions in the phonographs before the machines leave the plant.

In the burning in process, the unit is put into an "oven" (as Rock-Ola people refer to it) and operated non-stop for 24 hours. This test is designed to find out what would happen if the equipment were to be operated continuously.

Long before that burning in process, however, the chips, which are received from outside, go through their own burning in process. They are operated for 100 continuous hours, a process designed to weed out the bad components and reduce the failure rate to an almost negligible factor.

And, then there's still another test which the entire unit goes through before being crated and shipped out. A final stress test is undergone at a station where the machine is hooked up to a monitoring device; then it goes through every function it will be required to go through out on location, which includes playing a record on every selection in the box.

It's a lot of checking and cross-checking, but Rock-Ola figures it's absolutely vital that not a single step be skipped along the way—if it wants its phonograph sales to continue on their upswing.



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Dumping Your Old Dogs

Part One

By Charles C. Ross

TABLE 1

Pinball Machine *Spirits* cost	$1300*
Depreciation Expense	
Year 1 $520	
2 312	
3 187	
Total Depreciation to date	1019**
Book Value at time of sale	$281***

**Cost includes freight and sales taxes.*

***Assuming that the Declining-balance depreciation method was used at 2 times the straight-line rate and that the machine was bought and sold at the beginning of the year to avoid partial years depreciation.*

****IRS will refer to this as your adjusted basis.*

TABLE 2

Cash Position after the Sale

	Gain	Book Value	Loss
Sale Price (A)	$400	$281	$175
Book Value of the machine	281	281	281
Gain or (Loss) (B)	$119	0	($106)
Tax Rate (C)	40%	40%	40%
Added taxes or (Tax savings) (D) (B)x(C) = (D)	$47.6	0	($42.4)
Final Cash Position (E) (A)-(D) = (E)	$352.40*	$281**	$217.40***

**It should be pointed out that regardless of your tax bracket the final cash position will always be better with the equipment sold at a gain.*

***There will be no tax paid on the $281 because it is a return of capital.*

****For the loss the tax savings is added to the sale price to get your final cash position.*

We have all heard the old saying "Two things are certain—death and taxes." While that is true, if you are in tha musement business, there is another part to the old saying that says "Three things are certain—death, taxes, and you must get rid of old machines."

There are normally two solutions to old machines: either sell them outright or trade them in on new machines. Now this sale or trade-in brings us back to one of the other things which is certain—taxes. How do you handle the taxes on the outright sale of an amusement machine?

First let's explore your predicament. Three years ago you bought the hottest pingame out, *Spirits*. You have been depreciating the machine over a five year life using the Double-declining balance method. (See PLAY METER January 15, February 15, March 15, 1979, for depreciation methods.) The machine no longer earns well and you are ready to sell it. Table One summarizes your position.

Let us assume that you have found a home buyer for the old machine. If you sell the machine for exactly $281 you have no tax problems because you had no gain or loss on the sale for tax reporting purposes. While that may appear to be the ideal position you would probably not object to someone offering you $400 for the old machine, but it does complicate your tax situation.

Selling equipment at a gain

Equipment used in a business is not a capital asset but a noncapital asset. The IRS regulations on gains and losses for noncapital assets are different from gains and losses on capital assets. Gains and losses on capital assets are called "capital gains and capital losses," and are referred to as section 1245 gains and losses on noncapital property. Now, back to your old problem of how to handle the gain on the old *Spirits* machine. You have a gain of $119 (See Table Three) on the machine if you sell it for $400 and how do you handle the

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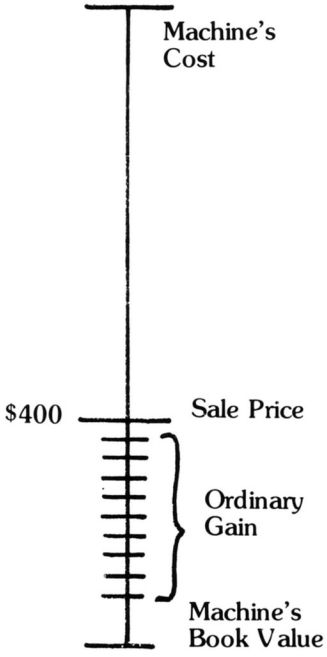
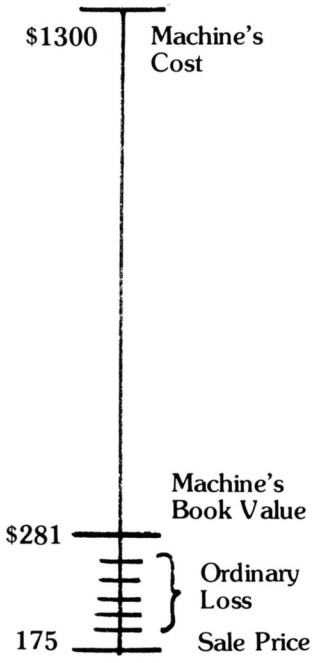
TABLE 3



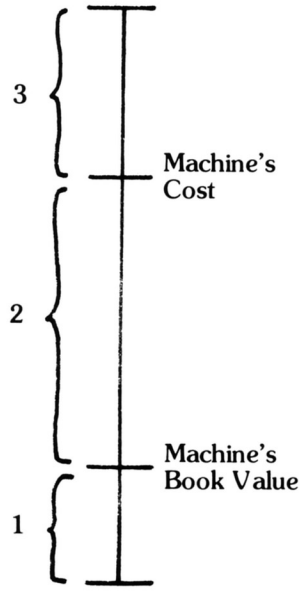
Since your selling price is above your "basis" or book value, you have an ordinary gain on the sale of the equipment. The ordinary gain will be added to your taxes.

TABLE 4



Since you are selling the machine below your "basis" or book value you have an ordinary loss on the sale of the equipment. The ordinary loss will be subtracted from your taxes.

TABLE 5



(1) If your sale price occurs in bracket 1, you will have an ordinary loss; (2) If your sale price occurs in bracket 2, you will have an ordinary gain; (3) If your sale price occurs in bracket 3, you will have an ordinary gain equal to bracket 2, and a section 1231 gain equal to bracket 3.

gain from a tax standpoint? The IRS views that gain as an ordinary gain and subject to taxation at your current tax rate, and is referred to as the "recapture of depreciation."

In effect, you have been depreciating the machine too fast. "Too fast" means that the machine actually has a market value of $400, not the $281 which your books show. Therefore, the IRS is saying that you must "recapture" that excess depreciation you have been taking.

To further explain remember that, when you depreciate a machine you take the depreciation expense each year and use it to reduce your net income and thereby reduce your taxes. The IRS is saying "You have been wrong on how much you have been reducing your net income and income tax; so now we are going to collect the underpayment from the last three years." You must recapture the excess depreciation and pay taxes on that amount.

While you will pay tax on the ordinary gain it does not mean that you should not try to sell the machine for more than the $281 book value. For example if you were in the forty percent tax bracket you would pay only $47.60 more in taxes (See Table Two). So by all means you should sell the machine for the 400 price tag as opposed to the $281 book value.

Selling equipment at a loss

While it is desirable to sell the machine for at least its book value, sometimes it is impossible. Perhaps you do not wish to wait for the right buyer to come along or the machine is just not worth book value and you sell it at a loss.

If you were able to get only $175 for the *Spirits* machine, then you would have experienced a $106 loss (See Figure Two). How is the IRS going to view the loss?

The loss will be treated as an ordinary loss for the same reason your gain was treated as an ordinary gain. You have been wrong on the amount of depreciation you have been taking during the past three years. You have been taking too little depreciation since the selling price is below your book value. Therefore, the IRS is going to allow you to play catch-up in effect by allowing you to deduct the entire loss from your ordinary income in the year of the sale.

While the ordinary loss is used to reduce your taxes it does not mean you should sell the machine at a loss just to reduce your taxes. The $106 loss shown in table two is only going to save you $42.40 in taxes if you are in the 40 percent tax bracket.

Table Two also shows your final cash position after the sale at the book value, sale at a loss, and at a gain. It is easy to see that the most desirable position is to sell the machine at a gain even after you pay taxes on the gain.

Table Five shows the breakdown for the various types of gains and losses which might occur on noncapital property. While it is unlikely that you would sell an amusement machine for more than you paid for it and have a section 1231 gain, there are other assets which your company owns which you may sell for more than your original purchase price. If you do sell an asset and incur a section 1231 gain, consult the latest IRS regulations on section 1231 gains because the regulations are different for the unincorporated business and the incorporated business.

Next month tax treatment of gains and losses on trade-ins of old machines for new machines will be discussed. Information will also be given to help you determine if you should sell or trade old equipment.

In this, the first of a two part series, Charles C. Ross, owner of The Magic Coin in San Marco, Texas, and an instructor of Accounting and Finance at Southwest Texas State University, takes a hard look at depreciation in the coin operated industry. Cecil D. Stott, C.P.A., acted as a corroborator.

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At right, distributors check out Game Plan's new slot machine.

Game Plan's message to distributors

"We're in this business to stay!"

"We are in this business to stay. We aren't stopping with *Sharpshooter*," Wendell McAdams, vice president and general manager of Game Plan Inc. in Addison, Illinois, promised distributors during a tour of that company's new facility recently.

"The cocktail tables, for us, was a means to an end. We have always wanted to be in the upright pinball market," he said.

Video games are in the master plan for the future, but officials note that they will be properly tested, proven earners before they go into large-scale production.

Service schools and test equipment, as well as other "fringes," are being planned also.

Troy Livingston, vice president of manufacturing, led 48 distributors (which was 89 percent of the total network) through the plant. Ed Cebula, vice president of engineering also was on hand.

McAdams' intentions seem to be borne out by the company's intense expansion effort seen in recent months. The old 5,400 square foot plant was vacated in January for a spacious 75,000 square foot structure that houses 320 employees.

Troy Livingston (top photo at far right) led distributors on a tour of Game Plan's facilities. Wendell McAdams (lower picture) shows the company's new upright pin and announces, "We're in this business to stay."

Merchandise moves on conveyors and pallets to minimize human handling, and to allow quick change for the bulk movement. The machines are moved to the glass rather than the glass moved to the machines. Testing is done at each item's station.

The company proudly notes that it is capable of producing fifty uprights, fifteen cocktails and 22 slot machines per day. And the potential is there to almost double present capacity.

Distributors were showing Game Plan's *Money Machine*, a slot machine, which represents the other side of Game Plan's operation.

The slot machines, incidentally, take up much of the open area in the facility.

Game Plan, which reports that it is 75 percent "set-up" now, has the capability, for example, to produce 160 products—it also can produce 100 percent of the harness for its equipment. The company now is capable of stuffing its own boards, too, as well as its own equipment. Self-sufficiency, officials say, is important to Game Plan, Inc.

New games also were previewed on the tour, including *Coney Island*, a four-player pinball machine which, at the time of the tour, was not yet field-tested nor had the artwork been completed.

Other games were *Super Nova*, another four-player pinball, and *Vegas*, a cocktail table game.

Distributors were given a tour of AES Technology, Game Plan's parent company, to show the distributors that the company was on sound financial footing. AES Technology specializes in the manufacturing of office equipment for large corporations.

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First triple tournament

The first triple tournament to feature location winners in foosball, pool, and pinball play is slated for Radisson South in Bloomington, Minnesota April 4, 5, and 6 of next year.

Contenders will be culled from a six state area encompassing North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Hanson Distributing Company is the coordinator.

Twenty-five pool tables, 50 foosball tables and 40 pinball machines will be available for tournament play.

"Something like this has never been pulled off before," Kirk McKennon, vice president and sales manager, noted.

Sponsors are U.S. Billiards, Tournament Soccer, and Game Plan. An undetermined number of prizes and trophies will be awarded at the location level, and prizes and cash at the finals.

"We started major promotions for tournaments five years ago—promoting a product available only through coin machine operators," McKennon reported. "But about two years ago we noticed that only a really small percentage of the population, maybe ½ of 1 percent of the population, was world champion material. So we decided to make a distinction between the everyday player—the funseeker in a bar or a bowling alley—and the true pro-player."

"The tournament itself was the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow but there was nothing to fill the gap between the pot of gold and the novice player," he said. "Let's face it—foosball is an in-depth, skilled game."

The situation may best be illustrated by imagining the hypothetical example of Joe, a sharp youth who's got a pretty hot reputation in foosball circles around his hometown of Chisholm, Minnesota. No one can compete with him in the local arcade—and the positive reinforcement he gets with consistent wins tells him he's pretty good.

The tournament he attended, however, sent him a different message. He discovered, much to his chagrin, that he was nothing more than a rookie.

"Because of this sort of situation, less and less players would show up for a tournament. Tournament Soccer's immediate reaction was to create a novice division so that they had a whole new skill level.

"This helped," McKennon continued, "but we still weren't doing anything for average bar and bowling alley players. At this same time, U.S. Billiards' Len Schneller began asking us to run promotions on pool tables. Before, you remember, the promotions were for foosball exclusively.

"His new program was designed for players in bars and bowling alleys and would run eight weeks. The ninth week was devoted to a play off between the eight top weekly winners. Three of these people qualified for the regional finals.

"For the first time the operators saw the results. Coins were in the cashbox—this was added income in the tables both from practice and tournament play," McKennon noted with satisfaction.

"We and other distributors who had run that format went back to Tournament Soccer and requested that they do something like that with foosball, which they did for the past two years. It's a buildup type of tour.

"But now what was going to happen when we would spend one quarter of the year on a foosball tournament, one quarter of the year on pool tournament, and try to space

By Vicki Darlington

set in Minnesota

the other quarters so that we were able to plan for the push?" he queried.

Enter pinball machine into the melee. "Our coin machine operators who'd been successful with our foosball and pool efforts asked that we do something with pinball. We felt it would be impractical to emphasize one product per quarter, leaving us with only one quarter to prepare for three events so we decided on a triple play tournament."

The tournament is designed to be a break-even event, McKennon said. "One of the biggest objections voiced by operators the first time was from those who thought if they took the same entry fee, run their own tournament, they'd get better results. But that's proven to be false.

"Not only do they get the benefit of having the tournament in their locations," he reminded, "there's also a synergistic effect of giving the players more by allowing them greater recognition and competition."

"Because we buy for so many more locations, we get the trophies and prizes for lower prices and produce a higher quality kit to run the event. With the savings, we can advertise to draw more people to the location. For example, what can a guy do with $200? That's just about the cost of the trophy, the prizes and the kits," he said.

"The program was designed to give 70-80 percent of all entry fees back to the location itself so the final tournament itself is not a big buck tournament. The first place prize probably might be $500, which is not a lot of money.

"The other beauty, to our way of observation, is that there are no hustlers at the finals. Contestants are everyday players," he observed.

The kits contain a "complete set of ingredients," according to McKennon, including on-location rules, which, incidentally, are the same as those used in the finals.

Each tournament has its own officials at the finals. Locations will be monitored by the players themselves, each of whom have a copy of the rules. The location usually has one person that acts as an official.

Posters and brochures will be available by mid-November.

Location tournaments will begin after January 1. In location qualifying, of course, must be completed by that date.

"This program will be available only through coin machine operators," McKennon reminded. "It's designed to be a lock-in tool for them."

What sort of response does he expect? "I think the event is going to be filled up, which means that 128 locations in each event from the six state area will be booked. People who supported me in previous events will have first option to purchase kits for this year's event."

The deadline for entry is March 6.

Advertising for the event will be carried in radio, magazines, and newspapers. "And 'coin-op' advertising will be available to local coin operators," McKennon said.

The tournament is a first, you'll probably agree. But why does a company want to go to all the trouble if there's no money in it?

"We do it because we've found that a distributor who does for his operators gets business. I think my operators will recognize that I'm putting coins in their cashbox and they'll buy their equipment from me," McKennon said emphatically.

"I'm a firm believer that you can't give without getting in return."

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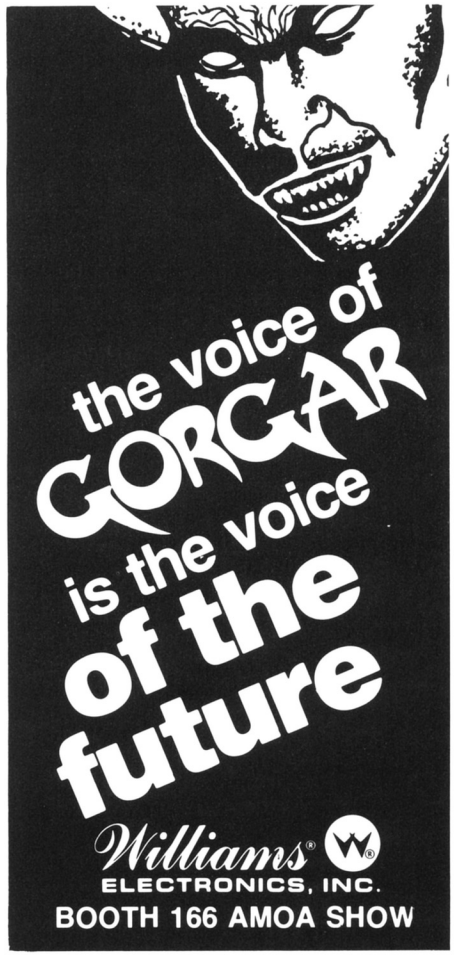

Kindler, Plotnick move up Shaffer corporate ladder

Several changes in personnel were effected recently in the Shaffer Distributing Company, a coin machine distributor.

Tom Kindler has been named operations manager in the company's home office in Columbus.

Kindler, who previously was the northern Ohio branch manager since 1976, has been with the Shaffer organization for seven years.

Replacing Kindler as manager of Shaffer's Cleveland area office is Dale Larcey, former assistant manager of the full service branch which moved recently to a new location in Macedonia, Ohio.

Shaffer has maintained a Cleveland area branch since 1959.

Harvey Plotnick has been named controller in the Columbus office.

Plotnick, who comes to Shaffer with an extensive background in many phases of accounting, has been employed by a major national publisher as well functioned as an independent financial consultant.

Plotnick is a graduate of City College of New York, and is married with four children.

Cleveland Coin International Expands Physical Plant

Cleveland Coin International of Columbus, Ohio, recently took possession of an additional 10,000 square feet which will allow greater technical capabilities and showroom space.

The 10,000 square foot new construction is in addition to the present 20,000 square foot facility.

A special projects division has been formed to investigate and develop new areas with in the coin industry.

Ronald A. Gold, president of Cleveland Coin, was commended recently by Dartmouth College for his performance as co-chairman in the class of '54 reunion "giving" program. The class donated $1,054,000 to the school, breaking all previous college records.

"No wonder they call Dartmouth 'big green'," Gold quipped.

Gold, who recently embarked on a four country tour of South America to investigate industry business opportunities, will address trade groups in Chile and Argentina. Brazil and Uruguay also are on his itinerary.

Fred Alpert, president of Alpert, Inc., left, and Ron Gold, president of Cleveland Coin International, present Dartmouth a check for $754,000, augmenting the school's reputation as "Big Green."

Kimco seeks reps

Kimco of Mentor, Ohio, is looking for representatives for the Kimco product line on a nationwide basis.

Kimco distributes tools, solvents, and other equipment for repairing and reworking printed circuit boards.

Kimco recently produced a twenty page catalog displaying products for the coin-op industry, such as anti-static devices, electronic pliers and cutters, and soldering products.

The company has warehouse facilities and offers same day service.

John Anderson is director of operations. The toll free number for operations outside Ohio is 1-800-321-7056.

The company has already been servicing industrial electronics accounts.

The company will be exhibiting in booth C-34 at the AMOA Show.

International Billiards moves its offices

International Billiards, Inc., a Houston-based importer/distributor/retailer for billiard accessories and related products, moved its national shipping/receiving, sales, accounting and management functions to the Park Ten Service Center at 16810 Barker Springs Road, Houston, Texas 77084.

The move, company officials report, was designed to accommodate increased growth and to further diversify its operations.

The recent addition of Robert L. Stair as marketing director for the national sales division, and the formation of All In Fun, Inc., as a separate retail entity under the direction of Edward Nutter, should provide "additional avenues of growth," the company notes.

All In Fun, Inc., will operate out of two locations: 2311 Washington (near downtown Houston), and 9444 Old Katy Road (near Spring Branch).

Hercules featured

Atari's *Hercules* game was displayed on the cover of *Merci*, the public television station in New Orleans, journal.

The theme of the 1979 Public Broadcast System auction was "Tasteful Pinball."

Pictured playing the machine were the co-chairwomen of the event, Elaine Van Der Linden and Edie Morphy.

Exidy appoints factory distributors

Exidy, manufacturers of video games, is appointing factory direct distributors in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, and the Netherlands.

Lila Zinter, Exidy's marketing manager, said "We're at the point now where production releases and growth deems it necessary to go direct. We were depending on export representatives before, but now we need better communication."

Two new Exidy products, *Fire One*, in color, and *Sidetrack*, in black and white, will be unveiled at the AMOA show in booth number 44-51. *Fire One* was premiered in Japan, and *Sidetrack* will take its first bow at the AMOA show.

The company discontinued production of *Crash* on agreement with Sega-Gremlin.

In other news at Exidy, President H.R. Kaufman has announced a warranty reserve program and an incentive board program.

"A basic tenet of these programs is to provide better and more efficient in-warranty, minimum charge service to the distributor, and, at the same time, offer timely support to the operator," said Kaufman.

The warranty reserve program is a credit to a reserve account set up for purchasers of games from Exidy. Each *Star Fire* buy is credited with forty dollars warranty credit; each *Crash* purchase is credited twenty dollars of warranty credit; and each new Exidy game produced will be assigned an appropriate warranty credit.

An Exidy customer who has a warranty account will be able to use the funds credited therein to buy Exidy parts or merchandise, or to use Exidy labor at a rate of $37.50 per hour.

Credit accounts are limited to $4,000, no cash rebates are allowed, and credits are not retroactive.

As a product of Exidy's new incentive board program, a complete set of logic boards is being dispersed, at no charge, at the time five games have been shipped to a customer. Another set of boards will accompany each purchase of 25 games.

Exidy recently moved its headquarters to 390 Java Drive, Moffit Industrial Park, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. The new phone number is 408-734-9410.

Exidy also has secured the new Telex number 357-499.

The mayor of the city of Mainz, (the capital city of the State of Rheinland-Pfalz), Dr. Joseph Hofmann, honored Peer von Oertzen, sales manager for Loewen-Automaten of West Germany, recently during an official reception at the city hall. During the reception he was handed the city coat of arms for many years of service to further the understanding between Germany and Yugoslavia. The leaders of political parties and other dignitaries also were in attendance at the reception.

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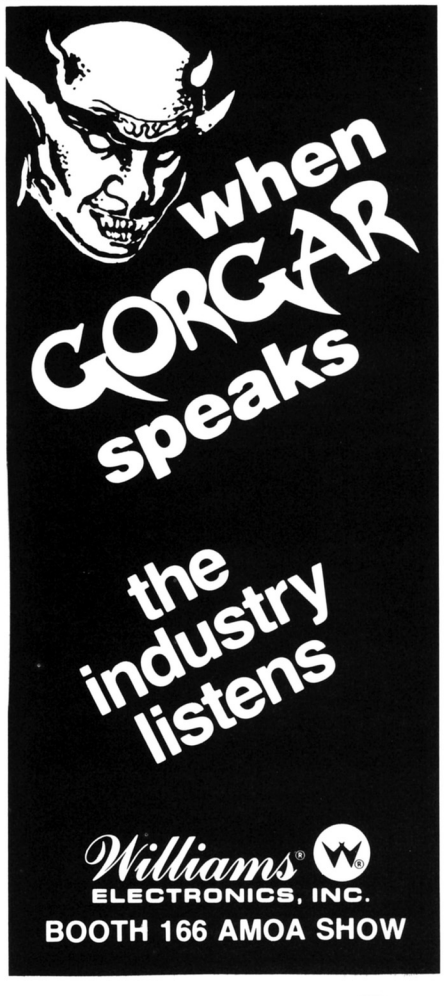

Tornado into full swing with foosball promotions

Tornado Table Soccer of Fort Worth, Texas, reports that its foosball machines now may be purchased directly from the factory.

The company, which formerly leased the machines, offers a direct sale on parts and accessories, too.

The manufacturer reports that table soccer sells well if it is promoted. "Some of our locations make $30-35 per day," Ed McCloud, president of the company, noted.

As an aide in the promotion of table soccer, Tornado has designed a league program for all ages, sexes, and levels (local, regional, state, and national). A sports club of approximately 1,200 square feet would include ten Tornado tables, ten or backgammon and chess booths, and a small food and beverage bar for patrons. A display case for accessory promotion items should be incorporated into the refreshment bar.

The new marketing director at Tornado, Marlene D. Clark, third from left, confers with colleagues, from left to right, Tom Jonas, director of tournaments and promotional events; Peter J. Petropoulos, international sales and marketing director; and C.E. "Ed" McCloud, president of Tornado Table Soccer, Inc.

"We are not advocating the development of a game room hangout," Jon F. Baxley, sales manager said. A membership plan should successfully preclude such a possibility, he continued.

The Tornado Table Soccer Club should be a family sports center which observes smoking and alcohol restrictions. "A no smoking policy is in tune with policies in racquetball, tennis, and other sports-health clubs. We are concerned about our, your and patrons' health. Community and family involvement are essential ingredients to the sports club formula," McCloud reported.

Tournaments, clinic and special sports club promotion will attract the uniformed players.

Also in the news at Tornado is the physical plant and personnel expansion seen around corporate offices in Fort Worth.

A 5,600 square foot table soccer-oriented amusement center recently was added to the 11,400 square foot manufacturing facility. The center serves display, research, and marketing functions. "We're able to keep abreast of every phase of our industry," McCloud said.

New faces at Tornado headquarters are Peter J. Petropoulos, international sales and marketing director, and Marlene D. Clark, amusement center director.

Petropoulos, who currently is a member of International Sales Marketing and Management Consultants of Pompano Beach, Florida, is a familiar face in the amusement business.

"His experience and abilities in the coin-operated amusement field will be of tremendous value to Tornado's marketing efforts," McCloud said.

Clark formerly was owner and operator of the Family Fun Center amusement centers located throughout Arkansas.

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ABC takes over premises

ABC Records has taken over the premises of the bankrupt Astro Games Inc. for reclamation of debts.

The former agreed in court to "segregate assets belonging to the estate from all other assets and to prepare an inventory of those assets for use by the court and the estate."

Nathan Yorke was appointed receiver.

Astro Games is the second failure for owners Robert Anderson and Robert Runte, whose Fascination Ltd. fell in August, 1978.

Anderson and Runte remain in business now as Ram, Inc., a company which purchased most of the Fascination Ltd. assets when it folded, then later funneled them to Astro Games.

Venture Line sales increase

Venture Line, Inc. of Tempe, Arizona, realized a 74 percent sales increase over last year through the third quarter, President Joe York announced at a recent sales banquet.

Alden Rosbrook, vice president of marketing, noted that the increase primarily is due to a growing export business.

Venture Line, a producer of custom video game logic boards, produces video games for overseas manufacturers to the customers specifications.

The company now may be contacted by Telex through number 165-025 RCA CEC.

Seeburg unveils new products

Seeburg unveiled its new phonographs and accessories for the fall 1979 and 1980 marketing year to domestic and overseas distributors in Chicago recently.

The Seeburg *Phoenix 160* selection phonograph, and the new fully computerized 100 selection phonograph were prominent products at the show.

The *Phoenix 160* phonograph is equipped to accept the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin.

The two dollar bill validator and a kit for converting a dollar validator to a two dollar validator also were exhibited at the show.

Also on display was a full line of accessories, including the Seeburg Satellite programmer.

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Gremlin encourages 'family' atmosphere

Affording ethnic minorities employment opportunities and providing morale boosters for all employees are two areas that Gremlin Industries, manufacturer of coin-operated electronic wall and video games, seems to take seriously.

Frank Fogleman, president of Gremlin, and his staff have created various programs and events that were designed to "make employees feel as if Gremlin were their second family."

One program recently initiated and opened to all employees at Gremlin is the service award program. Each individual, regardless of position or job title, has the opportunity of receiving company wide recognition after at least two years of service.

The first annual service awards took place recently in Gremlin's headquarters in San Diego. Honored then were six-five year employees and 26-two, three and four year employees. In a speech to all employees, Fogleman noted "this program is intended to say 'thank you,' and the emblem you were given is a tangible recognition of this 'thank you.' "

To further enhance employee relations, the annual Gremlin picnic was held at Big Oak Ranch, an amusement and park facility. Open to all employees and their families, the picnic offered softball and volleyball games, along with horse shoes, swimming, and potato sack râces. The picnic was paid for in part by the empoyees recreation fund, a year round service organization that sponsors various fund raising projects.

Coming up will be the "world series" of video, coin-op, and game manufacturers, as Gremlin plays against Cinematronics Incorporated in a softball challenge game.

Gremlin, along with other companies in the private sector, also participated in a program with the San Diego County Welfare Department which affords Indochinese and Hispanic families the opportunity to leave cash assistance rolls for gainful employment.

Gremlin Industries Inc. Director of Personnel Burt Nishimura, center front, is pictured with some of the graduates of the San Diego County Welfare vocational placement program. The program, funded by the federal government and supervised by local welfare departments, allows ethnic minorities to serve their dependency on cash assistance rolls. Vocational training is provided by community colleges throughout the area.

Many companies have placed graduates from the program into jobs, and the individuals have proved to be competent in their transitions to the work situation. And of the 275 employees at Gremlin, 75 are of an Vietnamese or Hispanic background.

Teamwork and "the ability to utilize innovative technological advancement" probably has a winning combination for Gremlin. According to Bert Nishimura, director of personnel, "We hire good people and trust that their attitudes toward the company will result in quality workmanship. It does not take long for these people to become integrated into the Gremlin family." Nishimura attributes the success Gremlin has achieved over the past two years to the contribution of the minority workers.

Most of these employees started with Gremlin after graduating from the orientation and employment program. Several minority workers have already proved themselves capable of handling more responsibility and therefore have become group leaders in the areas of quality control, sub-assembly (manufacturing of metal parts and wiring), electronic assembly (inspection and design of circuit boards), and testing.

The training program is financed by the federal government, conducted by the community colleges throughout the area and supervised by local welfare departments. Family heads are especially selected for the school so their eventual employment will take not only themselves but members of their families off welfare.

The language needed for the specific job skill is taught. For example, students who are placed in electronic assembly at Gremlin must learn about semantics and application of words like components, transistors and circuit boards and the entire methodology of applying these words to working ability. After two months of learning language skills, the classes have been phased into Gremlin training sessions in which these minorities work normal hours, alleviating further governmental expenditures.

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Tournament Soccer now plans to market pool tables

When those of us in the coin machine industry think of "tournament marketing," one success story that comes to mind may be that of Tournament Soccer. Now the principles, programs, and marketing team from that company have debuted a new product—*Tournament 8-Ball*.

"It's the most natural extension of our company," reports Lee Peppard, president of Tournament Soccer. "The same programs that have made us the leaders in tournament marketing in the sport of table soccer can be applied to the long-established sport of pool."

Tournament Soccer has contracted U.S. Billiards of Amityville, New York, to manufacture its new product, which will be unveiled at the AMOA show in Chicago in November.

Also in the news at Tournament Soccer is the addition of Chuck Farmer to the staff.

Farmer comes to Tournament Soccer via Shaffer Distributing Company of Columbus, Ohio, after fourteen years of involvement there.

He has learned from one of the well-known names in the trade, Ed Shaffer—a man who runs a quality distributorship that has withstood the test of time, celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Farmer brings with him a solid knowledge of sale, promotion, and management, with a real feel for both operator and distributor problems," Peppard said.

Ohio is a very special training ground—some say it is the number one "coin-operated" territory in the country. It has gained this reputation because people like Ed Shaffer, Steve Shaffer, Bernie Flynn, and competitors like Monroe Coin, Cleveland Coin, and Royal Distributing. "Farmer's work in the Ohio market has prepared him in the following areas: sales management, showing (new product presentation), advertising, purchasing, used equipment sales, direct sales (one-to-one with the operators), and an understanding of the concepts involved in the overall operation of a strong distributorship," the president noted.

Cherry Leisure launches games division

Cherry Leisure, the largest Scandinavian and English operators of video games, have launched a new division of refurbished games from its routes.

Facilities have been provided to attend to the cleaning and complete overhaul of all electronic and mechanical components of games before they are offered for sale.

Melvin Epstein of the London office headquarters is directing the operation.

"All games are cleaned and refinished to their original state," Epstein reported. "Any worn controls are replaced with new components. Monitors and boards are thoroughly tested, with repairs made as needed. The games end up looking and functioning as good as new."

A refurbished line of Atari games attracted considerable attention in London recently when many clients couldn't tell them from the new ones, Epstein said.

Cherry, which is Scandinavia and England's sole importers (the firm operates mainly Atari games, as well), offers secondhand Atari renovated games for sale, as well as after other brands.

Some of the models currently available include *Sprint II*, *Super Bug*, *LeMans*, *Breakout*, *Night Driver*, and *Destroyer*. All games carry a 90-day warranty and offer competitive pricing, according to Epstein.

Sales of videos are dealt with by Vic Leslie of London, and a similar operation has been set up in Sweden to handle slot machines and pinballs.

Information on these can be obtained from Hanan Soderstrom, Per Hamburg, or Rolf Lundstrom at Cherry's offices in Stockholm.

Catalog of counters issued

TMI Industries, Inc. recently issued a new catalog showing its standard line of electro-mechanical and mechanical counters.

The six page color catalog lists standard models available. Additional counters and other special digital measuring devices are also available from TMI Industries, Inc., digital instruments division.

Tom Tsergas, vice president of engineering, also announced that TMI Industries, Inc., has signed an exclusive marketing agreement with Toyoda of America, a subsidiary of Toyota Motor Company, for its quartz type hourmeter, which is used on vehicles, to measure hours of usage.

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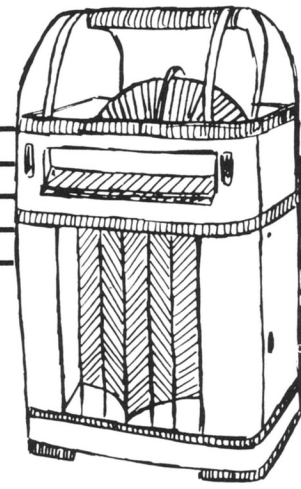


By Pat Matthews
WQUE New Orleans

Sly's back

This time out we have some of the best product in quite some time. I think it may have something to do with getting close to the cut off date of what's considered 1979 or 1980 material. Whatever the reason, let's not waste another word...

REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE—Sly And The Family Stone—Warner Brothers WBS 49062

It's been a long time in between records, let alone hits, for this group. But Sly & friends are back and "Back On The Right Track" (which also is the LP title). And because big things are expected a very unusual thing is about to happen in the record business as you will see just a little bit later.

But first, let's talk about this record. It's the closest thing to the classic Sly a lot of us grew up on. It features the mellow, funky voice of Sly Stone himself, double tracked in some parts, and blending in with background harmonies. And don't forget his keyboard renderings that only this supergroup can do it. It's extremely danceable and makes the void of no Sly since the early seventies an easier pill to have swallowed. Try an 8 out of 10 on it.

SWITCHBOARD SUSAN—Nick Lowe—Columbia 1-11131

If Rolene (Moon Martin's reminiscing of "Memphis") can sell, so can this. Unlike Martin, Nick Lowe has established a large loyal following with the success of "Cruel To Be Kind." This is a powerful rocker with witty lyrics and lots of starts and stops. Should do very well. An 8 out of 10 at least.

ONLY TIME—Robert John—EMI 8023

After waiting so many years for a hit, Robert John has found a winning formula with the number one single, "Sad Eyes," and has stuck with it. This is another love song with an excellent arrangement. The strings, synthesizer, guitars are all in the right places. And John's falsetto vocals are stylishly done. A first class hit record all the way. 9 out of 10 or better.

ROCK WITH YOU—Michael Jackson—Epic 9-50797

Let's get this joint to dancin', okay? This time out MJ has slowed the beat down "just a tad" and put that rock (which is a current dance that anyone can do—it's sort of like the twist for people with two left arms) beat to it. Once again the instrumentation and background harmonies are perfect. And of course Michael Jackson is the man who can sing and dance at the same time better than anyone. 10 out of 10.

SHE'S GOT A WHOLE NUMBER—Keith Herman—Radio Records RR 417A

Now it's time to go from the famous to the obscure. But that doesn't mean it can't be good. In fact, it's excellent. The first (that I know of, anyway) release from this small record label in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, could put them on the music map in a big way.

The song starts out like something out of the sixties, a la the Seekers, with counter point acoustic guitars, but it quickly moves into a toe-tapping, very commercial sounding tune. The vocals are great and it just has that *non*-run of the mill sound. There's even Beatle hand claps in the middle eight. This guy could be the next teen idol. Honest! Conservatively, I'll give it a 7 out of 10.

IN THE STONE—Earth Wind & Fire—ARC (Columbia) 1-11093

What can I say? The most requested LP cut on "I Am" has been released as the new EW&F single. The record opens with one of the brightest sounding brass fanfares heard on any recent vinyl and moves funkily into a very typical sounding Earth Wind & Fire hit. By typical, I mean all the elements for a hit record are exactly where they should be. Maurice White is a genius. 10 out of 10.

SING A SIMPLE SONG/DANCE TO THE MUSIC—Sly & The Family Stone—Epic 9-50795

Well, here it is—the complement to our first review. Two competing record companies promoting the same artist. Must make Sly feel real

The records are rated as follows: 10 out of 10 = Top 10 peak; 9 out of 10 = Top 20 peak; 8 out of 10 = Top 30 peak; 7 out of 10 = Top 40 peak; 5 or 6 out of 10 = Somewhere in Top 100; 4 or less = Forget it, loser, break in half.

good inside. CBS Records (Epic) has re-released ten of the 1960 Sly & The Family Stone smashes on a new album entitled rather aptly "Ten Years Too Soon."

What they have done to the songs is to make them more danceable, more *today*. The original masters (which an Epic exec told me the company owns) have been spiced up with new percussion and rhythm tracks by a very talented man named John Luongo in New York City.

The end results are incredible. If you liked the originals, you'll love the new ones. Could go 7 out of 10 or better.

IT'S ALL I CAN DO—The Cars—Elektra E-46546-A

Ric Ocasek and company are finally in the national spotlight and justly so. This new effort should even capture some more acclaim from this very talented New England group. The beat is steady, the lyric content very "un-confusing," the guitars and synthesizer interesting, and the vocals refreshing. The Cars travel further down the road to riches once more. 8 out of 10.

DEJA VU—Dionne Warwick—Arista AS 0459

First of all, I think you should know that Isaac Hayes wrote the music for this one. So add to that the success of "I'll Never Love This Way Again," and the effect of one of Barry Manilow's presence on this "Come Back Record Of The Year Album" and you've got another winner. It's hauntingly beautiful and is sung in typical Warwick style. Perfect. May do even better than the initial release. 9 out of 10 or better.

NO MORE TEARS (ENOUGH IS ENOUGH)—Barbra Streisand/Donna Summer—Columbia/Casablanca 1-11125

This is it! The duet to end all duets. Probably the two most popular singers of recent times together on record for the first time. It's really a moot point to break the record down into the ingredients. The artists here are the only ingredients one needs to be aware of to know this record is a bona-fide word-of-mouth smash! 10 out of 10 or through the roof of the charts. This one should show the world just how high a record can go.

WORTH A LISTEN

WHO LISTENS TO THE RADIO—The Sports—Arista

CONFUSION—Electric Light Orchestra—Jet

ESCAPE (THE PINA COLADA SONG)—Rupert Holmes—Infinity

THIS IS IT—Kenny Loggins—Columbia

PLAY METER HOT STUFF

_____**DON'T STOP TILL YOU GET ENOUGH**—MICHAEL JACKSON—Epic***

_____**HEARTACHE TONIGHT**—EAGLES—Asylum

_____**YOU DECORATED MY LIFE**—KENNY ROGERS—United Artist

_____**SAIL ON**—THE COMMODORES—Motown***

_____**DIM ALL THE LIGHTS**—DONNA SUMMER—Casablanca***

_____**ALL MY LOVE**—LED ZEPPELIN—Swan Song

_____**GOOD GIRLS DON'T**—KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND—TK***

_____**DRIVER'S SEAT**—SNIFF N THE TEARS—Atlantic***

_____**HOLD ON**—IAN GOMM—Stiff/Epic

_____**BABE**—STYX—A&M***

_____**TUSK**—FLEETWOOD MAC—Warner Brothers***

_____**ARROW THROUGH ME**—WINGS—Columbia***

_____**DEPENDIN' ON YOU**—DOOBIE BROTHERS—Warner Bros.***

_____**RISE**—HERB ALPERT—A&M

_____**FINS**—JIMMY BUFFET—MCA***

_____**COME TO ME**—FRANCE JOLI—Prelude***

_____**THIS NIGHT WON'T LAST FOREVER**—MICHAEL JACKSON—EMI

_____**LONESOME LOSER**—LITTLE RIVER BAND—Capitol

_____**HALF THE SAY**—CRYSTAL GAYLE—Columbia***

_____**FOUND A CURE**—ASHFORD & SIMPSON—Warner Bros.

_____**BROKEN HEARTED ME**—ANNE MURRAY—Capitol

_____**GOTTA SERVE SOMEBODY**—BOB DYLAN—Columbia***

_____**DIRTY WHITE BOY**—FOREIGNER—Atlantic

_____**STILL**—COMMODORES—Motown***

PLAY METER FUNKIFIED

_____**DON'T STOP TILL YOU GET ENOUGH**—MICHAEL JACKSON—Epic***

_____**RISE**—HERB ALPERT—A&M

_____**KNEE DEEP**—FUNKADELIC—Warner Brothers

_____**BREAK MY HEART**—DAVID RUFFIN—Warner Brothers

_____**LADIES NIGHT**—KOOL & THE GANG—DeLite

_____**CRUISIN'**—SMOKEY ROBINSON—Motown

_____**DIM ALL THE LIGHTS**—DONNA SUMMER—Casablanca***

_____**SO GOOD, SO RIGHT**—BRENDA RUSSELL—Horizon

_____**STILL**—COMMODORES—Motown***

_____**YOU GET ME HOT**—JIMMY "BO" HORNE—Sunshine Sound

_____**I JUST CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF**—NATURE'S DIVINE—Infinity

PLAY METER PICKIN' & GRINNIN'

_____**ALL THE GOLD IN CALIFORNIA**—LARRY GATLIN—Columbia***

_____**SWEET SUMMER LOVIN'/GREAT BALLS OF FIRE**—DOLLY PARTON—RCA

_____**COME WITH ME**—WAYLON JENNINGS—RCA***

_____**YOU DECORATED MY LIFE**—KENNY ROGERS—United Artist

_____**I AIN'T GOT NO BUSINESS DOIN' BUSINESS TODAY**—RAZZY BAILEY—RCA

_____**HALF THE WAY**—CRYSTAL GAYLE—Columbia***

_____**SHOULD I COME HOME**—GENE WATSON—Capitol

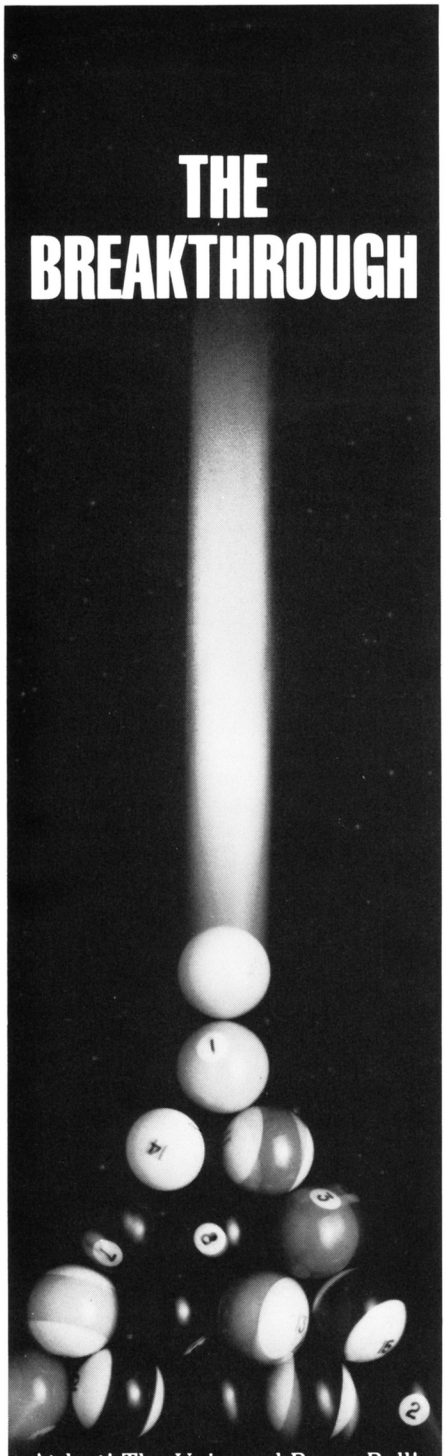
_____**THE LADY IN THE BLUE MERCEDES**—JOHNNY DUNCAN—Columbia

_____**BROKEN HEARTED ME**—ANNE MURRAY—Capitol

_____**PUT YOUR CLOTHES BACK ON**—JOE STAMPLEY—Epic

_____**BLUE KENTUCKY GIRL**—EMMYLOU HARRIS—Warner Bros.

****denotes records reviewed by PLAY METER*



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Others Pending

On the Move

Kelley joins Valley

Warren Kelley has been appointed business development consultant by The Valley Company of Bay City, Michigan.

"He'll be of tremendous value in the planning of our various business activities because of his diverse background and experience," Chuck Milhem, president of Valley reported.

Kelley comes out of retirement in Florida, where he has been living for the past three years, with his wife, Catherine. He spent 38 years with Brunswick, the last 25 in responsible positions in marketing services, promotion, and business development for the bowling and billiards divisions.

Warren Kelley

Bill Adair

Seeburg changes

Seeburg Corporation top brass underwent a change recently when Bill Adair retired from the presidency and John Chapin succeeded him.

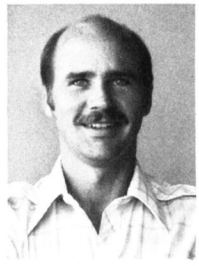
Adair, who underwent cardiovascular surgery in January of 1979, retired on the advice of doctors. Although he achieved what is thought to be full recovery, doctors recommended that he limit his business activities. He will, however, maintain his association with Seeburg as a consultant in all business and new product planning matters.

John Chapin comes to the presidency of the company after many years of working up through the ranks. He started with the company in 1946 as a field engineer and at various stages of his career with the company he has been manager of field engineering, quality control, parts sales, new product planning, manufacturing planning, phonograph sales and most recently, manufacturing operations.

During World War II he was an electronic technician in the U.S. Navy and spent time aboard the battleship *U.S.S. Washington*. His formal academic training was in mathematics, which he taught at an eastern university, and physics.

Chapin is quick to point out, however, that he considers his important real training to have come from working closely with phonograph operators, distributors, service, and sales people.

John Chapin



Richard Malecki

Two promoted

Richard Malecki and Roger Dickman, employees at Venture Line, Inc. in Tempe, Arizona, were promoted recently.

Malecki, in the second promotion of his approximate year's tenure with the company, was promoted to manager of test engineering.

Dickman, formerly in charge of test engineering, has been promoted to production manager.

Roger Dickman

Frank L. Happ

Happ appointed

Wico Corporation has announced the appointment of Frank L. Happ as director of marketing.

Happ will lead a team of five merchandise managers who will plan, price, and promote all products sold by Wico Corporation.

Happ is a 13-year veteran of the amusement and vending industries, working these past five years for Wico in the capacity of merchandise manager.

Accepting his new position, Happ noted "Wico is an exciting and aggressive company. I am very happy to be selected to lead Wico's marketing efforts as we enter our 41st year."

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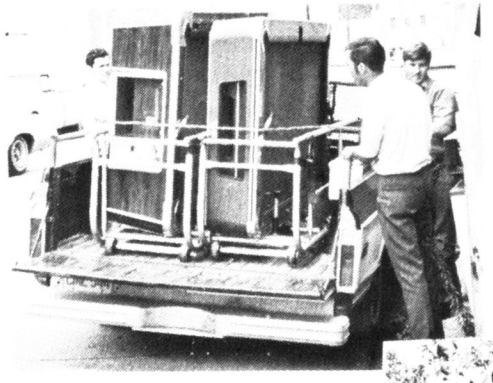

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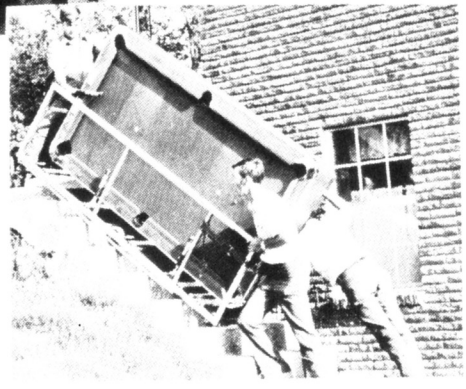

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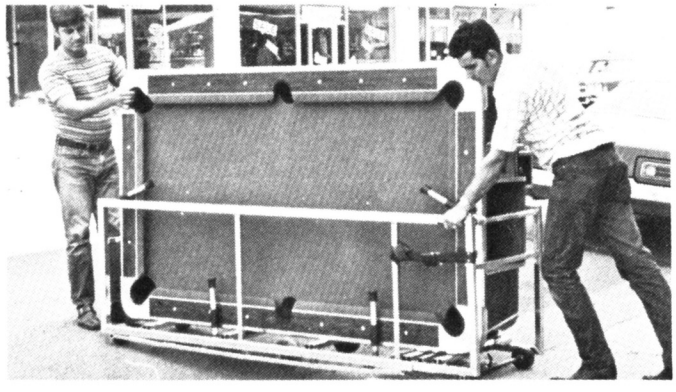

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WILL LAST FOR YEARS!

On the virtues of 'clean

By Zac Oliver

The virtues of a clean game are well known, and it is a job well rewarded. Also, it gives one the opportunity to implement solutions to the small problems which often create service calls.

Among the problems related to playfield components is the old"ball stuck under the rubber." Most manufacturers are protecting the areas where this is likely to occur by adding rails or posts on the back of the rubbers. Another solution is to use double rubbers, which may help, but has its disadvantages. It is costly, temporary, and, depending upon where it is placed, can slightly change the play (especially around the bottom kickers). The most inexpensive solution is just to add nails to block the areas where the ball might crawl under or over. Since the nail uses a very small area, and is used originally by the manufacturers, its addition is less noticeable to the game appearance. To better the nail appearance, one can trim the head off. Typical nail size is #4 finishing.

Another problem is the loosening of posts and resulting destruction of the wood threads. The easiest solution is to open the hole all the way through the play board using the original screw as a drill bit (some areas will have to be machine drilled due to mechanism brackets such as drop targets, but the percentage of such cases is really small). Replace the original post fastening screw with a machine threaded one. If the screw is a plastic holder, use Bally part no. S-2125, if possible with a T nut (Bally part no. M108-15), or a flat washer and a 6/32 hex nut. The other posts can be fastened by 6/32 x 2 inches machine screws. As the machine screw is driven through the wood it creates its own thread. Depending on post location, it is not necessary to use the nut under the playboard.

Another item that often gets loose is the ball guide rails on Williams playboards. Remove the rail completely out and flaten the edges. Reinsert the rail, and from under the board drive a wood screw in an angle such that permits the screw threads to work its way alongside the rail. Mini-post (on older games) should be fastened through the playboard. Use Bally part no. ASE-2836-x with a flat washer and hex nut or a T nut.

Some of the rubber rings around the lamp bulbs dries up and eventually breaks or has to be frequently replaced. Using the nails, and if necessary a different size rubber ring, move it away from the heat.

Playfield wear can be avoided on specific areas with the use of pieces of mylar self-adhesive protectors (Bally part no. M1787-4).

The panel inserts (bonus and feature lamps plastics, inserted in the playboard), when not level with the playboard surface, should be removed and reglued. A general application glue like Elmer's works well.

Under the playfield, we find problems with oxidized lamp sockets which cause the lamp to light intermittently. The best solution is to replace the socket. However, a quick fix is to add solder to the center contact point on the lamp, thereby increasing contact pressure in the socket. (To avoid the opening of the internal wire connection, do not overheat the existing solder spot in the bulb.) Also, use a longer life bulb in such cases. The lamps used in the games are 47's which average 5.000hs of life, according to lamp manufacturers specifications. The 1847's average 15.000hs, and the 755's, 50.000hs. All these bulbs have the same electrical characteristics, but different pricing. Consult your Wico or Peach State parts catalog for price quotations.

In hard to reach places of general illumination, it is worthwhile to use the more expensive 755's. However, vibrations on the playboard can cause a hot filament to break. To compensate for vibration, the sockets might be loosened and a rubber groumet inserted, thus separating the socket bracket from the board. Practical application has shown some improvement, although the filament in the bulbs does break faster than we would like it to.

While still under the playfield, look for missing or broken lead debouncing capacitors on stand up targets switches. These .05 mf disc caps vibrate when the ball hits the target, eventually breaking its wire leads. Its debouncing function is very important for game play. To avoid frequent replacement or resoldering, glue the capacitor body to the switch assembly with silicone rubber sealant.

Take your time and inspect the mechanisms under the playboard. Bumpers ring and rod assemblies require periodic retightening. To have a broken rod in a Williams or Stern game is not much of a problem for replacement. The other designs are far more complex to dismantle. Flipper units should also be inspected. Coil stops and bushings are parts which are likely to loosen up. On Bally, the screws that hold these parts are the same ones used to hold the control boards in the back cabinet. Anyway, the Bally part no. is RLPP832-1106.

All these little details can be corrected on a periodic cleaning job and their accomplishment will save time and money in the long run.

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'Space Invaders' tips

By Zac Oliver

I often wonder about *Space Invaders*. What a game! Simple to play, simple to service, and wonderful on collections. Production run is reaching the 30,000's, and customer orders continue to stack up at distributors. Servicewise, the game is terrific. There is practically nothing to go wrong (theoretically, at least). The 8080 system seems to be debugged well enough; the power supply, the front door, and the monitor are fairly reliable.

However, we did find a couple of problems, mainly related to production and assembly, and others to design. The corrective measures are very easy and it is likely that the problems may never occur on your route.

One of the first problems found was the flyback transformer in the Wells Gardner monitor. The coil is mounted on the core and not fastened to it. Its inner sleeve around the U-shaped core is grooved, but there is still play and the wobble causes the coil wire(s) to break, resulting in loss of high voltage and consequently, of picture.

The symptom is easy to identify, since the game sounds are present and the picture might appear with vibration. The repair is also easy, the worst part being the removal of the whole chassis from the game. Use silicone rubber sealant to affix the coil to the core and resolder the wire(s). Reassemble the chassis to the cabinet and you are back in business. If it is possible, move the chassis from its original position in the game. The neck of the CRT is too close to the monitor board. The board removal is practically impossible without chassis removal.

Another problem is overheating of the power supply board due to poor ventilation. The best fix is to install a fan (about $15.00) with a varistor across its connections. Place the fan in the back door using part of the vents as air supply to avoid drilling of holes. If it is possible to keep the game about six inches off the wall, reverse the position of the power supply board. To do so, one must reposition the power harness. The loosening of two cable clamps will do it. Talking about power supply calls for a reminder: always adjust the +5 VDC, +12 VDC and -5 VDC through the adjustment pots in the power supply when installing any Midway processor controlled game. Even if you move them to another location, check the voltages, always. Measure the voltages in the mother board at the edge connector on the board side. From the bottom up, Pin 1 is +5 VDC, Pin 3 is +12 VDC and Pin 5 is -5 VDC. These voltages should be kept slightly higher than their values. One or two tenths of a volt is permissable.

Customers have the tendency to switch the main power switch on top of the cabinet off and on trying to create random spikes in the system. This can be avoided by bypassing the on-off switch on top of the cabinet, soldering both wires together. Most of the powered serviceable systems in *Space Invaders* are reachable from the back of the cabinet and power cut-off can be controlled through the interlock switch. Of course this will not prevent the player from unplugging the game from the wall outlet, but does reduce the abuse.

The front panel controls require very little maintenance. However, periodically disassembling the buttons for cleaning and inspection is necessary. The firing button wears out faster than the others. During cleaning, it can be swapped with one of the start buttons. It is advisable to clean the switches and check for proper adjustment.

Another possible problem comes from the coin door. The wiring harness is clamped to the frame and around the coin mechanisms. In one of the curves around the left acceptor, friction may cause the wire insulation to open, thus exposing the conductor to the frame ground. If the mentioned wire is a coin-switch return, one might experience wrong meter readings (you bet this means free games) or overheating of meter coil and associated problems. As I have mentioned, some of these problems might never occur to your game. However...

One last note refers to the bars which lock the glass (or plexiglass). The locking tabs may come loose because of vibration, allowing the player access to the inside of the game and coin door, enough said. Re-tightening of the locking tabs will generally solve the problem.

The game is a great piece. Congratulations to Taito and Midway for the breakthrough. Will the AMOA bring us a *Space Invaders II*? At least, we will see a rerun of one heck of a winner.

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Performance appraisal and salary review:

Will the gears ever mesh ?

By Joseph Arkin

During the past few years a considerable amount of enthusiasm has been generated within industry over the subject of performance appraisal. A number of companies even have attempted to implement some rather progressive concepts in this area.

But before we take a close look at the most radical revision—the change from the widely accepted rating-scale type of performance appraisal system to one that is based upon employee goal-setting, it might be well first to review the definition of performance appraisal. Let us define it as a process of judging the extent to which a subordinate has been fulfilling his obligations to an organization over a given period of time.

The conventional rating-scale system creates a tendency on the part of management to compile highly subjective and frequently meaningless comments on such employee attributes as industry, loyalty, and dependability. A subordinate often leaves the post-appraisal interview either in depression or in ecstacy.

With a selected first from within the broad spectrum of the employee's job. The employee then participates in the setting of his own goals within these areas. He later takes part in the review of his progress toward those goals.

The new performance appraisal approach is viewed as a training technique, as a fundamental aspect of manager development, and as a source of management information. Goal-setting is essentially future-oriented; the rating scales looked to the past.

These progressive changes often tend to aggravate the split that sometimes already exists between performance appraisal programs and salary review programs. In those companies where the two traditionally have been treated by management as separate and distinct processes, employees now more than ever want to know the basis upon which their raises are determined.

They feel that the two programs cannot logically be separated, that the very nature of a goal-setting program links it to the determination of a man's worth to his company.

In those organizations where performance appraisal always has been used for the purpose of reviewing a man's salary, a different problem exists. Since the goals established by the employee and his supervisor under a goal-setting program do not ordinarily cover the entire range of his duties and since they differ from employee to employee at the same working level, employees balk at the apparently new lack of relationship between performance appraisal and salary review.

When an employee reaches his goals, and does not receive a raise in pay, he is disappointed even though his goals may have been set rather low and his total performance may have been poor.

While numerous article and books have been written about the new approach to performance appraisal, theoreticians and practitioners alike have tended to side-step the inevitable question: how do we integrate goal setting with salary review?

Why to Avoid Integration with Salary Review

There are many individuals in industry who strongly feel that a person's salary review should not be linked to his performance appraisal. The principal argument here states that a discussion of salary at the time of performance appraisal tends to throw the whole meeting off the track.

Supposedly, the employee waits to hear how much of a raise he will receive and then proceeds to "tune out." For this reason, many managers feel that if they are to get their thoughts across to a subordinate about his job performance, they had better leave out any discussion of salary.

The other widely stated argument concerns the amount of time available for interviews. This line of reasoning follows two paths. First, there are those who say that, since performance appraisal interviews must be conducted more often than salary reviews, the two are mutually exclusive and time must be allotted for both.

There are others who say that, since more than one interview a year between a manager and his subordinate is not feasible, either a performance appraisal interview *or* a salary review should be conducted.

Why to Integrate with Salary Review

People on the side of the fence favoring the integration of performance appraisal and salary review tend to be those who are more often in the position of being reviewed than in the position of doing the reviewing. These people want salary review tied in very closely with performance appraisal.

In this view, if an employee improves his performance, he should be compensated accordingly. Another way of stating the same thing is to say that, since a man's salary is affected by his performance, salary and performance should be reviewed at the same time.

A second argument states that, since performance appraisal and salary review are synonymous in the minds of many employees, they should be treated as such by management.

Finally, we return to the issue of available time for interviews. Here it is felt that, since two interviews are not feasible in a given year, performance appraisal and salary review should be covered during the one interview period that is feasible.

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To disco or not to disco.

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It all means that we do more than make it loud. We make it great.

The price is right.

But better looking and listening aren't the end of our new jukeboxes. We've also re-designed the pricing procedure. Gone are charts, switches and calculations. In their place are a brand-new Rowe innovation: Plug-in pricing chips. Just plug them in, and you're all set.

Control center.

The "brain" behind our new jukeboxes is an improved central microprocessor that controls all functions.

The benefits of this new arrangement are both numerous and astonishing. For one, the unit can now play both sides of a record (assuming both were selected), in succession.

In addition, we have enhanced the capabilities of our Memorec unit. Not only will it give you the most (or least) selected records, in descending order, it displays total selections since last reset, provides an instant display of the number of plays on any individual selection and also shows total money intake since last reset.

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There's a new "Most Popular Record" flashing display that advertises that particular location's biggest hit. Put in your money, push the "Most Popular Record" button and the machine plays the location's biggest hits (from #1 on down) until credit runs out.

The Tempo

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An Approach to Salary Review

Salary review can be looked upon as the evaluation of a man's recent performance, as compared with some standard performance, for the purpose of giving, or not giving, him a raise in pay. Just what comprises a standard performance tends to vary from company to company and even from department to department.

And due to changes in technology, it will vary from time to time. What is perhaps more critical is that a standard can vary within the mind of a manager as he reviews the performance of different subordinates.

To measure an employee's performance validly, it is surely necessary to develop job standards that permit a minimum of variation from one subordinate to the next. By minimizing this variation we mean that a manager should have a yardstick with which to determine whether an employee's recent performance has been less than, equal to, or better than a "reasonable norm," or "reasonable expectation," for *that particular job*.

In attempting to construct such a yardstick we might remember that the past performance of an employee is essentially an unfair criterion for the establishment of standards against which to measure his future performance. The reason for this inequity is that those employees who have done a better-than-average job in the past are placed at a disadvantage. If their past performance is now regarded as standard, these people may have to make extraordinary efforts in the future just to keep ahead of themselves.

By the same token, an employee whose performance has been unsatisfactory in the past may encounter little difficulty in exceeding this performance level, once he makes up his mind to do so. We can see that setting standards by a man's past performance may be rewarding him for poor performance and penalizing him for superior performance.

A more equitable practice in establishing standards is to employ a careful analysis and appraisal of the job itself and of the kinds of people who are hired or promoted to do that job. Naturally enough, it is conceivable that this practice would allow for setting standards that are now being exceeded by some of the people in the organization.

The performance standard can be described as a measure that an employee may fail to reach, may reach, or may surpass. We would hope that it represents a reasonable expectation on the part of management and that this reasonable expectation will be measurable insofar as possible.

The performance standard that we are discussing is not a rubber yardstick that is stretched every time an employee approaches the end of it. We do not advocate a carrot on the end of a stick.

On the other hand, a standard need not remain fixed year after year after year. Progress for the organization or the employee is not often brought about by this strategy. But the review of a standard should be every bit as objective as the original process of setting it.

Assuming that standards for a job can be set, let us take a look at how this concept might work in practice. A supervisor of a group may have been allotted a given dollar figure for raises over the next year. He must then allocate that money among the people who work for him. It is his responsibility to give an equitable raise to everybody within the limits of that allotment.

This task should by no means be an unreasonable one that must be accomplished with an unfair allotment. But it should require that a supervisor reward the employees who work for him in proportion to the jobs that they have been doing.

In plain language, those who have done an above-average job, that is, those who have surpassed the reasonable expectation, should re-

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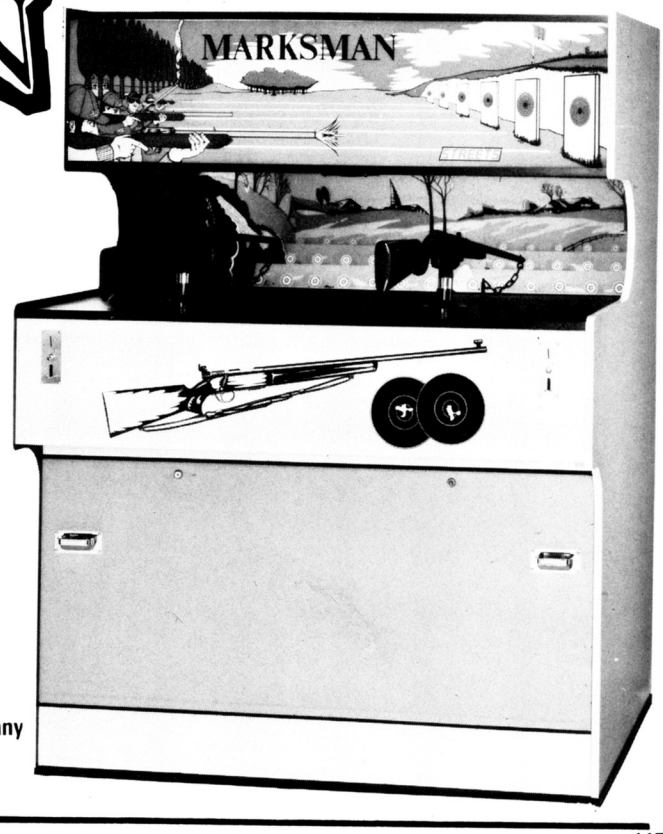

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ceive an above-average percentage increase. Those employees who have done an average job should receive an average percentage increase. And those who have done a below-average job should receive a below-average increase.

If the performance of a group is such that the raise allotment cannot do justice to everybody's performance, a supervisor should be permitted to submit a request for a greater allotment (and to have a good chance of receiving it).

The important thing about a plan of this nature is that it encourages a fair distribution of raises based upon a fair measure of total job performance.

Resolving Differences Between Goal-Setting and Salary Review

We can now consider the kind of a work situation that brings the new performance appraisal, or goal-setting, approach head-on with salary review.

Let us look at two men doing the same type of job for the same supervisor. Whether or not they earn the same salary does not make any difference for our illustration. As we shall see in a moment, however, the first man is likely to be earning a higher salary than the second.

When goals are set at the beginning of their performance appraisal, or goal-setting, period, the supervisor establishes three goals for the first man. He also sets three different goals for the second. While the goals for both men may cover the same job areas, those that are established for the first man are of a higher level of difficulty.

Why should this be so? The reason is that the first man has been doing a better job than the second, according to standard, and consequently is at a higher level of performance to begin with. If he is to develop further as an employee, it is only reasonable to set goals for him that he must strive for.

Setting the same goals for the second man, however, might be asking him to reach for the impossible. The result of such a practice would more likely be discouragement than development.

As the time period for goal achievement passes, each of these two employees tries to reach his expected goals. But now let us suppose that the second man, who has been the lesser performer, not only reaches his goals but goes so far as to surpass them. His performance appraisal, or goal-setting, record must then indicate that he has done a superior job in reaching his goals (and that he has presumably become a better employee in doing so).

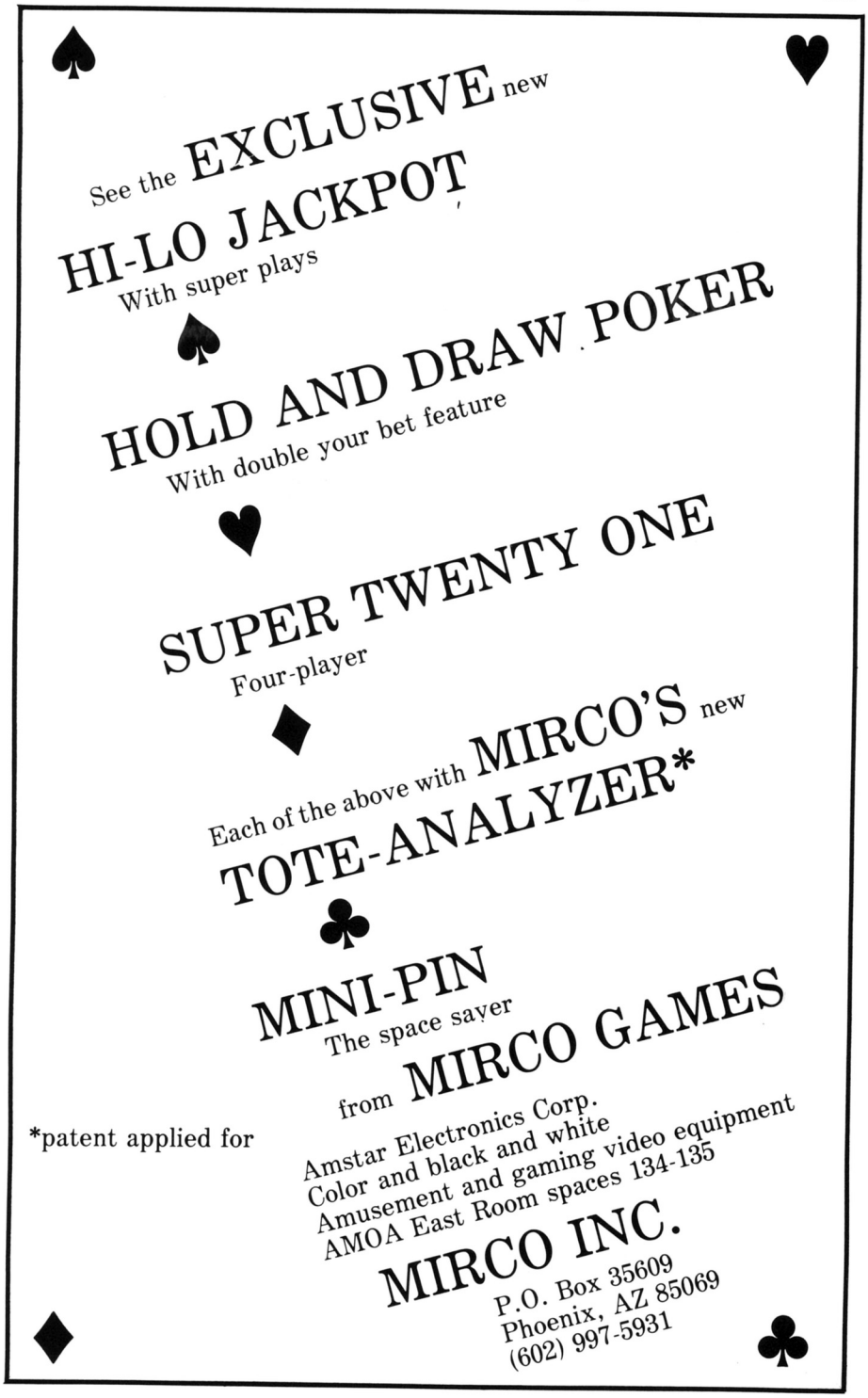
Let us further suppose that the first man does not reach any of his goals. His performance appraisal record must indicate this fact (and the implication that he has not significantly improved as an employee).

What should these results mean to the two men in terms of increased salary expectations? In view of the inherent difference between goal-setting and salary review we would have to say "not *necessarily* very much." Here are the reasons why:

Although the first man did not reach his goals, he nevertheless may have maintained his lead over the second man in those job areas for which goals were set. Presumably, he is still worth more to the company in terms of performance.

The second man might have done well in achieving his goals but neglected other aspects of his job. The overall result could easily be a status quo in performance, or even a decrement.

A manager should not fail to explain these different factors to his subordinates at the time that a goal-setting system of performance appraisal is instituted. He should try to make it very clear to them that the purpose behind goal-setting is employee development and not salary review. Otherwise, dissatisfaction within his department is a likely possibility.



By Roger C. Sharpe

Two for the Show

For most of you, it's now Chicago and you're reading this in your hotel room, taking a break from the hospitality suites and trying to gear up for another day at the Hilton, walking around the exhibits and deciding which equipment is going to do the job for the coming months.

Others are looking at these words back in their own home town, not able to get to the AMOA, yet acutely aware that their future rests with what transpires over a three-day weekend.

And what's the news? Well, most of it you've had in bits and pieces or through this column over the months, but much is unfolding now and pointing to the future in remarkable fashion.

Things are going so smoothly from a manufacturing standpoint in the world of pins that it's almost scary—but appearances sometimes are deceiving. Whether you're in the Windy City in person, checking out the stuff first hand, or trying to get an idea from words on a page, here is a closer look at several of the outstanding of the pins on display.

At Bally, the celebrity line doesn't seem to quit with the likes of the *Globetrotters* (reviewed last month), *Dolly Parton* (upcoming on these pages next month) and even a few surprises that punch some life into an already strong line-up. Interestingly, this forerunner of the solid-state era has taken a perceptual swing in design to more conventional layouts and play on the board.

The in-line target feature is getting good play—it's incorporated into three games rather close together. But even without this innovation, Bally has continued to integrate memory better, probably, than anyone else in the field. Sound, artwork, and the whole cosmetic touch have been refined for this generation of machines, and, almost assuredly, a new wave will unfold for '80.

At Game Plan the mood is happy contentment with the positive reaction to its first conventional pin, *Sharpshooter*, even though plans call for more sit-downs (which, incidentally, are what launched the company.) Two more machines are slated to follow the run of *Sharpshooter*. All indications seem to say that this company will be a tough and lasting contender in the pingame field.

Gottlieb's story is different. They have reacted well to the changes in the industry, even if they haven't initiated too many things. In fact, they're still the only major company which has integrated memory from ball to ball play. *Hulk*, of course, is the exception (which we'll look at closely in the next few pages)—it's only on extra ball play where the bonus multiplier will stay intact.

Besides this glaring omission, which has also influenced the design parameters of recent machines, Gottlieb has entered the celebrity fray with a few notable editions and one upcoming space theme sure to catch more than a few eyes and quarters. But I, for one, am waiting for the technological breakthrough from a company that may take a little bit longer to do things, but when they finally get around to it, lots of folks sit up and take notice.

Stern has exploded onto the scene this year with a dizzying array of machines as well as a startling development in drop targets which started on *Trident* and carried into its newest hit, *Meteor* (more on this game later).

The rap still seems to be, however, that the games wear a bit faster than the competitors. Fortunately, the problem was less evident on *Magic*, which bodes well for the games upcoming. Potential buyers who might have been turned off will, hopefully, reconsider the efforts of one of the major forces in the industry. Stern has established itself, and with a few more winners, who knows what the future holds.

Williams. What can you say about a company that's been on such an incredible *hot* streak? It has its stuff together, whether it be an imaginative wide-body or sturdy conventional model. Both artwork and sound effects have helped the surge, but the playfield designs which have integrated unique formats, as well as memory and recall for play continuity, probably have been the biggest factor. Perhaps the company's most promising future ace lies in Williams' vocal capacity—sure to be the talk of the town.

Imports? Well, as I wrote about a few issues back, the challenge is a hard one and as you're reading this, most of the viability already will have been decided. It is going to be interesting to see how the foreign competition copes, whether it be Zaccaria, Playmatic, Interflip, Recel, Sonic, or any others trying to enter into the fray.

Also, conspicuous by its absence of pins this year, has been Atari, which fell victim to many circumstances, one of which was a successor to the triumph of *Super-*

Roger's Ratings At-A-Glance

Stern's METEOR..... #### Gottlieb's INCREDIBLE HULK..... ###¾

Stern's METEOR

Gottlieb's THE INCREDIBLE HULK

man. But then, '80 is going to be an interesting time, and who knows what the end of winter will bring.

What *is* certain is that this AMOA, the IAAPA, and the upcoming ATE are going to supply the necessary showcases for a variety of equipment that will keep a lot of people in business and keep the business of pinball an ongoing concern. After all, we are getting ready for a whole new decade—the beginning of the last twenty years of the twentieth century. Pretty heavy stuff, admittedly, but just consider that next year also marks the fiftieth year of the pinball industry. Not bad for a nickel and dime business where penny arcades meant pennies and not today's quarters and dollars.

Innovation, increased costs for production, play in equipment, higher scores, and a more sophisticated audience are just some of the things to be aware of during this convention time. Just keep your eyes and ears open and play everything you can, make notes and remember the things that impressed you or stood out from the rest.

If you'd like a head start on your scouting, take a closer look at a movie spectacular tie-in and a comic book hero turned TV star turned pinball machine. And lest one forgets, the final tally of the *Sharpshooter* poll. On with the show...

Stern's METEOR

A great effort, really, a great effort *and* sound design from Steve Kirk make this game a winner on its own and a sure success with the American International movie tie-in. The artwork and the sound effects are also a big plus for what looks like the biggest pin this company has ever made.

PLAYFIELD: The action begins with a bit of a different alignment—the top features two pop bumpers and a sweep of three star rollover buttons just above a row of six drop targets (M-E-T-E-O-R). Move down to the center of the top field and there's a lone thumper bumper and a flipper just to the right.

Further to the right is a spinner, while on the left is the first of three drop target banks with three drop targets each. A target just to the right of the bumper and below the top flipper finishes off the top before one gets to a left side and right side set of drop targets. The bottom is pure Stern with rubber-ringed posts and wire lanes down to the flippers and a play-more post between.

ANALYSIS: The big news on *Meteor* is the memory drop targets at the top with their "remote trip action." You can hit them, go over the top rollover buttons, hit the center target when it's at the right lit value, or gow down the interior lanes to the flippers when they're lit for spotting a letter.

Every time M-E-T-E-O-R is made the bonus multiplier increases from 1X to 2X on up to a 7X possibility. *Meteor*—a great development in pinball history and should be noted as such—Stern should be commended for this improvement in pinball design.

But the scoring doesn't stop there. The spinner value increases along with M-E-T-E-O-R targets for a top of 2,200 points for each revolution.

And then there's the drop targets and a novel use of out-hole bonus lights integrated into the playfield graphics. The top left side bank (twos), the bottom left side bank (ones), and the bottom right side bank (threes) offer plenty of points and a great feature for when the values are lined up—you've gotten one target down in each bank, or two, or even multiples thereof that have the rockets all with the same value—suddenly there's a chance for a 70,000 point WOW value.

And with all the scoring and shot potential with plenty of reverses and long shots, as well as quick shots from the top flipper to the upper targets, *Meteor* also offers sound effects borrowed from the Williams' *Flash* school of continual auditory madness.

If all this combined weren't enough to get attention, there is an added touch that I'd like to see everyone adopt. Before the last ball is in play, the high score to date flashes so that a player knows what he's shooting for, just in case he's forgotten along the way.

Innovative touches and a package that takes advantage of the movie makes *Meteor* a game to look out for.

GRAPHICS: As I have mentioned, the graphics on *Meteor* are just super. It's a colorful, eye-catching theme with loads of black, orange, red, blue, yellow, green, and goodies any player or operator would gladly notice and pay attention to. And if the movie proves to be a hit, wait for the instant recognition.

PLAY: This is a good three-ball effort which probably won't gain anything, except even higher scores, from an additional two balls. For limits in extra ball areas, try a 180,000 point start followed by 360,000 and 600,000 points. In free play areas you're going to have to raise these levels by a good 100,000 to 120,000 points at least, depending upon the location and the caliber of the players.

RATING: ####

Gottlieb's THE INCREDIBLE HULK

True visually to the comic book and not the television characters, the game features masterful artwork for the theme and sound effects that are a bit more rugged to fit the mood of the game. From Marvel to Gottlieb to you comes this eye-catcher in this company's tie-in effort.

PLAYFIELD: Four free-standing lanes are at the middle of the top, not butted by an rebounding rubbers, start off the action. A bank of seven drop targets are on the right side, with two thumper bumpers in the middle of the field and a left side wide Gottlieb spinner finishing off the top portion.

Just below the left side spinner is a target (two) with another (one) below this one. In the middle is a sweep of four star rollover buttons while the right side offers a third target (three) and a short rollover lane siding the plunger lane. Move down and there's a departure for Gottlieb—two kick-back kickers are featured, much longer than those used by Williams on such recent games as *Contact, World Cup,* and the conventional wire form lanes and flippers.

ANALYSIS: *Hulk* is an interesting game, with some decent reverses and play action.

There is the immediacy of getting a bonus multiplier value off the plunger since the top lanes control the values from left to right of 2X, 3X, 4X, and 5X.

There's also a further tie-in of features with the kick-back kickers and drop targets denoted as A-B-C and the three targets as one-two-three for lighting specials and extra ball value on the field.

But the action is also limited by the left side wide spinner which offers good access back to the top on a precise hit but only a weak roll down on most shots.

The targets and the spacing of shots away from the flippers make this a definite skill game without a lot of margin tor error. A countdown bonus is offered after reaching 20,000 points on the out-hole bonus, but memory is restricted to only the bonus multiplier value (if any) on extra ball play.

GRAPHICS: The green man is everywhere on this machine, from the transformation on the backglass to the main spelling of the name and primary figure on the playfield, along with green heads and a green fist to finish off the motif. All are faithfully reproduced from the pages of the Marvel classic and easily parlay the popularity of the television series.

PLAY: Once again, nothing is lost on three-ball settings with the features sustaining themselves nicely on shortened game time (although five-ball wouldn't be bad for heightening the scoring.) For extra ball locations you might want to try a 150,000 start followed by 300,000 and 500,000 points. On free play, *Hulk* should be okay at levels about 50,000 to 100,000 points greater.

And on five-ball play you might even want to tack on an additional 25,000 points, depending as always on the level of play at the location.

RATING: ###¾

Lastly, as for the *Sharpshooter* poll, the results are so encouraging, that they might even get me motivated enough to try to design another machine.

For now, it is pleasing to hear comments that are predominantly positive on everything from the features on the playfield to the sound effects and the way they tie-in with the theme (I have to admit I'm partial to the galloping hooves of the spinner)...the million light (which I hope more companies will start to utilize in the future)...and the mechanical reliability (for which I will be eternally grateful and pleased).

One designer in the industry noted that the game is "very fast...like what happens after the drop targets are hit...thumpers on the bottom are good" are really something that has been coming in from many people. Others commented that the spinner lane might be a bit too narrow, there was no knocker for free plays and one even cited a dynamite explosion as a negative, but for the most part, the feedback has been highly positive—which goes to show *Sharpshooter* is a game that just keeps on keeping on.

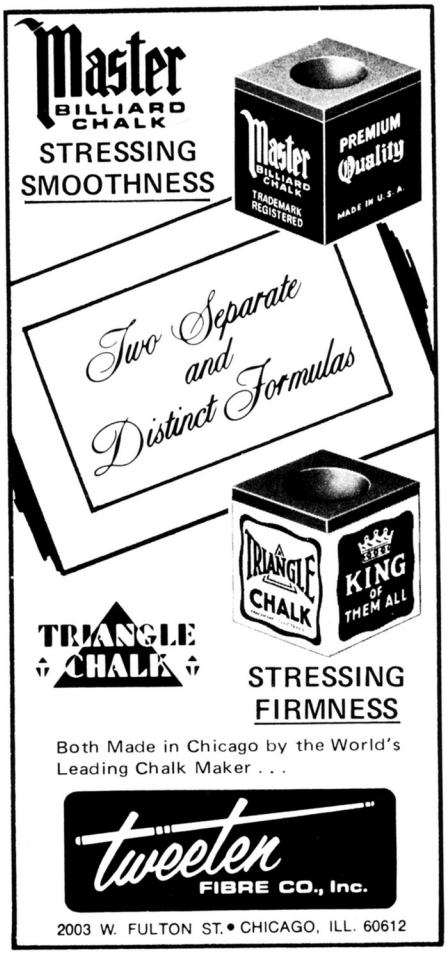
The figures look something like this, although I'm sure more feelings will surface at the show regarding the game:

```
####  =  77
 ###  =  32
  ##  =  16
   #  =   9
```

And one final tally from that same designer—###½

So, that's it for this time around. Next month, look for an AMOA wrap up with some comments on the highlights of the show. A few words about talking machines, celebrity sparkle, and innovative features, as well as what the foreign market holds for the future.

Until then, with a bit of my hometown under my belt, and some news of the upcoming new addition to the Sharpe line in December, I bid you adieu and the usual hope for the Bulls, Black Hawks, and some tears for those Bears...be well and prosper.



NEW PRODUCTS !

Cosmic Wars

Cosmic Wars, a cocktail pinball machine by Coffee-Mat, recently arrived on the electronic game circuit.

The game, which weighs 170 pounds and measures 30¼ by 42 by 30¼ comes with an optional pedestal base (height with the base is 40 inches). The cabinet is all metal.

The solid state circuitry electronics features a micro-computer. Adjustable volume offers six electronic sounds.

The two-player game, with individual L. E. D. score readouts, has a flashing record high score memory. Scoring may go up to one million.

Free game credits, free ball bonus, an ability to convert to add-a-ball, and end of game match scoring also are starbilled features of the game.

Hand truck

A light, strong aluminum hand truck which converts to a rugged, 4-wheel platform truck is now offered by Magline, Inc., manufacturers of light metal handling equipment.

Designed for loading and handling of conventional upright hand truck loads, the unit is also engineered to accommodate large, bulky platform truck cargo with ease.

The truck converts from two-wheel to four-wheel duty by releasing a spring catch, allowing platform frame to slide down and lock in horizotal floor truck position. There are no loose parts, and no tools are needed for changeover.

Frame quickly slides back up and locks in upright two-wheel hand truck position. With stability in both attitudes, vertical and horizontal, the compact truck is also easy to maneuver in either position due to large pneumatic wheels and smooth-rolling swivel casters.

The new *Gemini* trucks are available in two models: 61-inches high, with platform truck capacity of 800 pounds; and 51-inches high, with platform truck capacity of 650 pounds.

A dealer who swears he doesn't cheat

"The *Poker Machine* has been so successful," John L. Walsh, president of Intermark Industries, Inc., reported, "that we are offering three new configurations of the game."

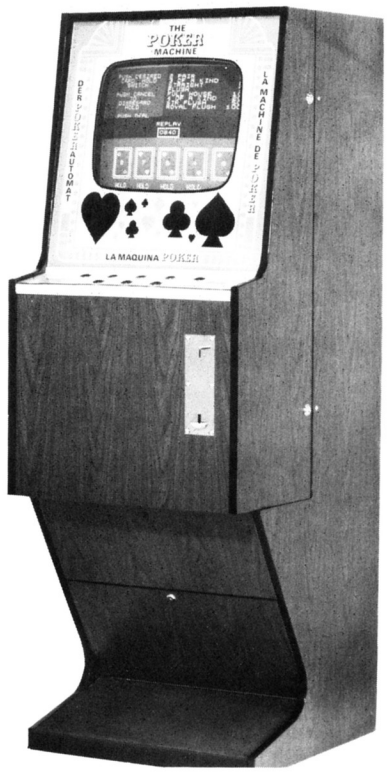
Poker Machine is now available in a new upright, formica, walnut grain cabinet which sports a vertical 19-inch monitor with colorlays, or a new counter-top walnut cabinet for locations with limited available space. A kit for overseas and conversion markets also is available.

"The *Poker Machine* has a microprocessor for a dealer," Walsh said, and "he always plays fair."

Single or multiple coins can be inserted prior to dealing with one to ten credits played per hand. Players stand pat, or discard and draw with a reshuffled deck every deal.

A sound is individually produced for each type of card. An ace has its own sound, the king has a different one. An arrow appears to indicate the winner from the on-screen winning hands chart.

The company will be exhibiting in Booth Number P-12 at the AMOA Show.



Getting stoned

Atari introduces *Asteroids*, an exciting one or two player adventure game with its new Quadrascan video system.

Players compete to destroy the oncoming asteroids and enemy saucers. Waves of asteroids approach from all directions. Accurate response buttons are used to control ship rotation and thrust.

The rapid fire is directed to hit the asteroids, deflecting them in different directions and shattering them into smaller pieces. Enemy saucers appear randomly, shooting as they approach the player's ship, adding danger to the space adventure.

The hyperspace button can be a last-minute escape from unavoidable disaster; however, there is the risk of destruction upon re-entry at an unknown point. *Asteroids*' action provides the excitement and thrills of avoiding danger and destruction with quick reflexes and developed skill.

The score builds with each successful hit shattering rocks into small fragments for high scoring. Large asteroids score 20 points, medium are 50 points, and small ones are 100 points each.

Hitting enemy saucers offers the best scoring potential with 200 points for the large one and 1,000 for the small one. Operators can adjust the game to three or four ships per play and bonus ships for each 10,000 points scored.

High score initial display of the top 10 scorers in the attract mode challenges players to test and develop their skill.

A real time machine

William's new pinball, *Time Warp*, now in production at the company's Chicago factory, features a triple sound option and futuristic curved flippers.

There are two ways to make a special, two ways to advance the bonus multiplier, and two ways to collect the bonus. A five-bank of drop targets steps a player through four time zones, advancing the bonus multiplier in each zone, culminating with an automatic special. Warping the ball into the top eject hole in one of four other time zones also advances the bonus multiplier. Place the eject hole in the fifth dimension from a three-bank of drop targets, and it will award an extra ball.

The multiplier can advance to a record-breaking 10X. Making A-B-C rollovers twice activates a time tunnel bull's-eye target for a special. Ricochet into another eject hole from any three of five jet bumpers or make it automatically as the ball returns from the time tunnel and collect all the bonus that has been built-up.

For technical considerations, *Time Warp* provides William's front-end programming that originated with *Flash*. There is also memory lock that protects all game adjustments when the coin door is closed.

A triple sound option allows selection of futuristic sounds, musical notes, and one of several background sounds including the exciting background from the *Flash* game.

Time Warp, available with an optional dollar coin chute, has the playfield action and graphics to captivate the pinball enthusiast, company officials note.

Putting the 'Shoe Shine Boy' out of business

Coin operated machines are seeing an unusual new peer with the debut of Active Automatic Sales Corporation's new Sutton shoe polisher model 300.

The model 300, which currently requires a 25-cent insertion, soon will be available in a 50-cent model. A fluorescent illuminated display sign lights the top.

A compact unit measuring 38 inches high, 22 inches wide, and 14 inches deep, it weighs 100 pounds and comes in a reshippable carton.

The manufacturer, who notes that the unit is designed for low maintenance, comes with a damage-resistant formica finish. Installation requires a 110 volt wall outlet, and the lock-equipped service door is located in the rear.

The wax polish comes in eleven-ounce containers which should last for approximately 200 shines.

Something to help you count all that money

Mekatronics, Inc., Port Washington, N.Y., has announced the availability of two new NCL Coin Counters. Model *NC-800* is a manual-feed unit with a capacity of 1200 coins, while the *NC-810* has an automatic feed and holds up to 2500 coins. Both models will operate at 1800 coins per minute. Nine presettable stops are built into each unit, enabling lots ranging from ten coins up to be counted in quick succession.

NCL Coin Counters are easy to operate: simply drop the coins into the hopper, set the "coin count" dial to the number of coins to be counted, reset the display to zero and press the "start" switch. Counting automatically stops when the preset number of coins is reached. Both models will count, sort, or count and sort at the same time. Two controls—one for coin thickness, one for coin diameter—allow the units to be programmed for any size coin.

An optional extra-large hopper is available for each unit, increasing the capacity of the *NC-800* to 4000 coins, the capacity of the *NC-810* to 4500 coins. A coin wrapping accessory is also available.

The Second Season

Atari is incorporating the team approach into its new version of Atari *Football*. New offensive and defensive strategies highlight action for two or four players.

The game features new plays including field goal scoring opportunities.

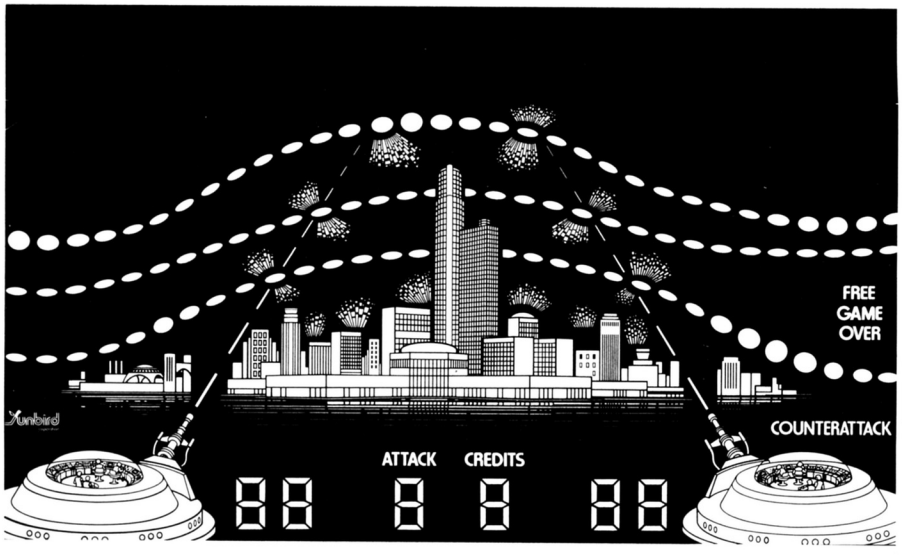
Under the four-player system, the quarterback and end are controllable by offensive players while defenders control both defensive backs. In the two-player version, the computer takes over the wide receiver and one defensive back.

The new game offers an add-a-coin feature, and includes new multiple pass plays, score conversions, kick option, and scrimmage line market, in addition to its most definitive characteristic, team play.

Your everyday nuclear war game

Counterattack is a new one- or two-player game from Sunbird to be unveiled at the AMOA Show in Chicago.

Counterattack's theme is an aerial attack of a twenty-first century megatropolis by flying saucers. The microprocessor randomly launches saucers onto the full-color backlighted scene from either side at various levels and speeds.



The game pits players against player in a true test of ability to hit a moving target with a realistic sounding laser shot. The objective is to blow the target out of the sky as it passes through the player's side of screen. If the player misses, the saucer continues across the sky and into range of the opposing player's laser who has a chance to blow it up.

Because the player has the first shot at a target moving through his hit zone and also those missed by his opponent, the player with the most hits is the winner.

The computer may fly one or as many as three saucers at a time. As the game progresses, the saucers move faster,

Rowe previews 'Tempo'

Rowe International Inc. of Whippany, New Jersey, has four new models of a 200 selection jukebox.

Walter Koch, director of design and communications for the company, advises that his company is the "only one in the country that has a 200 selection box."

Tempo, the model shown here, is one of the four basic models. Two others, the *Tempo Disco* (a disco version), and the *Prelude* (a furniture version), are of the same basic form factor. The *Kentwood*, a console, differs in packaging.

The *Tempo, Prelude*, and *Tempo Disco* measure 53 inches high, 41½ inches wide, and 28¼ inches deep.

The speaker system also has been redesigned, Koch noted, by positioning speakers very high and very low. "It's got a great stereo effect," he said.

Distortion feedback, usually associated with high volumes, is absent, the design executive noted.

The improved central micro-processor controls all function.

But perhaps the most popular feature of the box is the memorec unit, which gives operators a list of the number of plays on any individual selection. It also displays the total dollar intake since last reset.

Chemical cleaners

Kontact Clean and *Kontact Restorer* are two new products from Chemtronics of Hauppauge, New York.

Kontact Clean is a non-residue cleaner for all types of contacts, switches, and controls. It is designed to remove grease, dirt, oil, and oxidation, and to be safe for painted and plated surfaces. It can be applied while equipment is in operation.

Kontact Restorer can also be applied to all types of contacts for electrical and mechanical maintenance, but it differs from *Kontact Clean* in that it leaves a lasting film of lubricant to prevent corrosion.

Chemtronics is referring to its new products as a "one-two punch" to cover all contact cleaning situations.

NEW PRODUCTS !

Busting Loose

Dolly Parton, one of the most easily recognizable and popular entertainers in the world, is the latest personality to grace a pinball machine for the Bally Pinball Division. The game, with Dolly's unforgettable likeness on the backglass features her popular song "Here You Come Again" plays several times throughout game play.

Dolly contains Bally's new front door programming for easy operator bookkeeping. It also has the superstar multi-valued in-line drop targets; four side targets, as well as a top saucer feature that together light the center playfield D-O-L-L-Y P-A-R-T-O-N for points, extra ball, and special. A right center ball exit rollover takes the ball back to the plunger for added play and play appeal.

Bally plans extensive marketing and promotional efforts on the *Dolly Parton* flipper.

Adventure in the sky

"It's 'Phantom-tastic'!" That's the way Stan Jarocki, director of marketing for Midway Manufacturing Company, describes the new *Phantom II* video game just released.

Players can maneuver the Phantom in realistic flight patterns to battle and destroy bandit enemy planes. A press of the trigger fires missiles with authentic sound for on target hits. Adversaries seek cloud cover, and the Phantom turns on radar to reveal their position.

Bonus points are scored for radar screen hits. If the Phantom flyer is hit, he is ejected and parachutes to safety for another chance to fly again.

A unique feature of the *Phantom II* is the posting of three top games on the screen. Not just scores, but players add their own initials for "Legend," "Ace," and "Expert" to invite competition in the single player game.

Extended play and game time is adjustable. The cabinet measures 67 inches high, 27 inches deep and 27 inches wide.

The game features Midway's 23 inch first line monitor, double coin chutes and dependable microprocessor with built-in rom-ram testing.

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"It's an incredible game," said Tom Herrick, Gottlieb marketing vice president, in describing the company's new four-player solid state pinball game, *The Incredible Hulk*. It would be hard to find a more timely or topical theme for a flipper game in the fall of 1979. Marvel's famous comic book character has a steady following of millions of Americans and the television show of the same name has continuously been in the top ten."

The backglass artwork framed in rich magenta features a series of illustrations transforming man to beast. And the new Gottlieb tailored sounds offer the operator the choice of arcade sounds or a musical Bach-like cascade of notes with each playfield contact.

The game's new "spotting" feature in connection with four top rollovers can advance the bonus multiplier two, three, four and five times. Hitting all seven drop targets lights the "c" in the a-b-c feature. When the player combines the a and b ball shooters with knocking down the set of drop targets, it adds a 5,000 point bonus and lights the special. Also, three stationary targets are featured. Hit all three and the extra ball rollover is lighted.

Catching a few rays

Sundance, a one- or two-player video game from Cinematronics, Inc., recently made its debut.

Players open "space hatches" which catch bouncing suns upon the screen. Player options include the use of two, three, or four suns, and the expert players can not only fire a nova out of the hatches, thus destroying the suns, but he can also remove the optional grids for increased competition and excitement.

All options can be manipulated by the player during play, thus increasing the action as well as operator collections.

Cinematronics' *Sundance* introduces a new feature of the Vector-beam monitor. Sixteen different levels of line intensity have been introduced into the system. A 23 inche monitor also is featured.

Sundance includes six sounds to mystify the players and attract even more action. Explosions, whooshes, vacuum operated hatches, pings, and bongs surround the player or players.

Flippin with the cager clowns

Bally Manufacturing Corporation's pinball division recently released its new four-player flipper, *The Harlem Globetrotters*.

The game contains front-door programming and four adjustable "free throw" in-line drop targets that multiply the bonus 2X, 3X, and 5X and score points. A "Top Basket Globe Saucer Feature" with memory and recall spots the center playfield G-L-O-B-E for points and specials.

Harlem Globetrotters features a popular free ball gate and an extra flipper for ball control over the several skill shots on this game as well as three spinners, one whose value advances in conjunction with the in-line drop targets and two center spinners for points and adjustable additional bonus value.

Harlem Globetrotters is a colorful game featuring several of the Globetrotters players on the backglass.

For card players without a deck

Computer Kinetics Corporation has started production of its newest coin-operated, counter top amusement game, *Draw 5*.

Draw 5 is a five-card draw poker game for one or two players. The game has five discard buttons to give players the option of discarding any or all cards dealt, with a high game feature that allows the machine to be promoted on location. A cancel button to recover discarded cards, and a score button to display scores of all players in the game is also featured. After each game is over, the player's final score can be recalled.

The new game comes in a bright red and black cabinet that is 17 inches wide by 17 inches deep by 9½ inches high. It has a built-in security fastener allowing the machine to be easily secured by a lock and chain on location.

Some other features are the following: A shock sensitive tilt mechanism, designed to take any player abusing the machine out of play, a modular service concept, re-keyable vault door and an optional coin counter.

Export models are available that operate on various voltages and coins of the world. Multi-metered machines are available for export only.

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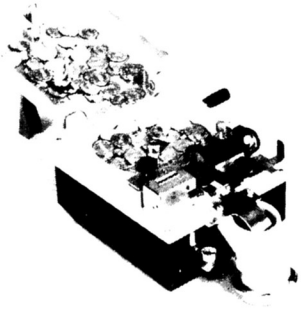

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News Briefs

......"Excellent, informative, really good material," is what Zac Oliver, technical editor of PLAY METER magazine has to say about volume two of Pinball Electronics for Pinball Mechanics. Robert Hornick, the author of the book who hails from Toronto, Canada, is associated with the firm of Laserscope. Don't miss Zac's review of the pinball mechanic's "Bible" in next month's PLAY METER.....

.....Lawsuits were filed in Seattle, Washington, against two different jukebox owners for not having the "compulsory license" required by law to perform copyrighted material. Defendants in one suit are Nelson and Michael Distributing Company, and Canteen Corporation in the other. Canteen's suit asks that the company be fined $250 for each of five songs. Seven songs allegedly were played without permission by the Nelson and Michael Distributing Company. The fine sought in that case is $1,750.....

.....Games Unlimited and the Bravo Chapter of the City of Hope recently sponsored Mandi Martin's 500 hour pledge for pinball which benefitted the City of Hope pediatric research. The event, which was held on October 18 from 5 until 10 p.m., was called "fun, (a) feat of human endeavor."....

.....C.A. Robinson's West Coast Expo is slated for November 30 in Los Angeles, California, at 2891 West Pico Boulevard (the Robinson annex). "Sandy" Bettelman, comptroller of C.A. Robinson, reported that the show is the seventh in a row. "A lot of perators from western states come in because not too many want to fly all the way out to Chicago for the AMOA show," he said. More than 700 operators are slated to attend the show. The manufacturer's dinner, set for November 29, was held at Jimmy's in Beverly Hills last year. The site for this year is still undetermined. Call Sandy or Al Bettelman at 213-380-1160 for more information.....

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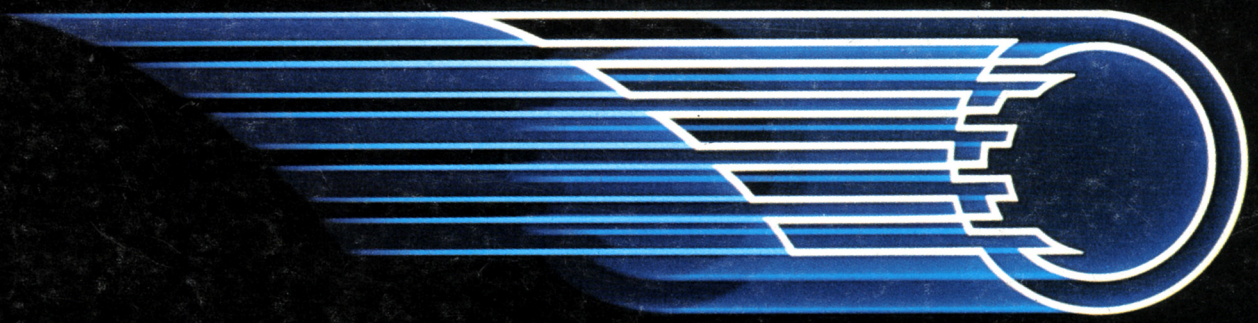

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