

ELECTRONIC GAMES

VIDEO GAMES • COMPUTER GAMES • MULTIMEDIA GAMES • PORTABLE GAMES • ARCADES

MORTAL KOMBAT

WE'VE GOT THE INSIDE STORY!



ATARI'S 64-BIT JAGUAR

YOU'VE HEARD RUMORS NOW READ THE FACTS!

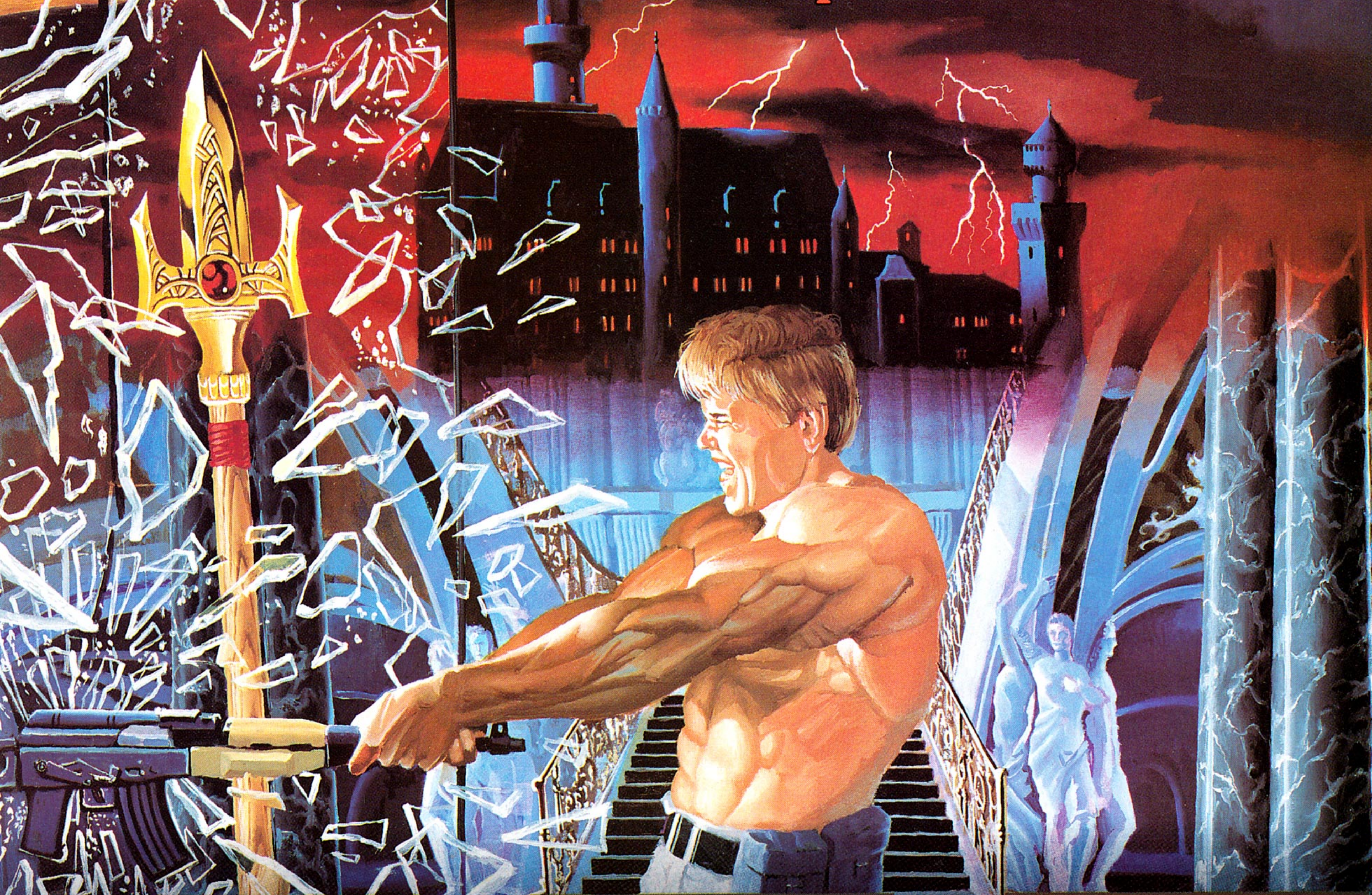
**PLAYERS' GUIDE TO FALL/WINTER GAMING
EG PREVIEWS THE HOTTEST VIDEO AND COMPUTER GAMES!**

\$3.95/\$4.95 Canada/£2.25
September, 1993



Spear of Destiny

A Wolfenstein 3D Graphic Adventure



Virtual Reality!

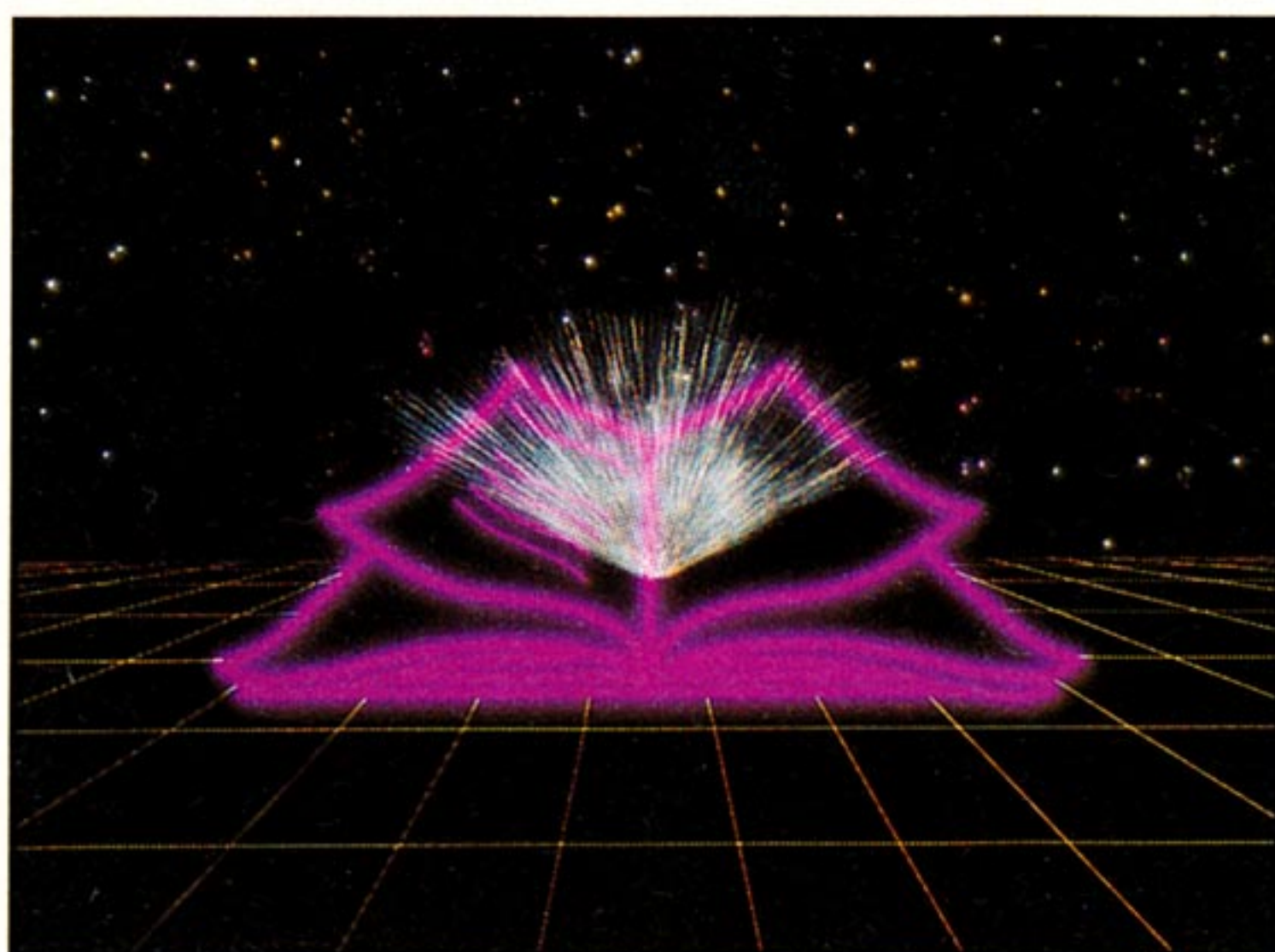
Spear of Destiny brings virtual reality to the PC, hurling you into an intense battle between good and evil in which only *you* can save the world! A breathtaking musical soundtrack sets the mood, while amazing "first person" visual perspective and spectacular digital stereo sound effects give an experience like no other game you've ever played!

Features!

- ✘ spectacular VGA virtual reality system
- ✘ breathtaking musical soundtrack for Adlib, Sound Blaster
- ✘ digitized stereo sound effects for Sound Blaster, Sound Source
- ✘ over 20 complete floors to cover
- ✘ 4 levels of play difficulty
- ✘ special extra challenges for advanced game players
- ✘ saves multiple games in process

What the Reviewers Say!

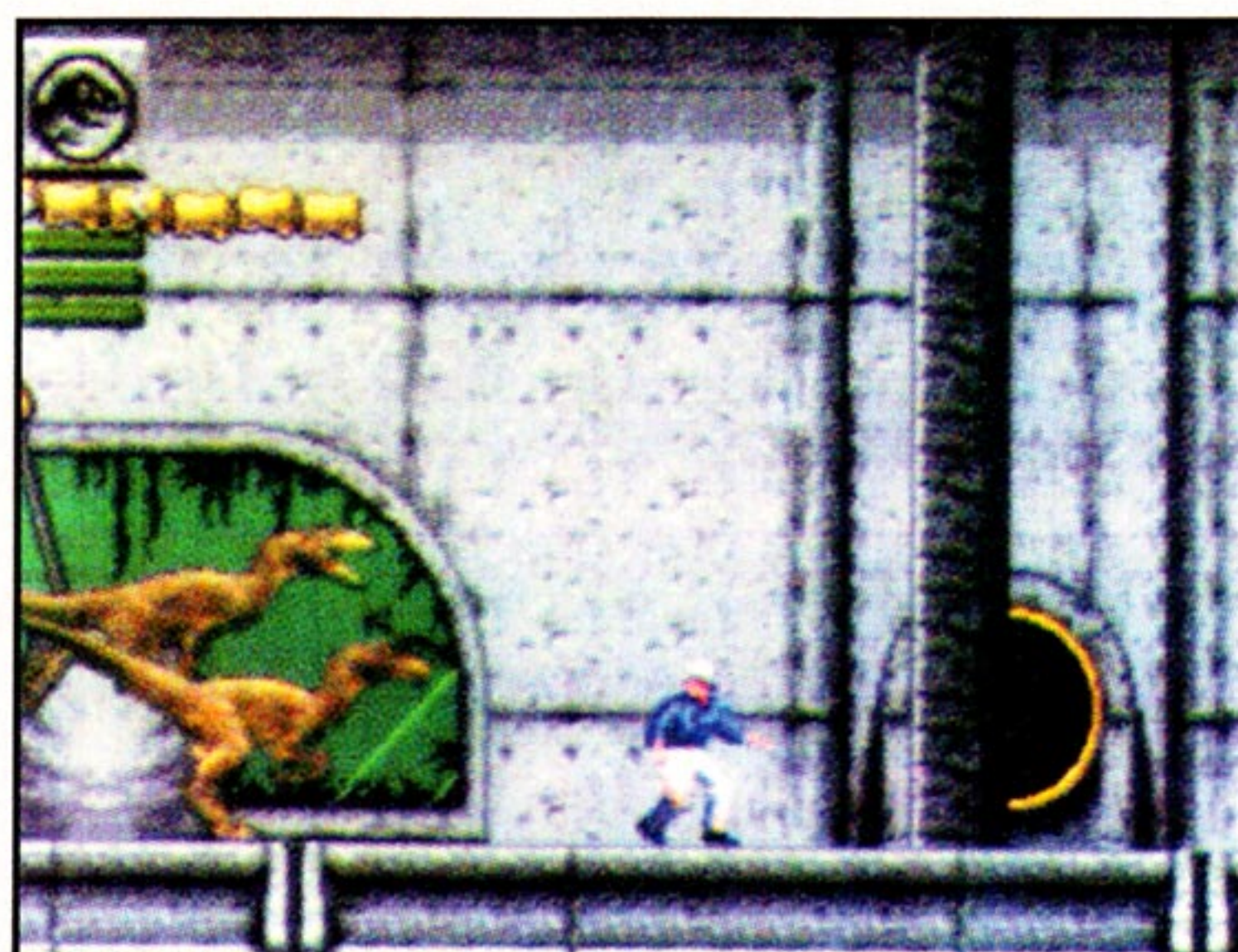
- ✘ "the player is 'there' like no game I've ever played..."
- ✘ "the sound and the visual action, is frighteningly realistic..."
- ✘ "I can't remember a game making such effective use of perspective and sound and thereby evoking such intense physiological responses from its players."



INSIDE EG

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About the art— We at EG would like to thank the following artists for their contributions to this issue:

Special thanks to Jeff Mangiat for the incredible Mortal Kombat cover — Also to Acclaim and Midway who hold the rights to all of these characters.

Cliff Spohn — EG Interview

Bill Vahn — Jaguar Feature

And now for this month's special announcement — Next month is our first anniversary issue, and all of us here at EG are so excited to still have jobs that we have decided to offer — to ten readers only — autographed copies of EG vol.2 no.1, the first anniversary issue. All you have to do is send in a card saying why EG is the best game magazine out there. Go ahead, lie a little, our good friends at EGM won't care. Send entries to EG is Best; c/o Marc; 1920 Highland Ave. #222; Lombard, IL 60148. The #1 prize winner will get a set of the first 13 issues of EG, All Signed! (Write in and pretend you care.) (All standard rules apply, void where prohibited by law or other natural forces.) And by the way, we have donated the hyphen from our cover to charity.



OK!



Who Left The Door Open?

"Brain Bustin', Thumb Crampin' Excitement!"
Electronic Gaming Monthly



**"The thinking man's action/
platform game"** DIE HARD GAMEFAN

**"Troddlers joins Lemmings
at the top"** *GamePlayers*

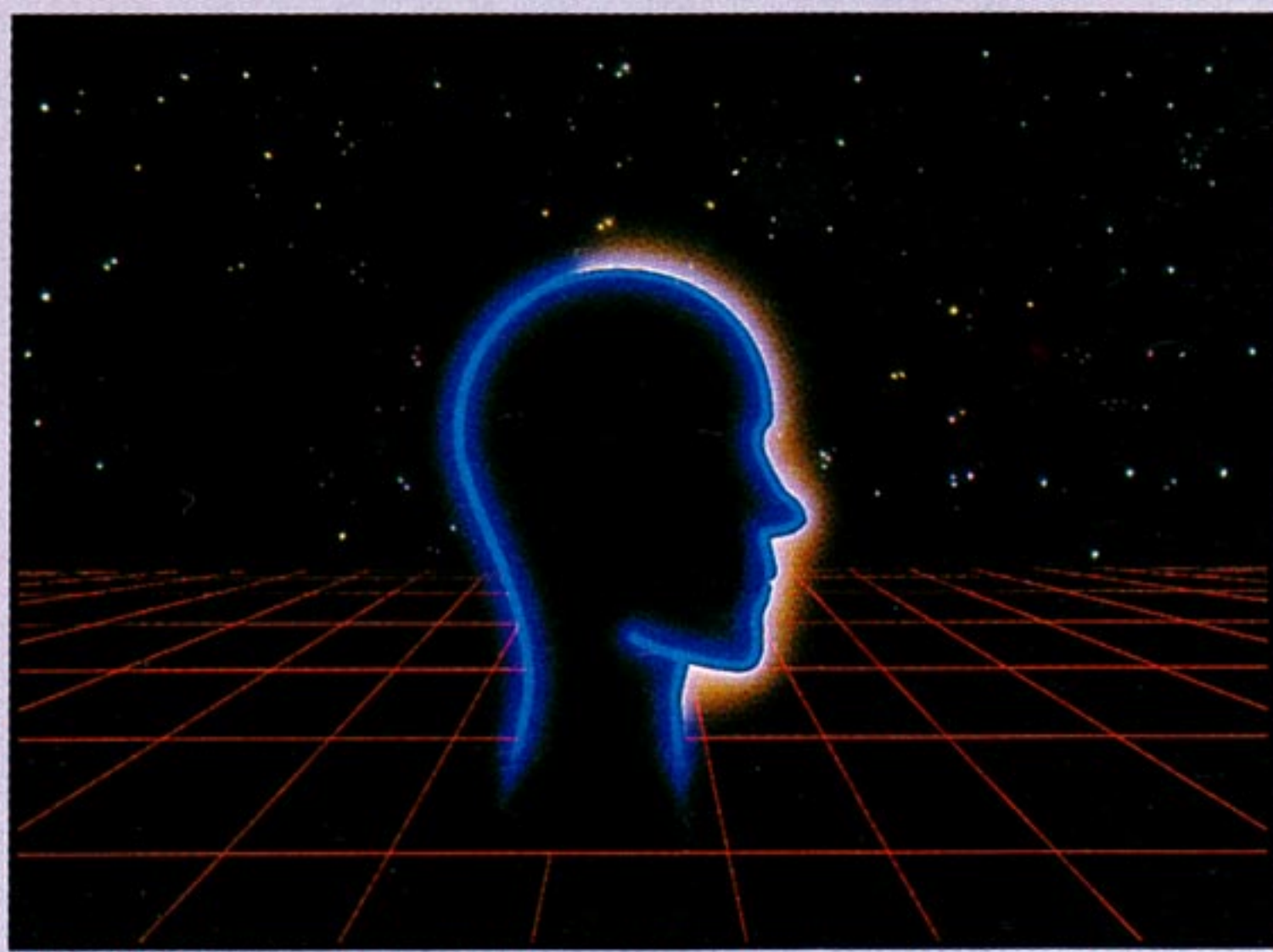
They're Tricky! They're Trouble! They're Troddlers. Hokus and Pokus are two lazy sorcerer's apprentices. The great magician Divinius barks a simple order: "Clean out the cellar!" But NOOOOO!, they do the stupidest thing they could possibly do, they open a box labeled...



"Hey, maybe these Troddler dudes will help us do the work," they thought. Wrong! They Bail! Right through the teleporter door - hundreds of 'em! Divinius will park their butts in a sling if they're not back pronto! 175 levels of fast, funny, frazzling excitement! Round up those Troddler dudes before they get ZOMBIFIED. You'll work like a dog, but you'll love every minute of it!

WARNING!
Instant Magical Troddlers
May Zombify If Allowed To Teleport





POWER ON!

Kid Stuff, Sez Who?

I'm an easy-going guy, all things considered. If you don't believe me, just ask the people I've bullied into supporting this claim.

Not that I don't have some "artistic temperament." That's a polite way of saying that sometimes I see red and start shouting. It takes a lot to get me hot under the collar, but some issues push my buttons—and I detonate.

One thing that never fails to rile me is when someone says that electronic games are just for kids, and just male kids at that! This notion is accepted implicitly by an alarming percentage of publishers.

The idea that only young boys play electronic games is so ingrained in many minds that its truth is seldom debated. Instead, they speak of knowing "what the kids want" or "getting to the kids" without reflecting on the validity of the underlying assumption.

Call me a maverick, but I strongly disagree with this alleged piece of wisdom. It's a gross, and insulting, over-simplification that's hurting the whole hobby.

No one could deny that young males, ages 12-16, love interactive electronic entertainment. They represent the largest segment of the hard-core gaming market. It is hard to conceive of electronic gaming reaching anything like its current high popularity without their enthusiasm and support. The same is true of players in the 8-12 bracket. It was the teen and pre-teen gamers who lifted the hobby out of the mid-1980's doldrums and triggered the Silver Age of Video Gaming. Make no mistake, it was kids who wouldn't accept that carts were dead forever, who put the NES and SMS into about 30 million U.S. homes. School-age boys are the backbone of the circulation of every electronic gaming magazine, definitely including this one. **EG** would never turn its back on these loyal and knowledgeable gamers.

But the question is not whether males under 16 play electronic games, but whether anyone else does. There's a lot of data, both anecdotal and statistical, that indicates that gaming has a much broader demographic base.

One obvious piece of evidence is that the average **EG** reader is in the early 20s. That includes a lot of teenagers, but also many out of school and on their own.

I spent a lot of time people-watching on the last day of the Summer Consumer Electronics Show. Over 50,000 converged on the North Hall, where the games were. The majority fit the young male image, but plenty of adults challenged the hundreds of demonstration games, too. Another flash for the gaming biz: They weren't all guys.

Gamers who don't fit the stereotype must make their voices heard. That's the only way publishers will know you're there. These Lost Gamers are overlooked because they don't fill out software registration cards or consumer surveys as avidly as the 12-16-year-olds.

Publishers don't want to ignore any gamers. They have to base their strategies on the information they can compile. Many adults ask, Why bother? Because publishers structure their product lines based on such input. If you don't "vote," your preferences don't get counted.

I've brought this up for a reason. I want you to start making yourselves heard right now, this very month. I'd appreciate it if every reader would make a special effort to participate in the survey at the back of this issue of **Electronic Games**.

Filling out the single sheet should take about five minutes and cost you a stamp. In return for this investment, I promise that you will be heard. The editors will personally tabulate every survey, and the information will play a crucial role in developing future plans for this magazine. I'd like to get an accurate picture of our audience and its needs. Please help.

— Arnie Katz

ELECTRONIC GAMES

SEPTEMBER, 1993

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 12

A DECKER PUBLICATIONS, INC. PERIODICAL

PUBLISHER

Steve Harris

EDITOR

Arnie Katz

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Bill Kunkel

NEWS EDITOR

Joyce Worley

SENIOR EDITOR

Marc Camron

MANAGING EDITOR

Ross Chamberlain

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Russ Ceccola, Ed Dille, Tim Ostermiller

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Jay Carter, Al Giovetti, John Hardin,
Steve Honeywell, Alex Rees, Scott Wolf,
Laurie Yates, Rick Zalud

ART DIRECTOR

Juli McMeekin

PRODUCTION

Colleen Bastien, Production Manager
Mary Hatch, Jennifer Whitesides, Copy Editors
John Stockhausen, Ad Coordinator

CUSTOMER SERVICE

(515) 280-3861

ADVERTISING

Eisenberg Communications Group

Los Angeles, CA 90024

(310) 824-5297

Jeffrey Eisenberg, National Advertising Director

Brandon Harris, Advertising Manager

Heh-Kyu Lee, Account Executive

Suzanne Farrell, Ad Coordination Manager

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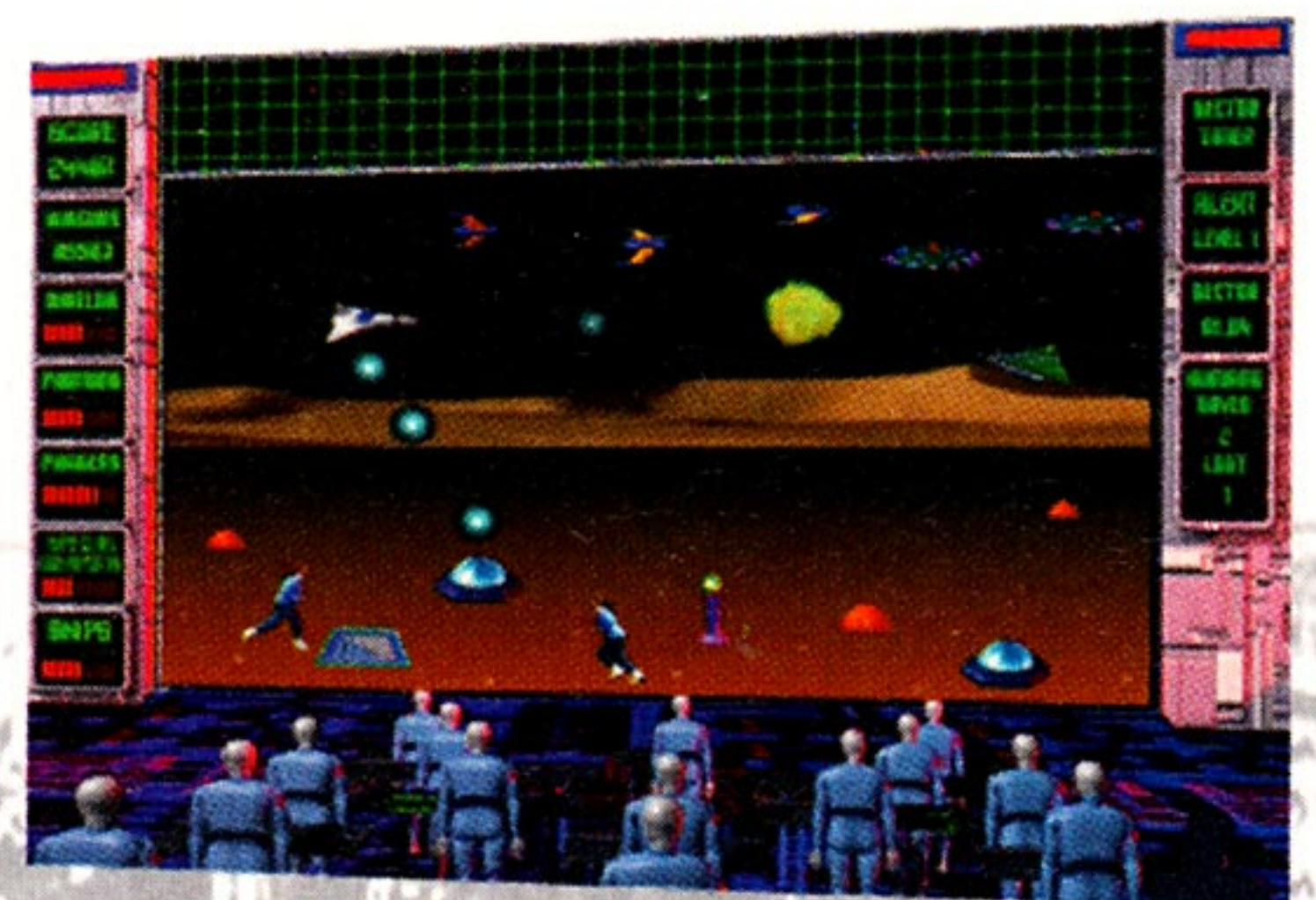
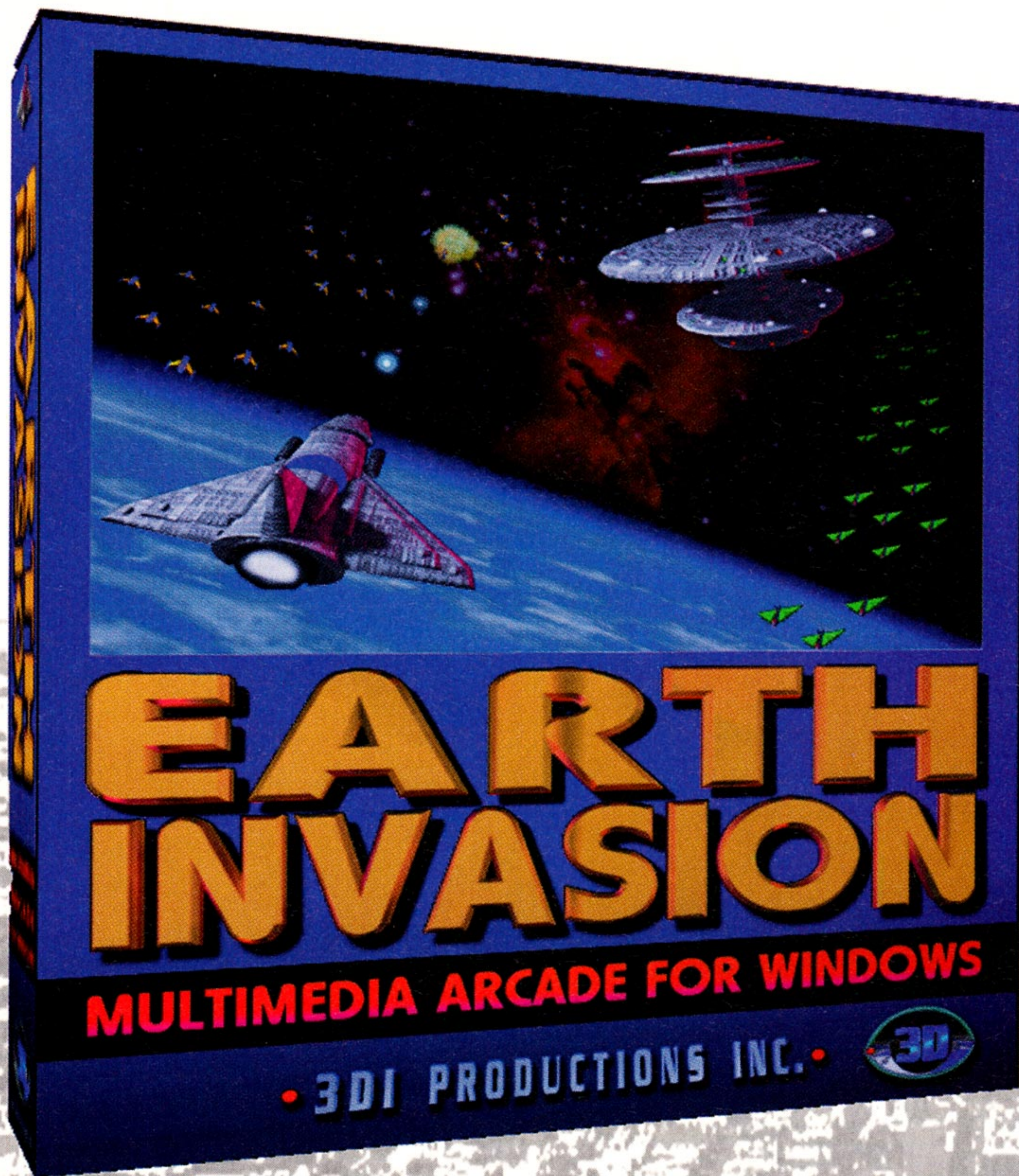
WARNER PUBLISHING SERVICES, INC.

BPA Consumer Publication Membership Applied for January 1993

Electronic Games (ISSN #1063-8326) is published monthly by Decker Publications, Inc. 1920 Highland Ave., Suite 222, Lombard, IL 60148. Application to mail at second class postage rates pending at Lombard, IL and additional mailing offices. Subscription rates for U.S.: \$23.95, Canada and Mexico: \$33.95, and all others by air mail only: \$80.00. Single issue rates: \$3.95. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Electronic Games, P.O. Box 7311, Red Oak, IA 51591-2311. For subscription changes, change of address, or correspondence concerning subscriptions call 800-444-3334. The editors and the publisher are not responsible for unsolicited materials. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the expressed written permission of Decker Publications, Inc. Copyright © 1993, Decker Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. All materials listed in this magazine are subject to manufacturers change and the publisher assumes no responsibility for such changes.

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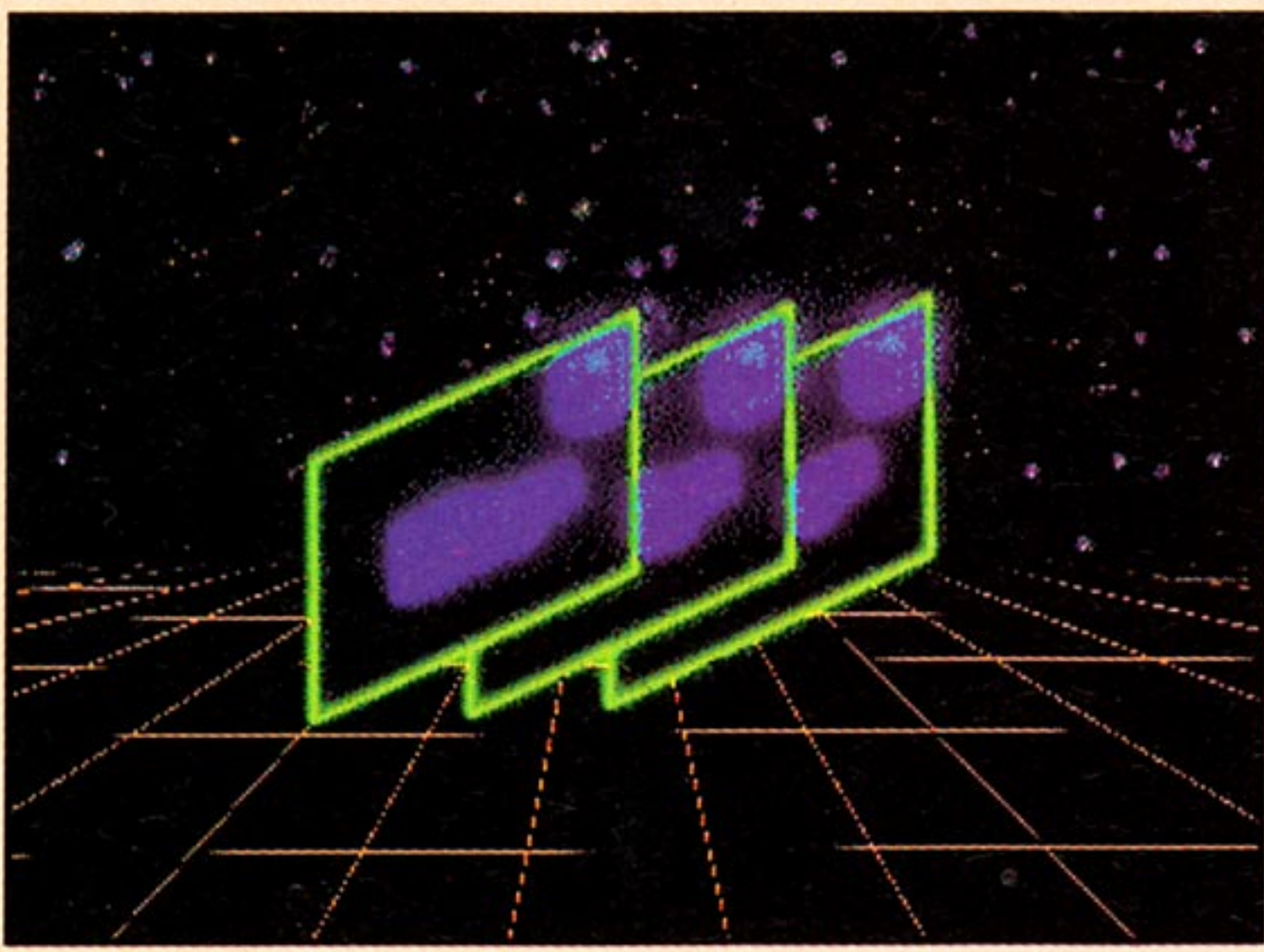
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FEEDBACK

Letters From Our Readers

Not For Adults Only

With Sega's late May announcement of a video game rating system similar to the movies, many thoughts have come to me, more of them worries than not.

It's clear that the primary motive for this move is to clear the path for a relatively controversy-free release of **Mortal Kombat**, which is sure to top this year's PAVV (Parents Against Videogame Violence) hit list.

On the positive side, this will hopefully serve as an easy-to-use guideline for purchasers of all ages, especially if they include a second code listing the motives for the rating: V-violence, L-language, etc... But on the negative I am very aware of the fact that video games, like television and movies, feel much safer dealing with the most senseless of violence, death and destruction than with even thoughtful displays of other adult themes, most easily seen in displays of sex and nudity.

Games like **Stormlord** and the **Dragon Knight** series come to this country every month with all of the violence intact but minus any sexual content. Other games with offbeat subject matter (like **3x3 Eyes**) have a difficult time finding distributors in this country because a vocal minority of the population may object to its premise.

I hope that Sega and its licensees take example from other industries such as comics, trading cards and music, who have risen above an image which forced them to produce for an audience where twelve is considered mid-life. Through proper marketing, distribution and labeling, they have been able to appeal to clearly defined audiences without offending or misleading others.

If these ratings are to mean anything at all, they *must* be used to expand the realm of subjects available in the market, not just to lend legitimacy to more mindless violence.

Michael Powell
Columbus, OH

So long as video games are perceived as primarily children's fare, Michael, there is little hope for level-headed thinking about ratings and content. When animated film makers, like Ralph Bakshi, tried to do adult features, Mr. & Mrs. J. Q. Public nevertheless took their kids, because that's what animated films are for, right? Then they were self-righteously outraged when cartoon characters started doing things on the screen that were inappropriate to Saturday morning TV. Violence? Naw, cartoons have always been violent. But sex? Egad! Filthy!

Nor is it just the would-be censors and behavioral bigots that equate "adult" with "dirty." Too many mercenary producers (not just of films, but of other entertainment products as well) make a point of squeezing everything into the ratings windows that they think they can get away with. And, sadly, to them love is just another four-letter word.

Good Bye, Camerica

I am writing to complain about the conservative executives at big companies who cut down a good new idea that might actually compete with them. I am referring to Camerica, who made the Game Genie and the Aladdin system. Both of these products were incredible, and the latter would have changed gaming forever. But no! Those large companies put so much pressure on them and made their work so difficult that now, since Camerica just filed a bankruptcy, these products, along with who knows how many future ideas, will die. These occurrences remind me of when Laker Airlines, who, in the 1970s and 1980s, had a new, innovative way to cut the costs of air travel, were forced out of business by the bigger airlines. What a sorry state of affairs this is!

Tobias Nanda
Boston, MA

Did you see the movie, Tucker? The state of affairs has been sorry for a lot of ideas and not only the people investing in them but those who support them,

who run up against the facts of life in a cold, cruel business world. We too will miss Camerica and its products. But be careful not to oversimplify the factors involved. Our entire industry is in a state of economic flux; and no one organization, no matter how influential, goes out of its way to crush the little guy.

CD or Not to CD

I have a PC clone and a Super Nintendo and lots of games for both. But now you and other game magazines keep writing about the new CD games, and some of them sound spectacular, but it doesn't seem like there's really that many out there, yet, and all the CD game machines cost a bunch.

It looks to me like CDs are just for the rich or really dedicated game players. Is it really worth the investment yet to get a CD-ROM system, and if so, which one? Should I go for a Sega or a Duo, or for a CD-ROM drive for my PC?

Fred Patton
Savannah, GA

Remember when music CDs took over from LPs, Fred? It took some of us a little while to get around to picking up a deck or player, and we know some folks who still haven't, but we wouldn't be without ours now. So, in a broad answer to your question, the answer is yes, it's time to invest in multimedia.

*But as to which one, that is going to require some investment of your own time to see which one best fits your needs. Are the games you want to play only available for the Sega or the Duo, or is your interest more toward something like **The 7th Guest** or **Sherlock Holmes**? Do you want to expand your PC's capabilities with applications or encyclopedias or are you only interested in games? And don't forget to look into the new black box systems like 3DO!*

Send your cards and letters to:

Feedback, c/o Electronic Games
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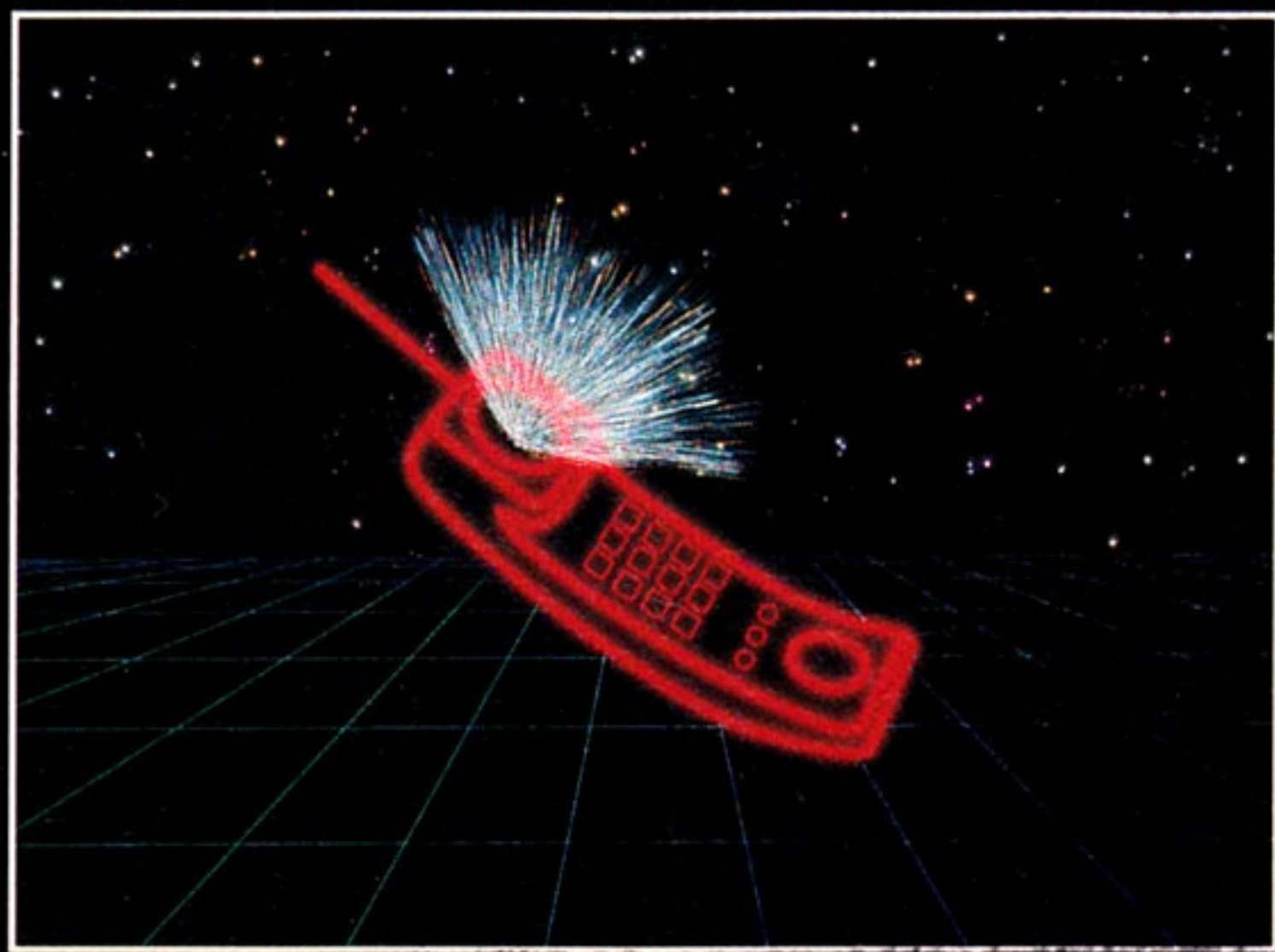
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EG HOTLINE

Compiled by Joyce Worley & Ross Chamberlain

Bubsy Bounces To TV

Bubsy Bobcat will star in his own half-hour animated special, titled *What Could Possibly Go Wrong?*, on Thanksgiving Day weekend. The show is part of Bohbot Entertainment's syndicated Kid's Day Off block of children's holiday programming. The special will be co-produced by John A. S. Skeel, Accolade's executive producer; Tom Burton, president of Calico Entertainment, the animation production company, and Stanford Blum, producer/director and president of Imagination Factory, Inc.

Accolade signed Imagination Factory as exclusive merchandising and licensing agent for Bubsy Bobcat. "Bubsy Bobcat is the best character I have seen in years," said Blum, who assumes Bubsy will "be the next decade's 'toon' star. I pursued the rights to make Bubsy the next major star in the market place." Initial product licenses are under negotiation.

Accolade Signs Sir Charles

Basketball's in-your-face personality and NBA's MVP for '93, Charles Barkley, signed an exclusive licensing agreement



by which he will co-design and endorse Accolade's basketball simulations line. The first game is scheduled for release on SNES, Genesis and MS-DOS computers early in 1994.

Danny Pisano, the game's producer, said, "We are looking forward to integrating his fast-breaking, intimidating, whatever-it-takes-to-win playing style into the game."

Kaneco Licenses Three Cats

Kaneco USA signed three popular cats, two of them feline, for SNES and Genesis games. Chester Cheetah, the Frito-Lay spokescat for Cheetos, travels the country in **Wild Wild Quest**, and Socks the Cat, in his debut, roams the Presidential mansion in **Socks Rocks the House**.

The other 'cat' is that cool, wild-haired guy that shows up on Saturday morning CBS television between the cartoons. His name (and that of the game) is Fido Dido, an interna-

tional celebrity and spokesman for 7-Up products in Europe and Canada.

CD-I Upgrades To FMV

Philips has an upgrade cartridge for the CD-I that makes it possible to play full motion video, using footage from movies, music videos or video games. The processor can display up to 30 frames/second.

It plugs into the CD-I, and



Full motion video is now ready for Philips CD-I systems.

can produce up to 72 minutes of video and stereo sound from one disk.

SEGA Plans Toys

Rumors say Sega is considering a new enterprise; the company is poised to start a new division devoted to toys.

Planned to be separate from the game division, the new group will design, manufacture and distribute small electronic toys.

Sega Unveils Plans

In an exclusive **EG** interview, Sega's Al Nielsen promised outstanding new software to fulfill the potential of the Sega CD. He explained the philosophy of the company about the new media: "CD has to deliver the same great, hot game play you've come to expect on the Genesis, but taken to a new level." According

to Al, there will be 55 new games for the Sega CD by Christmas of this year.

Al also revealed some Sega statistics. Over a million Sega CD units have already been sold, 6 1/2 million Genesis machines, and 1 1/2 million Game Gears.

The price of the Sega CD has been reduced to \$249, and the Genesis and CD have been restyled to sit side by side (although this is just a cosmetic change, and they are completely compatible with the old machines.)

Sega also announced development of a new chip, to be used first in the home version of **Virtua Racing**. The chip enhances speed, and will be made available for use by third-party game developers.

Tandy Realigns PC Business

John V. Roach, CEO of Tandy Corporation, issued a statement indicating that Tandy has no intention of leaving the computer business. "Tandy's intent to sell its PC manufacturing business has no effect on our commitment to providing quality products at competitive prices, and our customers can rest assured we will continue to provide them with the service and support they expect and deserve."



Tandy will expand its line of products to include a VHS.

His statement followed a recent announcement that Tandy will sell its computer manufacturing operations to AST Research Inc. The company chairman went on to explain, "There has been some confusion in media reports that Tandy was exiting the PC business but this is not the case, and we expect to continue to be a leading retailer of personal computers."

Proposed Shows Challenge CES

Now that multimedia is moving into prominence, everyone wants to get involved. Two new expositions are currently in the planning stage.

The New Media Expo, April 12-14, 1994 at the Los Angeles Convention Center, is by veteran show-runners The Interface Group, (Comdex shows are their best-known events). The new conference/expo promises to bring together "the complete range of technologies, products and services

under the digital umbrella." The trade show will feature exhibits, one-day market perspective tutorials, and what they describe as "a kaleidoscope of hardware platforms, communications gear, consumer electronics and infotainment software."

The Show Group, Inc., a new organization, is launching a show for the trade devoted to computers, communications, consumer electronics and entertainment, at the Georgia World Congress, April 8-10, in Atlanta. The Interactive Multimedia Entertainment Show (TIMES) promises "the only show where it's all coming together for the interactive industry."

Frame That Game!

Games may differ, but they always show up in the same box—the monitor or TV console on which they're played. Screenies change that, by framing a 13-to-15" screen from a selection of over 50 designs. These range from licensed patterns such as Ren & Stimpy and Ohio Art's Etch-A Sketch to animal skin patterns, space station interiors, pretty flowers and even the image of an old TV set!



Replaceable according to mood, Screenies are printed on sturdy art board with a protective coat of varnish, and attach with included Velcro fasteners. The First Edition Collection retails for \$11.95. Versions for other size screens (like 9" Macs and 16"-17" monitors) are in the works. Why look at a boring, dirty-white framed monitor when you can deck it out like this?

No Consumers At SCES '94

It was nice while it lasted, but it's over. The Summer Consumer Electronics Show in 1994 will not be open to the public, ending the two-year experiment in consumer attendance. In addition, the Chicago show, which previously lasted four days, will be cut to three days in 1994, from Thursday through Saturday, June 23-25.

Gary Shapiro explained that the consumer day was cut at exhibitor request. "We understand that many exhibitors and consumers will be disappointed... but our first priority is to serve the needs of our trade customers."

Texas Teen Wins StarFox Prize

Trevor Petersma of Garland, Texas, won the grand prize in the Super StarFox Weekend Competition. His name was pulled from more than 1,500 finalists in a random drawing at the Summer CES in Chicago. These were the top scorers out of over 200,000 competitors who played a specially designed **StarFox** competition cart at Nintendo outlets nationwide in May.

Given a choice of \$15,000 or an all-expense paid trip for four to Tokyo, London, Paris or Sydney, 15-year-old Petersma took the cash. His sister Tanisha, 12, won a StarFox T-shirt for achieving a preset score level.

Spectrum HoloByte, MicroProse Merge

In a landmark agreement, Spectrum HoloByte and MicroProse have agreed to merge. The two

companies have been working on a \$10 million financing, which will result in a transfer of stock between the two companies. Upon completion, stockholders of Spectrum will control approximately 60% of the outstanding common stock of MicroProse. Wild Bill Stealey, MicroProse co-founder and principal stockholder, has resigned as president and CEO.

The merger will take several months to complete. At this point there are no plans to change the MicroProse operation or move it from its Maryland headquarters.

MPEG Becomes Data Standard

A group of consumer electronics manufacturers agreed to support the MPEG 1 standard for compression of video and audio data, as well as the Karaoke CD format. This means that programs using these standards will be able to be played interchangeably on numerous platforms.

Companies adopting the format are Commodore, C-Cube, E-Motions, Goldstar, Paramount, Philips and Samsung.

Acclaim Signs Movie Deal

Acclaim is going to the source for a series of titles. They signed a licensing deal with motion picture director James Cameron (*Terminator*, *Aliens*, *Abyss*) for all software rights to the movies Cameron will make under his current contracts.

The first game project will be based on Cameron's 1994 summer movie, *True Lies*, which will star Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Play the Game, Read the Book

Legend Entertainment's **Companions of Xanth** will be packaged with the novel it's based on, *Demons Don't Dream*. Due for release in October, this is the only way the paperback edition of Piers Anthony's 16th title in the Xanth series will be available



until Tor Books gets it out to book stores in 1994. The hardcover version was shipped earlier this year.

Companions is a graphic adventure in the magical land

of Xanth, with rotoscoped animation and a new, "smart" interface that includes tutorial help and an undo-last-move feature.

FlightLink Games Go International

Gamers lucky enough to be flying to Europe on FlightLink-equipped planes next year can keep on playing, thanks to a substantial investment in In-Flight Phone Europe (IFPE) by Mercury Communications of London. The first European ground stations are expected to be activated by the end of this year. Full services may not be complete until 1995, since overseas ground-link specifications and standards differ, requiring dual-compatible systems.

IFPE is a joint venture of Irelandia Corp. of Dublin, Ireland, and Illinois-based In-Flight Phone International, which cre-

ated FlightLink, the digital air-to-ground communications network that offers games, phone lines and other services.

Top Video Games

As of June 15, 1993

The following figures are provided courtesy of Babbages.

Super NES

1. *StarFox*, Nintendo
2. *Bubsy*, Accolade
3. *WWF Royal Rumble*, LJN
4. *Street Fighter II*, Capcom
5. *Batman Returns*, Konami
6. *Vegas Stakes*, Nintendo
7. *The Lost Vikings*, Interplay
8. *Tecmo NBA Basketball*, Tecmo
9. *Shadowrun*, Data East
10. *Fatal Fury*, Takara

Sega Genesis

1. *X-Men*, Sega
2. *Bulls vs. Blazers*, Electronic Arts
3. *Cool Spot*, Sega
4. *RBI Baseball '93*, Tengen
5. *HardBall III*, Accolade
6. *PGA Tour Golf II*, Electronic Arts

7. *Tony LaRussa Baseball*, Electronic Arts
8. *Flashback*, US Gold
9. *Fatal Fury*, Takara
10. *Road Rash II*, EA

Game Boy

1. *Super Mario Land 2*, Nintendo
2. *Kirby's Dream Land*, Nintendo
3. *Super Mario Land*, Nintendo
4. *Yoshi's Cookie*, Nintendo
5. *NBA All Star Challenge 2*, LJN
6. *Tetris*, Nintendo
7. *Baseball*, Nintendo
8. *Wordtris*, Nintendo
9. *Racing Set*, Nintendo
10. *Tiny Toon Adventures*, Konami

NES

1. *Kirby's Adventure*, Nintendo
2. *Tecmo NBA Basketball*, Tecmo
3. *Dragon Warrior IV*, Enix
4. *Yoshi's Cookie*, Nintendo
5. *Bases Loaded 4*, Jaleco
6. *Tetris*, Nintendo
7. *Tiny Toon Adventures 2*, Konami
8. *TMNT The Manhattan Project*, Konami
9. *Ducktales 2*, Capcom
10. *Dr. Mario*, Nintendo

Sega Game Gear

1. *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*, Sega
2. *Land of Illusion*, Sega
3. *Taz-Mania*, Sega
4. *Outrun Europa*, US Gold
5. *Streets of Rage*, Sega
6. *Super Off Road*, Sega
7. *Prince of Persia*, Tengen
8. *Defenders of the Oasis*, Sega
9. *Vampire, Master of Darkness*, Sega
10. *Batman Returns*, Sega

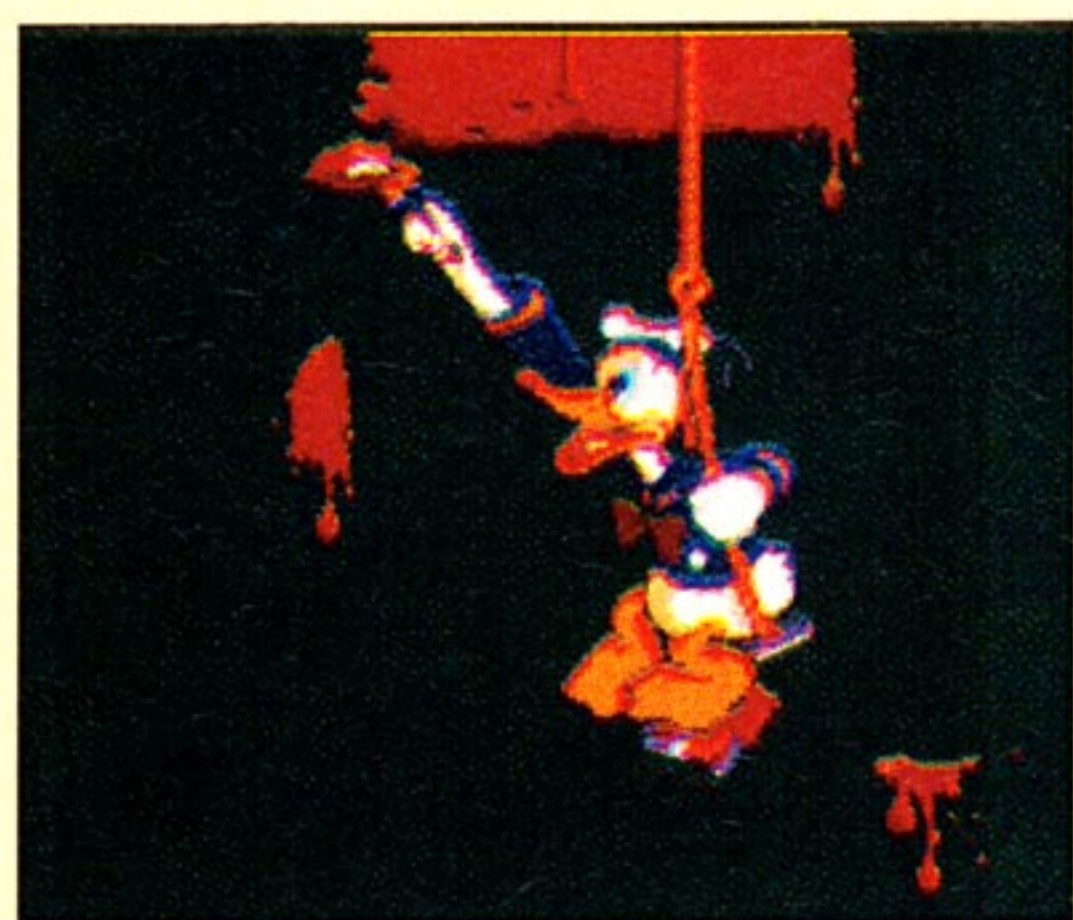
Sega CD

1. *Batman Returns*, Sega
2. *Time Gal*, Renovation
3. *Jaguar XJ220*, JVC
4. *Adventures of Willy Beamish*, Sierra
5. *Night Trap*, Sega
6. *Road Avenger*, Renovation
7. *After Burner III*, Sega
8. *Sewer Shark*, Sony Imagesoft
9. *Prince of Persia*, Sega
10. *Black Hole Assault*, Big Net

Disney Characters Save Screens

Berkeley Systems' latest screen saver is just the thing for cartoon lovers.

The Disney Screen Saver



Users can see Donald and the gang save the screen!

lets Mickey, Donald, Goofy, Pinocchio, The Little Mermaid and many more of the popular animated Disney characters do all the work on Macintosh and MS-DOS computers.

Lots of cute animations

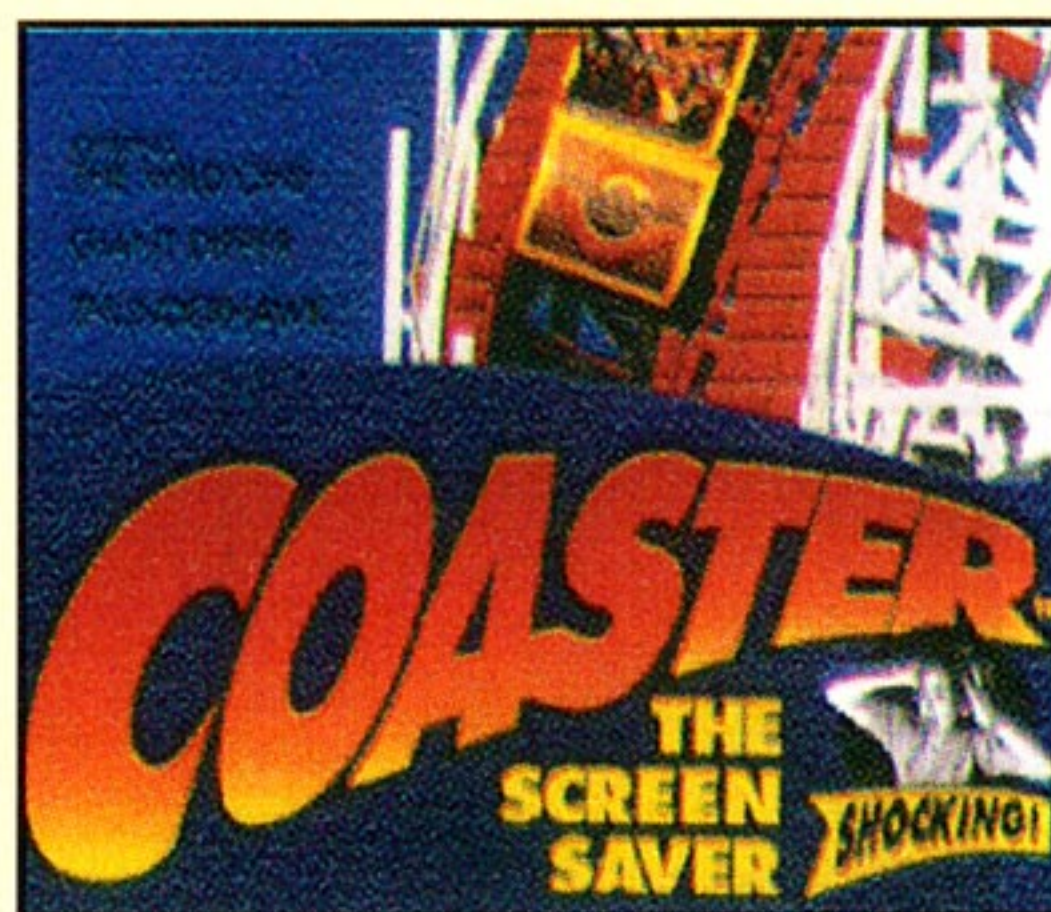
that look like they're right off the big screen keep the monitor refreshed, as Dalmations spot up the place, the Cheshire Cat grins, Donald Duck paints, fireworks explode over the Magic Kingdom, Mickey explores a haunted screen, and much more.

Berkeley's earlier screen savers include **After Dark** and **Star Trek**.

Roller Coaster's Role As Screen Saver

Screams and laughter greet the gamer away from his or her PC too long, as Road Scholar Software takes it on a roller coaster ride. Designed for DOS and Windows, **Coaster!** uses advanced simulation techniques, accurate to a quarter-inch, to reproduce the roller coaster experience through three different

rides (*The Giant Dipper*, from The Boardwalk, Santa Cruz, Calif.; *Thunderhawk*, Dorney Park, Allentown,



Take a wild ride with the new Coaster screen saver.

PA., and *The Wild One*, at Wild World Theme Park, Baltimore, Md.). Other popular roller coasters are to come.

The product also will be released later this year as an entertainment which lets the gamer build, customize, then ride a track which can be set up as a luge, water slide, or roller coaster.

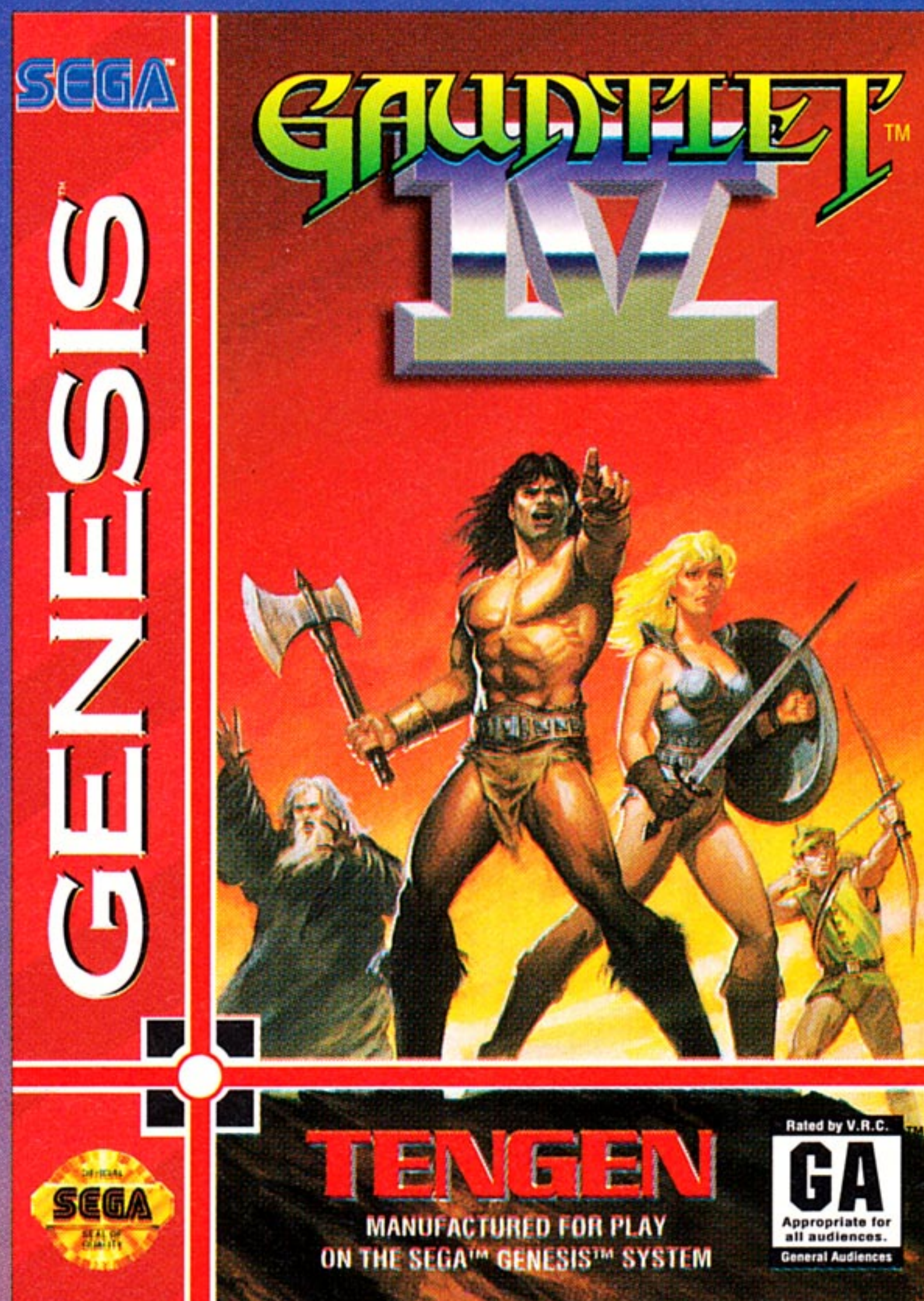
Tap Into a 4-Player Quest

Grab your Sega 4-Player "TAP." Gauntlet™ IV has arrived...and this time, you'd better bring your friends!

The title that defined video-game adventure is now the first to utilize Sega's new 4-Player "TAP."

Just like the arcade classic, Gauntlet™ IV lets you team up with up to three of your buddies as Thor, Thyra, Merlin and Questor—and blast more Grunts, Ghosts, Demons and Lobbers than ever before. There's even a special 4-Player head-to-head mode so you can turn against your friends in a winner-take-all battle royal!

Gauntlet™ IV has arrived. Tap into the 4-player quest...and bring your friends!



First Game Available for Sega's 4-Player Adapter



Choose your path carefully—that door could be the last you ever open. Boo!



You want the treasure...but is it worth the risk? Too bad you couldn't become invisible!



A fire-breathing dragon can really ruin your day. Next time bring back-ups!



Grab four of your buddies and crash a Grunt party. Just watch your back!

GAUNTLET™ IV



GENESIS™

Top Software for June 1993

The list of top-selling computer software was compiled by PC Research of Washington, DC., based on units sold by ten retail chains, representing over 1300 stores.

Top MS-DOS Games

1. *X-Wing*, Lucas Arts
2. *Strike Commander*, Origin
3. *Comanche: Maximum Overkill*, Nova Logic
4. *Alone in the Dark*, Interplay
5. *Links-386 Pro*, Access
6. *T. LaRusssa Baseball II*, SSI
7. *Wolfenstein 3-D/Spear of Destiny*, Formgen
8. *Links-Banff Springs*, Access
9. *Ultrabots*, Nova Logic
10. *Comanche Mission Disk #1*, Nova Logic

Top CD-ROM Titles

1. *Seventh Guest*, Virgin
2. *MPC Wizard*, Aris
3. *Compton's Encyclopedia Upgrade*, Compton's
4. *Corel Art Show*, Corel

5. *Key Clipmaster Pro*, SoftKey
6. *Cinemanía*, Microsoft
7. *Street Atlas USA*, Delorme
8. *Key Fonts Pro*, Softkey
9. *Battle Chess*, Interplay
10. *King's Quest V*, Sierra

Top Coin-Ops of July 1993

Figures courtesy of Replay Magazine, based on an earnings-opinion poll of operators.

Best Upright Videos

1. *NBA Jam*, Williams
2. *Title Fight*, Sega
3. *Mortal Kombat*, Midway
4. *Lethal Enforcers*, Konami
5. *Street Fighter II: CE*, Capcom
6. *Super Chase*, Taito
7. *Terminator 2*, Midway
8. *Fighter's History*, Data East
9. *Steel Gunner*, Namco
10. *Golden Axe II*, Sega

Best Deluxe Videos

1. *Virtua Racing*, Sega
2. *Suzuka 8 Hours*, Namco
3. *Stadium Cross*, Sega
4. *Lucky & Wild*, Namco

5. *Race Drivin'*, Atari
6. *Moto Frenzy*, Atari
7. *Galaxy Force*, Sega
8. *Mad Dog II*, ALG
9. *X-Men*, Konami
10. *Hard Drivin'*, Atari

Best Coin-Op Software

1. *World Heroes 2*, SNK
2. *Street Fighter II: C E Turbo*, Capcom
3. *Neck N' Neck*, Bundra
4. *Warriors of Fate*, Capcom
5. *In The Hunt*, Irem
6. *Time Killers*, Strata
7. *C.O.W./Moo Mesa*, Konami
8. *3 Count Bout*, SNK
9. *Fatal Fury 2*, SNK
10. *Street Fighter II*, Capcom

Best Pinball Machines

1. *Twilight Zone*, Midway
2. *Jurassic Park*, Data East
3. *Addams Family*, Midway
4. *Creature/Lagoon*, Midway
5. *White Water*, Williams
6. *Rocky & Bullwinkle*, D.East
7. *Star Wars*, Data East
8. *Dracula*, Williams
9. *Terminator 2*, Williams
10. *Street Fighter II*, Gottlieb/Premier

EG Readers' Popularity Poll

August 1993

These games were voted the readers' favorites in EG's monthly poll (see last page in this issue). Duplicate numbers represent ties.

Favorite Video Games

1. *Street Fighter II*, Capcom
2. *Super Star Wars*, LucasArts
3. *Streets of Rage*, Sega
3. *StarFox*, Nintendo

Favorite Computer Games

1. *X-Wing*, LucasArts
2. *Wing Commander*, Origin
2. *Kings Quest 5*, Sierra

Favorite Multimedia Games

1. *Night Trap*, Sega

Favorite Coin-Op

1. *Mortal Kombat*, Midway

Street Fighter Goes to Movies

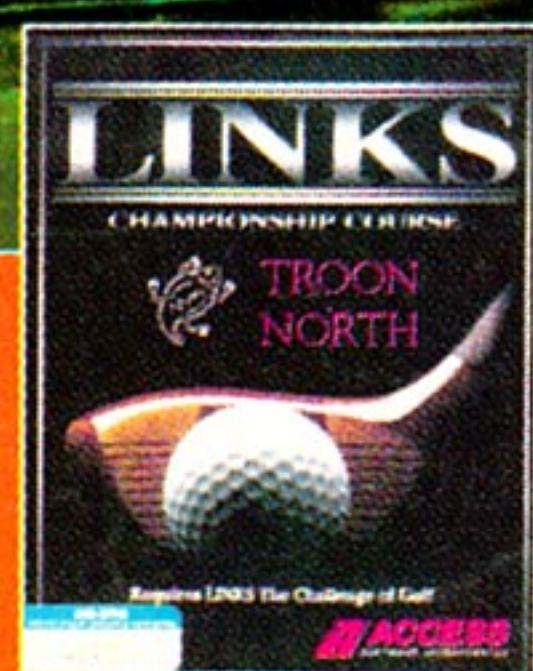
Pressman Films, (producers of *Wall St.*, *Reversal of For-*

ACCESS Softw

A COURSE FOR YOU



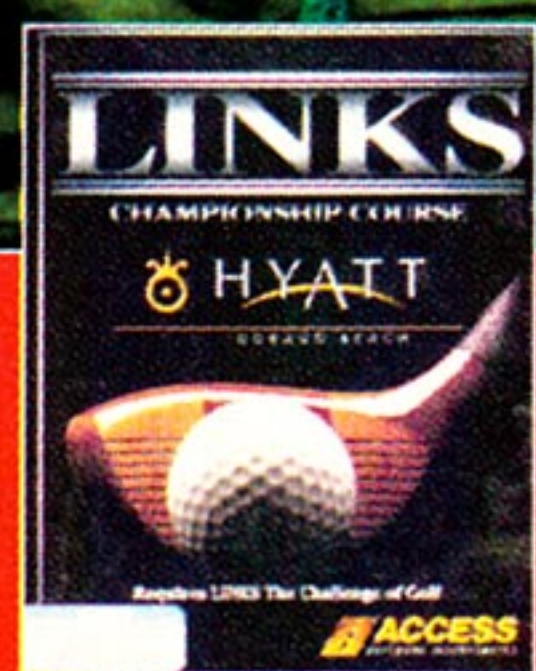
Firestone
Akron, Ohio



Troon
Scottsdale, AZ



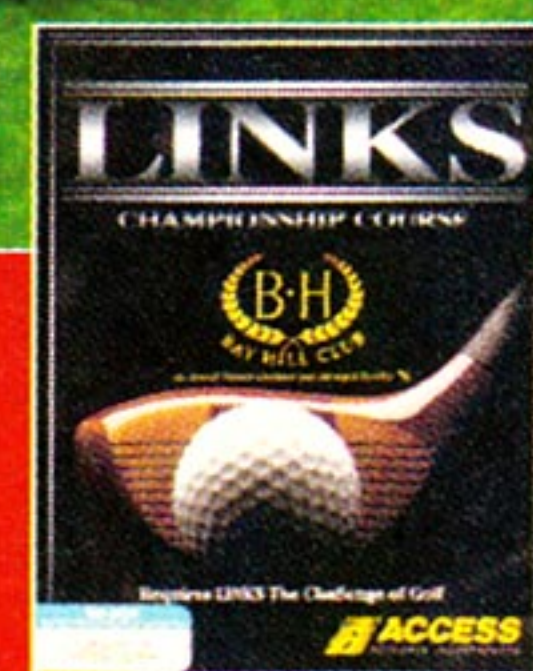
Bountiful
Bountiful, UT



Dorado Beach
Puerto Rico



Barton Creek
Austin, Texas

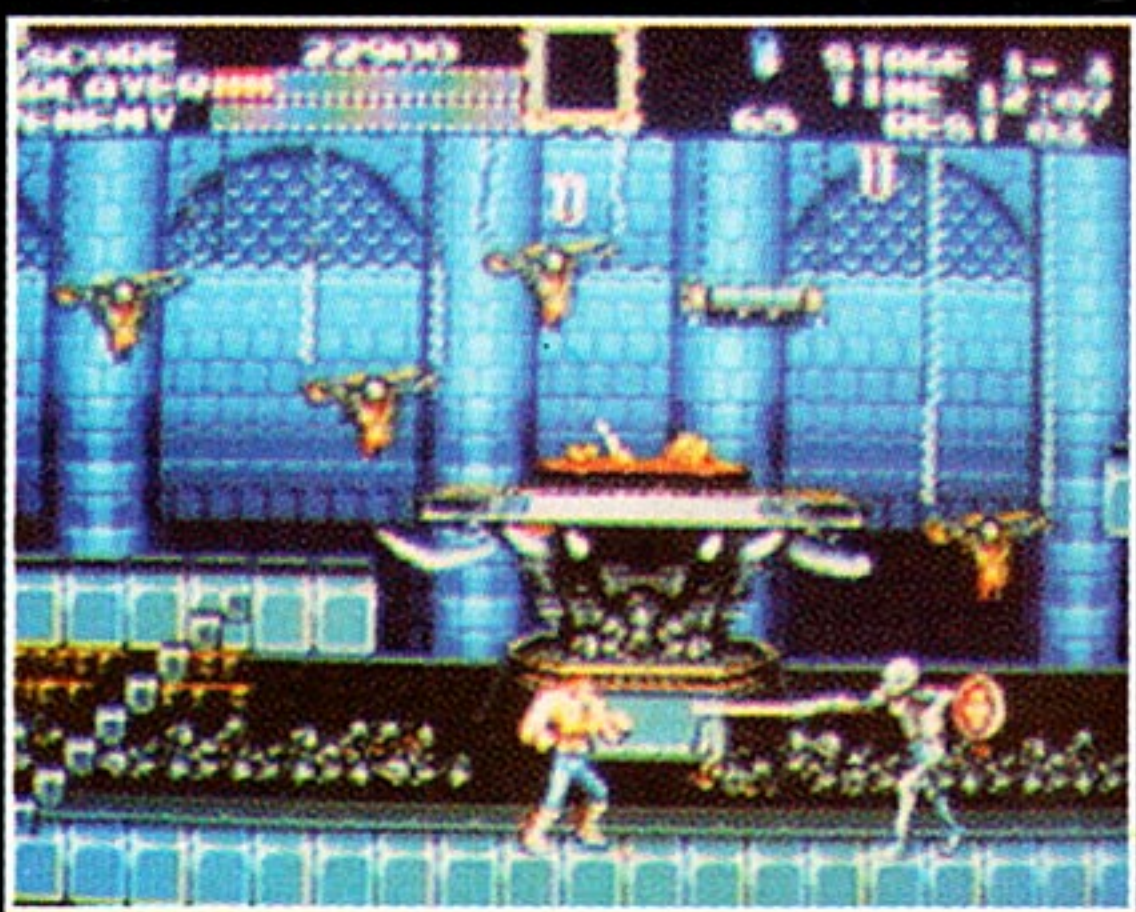


Bayhill
Orlando, FL

tune, **Conan the Barbarian**, and others) won the rights to do the **Street Fighter** movie. Screenwriter Steven (48 Hours, Die Hard) De Susa will pen the script.

The studio hasn't yet been announced, but the movie is scheduled for Fall of 1994.

Castlevania Blood Spills on Genesis

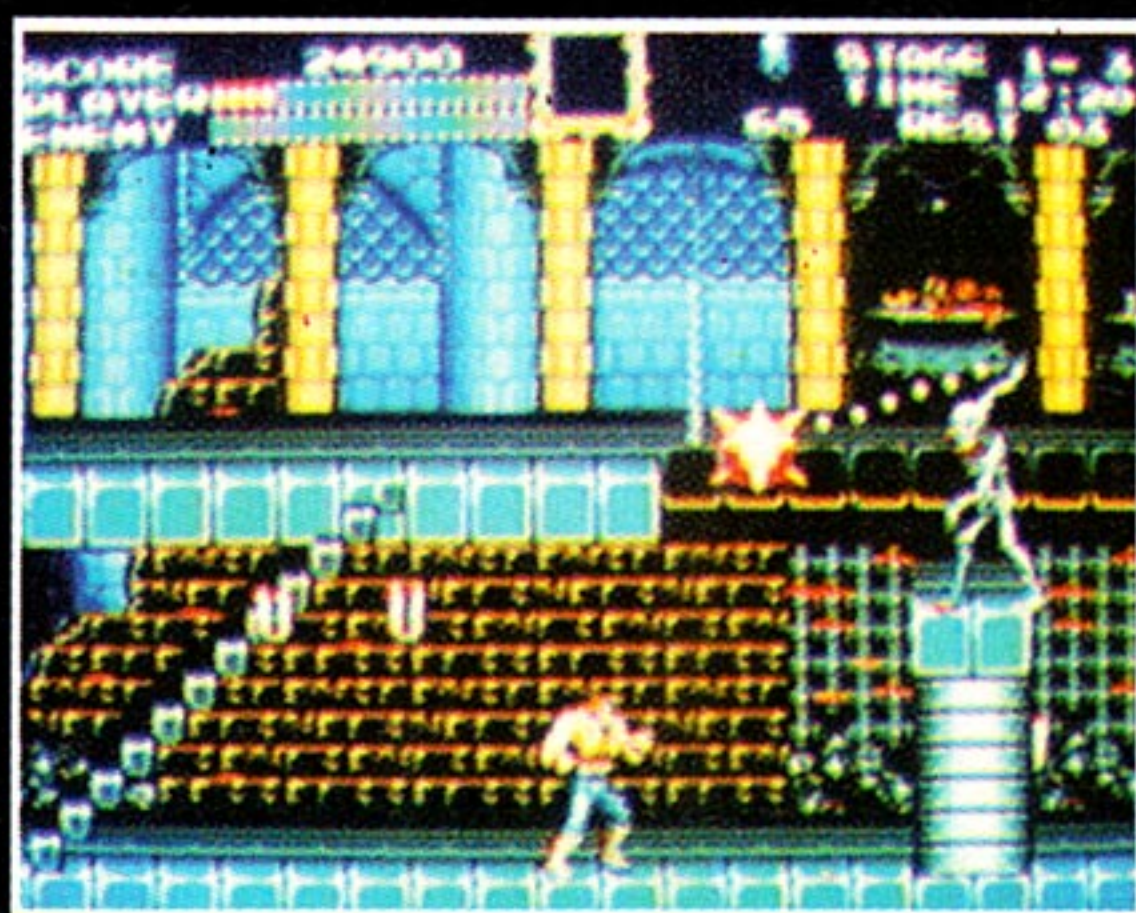


The newest addition to the Castlevania series is here!

Over 3.7 million Castlevania games have been sold, but now gamers will be able to play a Castlevania game on their Sega Genesis for the first time.

Two descendants of the Belmont family tried to escape to Sega country, only to find they cannot get away from Dracula and his ghoulish allies. If anything, their plight, and their duty, is worse than ever on the Genesis.

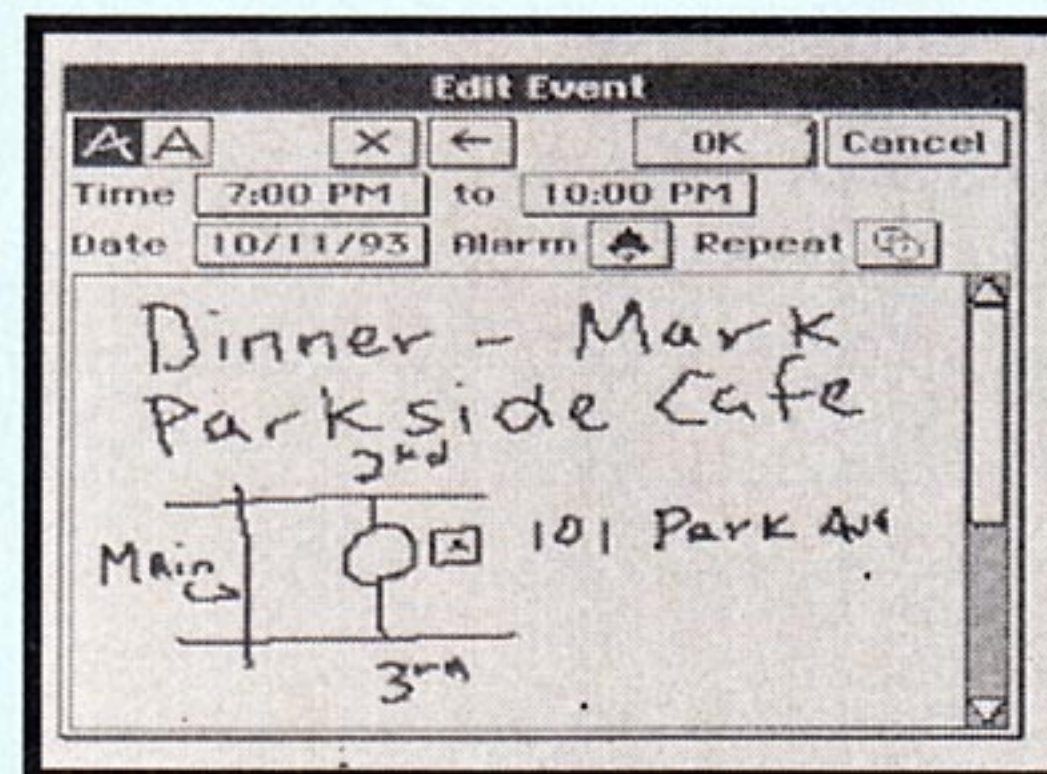
Castlevania Bloodlines, to be released on an 8-Meg cart this fall by Konami, stretches its new game design from the Middle Ages to the present, with locales in the Alps, London and the Dover Straits, as the player tries to destroy vampires and other ghouls. The action is fast and furious, with new sounds and graphics.



Bloodlines adds more thrills and action for gaming gurus.

Palm-size Zoomer Gets Games

The **Zoomer PDA**, a new hand-held info/notebook computer, added a sprinkling of fun to go with the translator, dictionary, thesaurus spell checker, world clock, and other information stuffed into the miniature unit. Soli-



taire, Pyramid and an Othello-type game called UKI will keep the user entertained when not making notes with a stylus on the screen which the machine then reproduces as type or a drawing. It has built in

telecommunications software, a Geos operating system, and offers up to 100 hours on three AA batteries. It also has a serial port for connection to PCs, printers, speakers, headphones, modems, etc.

The Zoomer is a creation of Casio and Tandy. Participating companies include America Online, Intuit, GeoWorks, Motorola and SunDisk

EA Debuts 4-Player Adapter

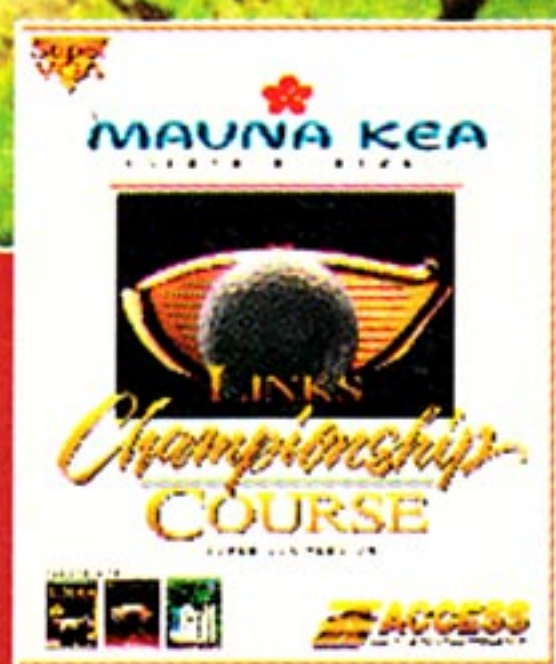
Electronic Arts is readying a four-player adapter for the Sega Genesis, to let gamers go head-to-head.

The first games compatible with the \$29.95 adapter are **General Chaos** and **Bill Walsh College Football**, but all future EA sports games will be programmed to work with the new accessory.

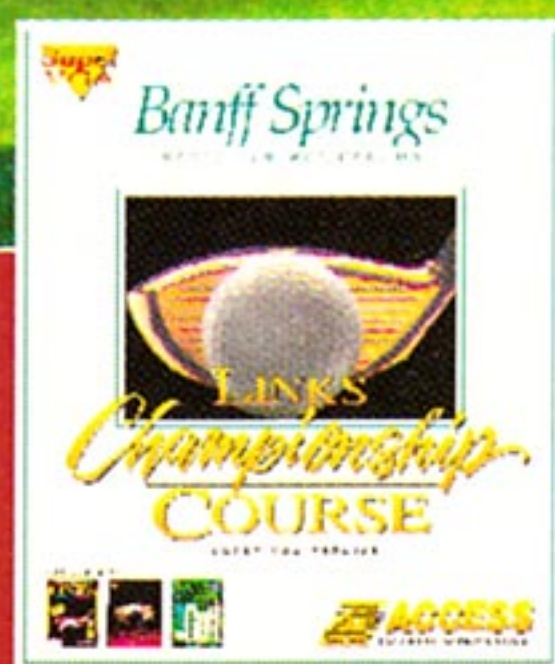
are brings you UR EVERY MOOD!



Pinehurst
Pinehurst, NC



Mauna Kea
Hawaii

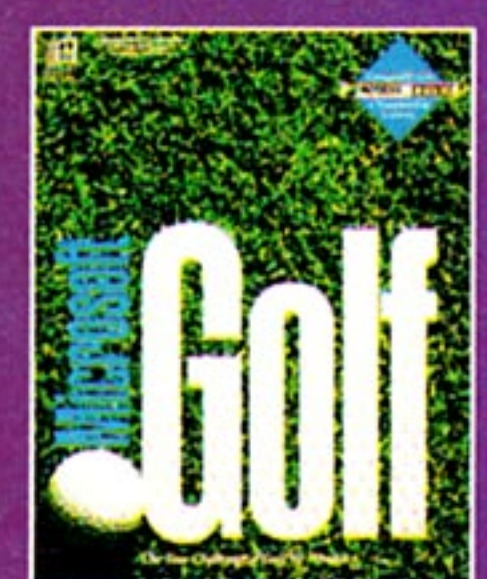
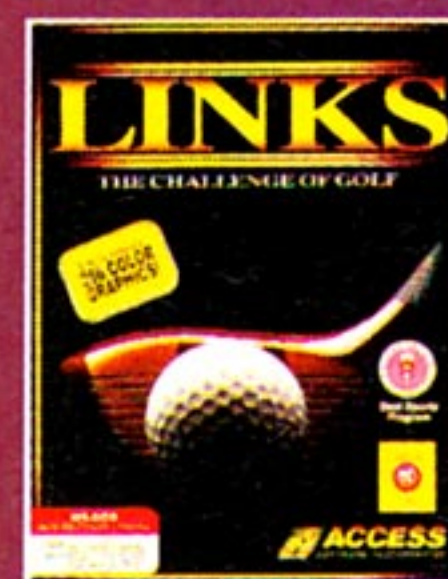


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A LOOK TO THE EAST

by Marc Camron



The main goal in the world of marketing is to sell as much product as possible, and achieve the highest profits in the process. Unfortunately, often times this goal is not achieved and the end result of an ambitious marketing campaign is a lot of annoyed consumers.

Nintendo has proven themselves time and time again to be geniuses at the marketing game. Particularly when it comes to a certain little plumber who endures as the premiere icon of videogamedom, the same as Mickey Mouse represents all of the citizens of Toon Town.

This brings us to **The Super Mario Collection**. Recently released in Japan, **The Super Mario Collection** is nothing new. That's right, there are four games on the cartridge, and the newest of them is about four years old. That is not to say that this incarnation of the cartridge is not new. On the contrary, yours truly wouldn't waste an entire page to talk about a cartridge that is anything less than outstanding. And **The Super Mario Collection** is somewhat better than outstanding.

It is a rare occasion when a company gives you more than they have to. In the

case of **The Super Mario Collection**, Nintendo has succeeded in taking four old 8-Bit games and revitalizing them for their 16-Bit machine. The graphics have been beefed-up, particularly the backgrounds. The once simple scenes are now lavishly painted; single layered graphics replaced with multi-level, multi-scrolling ones.

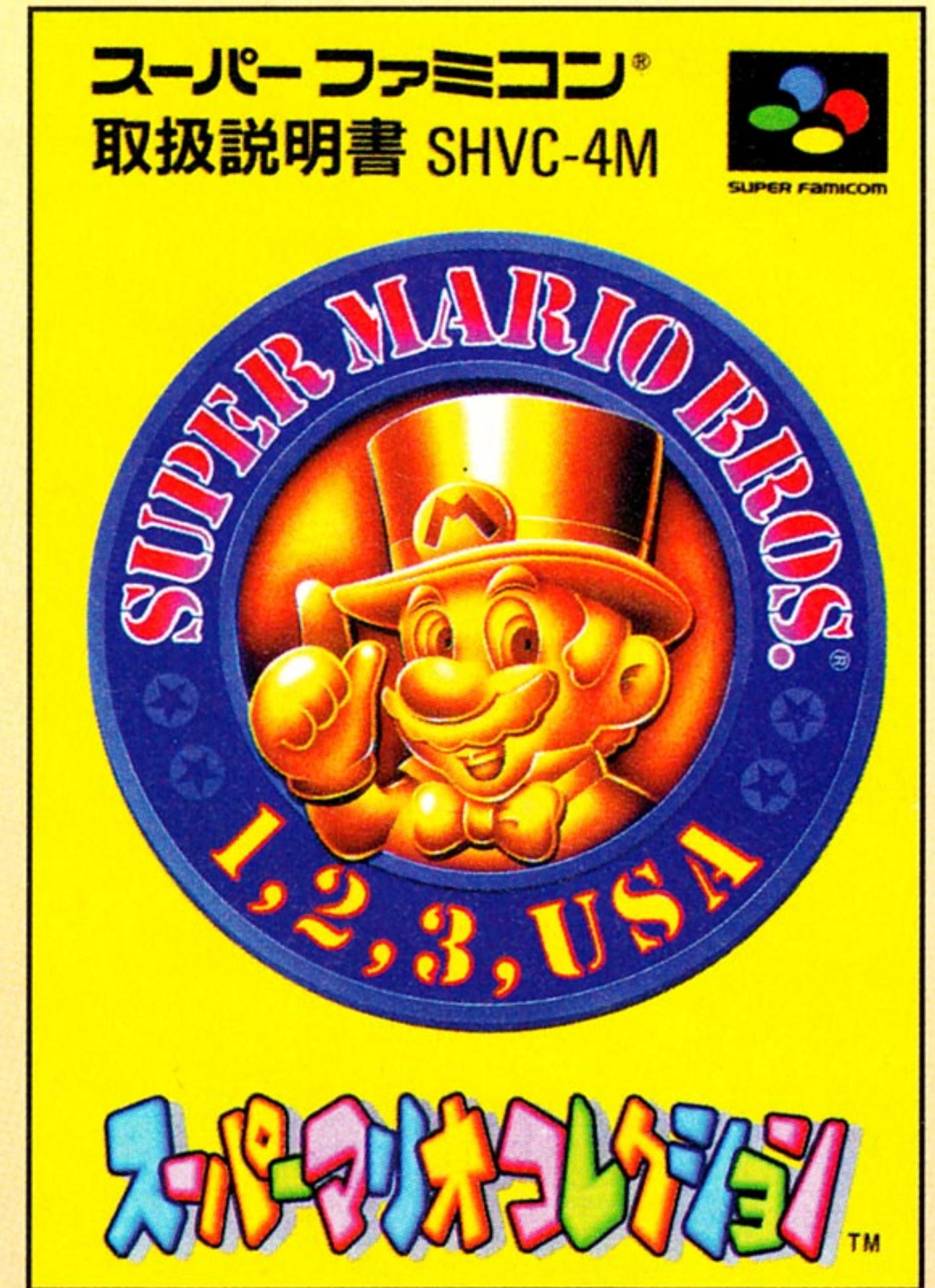
The characters have also been brought up to 16-Bit standards, though this is not as apparent without comparing them one-on-one with their 8-Bit counterparts.

The colors have been increased to take advantage of the Super Famicom's large palate, and it is obvious how much care has gone into making sure the game looks just right.

Another nice enhancement is in the area of sound. The programmers have kept the music from each of the respective games while taking away the tinniness of the 8-Bit sound. Combined with stereo sound and enhanced sound effects the game really draws players in.

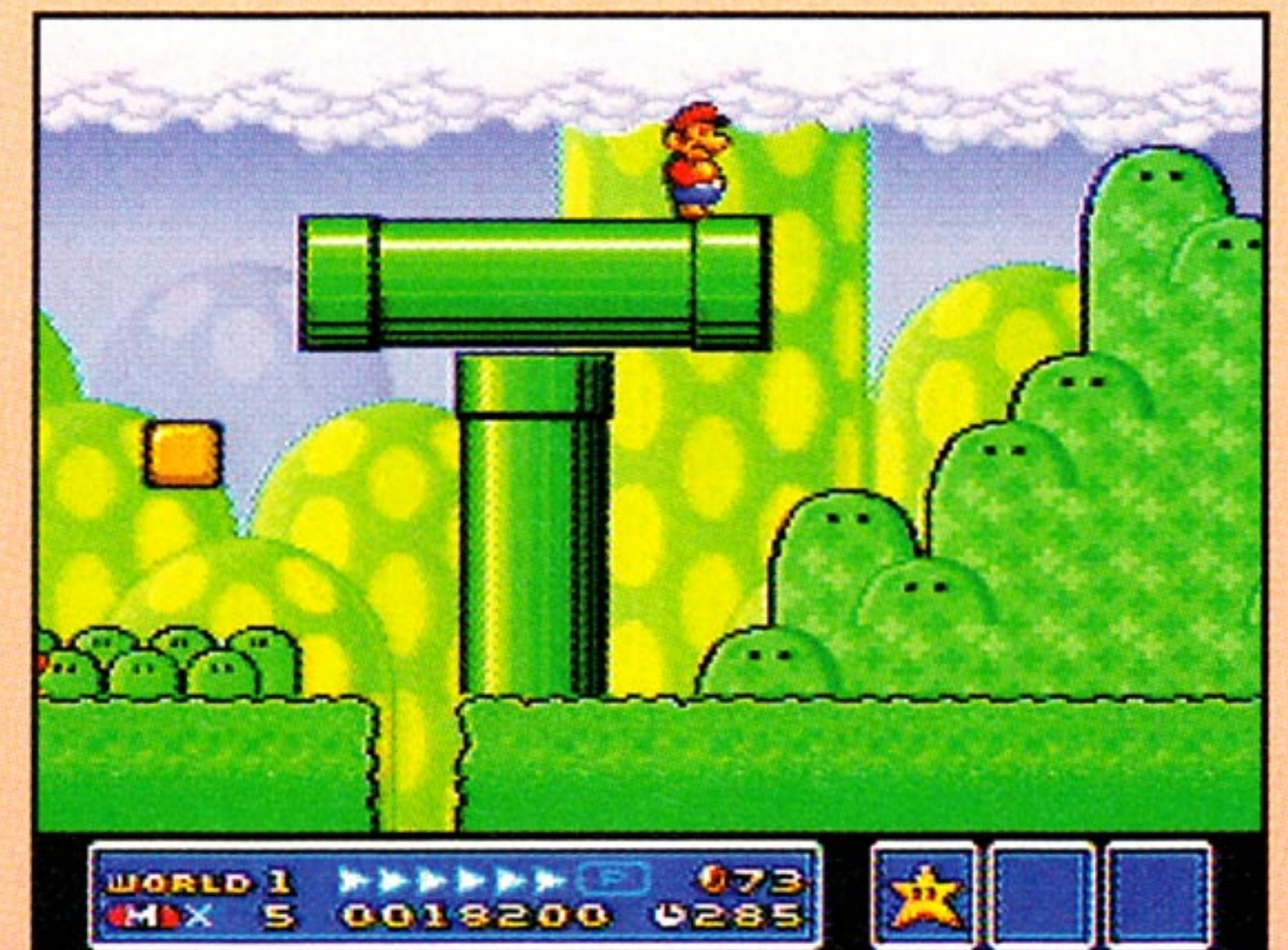
All of these enhancements would have been enough to sell a lot of games. Heck, just by combining four Mario games on one cartridge people would have shelled out the yen. Add to this the ability to save your position in each of the four games, four times (for a total of sixteen saved-game slots for those of you not up on your arithmetic) and you now have the possibility to play each of the games straight through, without having to warp. Combined with unlimited continues this gives gamers the opportunity to explore worlds more thoroughly without the fear of dying and having to start over from the beginning.

There are other little enhancements. It

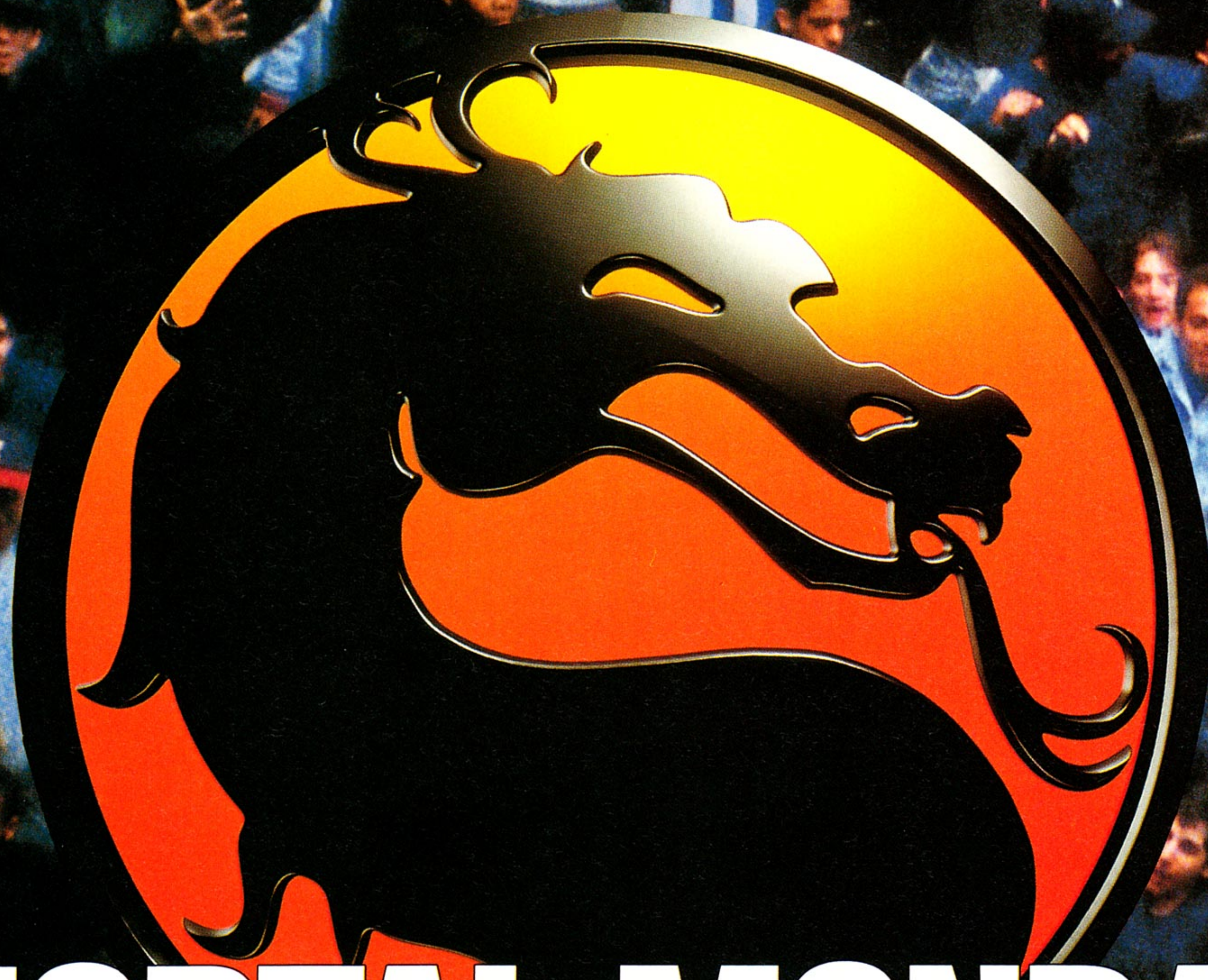


is even rumored that in Super Mario Bros. 2, there are a bunch of hidden worlds that can only be accessed if the game is played straight through without warping or saving. Considering the difficulty level of this game, that may amount to a monumental task.

Here's the good news. **The Super Mario Collection** will be released in the U.S. in August under the title, **Super Mario All Stars**, and will have all of the same features of the Japanese release. As mentioned in my column last month, this will include the original **Super Mario 2** never released in the U.S. What more could a gamer ask for, for just \$59.99? And if you're tired of hearing about Mario, don't worry. Maybe Nintendo won't come out with any more Mario games...this year.



PREPARE YOURSELF



MORTAL MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 13

SUPER NES[®] GENESIS[™] GAME GEAR[™] GAME BOY[®]

Acclaim[®]

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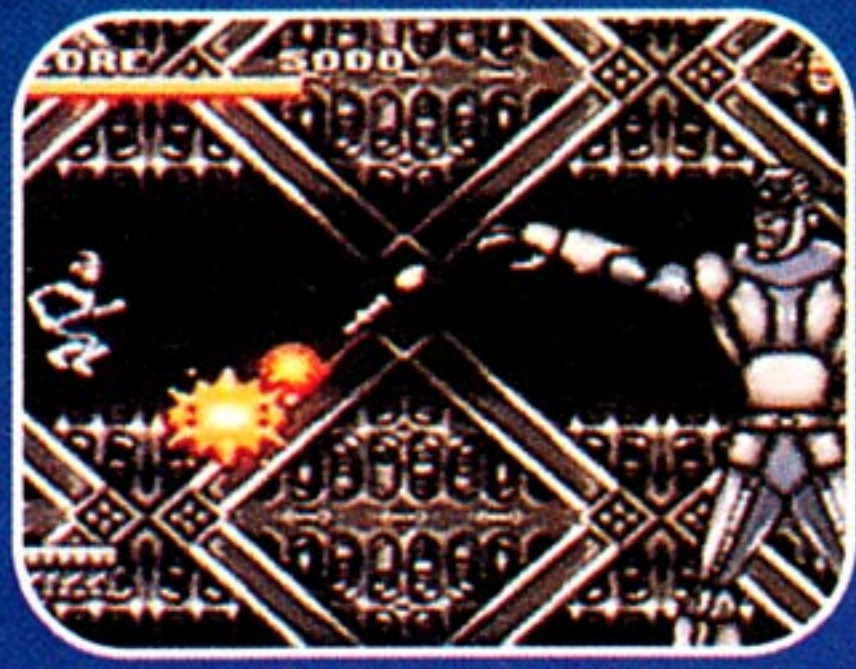
MARVEL
COMICS
M



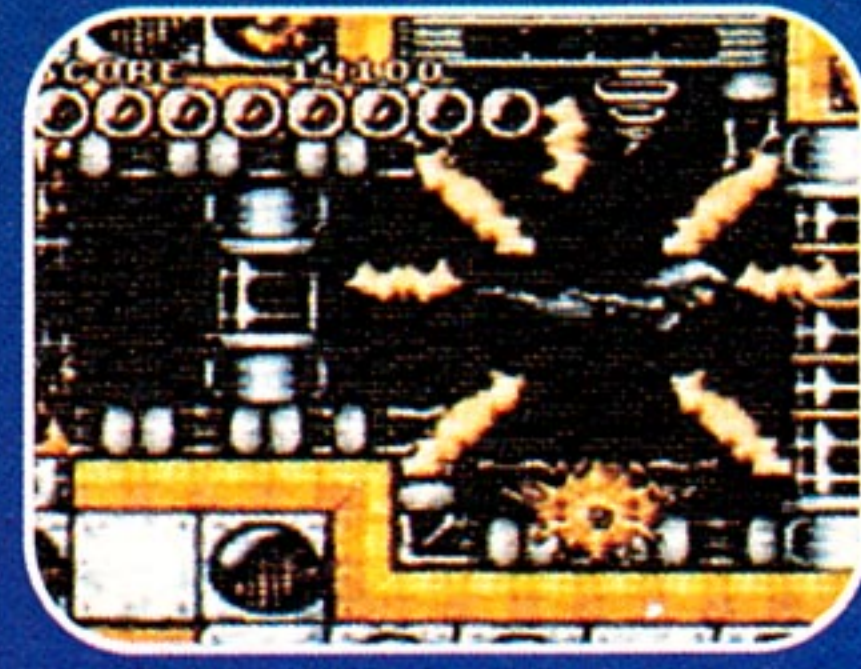
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STORM™

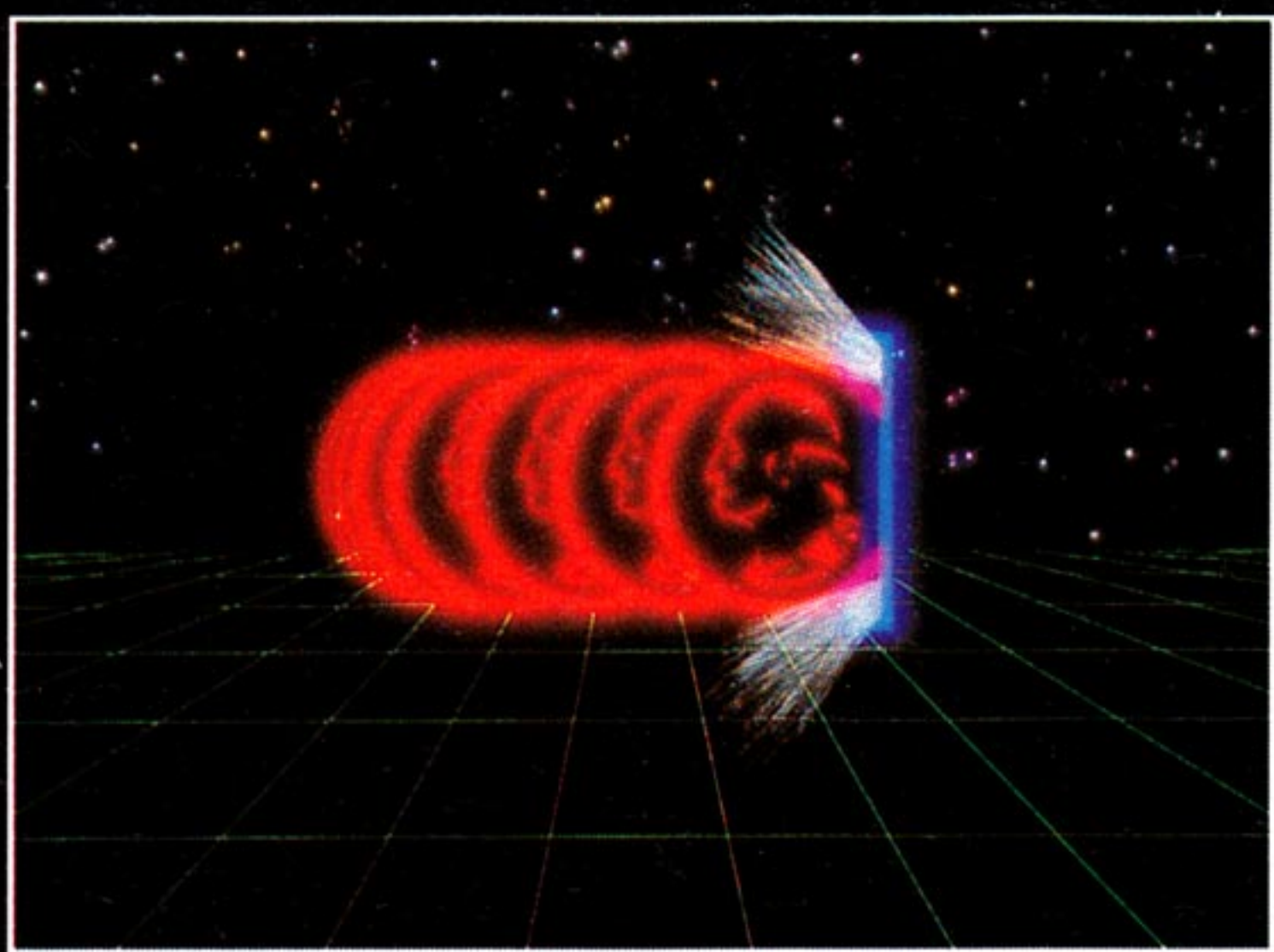


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INSERT COIN HERE

Let The Games Begin

by Jay Carter

Throughout its history, the coin-operated amusement game industry has always tended to gear up with the arrival of fall. This year, as summer amazingly winds down, it's no different. In fact, the rest of 1993 is already shaping up to be a wonderland of outstanding creative efforts for game players everywhere, with the emergence of newer technologies and more feature-packed equipment than ever before.

As we briefly highlighted last time around, the world of pinball continues to deliver a diverse mix of high-energy excitement that might best be exemplified by Data East's **Jurassic Park**.

John Hammond's Isla Nublar theme park has gone amok, unleashing genetically engineered dinosaurs on a frenzied rampage.

From the pages of Crichton's best seller to Spielberg's history-making big screen extravaganza, **Jurassic Park** comes to life as a faithfully adapted pinball machine. It features a fully-automated, ball-eating Tyrannosaurus Rex and a rumbling cabinet which provides the sensation of 'feeling' the oncoming dinosaurs. Game play begins with the need to accurately sight a deadly Velociraptor in the dot matrix display and fire a Taser Stun Gun to launch a ball onto the playfield.

Following key elements from the story line, the pinball incorporates 12 different mini-games with their own scoring values and objectives. These might include making shots to the dangerous raptor pit kick-back, or visits to the power shed, control room, or bunker drop holes while attempting to begin Tri-Ball play for possible Jackpot rewards.

In addition, **Jurassic Park** also serves up a special Chaos six-ball mode which

can result in scoring of up to 600 million points via Super Jackpots and Twin Super Jackpots. Last, but not least, part of the arsenal is a one-time-only-per-game Smart Missile button on the Taser Gun that, when fired, will automatically award whatever feature is lit at the time for an

Pitch & Putt where hitting the coconut bonus captive ball can deliver big points.

From holes in one to a spinning gopher wheel, **Tee'd Off** also provides the opportunity to test one's flipper skills in two- or three-ball multi-ball play for Jackpots that can progressively increase in value. In addition, if enough holes are completed, there's multiple millions to be scored in either the Raining Cats & Dogs or Anything Goes modes.

But if golf or dinosaur-themed pinball games aren't your passion, there are more than enough other attractions hitting local game rooms that might strike your fancy. In fact, be on the look out for Sega's coin-op version of Jurassic Park. Until then, you

might want to try your hand at **Title Fight**. This appears to be an updated variation of Sega's **Heavy-weight Champ** boxing video. This time around the perspective is reminiscent of the old Nintendo

Punch Out! with a through-the-fighter-silhouette viewpoint of the action on screen. A new touch is the dual monitor cabinet configuration that allows players to compete against each other, as well as one or even two players against the computer.

Select from one of four different title contenders, to determine if Lucky, Chuck, Tony, or John has what it takes to mete out punishment and survive what you're going to have to take on your quest to be the world champion. Hopefully, you're up to the challenge with special glove handle controllers. These can really test your stamina and reflexes as you throw jabs, hooks, combinations and uppercuts, while bobbing and weaving out of the way of a barrage of oncoming punches.

Despite all the buzz and anticipation of **Super Street Fighter**, the design talent at Capcom has continued to be extreme-



instantaneous pay-off.

Hoping to hit with a stroke of genius, Premier Technology takes a different approach with its latest Gottlieb pinball machine. **Tee'd Off** might best be described as a derivative of the Caddy-shack movies complete with its own mechanical dancing gopher, Gunther, mounted on the top of the machine.

The objective is relatively simple. The player must attempt to finish golf holes (from one to nine) in order to get into higher scoring modes. Along the way, various timed rounds are encountered, indicated by lit golf balls that rest just above the main playfield. These rounds include mastering different shot sequences such as Find The Gopher, spelling S-K-I-N-S! via a volcano shot that allows the option to possibly double your entire score, or

ly busy as evidenced by two notable recent releases. Direct from the pages of Marvel Comics comes a ruthless crime fighter, **The Punisher** who is out to serve up his own form of justice in a two-player side-scrolling action game.

Whether you pick Frank Castle, better known as The Punisher, or special agent Nick Fury of S.H.I.E.L.D., the objective is revenge and destruction of crime's reigning mastermind, Kingpin, along with his supporting cast of henchmen such as Bushwacker, Scully, Bonebreaker, Guardroid and Jigsaw. Through six different waves of game play, your formidable arsenal of weaponry can be anything from an Uzi to flamethrowers, baseball bats, grenades, M-16s and even furniture that might be lying around. Not to mention a host of flying kicks, punches, and throws that brings this comic book hero to life.

Also from the creative minds of Capcom comes **Saturday Night Slam Masters** featuring ten new muscle-bound characters facing off in the squared circle. For fans of wrestling the action has never been better, with two different mode options for up to four players to compete, including a one-on-one or team battle royale where two teams of four wrestlers can take to the mat and battle to the final pin fall.

Proving that there's always something for everyone in the world of coin-op video, American Sammy has brought back vertical scrolling game play with six button controls for the multi-dextrous at heart. **Daioh** offers a colorful universe of top-down landscapes that will take you above and through floating continents, ancient ruins and four exciting out-of-this-



world environments for seven stages of non-stop action.

For one or two players, the goal is to control a craft with an eight-way joystick

and master two rows of three fire buttons that activate missiles, lasers and ion shots along with mega beams, atomic and fire bombs. It's a familiar theme, one that goes back to the days of **Xevious**, but this is one shooter with some solid graphics and strong game elements.

Another mainstay on the coin-op scene for a number of years has been Pop-A-Shot basketball machines that have found their way into many family amusement centers and sports bars. Well, Innovative Concepts in Entertainment (ICE) along with G. L. Technology have come up with a moveable feast for mini-basketball enthusiasts with the introduction of **Full Court Frenzy**. Now, rather than just perfecting your set shot technique in a static game of hoops, one to four players can compete in three different game modes where the backboard and basket can be moving into a variety of positions that might find you firing from what appears to be the corner of the court or just under the

hoop. This is the first basketball skill game that requires the player to really concentrate on taking some realistic shots from a variety of interesting angles - much like you'd find when sweating it out on the blacktop!

There's a front mounted monitor for the display of post-game statistics and **Full**

Court Frenzy also provides some nice background sound effects, music and even a game play announcer. These factors combine for a fantastic game that will draw hoopsters into the arcades on those rainy days to work on their oh-so-awesome skill shots.

All in all coin-op is getting into gear for a fall/winter season that promises to amaze and entertain the most ardent players. So keep on playing and have fun with the best of the best.

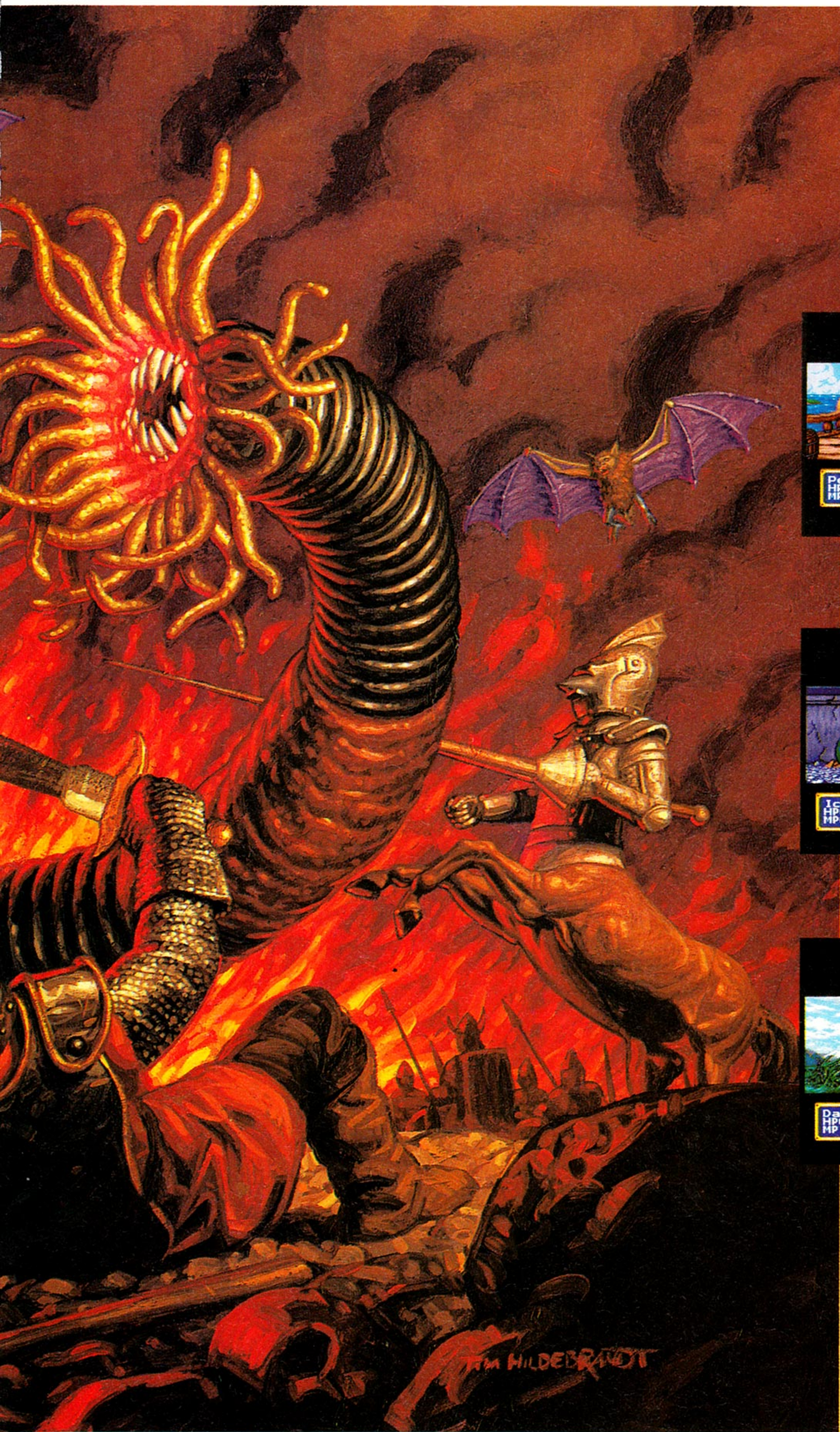
SHINING FORCE



EVERY
CONTROL
THE
LEVEL

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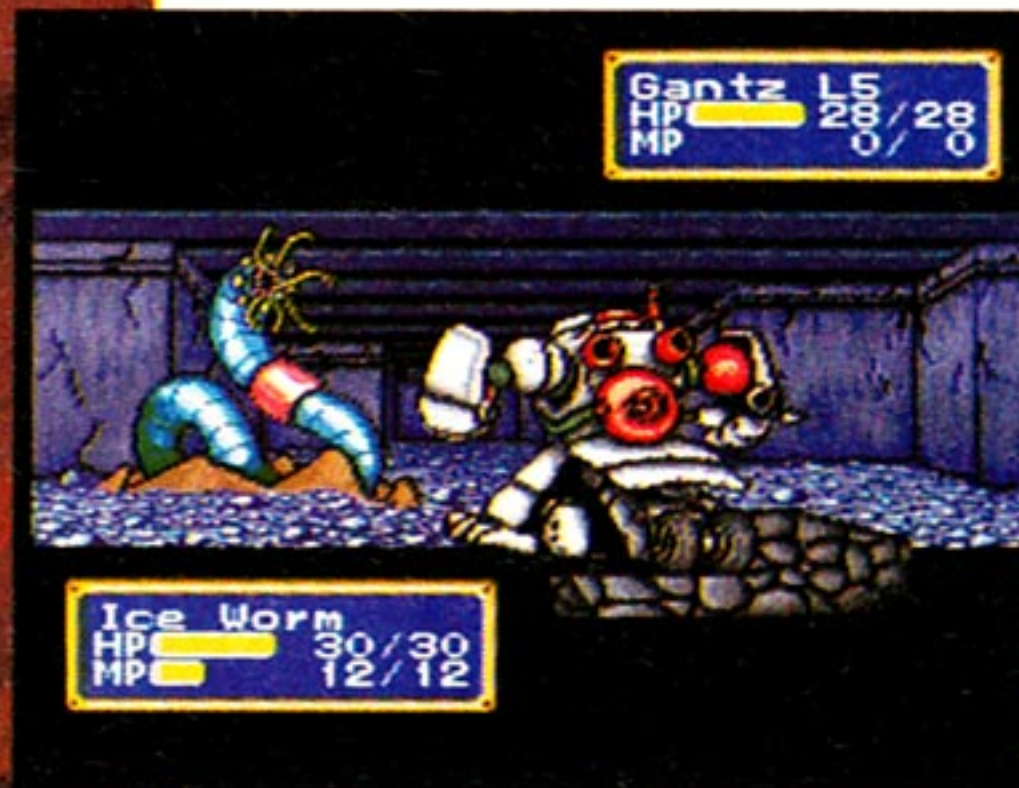
You control the archers. You control the magicians. You control different characters at a time. You control how long it takes to reach the epic. You control your purchasing decisions. You control your destiny. You control



SEGA
Genesis.



Your brain.



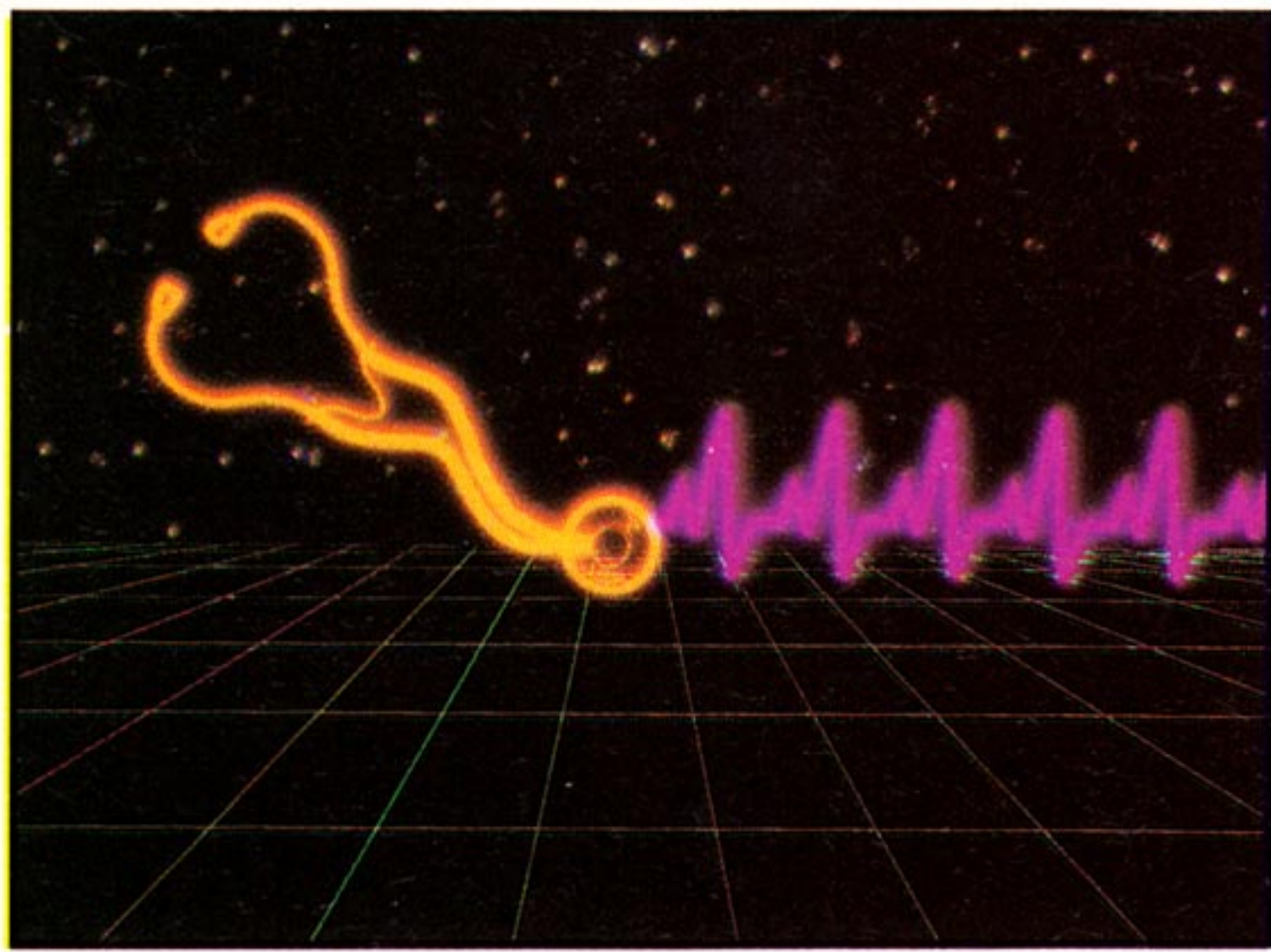
Your grief.



Your glory.



*You control the fighters. You control the centaurs. You control the strategy. You control up to twelve
You control 12 megs of power. You control our company. You control our engineers.
You control our tv. You control the eyes that just finished reading this.*



GAME DOCTOR

Answers, Answers + More Answers!

by The Game Doctor

Hello, gang, welcome back to the longest running electronic gaming medicine show in the business. I never cease to be amazed at the way the volume of information required to produce this column has grown over the past dozen years. Part of this rising tide of intelligence is directly related to the growth and ongoing sophistication of plugged-in entertainment, but much of it is the result of the great questions I receive every month from you folks.

Speaking of which, let's get on to this month's roundup of suitably impressive inquiries. And, as is becoming our custom of late, we open with a Q from a Street Fightin' Man:

Q: I am an avid **Street Fighter II** fan and I have followed the game from its earliest days through the CE and Turbo editions to the SNES version and the upcoming (when, Doc, when?) Genesis version. But what I am actually writing to ask about is that weird thingie that appears after the name "Street Fighter II" on the title screen and box. It looks like an apostrophe, but an apostrophe for a Roman number? I have wondered about this for a long time and have never read an explanation.

John Devlin
Austin, TX

A: Good observation, John. Actually, the Doc recently visited Capcom along with **EG** exec editor Bill Kunkel and we got the lowdown on that "thingie" you refer to. It's apparently called a "dash" and it's a Japanese character that looks exactly like the English apostrophe. In fact, at one point Capcom's parent company actually wanted the game to be referred to as "Street Fighter II Dash," but the American side of the company was able to talk them out of it.

As for that Genesis version, it should be out by the time you read this.

Q: Why are games like **It Came from the Desert** so much more grainy and pixelated than PC games like **7th Guest** when the Duo can display 512 colors at a time and the PC can usually only display 256? What makes the multimedia computer games so much better?

Andrew Flury
Los Gatos, CA

A: There are several issues raised by your question, Andrew. In the first place, keep in mind the fact that **It Came from the Desert** is several years old while Virgin's **7th Guest** represents the pinnacle of graphic excellence in the MPC format. Nonetheless, you are correct in your assertion that, by and large, CD-ROM games look a lot better on the computer than they do on the CD-based video game systems (Duo and Genesis). For one thing, programmers have been working in the MPC format much longer and more extensively than have developers for the Duo or Sega CD. As we saw at the SCES, the video game CD developers are improving rapidly. Games like **Lethal Enforcers** (Konami), **Silpheed** (Sega), and **Mortal Kombat** (Acclaim) will greatly enhance the Sega CD's rep, while virtually everyone who's seen the various editions agrees that the Duo's **Street Fighter II** is the best home version of the game around.

Also, focusing exclusively on the issue of simultaneous color presentation is a perfect example of why the Doc always gives strong caveats whenever discussing system specs. It's like the story

of the blind men and the elephant: one feels the trunk and thinks elephants are like snakes, another feels a leg and presumes the pachyderm resembles a tree, etc.

Remember, MPC games are run on special VGA and SVGA monitors, while video game systems are generally tied to the household TV set. Also, the PC set-up provides programmers with more of that all-important "buffer" space. The buffer is like the computer's waiting room; the bigger it is, the more people (or, in this case, data) can be squeezed in. When a program is running off the buffer, access time is negligible, whereas scanning an entire CD takes some time.

Computers are generally more powerful than their video game cousins, but the video game hardware is dedicated, that is, constructed for the sole purpose of playing games. Features like scaling and rotation can be built into the hardware, whereas extensive programming and data storage space is required on the PC.

In other words, it's a trade-off. But considering that even a 386-based MPC system has a high-tech hernia trying to run a game like **7th Guest**, with pretty poor overall results, I wouldn't look for a comparable version in the video game CD world just yet.

Q: Yo, Doc! You gotta help me! I was recently playing **Out of This World** on the SNES and the first thing that hit me was its extended use of polygon graphics. What's so different between polygon and regular graphics? Do they allow for more effective special effects? Also, what the



heck is the technique called "rotoscoping?"

Aaron Phelps
Chico, CA

A: Polygons are much easier to manipulate than regular, or bit-mapped graphics. Whereas bit mapping requires the images to be constantly redrawn, the polygons can be joggled on the fly, which is why the technology is so popular in flight and driving simulators. The more polygons that are used in any drawing, the more realistic it becomes; with enough of them, even the technology's intrinsically sharp-edged, blocky look can be eliminated.

Some games, on the other hand, combine the two technologies. In a driving simulator, for example, the dashboard, steering wheel, etc., which are fairly stationary, can be rendered in bit mapped graphics, while the outside scenery and roadway would be produced using polygons.

Rotoscoping is an old animation technique that has been used for years by the Disney Studios and was employed extensively for Ralph Bakshi's animated feature film *Lord of the Rings*. Here's how it works: the animated sequence is first produced and filmed on a soundstage, using actors and props. That footage is then given to the animators who used a device called a rotoscope to trace over the human figures, giving the animated characters extremely realistic articulated movement. This same idea has more recently been employed by game developers to produce real-looking human movement in their software.

Q: Hey Doc, I've got a friend who's kind of in the coin-op business and he says that a major home publisher is about to get into producing coin-op arcade games. The problem: my friend has wet brain or something and can't remember the publisher's name!

I am going crazy—any idea who the mystery publisher might be?

Len Fuchs
Irvine, CA

A: Probably Electronic Arts, which is currently exploring the possibility of entering the coin-op market.

Q: I am dying to know more about Sega's Virtual Reality headpiece. When will it be out? How much will it cost? And, most important of all, will it actually be VR?

David Prestonette
New York, NY

A: Virtual VR, Sega's new Genesis peripheral, is scheduled to ship for this Christmas and will sell for around \$200. One game, presumably either a **SF** shooter demo'd at the SCES or **Virtua Racing** will be released with the headpiece, with at least four more titles slated for '94 release. As to the device's quality, frankly, the Doc wasn't overwhelmed. But then the system is still in development and the actual response to motion cues, etc., seemed pretty solid.

Q: I've now read several references to "Q Sound" in your magazine and was wondering which new games will feature it? Also, what about arcade games? Will coin-ops be able to go "Q" as well?

Bob "Thunder" Clowd
Philadelphia, PA

A: Right now the publishers most into the Q Sound phenomenon (see **EG** June '93 "Gamesounds: Making Your Video Games Scream!") seem to be Virgin and Sega. Virgin will debut the technology on **Terminator CD** after which it will be used regularly on Virgin CD products, while Sega is adding Q Sound to the CD version of **Ecco the Dolphin**.

Q Sound is, indeed, also on its way to coin-opville; Capcom's new wrestling game, **Slam Masters**, will feature the revolutionary sound system which enables the player to hear sounds in a 360 degree range. Objects can be heard behind, in front of, or to the left and right of the gamer. Obviously, this technology will be most useful in first-person perspective games, where the full 360 degrees of sound can be utilized to maximum advantage.

Q: I was a big Activision fan in the 80s, and I was wondering if anyone has taken its great games and updated them for the current, 16-Bit game systems?

Steve Brevitt
Los Angeles, CA

A: Yeah—believe it or not, Steve, Activision has! The most recent information from the slowly reawakening software publisher (are you ready to **Return to Zork**?) includes the revival of several classic titles and characters. **River Raid: Mission of No Return**, **Kaboom! The Mad Doctor's Revenge**, and **Pitfall Harry: The Mayan Adventure** are all slated to appear on the SNES this summer.

Old timers may recall that *Pitfall Harry* actually had his own animated Saturday morning TV show there for a while — along with *Pac-Man*, *Q*Bert*, and the non-electronic anomaly, *Rubik*, the Amaz-

ing Cube. Sadly, their acting careers were cut drastically short.

Q&A Quickies: I wanted to take this opportunity to apologize to Jeremy Stegura of Pittston Township, PA, whose beautiful envelope art was reprinted in the May '93 issue with his full return address. Usually we obliterate the return address when it appears on an envelope we print, but somehow yours got through the process intact (probably because of the clever way you integrated it into the art). Again, my personal apology, and a Game Doctor Prize Packet is winging its way to you to make up for any inconvenience it may have caused.

In the future, why don't we try a different approach to this envelope art business and suggest, nay, plead with all envelope artists to include their return address on the back of the envelope in order to eliminate any possible confusion, or stalking by maddened video gamers... Alex Marshall of Houston, TX, was reading a review of Accolade's superb SNES version of **Bubsy the Bobcat** and saw it listed as a "two-player" game. He wonders: "If I'm Bubsy, then who's the other player?" The other player is also Bubsy; the two-player mode simply has gamers take turns... Frank Stringhill, a "life-long fan of the SNES" from Belle Vernon, PA, wonders if any games have been "assigned" for development by Nintendo for the SNES CD-ROM. As of this year's Summer CES, even Acclaim told the Doc that it had yet to receive a development system for SNES CD-ROM. That would almost certainly mean that no other U.S. company has one, since Acclaim is Nintendo's top American developer. Hmm, could that possibly be the smell of vaporwear in the air?...

And gang, that about kicks it in the pants for this installment of the Doc's Q&A gab session. Remember to send all envelope art (with the return address on the back of the envelope), questions, corrections, and comments to:

The Game Doctor (EG)
330 S. Decatur
Suite 152
Las Vegas, NV
89107

Also, to celebrate our 12th birthday, every letter printed in next month's column wins the writer a much-coveted, prized-beyond-all-earthly-goods Game Doctor Prize Packet.

Can you contain the excitement? Can you stand to wait four whole weeks? Aloha.



FANDOM CENTRAL

Unite or Fie!

by Arnie Katz

Is electronic gaming a passing fad or an ongoing sub-culture? Evidence that fandom will be with us for many years to come continues to accumulate. The announcement of the formation of GEA is yet another indication that fandom is building for its future.

The Game Enthusiasts of America (GEA) is a new national (and international) fan club by and for electronic gaming fans. Chris Johnston, editor of **Paradox**, is President. NAEGE, last year's noble but ill-fated effort, has dissolved and thrown its entire support behind the new effort. For its part, GEA will grant every NAEGE member a free one-year membership to cement relations between the new and old organizations.

A fan group is no stronger than its people. The fans behind GEA are the second wave of major fans. With fans like Chris Johnston (president), Andy Saito (editor of the club magazine), and Nathan Hauke (publicity and communications) spearheading the launch, GEA is likely to become an organized program of value to gaming fans everywhere.

Andy Saito is editor of the bimonthly **GEA News**. Each bimonthly, 20-page issue will update members on club activities and services and offer information about gaming now unavailable to the average fan. GEA also promises a second bimonthly zine, devoted entirely to fandom.

Every serious electronic gamer should try a one-year membership. Send a check or money order for \$10 to: Gaming Enthusiasts of America, 19 Vermont St., Methuen, MA 01844. Make checks payable to Gaming Enthusiasts of America.

I'll update information about GEA in this column as it becomes available. Meanwhile, let's not forget the main purpose for *Fandom Central*. It's time to attack that ever-growing pile of new zines on the bay window behind my desk.

The Atari Zone Vol. 5/#3

Edited by Daniel Iacovelli

1411 N. 36th, Melrose Park, IL 60160

Frequent, \$1.60 per issue, 11 pages

Dan's editorial apology for lateness is unnecessary from two standpoints.

Fanzines are a hobby, and **The Atari Zone** is both frequent and informative enough to please fans of Atari hardware and software.

This is one of several zines that cater to classic systems. This issue's trivia quiz will inspire many happy memories.

Fantazine #2

Edited by Pat Reynolds

1740 Millbrook SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49508

Monthly, \$1.50 per issue, 22 pages

A huge staff of writers, some of them fairly literate, cover almost every phase of electronic gaming, though the spot seldom strays too far from cartridges. The monthly schedule may turn out to be too ambitious, but I hope its opinionated young editor continues to get it out as frequently as possible.

Few will agree with everything written in the well-filled pages, but **Fantazine** is crammed with controversy that's sure to get any gamer's blood racing. Highly entertaining and, therefore, recommended.

The Gaming Edge #1

Edited by Mike Short & Matt Turner

756 Valley Crest Dr., Vista, CA 92084

Frequent, \$1.50 per issue, 11 pages

The best suggestion that can be given to any first time faned (fanzine editor) is "look at other zines first!" This is both editors' first fanzine. It's a good start, but it would've been even better had they avoided overly large text type and printed on both sides of the sheet.

These are two bright newcomers, worth encouragement and support. Their first-issue flubs will soon be a memory. Matt and Mike are primarily interested in multimedia and video games, and their fanzine looks like a promising source for

data about cartridge and CD-based entertainment.

Game Force #2

Edited by Jeff Beedham

P.O. Box 1610, Belen, NM 87002-1610

Frequent, \$1.50 per issue, 12 pages

Here's a good example of how titles improve. Jeff's first publication was pretty typical of first tries, but his second issue looks and reads much better.

Jeff is a multimedia-conscious gamer, so look for plenty of material about CD-based software as well as the popular cartridge games in future issues.

High Density #1

Edited by Greg Bemis

56 Glenview Dr.

San Francisco, CA 94131

Monthly, \$1.00 per issue, 12 pages

With Danny Han moving into the pro ranks, fans are looking for new computer fanzines. This outstanding first issue is one candidate to fill the need.

High Density's layout is enhanced by photos and drawings that break up the text. The writing is fairly good for the first-go-round. Greg seems to have the determination to make **High Density** a major fanzine.

Video Game Review #5

Edited by Travis Scott

8 Peppertree, Anderson, SC 29621

Bimonthly, \$1.25 per issue, 24 pages

As the name implies, this fanzine has a large section of short video game reviews. It also has articles on such diverse subjects as the viability of the TurboGrafx-16 and game sequels.

VGR, though already worth a read, continues to improve. With better organization and tougher editing, it may make a real mark on fandom.

Attention fanzine editors: If you'd like your fanzine reviewed in this column, send it to: Arnie Katz, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107. I read and save them all.

IT'S TIME TO PICK A WINNING TEAM!



IT'S 1941 and the U.S. and Japan are preparing to clash.

The goal is to control the Pacific! The game schedule is exhausting: Pearl Harbor, Midway and the Philippines for starters. Both teams have great captains, fantastic rosters and the best equipment around. The Americans can depend on the Yorktown, Hornet and Nevada to run successful battle plays that will amaze their opponents. But don't count out the other team quite yet. The Japanese carrier force can quickly make up lost ground by running secret plays or handing off tough missions to their top-notch kamikazes. The starting gun is about to fire. It's time to pick your team colors and hit the battlefield. Good luck!



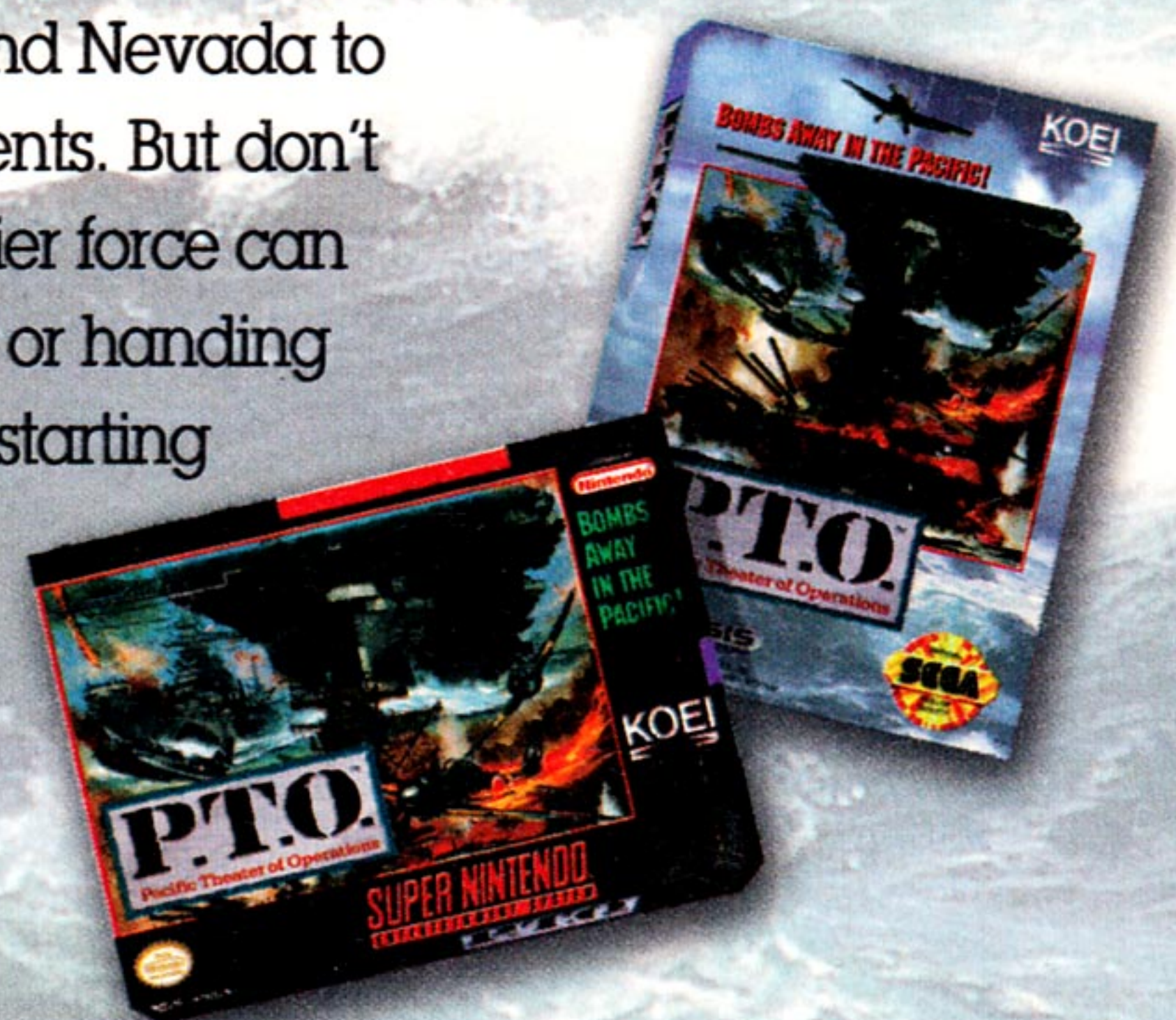
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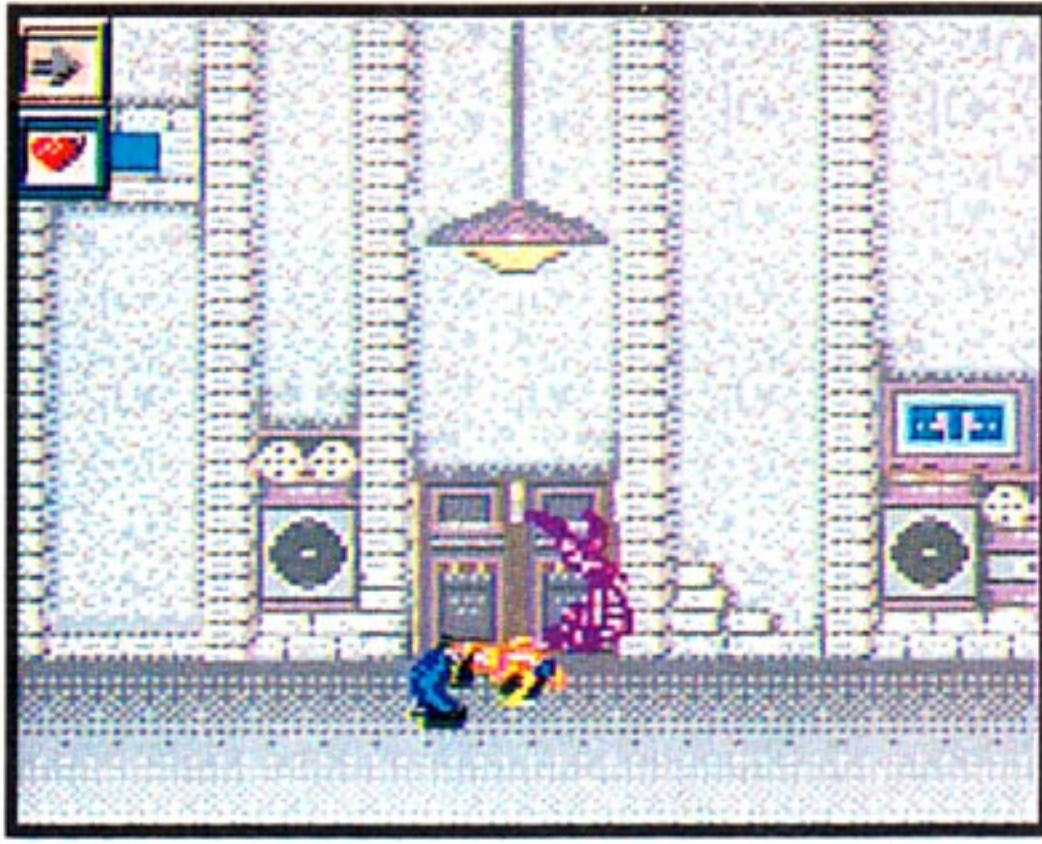
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SUPER NINTENDO



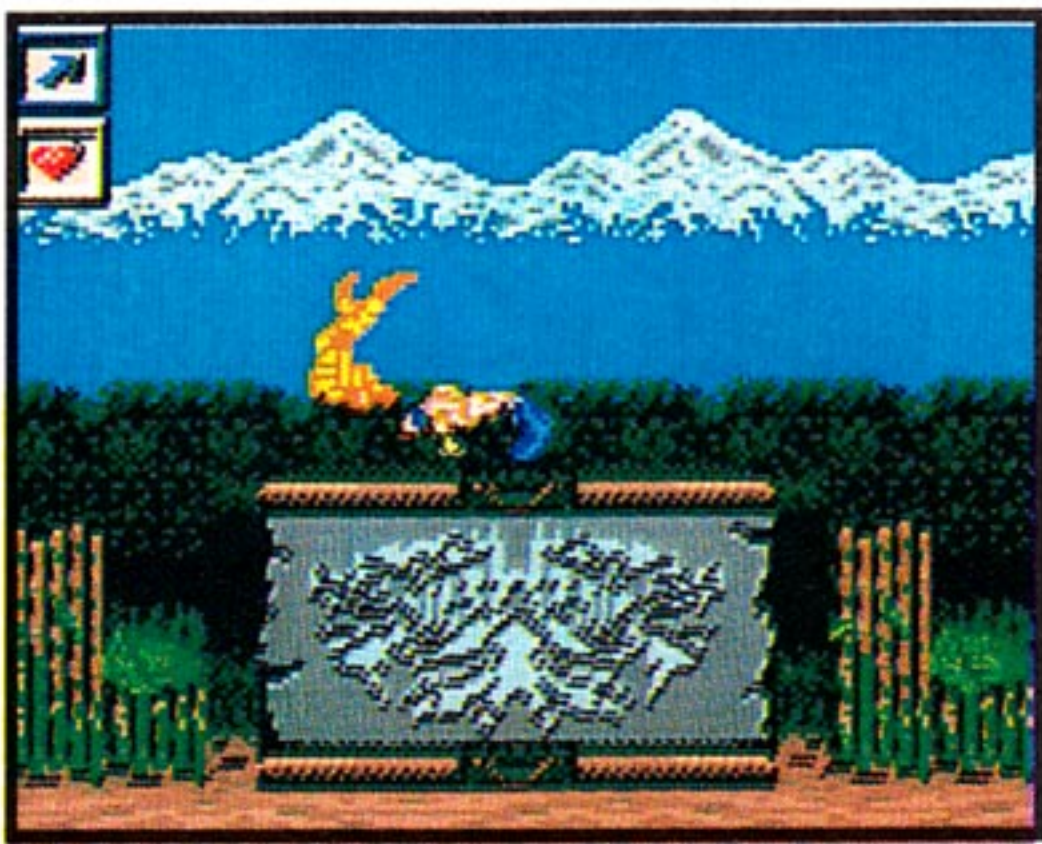
SEGA GENESIS



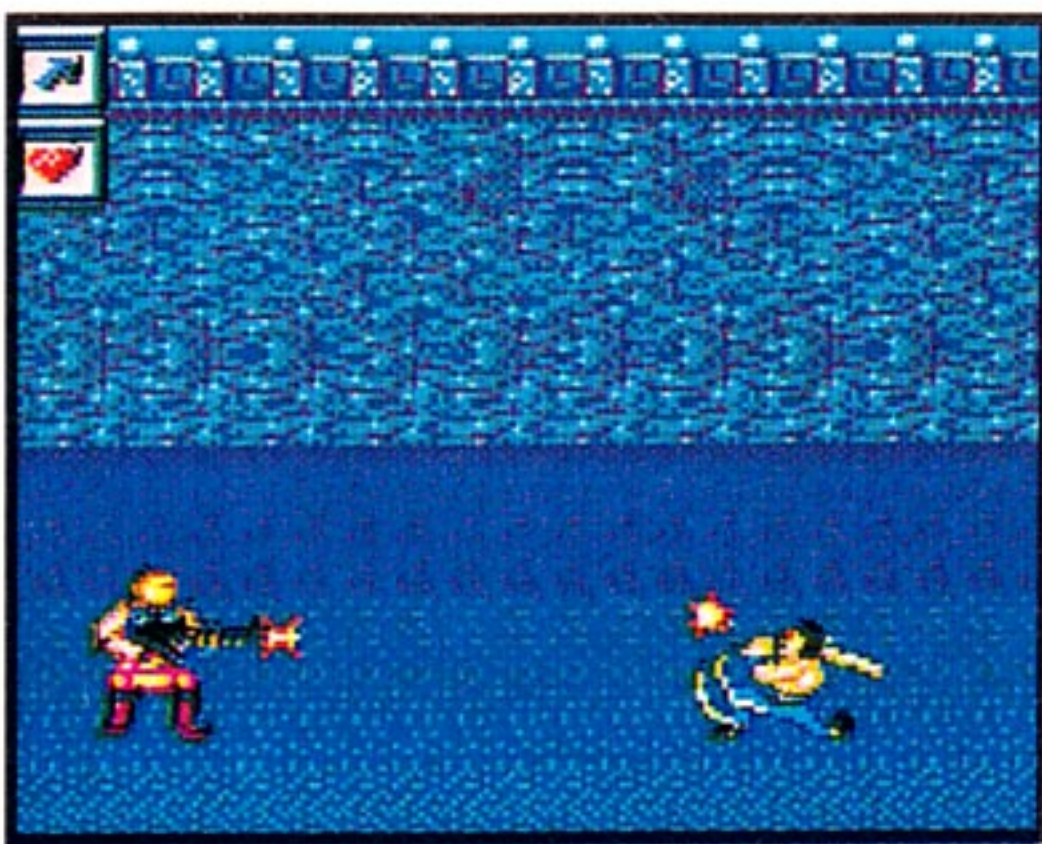
Defeat all the enemy ninjas and continue left until you reach the phone booths. Ask Adam for clues here.



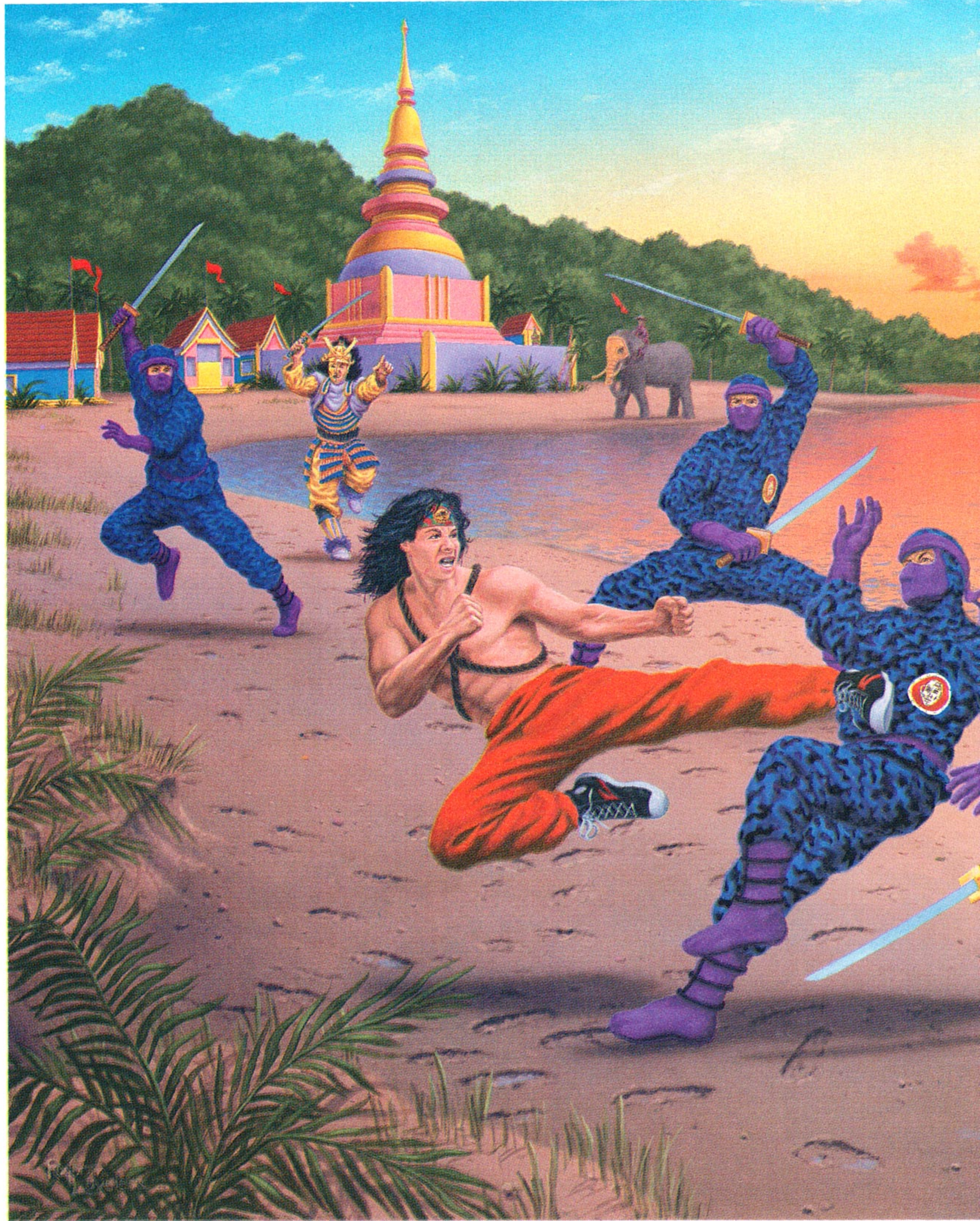
Stand on top of the plaque after you've defeated all the ninjas, and ask Adam for a hint. He may give you clues leading to the family treasures.



To beat the enemy ninjas here, move to the right and jump off the ledge to the next full statue. Ask Adam for a hint.

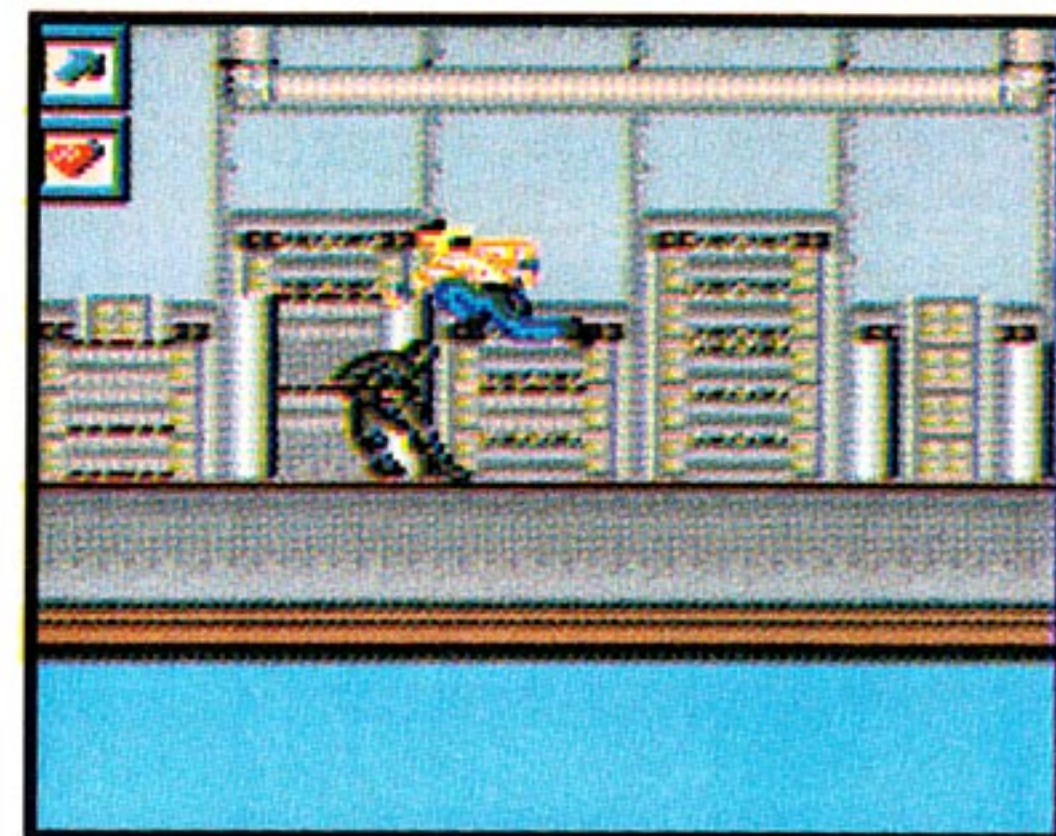


SURF NINJAS™

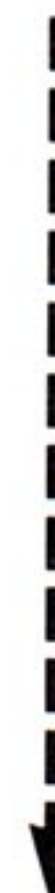


WELCO
METOT
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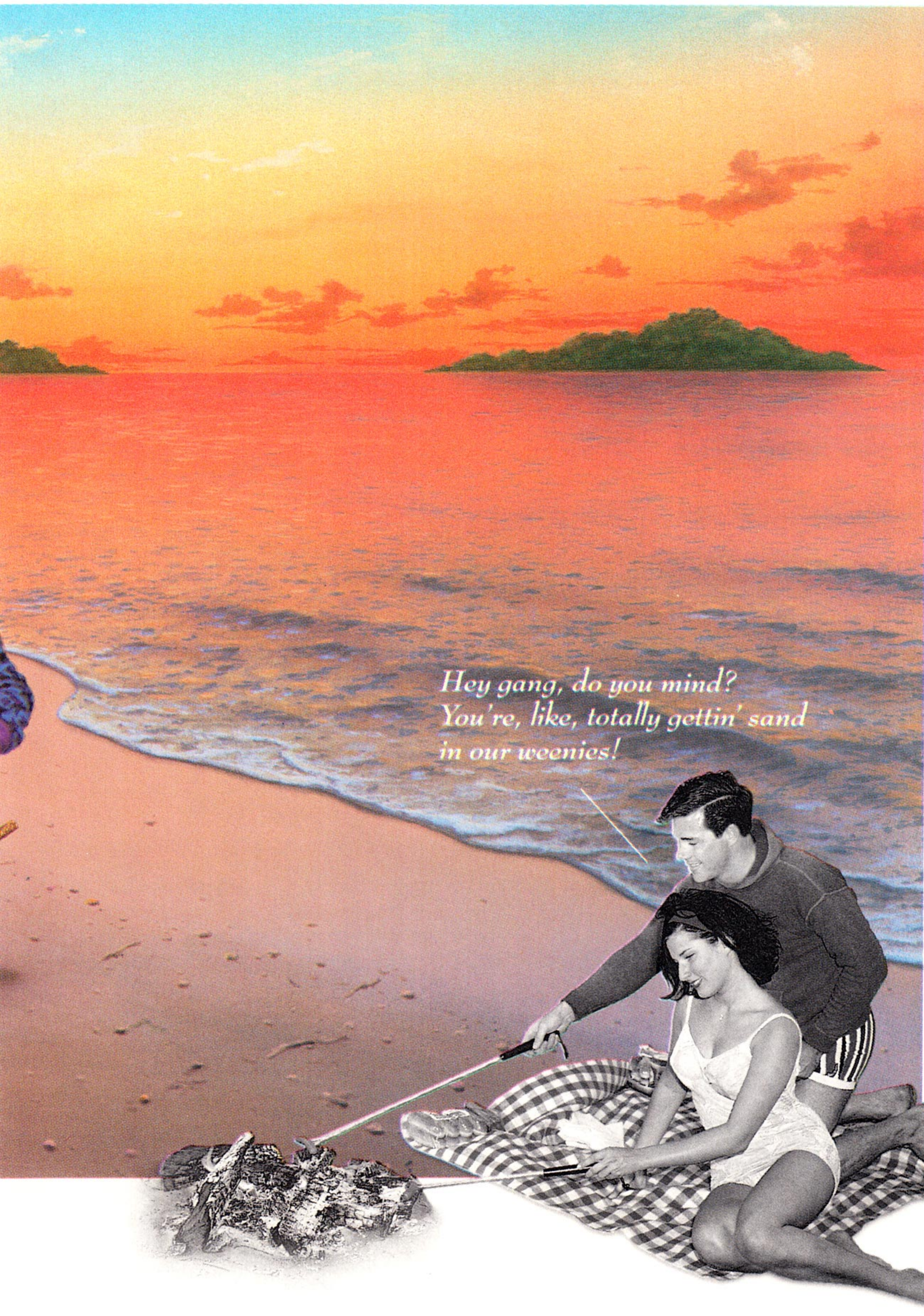
Your only defense against Colonel Chi's gun is the Weapon of Kwantsu.



Find this secret level and look for power-ups, special weapons, an extra life, and gold coins. You also might find a shortcut to finishing the level.



Based on the movie of the same name, Surf Ninjas is perhaps the most intense, action-packed martial arts game ever. See into the future. Fight ninja death squads. Liberate your South Pacific homeland from the evil Colonel Chi. Gnarly.



*Hey gang, do you mind?
You're, like, totally gettin' sand
in our weenies!*

 **NEW LINE CINEMA**

The Jaguar Roars

Atari's New Multimedia System Springs To Life

Atari says there's never been anything like it, and we believe it. The Jaguar hits the market this fall in New York, as the world's first 64-Bit multimedia entertainment system.

Several years in the making, the Jaguar leapfrogs Atari into the thick of the multimedia race. Atari Corporation hasn't made much noise lately. When the Atari ST computer faded into obscurity, Atari's presence in the gaming community hung only on its past glories—and the diminutive Lynx portable game system. The excellence of the Lynx belied its tiny size, and kept the sleeping giant alive.

While industry pundits bemoaned the fate of the historic company, rumblings of another mighty project were heard in Silicon Valley. Fans geared up their expectations for the Panther, a video game unit that never made it out of the factory. But even when its death was announced, before it had even been born, there were rumors of another kind of cat about to appear in the jungle of gaming hardware. Now those stories are becoming tangible.

If advance specifications are to be believed, this is one powerful cat. It's based on Atari's 64-Bit RISC processor, which should make it the fastest and most powerful data manipulator available to video gamers.

The Jaguar reproduces over 16 million colors and produces shaded 3-D polygons. It also has real-time texture mapping, and is said to be capable of spectacular video effects.

When the company spokesmen talk about the "roar" of the Jaguar, there's a reason. The audio system offers 16-Bit stereo CD quality sound, and can reproduce realistic sound effects, as well as lifelike human voices. Big game hunters will hear this cat coming!

Atari promises the Jaguar will be truly expandable; they've built in a 32-Bit expansion port for use in the future to connect to cable and phone networks. It's also equipped with a digital signal processing port so that a modem or other digital audio peripherals can be connected.

Some Technical Expertise

Atari is no slouch in the manufacturing department, but the Jaguar calls for something really special. Now that the wizards in Atari's R&D department have completed their prototypes, Atari has gone to a giant

build the sleek system in their Charlotte, North Carolina, facility, so the Jaguar will be fully American made.

This is one of the first outside projects that IBM has accepted, and also one of IBM's first manufacturing projects for the consumer electronics market. The personnel at IBM Charlotte are excited about the venture. Herbert L. Watkins, director of Application Solutions manufacturing, explained, "Everyone expects IBM to manufacture complex information technology products, and with this, we'll show that we can competitively build a sophisticated consumer product."

What About Software?

Like every new system, the Jaguar's success or failure really depends on the software that becomes available. Right now Atari is promising a group of games for the launch, with more in development. The software will be packed on

MegaCarts, and the company has already announced three new 3-D game titles: **Cybermorph**,

Aliens vs. Predator and **Jaguar Formula One Racing**. The company also will release new versions, specifically redesigned for the Jaguar, of their classics **Battlezone 2000** and **Tempest 2000**. The company will also license third party developers to publish Jaguar software.

Roughly 50,000 units will be available this fall, at approximately \$200. (The price and release date of the CD peripheral hasn't yet been

announced.) National rollout is set for 1994. Get ready for the roar!

-Joyce Worley



to arrange for manufacture of their newest machine. IBM Corporation got the contract, valued at \$500 million, to

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16-Bit Hits Its Stride

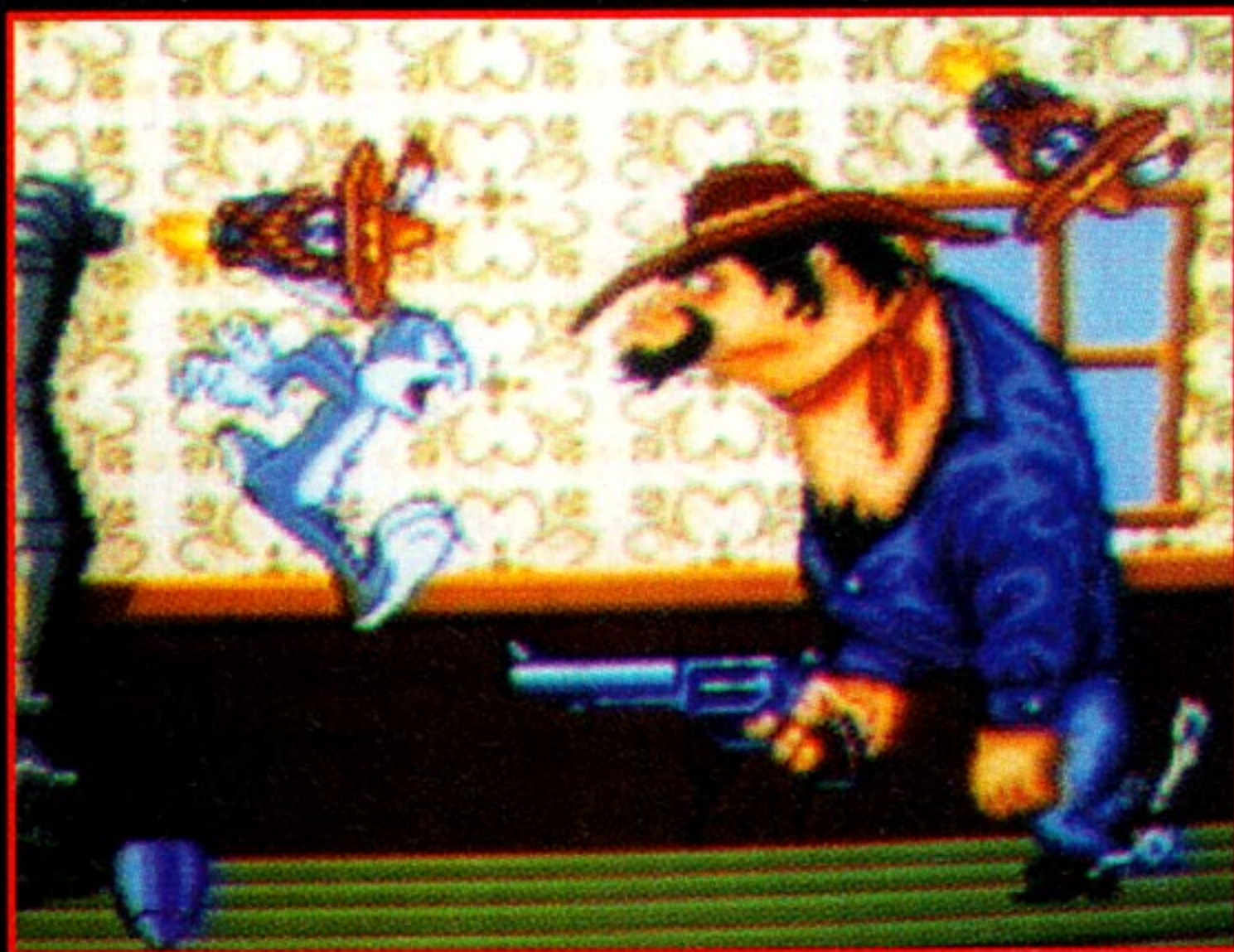
by Joyce Worley & the Editorial Staff

Get set for the best video games you've ever played. With no disrespect intended toward yesterday's classics, the cartridges coming this fall and winter are the pinnacle of 16-bit entertainment. Designers and developers have now mastered the intricacies of the hardware and are wringing amazing graphics, sound, and play-action out of the popular consoles.

Even an article as long as this can't describe *all* the goodies coming our way, but these are the ones **EG's** editors believe will be the most interesting releases during the next six months.

Ready for Action

Platform games, platform games, everyone's got platform games. Though hardly the staple they were in the late 1980s, good graphics and sound, higher speed, and plenty of animated frills keep them on the best seller list in the 1990s.



Bugs Bunny is up to more mischief in the SNES version of Rabbit Rampage.

The Adventures of Rocky & Bullwinkle and Friends (Absolute/Genesis), due this fall, lets the gamer take the role of either Rocky or Bullwinkle, in this typical platform game.

Bugs Bunny: Rabbit Rampage (Sunsoft/SNES) is based on the familiar



The dashing and daring private fish-eye, James Pond, returns in an all-new game.

Warner Bros. cartoon. The animator interrupts the cartoon to erase and change things, which brings a whole new atmosphere to the game.

You'll laugh out loud at **Chuck Rock II: Son of Chuck** (Virgin Games/Genesis, Sega CD). This horizontal scroller has an assortment of prehistoric adversaries.

Cool Spot (Virgin/SNES) looks (what else?) cool.

There's a Sega CD version coming with music.

Daffy Duck: The Marvin Missions

(Sunsoft/SNES), though not especially exciting, has some very funny animations. It's a platform game with the Warner Bros. characters.

Dashin' Desperadoes (Data East/Genesis), a race with kid characters, offers great head-to-head play. The first to the end of the level gets a kiss. The quality music is infectious.

Goofy (Absolute/Genesis) packs Disney appeal. Goofy's special tools make this platform game a lot of fun. He can extend a hand to grab, a boxing glove to

hit and a propeller to fly.

James Pond III: Operation Starfish (EA/Genesis) asks players to save the moon through 80-100 levels of side-scrolling cute graphics. This may signal an upturn for the series.

Kaboom: The Mad Doctor's Revenge (Activision/SNES) improves the look and game play of the cartridge classic. Don't get blown up while trying to stop the villain from destroying world landmarks.

Mr. Nutz (Ocean/SNES) stars as an acrobatic squirrel who throws nuts. The colorful and well-drawn artwork gives **Mr. Nutz** a slick, cartoon look.

Mario & Wario (Nintendo/SNES) should keep people busy playing for hours. The 10-12 level action/puzzle title makes good use of the Mario and Wario characters.

Pink Goes to Hollywood (TecMagik/Genesis), developed by Manley & Associates, puts the Pink Panther through movie spoofs. A pink spray dispatches the enemies. It's an imaginative and



appropriate use of the popular character.

Pitfall Harry: The Mayan Adventure (Activision/SNES) is another reborn favorite from the early days. It features really good graphics and sound, a much larger play environment, and a lot of new moves. The bungee jumping scenes are

Rating the Fall-Winter Video Games



Gamers must help Puggsy the Potato to triumph over many puzzles and tests.

a highlight.

The star of **Puggsy** (Psygnosis/Genesis) is a potato, but he moves and acts with uncanny realism. Puggsy must solve puzzles, which vary a great deal in difficulty, while he explores an island.

Sylvester and Tweety: Cagey Capers (TecMagik/Genesis) boasts the best graphics of the Looney Toon video games. Sylvester chases Tweety around, just like in the cartoons.

Wizzy 'n' Lizzy (Psygnosis/Genesis) are a little sorcerer and witch, and the gamer can play either one. The characters are very tiny on the screen, cute but difficult to see. It allows them to zip around the screen like greased lightning. This is a fairly non-violent cartridge, which may make it especially suitable for younger players.

Blades of Vengeance (EA/Genesis), coming in September, casts the player as an axe-wielding warrior or sorcerer. The 40-level contest was formerly known as **Bard's Arcade**.

Publishers who want to cash in on the mania for fighting games are showing a lot of ingenuity. Fall and winter offerings will put the familiar combat action into imaginative new settings.

More detailed animation makes movement more realistic and less cartoony in **Captain America and the Avengers** (Software Toolworks/SNES). It's actually



Twist and turn with the flexible foes as you challenge others in Clay Fighter.

more like Data East's Genesis edition than the same company's coin-op.

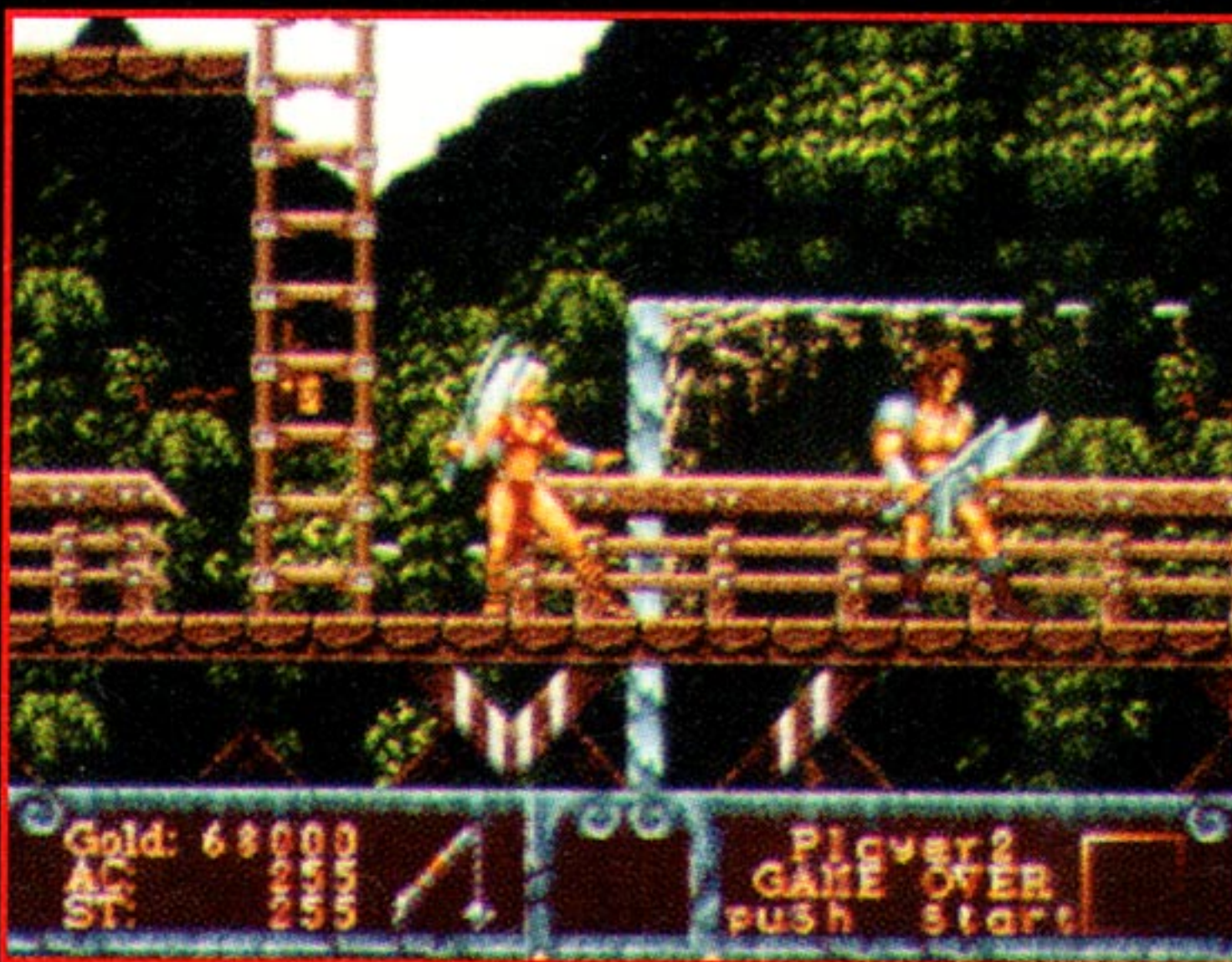
Clayfighter (Interplay/SNES) is very colorful and humorous, and the most creative of the fighting games. The cartoonishly animated clay figures make the violence less harsh.

Eternal Champions (Sega/Genesis) features fast action and excellent visuals. The graphics look good, if not exceptional.

Lethal Enforcer (Konami/Genesis, SNES) comes with its own plug-in plastic gun. It's based on the coin-op target shooter; digitized characters appear on screen in turkey shoot fashion.

The half-shell heroes turn tough in **Turtles Tournament Fighters** (Konami/Genesis, SNES), the latest wrinkle in the fighting game craze. The action isn't exactly revolutionary, but the graphics and sound dress it up a lot.

World Heroes (Sunsoft/SNES) is Sunsoft's answer to the fight craze. The moves are all right, and there are a lot of heroes, but it may need a bit more development to acquire more distinguishing features.



Blades of Vengeance pits the player against many foes, with axe in hand.

Shooters are the backbone of video gaming. It's hard to beat the frantic firepower found in these cartridges!

Alien vs. Predator (Activision/SNES, Genesis), based on the Dark Horse comic book, allows play from three perspectives: the Queen Alien, the Predator, or the base commander.

BattleClash II (Nintendo/SNES) is a shooter with bi-directional scrolling. The graphics aren't much better than the original, but the music and sound effects are improved.

BioMetal (Activision/SNES) is a tough horizontal scrolling shooter. Cyborgs provide the opposition.

Robocop vs. The Terminator (Virgin Games/SNES, Genesis) is an intense shooter based on the Dark Horse comic. The only downside is that you can't be

the Terminator, because he's supposed to be the game's bad guy.

River Raid: The Mission of No Return (Activision/SNES) is a sequel to the original **River Raid**. An expanded roster of enemies and targets looks very good. Night missions are simulated by restricting the player's visibility to a cone directly in front of the aircraft. This uses a top-down perspective with vertical scrolling.

Soldiers of Fortune (Spectrum Hologram/Genesis, SNES) is an overhead shooting game. It's very simple and fun, with tons of action.

Super Empire Strikes Back (LucasArts/SNES) follows the story of the second *Star Wars* movie. You can play Luke, Han or Chewie. It features lots of cinematic cut-scenes and more varied game play.

Turn and Burn: No Fly Zone (Absolute/SNES) incorporates ground-breaking video clips technology. It is similar to the Game Boy cartridge, but the graphics are outstanding for 16-Bit.

Another good sequel is **Rolling Thunder 3** (Namco/Genesis). It's kill or be killed through 10 horizontally scrolling levels.

Superstar Sports Carts

Football and soccer dominate the forthcoming team sports cartridges, but racing, boxing and tennis are also represented.

Digitized video and speech spice up **ABC's Monday Night Football** (Data



The trials of the Rebel Alliance continue to build in Super Empire Strikes Back.

East/SNES). The play-calling system is a bit complex, but the action is first rate.

John Madden Football '94 (Electronic Arts/SNES, Genesis) uses the new football engine introduced in **Walsh**. There's a close-up of the field, weather is now factored into the game, and the speech is more varied. The SNES cart includes commentary from Madden, which helps to top off the fantastic amount of realism already present in the simulation.

Rating the Fall-Winter Video Games

Compete or cooperate in **Dan Marino's Touchdown Football** (Virgin Games/Genesis) when not playing solitaire against the machine. The sideline vantage point provides a clear view of the unfolding action.

Quarterback Club (Acclaim/Genesis) is a multi-view football simulation with smashing graphics. The field-level view keeps up with the fast gridiron action.

Beastball (Spectrum Holobyte/Genesis & SNES) continues the craze for putting monsters in football jerseys. It has lots of special monstrous moves.

Super Bases Loaded II (Jaleco/SNES) contains a special chip to handle scaling, which yields fast, beautiful graphics. This stat-influenced action contest now allows full-season extended play.

The vertically split screen of **World Series Baseball** (Sega/Genesis) offers the largest batter ever seen in a baseball game. The offbeat color scheme may bother some players, but this game is hot.

2020 Super Baseball (Electronic Arts/Genesis) is adapted from the SNK/Neo•Geo coin-op. The game gives the National Pastime a cybernetic goose. Play as male, female or robot. The blurred afterimage to track a speeding ball is superb.

NBA Jam (Acclaim/SNES, Genesis) brings the arcade game home. This one has really large characters, but it maintains surprisingly smooth action throughout play.



2020 Super Baseball lets players leap into the future for some intense action.

Al Michaels calls the shots and saves in **Brett Hull Hockey** (Accolade/SNES, Genesis). It has a solid statistic basis, multiple views of the action and optional penalties. This is a "must" for fans of the sport.

The players slip and slide a little too

much in **NHL Hockey** (Nintendo/SNES) but the rotoscoped images are generally of high quality.

International Soccer (Electronic Arts/Genesis) has great music to accompany the realistic soccer play and funny animation. The angled side viewpoint keeps the ball in view at all times.

Nigel Mansell's World Championship Racing (GameTek/NES, SNES, Genesis) is a first-person driving game with 16 tracks. Customize your car and race it in fair weather and foul. The effect of limited visibility makes this more subtle than the usual pedal-to-the-metal race.

Pelé Soccer (Accolade/Genesis, SNES) portrays the action from behind the players. The ball's bounces, rolls and stops on the grass are authentic. Weather influences individual moves and the overall conduct of the match.

Pro Moves Soccer (ASCII Software/Genesis) uses all six buttons intelligently, but that still makes for a fairly complicated game. The overhead perspective doesn't work too well.

Compete on 12 tracks in **Formula 1 World Cup** (Domark/Genesis). This 8-meg cartridge has a 64K battery backup.

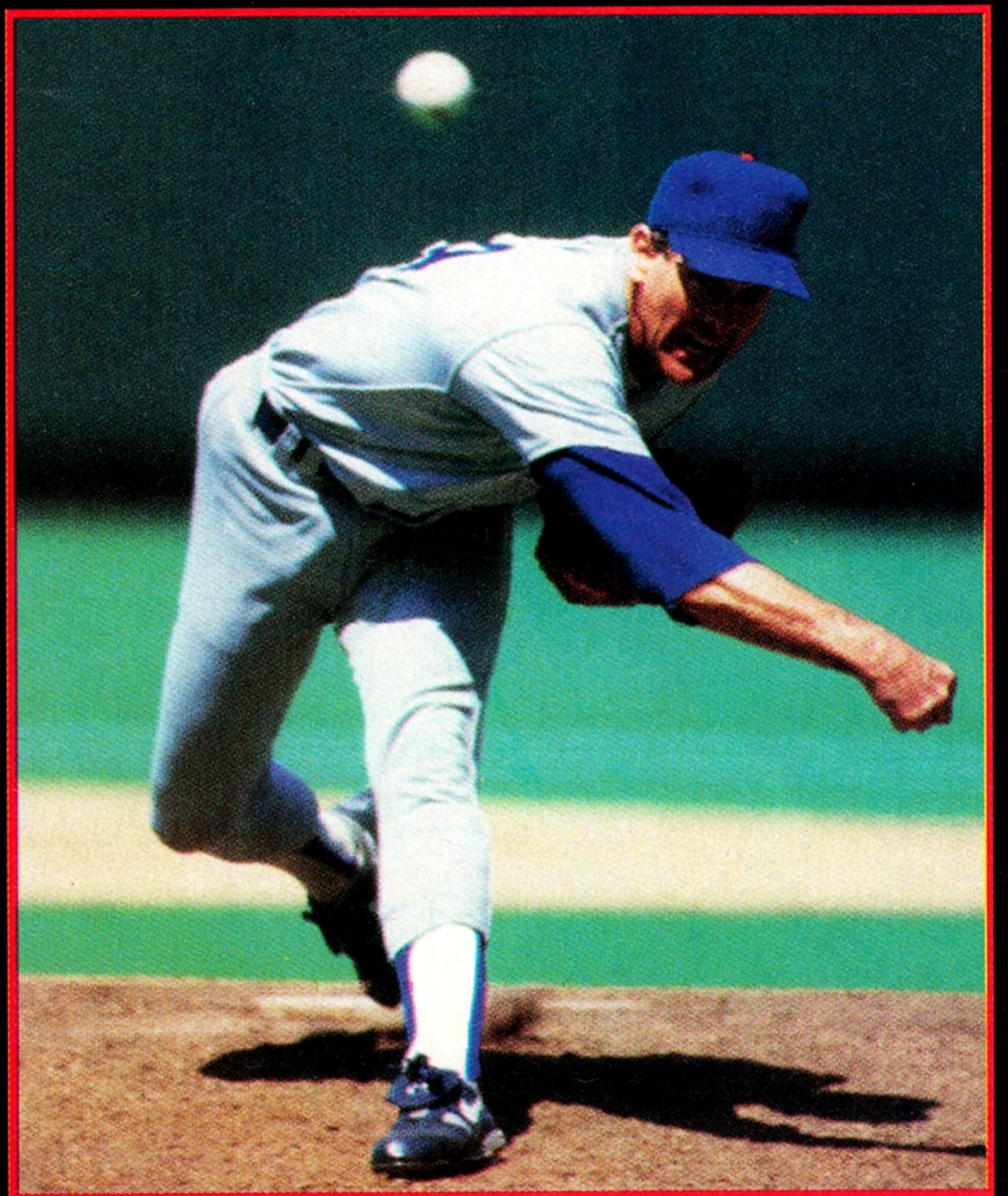
FX Trax (Nintendo/SNES) is a behind-the-cockpit point-of-view racing game. It uses the second-generation SFX chip.

Redline: F-1 Racer (Absolute/SNES) brings back memories of **Pole Position**, with its behind-the-car perspective, and it has a split screen for two-player racing. The cars are responsive, and Absolute's usual fine sound job enhances the game-experience.

Speed Racer (Accolade/Genesis, SNES) lets the player become Speed Racer or Racer X, with their appropriate vehicles and tools. The recent movie has revived interest in the animated adventure series, and this game turns the familiar characters, hardware, and situations into an interactive experience.

Riddick Bowe Boxing (Extreme/SNES) is a very fast game. The rotating ring is a nice effect, but the Riddick character doesn't look too much like the real fighter. Still, Sculptured Software has developed an outstanding boxing title.

WCW: Main Event Wrestling



(FCI/Genesis, SNES) endows each mat star with the signature moves that made them famous. Sting (the wrestler, not the singer) is the best known character included in the game.

Andre Agassi Tennis (TecMagik/SNES) is a revised version of the 1992 Genesis title. It's basically an action contest, rather than a simulation. The racquetees are small, but move well.

Quest for Adventure

One of the important developments in this segment of video gaming is the arrival of games which support the SNES mouse. It makes it a lot easier to play



A popular series on the PC, Eye of the Beholder makes a debut on the SNES.

many RPGs and adventures than using the conventional controller.

Beauty and the Beast (2 games) (Sunsoft/Genesis) is a grand experiment to

entice female players to try. Both products are fun and feature animation and music that are slanted toward boys or girls. Excellent animation and graphics reproduce many scenes from the movie.

Castlevania: Bloodlines (Konami/Genesis) is much gorier than previous **Castlevania** titles. The first **Castlevania** game on the Genesis, its plot spans from the Middle Ages to the present. Scenery includes female vampires, a torture chamber, and hanging body parts.

Eye of the Beholder (Capcom/SNES) is a fairly straight port from the MS-DOS version, though the graphics can't be quite as good. Capcom did a great job with this mouse-controlled RPG.

The Journey Home: Quest for the Throne (Renovation/SNES) is a **Final Fantasy/Zelda**-like game that should appeal to adventurers. The overhead perspective visuals are excellent. The music, by a member of Yellow Magic, is very atmospheric and dovetails with on-screen action.

Might & Magic III (FCI/SNES, Genesis) is another port-over with less bells and whistles than the original, but the same baffling mazes and extensive world. The music may be better than the original, and it plays very well with the mouse.



Out to Lunch, for the SNES, makes a great recipe for fast action gaming.

Star Trek: The Next Generation (Spectrum Holobyte/SNES) puts the gamer in command of the series' seven major characters. Save the galaxy by juggling their talents to handle sticky situations.

Titled overhead perspective gives **Runes of Virtue** (Origin/SNES) an unusual, attractive appearance. This RPG is large (150 levels) but fairly easy to play. Pick one of four characters and start questing.

Ultima: The False Prophet (FCI/SNES) is a port from the MS-DOS version. The cartridge includes a battery for backing up saved games. Like the previous PC conversions, this one should be good.

Think Fast: Strategy and Action-Strategy

It isn't always easy to tell action from action-strategy video games. These announced titles require more than just hair-trigger reflexes to win.

Inspired by the movie, **Dennis the Menace** (Ocean/SNES, NES) is a platform game with many background animations. Dennis plays tricks on Mr. Wilson in this conventional platform game with 10-15 levels.

Goof Troop (Capcom/SNES), based on the TV show, is a straightforward puzzle contest. The graphics are cute.

There's ghostly fun in **Haunting** (Electronic Arts/Genesis). As a pesky spirit, the player frightens a family out of four houses.

Zombies Ate My Neighbors (Konami/SNES) has different types of monsters on each action level. Adults will love the humor and catchy graphics on this one, though there's no shortage of real-time excitement.

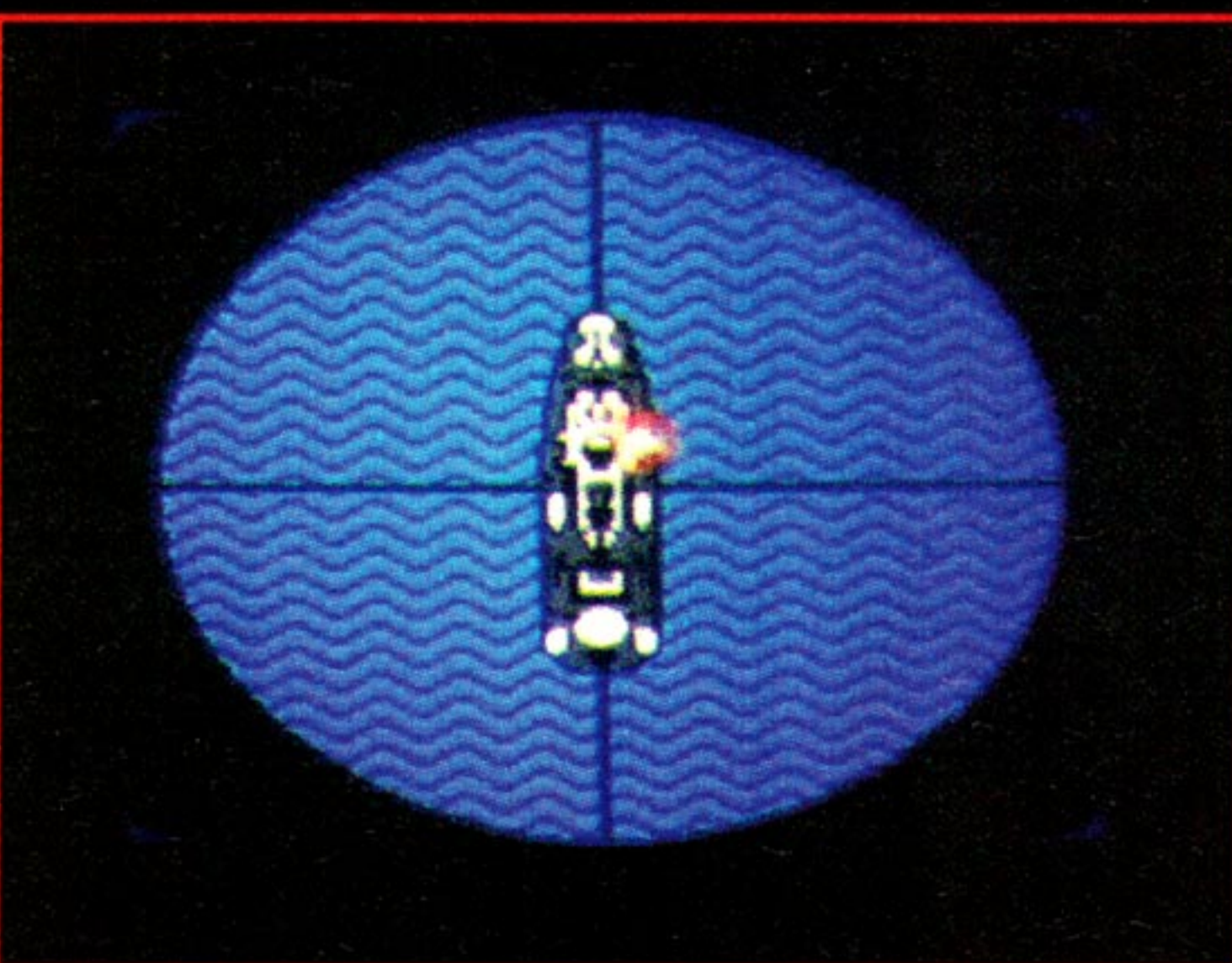
From Europe comes **Out to Lunch** (Software Toolworks/SNES), a platform game with cool characters, but ordinary action. Dueling chefs gather ingredients to prepare gourmet dishes through six levels.

War is always a popular topic for games. These are the best of the upcoming military titles.

Ghengis Khan II: Clan of the Gray Wolf (Koei/SNES, Genesis) fixes up **Ghengis**. The new cart has two-player capability for its four scenarios.

Metal Marines (Namco/SNES) puts futuristic battle units into a strategic, chess-like setting. The intriguing game-play makes amends for the average visuals.

Super Battleship (Software Toolworks/SNES) is a campaign game in which you take part in arcade sequences and strategy sequences to eliminate your opponent's ships. Varied missions and terrain make the game challenging and



Fans of the conventional Battleship will find the video version fun to play.

promote additional replayability.

Super Battletank 2 (Absolute/SNES) has a separate turret to add more firepower in the familiar combat fest. A video sequence runs on the cockpit screen to celebrate each kill.

Walker (Psygnosis/Genesis, SNES) was originally developed for home computers. Battles involving the giant machines turned out so frenetic that the publisher has brought it to cartridge.

The desire to appeal to older players as well as teenagers has encouraged some publishers to produce games which are more mentally challenging than physically demanding. These games have more depth and complexity than most cartridges, but they retain high playability and strong audiovisual effects.



So you think nothing goes on in an anthill? SimAnt will change your mind.

SimAnt (Maxis/SNES) is much more accessible and less vast than the computer disk. The campaign is like the PC product, but there are also shorter scenarios. It also has lots of Easter Eggs and an animated ant encyclopedia.

Caesar's Palace (Virgin Games/SNES, Genesis) adds twists to standard casino activity. It has Video Poker, Blackjack, Slots, Roulette, Craps, and Keno, but also tip pulls, off-track horse betting and Red Dog. The SNES version supports the mouse.

Championship Pool (Software Toolworks/SNES) lets the player set the velocity of the ball. It has good graphics, and includes 14 different pool-hall games.

Side Pocket (Data East/SNES) adds some trick shots to the repertoire in the Genesis edition. This is still the best pool game available.

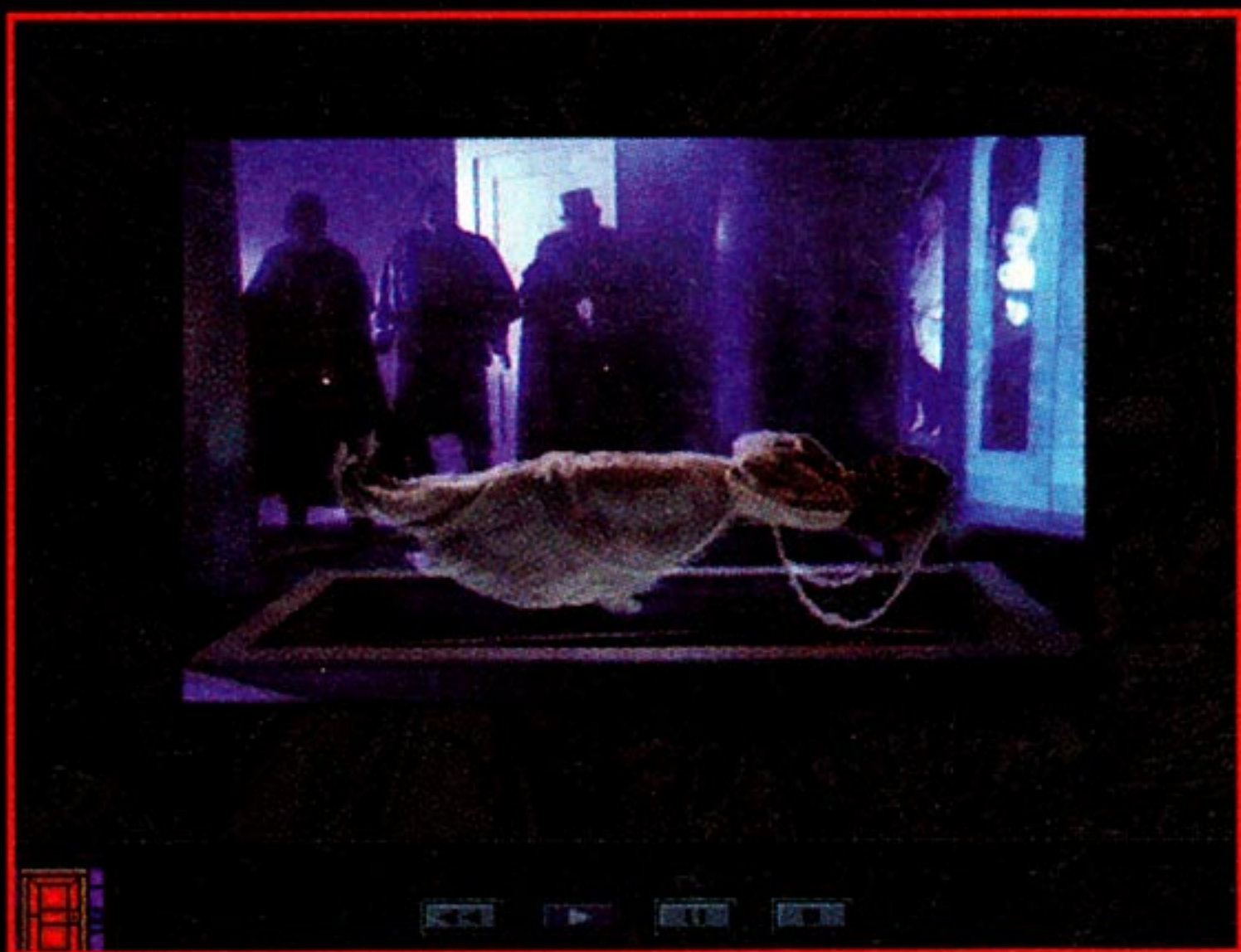
The Final Analysis

The 1993 holiday season will be a feast for video gamers. Quantity and quality are will reach new highs, and diversification of subject matter and game-play are sure to continue.

Hot floppies ride the cutting edge

by Arnie Katz & the Editorial Staff

Computer game creators are like X-15 pilots. They beat the astronauts into space, but the astronauts went farther and stayed longer.



Dracula Unleashed will bring the terror of the silver screen to PC monitors.

Similarly, designers are exploring the high frontier of home interactive entertainment, but multimedia can go where even 586 software can't. Multimedia overflows with potential, but computer gaming still has some of the hottest projects. We realize that production schedules often slip behind, but most of the companies are trying to adhere to their plans. Here's what publishers plan to introduce this fall and winter.



Breaking new ground in adventure games is becoming a tough task!

Adventures and RPGs

The darker aspects of fantasy continue to fascinate gamers. Macabre programs include:

Dracula Unleashed (ICOM Simulations/MS-DOS) takes place in England, 10 years after the novel. The hero has four days to destroy Dracula. Full motion video segments are well acted and spine-tingling.

Bloodnet (MicroProse/MS-DOS) is a cyberpunk vampire adventure. Surreal forays into cyberspace make the first exploit of futuristic sleuth Ransom Stark a winner.

Bloodstone (Mindcraft/MS-DOS) uses the older **Magic Candle** engine, with upgrades. For instance, the designers removed food as a consideration, because people complained eating is boring.

Music and sound effects give **Quest for Glory 4: Shadows of Darkness** (Sierra MS-DOS) the ideal spookiness. The series turns darker in this installment. There are vampires, wraiths, and a mad doctor abroad in Moravia.

Gabriel Knight (Sierra/MS-DOS), by Jane Jensen, is a dark adult drama. The New Orleans story centers on voodoo practices. The opening nightmare sequence is impressive.

Jagged Alliance (Sir-Tech/MS-DOS) is a retitled revision of a game shown six months ago. It's still not far along. The plot is strikingly inventive, involving a medicine man and mercenaries.

Publishers aren't forgetting more orthodox fantasy. These are some of the most intriguing plots around.



Arborea is the flagship title for an upcoming series. It looks great!

Shadow Caster (Origin/MS-DOS), developed by Raven Software, is similar to **Ultima Underworld**, but the plot is unrelated. The streamlined play-mechanics make it more palatable to those who find some adventures overly detailed.

Fantasy Empire (SSI/MS-DOS) departs from the ordinary in that the Dungeon



Master is visible and interactive. The game is based on straight D&D, so it should be simpler than previous SSI titles.

Forgotten Castle: The Awakening (Twin Dolphin/MS-DOS) challenges a royal heir to fulfill his destiny. The hero breaks out of jail, and explores the dungeons beneath the castle.

Rating the Fall-Winter Computer Games

The Elder Scrolls, Chapter 1: The Arena (Bethesda Softworks/MS-DOS) looks like a strong start for a new series. The graphics for the 400 locations are excellent.

Dungeon Hack (SSI/MS-DOS) is a Christmas present for adventurers who can't resist a well-conceived Gilded Hole. If you liked **Rogue**, this is the 1993 equivalent.

Inca 2 (Coktel Vision/MS-DOS) has more extensive animation and cinematic effects. All characters are digitized video. Four continents await your two characters.

Arborea (Psygnosis/MS-DOS) is a very intuitive first-person adventure. Learning to manage the ever-growing party is the key. The plot is dull, but may be improved before publication.

Simon the Sorcerer (Activision/MS-DOS, Amiga) is a British import by Adventure Soft, designers of **Waxworks**. The humorous fantasy has 110 locations.

Though fantasy is still tops, science fiction adventures won't be scarce. Some of the best:

The Dig (LucasArts/MS-DOS) is the latest by Brian (**Loom**) Moriarty. Space explorers investigate an asteroid that moves into Earth's orbit in this sus-



Trekkies will be thrilled with the latest Star Trek title. Work with me, Bones!

penseful adventure. The asteroid is an alien booby trap, and it takes archeological investigation to unravel the mystery.

Star Trek: Judgment Rites (Interplay/MS-DOS) uses the same interface as the previous Star Trek game. Rendered graphics complement the character animations. Combat will be simpler this time.

Gateway II: Homeworld (Legend (Accolade)/MS-DOS) evokes Fred Pohl's science fiction series. The only way to stop terrorists is to travel into a black hole and find the Heechee homeworld.

Kronolog: The Nazi Paradox (Merit Software/MS-DOS) is an alternate history time travel adventure. The Nazis won



WWII, and their industrial machine is putting the Earth in danger of ecological breakdown. The only way to save the planet is to travel back in time to reverse history.

Innocent Until Caught (Psygnosis/MS-DOS), aimed at more mature players, pits the futuristic hero against the Tax Man.

It's always crime time in computer gaming. These are the top cases.

Daryl Gates replaces Jim Walls as designer on **Police Quest 4: Open Season** (Sierra/MS-DOS). His experience, plus photo-realistic graphics, make this of exceptional interest to crime buffs.

In **Shadow of the Comet** (I•Motion/MS-DOS), the investigator must solve the secret of a comet cult before the celestial body returns. Sound effects and fine graphics enhance the adventure.

The following titles exemplify the lighter side of adventuring.

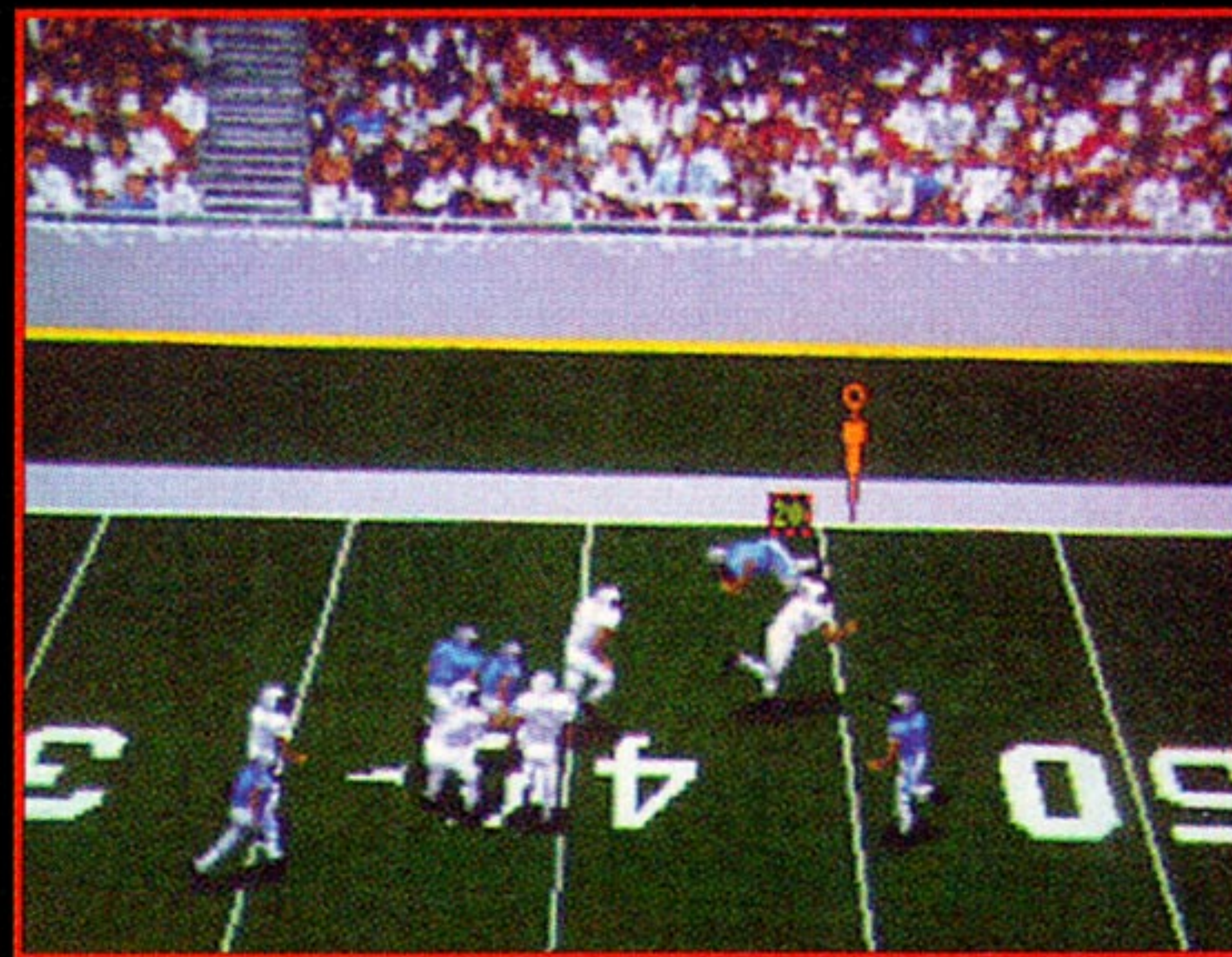
Leisure Suit Larry 6 (Sierra/MS-DOS)



Criminals had better beware when Sam and Max are out on the city beat patrol!

has more girls than ever before, and the high-res graphics make them a lot prettier, too. There are 90 women within Larry's clutching reach.

The stars of **Sam and Max Hit the Road** (LucasArts/MS-DOS) visit wacky American tourist attractions to find a kidnapped girl. It uses a pop-up interface with full-screen scenes.



The gridiron gladiators of FPS Football are even better in FPS Football Pro!

Sports Simulations

Tom Landry Strategy Football-Deluxe Edition (Merit Software/MS-DOS, Amiga) revamps the earlier release. Additional formations allow motion on offense and designated blitzers on defense.

Front Page Sports Football Pro (Dynamix/MS-DOS) is a re-issue of **Front Page Football**, introduced last winter. The main change is that the new version uses actual player names from your favorite teams to add another layer of realism to the game.

Rating the Fall-Winter Computer Games

Joe Montana NFL Football (Spectrum Holobyte/MS-DOS) will be ready for an October kickoff. It's the floppy version of the game made popular on the Genesis.

MPS Football (MicroProse/MS-DOS) mixes action and strategy. The most exciting aspect is the rotating gridiron.

Well-implemented court rotation enlivens **NCAA Basketball: Road to the Final Four 2** (Bethesda Softworks/MS-DOS). The game, which uses real player stats, is a huge improvement over the first try.



Walker gives gamers the chance to save history from drastic changes.

David Robinson NBA Action (Spectrum Holobyte/MS-DOS) is the computer version of last year's Genesis cart.

Brett Hull Hockey (Accolade/MS-DOS) could set a new standard for computer

hockey. Al Michaels announces games better than he did in **HardBall III**. The Mode 7 Rink scrolls smoothly to accommodate fast play.

Action and Action-Strategy

Aliens vs. Predator (Activision/MS-DOS) brings interactivity to the landmark Dark Horse comic book series. The action is blindingly fast.

Alone In the Dark II (1•Motion/MS-DOS) returns to the mansion which hosted the original. Players can now explore the area around the mansion, too.

In **Homey D. Clown** (Capstone/MS-DOS), the player rushes across town to eliminate all the other clowns auditioning for a TV show. It is based on the character from *In Living Color*.

Imperial Pursuit (LucasArts/MS-DOS) is a Mission Disk for **X-Wing**. As a bonus, it has a Top Ace who can try any of the original scenarios. It adds 20 missions, most easier than the first batch.

Walker (Psygnosis/Amiga) is coming after delays. As commander of a huge war machine, the gamer tries to prevent evil-doers from changing history. The Walker fights increasingly stronger foes.

Goblins 3 (Coktel Vision/MS-DOS) gives the player only one goblin, but it can shapeshift. Blount can grow big or small, change into a fly or werewolf, etc. It has lots of goofy artwork. Blount must find the jewel and save a princess.

The success of **Wolfenstein 3-D** launched a new gaming era. These first-



Imperial Pursuit gives players even more missions to test their flying skills.

person games have adventure elements, plus real-time thrills.

The Terminator 2029: Rampage (Bethesda Software/MS-DOS) features first-person combat. This sequel to the 2029 games incorporates improved graphics and sound.

Doom (Id Software/MS-DOS) employs an upgrade of the popular **Wolfenstein 3-D** game system. It mixes science fiction and fantasy as space marines tackle demons.

Secret of the Seventh Labyrinth (MicroProse/MS-DOS) is a real-time first-person action-adventure. This one has puzzles as well as combat.

Join the elite fighting force as **Seal Team** (Electronic Arts/MS-DOS) hits the beach in September. The player gets a first-person view of the mission and may split the team to do different tasks.

Computer shooters usually have more than blasting in store for players. Several notable ones are scheduled for fall/winter release.

Despite the title, **Wing Commander Academy** (Origin/MS-DOS) is self-contained, not an add-on. **WC** fans can design new missions and swap them with others.

Sub Wars (MicroProse/MS-DOS) is a fast-action undersea combat game, sort of a water-logged **Wing Commander**.

Modem play is a strength of **MechWarriors II: The Clans** (Activision/MS-DOS). There are stand-alone battles as well as a career-length campaign. The texture mapped graphics are much better than the series' first entry.

Well, there you have it. These, along with other releases, are sure to be popular in one venue or another. The ever-growing and expanding capabilities of personal computers keep the programmers and designers of these games on the cutting edge of technology. As consumers, we have the benefit of reaping the rewards of their hard labor. One can only dream where the next step of computer gaming will take us!



Fall/Winter Carts for Game Boy, Game Gear, and Lynx

By Bill Kunkel & the EG Staff

The market shares are shifting in the hand-held game segment. Though Nintendo's Game Boy has been unbelievably strong for years, it looks like color is finally going to carry the day. Atari's Lynx continues to please its fans, but it's the Game Gear that appears to be winning most of the converts. Sega estimates that its portable platform will have 40% of the audience by the end of the year.

Intensified Action

Action titles are growing more common. The Game Gear is successful with hot action, and even the Game Boy is getting into the act.

Aliens vs. Predator (Activision/Game Boy) is based on the Dark Horse comic book series. It's unique because players can become the Queen Alien, the Predator or the base commander who has to stop both. Basically a shooter, the game has enough depth to provide lots of replayability. This should be a winner.



Mortal Kombat will be making its way to the portable gaming scene very soon.

Batman: The Animated Series (Konami/Game Boy) is the first portable cart derived from the animated series. Every stage should look and feel right to the show's fans. The characters are very big for a Game Boy, in line with the graphic style of the Fox series. It's a typical side scroller, but very atmospheric and entertaining. It also offers players the rare chance to play as Robin or Batman.

Desert Strike (Domark/Game Gear) should reach stores this month. This 4-Meg cart is an excellent translation of the Electronic Arts classic video game.

Mortal Kombat (Acclaim/Game Boy and Game Gear) makes all the right moves. The fighters' stances and combat maneuvers are exceptionally good. The two portable versions will be introduced with the other editions in October.

Robocop vs. The Terminator (Virgin Games/All portables), another game carrying a Dark Horse license, may not be as well-conceived as **Aliens vs. Predator**. At this point it doesn't seem innovative, but completion is still months away.

Speedy Gonzales (Sunsoft/Game Boy) looks like the best of several Warner Brothers carts in the works at Sunsoft. Players guide Speedy, whose on-screen motion matches his name, through successive zones to find the cheese. Graphics are notably clean for the Game Boy.

Tiny Toons: Montana's Movie Madness (Konami/Game Boy) won't be completed for some months, but first-quarter 1994 release is likely. Buster gets involved in four Montana-made films, including a horror movie and a western.

WarioLand (Nintendo/Game Boy) is the first starring role for Wario, who made quite an impact in 1992. He's a terrific villain, and the game capitalizes on his charisma with great sound and graphics. **WarioLand** could be strong medicine for those who don't like this darkside version of lovable Mario.

A Little Sports

Sports games are always popular, especially with older players. Although color units have brought in a lot of teenagers, adults still represent a big segment of the portable audience. That's why most publishers try to include a sports game in their product lines. These are among the most interesting slated for fall and winter introduction.

Formula 1 World Cup (Domark/Game Gear), due in October, is the portable version of a Genesis title. The 8-Meg cartridge, which comes with a 64K battery backup, provides 12 tracks and cars to match. This is a very ambitious project.

Nigel Mansell's World Championship Racing (GameTek/Game Boy), though highly touted by the publisher, has a distance to go before it gets the checkered flag of victory. It doesn't stray far from

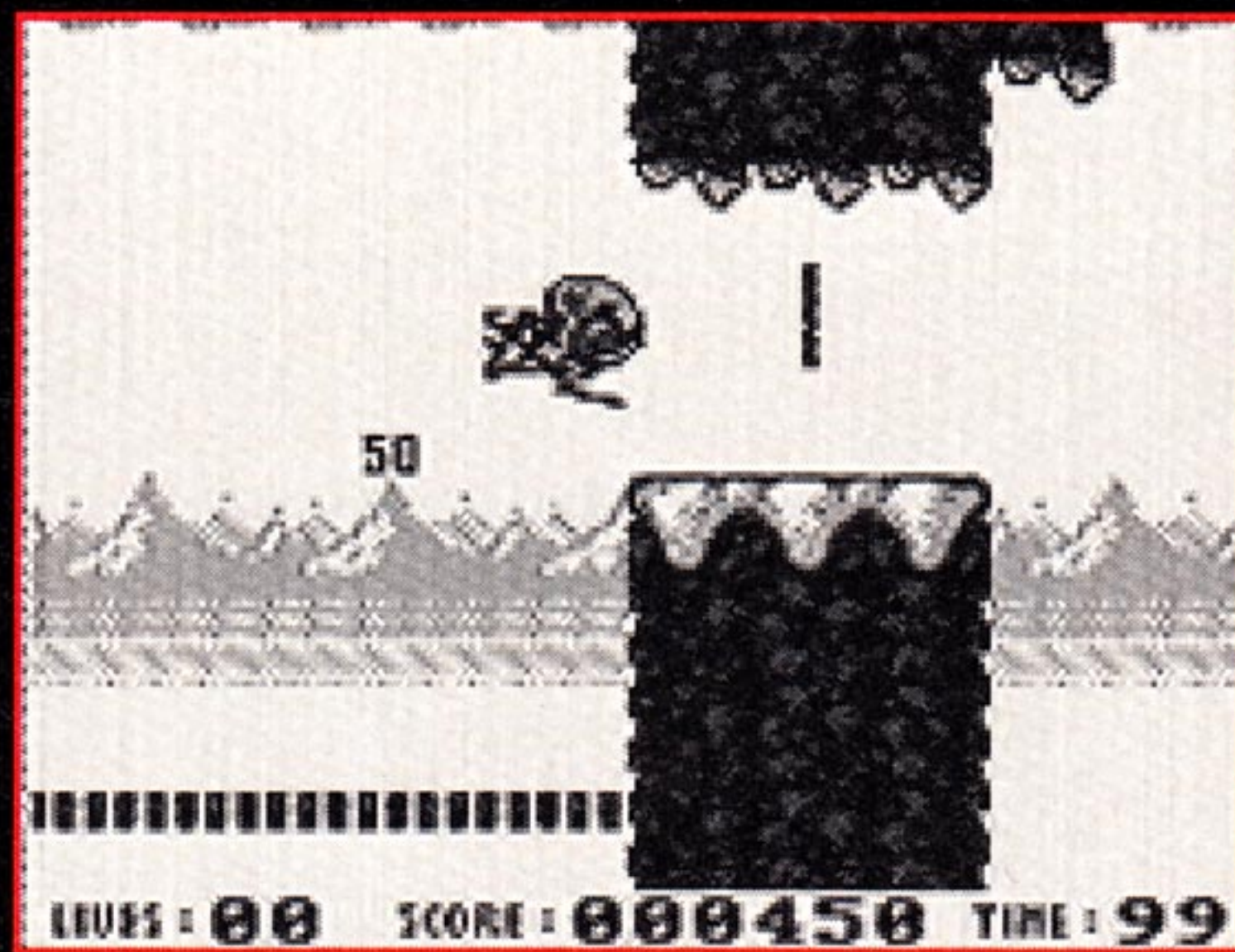
the Formula-1 formula, though limited visibility during foul weather is a clever touch. Drivers challenge 16 tracks in first-person perspective. A spin-out-and-crash sequence is good, but the background artwork is not especially inspired.

WCW: Main Event Wrestling (FCI/Game Boy) puts stars of Ted Turner's mat promotion, World Championship Wrestling, into the main event. The heat comes primarily from the inclusion of signature holds for every grappler.

Miniaturized RPGs

They said it couldn't be done. They were wrong. Game makers have hurdled seemingly impassable obstacles to create viable role-playing games that are playable on the mini-machines. Don't expect comparable depth and complexity, but forthcoming carts pack a lot of RPG fun into those small packages.

Turtles: Radical Rescue (Konami/Game Boy) has different moves for each of the famous turtles. The visuals are good, somewhat reminiscent of **Castlevania**. The design leans heavily on adventure elements instead of action. The object is to rescue the other three heroes on the half-shell from the clutches of CyberShredder.



The fastest mouse in all Mexico will keep the Game Boy speeding along!

Ultima: Runes of Virtue II (FCI/Game Boy) is the sequel to **Runes**. As before, the link facilitates two-player operation. Adventurers return to Britannia to defeat the Black Knight again and liberate the mayors of eight major cities. It boasts lots of flexibility in weapons, characters and items. Hardware limitations prevent any portable cart from having the depth of the computer series, but **Ultima: Rune of Virtue** provides exciting game play.

The Hot New Portables



Blaze demonstrates her new Side Kick Attack. Skate delivers a Head Butt and Elbow Smash Combo.



Skate's Migraine Attack is a major headache for these punks. Use the Corkscrew Attack on the bikers lurking around the corner.



Blaze's deadly Kikousho Attack can even the odds. Look for power-ups and weapons inside the trash can and other canisters.



If Skate's Double Side Kick doesn't put out that fire, try the Migraine Attack. Axel goes on a rampage when he gets his hands on weapons like the lead pipe.

STREETS OF RAGE 2



W E L C O
M E T O T
H E N E X
T L E V E L



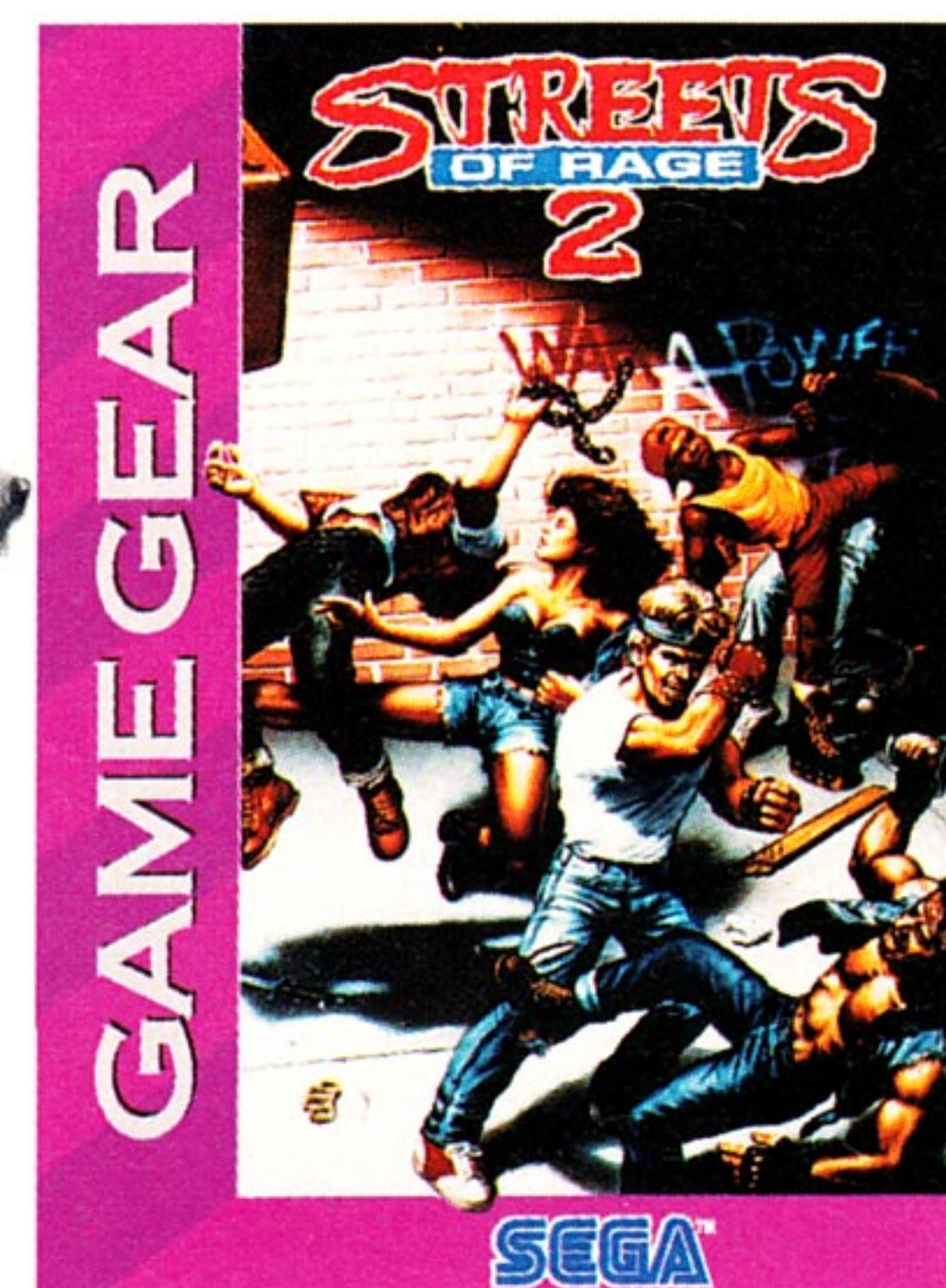
Axel's Grand Uppercut is the key to reaching Mr. X. Vanquish your foe once and for all with the Dragon Smash.



Skate, Blaze and Axel of Streets of Rage™ 2 have all their tricks from the Genesis™ version, plus a completely new maneuver. Good thing, too. Cuz if they're going to bring peace back to the streets, they're going to have to go through Mr. X. And he's not feeling very neighborly.



Honey, the fellow with his knee in the street thug's groin—isn't that the Johnson boy?



ADVENTURES UNLIMITED

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SSI'S DUNGEONS & DRAGONS?

by Bill Kunkel

Before the first line of code from the earliest mainframe quest game was ever entered, there was *Dungeons & Dragons*. This non-electronic role-playing entertainment represented a cultural breakthrough as profound as the first electronic flight simulator.

Gary Gygax' watershed product has been licensed many times over the years. A Mattel stand-alone electronic edition, several Intellivision games bearing the *D&D* and *Advanced D&D* logos, and an excellent Saturday morning car-



D&D has come a long way from the original pen-and-paper RPG series.

toon show were all produced in the early 80s, during the high noon of *D&D*-mania. Since 1987, however, SSI has had the exclusive rights to produce games under the *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* banner for computer, video game, and coin-op platforms. It has published approximately 25 *AD&D* titles in that time, set variously in the *Dragonlance*, *Forgotten Realms*, and *Spelljammer* universes.

SSI is one of the veteran software publishers, having started out in 1979 with only three employees, as was typical in those days when computer games were largely a cottage industry. The company, founded by veteran wargamer Joel Billings, focused primarily on producing wargames during its early years, and that genre still represents a significant portion of SSI's catalogue.

In '84, however, SSI entered the fantasy role-playing market, publishing *Queston*, *Wizard's Crown*, and the first of several *Phantasia* titles. Three years later, it acquired the *AD&D* license from TSR, Inc. and established itself as a major force in the RPG arena.

In the years since that acquisition, the industry has gone through several significant changes. Hardware capabilities have increased exponentially, for one thing, placing a greater premium on sound and graphics. Whereas for years a publisher like SSI could get away with minimal frills, depending on its solid scenarios and the *D&D* magic to pile up sales, today's ante has been upped considerably. Player expectations have risen dramatically; a user-friendly interface, quality audio, and attractive visuals are no longer a pleasant bonus in RPGs. They are essentials.

These sweeping changes represent a form of evolution, and those publishers who do not adapt to the new market realities will be as extinct as dodos within a matter of years. And, although it did not respond to the new gaming climate as quickly as might have been hoped, SSI recently woke up and smelled the future of computer fantasy role-playing games. The result: an impressive new lineup of *D&D* and *AD&D* software representing a quantum leap over most of the previous series entries, and, hopefully, precedents for titles yet to be released.



SSI's Secret of the Silver Blades attracted hard-core D&D role-players.

The Dark Sun Finally Rises

Dark Sun: Shattered Lands is an *AD&D*-based game set in a world that has just been blasted by a magic-based holocaust. The near-feudal society that remains consists of city-states ruled over by sorcerer warlords. Unfortunately, because of the damage that has already been done by spellcasting, each successive use of magic further weakens the world's entire eco-system.

The game begins with the player-character's party of four condemned to die in the arena for the amusement of one of the mage kings. The quartet must escape from the arena into the wilderness, where they can raise an army and attempt to win back their world.

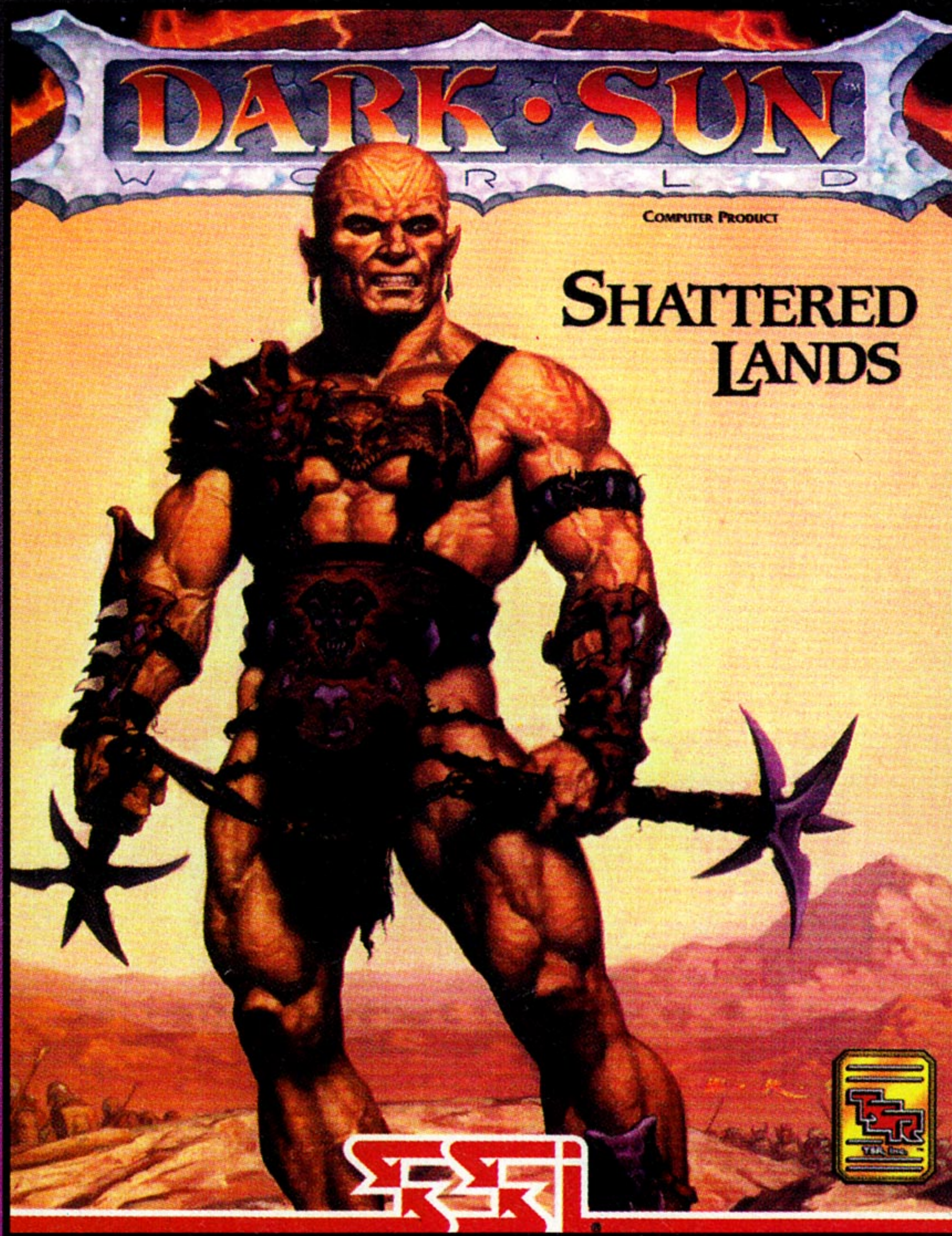


All SSI Dungeons and Dragons games contain detailed characters and parties.

Dark Sun employs powerful-looking full-screen, scrolling graphics to reproduce its magical dystopia. The angled topdown perspective works very well, as does the interface, which adds psi powers to the usual collection of skill areas. The four characters possess psychokinesis (the ability to move objects through mental will), telepathy (the ability to read minds), and teleportation (the ability to transport oneself instantly over great distances). The game also features menu-based conversations, the ability to manipulate objects, and new races to be role-played.

The monsters in **Dark Sun** are far more flexible and realistic than those in earlier SSI RPGs. Each creature has its own theme song, sound effects (screams, roars, etc.) and special animations.

Dark Sun proved so large that it had to be cut by 30% in order to finish the project. The game originally contained 45 regions, each comprising approximately 60 screens in a 10 x 6 alignment. Size was also a problem in the long-awaited SNES version, which has been put on



SSI is now producing games using both the *D&D* and *AD&D* logos, with the higher level RPGs under the *AD&D* banner and the simpler, more flexible programs assigned to the *D&D* universe. One of the most impressive titles from the latter group is **Stronghold**, developed by the Stormfront group (formerly Beyond Software, creators of the **Tony LaRussa Baseball** series).

Stronghold is a combination of world building games (such as **Populous**, **SimCity**, and **Castles**) and *D&D*, with the player assigned any of three goals. The gamer can choose to play as a lawful, neutral, or chaotic force, depending on

whether wiping out populations is more desirable than ruling them.

hold until the program can be streamlined to match the quality of past SSI releases.

Shattered Lands uses SSI's first new RPG game engine since the '88 introduction of **Pool of Radiance** and signals the end of the Gold Box era. The game has already consumed four years and more than 45,000 man hours in research and development. It will be made available in MS-DOS, MPC and Macintosh formats, with the SNES version due somewhere down the line. Afterwards, the first add-on program, the **Grey Isles Campaign Expansion Disk**, will be made available.

whether wiping out populations is more desirable than ruling them.



Players use icon-driven interfaces to command troops and construct edifices.

Players can create mining, industry, and farming districts, determine building types, and create up to five characters (a baron and four loyalists), each of whom commands the loyalty of those under their protection. Each of the buildings (of which there are approximately 60 different types, including towers, armories, dragon hatcheries, and even orphanages) undergoes five stages of development as the area around it grows.

Stronghold uses a simple point-and-click interface and offers users their choice of either a "postcard" view, similar to the angled side perspective seen

Behold the Eye

Westwood's **Eye of the Beholder** has been one of the most popular of the *AD&D* role-players. Now that Westwood has an exclusive arrangement with Virgin Games, however, SSI has taken the development of the final game in the trilogy in-house. **Eye of the Beholder III:**



Eye of the Beholder III is the fantastic conclusion to this well-loved series.

Assault on Myth Drannor represents the powerful conclusion to the best-selling first-person fantasy adventure series of all time.

Over 50% larger than **Eye II**, the third entry takes place in Myth Drannor, a ruined city from the *Forgotten Realms* universe, where a four-person party must retrieve a mystical McGuffin from the undead Acwellan. Along the way, they encounter no fewer than 35 monsters, foil traps, while solving puzzles using a streamlined interface featuring an automatic attack mode.

Adventures Yet To Be

Another intriguing new SSI product is **D&D Gazeteer: Fantasy Empire**, an action-strategy contest set in the *Gazeteer* universe. Using the standard *D&D* rules system, the gamer begins the game in charge of any selected kingdom, from which they must vanquish all the other kingdoms and rule the entire *Fantasy Empire*. This premise may sound overworked, but SSI adds new incentives.

All the major *D&D* races are on hand—humans, elves, orcs, dwarves, humanoids, and the undead—with the player able to command literally dozens of different troop types, including special forces known as hero characters. Heroes

Build Your Own Stronghold



Stronghold combines the RPG style of game with world-building techniques.

ADVENTURES unlimited

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SSI'S DUNGEONS & DRAGONS?

are able to undertake specific quests and missions.

Fantasy Empires is designed to be played by up to five human players, with approximately 20 computer-controlled opponents representing various levels of AI. The interface is slick and user-friend-



Fantasy Empires is sure to add many more enthusiasts to the D&D ranks.

ly, and during multi-player combat sequences, the screen is split so players each have their own view of the action.

Other upcoming AD&D titles include **Dungeon Hack**, a hack-and-slash contest in the **Rogue** tradition; **Isle of the Mad Genie**, a single-character FRPG set in an Aladdin-like universe; and **Ravenloft**, a gothic adventure presented from a first-person perspective.

Dungeon Hack is one of those near-mindless adventures where players move systematically, room-by-room, through a location, killing the monsters and snatching up the goodies. It's enhanced by sophisticated graphics, a user-flexible interface, and automapping.

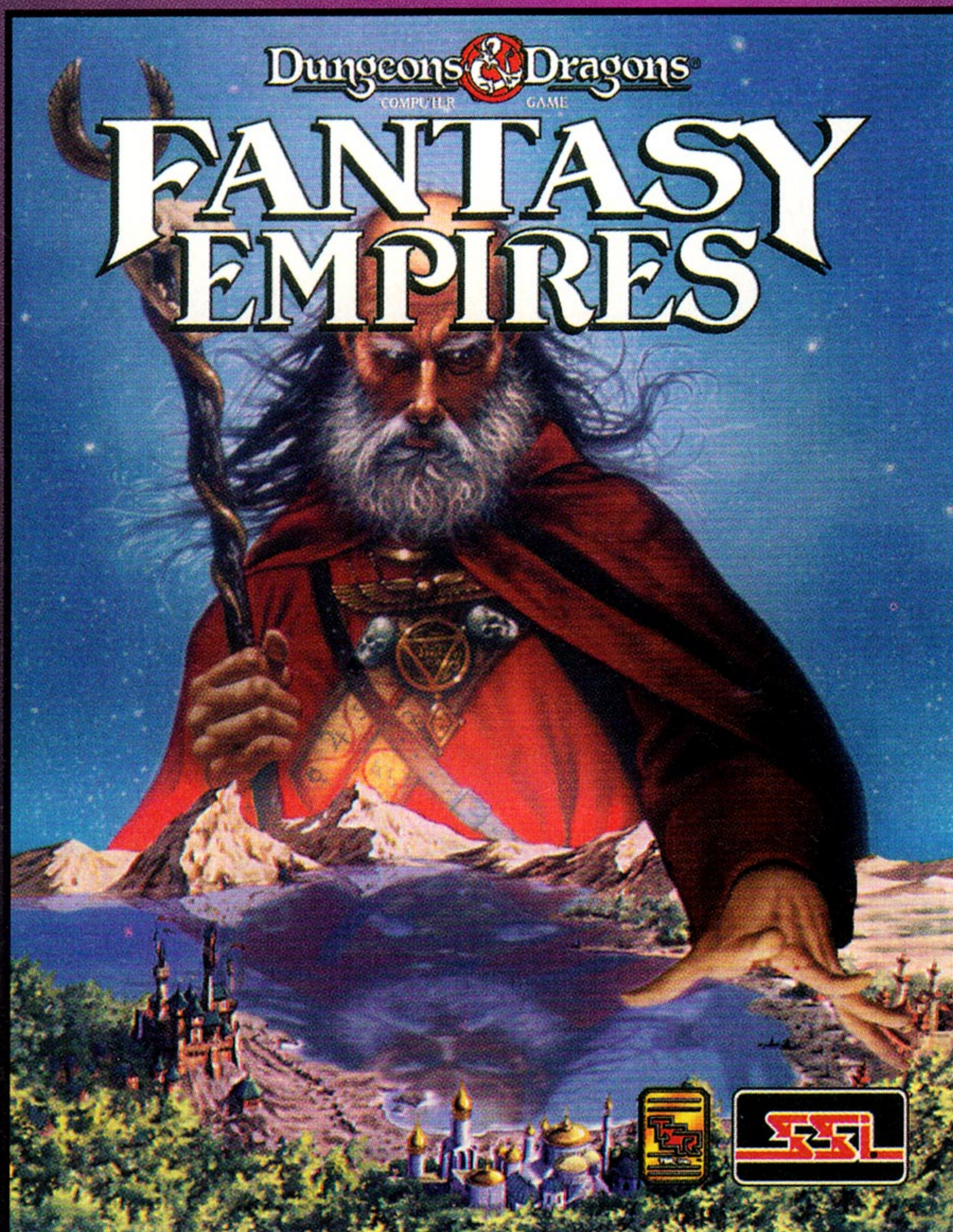
Isle of the Mad



A colorful and useful split screen view is available to Fantasy Empires players.

Genie casts the player as the scion of a wealthy merchant family in a battle to control the all-powerful genies who are suddenly making life extremely difficult. Developed by Cyberlore Studio, **Isle of the Mad Genie** makes excellent visual use of the game's byzantine setting.

Finally, we have **Ravenloft**, one of the most fascinating of SSI's forthcoming RPGs. This gothic vampire story by Event Horizon Group uses a special hi-res graphics mode to produce some of the lushest, most beautiful graphics ever seen in a game of this type. The graphics technology, called Dynamic Lighting, creates shadows, clouds and other mood setters, including day and night effects and even the phases of the moon!



The character generation system allows players to select among four different body types, with a tarot card-like display for selecting the character's face. As usual with AD&D character generators, precise control of many options is available.

Werewolves, vampires, and other creatures of the night make for most unusual FRPG stars, but the all-powerful vampires

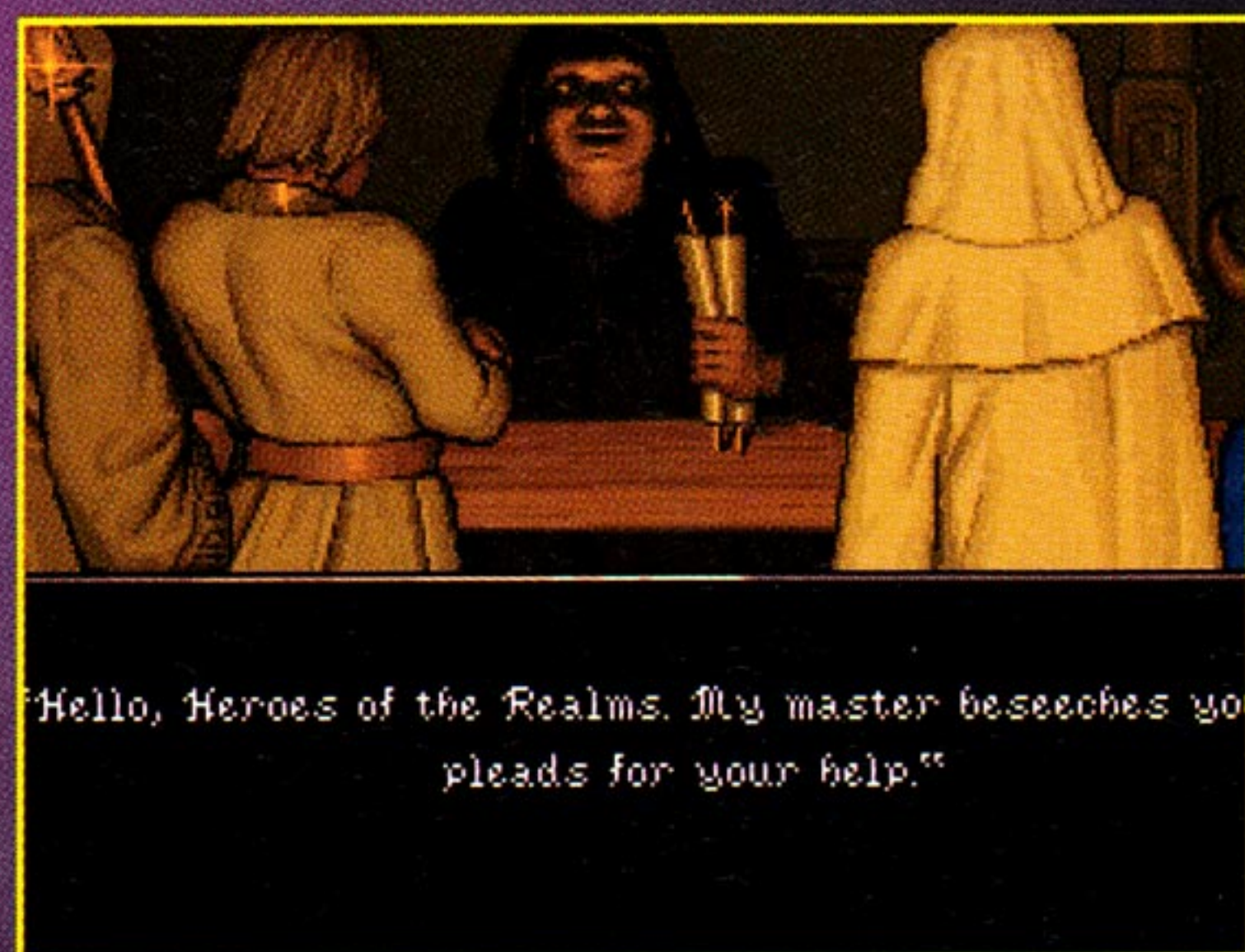


The D&D format ventured into deep space with the release of Spelljammer.

of **Ravenloft** bring them into the fold with surprising skill. This is perhaps the most atmospheric game ever created under the AD&D banner.

SSI into Tomorrow

SSI has clearly seen, and finally understood, the need for an extensive overhaul of its game creation systems. New



SSI promises to continue its presentation of detailed graphics in their games.

engines, spectacular 3-D graphics, and scaled down, user-friendly interfaces are being integrated into the TSR scenarios and story lines that have always been the guts of the D&D and AD&D games.

So, armed with one of the strongest licenses in the history of electronic gaming, and rapidly improving presentation technology, SSI hopes to be creating adventures on a vast array of worlds for many years to come.

— Bill Kunkel

PUGSLEY'S SCAVENGER HUNT™

As if things weren't ooky enough! Now Pugsley Addams must go on a simply torturous scavenger hunt. There's all sorts of unnaturally delightful traps. And hidden switches all about, which produce the loveliest, blood-curdling effects when Pugsley runs into them. There's even magic money which has an extra lively effect you won't want to miss. So get ready to get spooky, and get set to get kooky...it's Pugsley's Scavenger Hunt! En garde!



Screen shots shown are from the Super NES version of the game.

The
Addams
Family™

The name of the game



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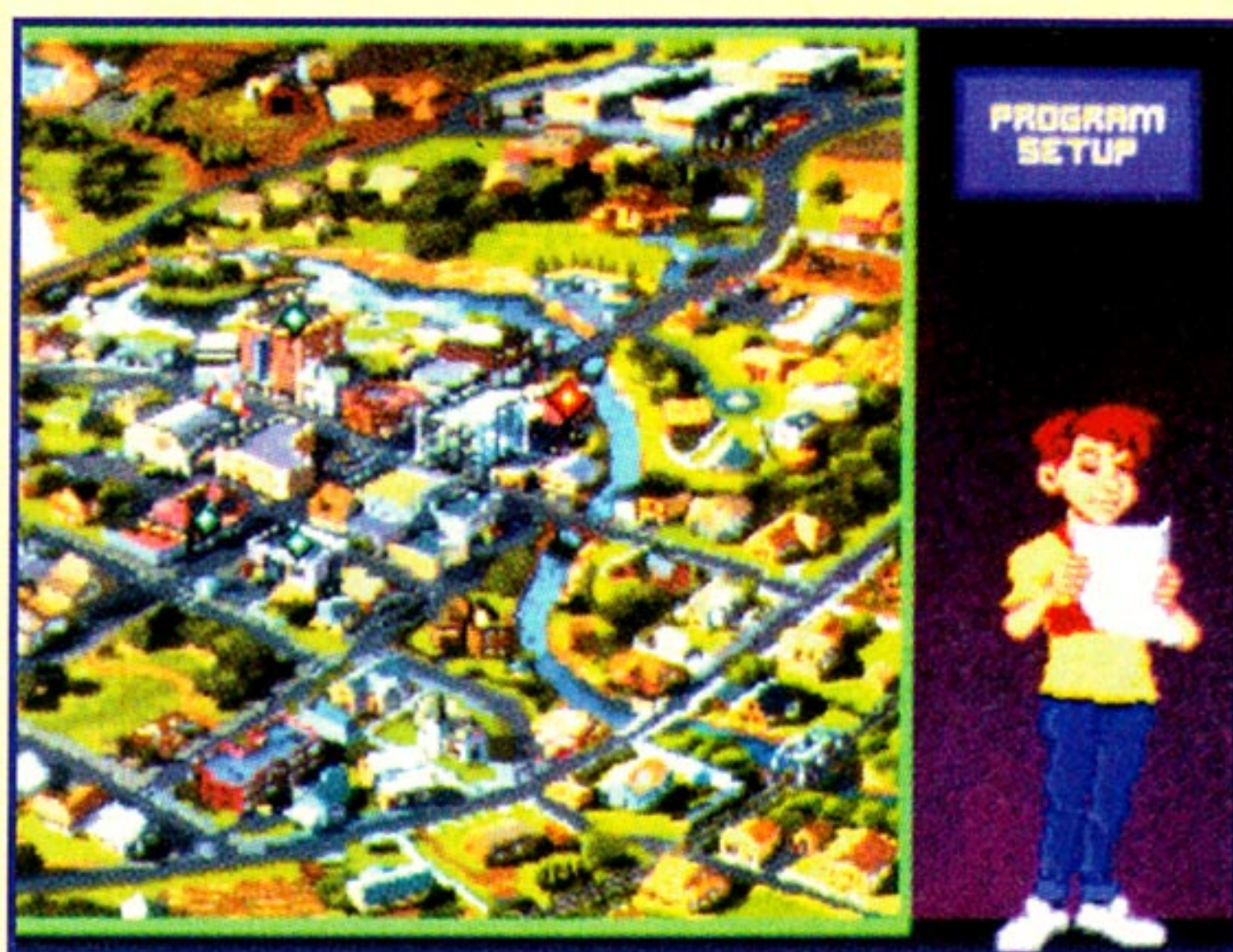
© 1992 H-B Production Co. All Rights Reserved. Based on the characters created by Charles Addams. TM designates a trademark of Paramount Pictures. Game program © 1992 Ocean Software Limited. Ocean is a registered trademark of Ocean Software Limited. Nintendo, Super Nintendo, Game Boy™, and the official seal are registered trademarks of Nintendo of America, Inc.

EG's First Annual Multimedia Report

by Bill Kunkel

The Best Multimedia Games

In the mad rush toward the multimedia rainbow, a salient fact has been consistently ignored by the consumer electronics industry: the vast majority of consumers don't know what "multimedia" means.



EA*Kids will release the impressive Eagle Eye Mysteries on the CD format.

By strict definition, a multimedia product is any piece of software that employs more than one medium. The most common use of the word refers to a combination of computer-generated text and/or graphics and full-motion video (FMV). And, because of the huge amount of memory which FMV consumes, the majority of these products come in CD-ROM format.

As a result, all non-audio-CD-based products have come to be designated as multimedia, whether they actually use multiple media in their presentations or not. Non-CD products such as U.S. Gold's **Flashback** (Genesis) and the forthcoming **Spelunx** (MS-DOS) from Broderbund offer multimedia content in cartridge and floppy disk formats, but are not generally considered multimedia.

Go figure.

In any case, to avoid total confusion, this overview will be devoted exclusively to the software that is available in the CD-ROM editions.

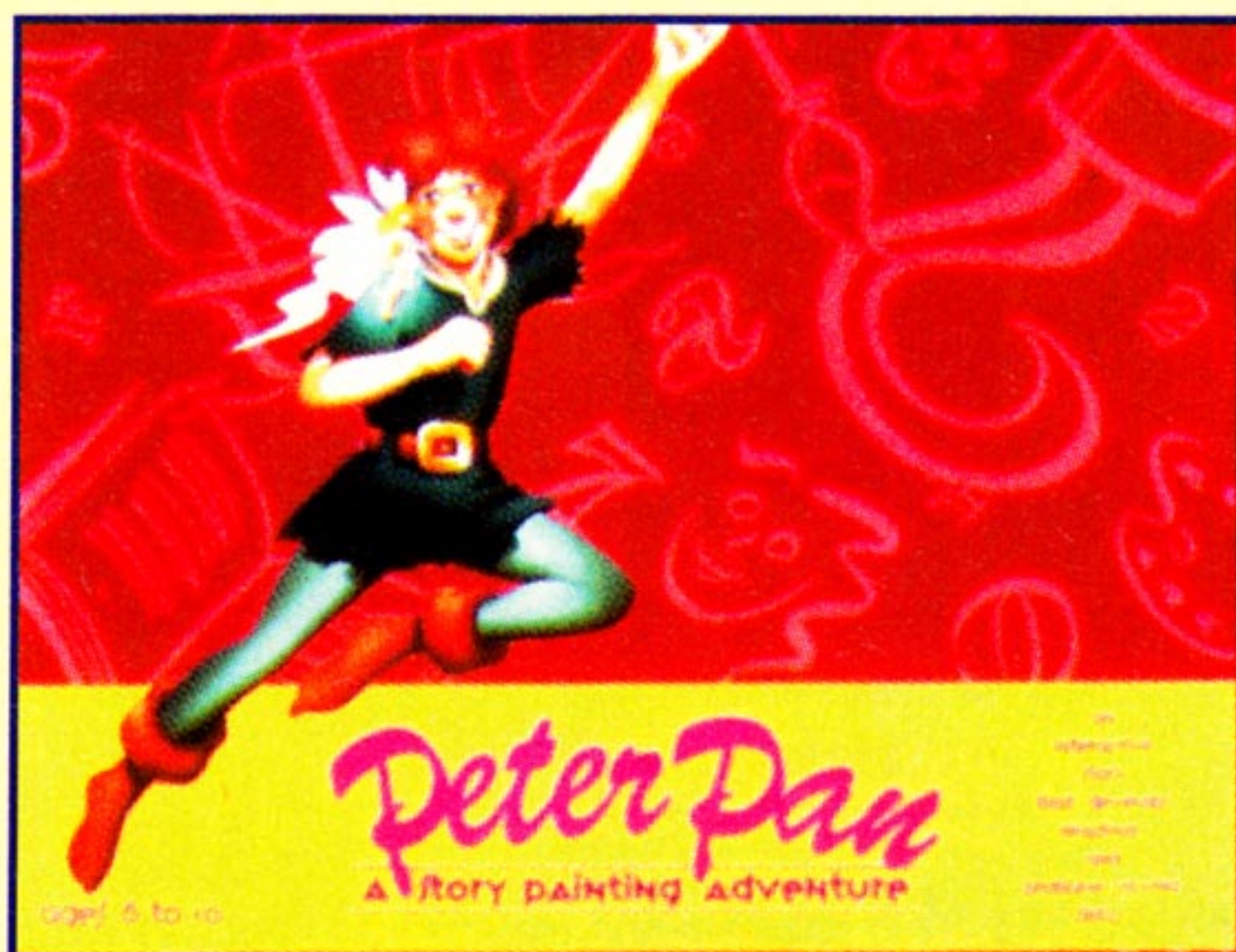
MPC: the Next Generation

The most firmly established of all multimedia formats is MPC (Multimedia PC) for MS-DOS-based computers. Most computer software publishers have at least dabbled in CD technology, driven by the growing market for mammoth databases. As a result, much of the MPC market is comprised of educational and edutainment software.

Americans in Space (Multicom/MS-DOS, MPC, and Macintosh), for example, chronicles the history of manned space flight, supplemented with over 500 photos, while musical history is the subject of E Book's **Vivaldi: Four Seasons**, one of the most sophisticated database products released so far. In addition to Vivaldi's actual themes, this MPC product includes extensive and informative text entries as well as a sheet music-based interface which allows users to listen to each instrument separately.

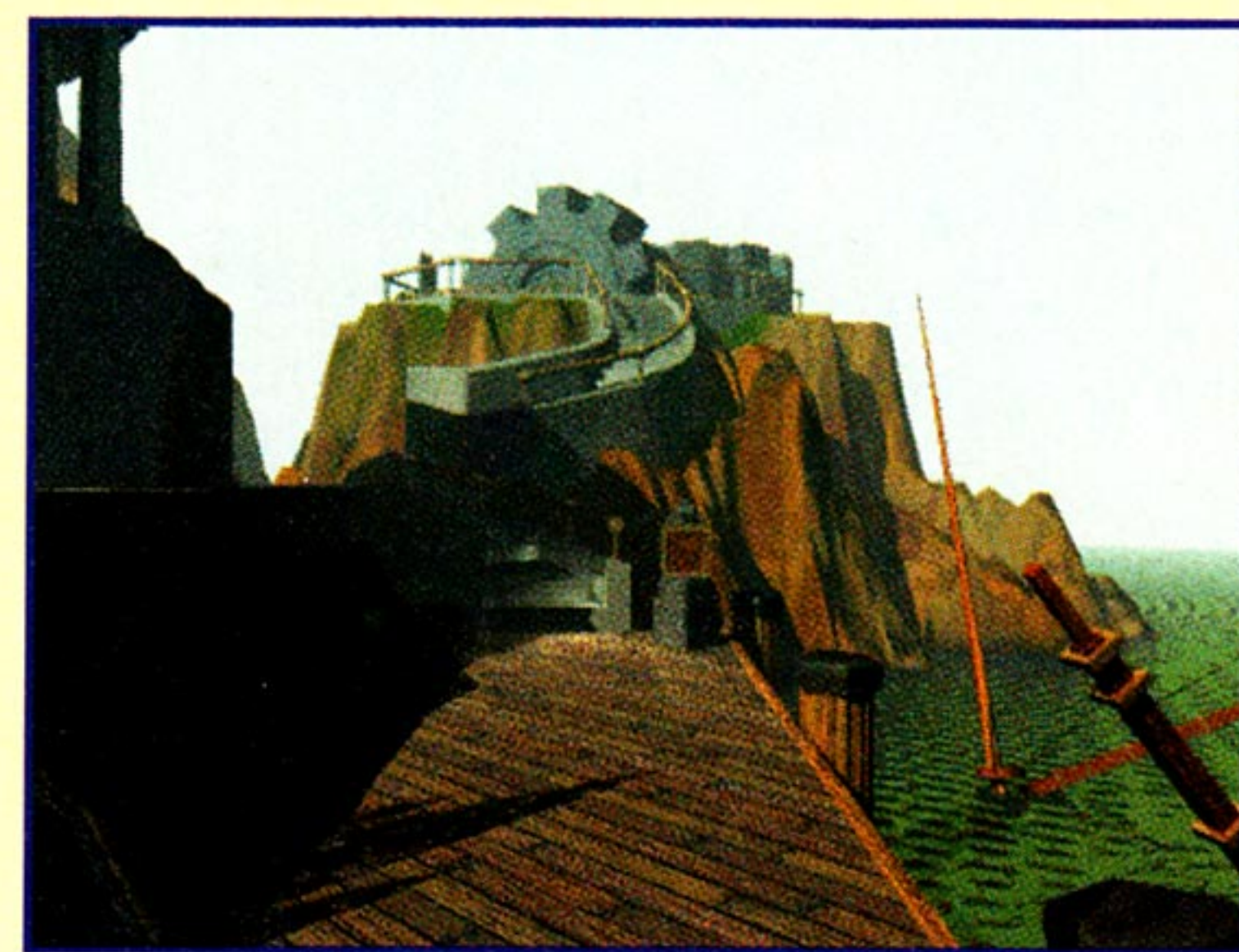
Edutainment and activity-based software for younger computerists has become a hot multimedia genre. There are not only electronic storybooks, such as Oscar Wilde's **The Selfish Giant** (Sanctuary Woods), but a number of interactive, exploration-based storybook adventures as well.

EA*Kids will offer **Eagle Eye Mystery in London** (MS-DOS, MPC, Macintosh, and Mac-CD) and **Peter Pan** (MS-DOS, MPC, Macintosh, Mac-CD, and 3DO). The



Peter Pan will be flying onto multimedia screens, bringing joy to kids everywhere.

Eagle Eye Mystery is the second entry in that series which teaches science, history, and the culture of the country being visited, all within the context of a juvenile



Myst will take the gamer through the magic worlds with breathtaking scenes.

mystery. **Peter Pan**, meanwhile, is an entertaining exercise in problem-solving for ages five through 12 developed by NovaTrade (creators of **Ecco the Dolphin**).

"Hot spot" products—exploration/activity programs without traditional game-oriented goals—have exploded onto the CD scene. Exploration programs, such as **Cosmic Osmo** and **Manhole**, were among the earliest multimedia entertainment programs, and the more recent success of Broderbund's **Granma & Me** series has publishers hot to trot out more of the same. This type of program is called "hot spot" software because the user simply moves a cursor around the screen and it lights up whenever it comes in contact with an item of interest, a.k.a. a hot spot.

Speaking of the early exploratory classics, the creators of **Cosmic Osmo**—Robyn and Rand Miller—have a new MPC product scheduled for release early next year. **Myst** (Broderbund/MPC and Mac CD) combines rendered backgrounds and FMV to produce a travelogue to a variety of imaginary worlds, each graphically astounding to see. Set on Myst Island, an impressive and exotic locale in its

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Sentai

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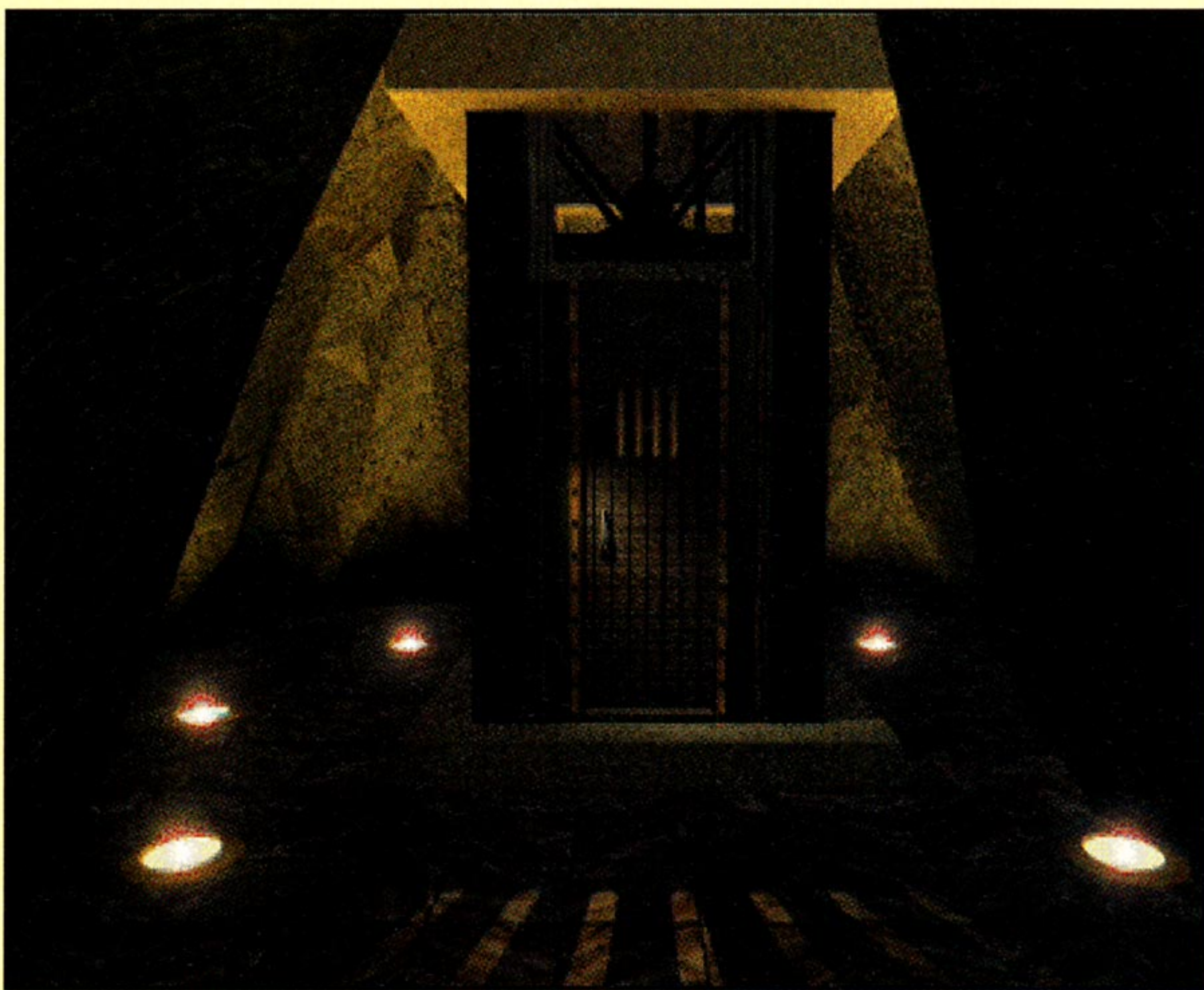
EG's First Annual Multimedia Report

own right, users employ magical books to transport themselves to an astounding number of alternate lands. **Myst** has an adventure-based subtext, but its universe is so massive that players will find plenty of entertainment value in simply checking things out.



Hell Cab makes those long rides in the city seem like luxury pleasure cruises!

Speaking of adventures, one of this year's most offbeat products is **Hell Cab** (MPC and Mac-CD) from the Time Warner Interactive Group. The player-character steps from a New York City street into what looks like an ordinary hack. Instead, the cab is actually a time/tele-



portation device being driven by a demon who enjoys nothing so much as stranding his fare in a variety of historically perilous situations. You may have had some

rough cab rides in your time, but did you ever wind up fighting for your life in a Roman gladiatorial contest after one?

Hell Cab makes excellent use of digitized characters; FMV; lush, painted backgrounds and groundbreaking special effects. This could be the CD sleeper hit of the year.

More exotic adventuring is available to MPC gamers in LucasArts' **Day of the Tentacle**, a scary monsters sortie which features one of the neatest Easter Eggs in gaming history: at one point the player can click on a Commodore64 computer and bring up the entire **Maniac Mansion** game!

Speaking of monsters, ICOM Simulations, one of the leading multimedia developers, has produced **Dracula Unleashed** for MPC and Mac-CD formats. The player has four days to identify, locate, and destroy the Lord of the Undead before he and his party are wiped out. Using an interface similar to ICOM's **Sherlock Holmes** games, **Dracula Unleashed** blends computer-generated data screens with FMV sequences performed by a group of summer stock players.

Gamers whose preference is for the more traditional type of adventure can look forward to **King's Quest VI** (Sierra/MPC). This made-for-CD edition features an introduction by Roberta Williams, complete speech for dialogue and descriptions, and several "director's cut" features, including FMV interviews with

the creators and a tour through an art gallery of background paintings created for **KQ**, some of which didn't make the final version.

Electronic Arts, meanwhile, offers **Labyrinth** (MPC), a maze-like location where time and space meet and history can be altered. The Super-VGA, first-person graphics are extremely smooth, and while the game is huge (an estimated

50-100 hours of play time), the interface is user-friendly, with automapping and icon-based commands.

Wargame fans, meanwhile, will want to



Day of the Tentacle will keep you glued to your seat with funny and fast action!

check out **Aegis: Guardian of the Fleet** (Software Sorcery/MPC), in which the player-character is cast as the commander of an Aegis-class cruiser looking to pursue a successful military career. Unlike most wargames, however, this one does not focus exclusively on combat, but also deals in ethical dilemmas and diplomacy. The game also features a disguised recreation of the Iranian Air Bus shoot-down which is used to test player judgement.

MPC in Action!

Action-oriented multimedia games, once rare as white rhinos, are suddenly stampeding onto the MPC turf. Leading the pack is the old coin-op classic, **Dragon's Lair** (MPC and 3DO) from Readysoft, a direct port from the original laserdisk. Lead Dirk the Daring as he swings over chasms and rescues maidens fair.

A more recent coin-op success story is also riding into multimedia town: American Laser Game's **Mad Dog II** (MPC and Sega-CD), a buffed-up sequel to **Mad Dog McCree**. In this follow-up western contest, the gun battles and showdowns are shored up with an adventure overlay, numerous game locations, and opportunities to earn money by bounty hunting or gambling.



Mad Dog McCree puts the player in the boots of a rootin', tootin' gunslinger.



Rebel Assault adds to the thrills of the now famous X-Wing game by LucasArts.

Rebel Assault (LucasArts/MPC, Sega CD and CD-I) is an arcade-style, multi-contest action game that brings the *Star Wars* universe and CD technology together for the first time. The graphics, sound effects, and music are taken right off the actual films as the player engages in deep space dog fights, snow speeder skirmishes, and numerous other experiences in this 15-level contest that climaxes with an attack on the Death Star.

Sports fans are finally beginning to benefit from the multimedia revolution. In **Global Golf: the Earth Invitational** (ICOM Simulations/MPC and Mac CD), comput-



Periscope up! Wolfpack delivers a strong dose of submarine warfare.

er duffers can play holes atop Mt. Everest or in the heat of the desert.

MegaRace (Software Toolworks/MPC and 3D0), meanwhile, is a fully-rendered driving sim that offers incredibly realistic visuals and great game response.

Simulation mavens have several interesting contests coming their way, including **Wolfpack CD**, a multimedia upgrade of the old Broderbund submarine sim from NovaLogic with lots of new missions and upgraded CD graphics. NovaLogic is also working on a tank simulation, using the same successful terrain model that wowed the market in their fantastic helicopter simulation, **Comanche: Maximum Overkill**.

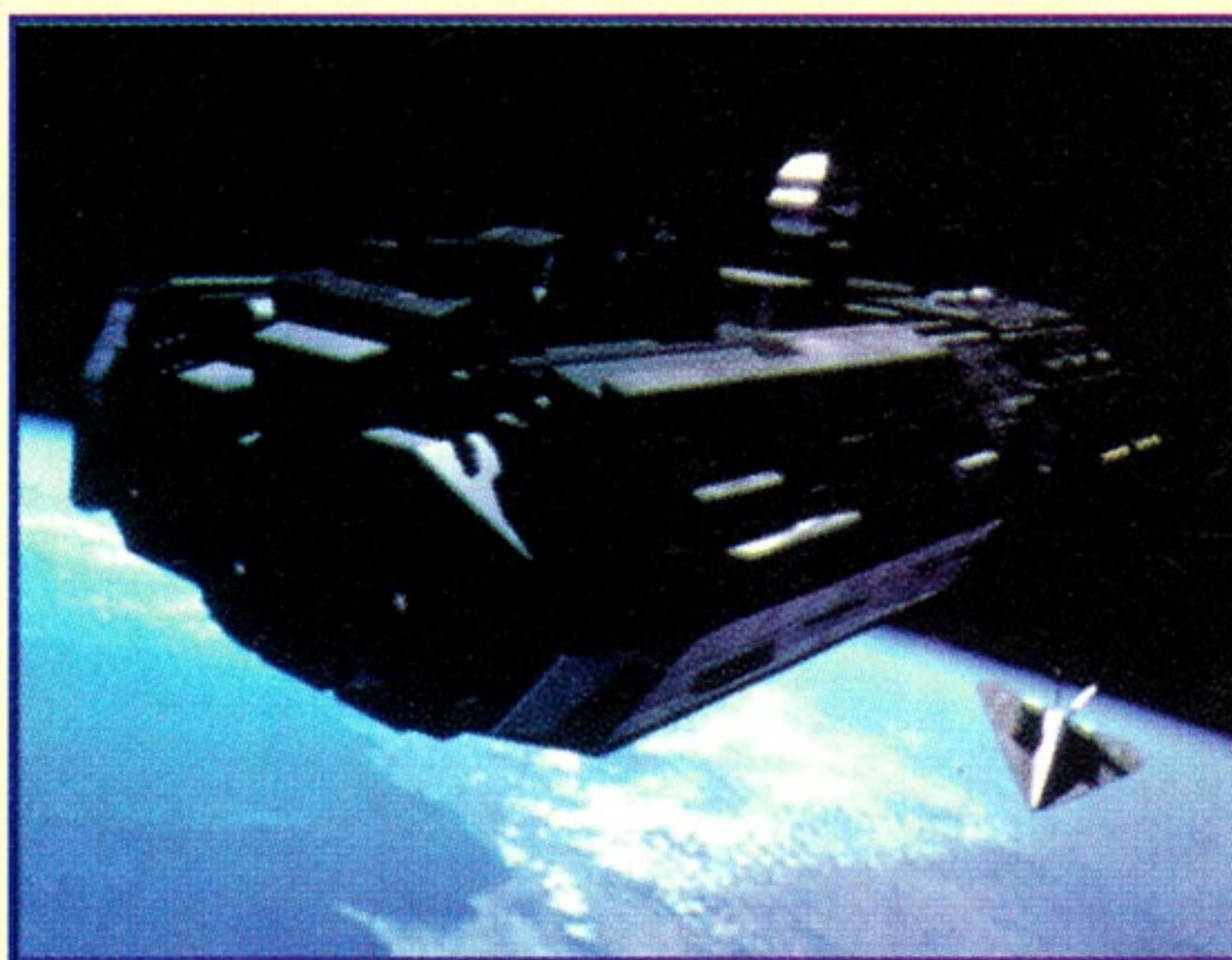
Action on the Next Level

The biggest boons to arcade-oriented gamers, however, have been Sega's entry into multimedia and the announcement of the forthcoming 3D0 technology. Among the hottest forthcoming Sega CD and 3D0 action titles are: **Betrayal at Krondor** (Dynamix/Sega CD and 3D0),

Chuck Rock II: Son of Chuck (Virgin Games/Sega-CD), **Crash & Burn** (Crystal Dynamics/3D0), **Demolition Man** (Virgin Games/3D0), **Shock Wave** (Electronic Arts/3D0), **Jurassic Park** (Sega/Sega CD and MCA/3D0), **Total Eclipse** (Crystal Dynamix/3D0), **Lethal Enforcers** (Konami/Sega CD), **Stellar Fire** (Dynamix/Sega CD), and the coin-op marvel, **Mortal Kombat** (Acclaim/Sega CD).

Betrayal at Krondor is an RPG with turn-based combat taken from the novels by Raymond Feist. The graphics combine polygons and texture mapping, with an auto button for combat. A sequel is already in the planning stages.

Chuck Rock II is a hilarious side-scroller, **Crash & Burn** is a racing com-



Shockwave, a futuristic combat flight simulator, features incredible graphics.

bat game with retina-thrashing 3-D effects, and **Shock Wave** is a visually impressive combat flight sim.

Total Eclipse might best be described as **Stellar 7** meets **Comanche: Maximum Overkill**. The player pilots a skim-mercraft over a desolate planet's rocky

landscape while firing at the bad guys. **Stellar Fire**, meanwhile, pretty much is **Stellar 7**, a total carnage spasm and one of the most promising of the new Sega CD titles.

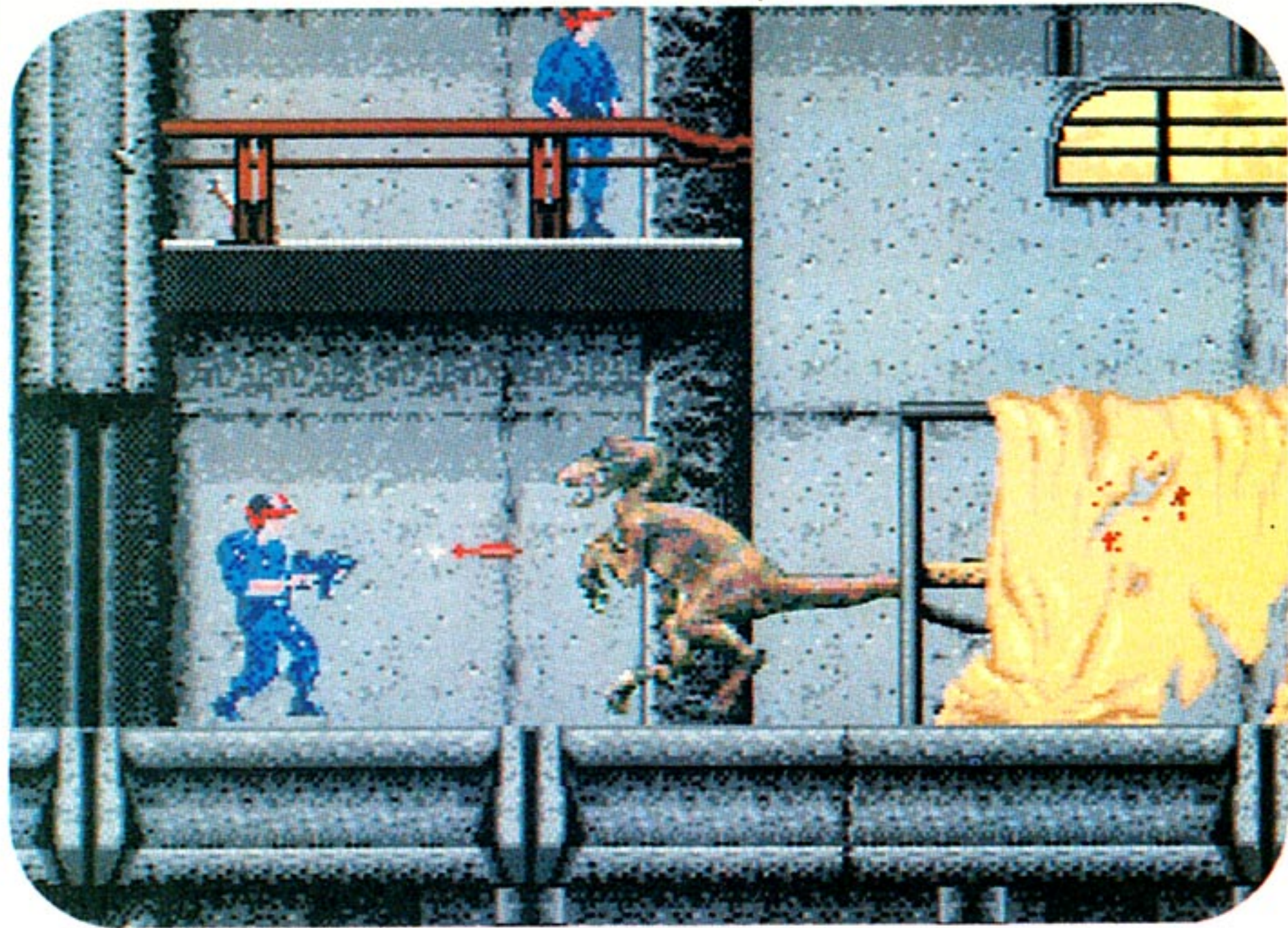
Coin-op partisans can look for a pair of monster arcade hits to arrive in multimedia format later this year. Konami's



Lethal Enforcers is a high-speed, light gun-activated shooter which will come packed with a plastic six-shooter, while **Mortal Kombat** is the most realistic of the street fighting contests.

Moviegoers can get off on multimedia home versions of **Jurassic Park**, **Demolition Man**, and several versions of **Dracula**. MCA's 3D0 edition of **Jurassic Park** puts an interesting spin on the book and film, casting the player-character as the person in charge of the computers which monitor and remotely-control the entire island. When the whole system goes down, however, chaos ensues and it's up to the player to save the frightened park guests who are now trapped among the rampaging saurians who escaped their enclosures during the downtime. All of this is done remotely, through the computer consoles operating on reserve power, giving the game an interesting strategic distance.

In the film *Demolition Man*, peace officer Sly Stallone and psychotic killer Wesley Snipes are both trapped in suspended animation. Snipes awakens in the peaceful far-future, where the citizens have no idea how to cope with his anti-social tendencies. Who they gonna call? Sly Stallone, of course. For the remainder of the film, Stallone frantically pursues Snipes through this seeming utopia, while extracting quite a bit of



YOU CAN BE THE VELOCIRAPTOR.

Only on *Jurassic Park*™ from Sega™ can you play the dinosaur as you attempt to escape the armed guards of *Jurassic Park*.



Dinosaur teeth varied in size and shape depending on what the dinosaur ate. *Herbivores* had round, dull teeth for chewing plants. *Carnivores* had sharp, pointed teeth for chewing *Herbivores*. Be careful. To them, you're just a snack.

Welcome to the



At the end of their powerful legs and muscular arms, many dinosaurs were equipped with razor-sharp claws. Ours are no different. And no less dangerous.



The movie brings them to life. The game invites you to join in.



Try not to end up here. The powerful jaws of the meat-eater *Tyrannosaurus rex*. They had pointed, six-inch-long teeth and really bad breath. Keep out.

IT TOOK 65,000 TO MAKE T

FACE TO FACE ON SEVEN DIFFERENT

LEVELS. Work your way through the Visitors Center, Pump Station, River, Volcano, Canyon, Power Station, and Jungles of *Jurassic Park*.

A typical walk in the park 130 million years ago would have looked like this. Ferns, cycads, and other plants were everywhere. Just like the jungle of our game.



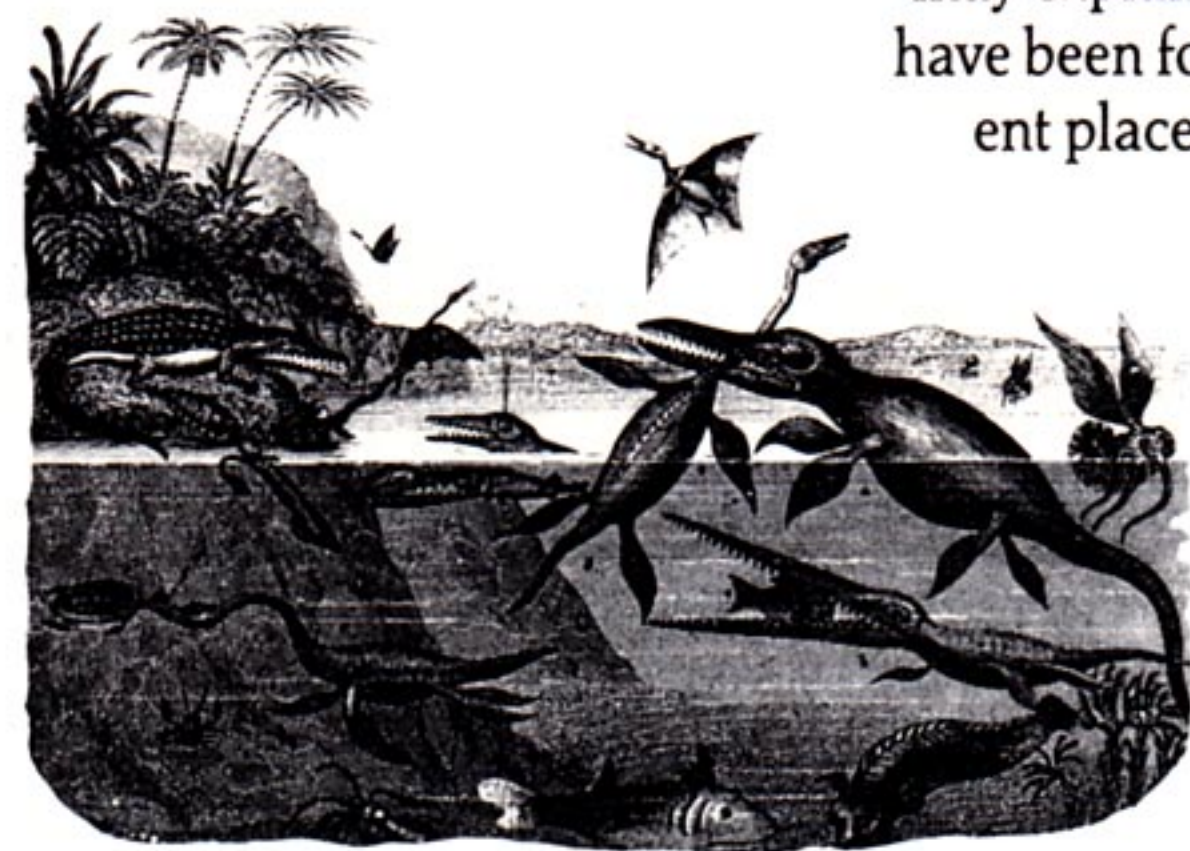
The reptiles that could fly, the *Pterosaurs*. They ruled the sky while the dinosaurs ruled the Earth. Be careful as you move through *Jurassic Park*. You never know when one might drop in.



At one time, all the continents were grouped together forming one supercontinent called *Pangaea*. This may explain why dinosaur fossils have been found in so many different places around the world.



It's still unknown why the dinosaurs disappeared. One theory suggests that a huge asteroid struck the Earth sending dust into the sky and blocking out the Sun. Or maybe they died of boredom; there were no video games back then. What do you think?



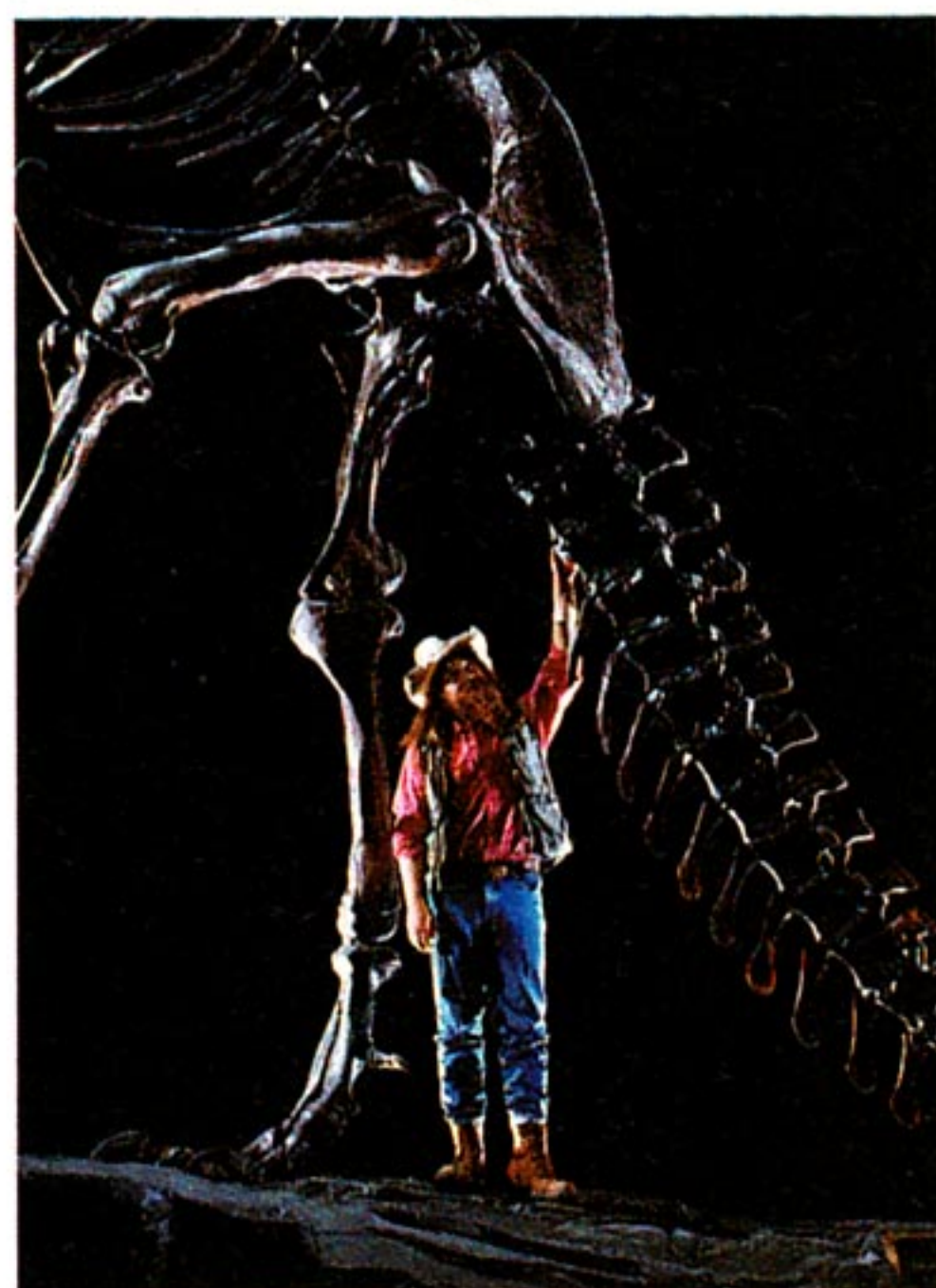
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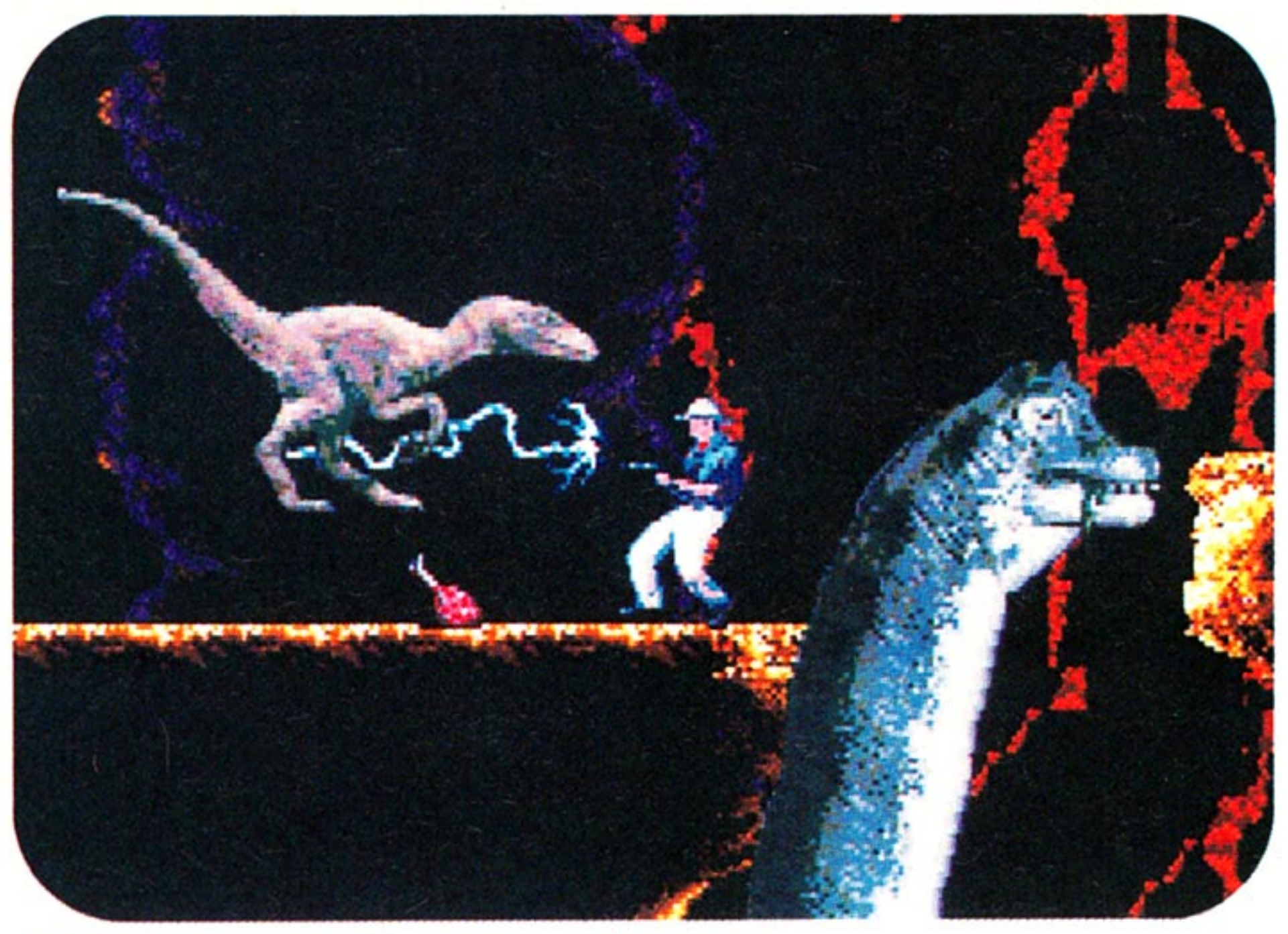


This is *Amber*. The fossilized resin (sap) of an ancient tree. Have you got something you want to preserve for 65 million years? This is the way to do it.

Dr. Robert T. Bakker is a real paleontologist. He helped us design *Jurassic Park* for Sega.



Imagine: You're walking through the jungle 130 million years ago. Be sure you don't step in *this*. It's a fossilized dinosaur dropping. Today, they can help scientists reveal clues to a dinosaur's diet and nutrition. (You'll be glad to know, we've left these little land mines out of our *Jurassic Park*.)



YOU CAN BE DR. GRANT. You can choose to play Dr. Grant as he tries to escape the dinosaurs and treacherous jungles of *Jurassic Park*.

Bones that have turned to stone and ancient impressions in rocks: Fossils are our best window



to the past. Fortunately, more and more of them are being discovered each year.

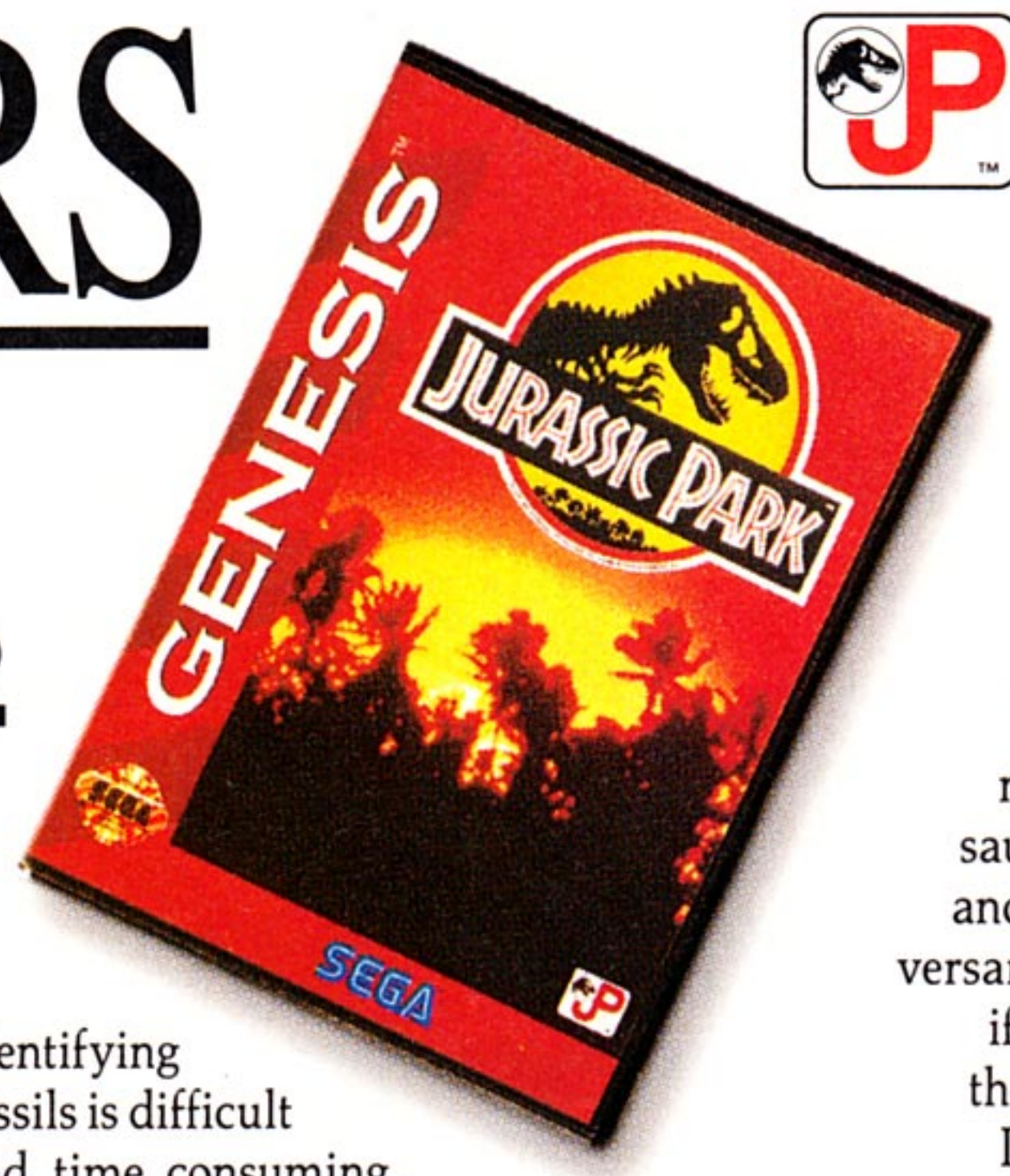


Unlike real paleontologists, Dr. Grant uses tranquilizer darts, a stun-gun, flash grenades, gas grenades, super darts and dinosaur bait.



This is the team that designed and created *Jurassic Park* from Sega. Their task was to produce the best looking, most exciting dinosaur game possible. Nice job.

0,000 YEARS THIS GAME.



Over the years, humans have developed large, intelligent brains. We can think like no other species ever has. For years, it was thought that dinosaurs were dumb, pea-brained creatures. That may be wrong. We've learned recently that they actually migrated to different areas and even cared for their young. Are they smart enough to beat you in *Jurassic Park* from Sega?

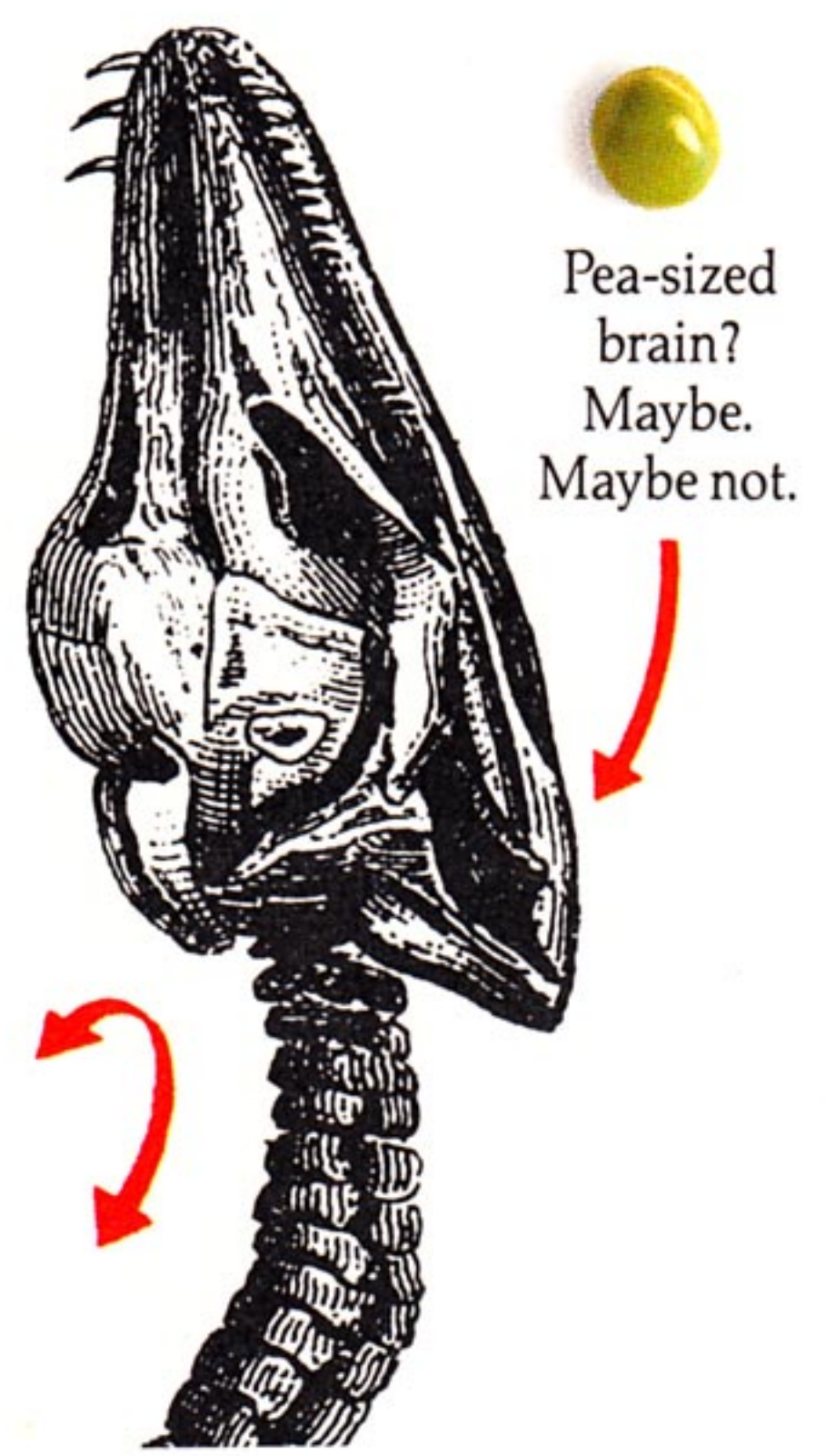
Identifying fossils is difficult and time consuming. Finding a game in the store is too. For your reference, this is *the* game box to look for: *Jurassic Park* from Sega.

Just like in the movie. A dinosaur is a cunning and ferocious adversary. Remember, if you can't beat them, join them. In *Jurassic Park* from Sega, you can play the dinosaur.

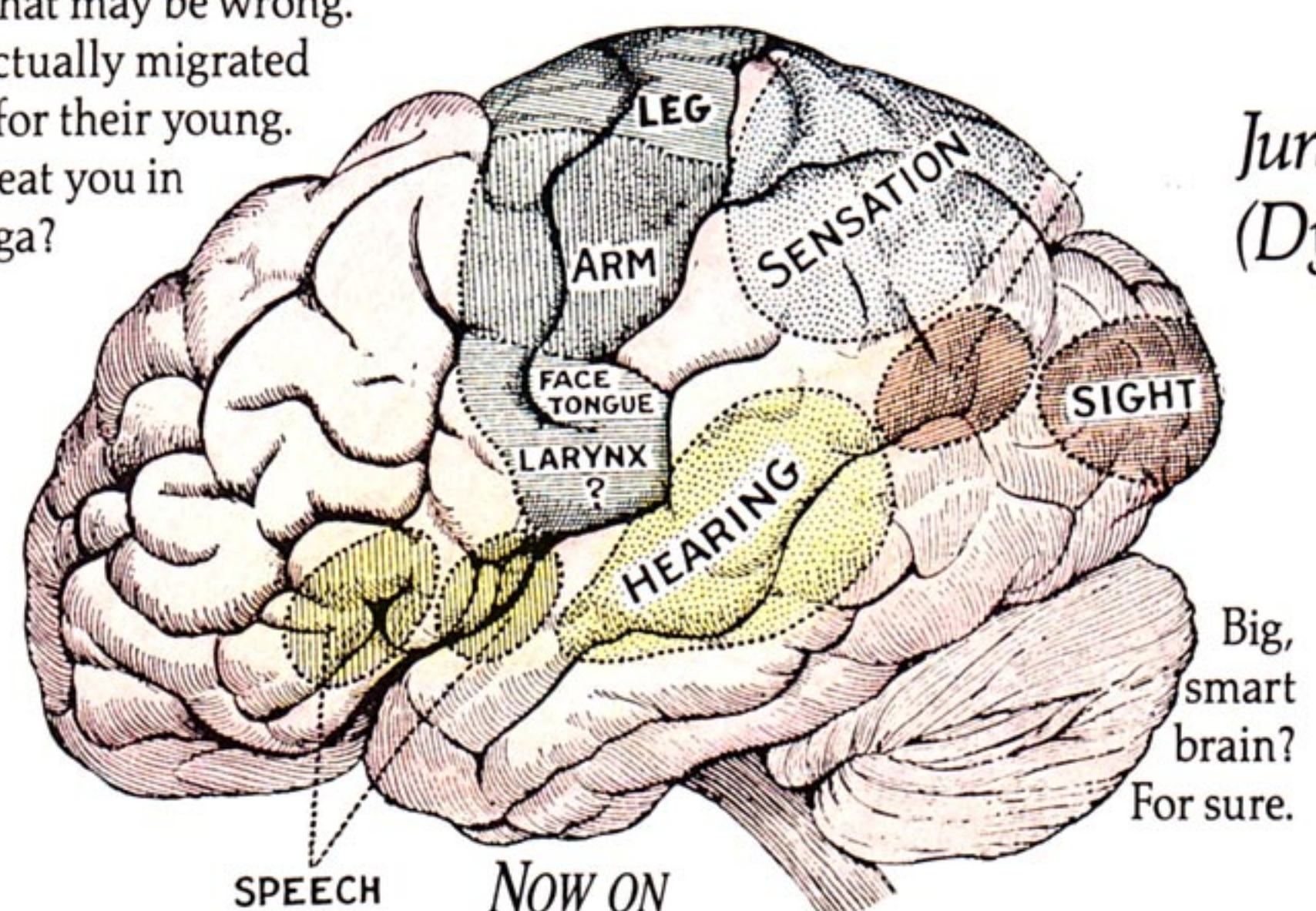


THEY GET SMARTER AS YOU GET BETTER.

Jurassic Park from Sega was designed to include D.P.A.™ (Dynamic Play Adjustment.) So as your game skills get sharper, the dinosaurs become harder to outsmart.



Pea-sized brain? Maybe. Maybe not.



Big, smart brain? For sure.

SEGA
GENESIS™

COMING SOON TO GAME GEAR™ AND SEGA CD.™



Photo credits: ©1993 Louis Psihoyos/Matrix International, Inc.; Royal Tyrrell Museum/Alberta Community Development; California Academy of Sciences. Special Thanks To: Mark Goodwin, UC Museum of Paleontology.

EG's First Annual Multimedia Report

spend several days at Virgin shooting special game-related footage.

But while it was a good year for Stallone and dinosaurs, the most popular subject for multimedia game crossovers was Vlad Tepes, a.k.a. Dracula, son of Dracul. In addition to **Dracula Unleashed** (see above) from ICOM, Psygnosis is producing a pair of games, both called **Dracula** but different projects, for the Sega CD and 3DO. Not to mention **Bram Stoker's Dracula** for the Sega CD from Sony-Imagesoft.



Voyeur brings top-notch actors to the CD-I screens across the country.

Eye on CD-I

Last year's disastrous rollout of the CD-I seems to have convinced Philips that databases alone won't sell this type of system; people want entertainment. "Fun is the Name of the Game" is the new CD-I slogan, with plenty of games to back it up. Even the productivity and lifestyle software is more entertainment- (and adult-) oriented (including electronic versions of **The Joy of Sex** and **Playboy Massage**).

The pride of the new CD-I lineup is **Voyeur**, a FMV interactive movie starring Robert Culp. Billed as a thriller in the Hitchcock tradition, **Voyeur** brings cinematic production values and top quality actors to the silicon screen. Though not terribly interactive, **Voyeur** offers users a truly compelling game experience.

Also on line for the CD-I are impressive looking versions of Virgin Games' **7th Guest** and Psygnosis' visually stunning **Microcosm**.

Other forthcoming CD-I software includes revamped versions of Nintendo's **Mario** and **Link** games, **Caesar's**

Palace World of Boxing, and an Infogames **Tennis** simulation. Deals have also been cut with Paramount (**Star Trek: Deep Space 9**), Hannah-Barbera (**Cartoon Carnival**), and LucasArts (**Rebel Assault**).

Philips predicts another 100+ titles



will be available within a year, and it expects worldwide hardware sales to hit 300,000 by the end of the year. This would triple the existing installed base



The hauntingly fun 7th Guest will be transferred from the PC to CD-I.

according to most projections. Philips also intends to have a million CD-I units in homes, worldwide, by Christmas '94. Sign-ons include 200 software developers and 850 publishers coming on-line through '94.

Philips also announced a new peripheral, which will sell for approximately \$250

and will greatly expand the FMV capabilities of the system. One of the most advanced features of the piece of equipment is the ability for the user to choose the option of running high quality optical disk versions of films, rock videos, etc., through the CD-I. The FMV quality is stu-

pendous and the film segments looked and sounded awesome. Most films will be able to fit on two disks.

Other Systems, Other Software

Multimedia is growing like Topsy, with new systems being announced at regular intervals. Atari's Jaguar is the first such black box system to use cartridges rather than CDs as the primary memory storage medium. Even so, with a 64-Bit CPU (not to mention an optional CD peripheral), it should have no trouble handling impressive, multimedia-style software.

The one constant through all this electronic evolution remains the primacy of software. This is, after all, a business where you sell the razor as cheaply as possible in order to maximize profits on the blades. Yet, the consumer won't spend his or her hard-earned cash on a shaver that will last but a short time!

And software is the razor blade of the electronic entertainment industry: the sharper it is, the better everything sells.

—Bill Kunkel

A Look At Multimedia

Which System Is For Me?

by Joyce Worley

If "multimedia" is the word on every game developer's lips, then "Which system should I buy?" must be the question on every gamer's mind. This is truly the year of multimedia. After a sluggish start, enough units are finally available for variety of choice, and enough purchasers to interest the game designers.

All the players haven't placed their bets, but the race has already begun. While existing units are vying for their shares of the market, Nintendo, Atari and Hudson Soft are also readying multimedia players, and there are probably others on the design tables right now. Nintendo spokespeople continue to deny any plans to enter the CD race, although affirming that Nintendo has the technology. Hudsonsoft's machine probably won't show up until 1994 or even '95. Atari will introduce their Jaguar this fall (see story elsewhere this issue).



The Sega CD allows the use of Genesis carts as well as multimedia CD titles.

The Black Box Systems

Many gamers will choose interactive multimedia players that connect to a TV, have no keyboard, and use CD data disks. Designed for maximum ease of use, black box systems are the newest darlings of the high-tech crowd.

And if black boxes are the darlings, then surely 3DO, scheduled for retail introduction this autumn, is the queen of them all. Dozens of software developers are working on 3DO programs, and several hardware companies are licensed to manufacture 3DO players, such as AT&T,

Sanyo and Panasonic. Sanyo has yet to announce plans to bring their 3DO player into this country, and AT&T expects theirs to be ready in 1994. The Panasonic FZ-1 REAL 3DO Interactive Player will be available in September for approximately \$700.

The 3DO system can process 50 million pixels per second, produce over 16 million colors, play audio CDs and photo CDs, and reproduce full-motion video. Scaling, rotation, transparency, and other special effects are built into the 3DO system.

Philips CD-I (\$599) produces full-motion video on any TV screen, with CD sound. Since its introduction, over 100 titles have become available, and there are said to be more than 100 in development now, including plenty of games. Originally planned as an interactive family information machine, the company has now focused in on entertainment, but there's also a large library of kid software, as well as educational for every age. With the addition of the Full-Motion extension unit (about \$250) the system can even run movies, such as *Apocalypse Now* and *Top Gun*. Philips has a special agreement with Paramount Pictures to allow release of movies on CD-I at the same time as they are released on cassette, and there are a few of the traditional game manufacturers planning projects for CD-I.

VIS, the black box system from Tandy/Radio Shack, with players available from Tandy and Zenith, now has close to 100 programs available. The system retails for \$399.95. Like the other black box systems, it connects to a standard TV, with audio connectors to the TV or stereo, and supports up to 16 million colors. Many game companies are doing some translations for the VIS; if the system becomes popular, they will probably do much more.

About 40 CD games will be available at the introduction of Commodore's Amiga CD-32 this fall. The 32-Bit game machine includes a double-speed CD-ROM drive, and an 11-button hand-held controller. It can accept Amiga mice, joysticks, keyboards, interface with TV or monitor, and it's software compatible with the CDTV. It

will probably be priced to compete with 16-Bit video game systems.

CD FOR Computers

The decision is easier for computer owners; most will simply add CD units to their equipment. There are CD-ROM drives available for Amiga, MS-DOS and Macintosh computers, made by a variety of companies. Thousands of programs are already available, including ever-increasing numbers of games which use the host computer's graphic capabilities, and use the CD to store massive amounts of data and full stereo sound.



TTI's Duo is another system that uses both CD and cartridge formats.

Video Game Multimedia

There are 20 new CD games from Sega scheduled for the last half of the year, not counting dozens more in preparation by third party licensees. Sega CD (\$229.99), already available nationwide, works on a 16-Bit processor and some products released since June '93 feature QSound, Archer Communications' new audio technology that provides multi-level and traveling effects previously unheard on video games.

The Duo (\$299.99) is Turbo Technologies' second generation CD game system. It contains a slot for cartridge games, and a CD-ROM player that also plays audio CDs. The console accepts all TTI cartridges, CD and SuperCD games. This feature (as with the Sega CD) should make a lot of shoppers happy. There is no need to toss all the old games. New peripherals due this fall include a mouse, remote controller, portable external memory cache for saving games, and the Intelligent Link SCSI Interface which lets the machine work as a CD player for personal computers.

TTI also has an upgrade, the CD-ROM Super System Card, for TG-CD to make it upwardly compatible to the Duo.



EG INTERVIEW

THE MAN BEHIND MORTAL KOMBAT ACCLAIM PULLS NO PUNCHES IN BRINGING MK HOME!

by Bill Kunkel

Was there ever a moment, we wondered, when Acclaim had to seriously think about whether it wanted the home video game rights to **Mortal Kombat**?

"We have a right of first refusal relationship with Midway," explained project producer Paul Samulski, veep of creative and product development at Acclaim. "And **Mortal Kombat** was just a given, from the first time we saw it. There was no arm-twisting required. We previewed it before it even went into local test in Chicago and you just knew that it was going to work. It took **Street Fighter** to the next degree, with the realism adding the fluidity that **SF** lacked. The first time you saw it you just knew that it had to go on all the formats.

"Our only concern was that, as games go, this one was a pig. I mean it's huge! It's massive! And so the biggest challenge was: *if we can do it on these various formats, how good a job could we do?* The rest, hopefully one of these days, we can say will be history. Right now we're at a point where they're all out of house and we're getting all of our SoA, SoJ, NCL [Nintendo of Japan], and NoA approvals in and we're heading toward the finish line, which is **Mortal Monday**," he says, referring to the single day when all versions of the game (except the Sega CD platform, which will not appear until early '94) will be simultaneously released as part of a major public relations event.

Speaking of the different editions, we wondered which developers handled which versions and, more importantly, why they were chosen. "Probe worked on Genesis, Game Gear, SMS, Game Boy and the Sega CD. They were given virtually the entire package with the exception of the SNES. For that version we went to George [Midos] at Sculptured Software simply because of their strengths. George's track record in recent times and the projects we've worked on with him over the years lead me to believe that Sculp-

tured would do a far better job on the SNES. They were much more familiar with the system. They had a lot more tricks that they had discussed with us [and] felt they could use if they needed to. Whereas Probe was much more familiar with the Genesis and had the same kind of trickery up their sleeves, but weren't quite up to speed on the SNES.

"This was the first project that I've ever split up that way and what ended up happening — and this wasn't intended — but an element of competition came into play between Probe and Sculptured. Not only did they cooperate with each other, they helped each other out and spoke pretty constantly on the phone, asking one another where they had problems and how they solved them. But besides doing that, they would, in their own sly way, kind of ask, 'So, where are you guys at?' And whenever they spoke to me, they'd want to know if a new version had come in from Probe or Sculptured and [if so] how did it look. So we kind of fed the competition a little bit, and it paid off. Looking back at it now after turning over everything, I feel that both groups did an excellent job, but I couldn't see Probe pulling off the SNES job as well as Sculptured, nor could I see Sculptured do the Genesis job, because [neither developer] was strong enough on that platform."

The Sega CD version has proven the most troublesome of those many platforms. The only SKU which will not be made available on *Mortal Monday*, Probe is still hard at work dealing with the Sega CD's technological soft spots. "It's a big project. So many people say, 'Oh, CD, you should be able to do such a great job with it,' but when you consider that one format, you realize you're talking about not even being able to do as much as you did [on the Genesis version], simply because of the limitations of the system. It's a battle. It's not like we rewarded Probe by giving them the CD [version]; it's going to be even *more* of a challenge than the others."

Eventually, as a direct result of Acclaim's recent deal with Hi-Tech and Virgin, we will even see a computer version of **Mortal Kombat**. Hi-Tech Expressions

will handle the U.S. distribution while Virgin has the overseas market. "We took a look at all the SKUs, everything from the floppy formats to the 3DOs, all the way back to LCDs. Obviously, **Mortal Kombat** is going to wind up everywhere, because it *belongs* everywhere. As far as the floppy version goes, we'll be incorporating that within the deal we recently cut with Hi-Tech Expressions. We'll be working along with them, doing the development while they handle the distribution — we're not going to just dump it on them. They're not familiar with [the game] and by the time they went through the learning curve, it'd be a year behind schedule. This will be our first joint development venture with them."

We pointed out that, in the past, there has sometimes been a significant gap in quality between Acclaim's Genesis and SNES editions of the same game. For example, while the WWF wrestling games are largely superb on the SNES, they are several notches below that standard on the Genesis.

"We don't want anyone to think that we are showing favoritism [to one system over another]," Paul responded, "or that the Genesis version of a game is just a conversion of the SNES. That's why we went to separate developers on **Mortal Kombat**. We want to get the best from everybody involved for each of the platforms. I don't think that the Genesis stuff that you're going to see from [Acclaim] in the future is ever going to appear flat, or look like it's a second-class citizen. Both systems do offer enough to work with, you just have to know how to tweak it."

Finally, the discussion turned philosophical as we talked about the appeal of street fighting games such as **MK**. What was it about these contests, and **Mortal Kombat** in particular, that has so captured the imagination of electronic gamers the world over?

"What makes **Mortal Kombat** a good street fighting game is realism. I saw a lot of street fighting games at SCES in Chicago. Some of them had big, funny characters, and others had big, tough animated characters,

but none of them gave you the feeling that these characters were *real*. And that's the one thing **Mortal Kombat** has that the others don't. I don't mean to downplay those other games; I had a great time with **SF II**. I thought it was a wonderful game and I still do. But **Mortal Kombat** has a whole different feel to it. It just grabs you and pulls you into it because of its realism. It's not a couple of Saturday morning cartoons fighting in front of some colorful background. It's real people, actual, digitized characters.

So, in a way, we are really dealing with a different type of role-playing game, one in which players become intimately familiar with the moves of each combatant, then test their control against a range of opponents. "The wrestling games were really the first step in that direction," agreed Samulski. "The thing about working with licensed properties is that the strength of a license is the strength of the personalities associated with it. Whether it's the wrestlers, the characters of **Mortal Kombat**, or the NBA players in **NBA Jam**."

What about the future? Is there perhaps a **Mortal Kombat II** lurking in the shadows?

"I can tell you honestly that we are not currently working on a **Mortal Kombat** sequel here at Acclaim. But knowing Williams as I do, you've got to expect that [a sequel] is going to happen. When a game is this successful, and a development team has so much stuff on the shelf that they weren't able to put into the first one, I doubt whether they're going to just file it away forever or settle for a pinball follow-up. Obviously, there's going to be a sequel coming out of Williams and it's just a matter of when it happens. And, as soon as they involve us in the process, I'll be able to share my reaction. The only thing I know right now, according to the developers of the first game, if and when they do a sequel it will make the original absolutely pale by comparison. More characters, more moves, but that's pretty standard for Williams." We eagerly await new developments, but the awesome **MK** will hold us for awhile!

— Bill Kunkel



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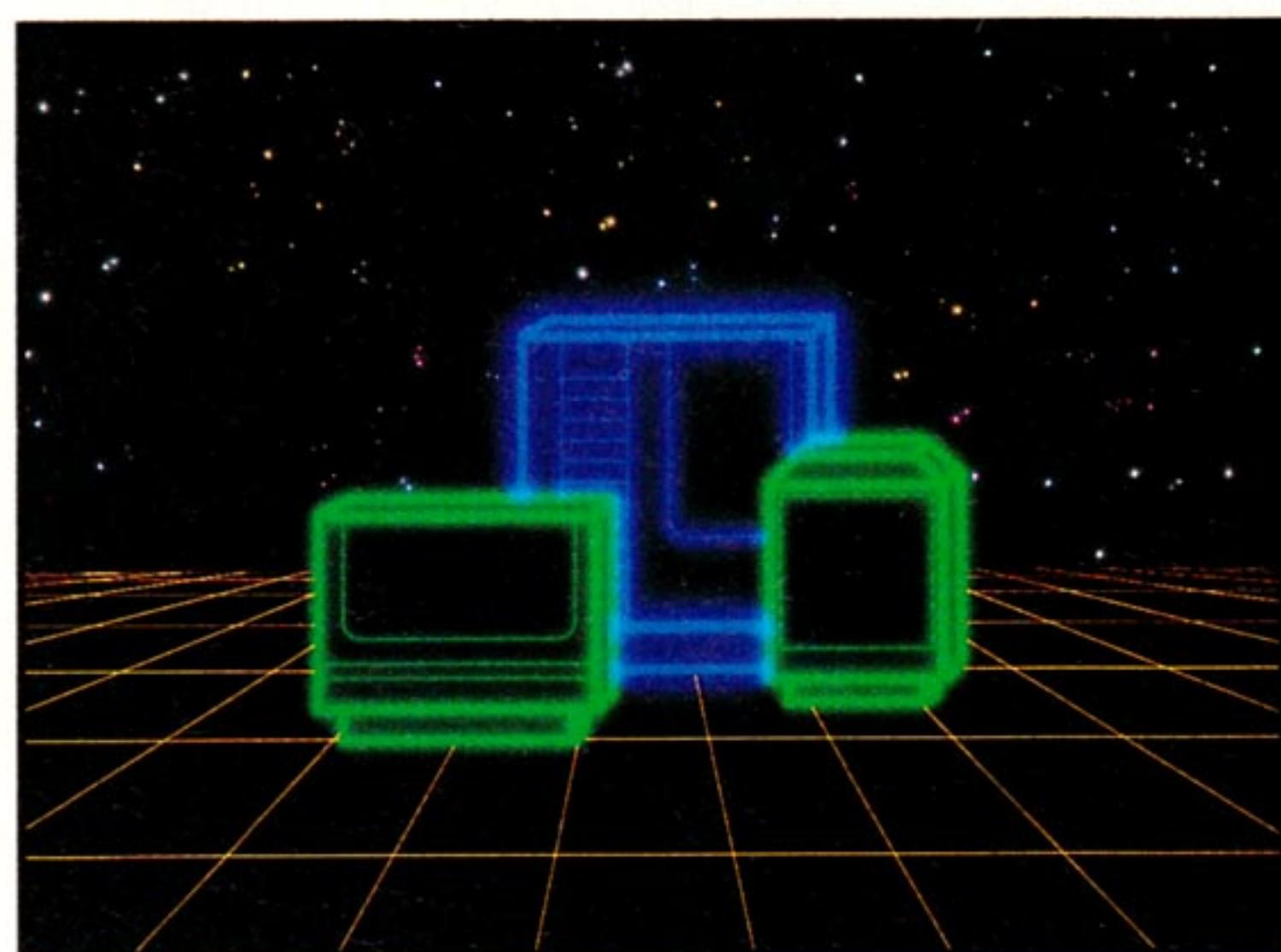
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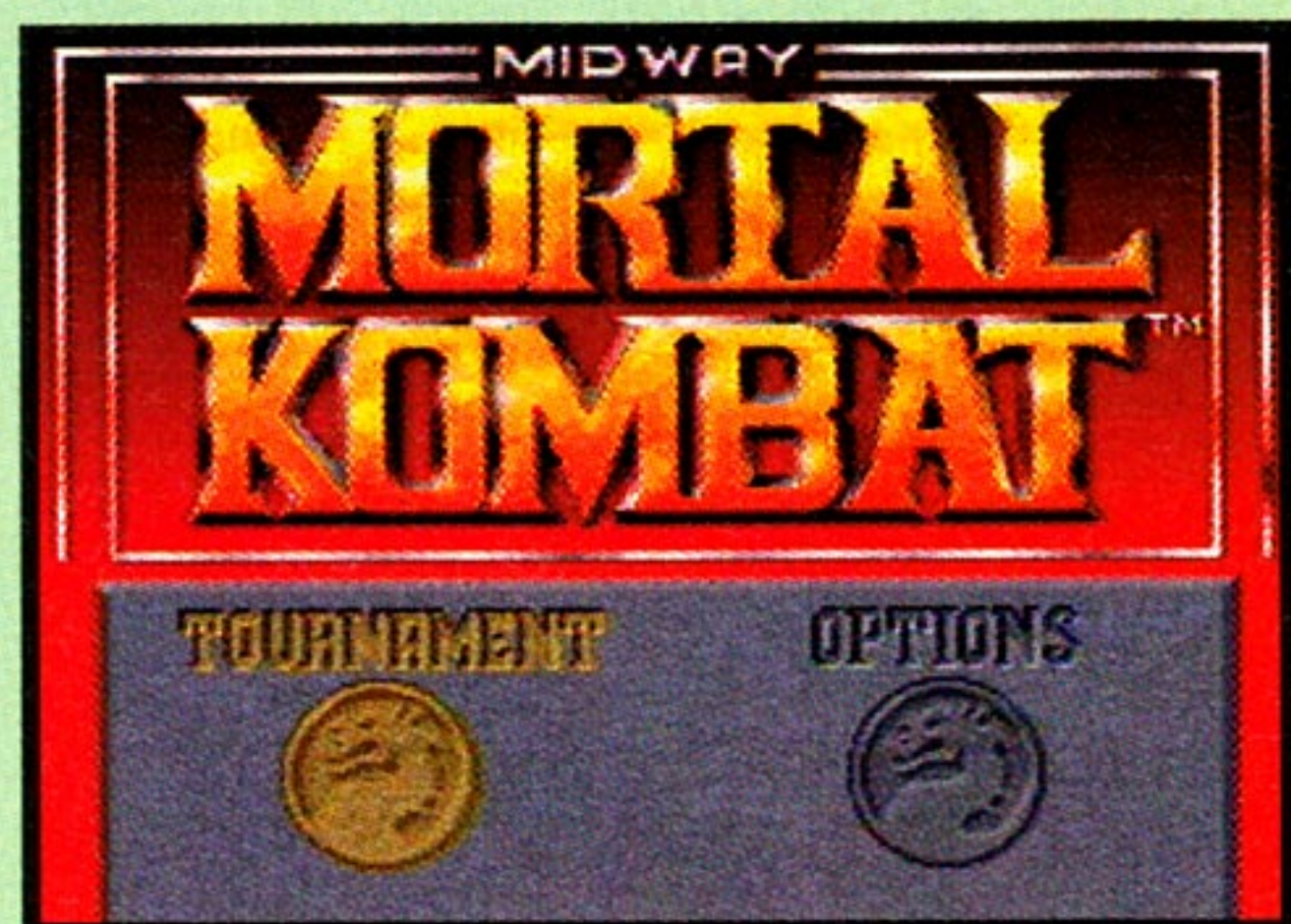
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VIDEO GAME GALLERY



VIDEO GAME GALLERY



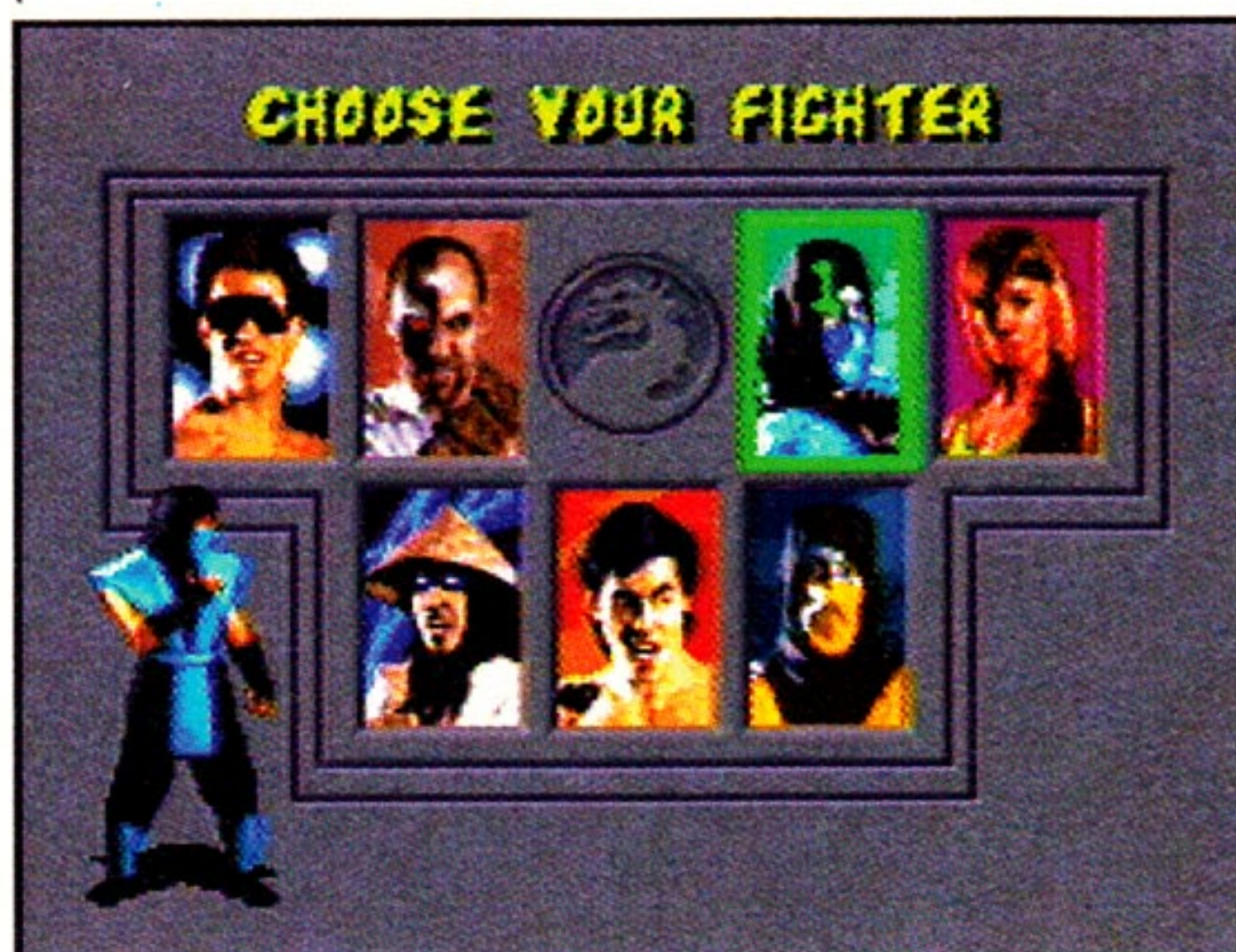
Mortal Kombat

PUBLISHER	Acclaim
SYSTEM	SNES
THEME	Street Fight
MEGABITS	16
PLAYERS	1 or 2
LEVELS	12
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	97%
SOUND	93%
PLAYABILITY	96%

OVERALL 96%

Two great versions of the coin-op arrive at last.

These home versions of Midway's smash hit, **Mortal Kombat**, have been anticipated by gamers since the coin-op machine first appeared in arcades two years ago. The good news: the wait was



The arcade foes are recreated on the SNES with all their signature moves.

worth it. Both the Genesis and, especially, the SNES editions of **MK** are superb, first-rate conversions that capture an amazing amount of the coin-op's visceral and visual appeal.

As fans of the game undoubtedly know, **Mortal Kombat** is based on an ancient martial arts competition, the Shaolin Tournament, which was, for ages, an honorable contest with the greatest warriors from the four corners of the world invited to participate. Ah, but that was before the tournament was tainted by a demon named Shang Tsung and his four-armed acolyte, Goro. The warrior devil Shang Tsung wasn't looking for honors or trophies, he was hungry for the souls of his vanquished competitors. Shang and Goro dominated the competition thereafter, but now, half a century later, the contest has been renewed, and the call has once again gone out to the world's greatest martial artists.



Fluid animation and quick action are sure to please fighting fans everywhere.

Liu Kang is a Bruce Lee-type from China; Johnny Cage is a cool American chop socky movie star who dons his Ray-Bans after each successful skirmish; Sonya Blade is a beautiful American woman who also happens to be a member of an elite, para-military organization; Kano is an unsavory cyborg who was thrown out of Japan and is wanted in 35 countries; Scorpion is a reanimated dead man; Rayden is a mystical warrior who



Bonus and strength points are tallied up and the end of each round of fighting.

resides in the thunder clouds and can harness the forces of lightning; and Sub-Zero is a mystery man among enigmas, believed to be a member of the Lin Kuei, a clan of legendary Chinese ninjas.

The gamer can use any of these characters as a Kombat surrogate, and each possesses unique maneuvers and powers. In the Tournament mode, the player selects a fighter, then battles each of the other contestants, in sequence, climaxing with a Mirror Match in which the warrior must fight a self-duplicate.

Gamers who survive the first round of encounters then advance to a series of three Endurance Matches, during which they tackle a pair of opponents, one at a time. Successful warriors then move on to tackle Goro—the Outworld Prince who is half-human and half-dragon, has four arms, and stands about eight feet tall—and, ultimately, Shang Tsung himself.

At any point during play, a second human player can enter the tournament by pressing the Play button on their controller, transforming **Mortal Kombat** into a head-to-head competition.

All fights are best-two-of-three rounds, and when one contestant has an opponent ready to fall, the words "Finish Them" appear on-screen, allowing the victor to engage a super-special finishing move. There is also a bonus screen in which players attempt to smash boards with a single karate strike. These factors provide for some intense fighting action!



Mortal Kombat

PUBLISHER	Acclaim/Arena
SYSTEM	Genesis
THEME	Street Fight
MEGABITS	16
PLAYERS	1 or 2
LEVELS	12
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	92%
SOUND	84%
PLAYABILITY	95%

OVERALL 92%

Those who saw photos from the Genesis version during its development will be delighted to see all the visual improvements Probe made in the cartridge just prior to completion. The backgrounds are full-bodied, with an impressive diversity of detail, while the characters themselves are beautifully replicated from the arcade version.

The SNES edition, however, produced by the Nintendo experts at Sculptured



Sonya may be a gorgeous lady, but she can also produce some awesome kicks!

Software, is even better. The colors are magnificent, creating an array of backgrounds that range from dungeon-like darkness to the full blaze of the sun. The characters, while they don't move quite as quickly as their Genesis counterparts, are magnificently animated. Even in comparable repose, they seem bursting with life and vitality, sinews ready to lurch into

action at any second.

Sculptured also used a successful new sound blasting technology to produce the superb music, sound effects,

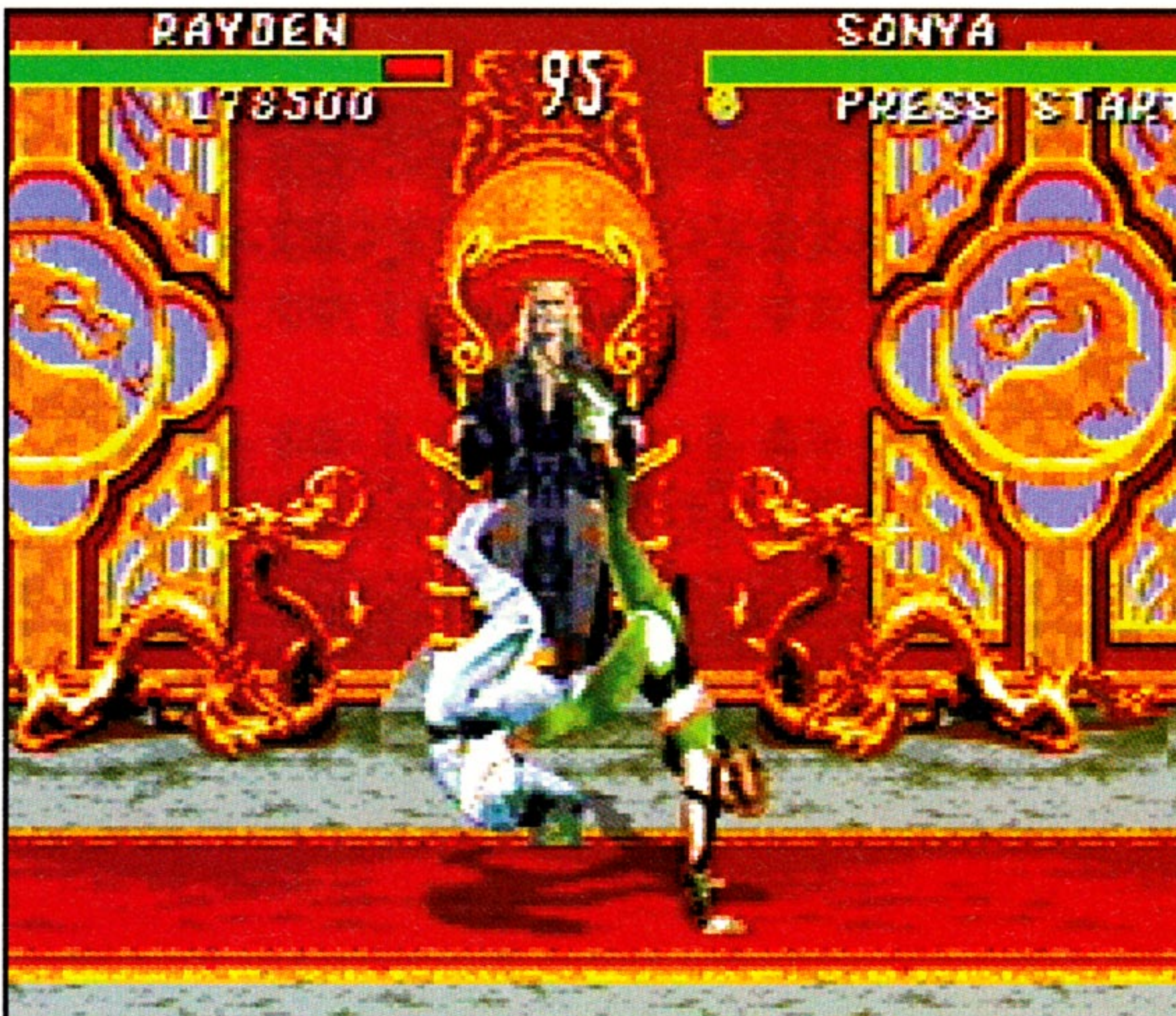


The main point of this game is not left to the imagination—time to kick tail!

and speech in the SNES edition. Characters chatter away as they battle, with the same exaggerated sound effects that fans of martial arts movies have come to know and love. And when the voice of Shang Tsung commands a competitor to finish off the opponent, the hairs may stand up on the back of the gamer's neck.

The downside of the game's famous digitized graphics, however, can be traced to the difficulty of finding four-armed giants and demon warriors to digitize. While Cage, Sonya, Rayden, and company look great, Goro, for example, suffers from comparatively crude animation. The Goro character moves with a jerky, stop-motion quality that is not only visually disturbing, but almost impossible to deal with in a combat context. Goro often seems to teleport across the screen, rather than move across it.

The other difficulty may or may not be a problem, depending on the individual



gamer's point of view. The fact is, there are an awful lot of moves to memorize here, and each fighter's combat commands vary, particularly on specialty moves. This presents a unique challenge. To deliver Rayden's finishing move, for example, on the SNES (which, remember, has three more action buttons than the Genesis) the player must move "toward [foe], away, away, away, [then press] Y (must be close to foe at start)."

While some gamers will enjoy the process of learning these complex, multi-command maneuvers, others will be frustrated by the awkwardness of the commands. In fact, those unfamiliar with the game will frequently find themselves accidentally discharging specialty moves while attempting a simple spin kick or other stunt. Fortunately, both versions offer several difficulty levels, including "very easy" for newcomers to **Mortal Kombat**.

The task of bringing a game as elephantine as this to even the 16-Bit video



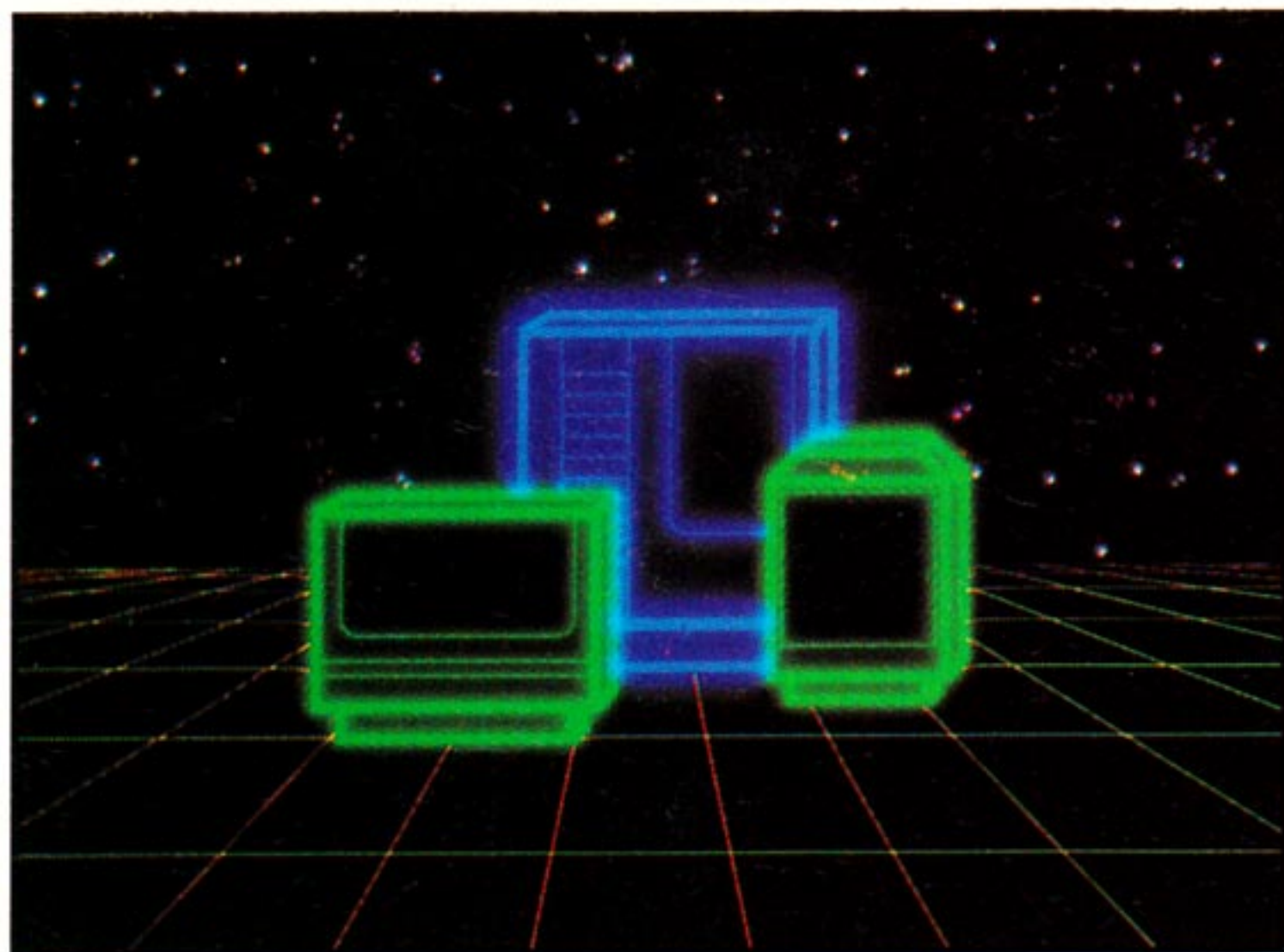
As the levels increase, the competition also heats up. This won't be easy!

game universe is enormous, and both Probe (all versions but the SNES) and

Sculptured (SNES) deserve major kudos for jobs exceedingly well done.

As for Acclaim, the days are over when competitors could laugh that, while it always snatched the best licenses, Acclaim never maximized their gaming potential. **Mortal Kombat** is a mortal lock to be among the best games produced on both the Genesis and SNES in 1993.

—Bill Kunkel



VIDEO GAME GALLERY



Vegas Stakes

PUBLISHER	Nintendo
SYSTEM	SNES
THEME	Gambling Simulation
MEGABITS	4
PLAYERS	1 - 4
LEVELS	N/A
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	69%
PLAYABILITY	81%

OVERALL 79%

Time to let it all hang out in everybody's favorite sin-city.

There is a mystique about Las Vegas that has enraptured a large portion of this country's population. It has become a favorite vacation spot as well as a popular choice when finding a new place to live. Ask our editors Katz, Kunkel, and Worley about Las Vegas, and they will wax-eloquent about the virtues of living there, for hours on end. Yes, Las Vegas is a place with a certain magic that is nearly impossible to describe.

Nintendo, in their new gambling game, **Vegas Stakes** doesn't reflect any of that magic at all. That is not to say that this is a bad game. Quite the opposite, in fact. But if you're looking for a game that reflects the genuine excitement of being in Las Vegas, with its glamour, lights, and 24-hour commotion, then look somewhere else. This game is just gambling.

In the "Vegas Adventure," your chosen character has just arrived in Vegas and checked into the Golden Paradise Hotel and Casino. The object is to take another character with you (for advise and the like) and to break the bank. At the start of the game there are four casinos to choose from. The Hideaway, The Golden Paradise, The Buffalo Head, and The 2020. There is also one casino you can't choose to start at, The Laurel Palace; but we'll get back to that later.

You start with \$1000.00 and your goal is to reach \$10,000,000.00 before your trip is over. The games to choose from



With five players, poker gives you the chance to cash in on some big pots.

are Black Jack, Slots, Roulette, Craps, and Seven Card Stud Poker. Each of the casinos have differing minimum and maximum bets determining how much money is to be won or lost at one time.

The rules for each of the games are well laid out, and the computer companion is always on hand to explain something the player may find confusing. This is especially helpful in craps where the rules are confounding enough that even some seasoned gamblers stay away from the craps table.

As the game progresses, there is some integration with other characters, some of which are out to take you for as much as they can get.

Each of the casinos features a different theme with unique graphics and music. Even so, aside from this and the different wager amounts, the games themselves are the same from place to place.

Building up funds isn't easy. Anyone who has ever been to Las Vegas knows how easy it is to lose a lot of money in just a short amount of time. The key is intelligent betting and saving your game whenever your income really goes up. This will help protect you against a streak of bad luck or a pickpocket.

When the player manages to turn his \$1000.00 into \$100,000.00, he

becomes a high roller and is given a free room at the Laurel Palace, the Casino with \$1000.00 minimums and no maximum bets. This is the place to either win or lose all of your money in a big hurry. Still, if you save often and persevere, you may break the bank yet.

The different games are portrayed accurately and are a lot of fun to play. The graphics are good and the backgrounds are clear and well drawn.

The sounds on the other hand are annoying. Some of the effects, especially the sound the slot machines make border on maddening. After just a few pulls of the handle, you will find yourself hitting the mute button on the TV set. The music isn't half bad, but can get repetitious after a while.

The game plays well but lacks the variety that one would expect to find in a 16-Bit gambling simulation. There should be a few different types of slot machines to choose from, at least ones with different wheels. No matter which casino you are at or what dollar amount you play on the slots, the wheels are always the same. There is also a lack of variety in playing poker. Seven-card stud is fine, but one wonders why five-card draw, the most popular poker game, is left out entirely. They should have at least included poker machines which have been becoming increasingly popular.

A few other games would be nice, but at least the major five are here.

The one-through-four player competition is a nice feature for a group of players following the same features as the one-player game, with the added feature of being able to exchange money back and forth.

There is also the option to use the Nintendo Mouse for the controller, which is okay but it doesn't take anything away and it doesn't add anything to the game.

Vegas Stakes is a good game for anyone who wants to give gambling a try without risking the money.

— Marc Camron



Ten million dollars breaks the bank and shows everyone who the best player is.

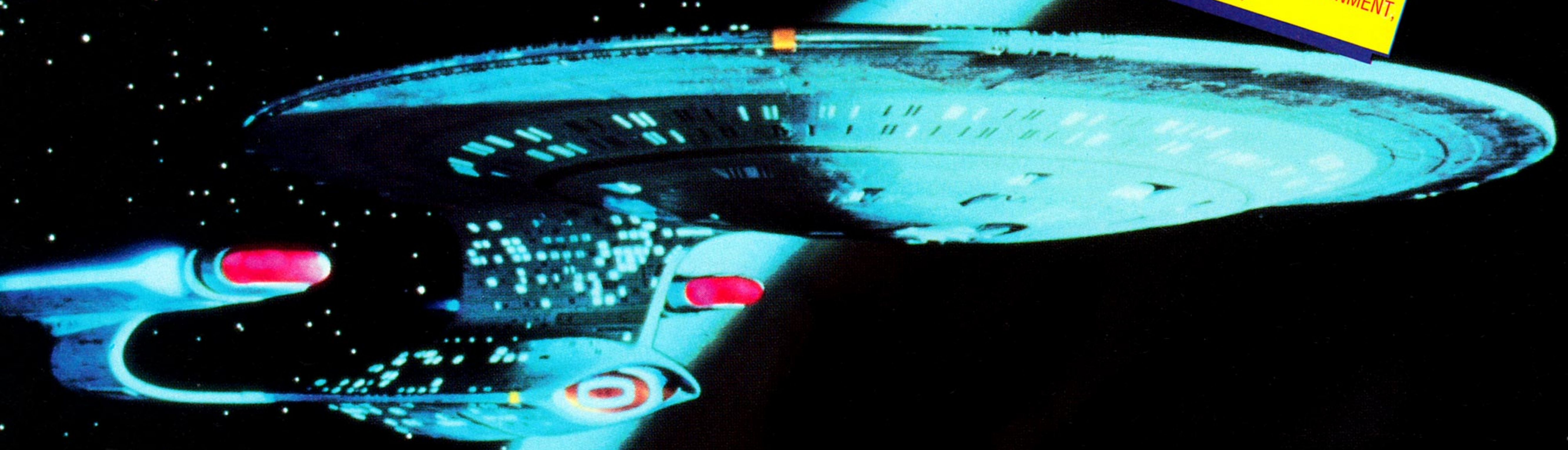
STAR TREK

THE NEXT GENERATION™

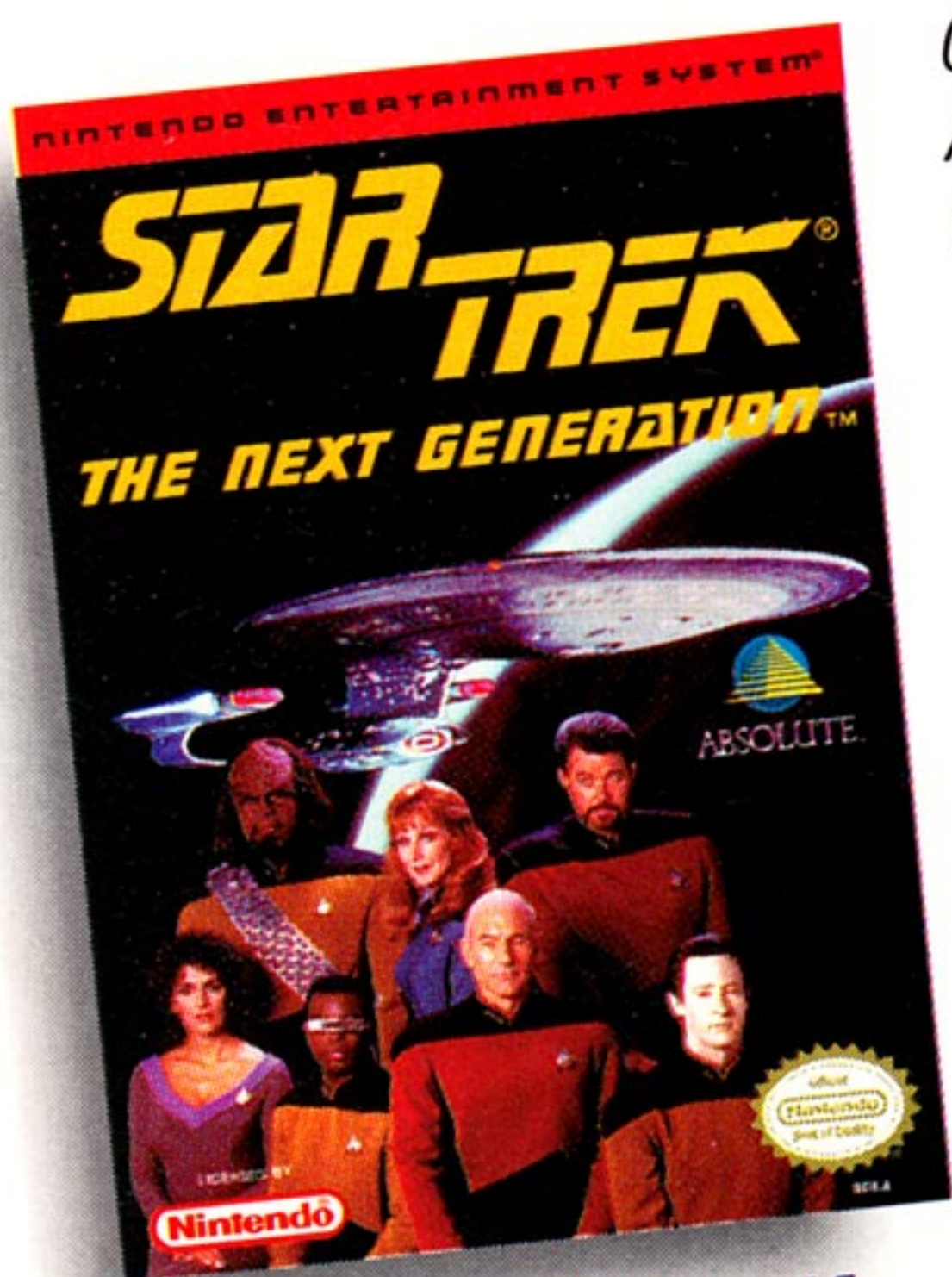
Critically-acclaimed on Game Boy!
(GAMEPRO, June 1993)

Graphics	Sound	Control	FunFactor	Challenge
4.5	4.0	4.0	4.0	INT.
				Intermediate

"...FIRST-RATE..."
(VIDEO GAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT, June 1993)



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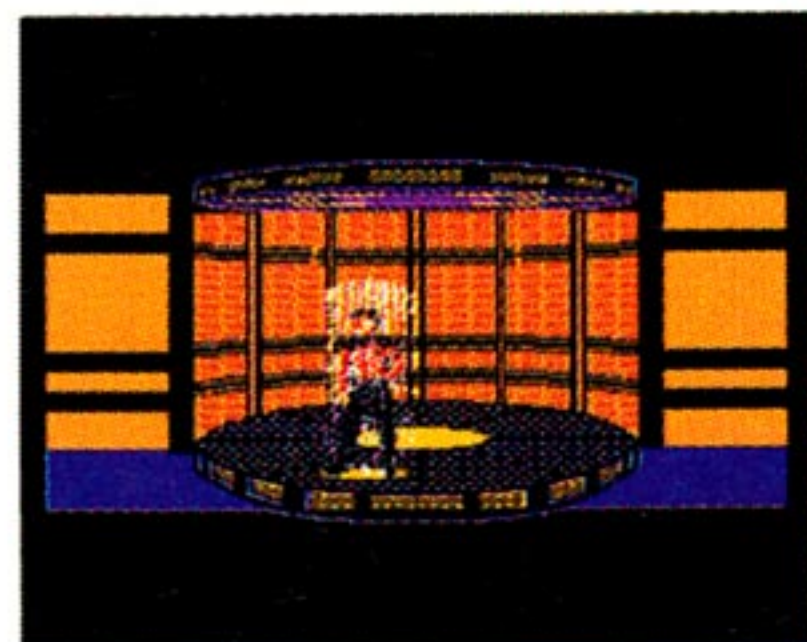
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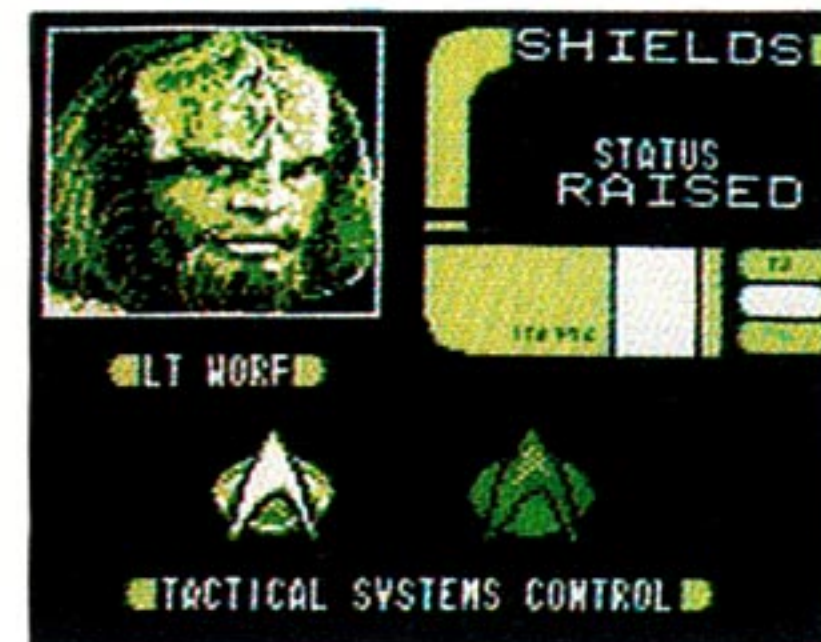
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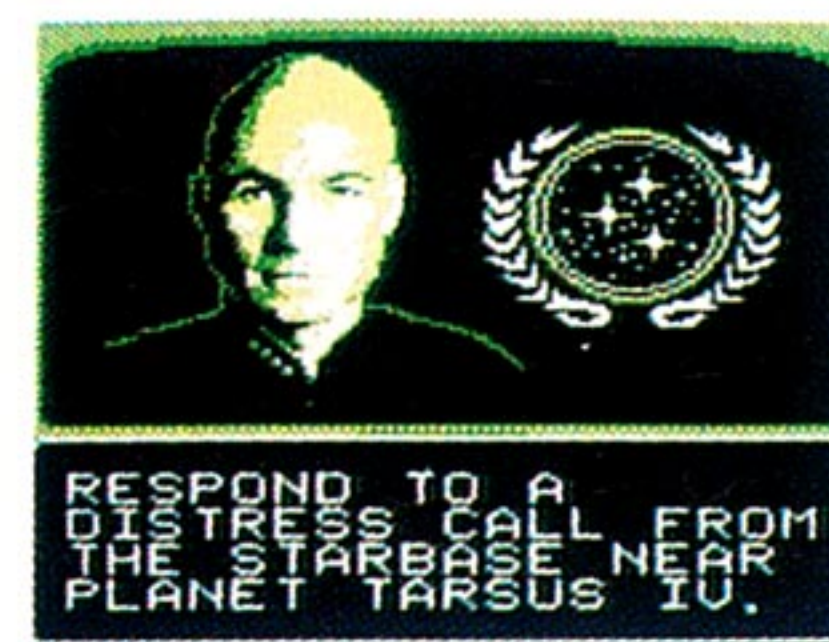
An intruder has infiltrated your starship; contact Chief O'Brien to beam it off!



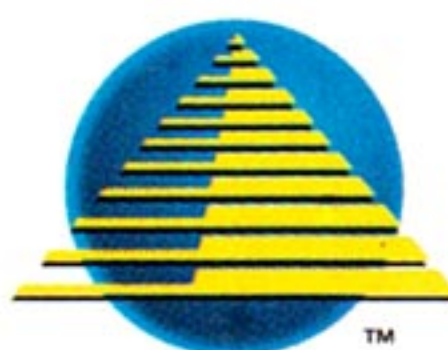
A Romulan armada moves in for the kill—aim phasers and fire!



The U.S.S. Enterprise™ is under attack! Order Lt. Worf to raise shields!



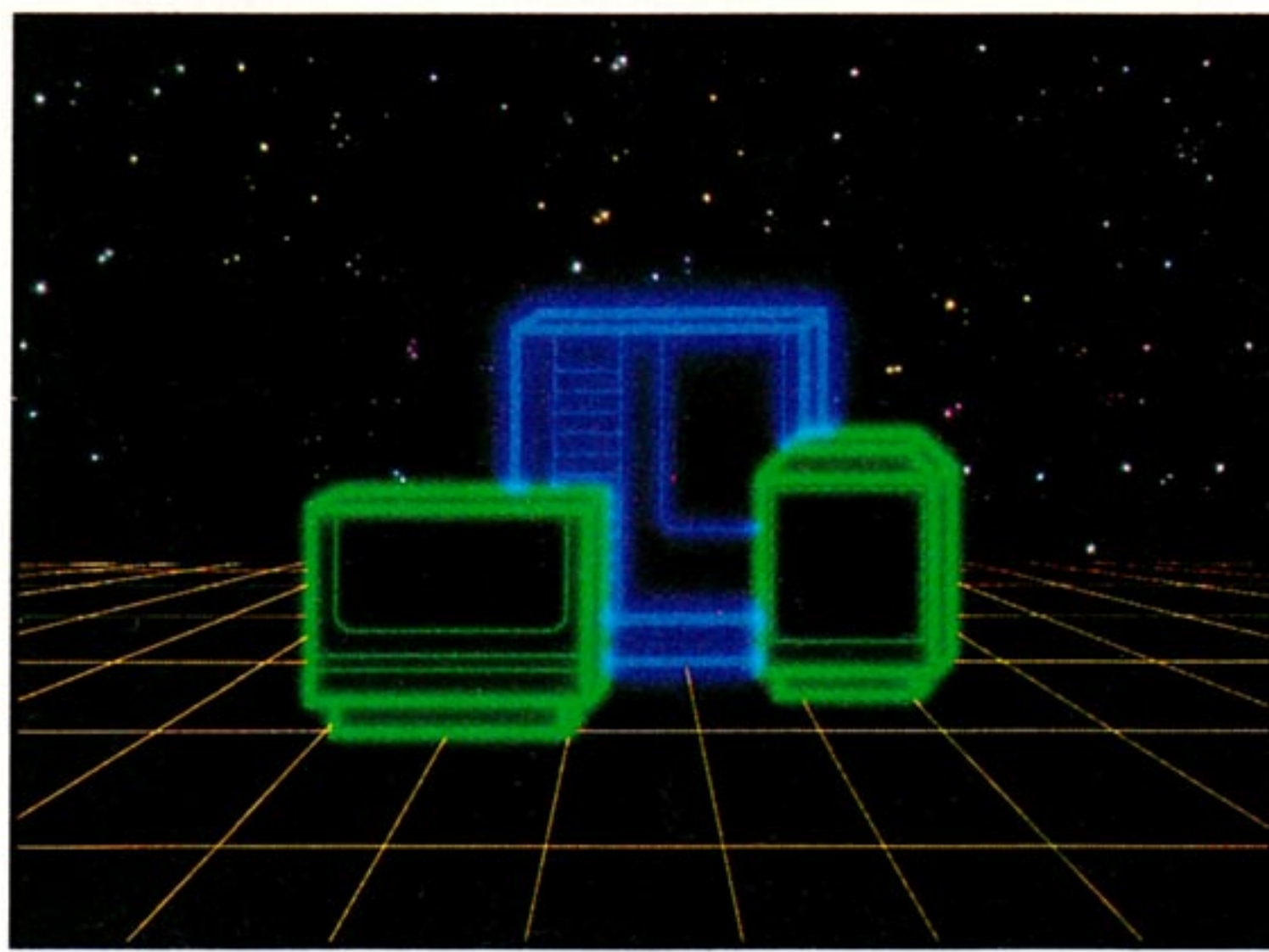
Receive your mission orders from Captain Jean-Luc Picard himself!



ABSOLUTE™



GAME BOY



VIDEO GAME GALLERY



T2: Judgment Day

PUBLISHER	LJN
SYSTEM	SNES
THEME	Action
MEGABITS	8
PLAYERS	1
LEVELS	8
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Hard
GRAPHICS	88%
SOUND	85%
PLAYABILITY	90%

OVERALL 86%

They forgot to mention he's a Terminator under restraint.

'Tis a puzzlement. Everybody wants to blow away the ol' T-800 Terminator on sight, but he (or it, rather) is supposed to save the world for humanity—starting with the young John Connor.

In the movie, there was little to stop the second Schwarzenegger-shaped cybernetic robot, which had only the overriding orders of Sarah Connor's only son to keep it from blowing away everything and everyone that stood in its way. For the sake of the game, the T-800 (affectionately called "Arnie" over at LJN) has a degree of vulnerability. The more hits he takes, the lower his batteries get. There are first aid packets to recharge his energy level.

While both the visualization and the action are in the classic side-scroller mode and format, there are on-screen

messages provided through a HUD (heads-up display) resembling the scenes portraying the T-800's viewpoint in the films. Mostly these appear at a touch of the start/pause button, but much of the time there are specific status statements of the current objectives. When these objectives are achieved, it's time to move on to the next level.

To a great extent this is more of a puzzle game than just a shoot-em-up. In early levels there are some fairly obvious objectives and some that have to be discovered. For example, in the first level the objectives are to acquire clothing, weaponry, John Connor's residential address, and a means of transportation to get him there.

The clothing is no problem—indeed, by the time the game starts, our cybernetic hero is already comfortably outfitted in some poor biker's leathers. How this occurred is provided in a non-interactive opening scene that starts right after the obligatory closeup of the red-eyed endo-skull and a title screen, and repeats if the start or select buttons aren't soon



The Terminator's sensors will assist the player in locating important objects.

pushed. The sequence recalls the openings of both movies, with his arrival in a truck stop's parking lot in a series of lightning discharges. This is followed by an unclad march (made discreet with a fortuitous fence and a motorcyclist) into the Corral, a hangout for low-life truckers and bikers. The camera continues to pan the outside of the eatery while a series of bangs and crashes, punctuated by howls, ensues. He then emerges from a back door, dressed as he is to be for the game, and looks around. This is where



the cycle starts over, or, if the start button is pushed, this is the point at which the game begins.

The other objectives are to be located in the area, either inside the Corral or on the street just outside. There are motorcycles, phone booths, trash cans and other items, plus lots of belligerent guys who probably took exception to how he acquired his clothing.

Think it's obvious? Not really. But the player will probably get it over time.

The tough part to master, actually, is an interlevel driving game whereby the T-800 must get to his next locations. It takes place on a street map in the angled overhead perspective probably first seen in Zaxxon, at a sufficient distance away from the streets to have some idea of what else is on them. But the control technique involves a not too intuitive combination of a couple of buttons and the direction pad, and, in terms of reaction time, the speeds are going to give new meaning to the word twitch.

When the T-800 catches up to John and Sarah, their protection against the T-1000 becomes the priority. There is some manipulation of which of them is by the T-800's side, and if they're injured, he has the capacity to, in effect, re-charge *their* batteries; i.e., restore their energy levels.

The important thing to remember is that it is more efficient to get through with as little violence as possible. It's hard to stay in Protection mode, as opposed to giving way to wholesale violence, but it sooner or later becomes clear that in this game, violence begets violence. It perhaps behooves the player to try to emulate the T-800's prerogatives, and this, in turn, could be a good philosophy to consider after the SNES is switched off and the controller is laid down.

—Ross Chamberlain



Jurassic Park

PUBLISHER	Sega
SYSTEM	Genesis
THEME	Action
MEGABITS	16
PLAYERS	1
LEVELS	7
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	96%
SOUND	92%
PLAYABILITY	89%

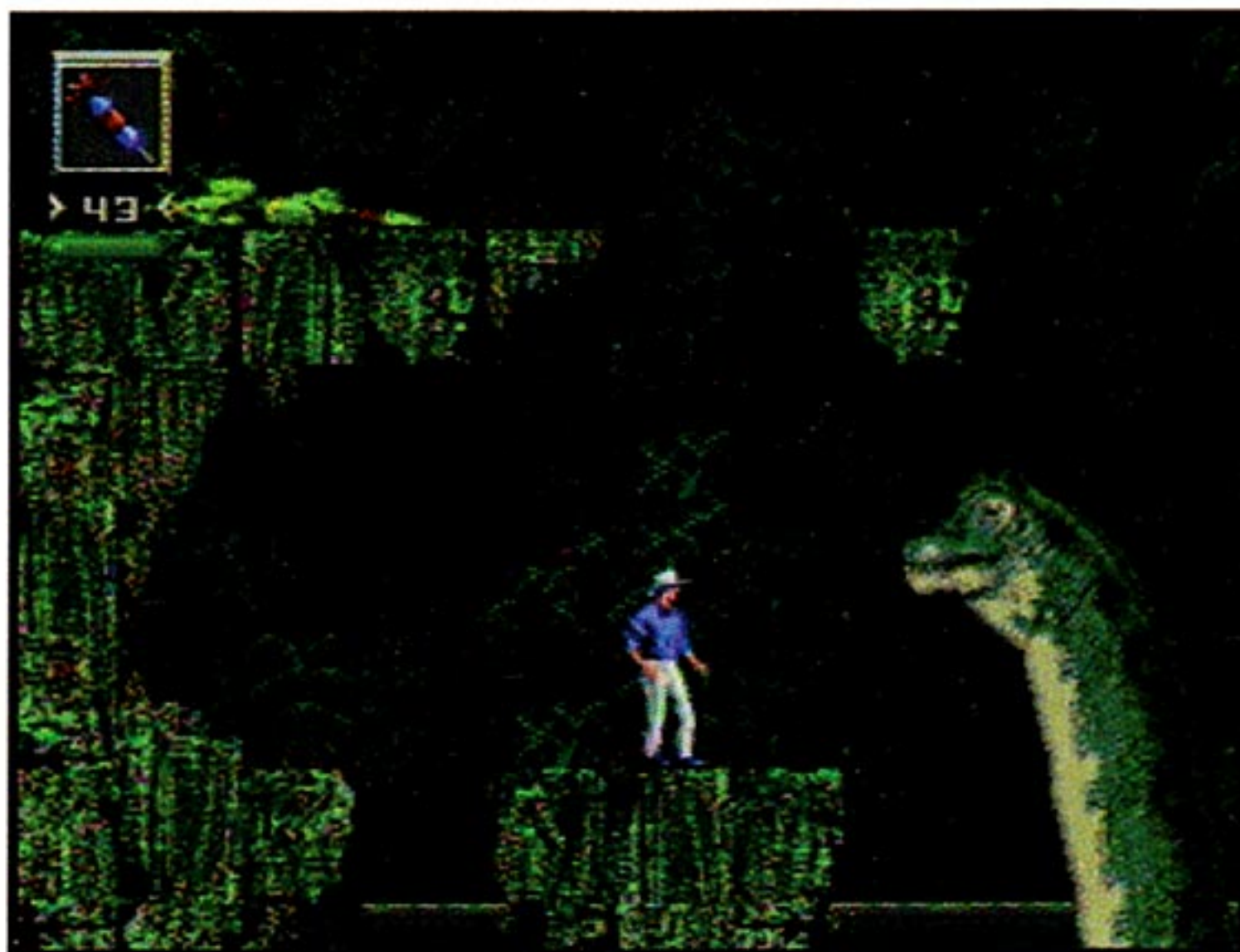
OVERALL 93%

This summer's hottest movie becomes interactive!

Jurassic Park is quickly working its way up the list of biggest all-time movies. It will soon, undoubtedly take its place along side of Star Wars, ET, and Close Encounters of the Third Kind as one of the highest grossing, most popular, technically outstanding films ever.

One of the most noticeable aspects of the film was the revolutionary special effects. It is only fitting that any game based on this movie would also have some incredible effects. In this case represented by the little dots on the TV set, commonly referred to as graphics.

Jurassic Park, the game, features some of the most outstanding graphics ever seen on a home video game screen. The characters are lifelike and well



Not all dinosaurs will attack Dr. Grant. Don't provoke them and just slip on by.

drawn, and most importantly, well animated. The dinosaurs in the game really look like the dinosaurs in the movie.

JP is an action game, with the player taking the role of either Dr. Grant — a scientist trying to escape from this island with all of his limbs intact; or an escaped Raptor — a dinosaur with a bad attitude

whose only goal is to wreak as much havoc on this strange world as possible.

Along the way, there will be other dinosaurs to deal with, along with humans (if you are playing as the Raptor) trying to put you in your place. Add this to all of the natural disasters than can be caused by rivers, prehistoric vegetation, and long falls into nothingness, and you have a side-scrolling action game to be reckoned with.



When playing as the Raptor, remember the humans don't like being eaten.

There is nothing all that special about the game play. It is still your everyday, run-of-the-mill, side-scrolling run and jump action game. What makes the game shine are the subject matter, the graphics, and the Jurassic Park name.

It may sound strange that one of the major contributing factors to the enjoyment of this game is the name, but consider this. Isn't it more fun to play a football game if you can control your favorite players rather than just a bunch of nameless guys on the field?

While this game could certainly hold its own as a generic dinosaur action game, the chance to explore Jurassic Park on your own make it worth the ticket price.



The levels themselves are varied enough as not to get repetitious. There is even a scene where Dr. Grant must take a raft along the river in order to get through the stage.

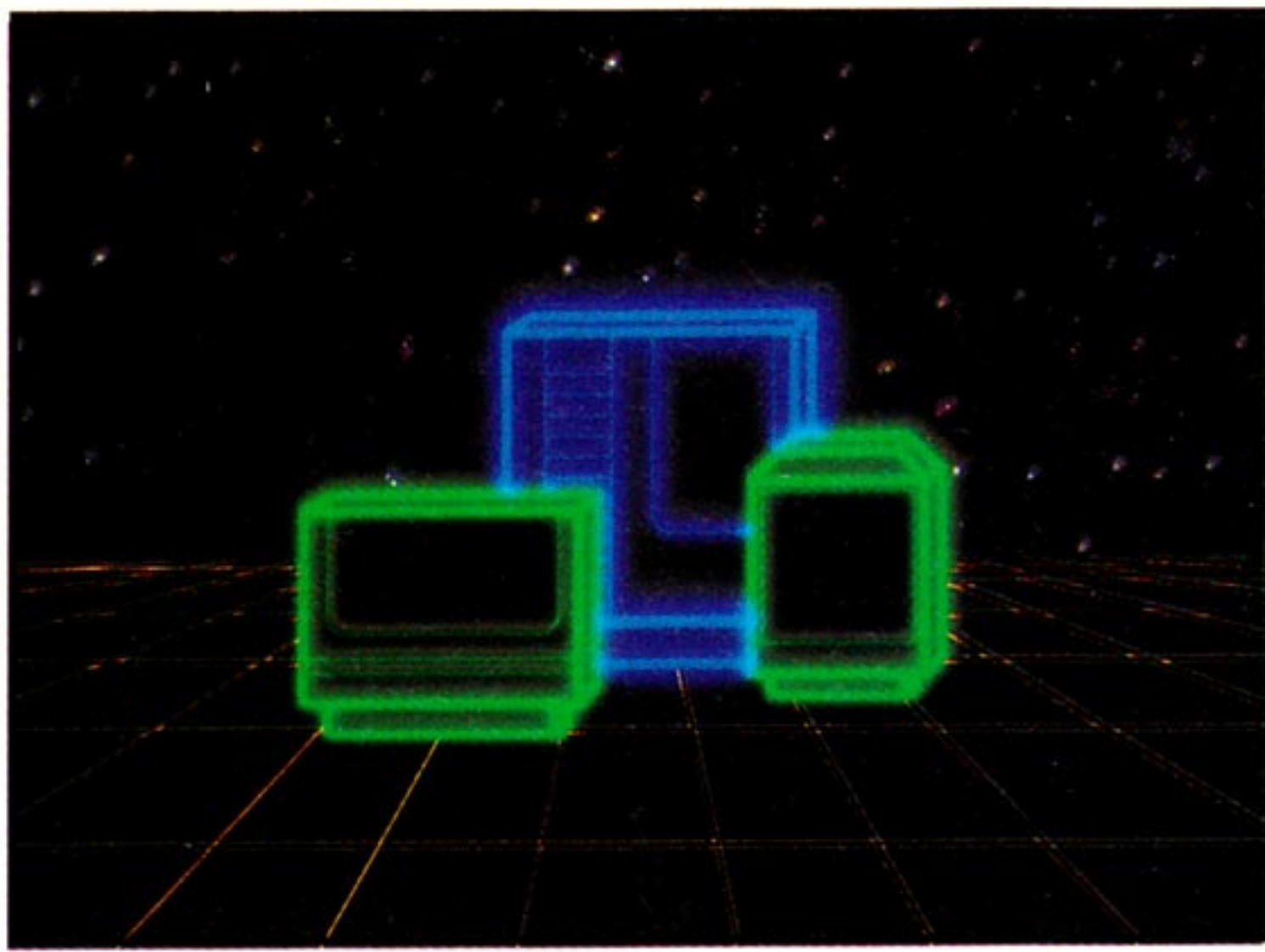
The number of moves is also impressive. Along with the standard run, jump, and crouch, Dr. Grant and the Raptor can grab onto ledges and pull themselves up, as well as walk through small places while stooped over. And as for defense, Dr. Grant has six different weapons at his disposal, including grenades and three kinds of darts. On the other hand, the Raptor must rely on his own natural abilities like kicking, clawing, biting, and stomping on his enemies to make them succumb.

Furthermore, the ability to choose between Dr. Grant and the Raptor as your characters gives the game further longevity. While the levels remain the same, the enemies and routes you must take through the levels are varied enough to make it almost like two different games.

By the way, not that it's important, but the story of the game takes little from either the book or the movie, so don't look for a bunch of parallels there. Instead just be expecting a game full of great graphics, sounds and plenty of dinosaurs. Jurassic Park was a revolutionary movie, and **Jurassic Park** and this is certainly a revolutionary game. The amount of time spent animating the dinosaurs must have been a huge task for Sega, as it was for those who did the same with the dinosaurs for the movie, and Sega certainly did it with a slightly lower budget.

If it were a ride (and somehow I think it probably will be) **Jurassic Park** the movie and the game would be an "E Ticket." Count on this one to be a big hit.

— Marc Camron



VIDEO GAME GALLERY

Rocket Knight Adventures

START
OPTIONS

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PUBLISHER	Konami
SYSTEM	Genesis
THEME	Action
MEGABITS	8
PLAYERS	1
LEVELS	7
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	87%
SOUND	89%
PLAYABILITY	85%

OVERALL 83%

Meet the new contestant in the High-Speed Sweepstakes

Sparkster the Opossum stars in Konami's **Rocket Knight Adventures**, the latest in the genre of high-speed action games made famous by **Sonic the Hedgehog** and **Bubsy the Bobcat**.

In the kingdom of Zebulos, Sparkster became leader of the elite Rocket Knights after the previous Rocket Knight master was destroyed by the corrupt Axle Gear. Sparkster fought, defeated, and banished Axle Gear from Zebulos but now he returns, allied with the evil swine of the Devotindos Empire. Axle Gear wars against Zebulos, seeking the key to the seal which binds the warship, the Pig Star. Naturally, only our rocket powered opossum superhero can save the kingdom from Axle Gear.

This is a lot of background for a side-scrolling platform game. Read the story

and forget it, or don't read it at all; the game loses nothing. Heck, chuck the manual and jump in feet first; it won't take long to get the hang of things.

Equipped with rocket pack, prehensile tail and a Mystical Sword, Sparkster journeys through 7 levels, battling mechanical monsters, killer birds, exploding fish and a never-ending supply of evil pigs, finally confronting Axle Gear on board the Pig Star. Each of the 7 levels has numerous sub-levels. Some are land based and others are water worlds where Sparkster must swim to his goal or flying scenarios where Sparkster battles numerous airborne foes.

The player chooses between 4 difficulty levels and can reconfigure the control pad. Players can begin on any level but new players starting on level 7 (the Pig Star) probably won't live long enough to see much of it.

Sparkster is not in the league of Sonic or Bubsy when it comes to land speed. He trods along at a fair clip for a opossum and is able to make startling bursts of speed with his rocket pack, but **RKA** lacks the sustained, frenetic pace of the games it emulates.

Still Sparkster is no slouch. His rocket pack makes him formidable if not always fast. Using the rocket pack is very much like riding a rocket; hold down the attack button until the pack's energy is at maximum, point Sparkster in the desired



Sparkster the Opossum takes to the tracks as he battles his many foes.

direction, let go of the attack button and hold on. If no direction is chosen, Sparkster spins in place and attacks anything nearby, inflicting a great deal of damage.

The burst of speed from the pack is quite short; only half a second or so, and it takes longer than that to bring the energy to maximum. In the flying scenes, the rocket pack is on automatic and the player doesn't have to worry about its operation. Gamers will quickly learn not to rely on the rocket pack too heavily.

Often, the precious time it takes to get the rockets warmed up is all the time Sparkster's foes need to do him in.



The speedy Sparkster can easily outfox his cumbersome boss enemies.

Wise gamers won't overlook the advantages of having a prehensile tail and a Mystical Sword in addition to rocket assisted take-off. Sparkster's sword shoots bolts of crescent shaped energy a la **Strider**, dispatching enemies from a safe distance. When Sparkster uses his sword on his porcine enemies the stunned creatures are knocked out of their clothes and go flying off the screen. There are a lot of these cute touches in **RKA**, but the cuteness gets heavy handed when short, animated bits interrupt the game. They're funny once, and there is no way around them.

The art and animation stand out with few exceptions, one of them Sparkster. Rendered in a generic Japanimation style, he lacks the surreal vibrance of Sonic or the funky, cartoonish warmth of Bubsy. In some screens his coloration makes him hard to see against the backgrounds. The backgrounds, by the way, display the best artwork in the game, especially during the flying levels. These parallax scrolling, animated land and cityscapes are done extremely well. Sparkster has his best renderings in these scenes. With his goggles down and cape a flying, he looks grim and resolute, which is saying a lot for a opossum.

The audio effects are good, especially the rocket pack ignition, but don't stand out like the soundtrack. The scoring is varied, with a different theme for each screen. Some of this stuff is quite hip, with an almost techno-industrial beat.

Most gamers probably won't return to **RKA** over and over again, as replay becomes repetitive after only a few plays. Konami has produced a fun game in **Rocket Knight Adventures**, but as a full-blown fast action game, it's not quite up to speed.

—John Hardin

CHUCK ROCK II

son of chuck™



To rescue his kidnapped Dad, Chuck's got to leap his way up a mammoth tree sinking in lava, beat Big Bertha and Fenny Fire Suit, duck flaming lava rocks and escape a crazy, dive-bombing bird - what's he so happy about?



Chuck's pouting big-time. Hovering over toxic waste, he's about to confront his father's abductor, Brick Jagger, and Brick's massive robot - the things a kid has to do for his old man!



Chuck Jr.'s about to become lunch as menacing sharks attack from below the Wacky Waterfalls. Quick, Chuck, throw a temper tantrum - then club them when they least expect it!

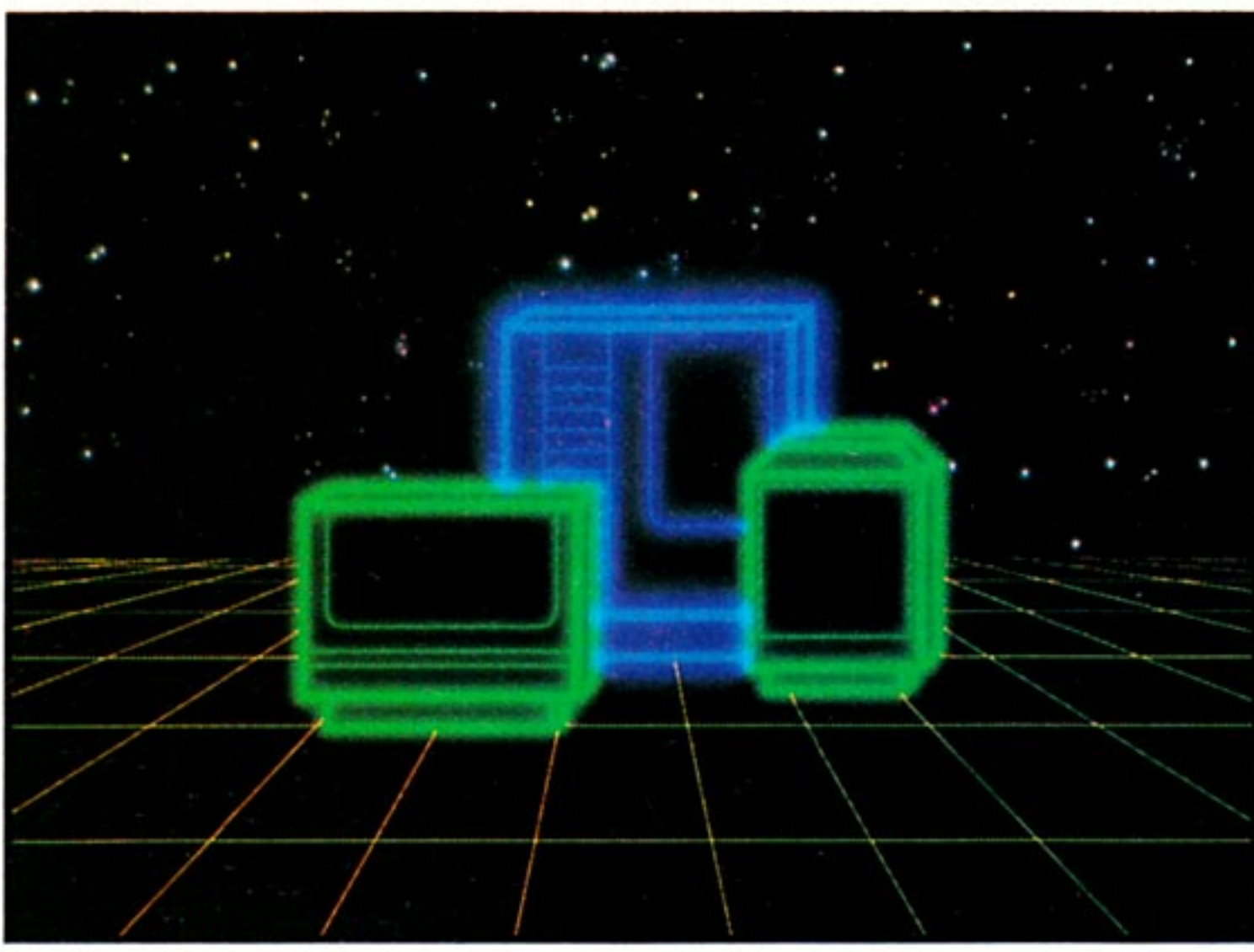


Why's Chuck wailing?! Is he afraid of Sergei the Sea Slug? Is he really just a baby?! Nah. You'd wail too if you could get a whiff of Sergei's armpits.

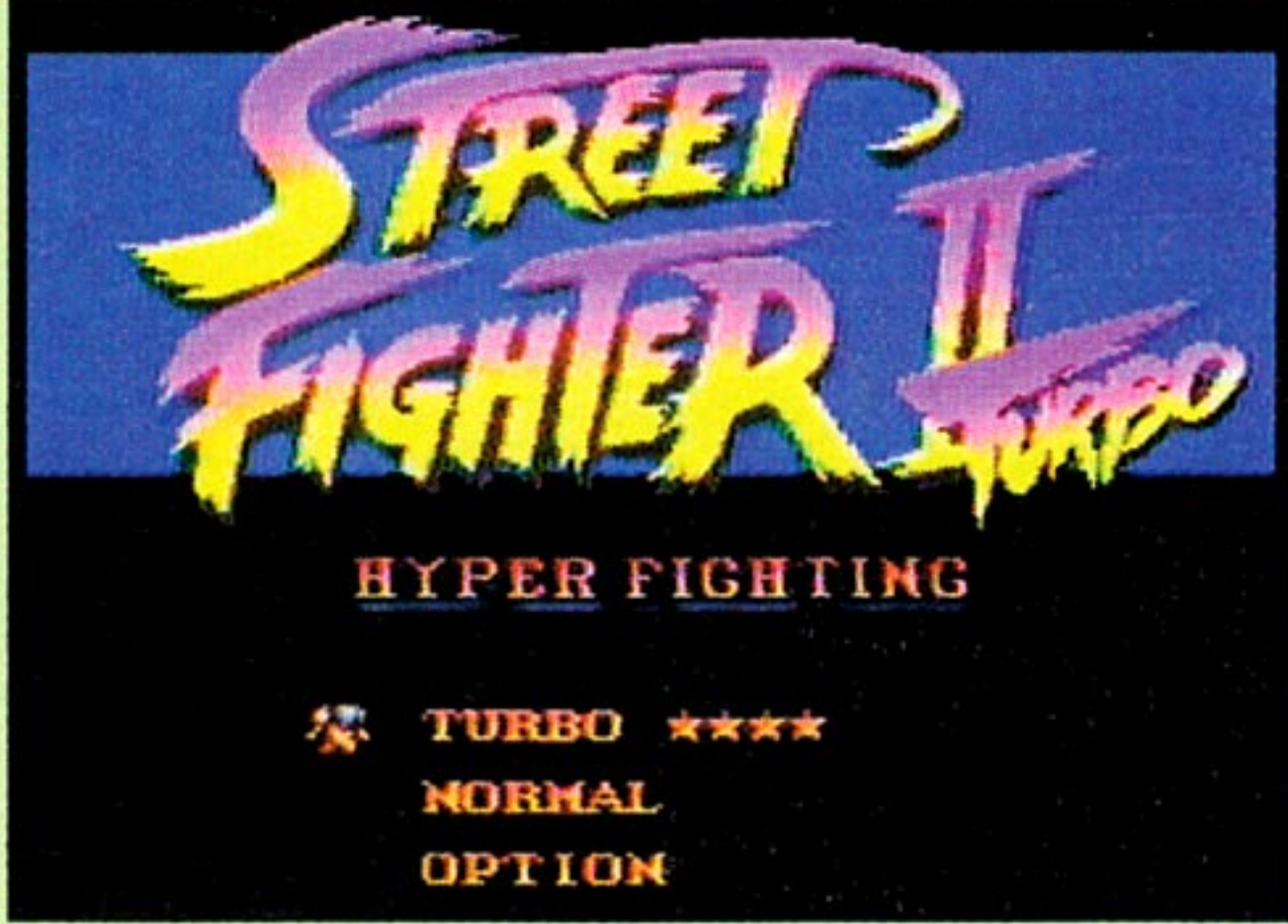


Available on Sega™ Genesis™ and Sega CD.™

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VIDEO GAME GALLERY



Street Fighter II Turbo

PUBLISHER	Capcom
SYSTEM	SNES
THEME	Street Fight
MEGABITS	20
PLAYERS	1 or 2
LEVELS	12
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	94%
SOUND	89%
PLAYABILITY	95%

OVERALL 93%

Ken, Ryu and the rest are faster than ever before!

The **Street Fighter II** series has already attained legendary status in the electronic gaming world.

SF II was named Arcade Game of the Year by the AMOA (Amusement & Music Operators Association) in '91 and the follow-up, **SF II Championship Edition**, copped the same prize a year later. These games literally revitalized the slumping arcade business while the SNES version of **SF II** was probably the single most important element in Nintendo's drive to launch its 16-Bit system.

The fastest-selling title in home video game history, **SF II** has already sold over 2 million copies in the States and nearly twice that many in Japan. Moreover, some 25 licensing deals involving the series have already been inked, including everything from t-shirts to a new movie to

be co-produced by Capcom and the prestigious Edward R. Pressman Film Corp., which recently brought filmgoers *Reversal of Fortune* and earlier gave Arnold Schwarzenegger his first dramatic role in John Milius' *Conan the Barbarian*.

Now, at long last, the much-anticipated next generation **SF II** contest has arrived. **Street Fighter II Turbo** for the SNES (the Genesis version having been held up as the rumored result of political pressure from Nintendo) reproduces the classic coin-op of the same name with remarkable fidelity.



Dhalsim's flame is fast and furious in this release of the fighting classic.

The enhancements are all here, including a built-in version of **SF II Championship Edition**. In the standard **Turbo** format, meanwhile, gamers can fight as any of the quartet of bosses (Sagat, Balrog, Vega, and M. Bison) and engage in mirror matches in which the same characters fight one another. And everything moves 15 per cent faster than in **SF II** (though the **Turbo** options *do* contain four speed settings). Additionally, characters have been given new, special maneuvers, including Chun Li's fireball



power and Dhalsim's added teleportation ability.

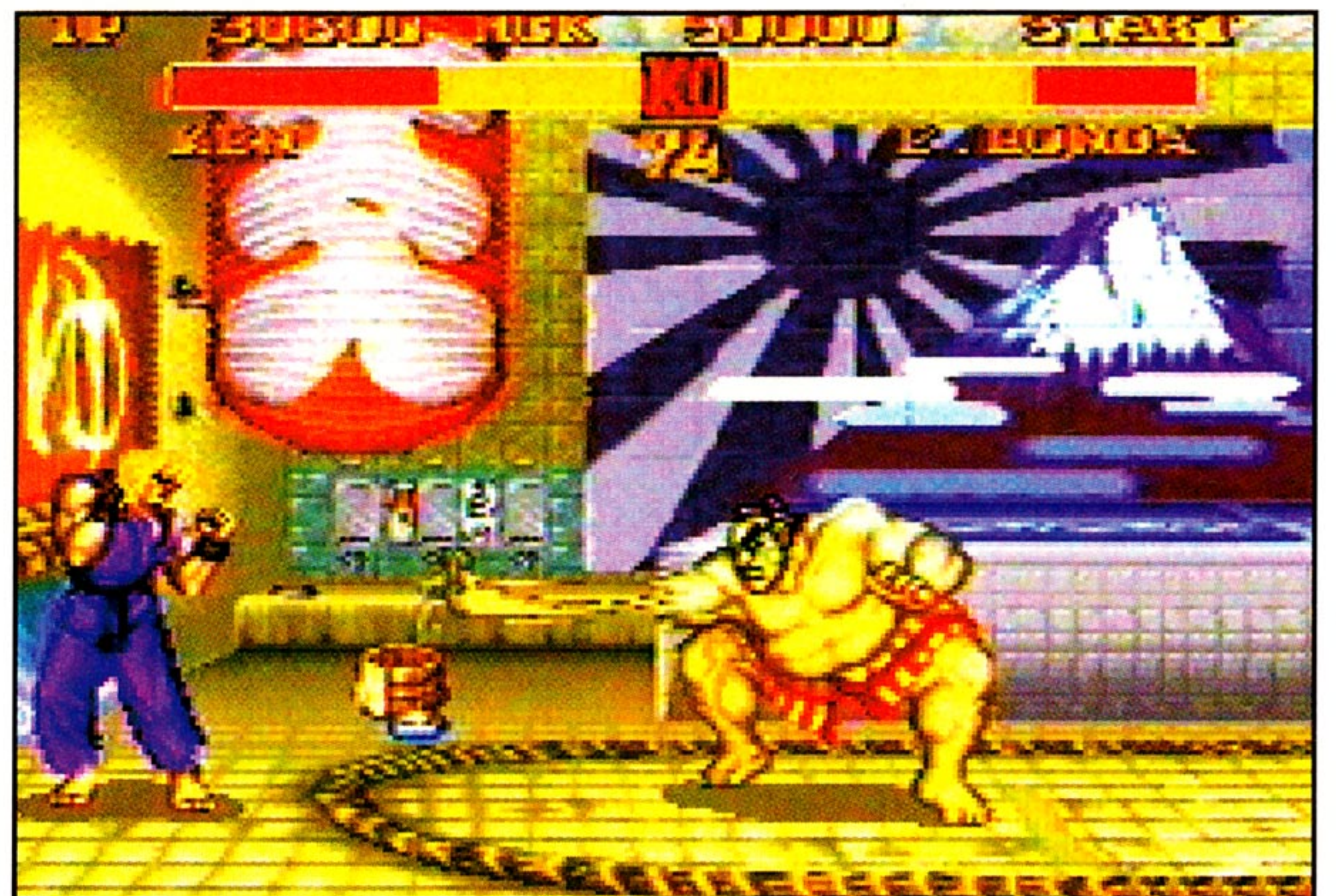
The major judgment call on this product is simple: if one already owns **SF II** on the SNES, is this additional purchase really necessary? Tough to say. Obviously, street fighting mavens won't have to think twice, nor will die-hard fans of the coin-op. More casual gamers, or those for whom street fighting contests are simply a peripheral component of their electronic entertainment diet, may well want to pass.

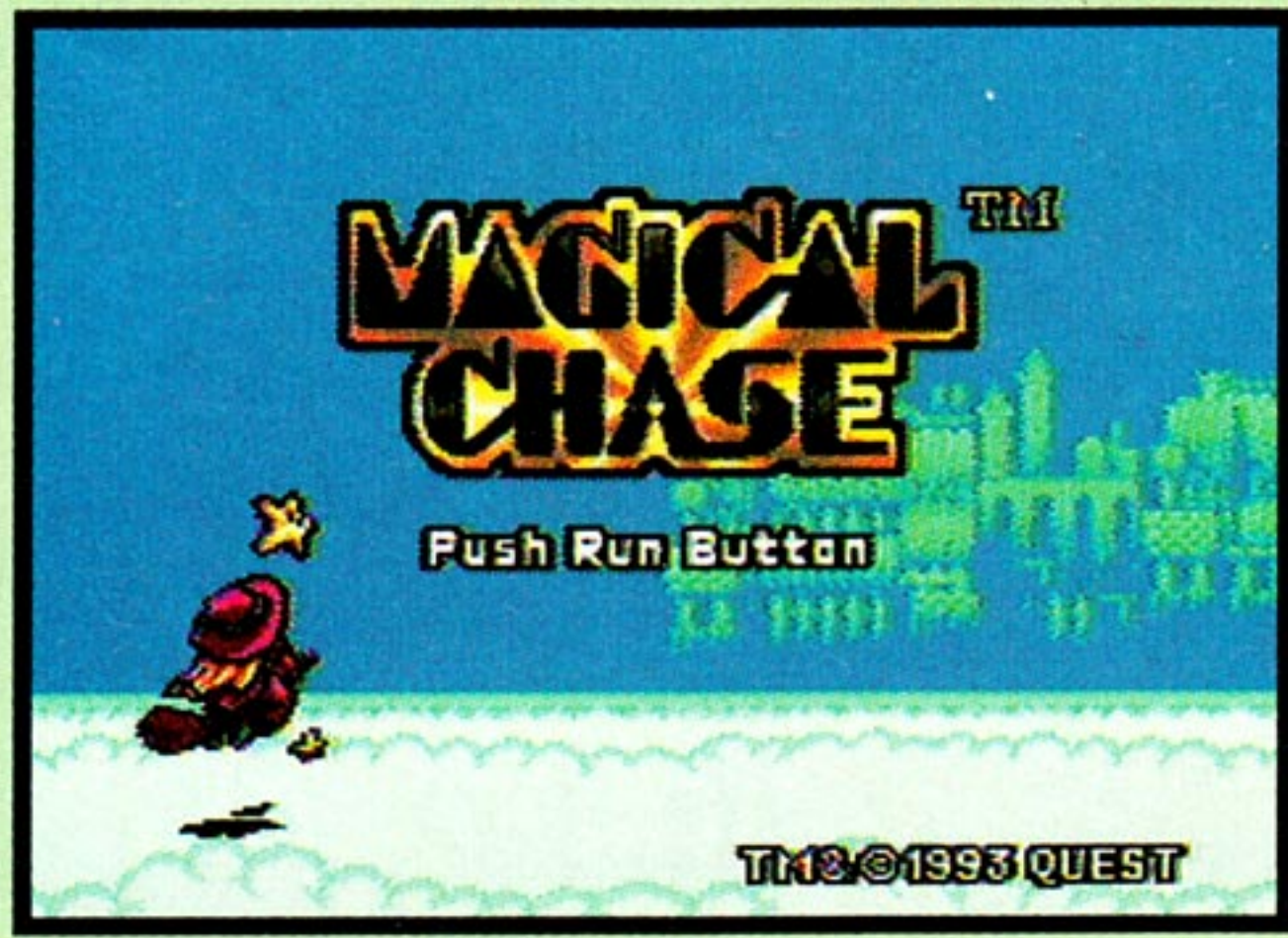
The new, special moves really are quite cool, in keeping with the battling superhero motif established by the basic game. The increase in speed is not remarkable—15 percent is a respectable rev-up, but nothing to shell out major bucks over unless, again, we are speaking to hard-core **SF II** people.

So look deep within yourself, Grasshopper. If the enhancements listed herein seem to justify the purchase of **Street Fighter II Turbo**, it will certainly not disappoint.

In short, the game delivers everything it promises; the only question remains: is that enough?

— Bill Kunkel





Magical Chase

PUBLISHER	Quest
SYSTEM	TG16/Duo
THEME	Shooter
MEGABITS	4
PLAYERS	1
LEVELS	6
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	91%
SOUND	88%
PLAYABILITY	89%

OVERALL 90%

Capture the Demons or Become a Frog.

Ripple is an apprentice to a terrifying witch. Ripple is especially afraid of her teacher right now, because she violated one of the witch's rules: Ripple opened the forbidden book, *Sleeping Demons*, and six demons leapt out and raced away. Now Ripple must catch all six demons and get them back inside the book before the witch discovers Ripple's transgression and turns her into a frog. Ripple is joined on her quest with her two Elf-Star friends, Topsy and Turvy.

Magical Chase has three levels of difficulty. Breeze is only available during the first three levels of the game, after which the player is raised to Bumpy. The third level, Tough, has strong enemy attacks.

Ripple has six stages to search for the missing demons. The first, Bridge Town,

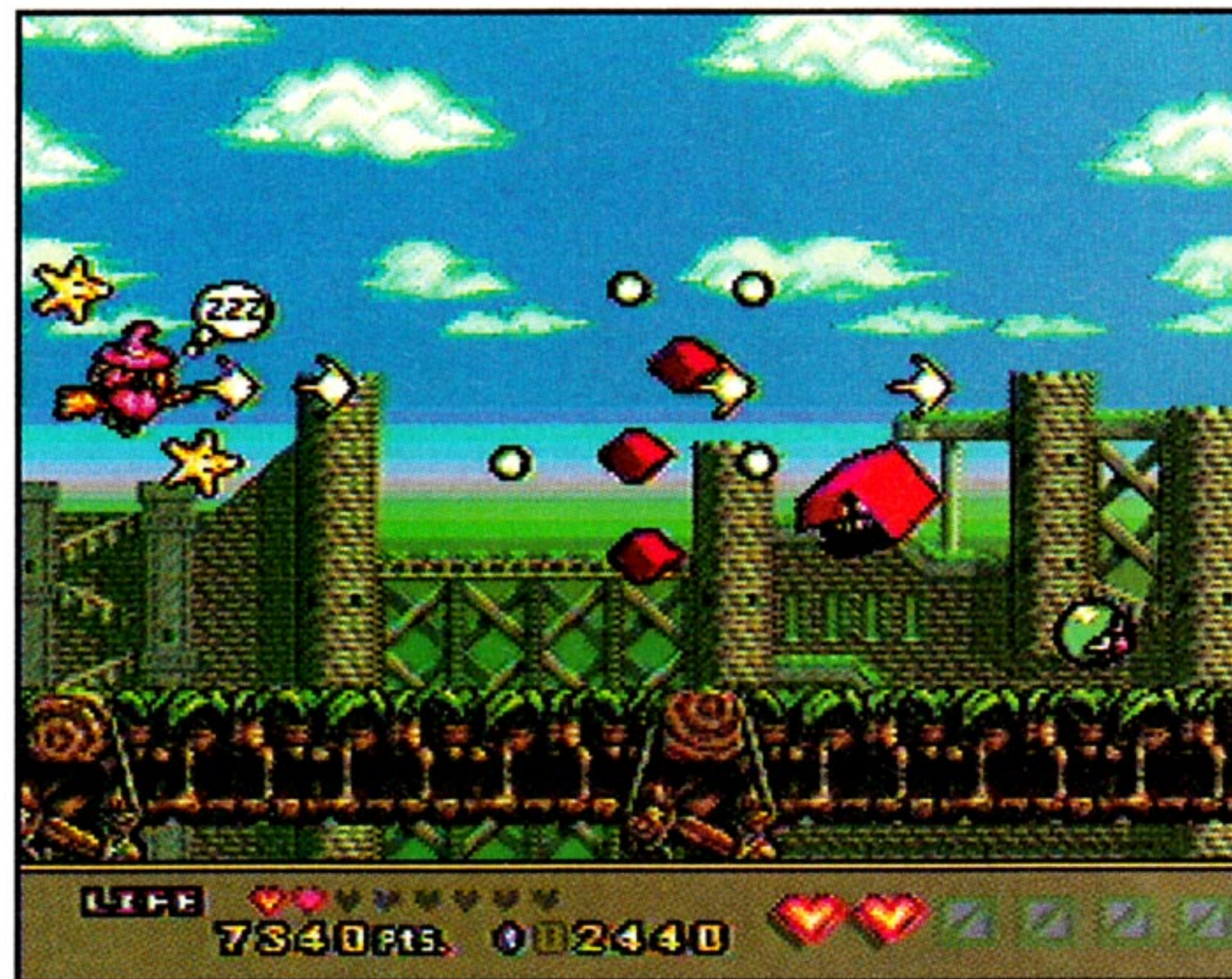


Players can load up on special weapons and options to increase their abilities.

is full of colorful characters in bright outfits. The Ruins, stage two, is a haven for strange animals, and demons that have turned into animals. The third stage leads Ripple to the Dual Snake, a flying battleship which defends the kingdom's skies. The Block Maze is a giant maze on the border between the kingdom and the world of magic. The fifth stage, Hell Fire, leads our heroine into the world of magic and demons, which gives them the home strength advantage. The last face-off occurs at Sanctuary, the palace where the King of Evil is worshiped.

However, Ripple, while just a student, has powerful allies and defenders in Topsy and Turvy. The whole secret to succeeding in this game is using the Elf-Star twins skillfully. Once the player has worked out the enemies' attack patterns and usual flight paths, the twins can be placed in a good defensive position and control the direction of the attack. This does not make Ripple invincible, but does help extend her life.

When the player-character annihilates the demons, colored crystals appear. By gathering these, the p-c can buy magic



powers and other items at Halloween Jack's Magic Store. Using the direction pad, the player can guide the wand to the desired purchase. It is important to visit Jack's Store and purchase items for later use, because the Store is not accessible in the Sanctuary stage. Jack's Magic Store has a plethora of items available, for a price. The player can increase Ripple's attack magic from regular shot to a range of eight magical implements. Halloween Jack also has two magical attack powers for Topsy and Turvy and three special magical powers for sale. Ripple can also purchase broom speed, fruit of life, medicine and elixir. The on-screen explanations Jack provides are very helpful, especially if the gamer doesn't have the manual handy.



The action is non-stop as Ripple, Topsy and Turvy fight against the six demons.

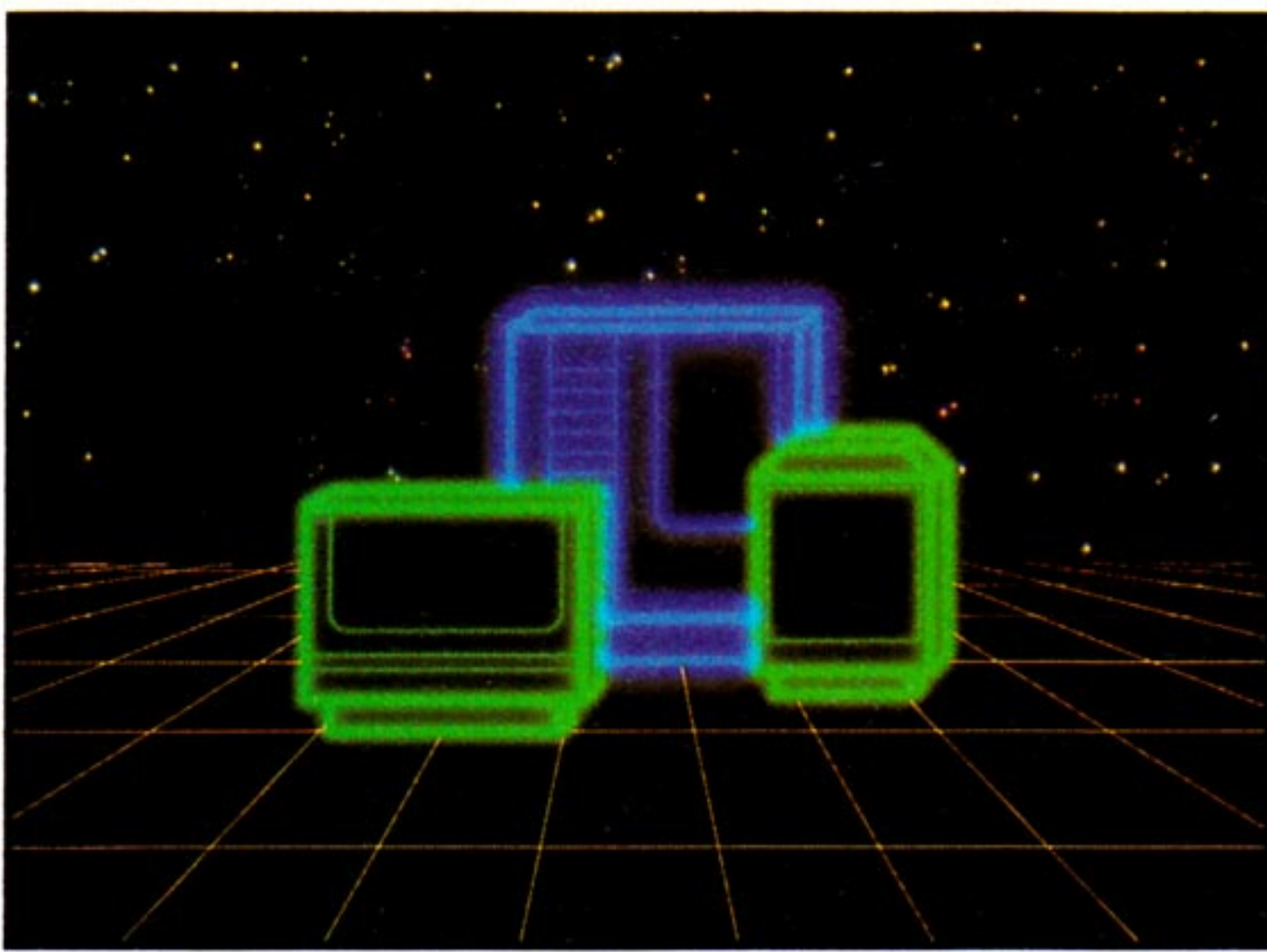
Magical Chase's graphics combine the character's Japanimation-style features with extensively realistic backgrounds. The images are crisp, clean, and a pleasure to look at. Layered backgrounds give **Magical Chase** a realistic 3-D appearance. The facial expressions Ripple displays are charming and make her seem even more whimsical. The sound is enjoyable and does not become repetitious or annoying, which is a plus as it cannot be toggled off. However, hearing Ripple's piteous cry of pain when injured or dead can be heart-wrenching.

The playability factor is very high. Ripple flickers as her hearts expire, but injury does not return the player to the beginning of the level. Instead, Ripple remains in her spot for continued game play. There are also an unlimited amount of continues; but even though Ripple returns to the beginning of the level, unlike many games she retains most of the purchases made at Halloween Jack's Magic Store.

The most frustrating part of the game is that Buttons I and II on the control pad perform double duty. Button I alone fixes and unfixes the movement of the Elf-Star twins, but if the player hits both buttons, it adjusts their shooting. Button II just being held down lets Ripple and the twins keep shooting. However, if Button II is hit twice quickly, then Ripple can use Special Magic. Without the manual in front of the player, the button jumping can become aggravating.

Interestingly, Ripple, Topsy, and Turvy are all females. Since side-scrolling shooters are typically a male domain, Quest's choice might seem out of place; however, they presented the trio in a manner that belied the implied "cuteness" of the support documents with a solid, fast-paced shooter.

— Laurie Yates



VIDEO GAME GALLERY

Super Bomberman

PUBLISHER	Hudson Soft
SYSTEM	SNES
THEME	Action
MEGABITS	4
PLAYERS	1 - 4
LEVELS	50+
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	89%
SOUND	86%
PLAYABILITY	94%

OVERALL 92%

Experience the new meaning of "Getting Bombed!"

Neither the concept nor the execution of this game is really unique. **Bomberman** first appeared, in this country, on the NES and later for the Duo (TurboGrafx 16). Most recently, an updated version for the Duo has popped up. The best part about the TurboGrafx versions of this game, is the chance to compete in a five-player game, blowing up several of your friends at one time.

Now this fun can be had with the SNES version of **Super Bomberman**. And don't fret about that great multi-player fun being lost. **Super Bomberman** comes packaged with Hudson's new five-player adapter making this package a great value as well as a whole lot of fun.

Now, before the question gets asked I will answer it. The reason that **Super**

Bomberman is a four player game, and comes with a five-player adapter is that Hudson didn't have time to program the fifth player into the game before it was released. At least that is the official story. One can be certain that the extra cost involved in adding an additional player (they probably wanted to keep the game at 4-Meg to keep the cost down, since the game is coming with the adapter) and the chance to make a five-player version with **Super Bomberman '94** most likely played into the decision.

So, for your money, you will receive a copy of **Super Bomberman** and a multi-player adapter. The question then turns to how good is the package?

The answer is — really, really good!

Super Bomberman is an addictive game that does not become repetitious. The different worlds are broken down into sub-levels, and each offers a different challenge. There are blocks scattered around to help the player decide on a strategy. The blocks can be bombed to create a path for the player to follow. Another purpose of the blocks is to keep monsters from attacking all at once.

Once a block is blown up, there may be a special power-up to be found beneath it. These are the same power-ups which allow players to survive in this game and which make it so much fun to play. There are extra bombs, flame extensions, remote-control bombs, invincibility vests, and extra men. There are also icons that give the character the power to kick the bombs along straight paths and to punch them over walls.

One or two players can compete in the normal game, which consists of bombing your way from level to level, eliminating all kinds of bad guys with the ultimate goal being defeat the boss and move on to the next level.

The map is arranged into six different worlds, each with numerous sub-levels for players to run around and create havoc. The enemies inhabiting these different levels are as varied as the levels themselves. There are some who take two or three bombs to kill, some who pass right through blocks, and some who even eat your bombs. Many of the enemies have

weapons and they will fire upon you if you get close enough.

As well as the normal game, there is a battle mode, where up to four players can compete at one time. The point here is to destroy the other guy. Power-ups are abundant, and are placed under blocks. Some levels feature warp holes or conveyer belts just to keep things interesting. And the twelfth level is done at hyper speed, making it that much faster and more exciting.

The graphics in **Super Bomberman** are good and extremely cartoony. They fit the



The bosses are large and fast. Lay out a bunch of bombs at once to catch them.

game well, as do the sounds which benefit from the fact that they do not get annoying after a long play period.

But where this game excels, is in the play. With two people, either the normal game or the battle mode provides hours of enjoyment. With three or four friends, it is time to bring out the chips and Pepsi and have a party.

Players will find exceptional value in the package since it includes the four-player adapter (which by the way is also very high quality), and will surely enjoy the hours of fun this game will provide.

— Marc Camron



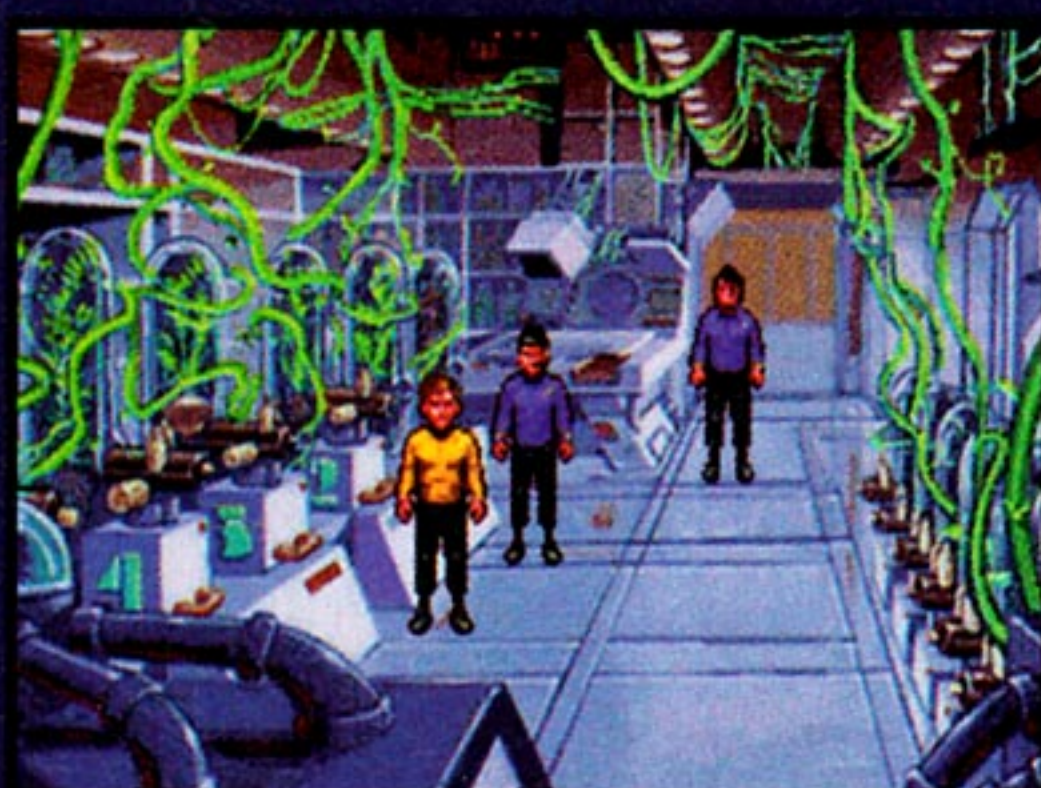
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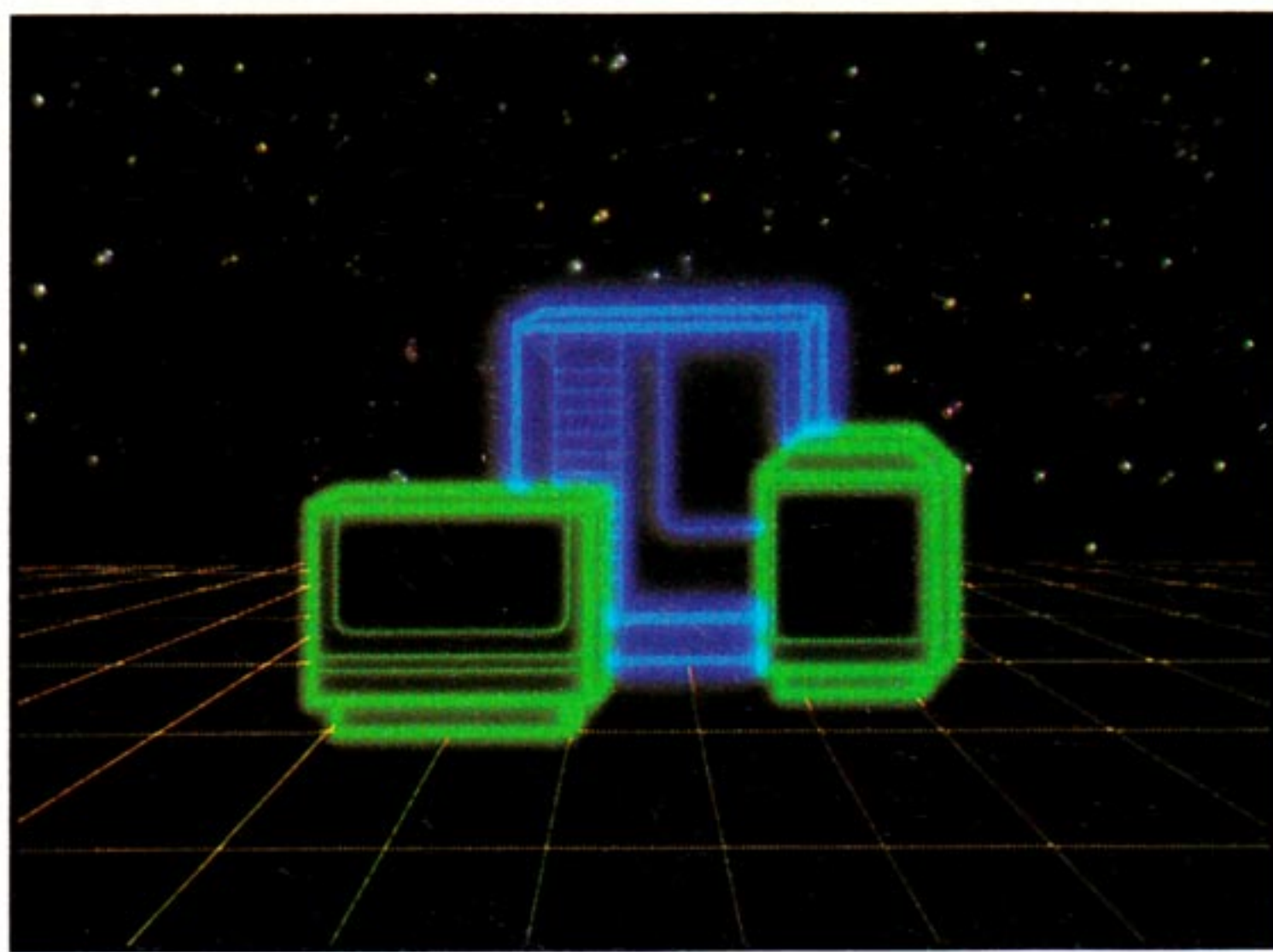
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VIDEO GAME GALLERY

Bill Walsh College Football

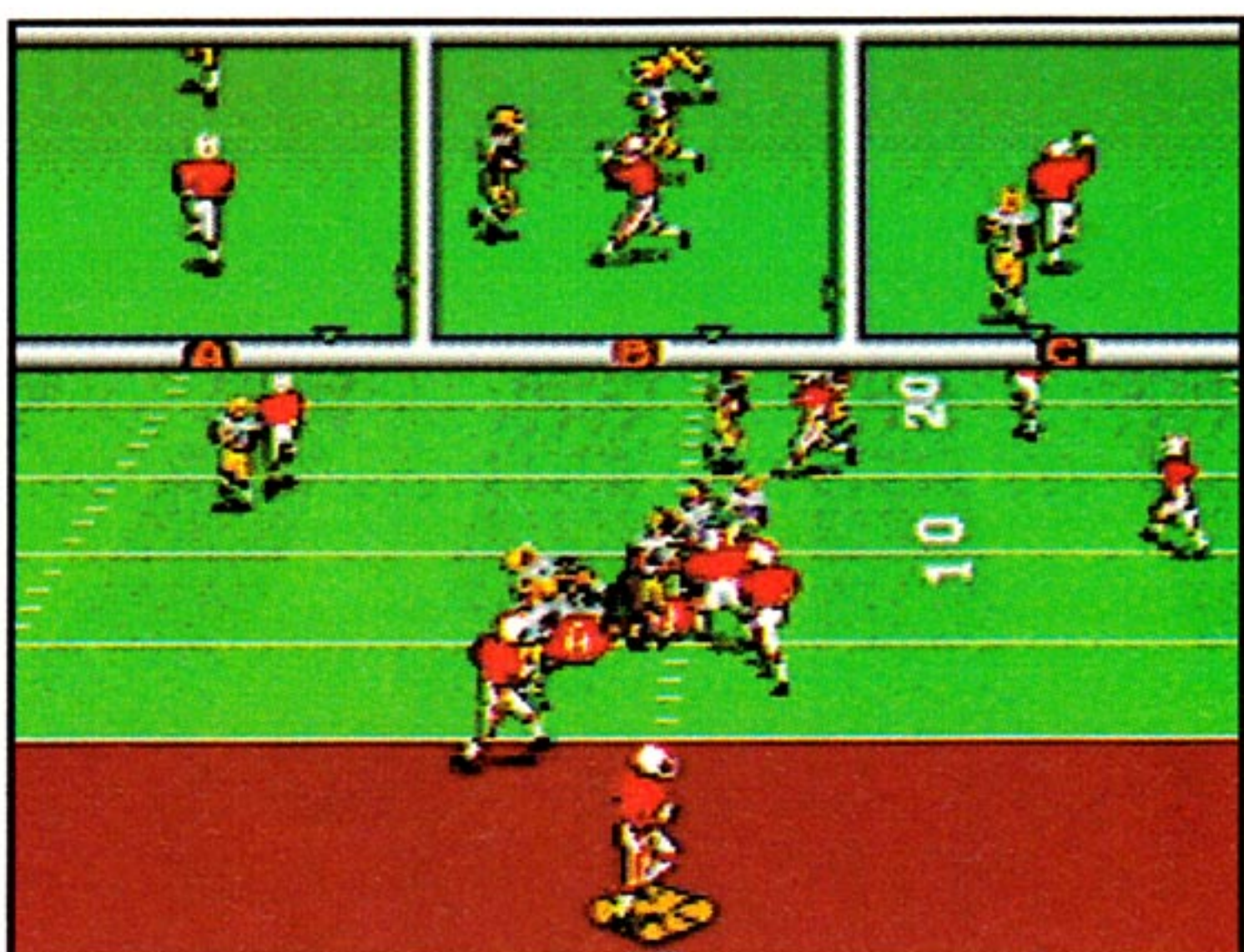
Design Contributions by
Michael Rubinelli
Michael Brook
Bill Rowe

PUBLISHER	EA Sports
SYSTEM	Genesis
THEME	Sports
MEGABITS	8
PLAYERS	1 to 4
LEVELS	N/A
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	95%
SOUND	91%
PLAYABILITY	96%

OVERALL 94%

Bill Walsh offers the latest rev of EA's football engine.

Anyone who has played the various EA Sports' **John Madden Football** games on the Genesis should have a pretty good idea of what to expect from **Bill Walsh College Football**. This is a game whose



The familiar game play of the Madden series is set up with college teams.

strengths and weaknesses are right up front, making the decision to buy or not to buy a fairly straightforward one.

On the plus side, **Bill Walsh** was developed by High Score Productions and Jim Simmons. Simmons worked with Park Place on the development of the original **Madden** Genesis game and he has continued to upgrade the basic engine that runs the EA Sports gridiron simulations. In fact, **Bill Walsh College Football** makes use of the next generation Madden engine—which won't be available on the pro version until the next Madden iteration appears later this year.

The interface is slicker than ever, the play-by-play text entries are rendered in huge, easy-to-read text, there are close-ups at the top of the screen after each play displaying the cheering crowd, a referee's call, or a close-up of the chains as the zebras measure for possible first-down yardage.

The graphics are absolutely beautiful. Even at the point of contact between the offensive and defensive lines, it is possible to clearly track the movements of individual players. On fumbles, we see an almost slo-mo ballet as the ball sails into the air before landing in the arms of a well-positioned player.

Then there's the novelty of college rules, making one wish that the pros would adapt the two-point conversion rule since it really lays on the tension in a close contest.

Perhaps best of all, **Bill Walsh College Football** is the first football contest to be available for four-player simultaneous action. Electronic Arts has now produced its first hardware product, a four-controller adapter which plugs easily into the two-input slot on the Genesis. This peripheral allows 3-on-1, 2-on-2, or even 4 players vs. the Genesis formats, all of which are tremendously exciting. At press time, it was still unclear whether or not this adapter will be compatible with Tengen's Turbo Tap 4-player adapter (the Tap was originally produced by Sega, which then decided it wasn't going to make it available in the United States after all), but most future EA Sports and



some other Electronic Arts games (such as **General Chaos**) will interface with it.

Now to the downside. First off, Bill Walsh is a poor choice as a licensed personality for a college grid game; he has virtually no identity beyond his years with the 49ers and only Californians and hardcore fans are aware of his present position as Stanford U. head coach. Moreover, it was not practical for Electronic Arts to go after the NCAA license or the various big name college teams, and so it settled for sound-alike squads (teams



Football fanatics can choose from many popular collegiate football teams.

with names like "South Bend"). Finally, there's the question of whether even the most rabid electronic footballer is all that interested in a college football simulation. The rules are almost identical to the pro game, and the teams and players (at least in this game) have neither strong public exposure nor strong identities in terms of playing style.

In short, though **Bill Walsh College Football** is an excellent program, we would have to recommend that gamers who can stand it, wait a few months for the next **John Madden** game instead.

— Bill Kunkel



Wing Commander: the Secret Missions

PUBLISHER	Mindscape
SYSTEM	SNES
THEME	Combat Simulation
MEGABITS	8
PLAYERS	1
LEVELS	16
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	85%
PLAYABILITY	95%

OVERALL 85%

Clobbering those Kilrathi can get to be a way of life.

Wing Commander started a revolution in the computer game industry when it combined exciting, interstellar combat with cinematic scenes and outstanding graphics and music. Mindscape managed to squeeze the complex computer



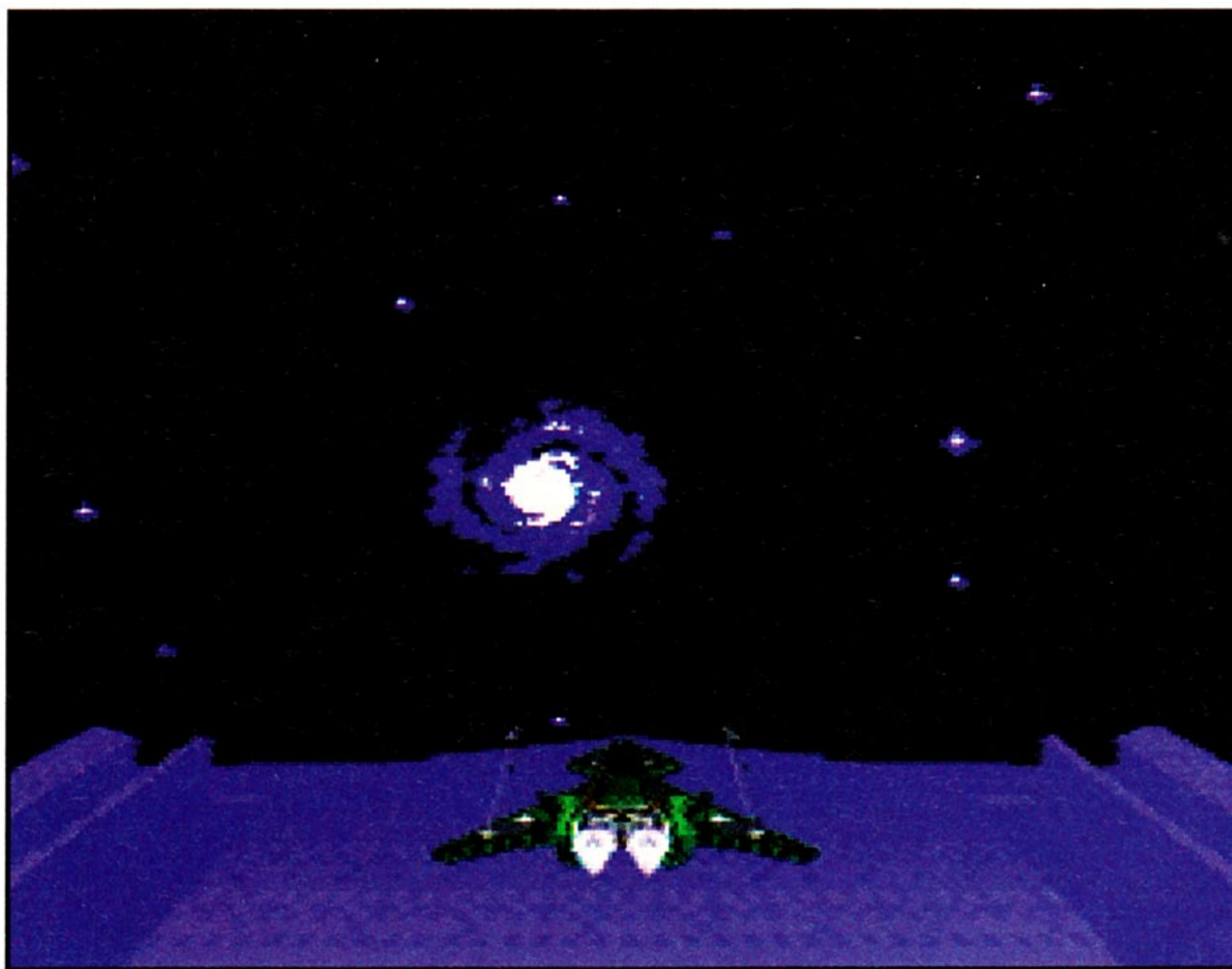
Pilots will be uninformed if they neglect to attend the special mission briefings.

program onto a Super NES cartridge and take full advantage of the machine's capabilities when they produced that game. Now Mindscape repeats its success with **Wing Commander: The Secret Missions**, a Super NES translation of the hit game's first mission disk. Once again, the Super NES game is an amazing recreation of the **Wing Commander** experience, but with new missions, ships and story segments.

In **The Secret Missions**, the cat-like Kilrathi have developed a mega-weapon with which they can destroy an entire planet in a single shot. The 16 missions in the game take the player closer and closer to the location of the mega-weapon and further and further into enemy territory. Players must take an active part in Operation: Thor's Hammer and destroy the mega-weapon. Remember to taunt the enemy away from crippled Federation ships in "protect" missions to avoid some headaches.

All of the familiar characters of the first game are back for **The Secret Missions**. The four Federation ships are the same too. They are automatically selected for the player in each mission. **The Secret Missions** also throws in four new enemy ships: the *Venture*, *Diligent*, *Lumbari* and *Sivar*.

The game interface for **The Secret Missions** will be familiar to those who might still be playing the original Super NES game. The game controls require all



of the buttons on the controller. Fortunately, Mindscape smartly placed the major functions on the left and right sides of the ship on the corresponding sides of the controller so that ship control becomes second nature after a mission or two. The Federation ships have different cockpit layouts and weapons, but the functions on each ship are the same.

Mindscape improved the flight mechanics of the game so that combat and regular flight are much smoother. Try the training simulator to test the improvements. Also, novices to **Wing Commander** can start the game in Rookie difficulty mode. The veterans can select the Ace level for a more challenging game.

There is a definite difference between



A few test runs in the training simulator will bring your reflexes up to speed.

levels; it was a nice touch to expand the potential audience for the game with this feature. A battery backup feature allows gamers to continue the game with the same pilot and thus take a break.

The Secret Missions is a perfect game for the Super NES. The cinematic scenes that tell the story behind the missions and the other graphic touches come

across so well on this machine. Animations are smooth and Mode 7 effects abound in combat as ships get closer and sneak away.

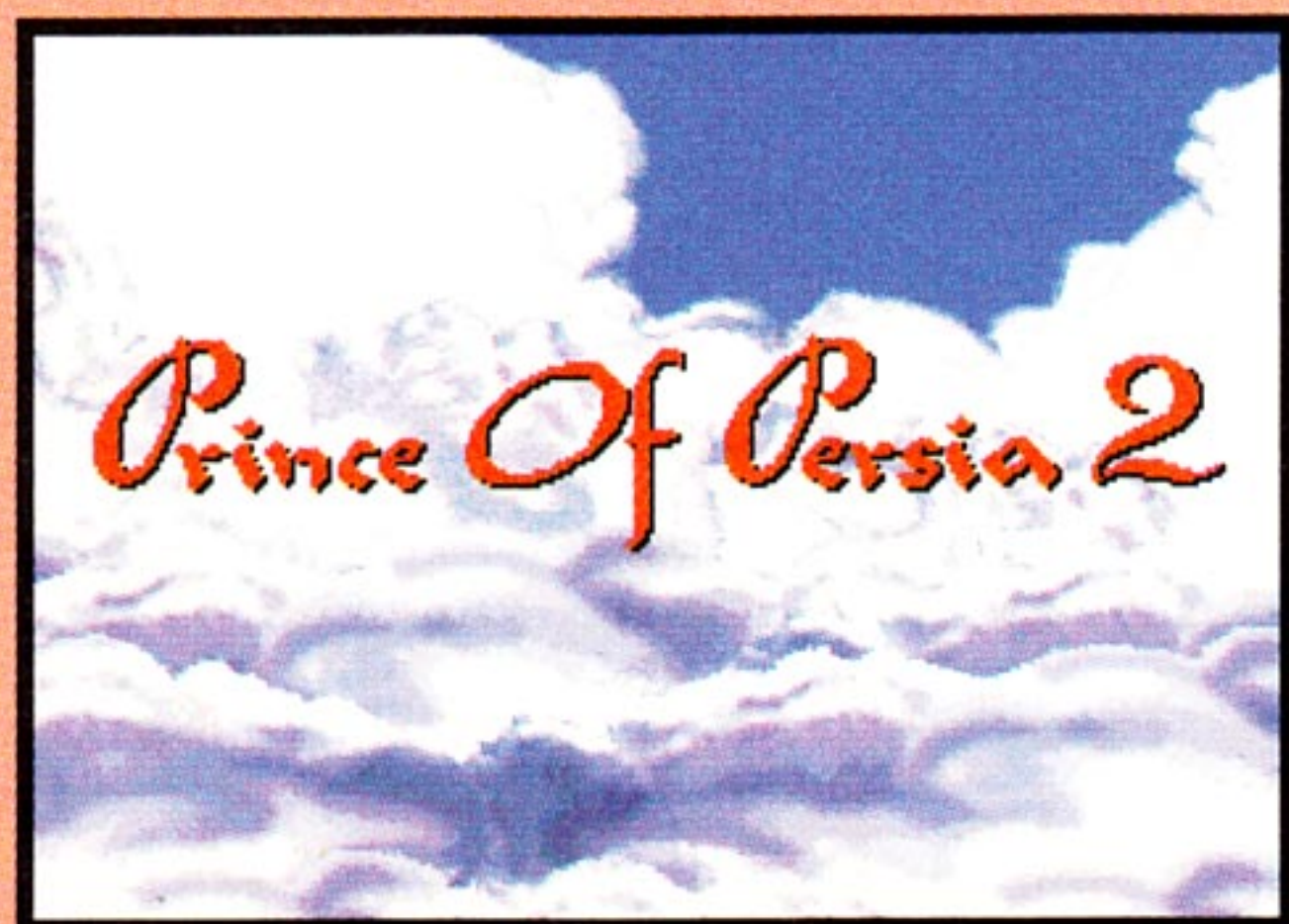
The cockpits are cleanly drawn so that players never have to struggle to read the gauges and other displays.

The music and sound effects are the icing on the cake. Music changes to match the current mission situation,

whether a tense struggle with a Kilrathi pilot or the end of a successful mission. The sound effects match the action and make **The Secret Missions** even more exciting with the volume up all the way. **Wing Commander** was a great accomplishment for the Super NES. **The Secret Missions** is even better. The variety of missions, locations and plot twists, as well as the new enemy ships and improved game play, make the cartridge a must-buy for action game fans. The missions vary from difficult to very easy, but they are all entertaining. **The Secret Missions** is highly replayable and addictive—and the only way to pass the time until the next set of **Wing Commander** missions from Mindscape.

— Russ Ceccola

SOFTWARE GALLERY



Prince of Persia 2

PUBLISHER	Broderbund Software
DESIGNER	Jordan Mechner
PLATFORM	MS-DOS
THEME	Platform/Arcade
MEMORY	7 MEG
PLAYERS	1
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Hard
GRAPHICS	92%
SOUND	89%
PLAYABILITY	94%

OVERALL 93%

Return to a legendary Persia of romance and adventure.

Put down the newspaper for a moment. Try to forget about former CIA Director Robert Gates' concern over Iran's broad rearmament program and open sponsorship of terrorism, and return to a time when that land was known as Persia and an unknown adventurer might, through deeds of bravery and daring, win a princess' hand in marriage and live happily ever...for about eleven days.

Yes, that's how long it took for Jaffar, the Sultan's jealous Vizier, to weave an enchantment that made himself appear as the Prince, and the Prince to appear as a poor, mad beggar. Seized by the Sultan's guards, the Prince breaks free, crashes through the palace's stained-glass window and races across the rooftops, barely escaping with his life

aboard a merchant ship. . .

No sooner does S.S.I.'s **Flashback: The Quest For Identity** rise up to challenge the classic **Prince of Persia** for the Best Animation Award than Broderbund brings forth **Prince of Persia 2: The Shadow & The Flame** to remind everyone where it all began.

For the uninitiated, **Prince of Persia** was a major step forward in game animation: live actors performing the game's actions were filmed and rotoscoped (traced), lending the Prince unusually fluid and realistic motion. Imprisoned by Jaffar, the Prince made his way out of the palace dungeons, battling guards, traps and the sands of time ticking away the Princess' life. Magic potions found



The evil Jaffar will test the Prince's will to save the woman he truly loves.

along the way boosted his strength and at one point he even faced his own doppelganger, having passed through a magic mirror. **Prince of Persia** redefined the "platform game," offering an unprecedented range of character actions, and became the standard by which all animated action adventures were judged.

Prince 2 retains all of the action and mysticism of the first game and adds vastly improved music and sound effects, as well as formidable new enemies and diabolical traps. The game opens with a storybook recounting of events from the first game, complete

with digitized narration. Basic game play remains the same—In order to rescue the Princess and save the kingdom the Prince must fight, jump and climb his way back to the palace, through 5 exotic environments and 15 treacherous levels, including a surrealistic showdown in Jaffar's mind. Character animation is as good as ever and the Prince has a few new moves, most notably the ability to separate from his body and move through the game as a Shadow Man, immune to injury and closed gates—the result of his mirror encounter in **Prince 1**. Background graphics have also been spiced up: the dreariest caverns in **Prince 2** are positively cheerful in comparison to the original. Attention to detail and scale, particularly in the temple where the blue flame is kept, is marvelous, and the perilous precipices that the Prince must negotiate will actually make players' stomachs queasy.

The game's numerous obstacles and traps feature such old favorites as sword-wielding guards and animated skeletons, deadly wall spikes and loose floorboards, but now they also include poisonous snakes, flying Goblin Heads, mechanized crushing walls and vicious spring-loaded scythes. Furious sword battles are made more exciting by the realistic clanging of steel on steel, as opposed to the wooden stickfighting sounds in **Prince 1**. The musical score is hypnotic and for once players will not find themselves reaching reflexively to shut it off.

Prince of Persia 2, like its predecessor, is an addictive game—every unexpected death seems easily avoidable on the next try and, with skill gained by experience, the major obstacle becomes the time limit. Ten save-game positions are available—a nice insurance policy against dead ends and unwise path choices. The Prince may be controlled with either keyboard or joystick and the game can even be run through Windows with little or no loss of performance.

— Scott Wolf

The Eastern Front, Gary Grigsby style.



Gary Grigsby's **WAR IN RUSSIA™** is the most comprehensive simulation of the World War II campaign that pitted Hitler's superior forces against Stalin's 5 million-man army from 1941 to 1945.

One or two players can re-enact this epic struggle with four campaigns, eight historical scenarios and one hypothetical scenario. An all-new Scenario Editor allows you to revise the existing maps,

units and equipment — *creating the potential for unlimited play.*

This massive game offers unmatched complexity in scale and detail — as you would expect of Gary Grigsby; however, the mouse driven interface makes it a breeze to play!

WAR IN RUSSIA is an advanced game, but novices can enjoy it too — three difficulty settings make this simulation accessible to players of all skill levels.

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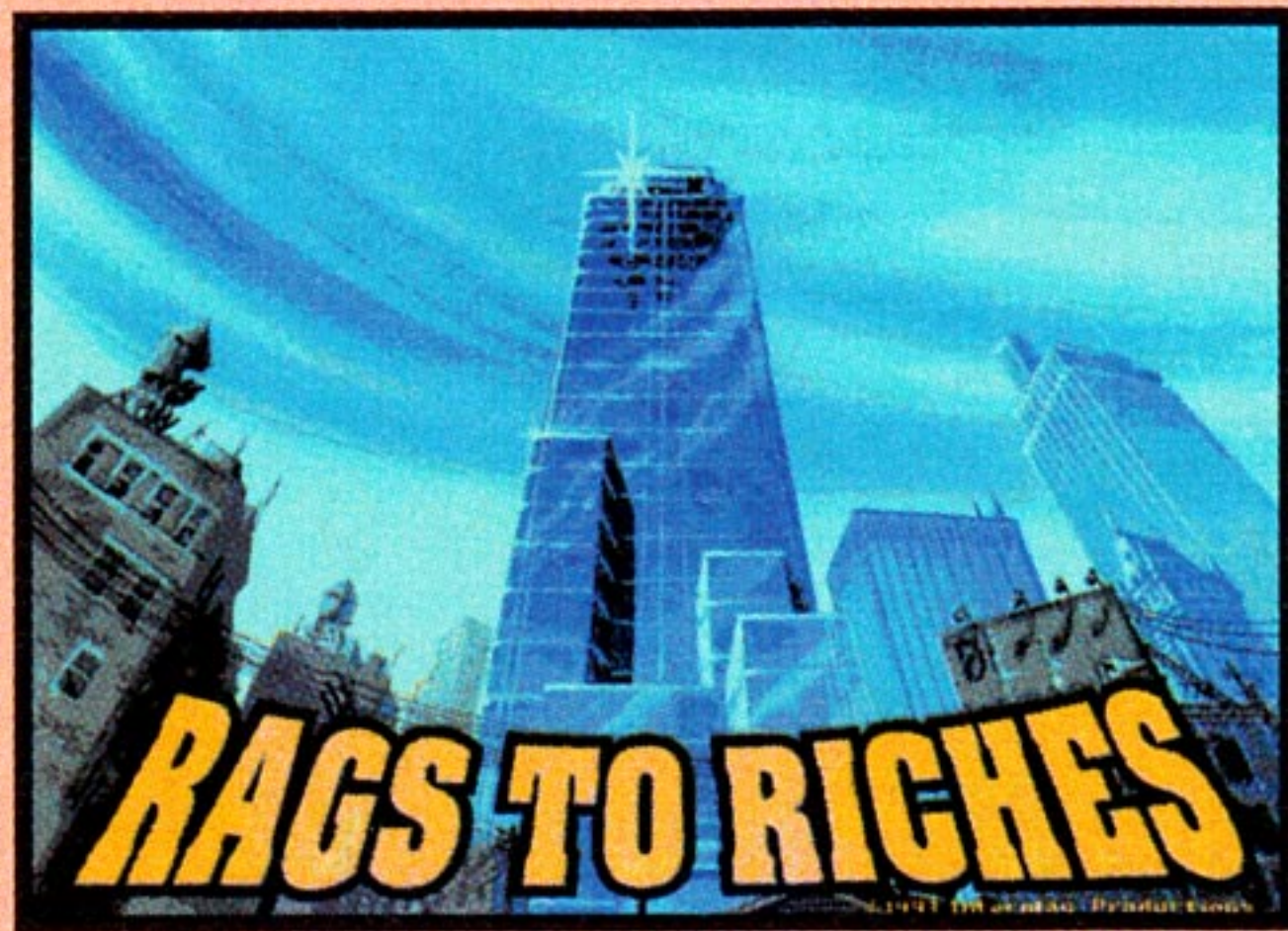
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SOFTWARE GALLERY



Rags to Riches

PUBLISHER	Interplay
DESIGNER	Thomas R. Decker
PLATFORM	MS-DOS
THEME	Strategy/Simulation
MEMORY	15 MEG
PLAYERS	1
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	80%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	85%

OVERALL 94%

Take the plunge, or risk one from a Wall Street window.

Financial games are tough sells for most gamers. They have to be fun and appealing for both stock market buffs/financiers and average folk. Also, they must have skill settings so that people with differences in market savvy and reaction time can equally enjoy the simulation. **Rags to Riches** addresses those issues in a simple four-commodity system that runs at a fast pace. Anyone who ever wanted to play Donald Trump will get to prove themselves in a surprisingly addictive financial market simulation.

Rags to Riches has variable game settings so that players can tackle simulations with a wide range of complexity, as well as alter the parameters within a game that define a certain style of play. Prospective millionaires can try one of three difficulty settings, have no competi-

tors or up to five, and set up shop in 1929 or 1994. Players start off with a small speculation business, no employees and very little money. Game play takes place over a full year; the object is to make as much money as humanly possible! The game assigns an overall score based on total worth, material possessions and client base.

Success comes slowly in **Rags to Riches**. Players don't make a mountain of money overnight; it's a long, grueling process. But this is a game that keeps players constantly alert. Changes in the commodities happen quickly and various other random events only allow a few seconds for action. Each trading day is a whirlwind of activity, like the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, and plays out in just a few minutes. A barrage of information fills the screen. The key to a successful business is the quick interpretation of and response to this data. Experimentation and attempts to perfectly time purchases and sales of the commodities keep the game addictive. A day goes by quickly, fast enough to have a lot of fun and make deals that might generate cash, never so slow as to turn the simulation into a boring textbook exercise.

Players could do nothing more than buy and sell commodities, but what fun is money if you don't spend it? Office staff are a necessary part of the yearly budget. However, luxuries define status in the game. Players should certainly concentrate on the management of their portfolios, but they must also consider the accumulation of high-priced items from the game's shopping mall, the hiring of new office workers and the eventual move to new offices. These factors directly influence the player's status in the game's simulated market and how many clients the company can attract. There are also sources of information that assist in trend predictions, like the newspaper, insiders, television (modern scenario), ticker tape/telewriter and chalkboard/computer.

Most game functions are accessible from the main screen, a representation of the company's office. The designers laid out the functions efficiently so that players don't have to fight the interface to play. Click on the door to go home, "do lunch" or shop 'til you drop. The phone accesses the insiders, Mom (who sometimes loans money), the job agency and a nun (for charitable donations). The chalkboard/computer displays a real-time graph of commodity fluctuations and price information. Click on the employees themselves to change their behavior. Informants are necessary to

sneak out information from competitors, and the lawyers keep the SEC and IRS away. One of the most important information screens is the accountant's report. It summarizes all of the essential data on a single screen.

Interplay built attractive Super VGA graphics around the game shell. The scanned paintings and detailed information screens give **Rags to Riches** a friendly, non-threatening look. Many financial games have minimal graphics, but this game has a realistic-looking world that highlights the program underneath and adds touches of humor throughout each simulated day. Nice sound effects like alarm bells, telephone rings and crowd noises (at lunch) pepper **Rags to Riches** and lighten up the simulation. The radio in the office can play a



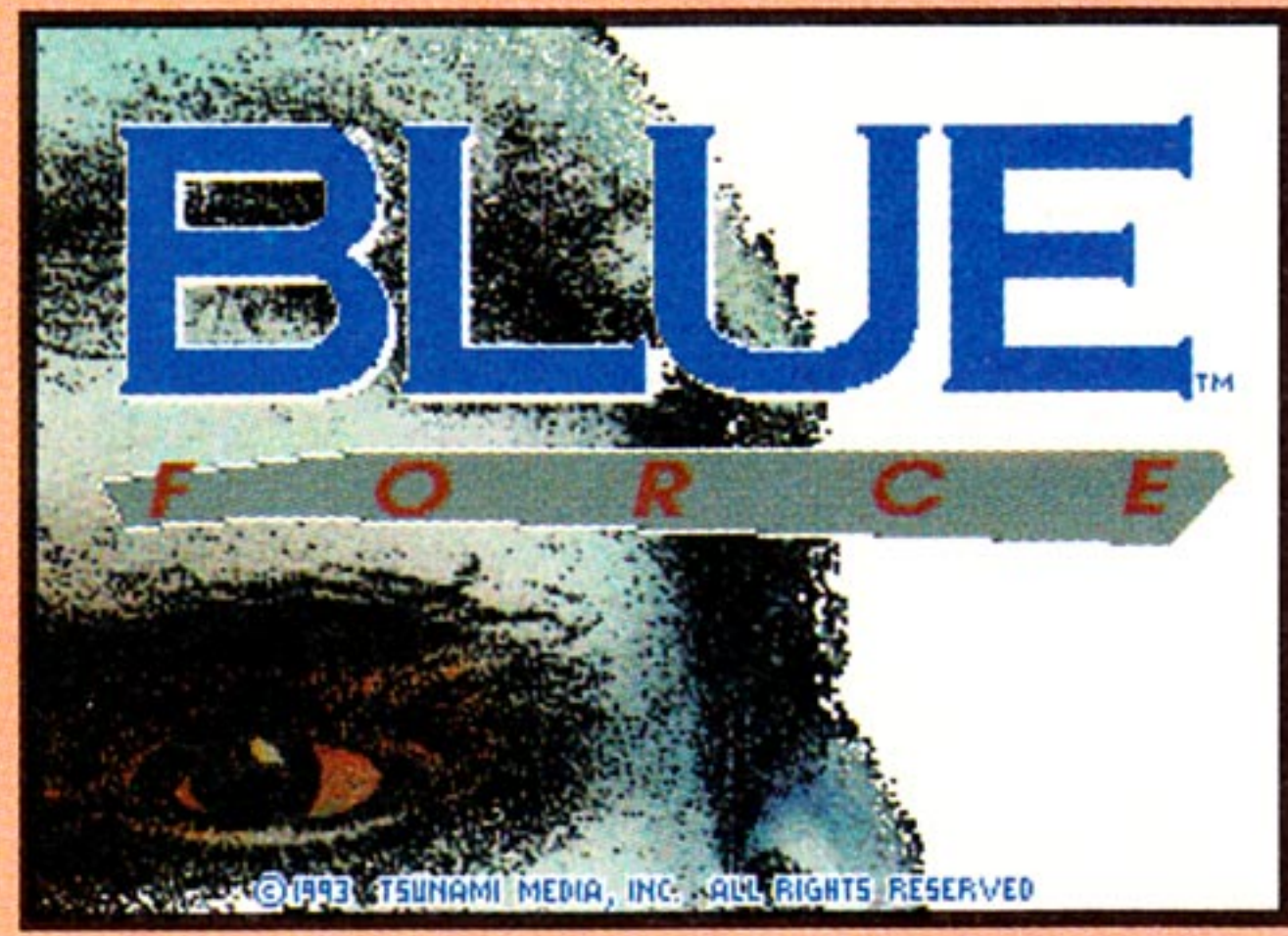
Your modern office will equip you with all the tools to become very wealthy.

number of music selections. It serves the same purpose as a radio in a real office—to minimize the monotony that sometimes accompanies work.

Rags to Riches is not a game for everyone, but most will have a good time playing the market without any real negative repercussions. The choice of time periods is a nice touch because each has different graphics, random events and commodities so that they play like entirely different games with the same underlying system. Plus, it's interesting to go up against the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and try to survive. The mall is a fun place to visit. They even have ceramic dalmations! Accumulations of similar items turn into collections, so players can have fun with their amassed wealth.

Rags to Riches is addictive as well as challenging, so play as many days at a time as you want and save the game for later greedy undertakings. See if you can turn your "modes" investment from mom and pop into a blue chip stock that will soar through the roof. Remember the golden rule: buy low, sell high!

—Russ Ceccola



Blue Force

PUBLISHER	Tsunami
DESIGNER	Jim Walls
PLATFORM	MS-DOS
THEME	Mystery
MEMORY	N/A
PLAYERS	1
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	85%

OVERALL 85%

Help Officer Ryan track down his parent's forgotten killer.

Blue Force designer Jim Walls may be familiar to many adventure game fans since he also designed Sierra On-Line's first three **Police Quest** games. Walls continued his development of exciting police adventures after he left Sierra, but with Tsunami. **Blue Force** has all the drama and plot twists of Walls' other tales, and it goes on record as Tsunami's second full-scale graphic adventure.

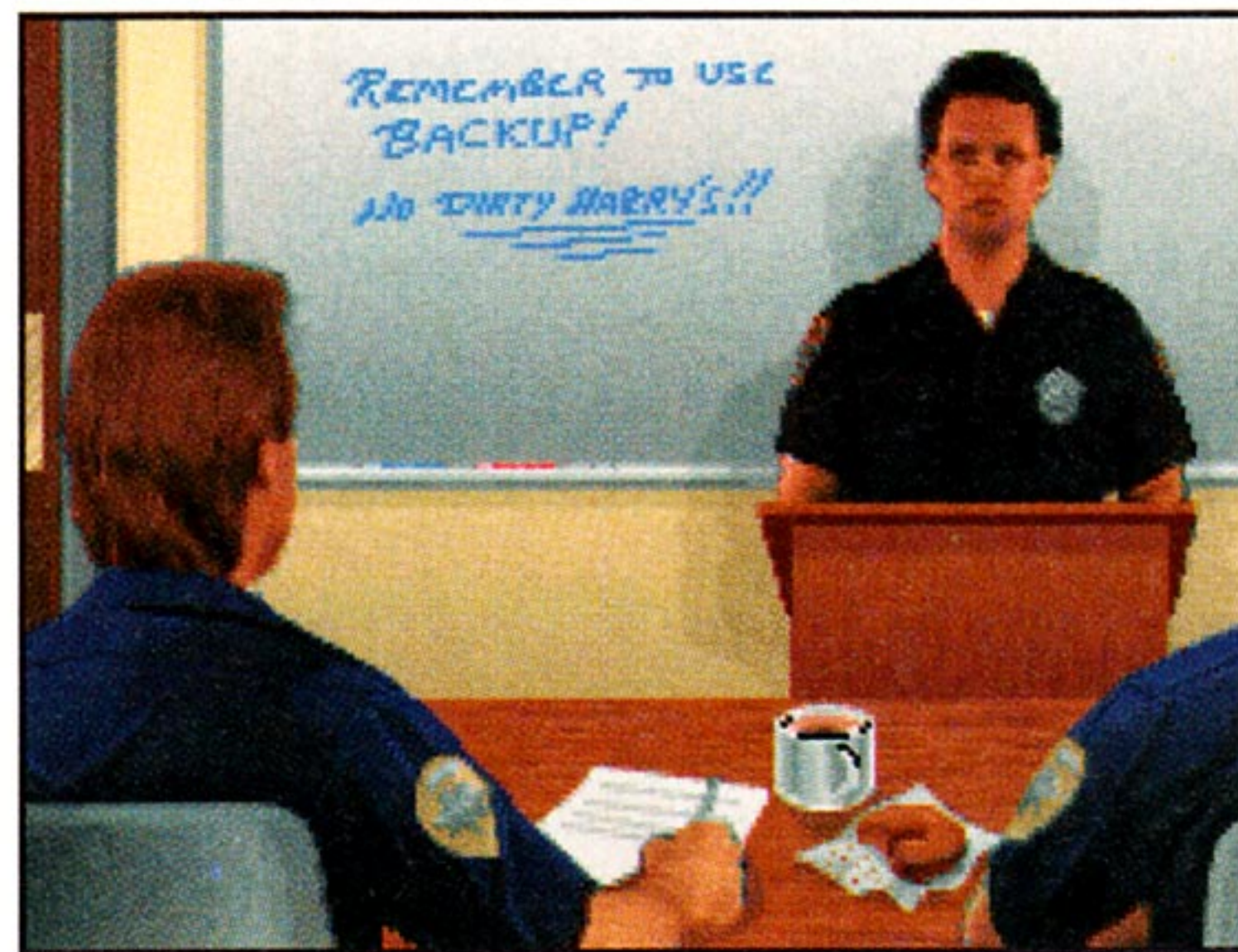
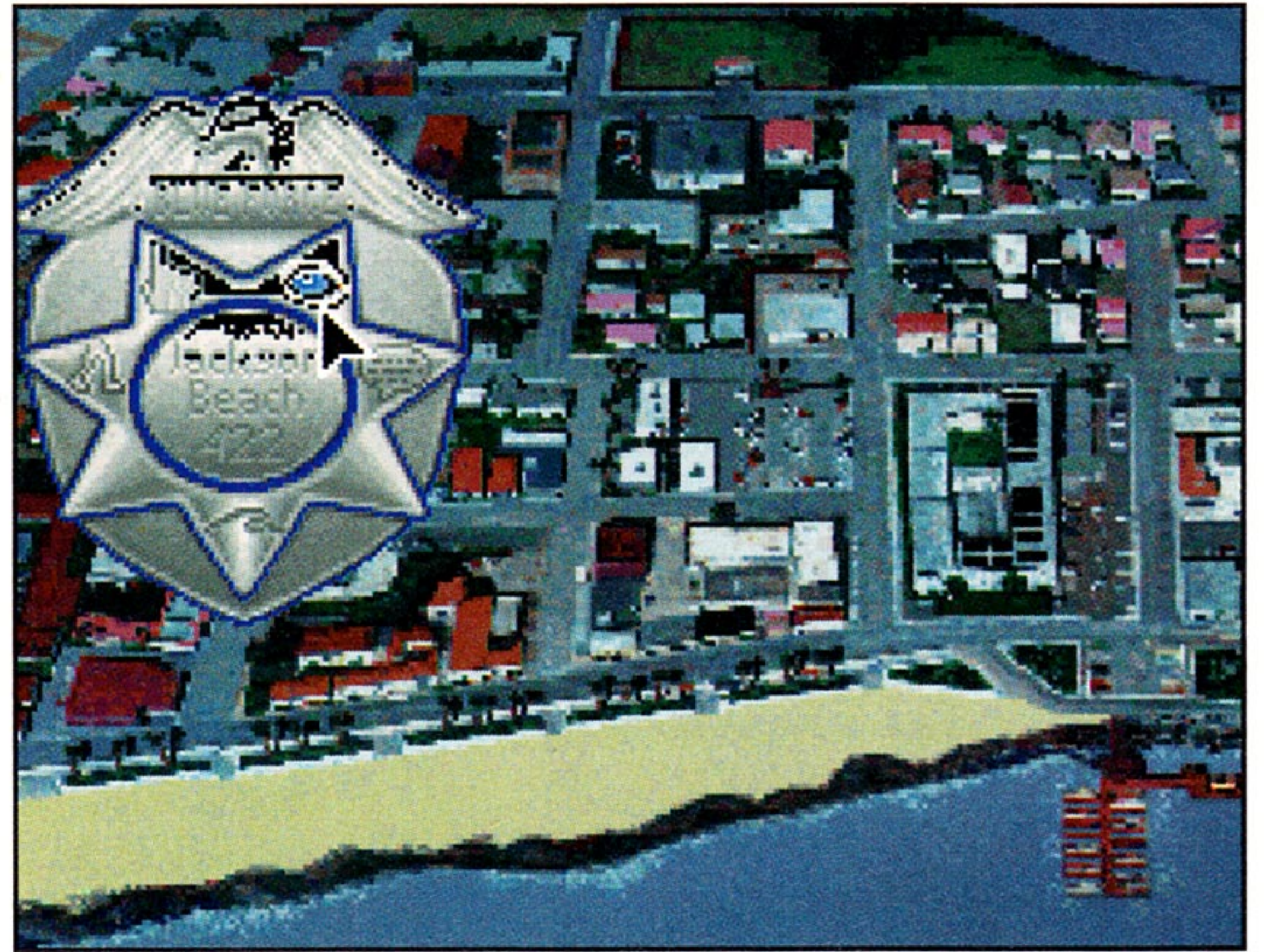
Walls has 15 years of experience as a police officer and a number of years of experience as a game designer, which perfectly qualifies him to design and develop a game like **Blue Force**. One conversation with the man reveals not only his easygoing nature, but also his attention to detail and commitment to game realism. **Blue Force** has a believable plot, a variety of interesting characters, and superior graphics and sound to emphasize the story's events.

Blue Force begins with a non-interactive introduction that sets up the background story and main characters. The player controls Jake Ryan, a rookie police officer fresh out of the Academy. The introduction reveals that a suspect broke into the Ryan household and killed Jake's parents when he was a boy. Jake, hiding in a closet, witnessed the event. The case was never solved. In **Blue Force**, the player gets to experience a few days as a police officer and, through

a long trail of clues that span a decade, also solve Ryan's parents' deaths.

The standard Tsunami icon commands are arranged around the perimeter of a police badge that pops up when players click the right mouse button. **Blue Force** does not introduce any new commands, using icons for walk (legs), pick up/use (hand), examine (eye), talk (word balloon) and game functions (Tsunami logo). Tsunami smartly added an arrow that pops up on the screen when the cursor crosses a possible exit from a game scene. Also, in addition to the usual side-views of locations, there is a map view that appears whenever the player clicks on the ignition of a vehicle. Available locations' names appear when players move the mouse over them on the map. A simple click transports Jake Ryan to that place.

Tsunami's first adventure game, **Ringworld**, was a great premiere in the genre, but it went by too fast for most players. **Blue Force** takes at least twice as long to play. It also offers a well-written plot and challenging puzzles. Nice revelations in the plot are flashbacks to Jake's par-



Become an officer of the law when you embark on the adventure of Blue Force.

ents' murder which occur at key points in the game.

Only a day or two takes place with Jake in uniform. A later event leads Ryan to team up with his father's former partner, Lyle Jamison, at Jamison & Ryan, a private investigators' firm.

Most of the game's puzzles revolve around performing correct police procedures or uncovering clues to the Ryans' murders. When players do not follow cor-

rect procedure, they may receive some sort of reprimand or encounter an event that requires them to replay the section where they made the mistake. These occasions fit within the context of the story and impress upon players that they must alter their mindset to think like a police officer.

Ryan encounters a few routine police calls in his first days as a patrol cop. It is especially important to relay the correct messages back to the dispatcher with the "10" codes like 10-35 (request backup) and 10-4 (received message). Examine all of the scenes carefully and the clues and necessary items will become obvious.

The graphics are good. Every character was digitized. Jim Walls himself plays two roles, alongside other Tsunami employees and actors. Locations and background scenes effectively make the town of Jackson Beach that much more realistic. Although the sound effects in **Blue Force** appropriately highlight the action, the music stands out as it changes to fit on-screen events.

Only two problems stick out like a smoking gun in **Blue Force**. After the arrest and imprisonment of the major criminals at the end of the game, the story just stops. It would be better to smoothly finish with at least a screen or two that discusses Ryan's situation. Also, the game has a score that increases after the solution of most puzzles, but nowhere does the program reveal any maximum score or assign players a rating for their performance.

Blue Force will appeal to adventurers of all skill levels and starts a new chapter in the design career of Jim Walls. Hopefully he will continue the story of Jake Ryan in a sequel to match this fantastic title.

—Russ Ceccola



SOFTWARE GALLERY



Might & Magic: Dark Side of Xeen

PUBLISHER	New World Computing
DESIGNER	Jon Van Caneghem
PLATFORM	MS-DOS
THEME	RPG
MEMORY	15 MEG
PLAYERS	1

COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	96%
SOUND	85%
PLAYABILITY	93%

OVERALL 95%

There is much to be Xeen in this mighty, two-sided world.

In fantasy fiction, where the pages are full of heraldic figures, exotic creatures and monstrous villains, what makes the book stand out is the story. In RPGs, the situation is a bit different. The story serves to set the playing field, so to speak, and heraldic figures, etc. are practically mandatory. What makes the game stand out is its playability.

Darkside of Xeen is easy to play and a lot of fun. It's a huge game, requiring a great deal of memory and 15 to 20 megs of hard disk space. After choosing the mode of play (Warrior or Adventurer, the latter being the less combative), the player is represented by a motley group of heroes, which can be created by the player. There are ten classes (Knight, Sorcerer, Ninja, etc.) and five races (Human, Half-Orc, and so on) to choose

from, each with its own set of skills and attributes. The characters can acquire more skills and attributes as they go along, by completing the quests assigned to them.

The members of the group also have an assigned number of hit points, which represent how much punishment they can take before falling unconscious and, subsequently, dying. Knights and Barbarians have the most hit points, naturally, while the Cleric and Sorcerer have the fewest; but they have some highly spe-



Dark Side of Xeen offers the same great graphics and sounds as Clouds of Xeen.

cialized spells with which to protect their comrades. The game is played from the player's eye view, unless one or more of the group has the Cartography skill or the Wizard Eye, in which case there is also an overhead view.

A nice touch is the use of "little helpers" around the edge of the viewing screen which let the player know that something is happening when their particular spell or skill is activated. For example, if one of the group has a Danger Sense



skill, a little bat at the top of the screen will move its mouth to let the group know that monsters can see them. Also, gems at the corners of the screen will turn green if certain spells are active.

A mouse is recommended for this game, as there are a lot of icons, but the keyboard can be used. The graphics are excellent, and the sound effects are terrific. The game comes with a map of Darkside, and help and tips are available either from a hotline number or the BBS.

Darkside is an extremely enjoyable and involving game. Although completely playable by itself, **Darkside** can be joined with another game, **Clouds of Xeen**, to create **The World of Xeen**. **Darkside** and **Clouds** are two halves of one world, which have been separated for centuries. The Guardian of Xeen has opened pyramids that lead from one side of the world to the other, and characters from one game can travel to and be used in the other. If you go there, you may never come back.

—Sara Slaymaker



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Graphics	SVGA & VGA (EGA Available)	VGA
Create-Your-Own Characters	Yes	No
Sound	Soundblaster AdLib PC Speaker Roland MT-32 Covox Disney Sound Source	Soundblaster AdLib PC Speaker No No No
Multiple Player	Yes	Yes
Modem Play	Yes	No
Network Play	Yes	No



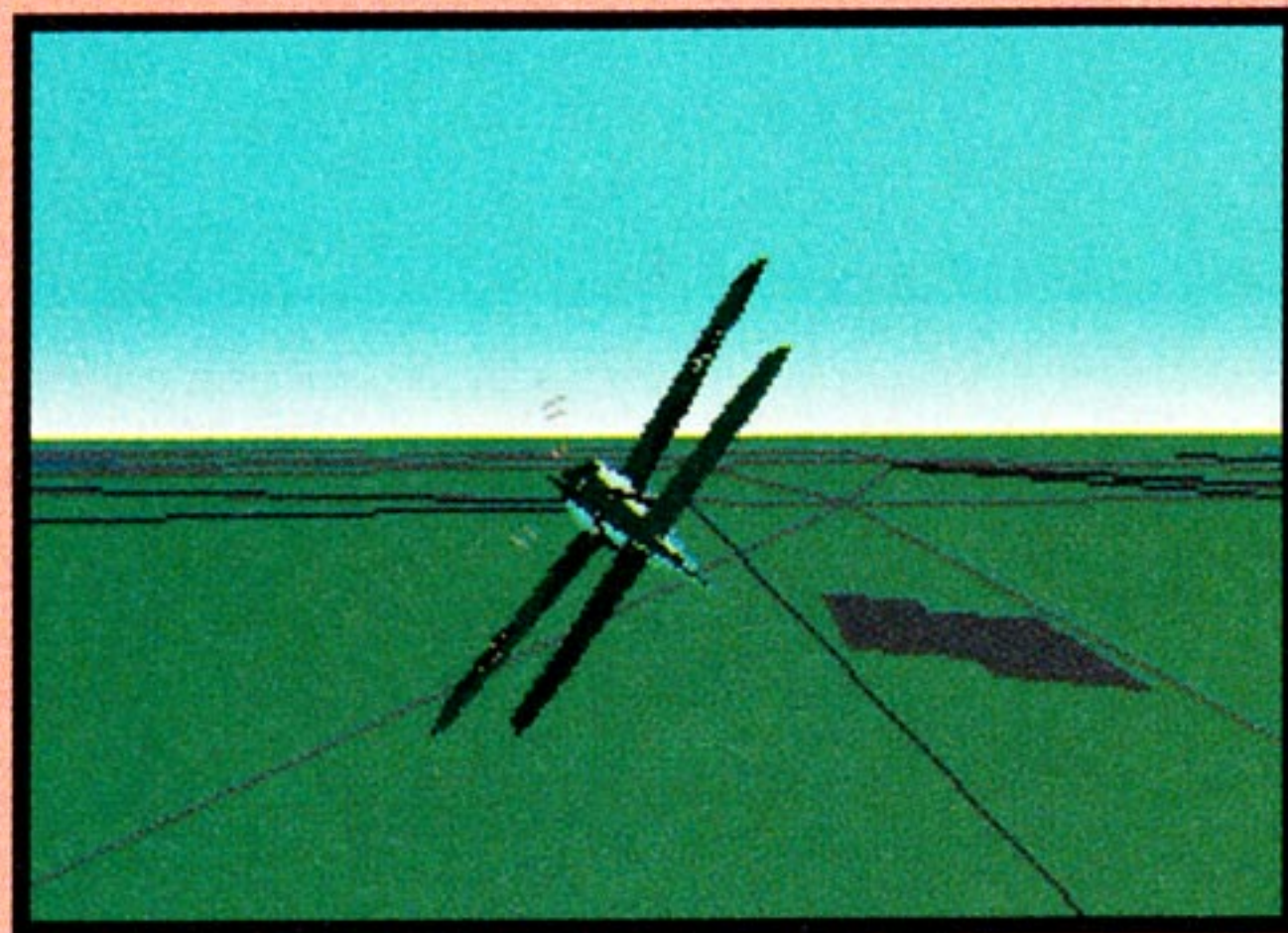
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SOFTWARE GALLERY



Aces Over Europe

PUBLISHER	Dynamix
DESIGNER	Damon Slye
PLATFORM	MS-DOS
THEME	Flight Sim./Action
MEMORY	6 MEG
PLAYERS	1
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	88%
SOUND	86%
PLAYABILITY	90%

OVERALL 88%

Take on the Axis in the wild blue yonder, one more time.

Dynamix has gone to a lot of effort to give **Aces Over Europe** the polish that **Aces of the Pacific** should have had when it first appeared. The graphics of this release have been improved using a proprietary resolution mode called Tall Res, which smooths the curves of wings and canopies and even makes the horizon look a little cleaner when banking. Gradient shading has been added to aircraft exteriors and each squadron is modeled with historically accurate color schemes and insignia. Also, aircraft fade into the distance instead of disappearing at the edge of sighting distance, gun rounds sparkle when they hit the enemy aircraft, and the player's aircraft visibly shakes when taking fire in return. Cloud modeling has also been improved, allowing players to use these phenomena tac-

tically and be rewarded by proper loss of visibility when flying through them. Finally, several animated cut scenes have been added for career players, à la **Wing Commander**.

In addition to the new window dressing, Dynamix has also improved the flight modeling of the Aces engine. The most noticeable addition is that aircraft can now be placed into a spin, either through damage or maneuvering outside the flight design envelope for that type of airframe. Also, stall speeds are not consistent between aircraft types, as before, and the types of stalls one experiences vary in intensity and difficulty of recovery. Pushing aircraft beyond their limits can now result in damage to the flaps and gears as well. Finally, operational ceilings are now adhered to, such that players with more capable aircraft can ascend to invulnerability if desired.

Obviously, because of the different theater of operations at their disposal, players must become accustomed to entirely new plane types. **Aces Over Europe** models the following new aircraft: Typhoon 1b, Hawker Tempest V, DeHavilland Mosquito VI and XVIII, Spitfire IX and XIV for the British and the Bf-109g and k, FW-190 a,d and f, Arado 243-b, Bf-262 and Ju-88. On the weapons side of the house, the player will also have access to R4M and Gr. 21 rockets for ground attack missions.

Speaking of missions, close air support, interdiction of enemy supply lines and Crossbow (attacking enemy V-1 and Radar sites) missions have been added. Additionally, in the Scramble option, enemy aircraft begin right over the base, which heats things up considerably.

As before, players have the option of flying single missions in lieu of a career. There are historic missions and the ability to dogfight a squadron or a famous



Participate in strategic air battles from historical locations across Europe.

ace. Aces are a lot tougher to down than in either **AOTP** or **Red Baron**. This is as it should be to keep zealous players from getting too cocky. Players may award the element of surprise to themselves, the enemy, or neither as desired when selecting the single mission option.

One of the nicer surprises of **Aces over Europe** was the discovery that it fully supports the Thrustmaster Flight and Weapons control systems (see *Testlab* in the July **EG** for a full review of these peripherals). The FCS allows operation of the guns with button one, switches from external camera to cockpit view with button two, drops bombs with button three and changes gun types with button four. Further, the coolie switch on the top of the stick allows players to quickly toggle between all of the cockpit views with the press of a thumb.

The nine button WCS can control all peripheral functions, from checking the map view to raising and lowering the landing gear. The depth of flexibility that this affords players makes **Aces Over Europe** the first flight simulator in which it is virtually unnecessary to touch the keyboard except to start the game.

Dynamix continues a proud tradition of cutting edge flight simulations with **Aces**

Over Europe. While enjoying this release, players can begin lobbying for the next installment in the series. **Aces Over Korea**, perhaps, or even **Aces Over Vietnam**. Because of Dynamix's commitment to listening to its users, the choice is really up to you, and you can fully expect the same quality in future releases.

— Ed Dille



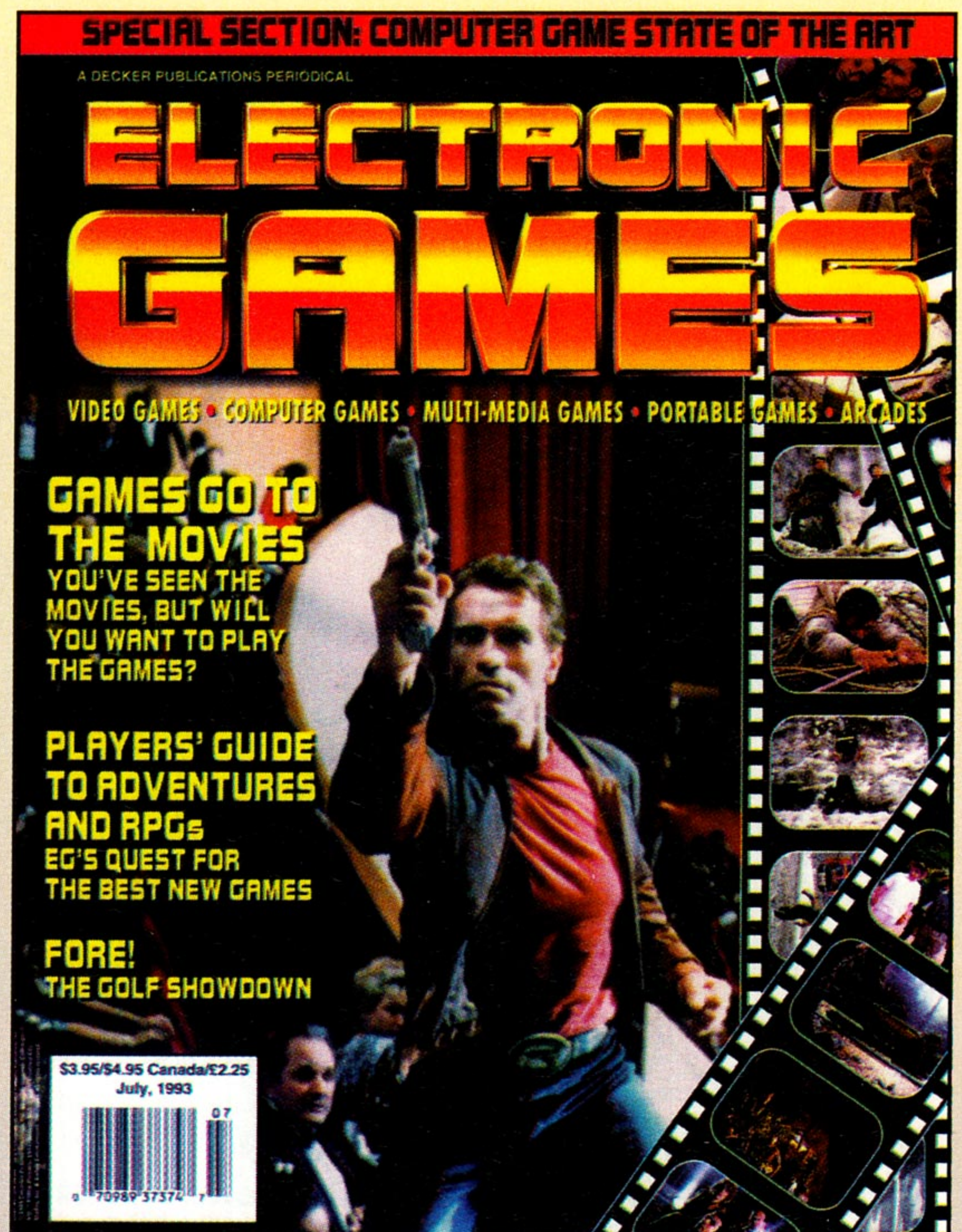
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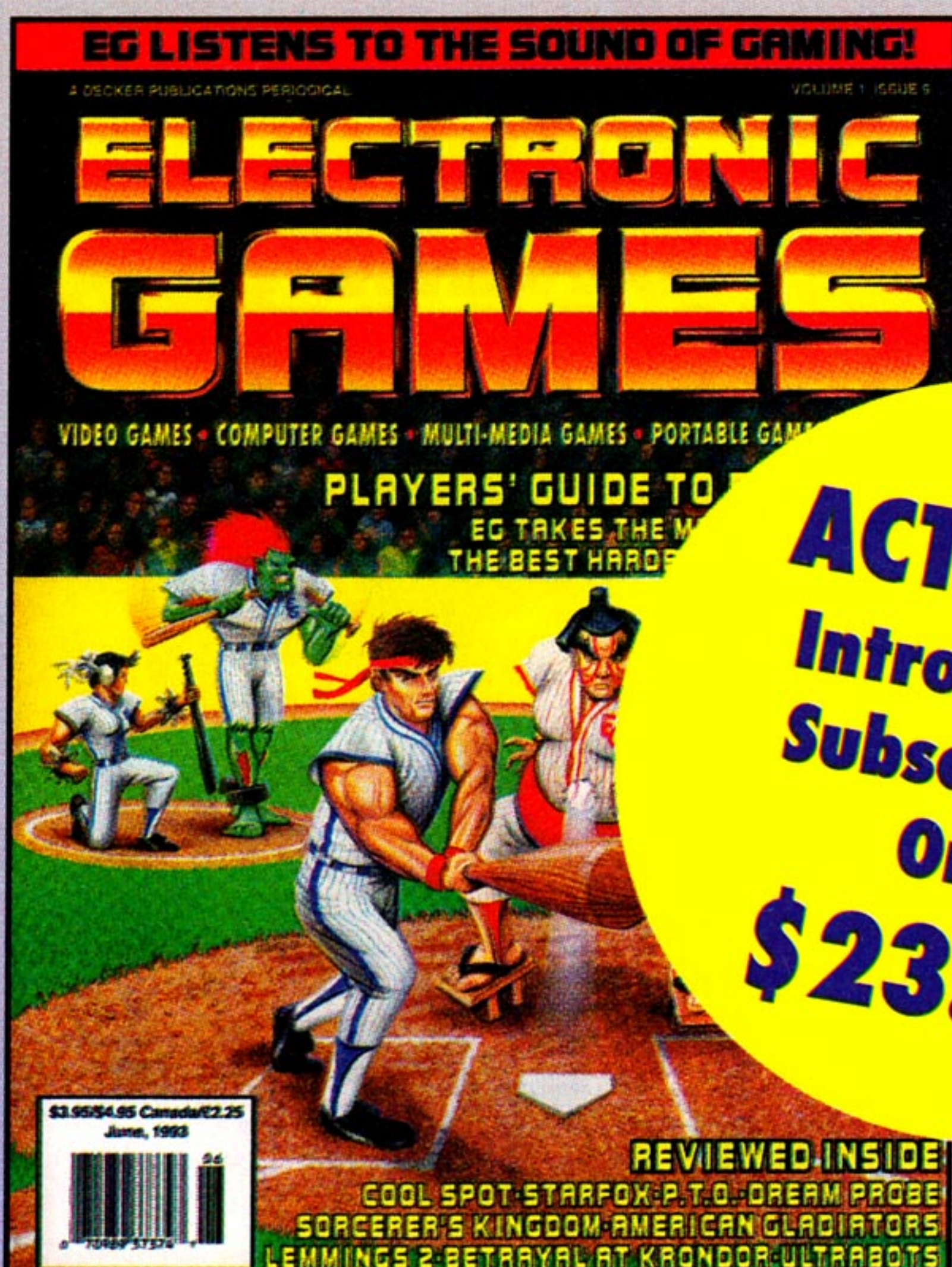
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SOFTWARE GALLERY



Eternam

PUBLISHER	Capstone
DESIGNER	Fournier & Roger
PLATFORM	MS-DOS
THEME	Adventure
MEMORY	5.5 MEG
PLAYERS	1
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	88%
SOUND	84%
PLAYABILITY	94%

OVERALL 89%

Laugh yourself away in this deadly amusement park.

Reading the fictional background for **Eternam** will undoubtedly remind players of several other titles with which they are already familiar. Don't be discouraged by this discovery, however, as the actual execution of the game is unique and fresh.

Players assume the persona of Don Jonz, a successful bounty hunter in the year 2815. He has been tracking an arch-villain named Mikhal Nuke for two years. Wearied from his efforts, Don Jonz was pleasantly surprised to receive a free Virtual Vacation in Eternam, the 29th Century's equivalent of Westworld. Unbeknownst to our hero, just prior to his arrival Mikhal Nuke took over Eternam. Well, most of it anyway—one of Eternam's programmers managed to escape in the Cybernet and she aids the

player-character, who is the sole remaining humanoid in Eternam's virtual cast of thousands, to defeat Nuke's plans and reclaim the planet for the recreation of the galaxy.

Throughout the remainder of the game, the player will solve a lot of item-based puzzles while traveling through different settings, the first of which is a medieval type fiefdom. Here, the player must pass a series of ordeals before being given a quest. All of these ventures represent what guests would be doing, if any remained, but the player must progress through them to accomplish the objectives of the behind-the-scenes story line. Periodically, Tracy, the programmer who escaped, pops up to offer the player-character a few choice tidbits of conversation designed to keep things moving along.

Eternam is entirely keyboard driven, which would seem like a step backward were it not for the simplicity of the interface. Along the bottom of the screen there are a series of six command icons, equating to take, use, look, speak, character functions, and disk functions. Players may either use the tab and arrow keys to select any of these commands, or access them directly by pressing a hot key, such as "s" for speak. All conversa-



The fully-interactive play mechanics make Eternam a joy to experience.

tions with NPCs are handled either automatically, for those who have only one thing to offer, or via a sentence based selection procedure, where the player determines the opening statement and responses to the dialogue provided by the NPC.

Item manipulation has been handled extremely nicely. As players move around

in the environment, which is populated with lots of objects, they receive unique prompts regarding items of interest when they move close to them. A dotted line appears from the character's eyes to the object and a thought bubble pops up with something like "nice ties." This cues the player that there is the possibility of interacting in some way with this object. Items which are only for decoration do not generate these cues, as a



rule. As such, the player does not have to meticulously try to manipulate every object in every new location while searching for clues, a welcome relief for players who are tired of "You can't do that" or "that is not important" messages, which seem to dominate other games.

Movement is handled exclusively by arrow keys. Exterior exploration is done in a first-person perspective view very similar to that used in **Draccon** and **Betrayal at Krondor**. During these sequences, the dusk and dawn animations are particularly spectacular. Interior movement is handled from the familiar third-person perspective, and the only flaw is the lack of diagonal movement for the onscreen character.

Periodically, when special events occur, the screen changes to an animated sequence, many of which seem to have been inspired by some of the art work used in the Don Bluth titles like **Dragon's Lair**.

The most notable aspect of **Eternam**, however, is its use of humor, which is a difficult emotion to evoke in this medium. Few games succeed in producing a chuckle from players, let alone make them laugh out loud. **Eternam** evokes laughter time and again, which in and of itself sets it apart from the vast majority of offerings on the market.

Eternam offers players a diverse play environment that has enough endurance and player gratification to keep one booting up for a long time.

— Ed Dille

LUNAR COMMAND

Lunar Command

PUBLISHER	Mallard Software
DESIGNER	Green, Adams, O'Conner
PLATFORM	MS-DOS
THEME	Strategy
MEMORY	7.5 MEG
PLAYERS	1
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	86%
SOUND	92%
PLAYABILITY	88%

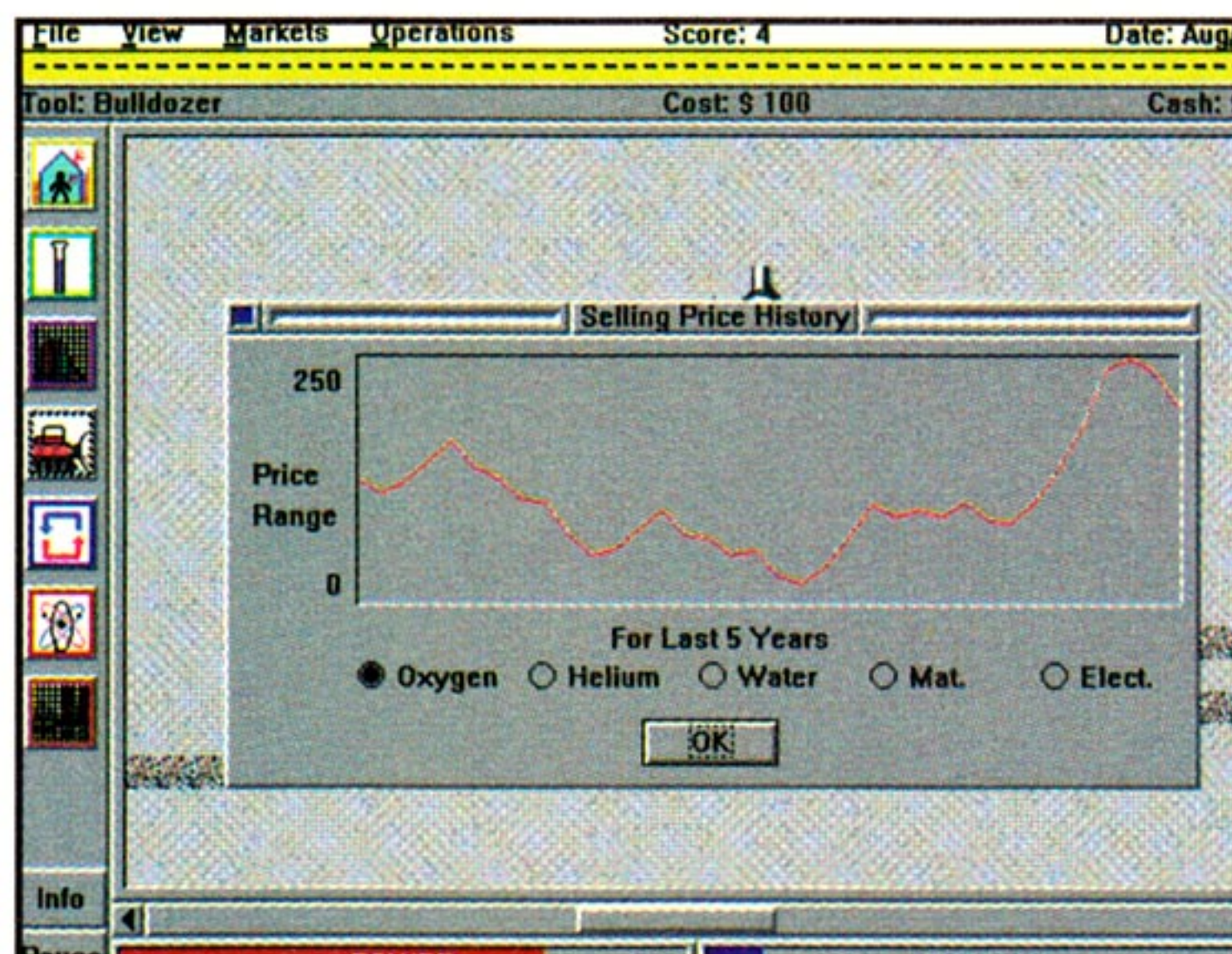
OVERALL 88%

It's a great place to visit, but would you want to live there?

If the idea of **SimCity** on the Moon doesn't sound new or original, that's because it's not. **Lunar Command** was originally designed to aid NASA scientists in planning and evaluating what components would be necessary to establish an outpost on the hostile lunar surface. Relatively unmodified from the dry perspective of a scientific simulation, the game was originally released as **Moonbase** by another software company a couple of years ago. Player response at that time was, not surprisingly, about as arid as a Lunar soil sample. Realizing

that the basis of a good game existed, the folks at Mallard acquired the rights to **Moonbase** and decided to jazz it up a bit for re-release. The result of their efforts, **Lunar Command**, is ten times the game its predecessor was.

As Commander of the lunar colony project, the player must construct facilities and industries designed to make the project self-sustaining within ten years, which is the point at which the bulk of the NASA funding will go away. There are several methods of generating revenue including mining, manufacturing and tourism. Liquid oxygen and He3 may be mined, solar crystals and low gravity



By keeping a close eye on the progress charts, players can expand accordingly.

semi-conductors may be manufactured, and hotels may be constructed for high roller tourists who want to see the lunar landmarks. While any of these pursuits may be emphasized, experienced players will learn that a diverse economy is both the most stable and the most survivable in the face of catastrophe.

Before one can become a captain of industry, however, it is first necessary to build sufficient infrastructure to house, feed and support the workers in the new

economy. Initially, everything needed for the survival of the colony must be shipped from Earth, at an exorbitant cost of course. The player can build three types of structures to reduce dependency on this pipeline; green houses, water extraction plants and maintenance facilities.

Each greenhouse grows enough food to

support 24 colonists. Water extraction plants can resupply the base's needs and even provide a surplus, provided one can find a large enough block of lunar ice to be tapped. Maintenance facilities can repair equipment and significantly reduce the number of spare parts which must be shipped from Earth, provided of course, that they are hooked up to both the power and thermal control grids and are sufficiently manned.

SimCity requires players to keep power flowing to their expanding cities. **Lunar Command** emphasizes power, oxygen and thermal controls. The latter are significant because of the vast temperature variations that occur in the course of a lunar day. A given location on the moon's surface is exposed to 14 Earth days of unfiltered sunlight in a row, followed by 14 days of cold, deep darkness in the vacuum of space. Without some method of storing heat and regulating temperature through both extremes, any colonization attempts would be doomed.

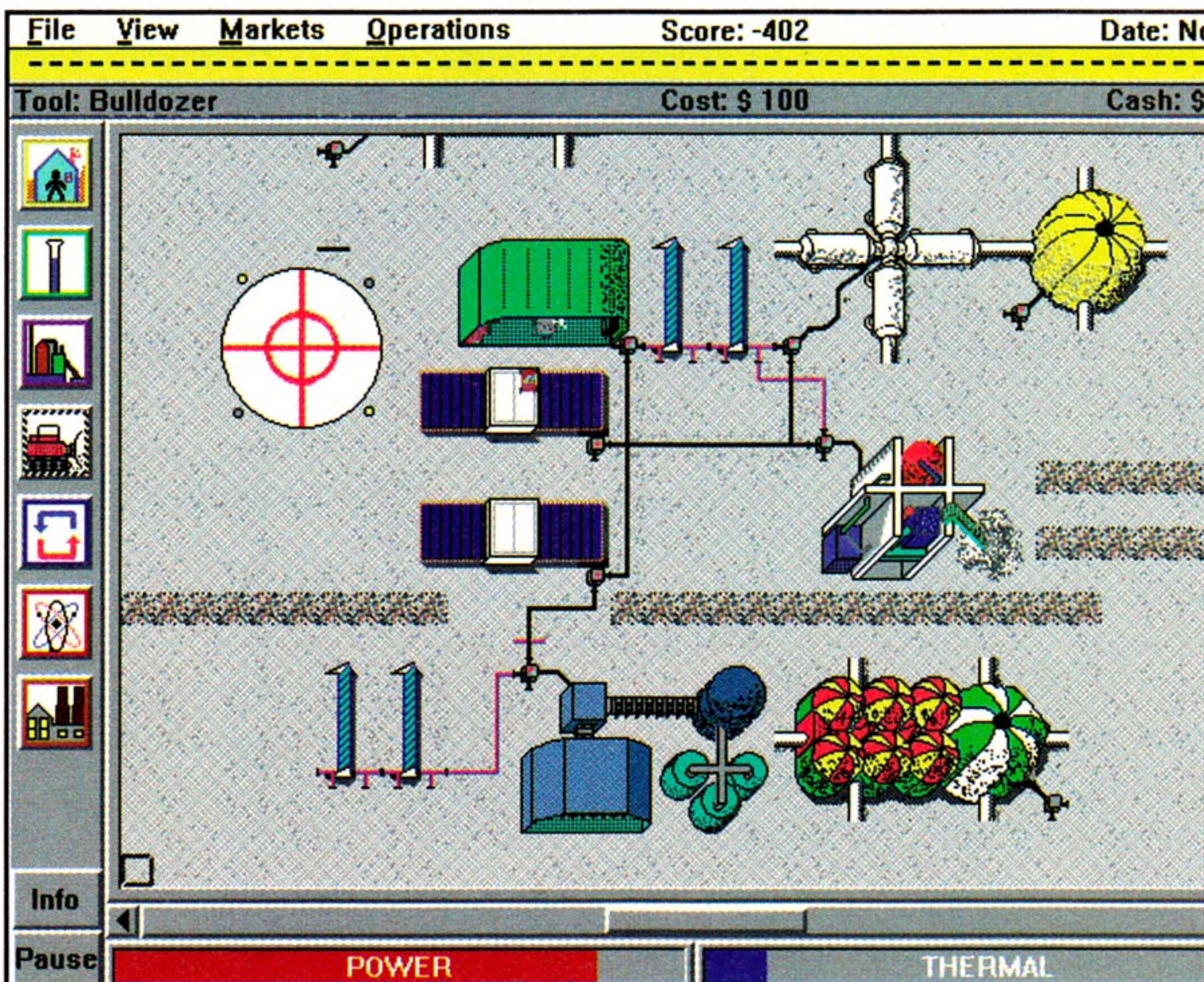
Astute players construct facilities with a keen eye on the resource requirements necessary to maintain them. Habitation, recreation facilities and other amenities must be balanced against a hardcore strategy of production. Mutinies are possible and players are forewarned that aggressive growth is futile if one overestimates the willingness of the people to toil without reward.

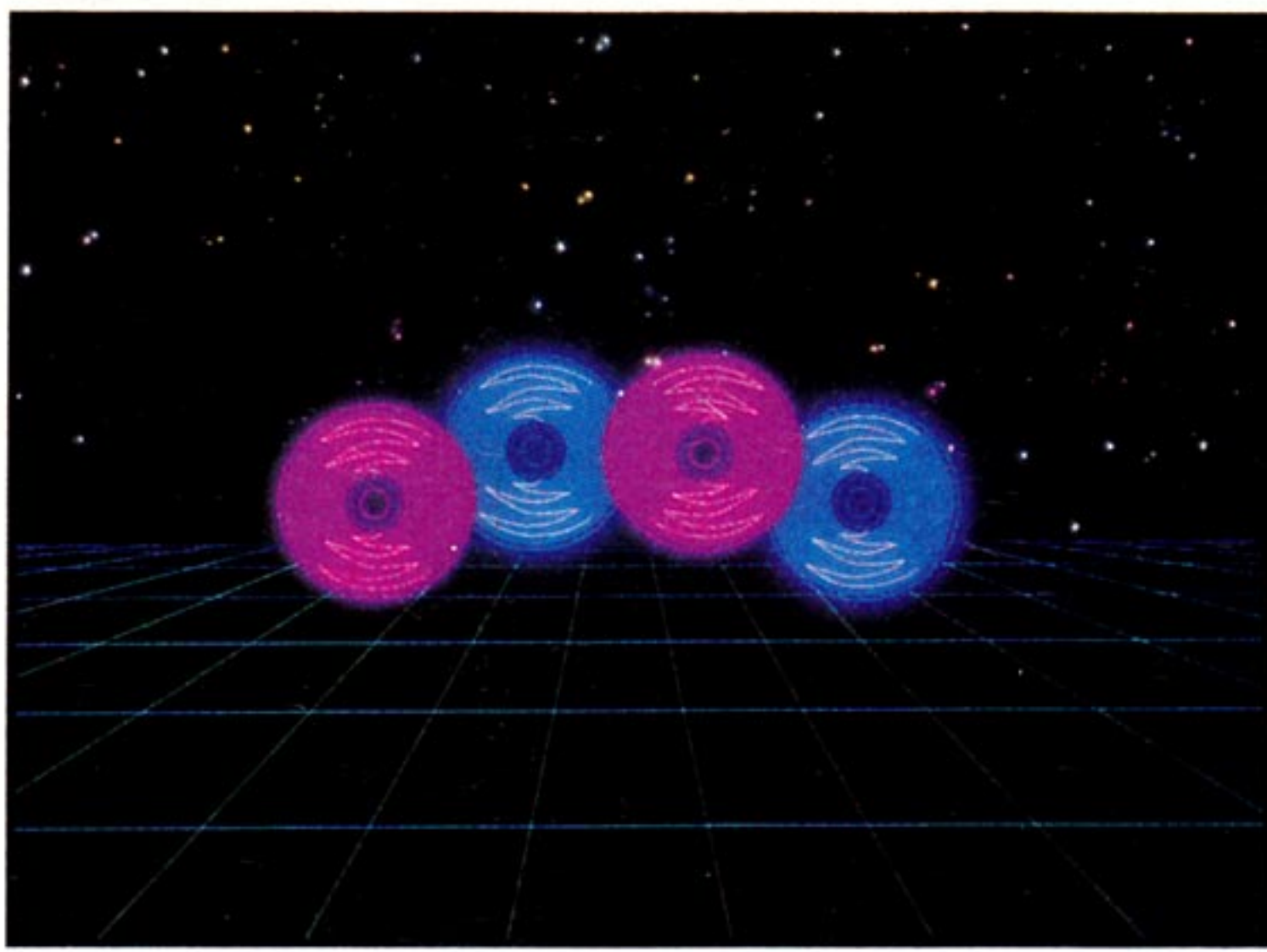
Further, the most well constructed economies are subject to unforeseen disasters, and the havoc that accompanies them. As in **SimCity**, such occurrences are infrequent but can upset the best laid plans and send players back to the drawing board. In the case of **Lunar Command**, players may be subjected to solar flares (which can be offset with sufficient warning if one has invested in a telescopic facility), lunar lander crashes, nuclear meltdowns (if one has constructed such a facility, it is best to locate it in a large crater away from the main structures to contain fallout) and even miners running amuck after being exposed to excessive solar radiation.

In addition to the elements of fun that Mallard has introduced into the system, they have also upgraded technically. **Lunar Command** is 386 specific with good VGA graphics and excellent audio files for SoundBlaster series cards.

Players may not experience the variety offered by **SimCity** or **A-Train**, but **Lunar Command** is definitely an in-depth strategy game that will challenge and reward players on an equal scale with its Earth-bound counterparts.

— Ed Dille





CD GALLERY



Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis

PUBLISHER	LucasArts
SYSTEM	IBM CD-ROM
THEME	Action/Adventure
MEGABITS	N/A
PLAYERS	1
LEVELS	N/A
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	95%
SOUND	95%
PLAYABILITY	90%

OVERALL 95%

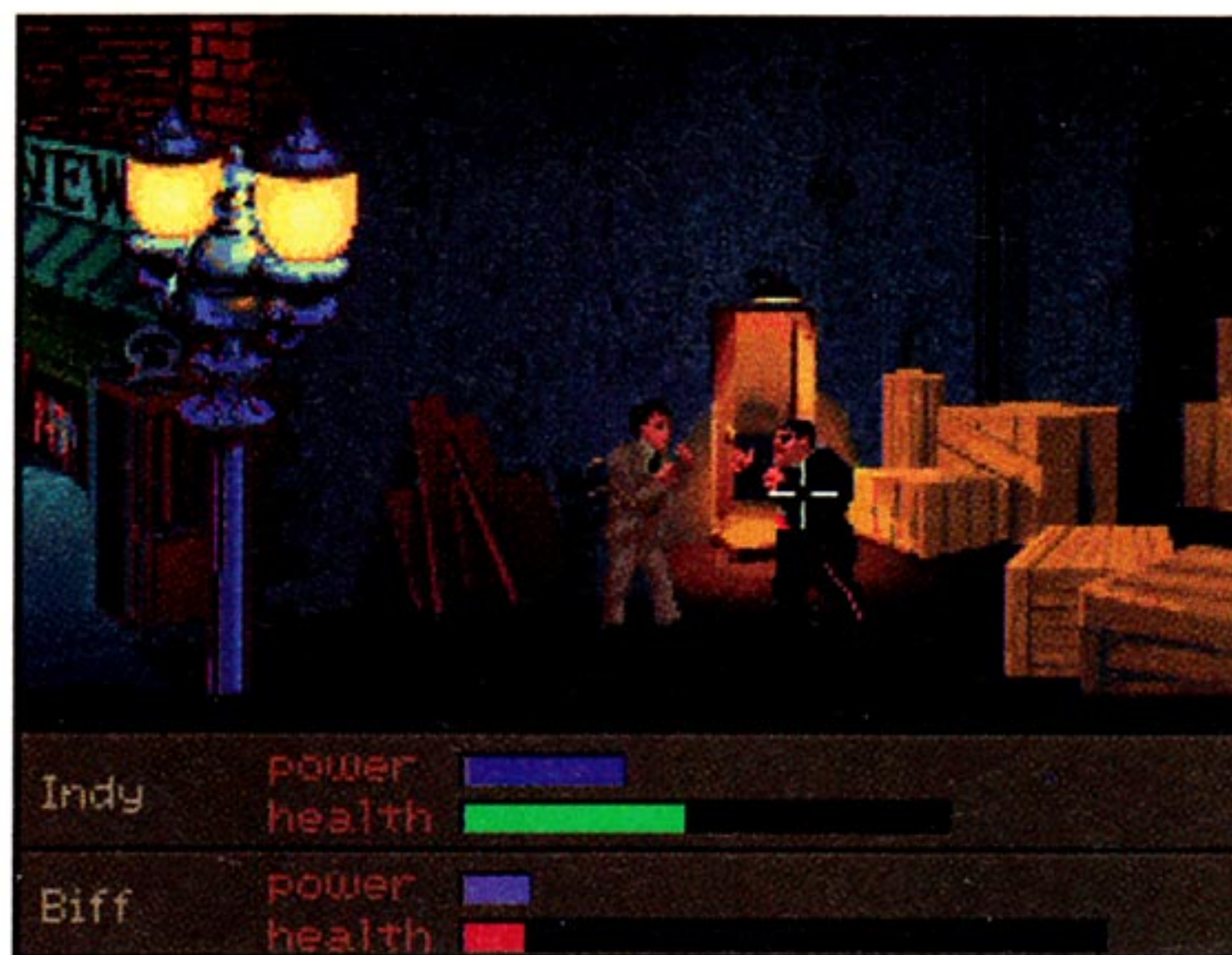
Help Indy outwit another Nazi bid for mystic conquest.

Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis is a genre classic that just got better with the addition of spoken dialogue and enhanced sound effects on CD-ROM. The plot of **Fate of Atlantis** is the most interesting of the existing movie and book stories. It also contains a logical branch point from which three different paths can take the player to the end segment of the game in Atlantis.

The game takes place in the late '30s. The Nazis are in a hurry to harness a rumored power source of Atlantis. Indy involves himself when he pursues a strange Nazi visitor. Indy and Sophia, a spirit "channeler," travel around the world and to Atlantis in an adventure as enjoyable as it is vast.

Fate of Atlantis uses LucasArts' standard interface in which half the screen

shows a graphic scene of the current location and the other half contains the available commands and inventory. When players move the cursor around the graphic screen, the text for clickable objects pops up when the cursor passes over them. Adventurers click on key words to assemble commands or use



Indiana Jones must once again use his brawn as well as his brains to succeed.

objects in combination with the key words. In some cases, special interfaces will replace the current scene in the graphic window. These allow players to guide a submarine, Atlantean vehicle or balloon, or help Indy fight Nazis in a simple arcade game segment.

The plot breakpoint for the game's triple path is obvious, so adventurers should save the game right before it so as to be able to try the other paths for maximum enjoyment. These roughly translate as a Wits way (heavy on puzzles), Fists (heavy on action) or Team play (longer, involving Sophia). There are also multiple endings that depend upon what happens in Atlantis and whether Sophia is saved from the Nazis.

Atlantis itself has some of the neatest devices ever seen in an adventure game and some of the most interesting puzzles, many of which involve Atlantean devices or orichalcum beads. Challenging, but fair, they run the gamut from logic puzzles to object-use brainbenders.

Graphically it's gorgeous. The scenery

reflects the plot locations, from Algiers and Monte Carlo to Crete and New England. Graphic touches like scaling, shading and animation add to the appeal. One key scene in the game takes place in a pitch black room. As time passes, Indy's eyes become accustomed to the light and the room gets slightly clearer.

The real treat of the CD-ROM version of **Fate of Atlantis** is the spoken dialogue (it's a "talkie" in LucasArts lingo). Over four weeks were spent recording the 8000 lines of dialogue for about 40 characters. Key voice actors are Doug Lee, convincing as Indiana Jones, Jane Jacobs as Sophia Hapgood and Nick Jameson as Dr. Charles Sternhart and other characters. The already excellent sound effects are enhanced. LucasArts' iMuse music system, which matches music to the on-screen action, also helps. The familiar Indiana Jones theme is reprised when Indy surmounts certain difficult challenges.

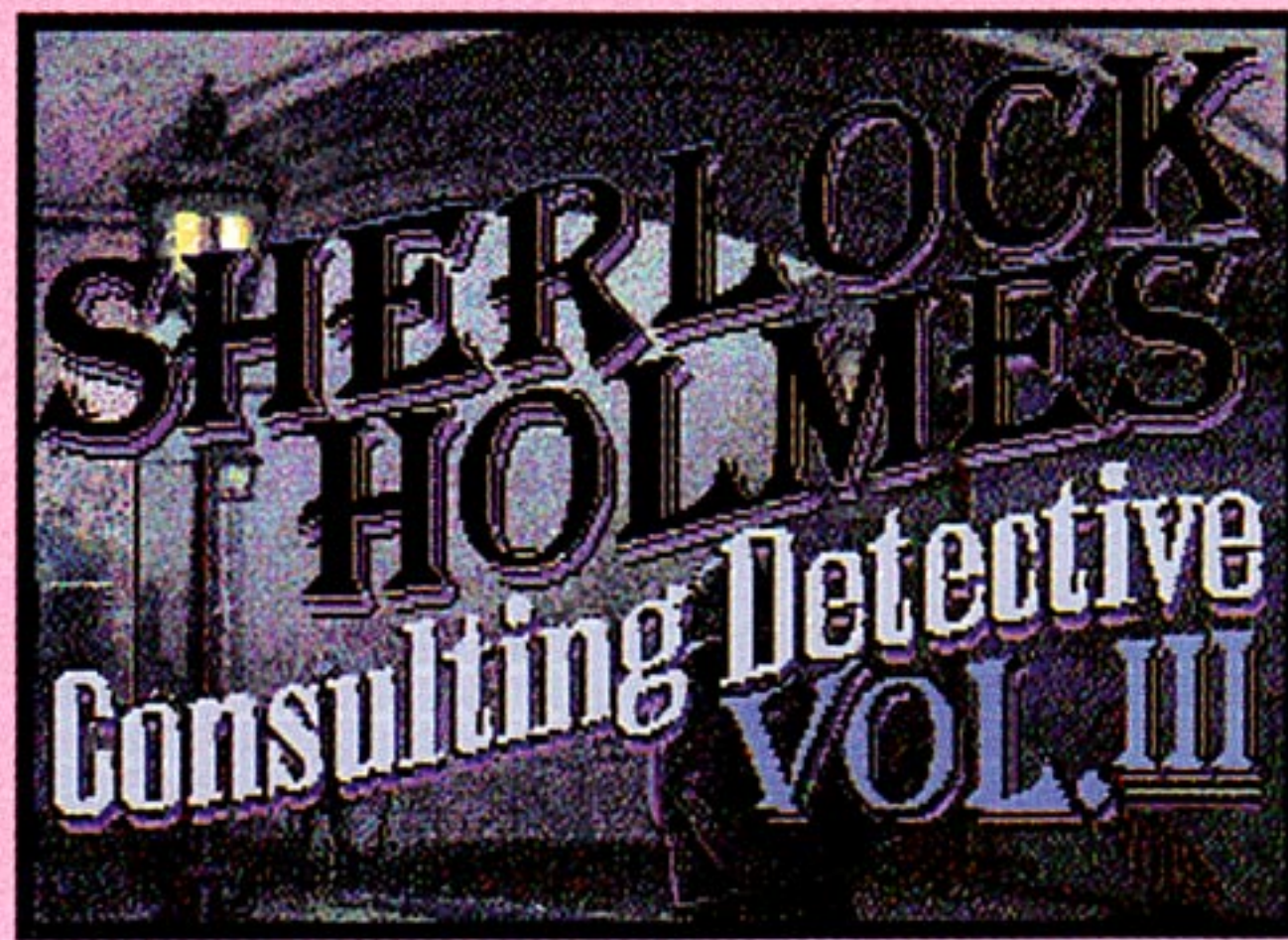
Fate of Atlantis plays like a movie, from its inventive, one-of-a-kind, interac-



Intricate dialogue with the numerous characters makes the CD version excel.

tive introduction/credits sequence to its fitting conclusion. Until it's made into a movie (we can hope!) The **Fate of Atlantis** CD is the nicest graphic adventure available and a brilliant mixture of puzzles, cinematic scenes, music, speech and story. Nazis beware!

—Russ Ceccola



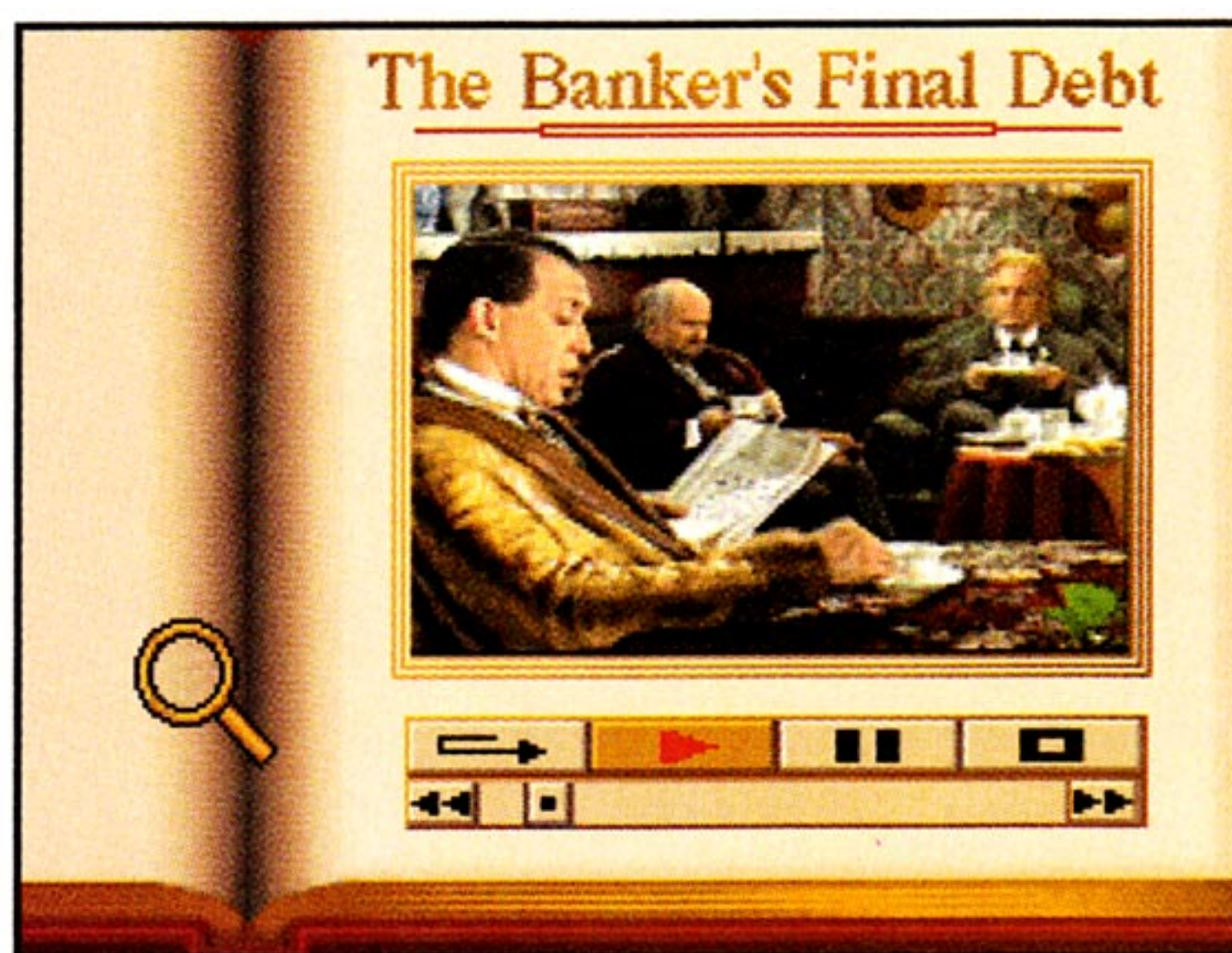
Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective III

PUBLISHER	ICOM Simulations
SYSTEM	PC CD-ROM, MAC CD
THEME	Mystery Adventure
MEGABITS	N/A
PLAYERS	1
LEVELS	N/A
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	96%
SOUND	98%
PLAYABILITY	90%

OVERALL 95%

London's great 19th Century detective is afoot again.

Volume III of **Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective** offers three new cases to explore, each deep enough to provide several hours of entertainment. Their shared objective is to gain enough information to go to trial using the least number of sources. In homage to the character, players achieve the highest scores when they can make amazing leaps of



Like the other titles in the series, this game offers in-depth video preambles.

deductive reasoning based on limited evidence. Less astute players will still be able to gather enough information to appease the Judge and attain convictions, but they may be surprised at what they overlooked after the trial, when they review Holmes' own strategy for winning the particular case.

The case of the Banker's Final Debt involves the murder of an accountant named Oswald Mason. Some initial clues suggest that his bludgeoning was the result of his work on an important embezzlement audit for the Treasury Department. However, the player subsequently finds links to a dance hall singer named Violet Blue, several replicas of the Venus De Milo, and a four-year-old diamond heist. As always in Sherlock's world, things are not as they first appear.

The case of the Solicitous Solicitor is an equally sordid affair, involving a Casanova personality who appears to have been poisoned, despite the diagnosis of a bad heart. What is the importance of the golden locket then, and who was he frequenting hotels with? Enquiring minds want to know.

The third offering, The Thames Murders, begins with a visit from Scotland Yard. Five bodies found floating in the Thames in the last week were not the work of Jack the Ripper. The most recent discovery, the body of the stepson of Lord Astor, prompted Inspector Lestrade to ask for Sherlock's help. Did Astor end this way because of his prowess at Whist, or in the bedrooms of the debutantes of London?

The game interface is unchanged from the previous Sherlock titles, which is as it should be considering the simple elegance of the original design. All command actions are accessed via a single screen, overlaid on a map of Nineteenth Century London. Eight point and click icons flank the center of the screen, the area for pop-up windows.

The upper left icon is Holmes' casebook, which brings up disk-based functions like load, save and case selection. One of the really nice features about **SH3** is that it doesn't require any hard drive space except for saved games. This is in contrast to many of its contemporaries, which still require 20 megs of hard drive space for game files despite CD storage capacity.

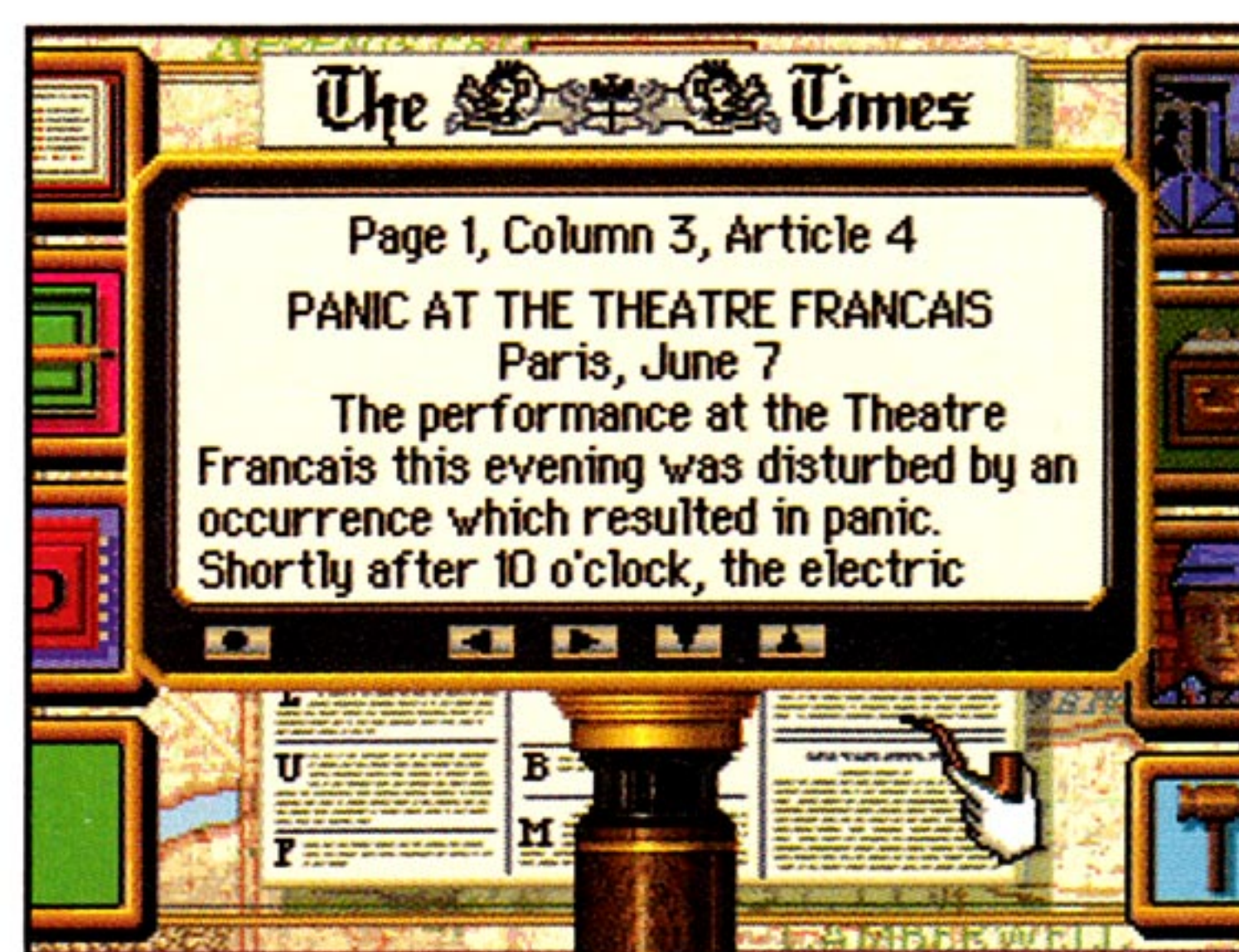
Underneath the casebook are icons for a notebook and the London directory. In their stripped down form, they may be viewed as catalogs for the various video clips in the game. Selecting a name or a location in one of these two sources, then clicking on the carriage icon in the upper right corner, transports the player to that place and initiates the video sequence, if it is appropriate to the case



being worked on. Attempting to pull up videos at random to short circuit the game either yields a sound bite from Watson stating, "Well, that seemed like a dead end," or leads to poorer scores once the case goes to trial.

Players may also select icons to call up *The London Times*, which often has useful information; Holmes' case files, or the Baker Street Irregulars, who may be sent off to garner clues for the player.

The video sequences are spectacular, especially when compared to their contemporaries. There are no slow motion,



The player has a plethora of information available at the click of a button.

grainy video clips with text boxes underneath. Every sequence is crisp, clear digitized video with synchronized sound.

Further, ICOM wisely avoided using company employees as actors. Instead, all footage was shot using professional summer stock players and the difference is very noticeable. The player is drawn into the action by their performances. Indeed, part of the allure of the Sherlock CD-ROM series is that clues in the game are both visual and auditory, as opposed to standing out in text boxes or slammed in the player's face through other means. It leads to a more subtle, enticing gaming experience.

— Ed Dille



PORTABLE PLAYTIME



King of the Ring

PUBLISHER	LJN
SYSTEM	Game Boy
THEME	Sports
MEGABITS	N/A
PLAYERS	1 or 2
LEVELS	N/A
.....	
COMPLEXITY	Average
GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	67%
PLAYABILITY	71%

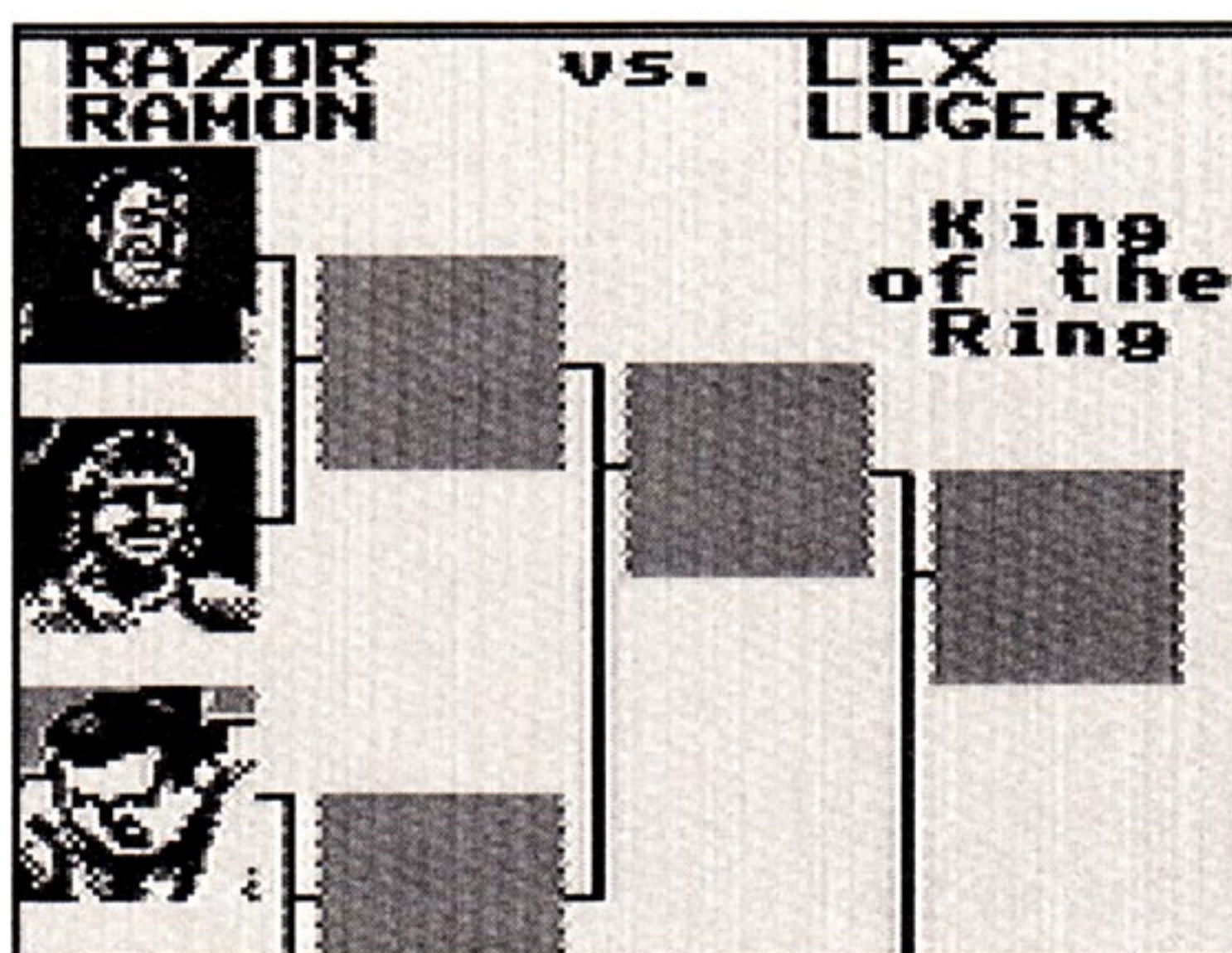
OVERALL 69%

Wrestling's a tough game, but it's not just the opponents.

Let's face it: the Game Boy is just not the ideal venue for a pro wrestling simulation. Those requiring proof need look no further than LJN's **King of the Ring**, programmed by Eastridge Technologies with art by Chris Gray's Gray Matter (based on LJN source code). While Acclaim's various labels have, in the past, turned out some of the best action-oriented grappling video games in the business, this product is not among them.

The first problem shows up before the bell even rings. **King of the Ring** was licensed from one of the last remaining trademarked names in the WWF catalogue. The "King of the Ring" tournament was an unheralded singles elimination event held sporadically throughout the late 80s, until this year, when Titan

Sports decided to turn it into a Pay Per View event. The problem in game terms is that virtually every WWF wrestling game already *has* a tournament mode. As a matter of fact, so does **King of the**



Players can pick their favorite wrestler, and see if he can become the King!

Ring. The Tournament format has the player's wrestler fighting seven other stars in rotation to become WWF champ; the King of the Ring mode is almost identical, except that the matches are based on supposed seedings and the winner is declared King of the Ring instead of WWF champion.

As might be expected, however, the real weak spot is the game's graphic presentation. To Gray Matter's credit, the wrestlers are good sized, but even so, the lack of color and the insufficient number of frames in the maneuver animations frequently make the game tough for the eye to follow. To its credit, however, there is almost none of the dreaded Game Boy blur when the wrestlers move, which they do frequently. In fact, the straight movement is some of the smoothest ever seen on a Game Boy; it's the moves themselves that are too abrupt.

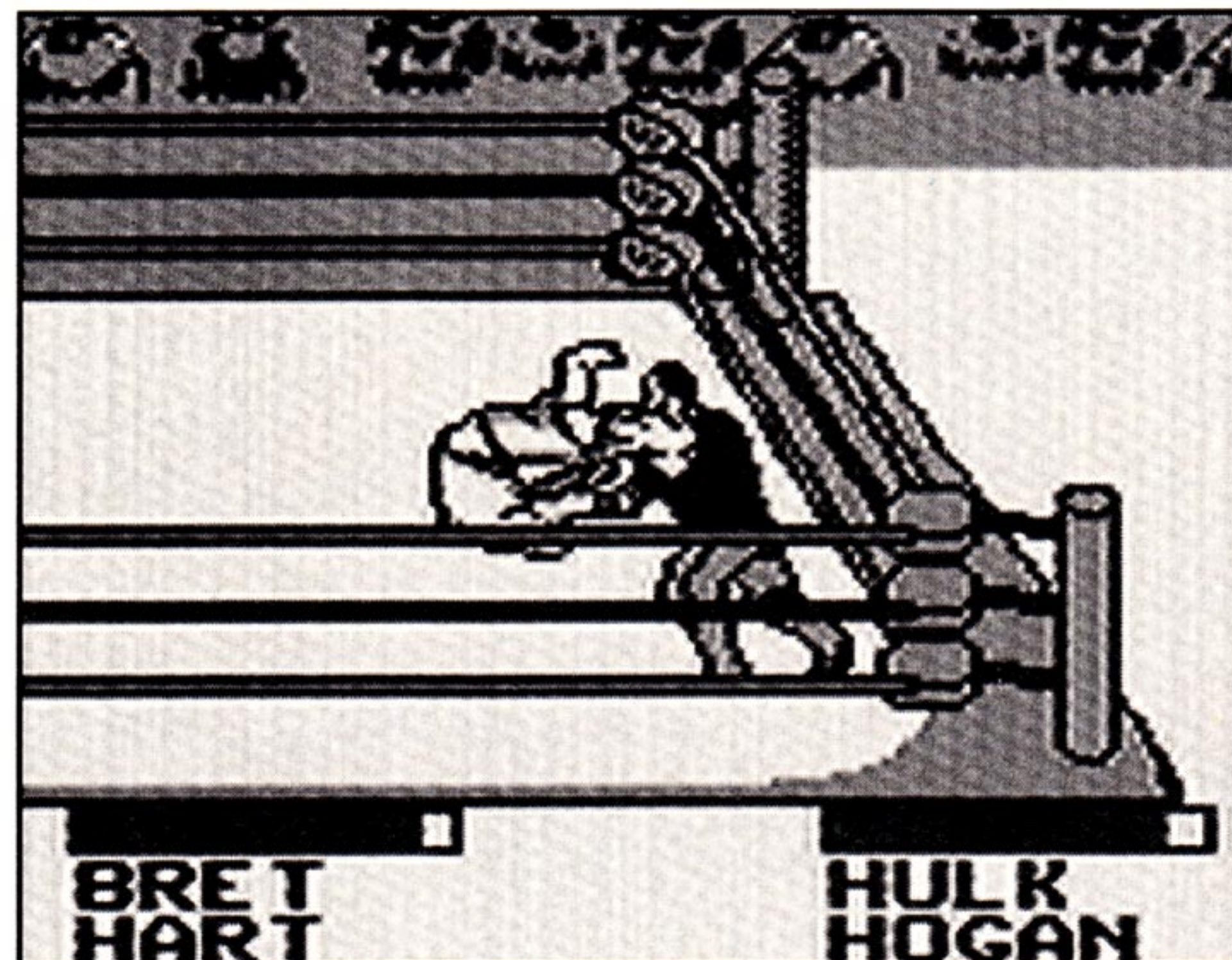
The game also contains an interesting feature: a crude wrestler construction kit that

inadvertently serves as the perfect example of why it's so tough to simulate pro wrestling: it isn't a real sport. Unlike baseball, football, and boxing, factors such as height, weight, speed, strength, and stamina are totally meaningless in pro graps. The winner of a match is determined entirely by the promotion's booker, whose task is to create a satisfyingly dramatic story line, not to validate or reward athletic ability. As a result, you have wrestlers in the six foot, 250 lb range competing with the likes of Yokozuna, a 6'5", 505 lb behemoth. Moreover, many of the height and weight stats given in the game are way off. Brett Hart is listed at six foot, for example, while Randy Savage, who is several inches shorter than Hart, is rated at 6'2".

In any case, the construction kit limits the wrestler's name to three letters, sets a predetermined height (six foot) and weight (250 lb) and allows a fixed number of points to be allotted among speed, strength, and stamina. There are no specialty moves and the command scheme is the same for every wrestler.

Overall, the build-your-own-wrestler feature is an interesting (if primitive) novelty, and the King of the Ring tournament is redundant. Still, this is the Game Boy, and given the technological limitations, **King of the Ring** isn't a bad game. It just isn't a very good one, either.

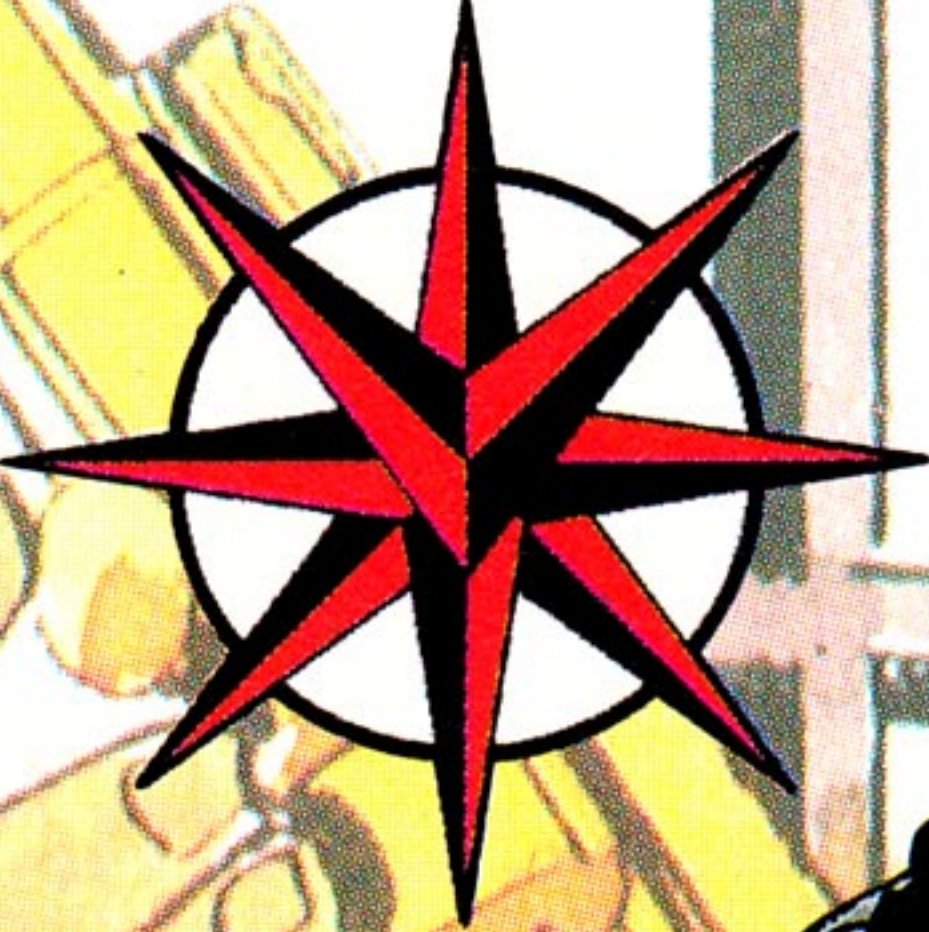
— Bill Kunkel



SHADOW

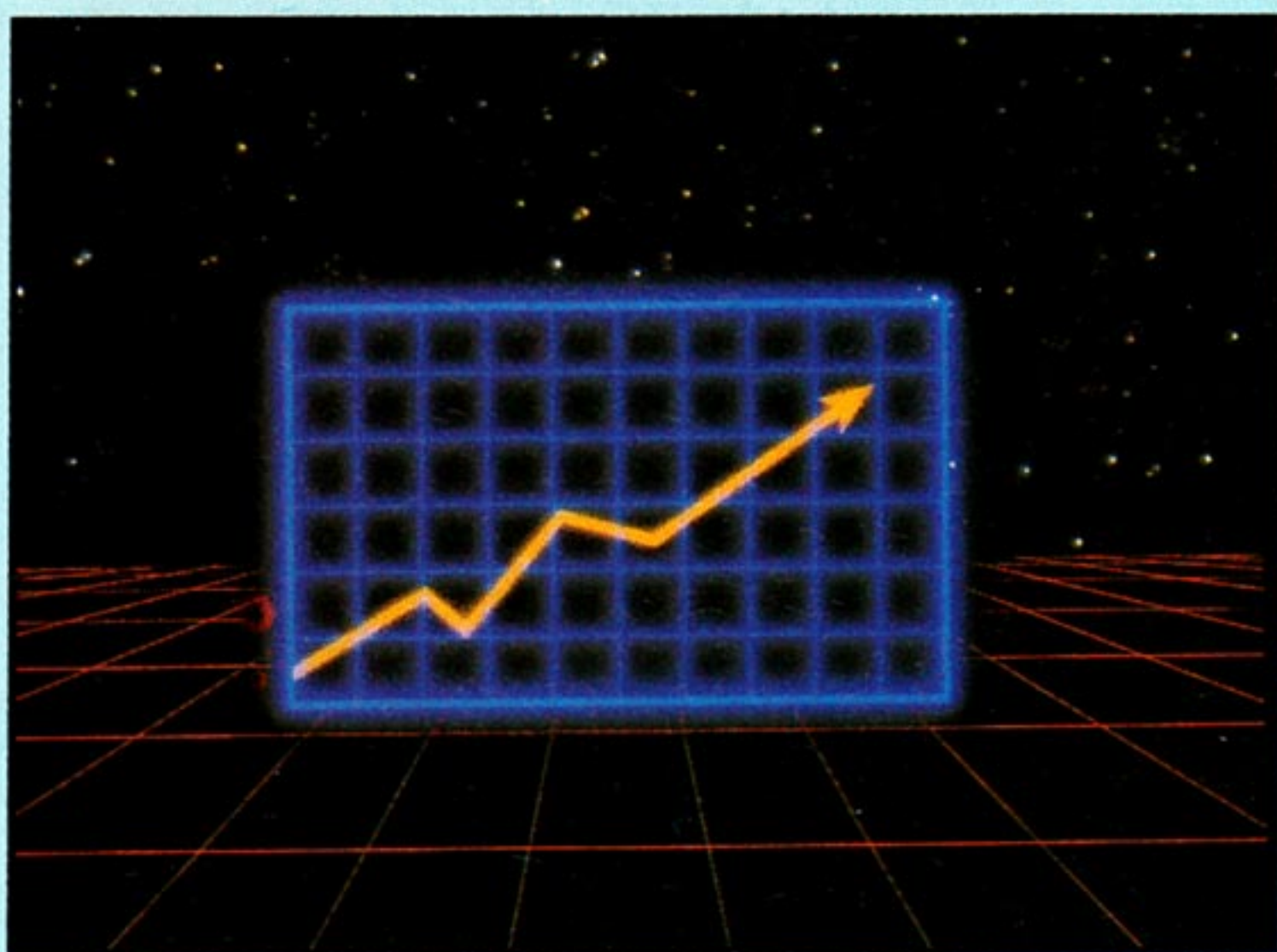
THE
NIGHT
IS ON
HIS
SIDE...

EVERY
MONTH
FROM
VALIANT



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KUNKEL REPORT

SCES Notebook

by Bill Kunkel

- While the electronic entertainment end of the business is zipping nicely along, the rest of the Consumer Electronics industry looks as dead as roller derby. We hear rumors of attendance in the 50K area which, after years of artificially inflated attendance figures, sounds shockingly low. Reports also surface that exhibitors left the show on the second day, exasperated with the lack of traffic.

- More rumors. Next year, some say, the show will be held in Atlanta. This turns out to be misreportage, as the show will return to Chicago, but for the first time in memory will run in late rather than early June. Official Reason: inability to compete with the World Cup which will be in Chicago the front end of the month.

The World Cup?

- This World Cup thing could be a major bomb. In our industry, there are already more soccer games being shown than we've seen in the past decade. But does anybody in the U.S. really care about this foreign sport filled with unpronounceable names? Soccer is being played by lots of American kids these days (the insurance and equipment costs are a lot lower than football), so maybe, in a decade or so. But now?

- If this show has a financial upnote, it is Sunday's opening up of CES to the public. People stand in line for hours to buy \$10 passes to the hall. When they open the doors, it looks like something out of *Rawhide*—an incredible mass of humanity sweeps down the North Hall (where the vast majority of the electronic gaming companies are sequestered), stripping away plastic bags, buttons, and promotional material like locusts. A large battalion finally stops at the Acclaim booth, where the **Mortal Kombat** actor/characters are assembled. The kids go wild over these digitized superstars, lining up for autographs and good wishes.

But the bulk of the crowd has another destination in mind.

Nintendo and Sega sit cheek by jowl at the back of the hall, brought into even closer proximity by the elimination of Nintendo's "Great Wall"—a gigantic plastic barrier that formerly served to enclose the Big N and its third-party vassals like a feudal city-state. This year, some of the bigger third party publishers (especially those who publish for both the SNES and Genesis and didn't want to maintain two booths) opted for space on the perimeter of the two war zones.

Up until Sunday, the impression was strong that Sega was "winning" the show. Its booth had more enthusiasm, more electricity and, frankly, more people. On Sunday, this impression is cast in concrete. The mob of kids, parents, and megagamers-in-general bears down on Sega City like a brontosaurus who's just spotted a thicket of fruit trees.

Not that Nintendoville is empty, but the crowd is remarkably thinner than across the street and the intensity level isn't even registering on the same board. For the first time at a CES it can be said without fear of contradiction: Sega kicked Nintendo's butt.

Note: next year's show will not be open to the public.

- The gala press presentation for the Sega/Virgin/Disney **Aladdin** for the Genesis beggared the imagination, drawing raves from veteran showgoers. But the promised elephants didn't materialize—they realized they'd need several of them and decided it was impractical. Virgin prez and bon vivant Richard Branson, just weeks before his profile on *60 Minutes*, showed off film of a recent parachute jump, during which he accidentally pulled the wrong cord and jettisoned his chute, rather than opening it, forcing the skydivers with him to each grab an arm

and float him safely to earth (proving once and for all, I guess, that *White Men Can't Jump*). Branson made quite an impression on the industry, and Virgin finally had its breakthrough show. It's been fascinating watching Martin Alper grow this company from a discount software publisher for the C64 to one of the major forces on the software scene.

Seth Mendelsohn even mentioned that Sly Stallone would be reporting to Irvine for two days of special photography as part of the *Demolition Man* movie license Virgin acquired. And Rob Alvy, who produced the amazing version of Disney's **Aladdin** for the Genesis, had the shell-shocked look of a man who has never seen such a fuss made over any product he's been involved with. Well done, guys.

- Jurassic Park, of course, was everywhere. Both Sega and Nintendo (Ocean, actually) had huge exhibits pushing the various SKUs. It was nice to see that Ocean has gotten beyond the stage where they simply buy a hot movie license and dump it into a generic platform game engine. Both the NES and SNES **JP** games use multiple (non-side scrolling) POVs.

- No show would be complete without its bizarro products. This time out the most outstanding white elephant was revealed before the actual start of the show. Philips, which is doing an impressive, fairly intelligent relaunch of its CD-I system, had rocker/techno-maven Todd Rundgren on hand to show off his latest breakthrough: an album of "interactive music." What it boils down to is the user can select from among a series of uninspiring tracks to create their very own cyber-muzak. Kiss of Death: it doesn't play on audio CDs, just the CD-I. Better luck next time, Todd.

Honorable Mention: the news that Trimark Interactive has licensed *White Men Can't Jump* as a video game. The story even came with a funny quote from Kelly Flock, Trimark's exec VP: "Most successful video games are licensed from the film industry." Think about *that* one awhile.

For the first time at a CES it can be said without fear of contradiction: Sega kicked Nintendo's butt.

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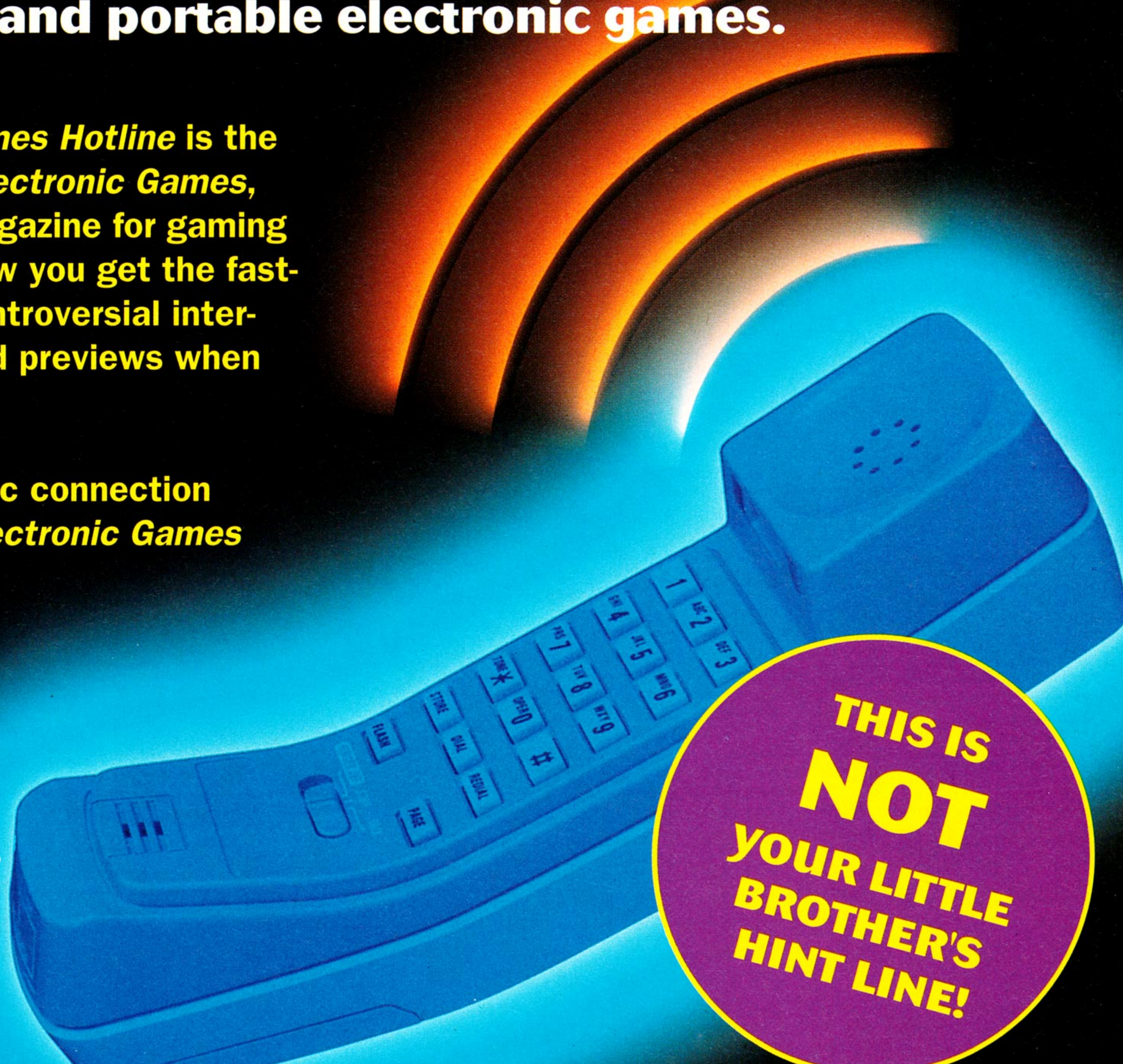
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**THIS IS
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THE JURY

We've been doing great on reviews from our readers over the last few months, and this month was no exception. Most of our jurors got past the hype and into what made the game really work—or not work—for them, and there were a lot of good and different ideas. Here are the two we felt presented their views the best.

StarFox

Nintendo
SNES

Winning Review Nick Fox-Gieg

StarFox virtually explodes onto the screen, immersing the unwitting player in a surreal, three-dimensional polygon world that seems inspired in equal parts by *Star Wars*, M.C. Escher and *The Wind in the Willows*. The player assumes the role of Fox McCloud, an intergalactic mercenary who might feel more at home in a Disney cartoon, and leads a squadron of four starfighters in a 12-level battle of good versus evil.



Fantastic graphics and sounds abound, thanks to the new Nintendo FX chip.

The graphics are nothing short of spectacular. Each level shows off the capabilities of the Super FX chip which drives the cartridge, and although individual polygons are somewhat coarse and lack detail, the action moves with such ferocious realism that you may find yourself reflexively ducking away from the screen.

The sound is equally good, with a thundering John Williams-style orchestral score and crystal clear digitized voices. The controls are remarkably responsive—your starfighter banks, climbs, dives and barrel-rolls effortlessly, using every button on the control pad.

What really makes **StarFox** an exceptional game, however, is the little touches that prove just how much effort went into its creation. Not only is the game a technological breakthrough, but it's a thrill to play.

Runner Up Review Eric Alog

"Why go to the next level...when you can go light-years beyond?" the commercial says. Players of **StarFox** may ask the same, as this game represents a true quantum leap in video gaming.



As you warp out of headquarters, you know a long battle lies ahead of you.

This fighter-pilot contest is given personality by Fox McCloud's wingmen, er...wing-animals: Falco, an Iceman-like eagle (remember *Top Gun*); Slippy, a timid yet perseverant toad, and Peppy, the rabbit mentor of the crew. In their high-performance Arwing fighters they must infiltrate Venom, a planet occupied by Andross, a mad gorilla scientist who possesses the "Telekinetic Converter."

Even though the polygons appear large and blocky, they create a somewhat realistic environment. The music, ranging

from orchestral symphonies to heavy metal, supports the settings well. Excellent control aids the smooth, fluid game play, and the skill level is variable not only by overall difficulty but also by the path taken to Venom. **StarFox** holds solid with all these features, including impressive intro and end cinemas, which really strut the power of the SFX.

Join the Jury

Review a game in EG's monthly contest!

Each month, **Electronic Games'** critics review dozens of new releases. They do a great job, but a lot of our readers are knowledgeable and perceptive about the games, too. Now, our unique monthly contest lets you strut your stuff. We'll pick a video cart each month, and challenge gamers to review it. Then, in *The Jury*, **EG** will print the best ones—and give free software to the winner.

The rules are simple:

1. All reviews must be of the nominated game.
2. Entrants can submit only **one** review of each game.
3. All submissions become the property of **EG**.
4. Reviews should be 200 words or less, typed double-spaced.
5. The month's best review, as determined by **EG** editors, earns the writer the currently available video game of his or her choice (sorry, no Neo•Geo carts).
6. The contest is open to anyone who has not sold professionally to **EG** within the previous 12 months (exclusive of this contest).

Game for Contest #12:

Bubsy the Bobcat

Accolade

Deadline for this month's contest:

September 1, 1993

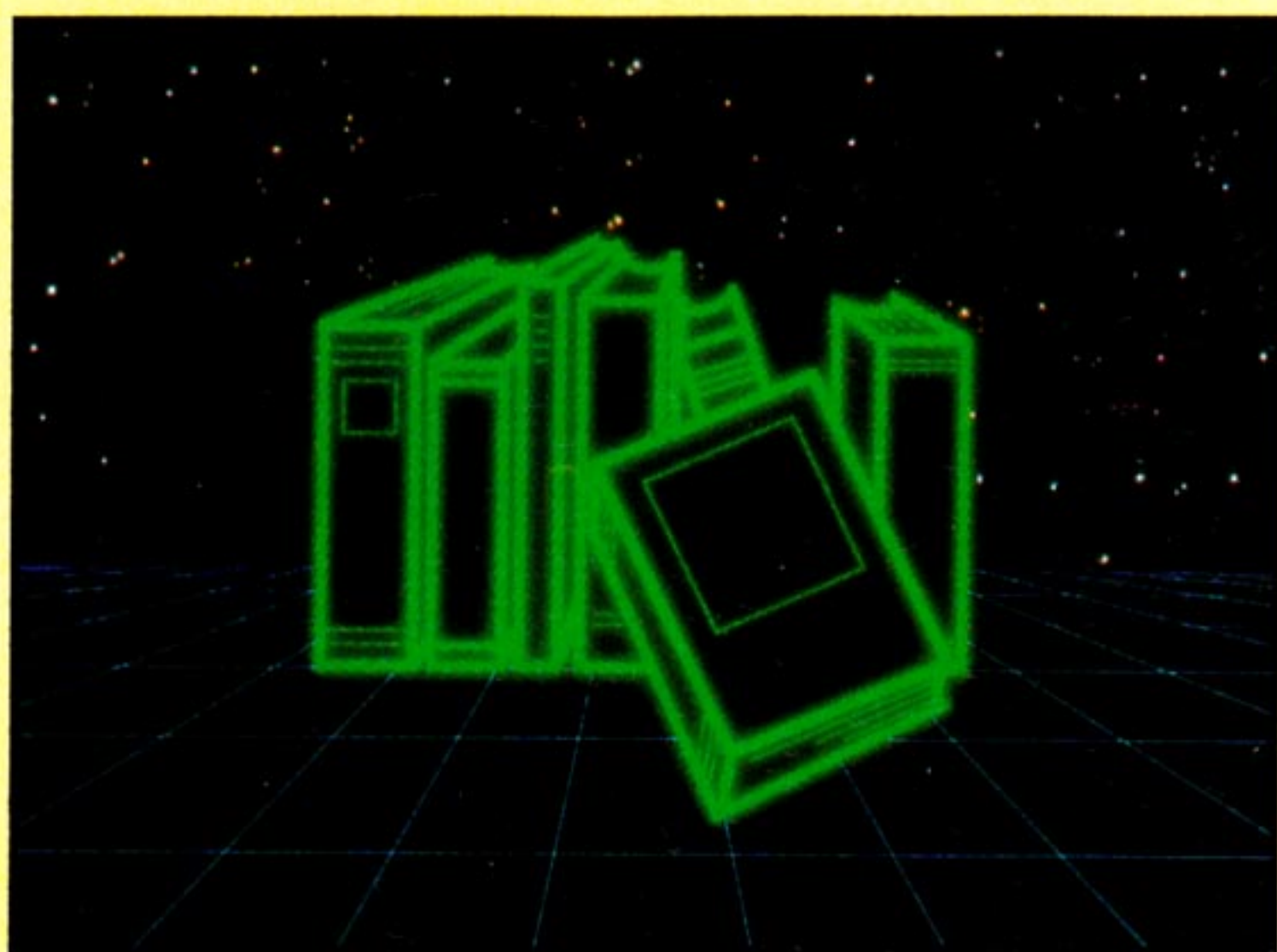
Send entries to:

The Jury (Electronic Games)

330 S. Decatur, Suite 152

Las Vegas, NV 89107

...and don't forget to tell us what video game you'd like if you are the winner!



LORE

Compute's Conquering Zelda Adventures, 2nd Ed.

Donald R. McCrary, Compute Books, 224 pages (softbound, \$12.95)

The three Zelda games are covered here: **The Legend of Zelda** and **The Adventure of Link (Zelda II)** for the NES and **Zelda III** for the SNES. Each is handled in a separate section, with **Link's** about half the size of the other two. All involve extensive explorations of the land (or lands) of Hyrule, though the maps change from game to game, and each has two main regions to deal with.

Each section begins with an overview of the game objectives. For example, in **Legend**, the hero, Link, must search eight labyrinths for pieces of the Triforce in order to battle the evil Ganon in the ninth and rescue Zelda. In **Zelda II**, Link locates six statues in as many palaces and puts a crystal in each as a key to get to the final palace to rescue Zelda. In the third game, Zelda gets rescued in the first half, then Link gets to go after six more princesses.

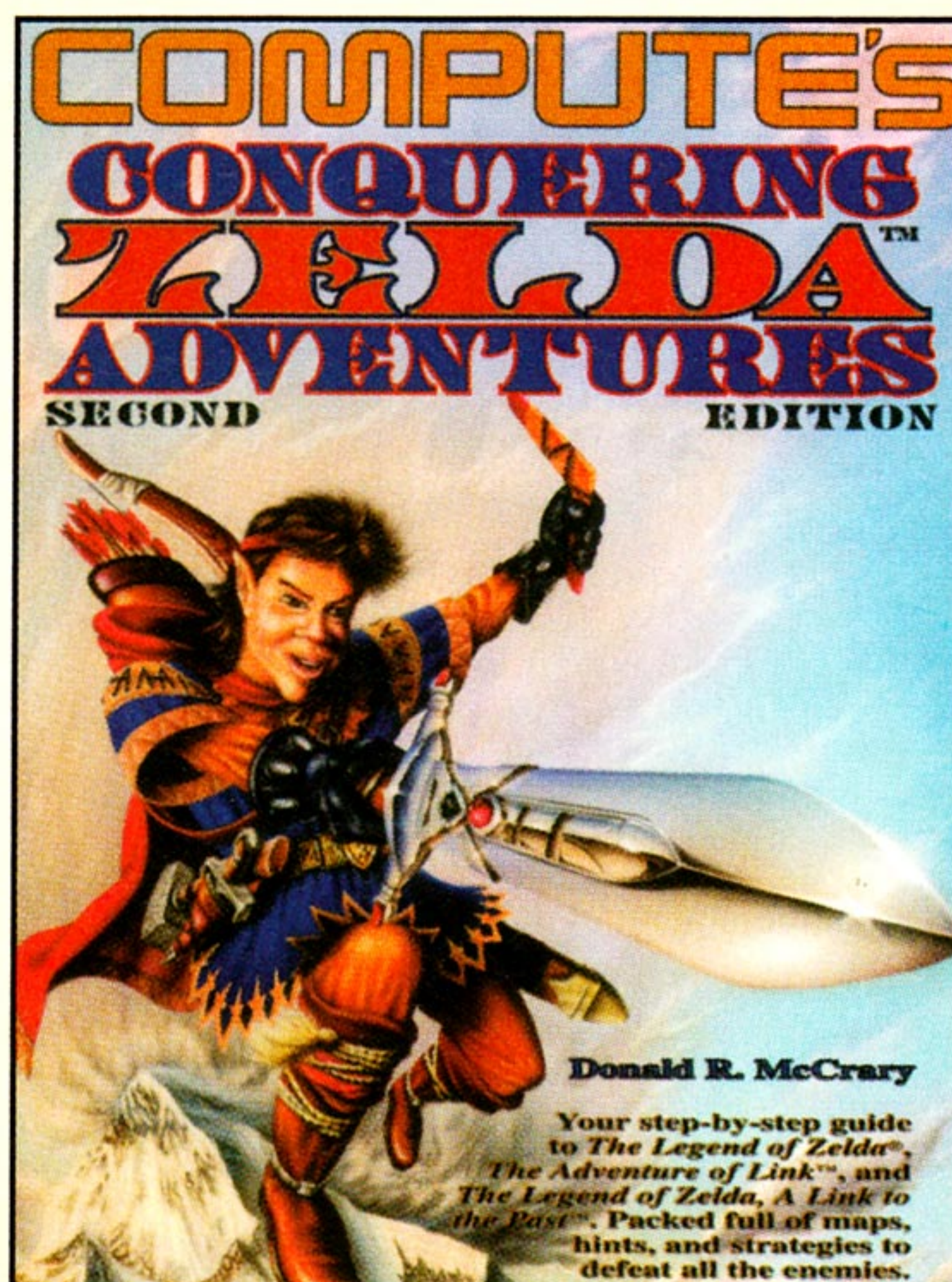
After touching on these, with considerable detail about Link's general strategies, weapons and items, a chapter is devoted to initial moves and objects to be acquired to prepare for the adventure. This is followed by chapters on all the hints, maps and strategies needed to get through it. In **Legend**, where two separate missions are involved, there is such a series of chapters for each.

In these hints and strategies chapters, advice is first provided as to what items Link should have in order to get through a labyrinth or palace or other location, then the step-by-step sequences are given for each area, complete with detailed charts and maps with grid references. The latter are used extensively, frequently with reference codes for items, enemies and special tips.

This means that while a great deal of information is offered it is possible to avoid getting too much at once. Still, in the introduction, McCrary recommends,

"Pick your own points of frustration before picking up the book for help," and follows this with a page or two of common problems and where in the book to find the solutions. He rightly warns, "Be careful not to read too much if you want to figure out the games on your own!"

— Ross Chamberlain



The Second Edition of Conquering Zelda gives gamers even more hints and tips.

The Complete Wargames Handbook: How to Play, Design & Find Them

James F. Dunnigan, Quill Press, 315 pages, (softbound, \$12.00)

Casual wargamers may not be familiar with Jim Dunnigan, but any grognard knows he is the father of modern wargaming. An academic, Dunnigan joined now retired Army Colonel Raymond Macedonia to expose a generation of battlefield commanders to the benefits of wargaming. His works are studied at the major service academies. Non-wargamers may remember him as NBC's on-

air military analyst during the Gulf War, or as the co-designer of a wargame featured on ABC's *Nightline* in November, 1990, that correctly projected every major aspect of the ensuing conflict.

This work is a revision of an earlier release written before computers. Computers have changed the scope, complexity and manageability of wargames to the point that Dunnigan was compelled to re-address the subject in modern day terms—an invaluable service to an entirely new generation of gamers.

Although he focuses primarily on conventional wargames (i.e., those depicting a historic event or potential real world event), he does not have a myopic view of the genre. As he points out, historical "what if's" are explored by playing out actual possibilities, such as Custer taking Gatling guns to the Little Big Horn, which he easily could have done. Fantasy gamers might even explore what might have happened if Custer had flamethrowers, or a death ray gun! The essence is in the different ways information the player is given may be molded.

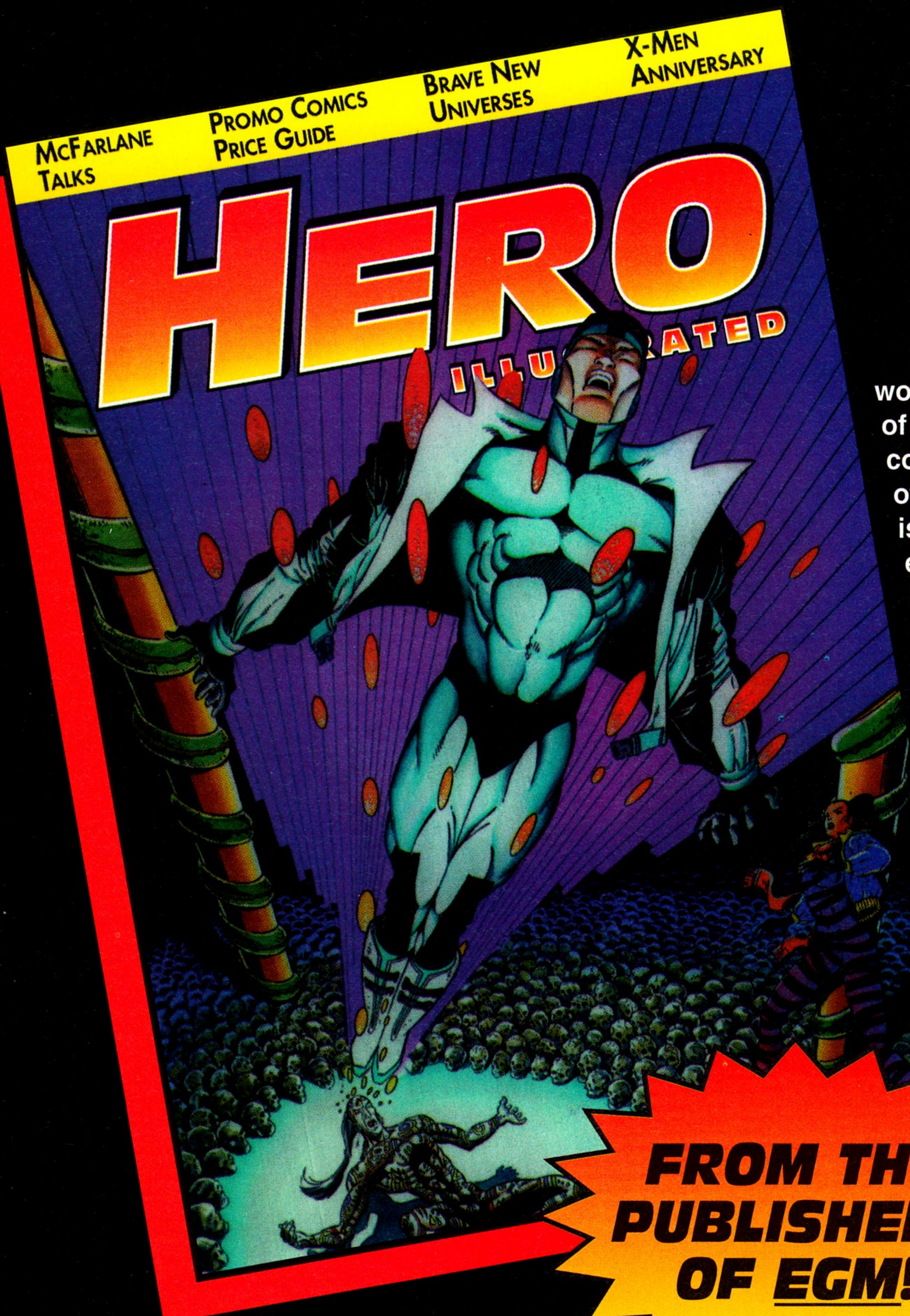
Sections of the book are devoted to unraveling "mysteries" behind wargaming—why rules are the way they are, layman's guides to technical terms used in the games, and special problems related to air and naval games.

Dunnigan gives the reader insights on the design of games, both paper and computer based. He is currently refining his design of the Hundred Year's War game on both Genie and the National Videotex Network, and he is designing a new release, from Three-Sixty, based on the old television series, *Victory at Sea*.

A final section of the book is devoted to the contributions of wargaming to the actual conduct of battle. His discussion of the differences between professional and hobby gamers is both surprising and enlightening. Indeed, the entire book will instruct and entertain casual and experienced readers alike, without bogging them down in minutiae.

— Ed Dille

BOLDLY GOING WHERE NO MAGAZINE HAS GONE BEFORE...



**ALL NEW!
ALL COLOR!
ALL OUT!**

Take a step into the incredible world of HERO, the new magazine of comics and comic book collecting from the publisher of EGM! Each big issue of HERO is loaded cover to cover with exclusive info on the latest developments in comic books - including special interviews with the hottest artists, reviews of new titles, and a price guide to track the value of your collection in a format unlike anything you've ever seen before!

Printed in four-color throughout, HERO is packed with insider news and exclusive art, as well as exclusive previews and price lists for new non-sport trading cards and collectible action figures! Throw in incredible info on new movies, animation, video games and more, and you get an idea of what HERO is all about!

**FROM THE
PUBLISHERS
OF EGM!**

HERO

ILLUSTRATED

THE HOTTEST NEW GUIDE TO COMICS IS MUCH MORE THAN JUST A MAGAZINE...

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Packed into every issue you'll find special sneak previews of upcoming comics and original stories created exclusively for HERO! These foil-covered comics will not be found anywhere else, and are sure to be on the top of every collector's "most wanted" list! Rip open HERO #1 and you'll find an original Star Trek: Deep Space Nine adventure that will never be re-printed again as well as an exclusive preview of Batman/Grendel, with original foil-cover artwork by Matt Wagner!



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**The HERO Deluxe Package,
Found Exclusively At Your Local
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The Adventure Begins JUNE 6th!**



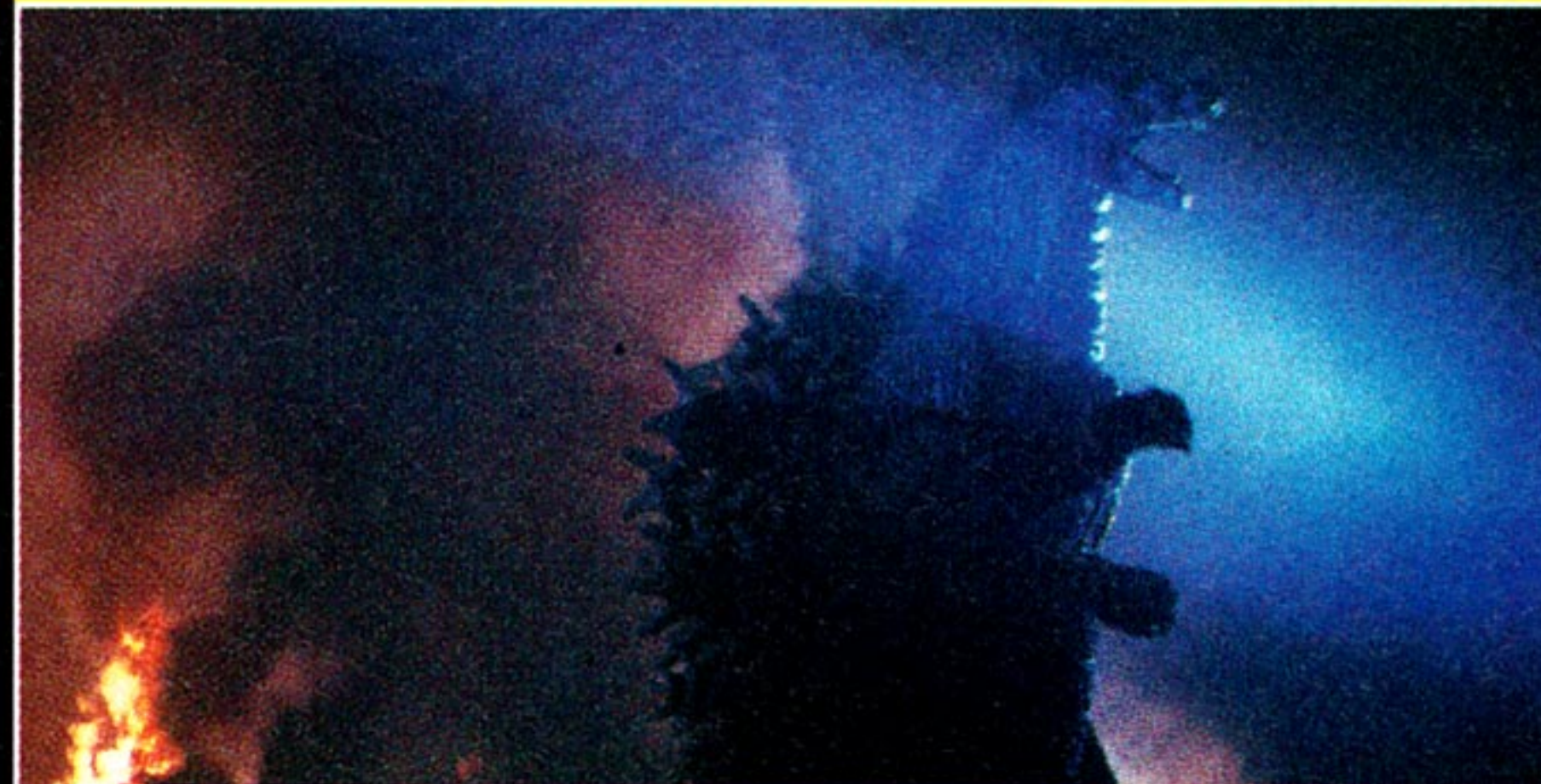
• FIRST NEWS OF BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES!



• THE GREATEST NEW VIDEO GAMES!



• FANTASTIC ANIMATION AND ANIME!



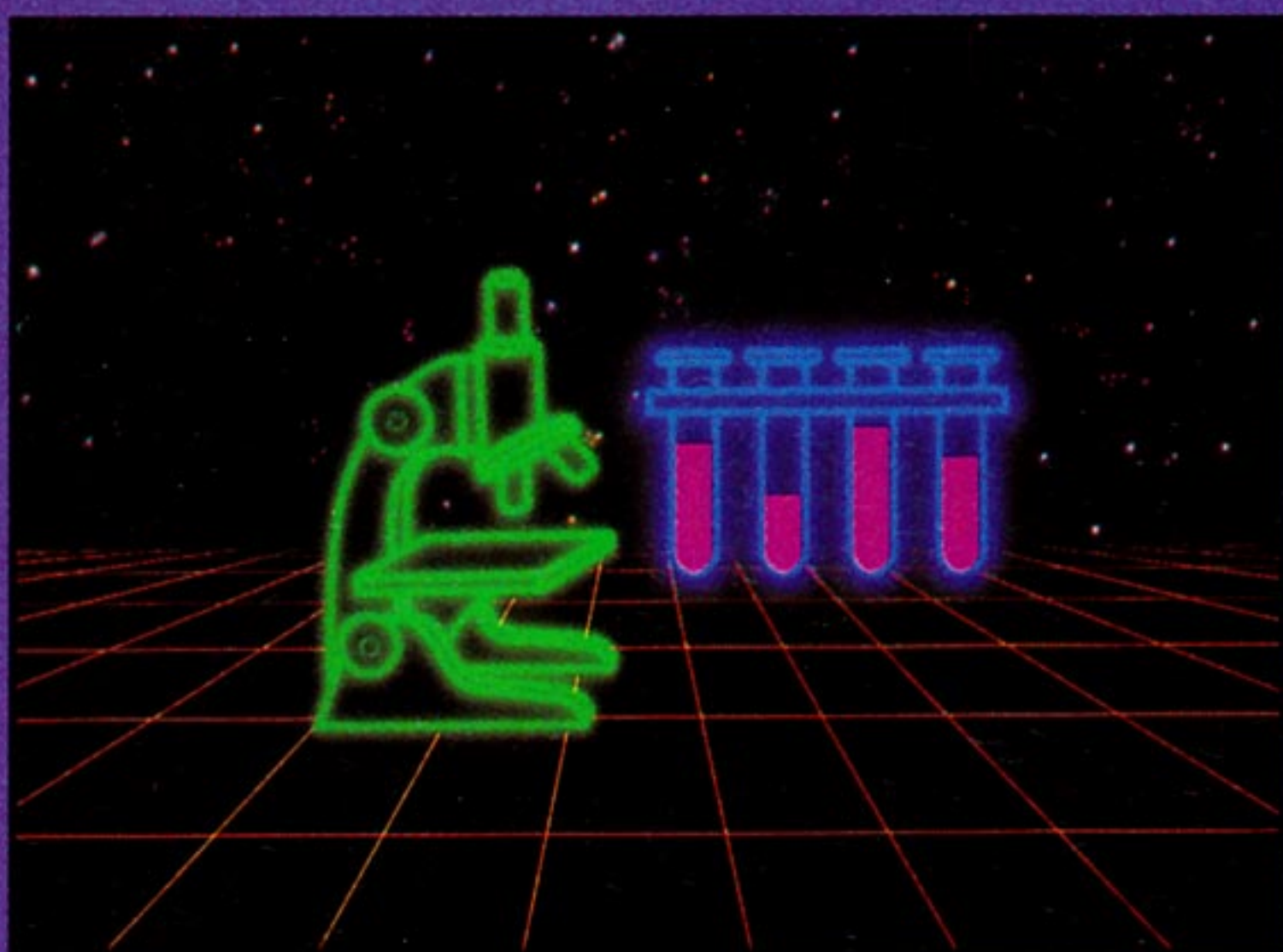
• CULT MOVIES AND SPECIAL EFFECTS!



• INFO ON THE BEST NON-SPORTS CARDS!



• PRICES AND NEWS ON TOYS & FIGURES!



TEST LAB

Accessorizing the Game Boy

Gaming on the go has become big business, and not just for Nintendo and the cartridge giants either. The revolutionary success of the Game Boy handheld unit has spawned an entirely new industry of manufacturers and distributors of add-ons and accessories for the unit.

Among these spinoff companies, Naki and Nuby are perhaps the most recognizable to the average consumer, but several others, including STD and Saitek, have recently stepped into the arena. The combined effort of these firms has produced an unprecedented glut of similar and dissimilar offerings to amaze and confuse consumers.

This is not to say that any of these companies set out to confuse the public, rather that the simple magnitude of choices faced by the consumer, particularly the non-player who is the purchaser, can be overwhelming. As such, the focus of *Test Lab* this month will be to help discriminating buyers sort through the hype and get the best bang for their buck.

Before opting to buy anything that will be discussed here, it is first necessary to carefully consider the playing habits of the members of the household who will use the product(s). Is the Game Boy being used as a true portable, going with the family for outings in the car (or even the boat) or is it a fixture in the family room, picked up only when there is nothing good on television? Further, is it a solitaire activity, where the noise of the game would disturb others engaging in different activities in the same room, or is it eagerly passed back and forth



between two or more players awaiting their turns? What are the hand sizes of the players? Does Junior love to play with Dad, but does Dad's hands cramp up before the little one's enthusiasm wanes? Finally, are the rising costs of batteries becoming a point of contention? All of these factors impact which among the following peripherals and accessories would be the best individual purchase.

Let us now consider a Game Boy used for its original purpose, as a method of freeing players from a cable connected to their televisions. Forgetting to pack the Game Boy when taking a long outing in the car has led to mutiny in some families. With the proper accessories, however, bringing one along can be painless and contribute to harmony, rather than dissent, in the vehicle. One of the most annoying features about playing in a car is difficulty in seeing the screen consistently as light conditions constantly

change. The best solution is to pick up an illuminated magnifier. Nuby offers the Game Light Plus, which has a 2x screen and an internal light that runs off of 4 AA batteries. The unit mounts to the front of the Game Boy and is a little bulky to handle, but it accomplishes the job. Naki makes the Bright Beam, which slides into the grooves on the side of the unit, is a little more compact, and offers a bubble magnifier which is a little more friendly in terms of viewing angle if the player is willing to put up with minor distortion of the image. Also, Naki's offering runs off 2 AA batteries instead of 4, making it more economical in the long run. The only noticeable complaint is that the unit, once

installed, blocks access to the contrast control on the Game Boy.

STD is also marketing a new clip-on which solves the magnification and light issues and then some. The Handy Boy is billed as an all-in-one accessory. The Handy Boy has a lighted magnifier which is equivalent to the others discussed, wing mounted stereo speakers which amplify game sounds (may be turned off if desired), enlarged rocker buttons for the A/B functions and a left-handed thumb stick for precise directional control. The modified unit can be folded compactly for transport and there is even a shoulder strap included for that purpose. On the positive side, the Handy Boy does not require a separate power source, connecting to the main power panel of the existing unit with a special cable. On the negative side, the Handy Boy cannot be used with alternate power sources, like rechargeable battery packs, which makes it an expensive alternative

Before opting to buy anything, first consider the playing habits of the members of the household who will use the products.

because it also shortens the life of conventional batteries significantly. Consider the Handy Boy a streamlined way to max out the unit in terms of performance, but make sure your pockets are deep enough to support it.

Which brings up the issue of alternative power sources. There are several methods, the most common one being conventional rechargeable units that plug into a standard outlet for several hours then offer an equivalent playing time before requiring recharge. Nintendo's original battery was constraining because the player remained tethered to a cable, which was better than a wall

socket but still not convenient. Naki solved this by introducing a 7-hour Action Pak, which clipped directly into the existing battery compartment. Although there was nothing wrong with the design, Naki found that players tended to wrap their fingers around the unit and press down on the battery for support while playing. This was reducing the rechargeable life of the batteries. Going back to the drawing board, Naki re-engineered the unit and now markets both 7- and 12-hour versions for a reasonable price. Nuby has entered into direct competition with Naki's 12-hour version by producing the Snap 'N' Power, which is equally capable and well designed. The deciding factor between the two units should be local pricing, as it differs by retailer volume.

The most innovative new entry into the power source wars, however, is undoubtedly the Naki Solar Pak, which won Innovation's 1993 Design & Engineering award at the recent Consumer Electronics Show. Coming in at a very reasonable suggested retail price of \$39.99, the Solar Pak requires 8-12 hours of direct

sunlight to charge and yields 7 hours of playing time from a full battery. The solar bank is well constructed, but users must be very careful not to allow the unit to get wet. Also, if the Pak will not be used for more than 4 weeks, it must be stored with a full charge to avoid damaging the delicate cells. If properly cared for, however, the Solar Pak will eliminate the need for batteries altogether.

Finally, there are 12 volt adapters designed specifically for vehicle use. The biggest drawback to these is the need to sling a cable from the

space for four Game Boy cartridges.

The Nuby Attache Case is a trim way to keep things organized, offering storage for the unit, two small accessories (like battery packs) and eight cartridges in a compartmentalized zip-down case. For the tricked out player, with attachments and lots of games, Nuby's Universal Hand Held System Bag will provide a lot of storage space, though it is not as compartmentalized as the Attache.

For stationary Game Boy enthusiasts, Naki has two new products to enhance player enjoyment. The first is a set of high fidelity portable speakers called Sound Jammers. These are stand up units for a desk top which can also work with other sources, such as video game consoles, CD players or home computers. They also have a new enclosure

unit called the mini-arcade, which will retail for \$39.95. The mini-arcade was originally designed by Saitek as the Better Boy, but is being produced and released by Naki. The unit is designed for table top as opposed to hand-held play, and offers a stow-away magnifier screen, compact amplified speakers, enlarged function buttons and a multi-directional thumb stick similar to the Handy Boy's. There is also a compartment for storage of headphones and two games.

Finally, for rugged outdoor players, STD is coming out with a new line of playable waterproof cases this fall that actually float, should careless players drop them overboard during an outing on the boat.

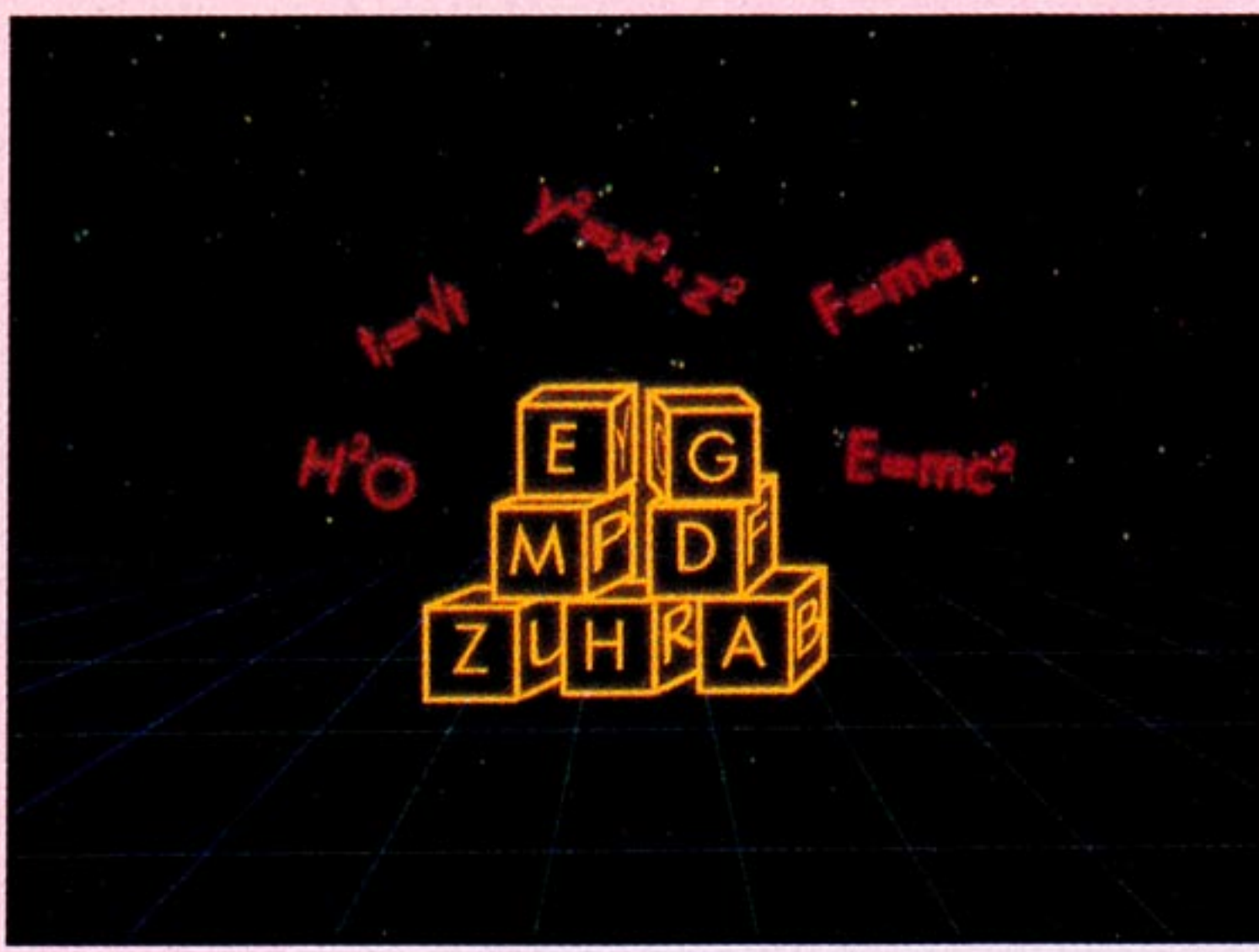
As you can see, the manufacturers realize that interaction with the Game Boy is a very individual thing, and have developed a line of products to meet those specific needs. While not every accessory is on the street, the industry is responding to user feedback and doing their best to serve this market.

— Ed Dille



front seat to the back. Both Nuby and Naki manufacture acceptable units, the major difference between the two being a 6-9 volt selector switch on the Naki model, to reflect their international marketing scheme.

The final issue for mobile Game Boy players is that of protecting the unit and accessories while in transit. Perhaps there are more alternatives in this area than any other. Players with unmodified units should consider one of Naki's Pro Pouches or the Nuby Play & Carry Case. The latter is particularly nice because the unit may be played without removing it from the case. Also, there is a flap that secures down to protect the view screen from scratches when not in use, a detachable shoulder strap, and storage



PLAYING IT SMART

A Trio For Learners

by Joyce Worley

There's a huge diversity in learning programs. The various approaches used to help young gamers grasp lessons give parents a chance to choose software to suit the child's individual needs.

Cuckoo Zoo (EA*Kids/MS-DOS and Macintosh) delivers the usual set of learning programs for the 3-6 age group, but dresses them up in fresh concepts. Letters, colors, and numbers lessons are cloaked in the delightful guise of a trip through a zoo. The basic trio of skills is further widened to promote problem solving abilities and creativity.

The zoo train visits five locations, the Savannah, the Rain Forest, the Farm,



Cuckoo Zoo helps children learn the names of many different animals.

Polar Park, and CuckooFest, each with cute animals and entertaining activities. Even the ride is fun; the young engineer speeds or slows the train and chooses the direction at intersections.

The games usually offer two or three skill levels, and there are several things to do in each area. The Who's Who game pictures animals, and teaches their names in written and spoken formats. The child can also click on the animals to hear their voices and see an animation. Animal Mix-Ups requires the gamer to sort out and reassemble the animals. The Savannah area has a paintbox for

children to color the animals. The Rain Forest teaches the alphabet. The Farm is a hide-and-see game with domestic animals, and Polar Park holds the counting game. CuckooFest is a music activity area. Each of the many edutainments is sparked with delightful cartoon-style graphics and a great soundtrack of child-pleasing effects and music that make the program fun to use.

Reader Rabbit 2 (The Learning Company/MS-DOS and Macintosh) is for the more advanced learner (ages 6-8). It also uses the train motif, carrying Reader Rabbit through four areas, each with its own game to promote reading skills, but the train ride is symbolized by an attractive, non-interactive animation.

The emphasis is definitely on first and second grade learning. The four games are well presented, with charming animations and sounds, but the lessons are serious. Word Mine pictures a miner's cart containing either the first or last part of a word, and five choices of prefixes and suffixes to assemble a word. Match Patch has a word under each carrot, for the child to find and match rhymes, opposites and homonyms. The Vowel Pond features Reader Rabbit, fishing for long or short vowel sounds. Alphabet Dance asks the child to arrange the animals alphabetically, then rewards them with a dance.

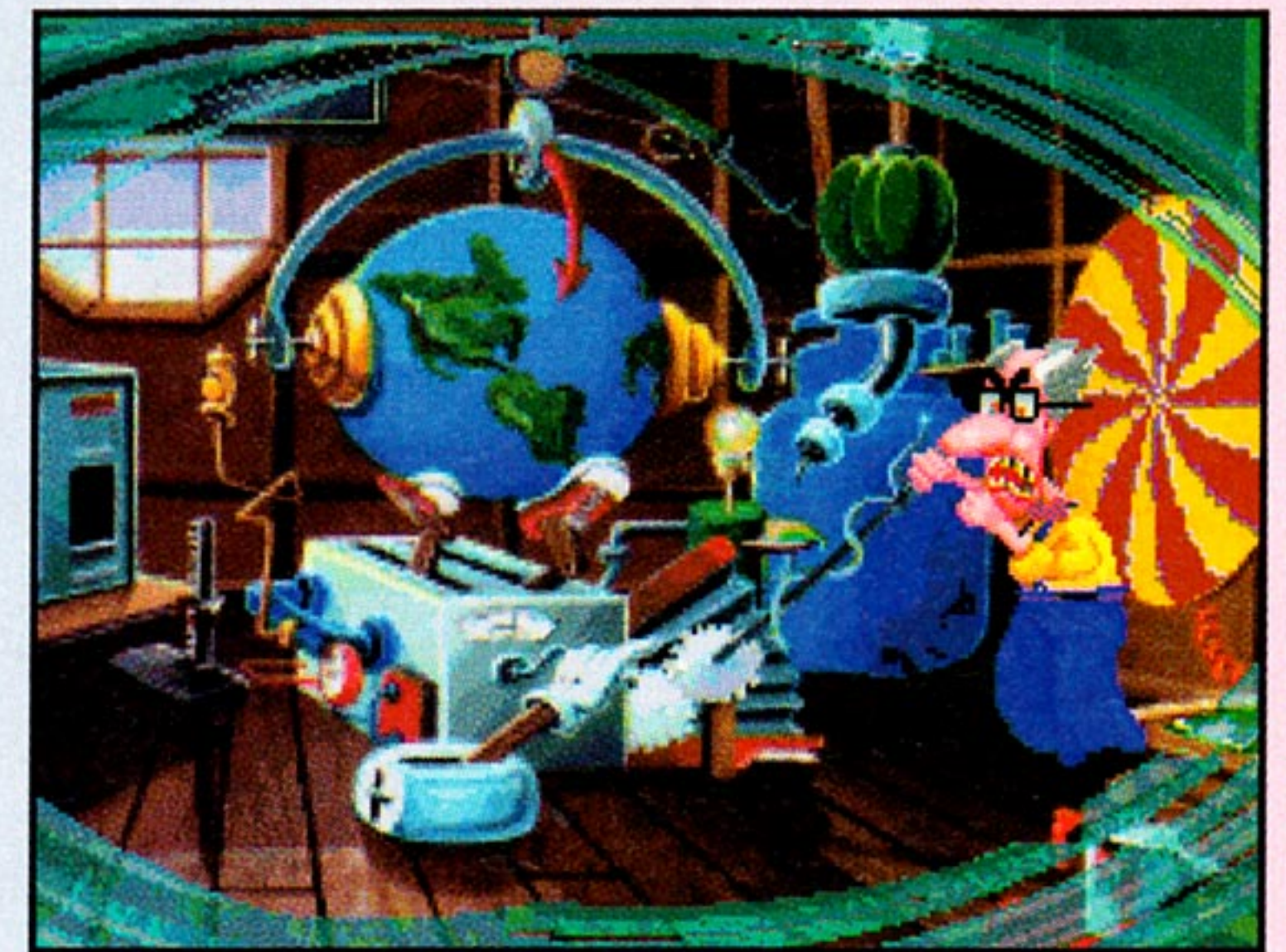
Drill and practice dominate the program. The graphics are pleasant, and the



Kids can go on an exciting train ride that will take them throughout the zoo!

short animations are amusing, but the focus is on learning, not gaming.

Pepper's Adventures in Time (Sierra/MS-DOS) teaches American history to students age 8 and over, in such a



Pepper's Adventures in Time will send students on a historical adventure.

delightful format even parents will want to play. It seems someone has scrambled the history of Colonial America, and the player must go back in time and sort things out. Much of the adventure is centered around Ben Franklin and his experiments, so the student has a chance to learn a lot about both.

As in most adventures, the hero must travel around, talk to people and examine things. Unlike most adventures, this one has quizzes at the end of each section to make sure the student got the message embedded in the fun. It's icon driven, with charming graphics, interesting puzzles, and lots of amusing dialog and animations to keep it moving.

Pepper's Adventures in Time definitely is one of the most outstanding educational games ever created. It delivers a lot of information for history students, yet manages to stay entertaining at the same time. Some of the historical situations are made quite amusing!

Software should fit the student, and these three programs each demonstrate how different approaches to learning can be used in various stages of education.



Gaming On-Line

appears, TSN subscribers will be able to actively compete in 12 interactive game shows as well as sports and other entertainment programs with NTN users, who are currently accessing via special units in hotels, bars and restaurants. Two of the game shows will definitely appeal to TSN's large user base of Trivia fanatics. **Showdown** and **Countdown** are Jeopardy type shows in which a panel of four contestants receive a question with five multiple choice answers. The faster one keys the correct response, the more points are awarded. If an incorrect response is input, up to three subsequent clues are displayed until the player gets it right. A single game takes about 20 minutes to play and each individual is ranked

late this year or early next year. The game will be a 3-D, first-person perspective action game involving player teams competing for survival in the 22nd century.

Farther down the road, MPG has high hopes for their on-line version of the popular role-playing environment, **2300 A.D.** Still about two years away by their estimate, if the game lives up to expectations, it will be unlike anything that has been seen up to this point.

Prodigy is eliminating its extra surcharge for 9600 baud users and is coming up with two new flexible payment options. Subscribers may elect for 2 hours of core and special features combined, at a rate of \$7.95/month, or unlimited use of core features and 2 hours of special for \$14.95/month.

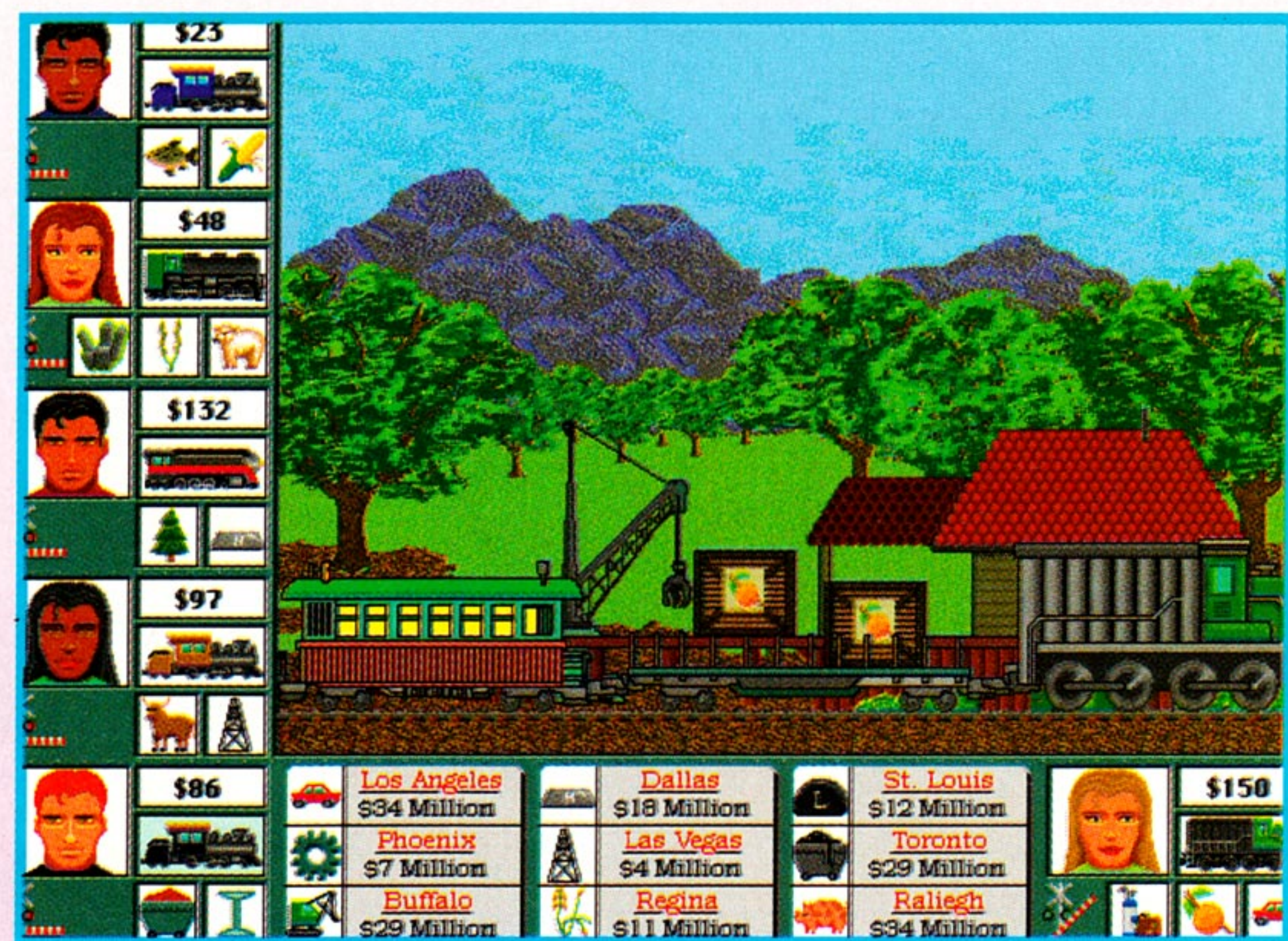
Boxing the Shadow

Welcome back to the world's only comprehensive coverage of the latest and hottest news in BBS on-line gaming. Our first item concerns a unique marketing move by The Sierra Network. Up until now, games have either been developed strictly for on-line play, or have been ported to on-line versions from successful box copies. TSN is reversing that process. Their on-line fantasy role playing game, **The Shadow of Yserbius**, has proven so popular that they will release a box version for retail sales this fall.

According to Sierra, the solitary version will include additional new art work, more texture in their dungeon settings, and a plethora of new sound effects and music. Additionally, a TSN starter kit will be included in every box such that a new generation of wizards and warriors can leap from their isolated adventuring to the fast-paced multi-player environment enjoyed by thousands nationwide.

One note of interest to existing subscribers of TSN, effective September 1st, the accounting branch of the network will be moving exclusively into the electronic age. Bills will no longer be prepared and mailed, all billing will be accomplished through credit card, debit card or electronic funds transfer. It's the wave of the future, so get used to it.

TSN is also in the news because of a recent alliance between themselves and NTN Communications. Beginning at roughly the same time this issue



according to their skill against other players in the same game and their overall performance in relation to all other games on-line.

The MPG net is back in the news. As mentioned previously, they are scheduling a series of **Empire Builder** tournaments on-line this fall with 14.4 bps modems for prizes. To test their modeling of the shorter scenarios needed for this type of event, they will be hosting a mini-tournament at GENCON in Wisconsin, August 19th through the 22nd. Also, Tantulus is developing a new multi-player on-line game for MPG to appear either

Because they have also streamlined their menus and introduced off-line message basing, this makes subscription more attractive than before. They are also the home of the longest running on-line golf simulation, based on Accolade's Jack Nicklaus product, and they will be featuring tournaments throughout the fall.

Finally, the Computer Sports Network has vastly expanded the options available to users of its on-line baseball league with the introduction of Micromanager. CSN has been running an on-line version of **APBA Baseball** for three years, but the system

was plagued by the requirement that players E-mail managerial instructions back and forth to 20 other participants. The new interface eliminates that annoyance, allows the computer to manage following the players instructions while on the road, and also offers an expanded statistics database that will appeal to the purists amongst you. CSN also differs from other fantasy baseball games in that it allows the player to keep the same team from year to year, allowing for more realistic evaluation of player skills and trade negotiations.

— Ed Dille

The Electronic Games Reader Poll

The editors of **Electronic Games** want to know about you, the reader, so that we can tailor the magazine to meet your particular needs. The monthly Reader Poll will let us know what aspects of the electronic gaming hobby are most interesting to you. We also want to know what you're playing, and to receive your vote for the most popular game programs each month.

Just circle your choices below, then send your poll sheet (or a photocopy if you prefer) to:
Electronic Games Reader Poll, 330 S. Decatur, Ste. 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.

Sex: Male Female

Age: Under 16 17-23 24-30 31-40 Over 40

Family Income: Under \$20,000 \$21,000-\$35,000 \$36,000-\$40,000 Over \$41,000

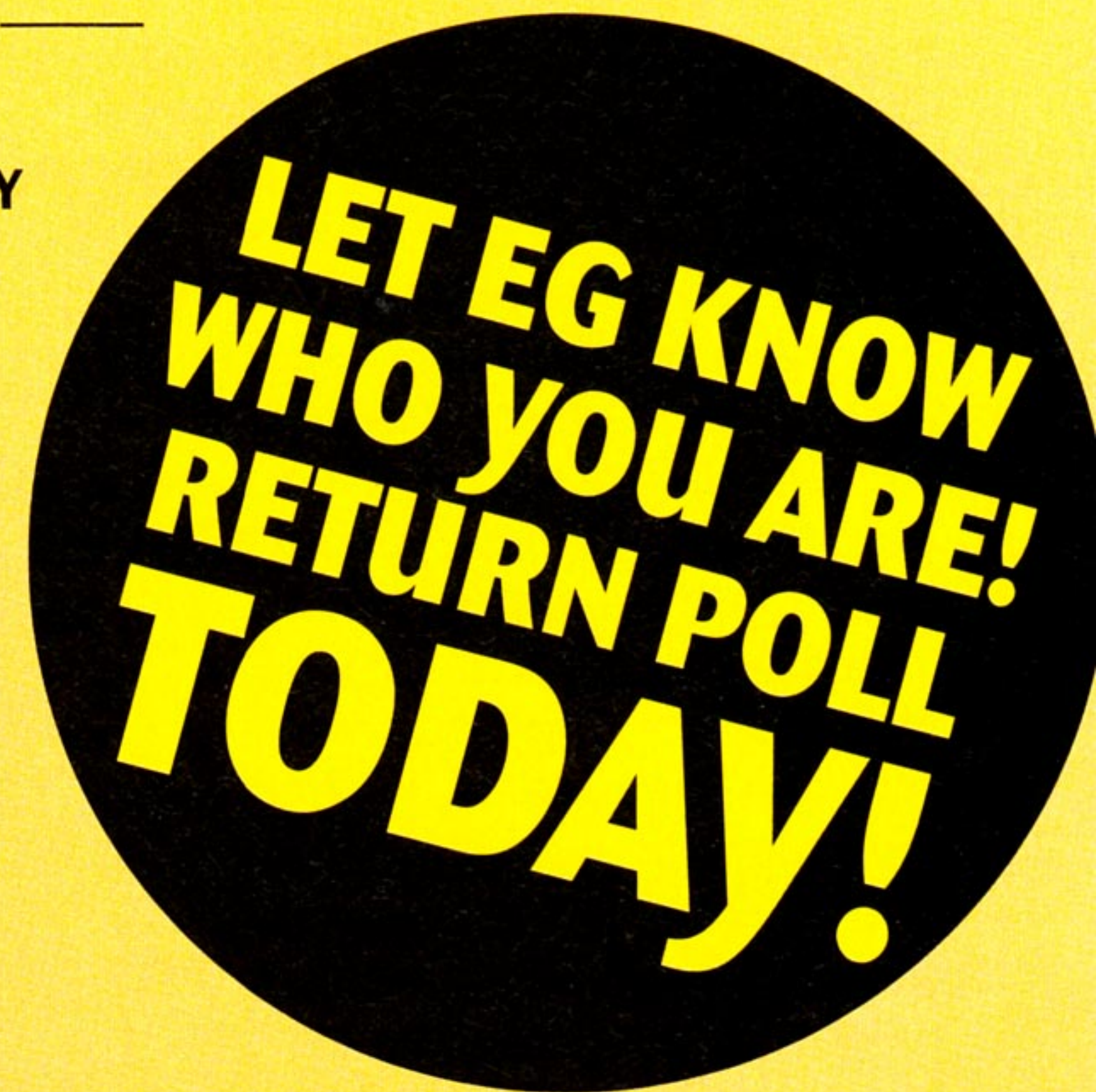
I regularly play: Video Games Computer Games Both

How many of the following did you buy (or receive from others) in the last 12 months:

Video Game Cartridges _____ Computer Games _____
 Portable Game Cartridges _____ Multimedia Games _____

Please check all hardware you own or plan to buy in the next 12 months:

	OWN	PLAN TO BUY
Super NES	_____	_____
Genesis	_____	_____
Sega CD	_____	_____
Neo*Geo	_____	_____
Duo	_____	_____
Game Boy	_____	_____
Game Gear	_____	_____
Lynx	_____	_____
Amiga	_____	_____
Macintosh	_____	_____
MS-DOS Computer	_____	_____
CD-ROM Drive	_____	_____
Other computer (write in name) _____	_____	_____



I will ___ will not ___ buy a Multimedia gaming system in the next 12 months.

Please rate the following game subjects from 1 (no interest to me) to 10 (very interesting to me):

Science Fiction _____	Martial Arts _____
Fantasy _____	Mystery _____
Arcade _____	Military _____
Sports _____	Flight _____
Other (please write in category) _____	

Please rate your interest in these types of electronic games from 1 (not interesting) to 10 (very interesting):

Video Games _____	Coin-Ops Games _____
Computer Games _____	MultiMedia Games _____

My favorite video games are:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

My favorite computer games are:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

My favorite multimedia game is:

1. _____

My favorite coin-op game is:

1. _____

Coming Attractions...

In the October Edition of Electronic Games

The Players' Guide to Science Fiction

Reach for the stars with this complete guide to science fiction video, computer, portable and multimedia entertainment. Our sci-fi experts preview a galaxy of new futuristic funware and dig behind the scenes for the in-depth stories. Among the highlights, an exclusive interview with Piers Anthony, whose *Xanth* series is coming to the gaming screen this winter!

Down Mean Streets with Darryl Gates

The designer of **Police Quest IV** — and the most controversial lawman in America — opens up about his life, his game, and his thoughts in an exclusive one-on-one interview.

The Eye of the Jaguar!

The announcement of Atari's 64-bit game console threw gaming for a loop. The October issue presents the first hands-on report. Find out about the hardware and, even more important, the cartridges coming our way for this revolutionary new game machine.

Re-fight World War II

On the 50th anniversary of the largest armed conflict in history, military affairs maven Ed Dille tours the interactive battlefields. So many new WW II games are scheduled for release that picking the good ones is like a midnight stroll through a minefield. **EG** will keep your wallet from becoming a casualty!

And Be Sure to Look For the Very Latest in High-End Gaming, Including:

- Power On!
- Feedback
- A Look to the East
- Insert Coin
- The Game Doctor
- Fandom Central
- Kunkel Report
- Test Lab
- Video Game Gallery
- Software Gallery
- CD Gallery
- Portable Playtime
- The Jury
- Playing It Smart
- Gaming On-Line
- Lore

and don't forget all the latest news and previews in **EG's Hotline!**

Look For All This and Much More At Newsstands September 23, 1993!

Bulls

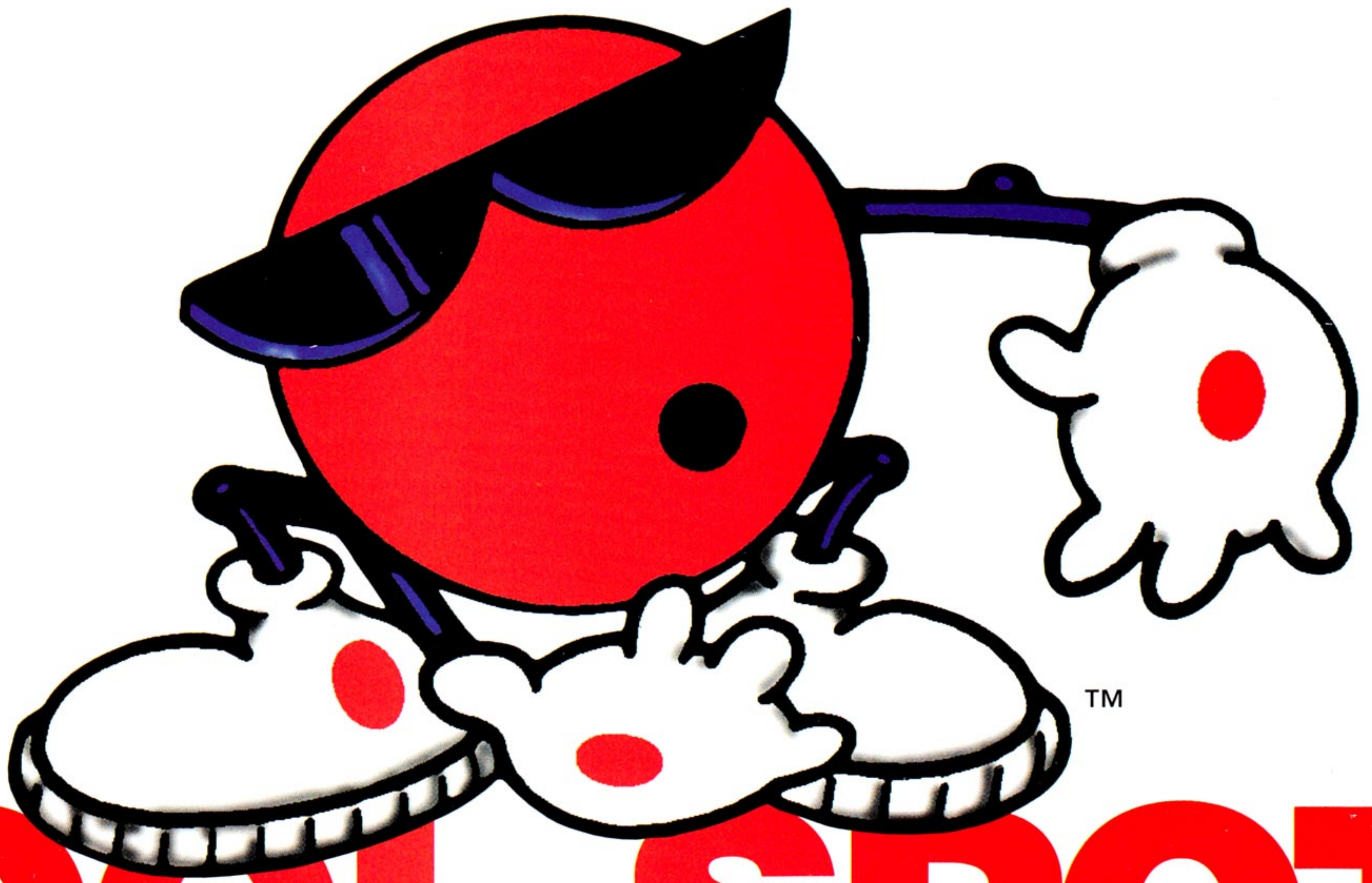
YOU'VE HIT IT!

-eye

This year's coolest, craziest, funnest, loudest
Sega™ Genesis™ smash COOL SPOT is now
available for the Super NES.®



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Nintendo of America, Inc.
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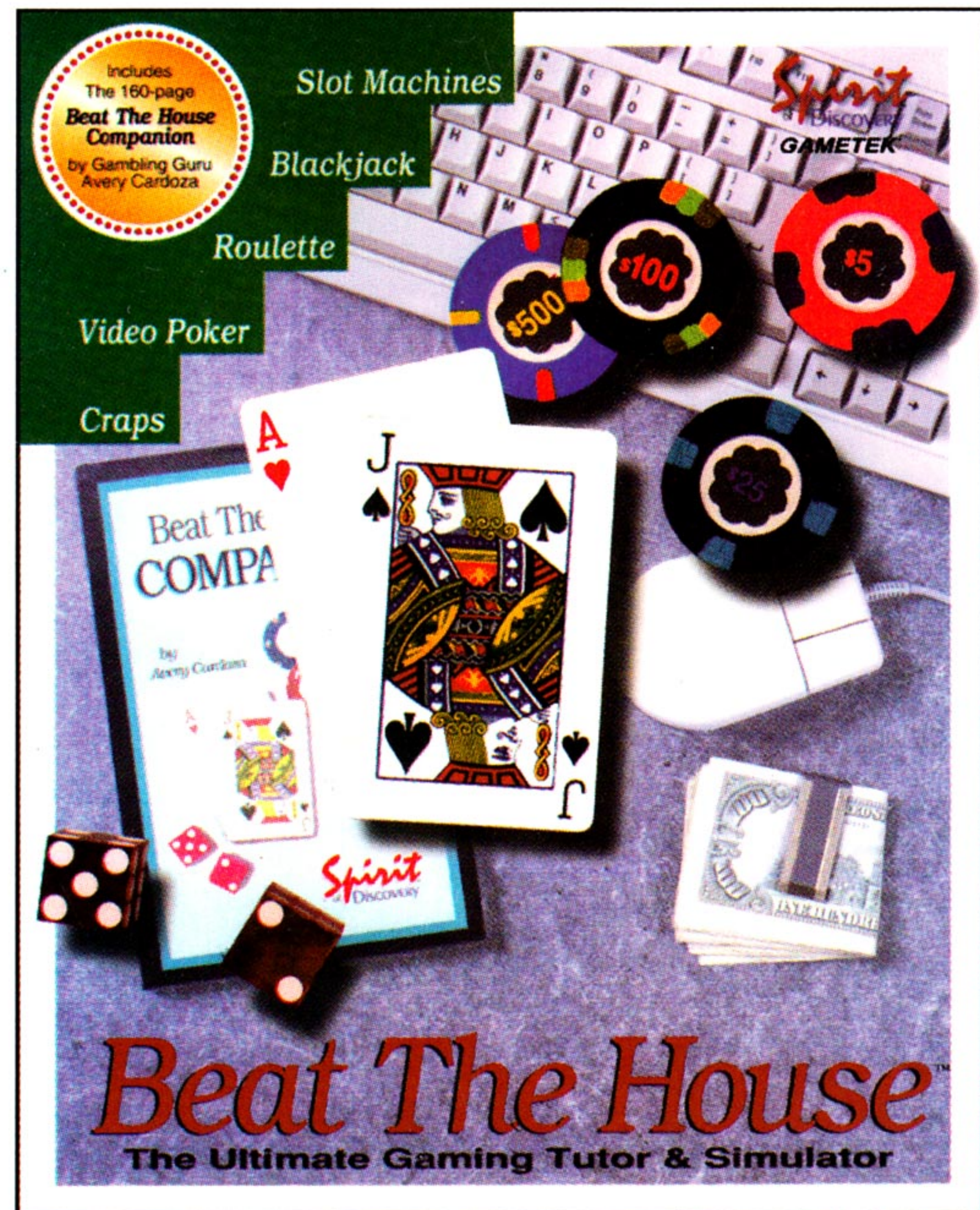


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