

Electronic Game Player

THE COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAME RESOURCE

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VOL. 1, NO. 2

MAY/JUNE 1988

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SEE PAGE 14

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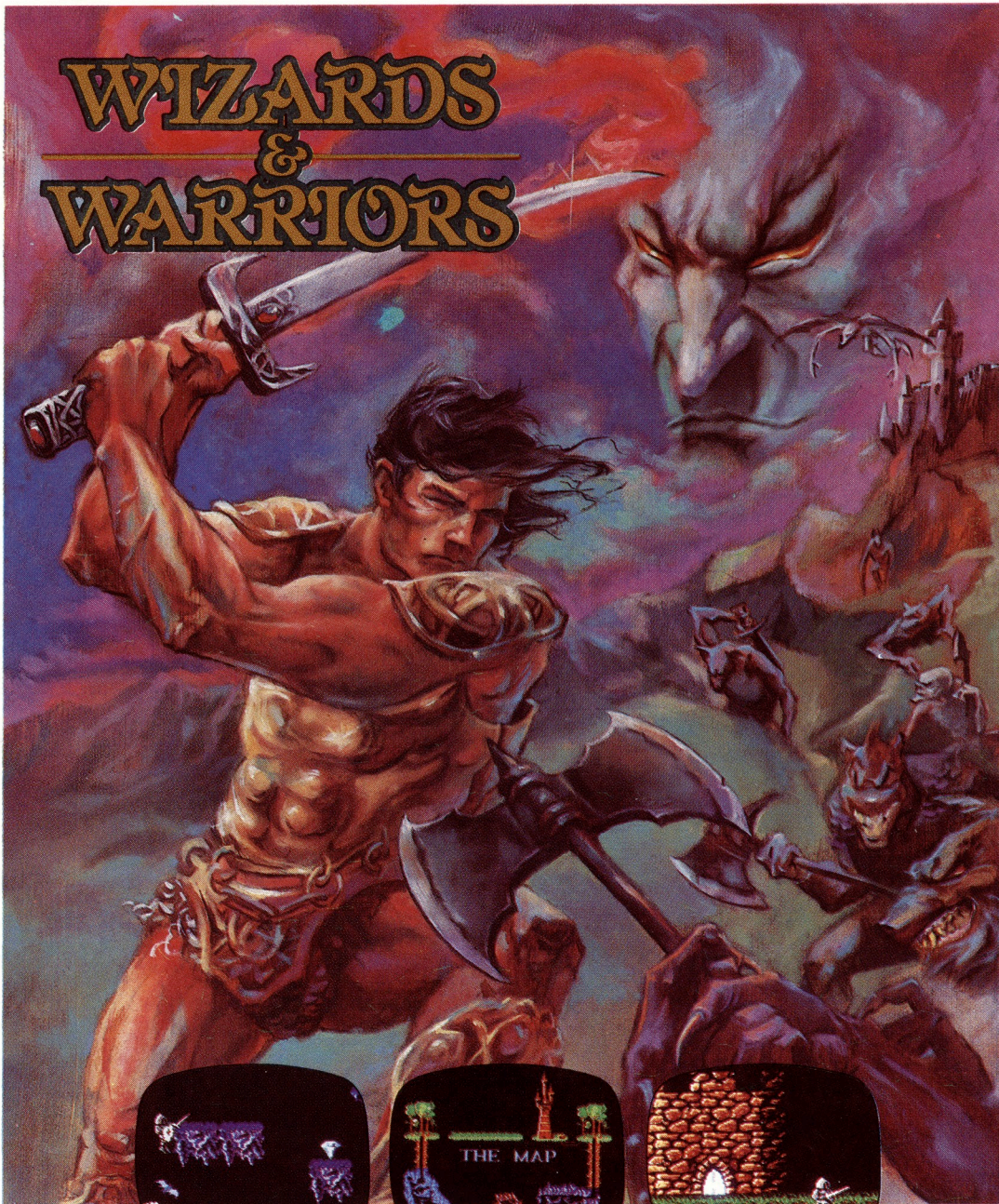
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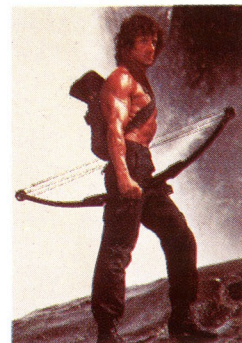
the Brightsword.

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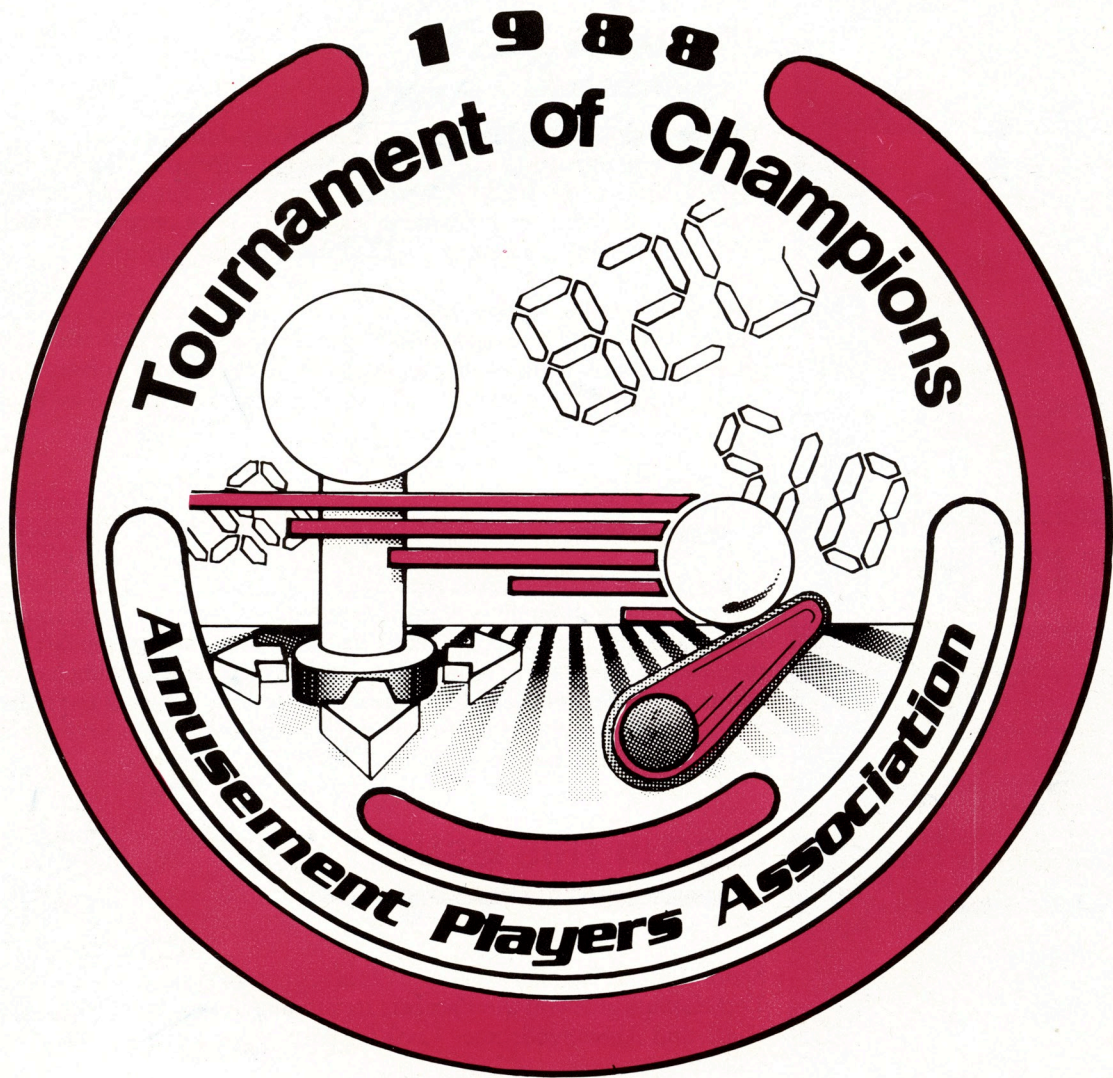
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Team**

Electronic Game Player

THE COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAME RESOURCE \$2.95 \$3.95 CANADA

Volume One, Number Two

May/June 1988

FEATURES

The Electronic Game Player Great Game Give-Away14

Here's your chance to win over fifty cartridges for your Nintendo Entertainment System absolutely FREE! One lucky winner will get a slew of titles, including games that aren't even available in stores yet! It's a once in a lifetime offer from THE Video Game Resource . . . Electronic Game Player!

Behind the Scenes at the CES17

Grab your V.I.P. pass and head for Las Vegas with Electronic Game Player for an advance look at all of the home games and computer software you'll be playing in the months to come. It's the industry's main event, and we'll take you there.

IN-FOCUS

Video Games Battle Back 23

With millions of game systems filtering into American living rooms and arcade receipts exceeding \$5,000,000,000, the video game hobby appears to be healthier than ever. Some say the wonderful world of electronic gaming has returned from the dead. Others contend that it never had left us. Find out the real story and get an insight on where the major companies plan to go from here in this special In-Focus report by Roger C. Sharpe.

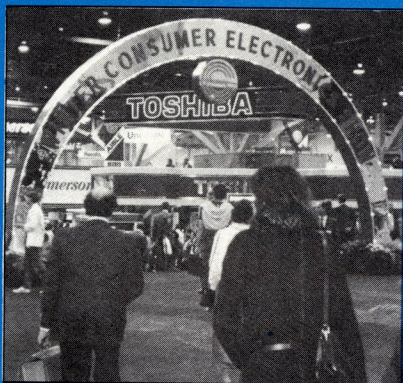
ALSO IN THIS ISSUE . . .

Score!35
Top champs give you their secrets to winning at Out Run, Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!, and Alien Syndrome. Look for plenty of helpful tips in this new expanded section.

The Home Front42
Get the complete scoop on over a dozen new releases for the Nintendo Entertainment System and the Sega Master System. Be sure to check out Ed Semrad's reviews of Victory Road and Zaxxon 3-D, as well as Wizards and Warriors and Freedom Force.

The U.S. National Video Game Team Endorses 44
A new column you'll find exclusively in Electronic Game Player! The U.S. National Video Game Team, the only internationally recognized group of professional game players, lend their special "Players Seal of Approval" to three of the hottest new carts! Read the team's endorsements of Double Dragon, Fighting Golf, and RBI Baseball in this regular feature that spotlights only the very best titles!

Logon51
Todd Rodgers, Jim Gilliam, and John Styles review Accolade's Test Drive and Card Sharks, Mindscape's Into the Eagle's Nest, Data East's Speed Buggy, Q*Bert, and TNK III.



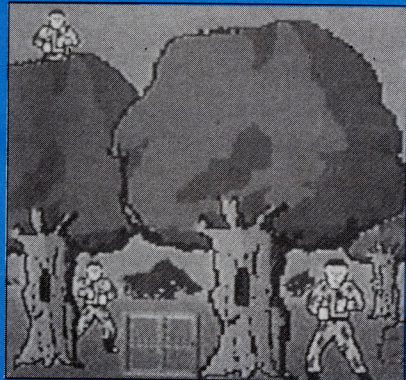
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Coming Soon...

NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

Available Now...

Tiger-Heli (Acclaim), Wizards and Warriors (Acclaim), Super Pitfall (Activision), Section Z (Capcom), Mega Man (Capcom), Gunsmoke (Capcom), Contra (Konami), Ikari Warriors II: Victory Road (SNK), Freedom Force (Sunsoft), Renegade (Taito)

Zinger Joystick (Beeshu), Jazz Joystick (Beeshu), Jammer Joystick (Beeshu), NES Advantage + Joystick (Nintendo), NES Max (Nintendo), 500 XJ Joystick (Epyx), Command Control Joystick (Wico), Super Controller (Bandai), Wing Commander (Data East)

March...

Dragon Power (Bandai), Bionic Commando (Capcom), 1943 (Capcom), Ultima (FCI), Dr. Chaos (FCI), Jeopardy (GameTek), Wheel of Fortune (GameTek), Jackal (Konami), Major League Baseball (LJN), T&C Surf Design (LJN), Fighting Golf (SNK), Xenophobe (Sunsoft), Gauntlet (Tengen), RBI Baseball (Tengen), Double Dragon (Tradewest), R.C. Racing (Nintendo), Ice Hockey (Nintendo)

April...

Rambo (Acclaim), Predator (Activision), Bases Loaded (Jaleco), City Connection (Jaleco), TNK III (SNK), Cycle Shooting (Taito)

The Ultimate Joystick (Beeshu)

May...

Hollywood Squares (GameTek), Price Is Right (GameTek), Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (Mindscape), Bad Street Brawler (Mindscape), Tecmo Baseball (Tecmo), Tecmo Bowl (Tecmo), Aighina's Prophecy (Vic Tokai Inc.), Chester Field (Vic Tokai Inc.), Terra Cresta (Vic Tokai Inc.),

Available Soon...

Iron Tank (SNK), Platoon (Sunsoft), Quarterback (Tradewest), Super Dodge Ball (Tradewest), Golgob (Vic Tokai Inc.), Super Mario Bros. II (Nintendo), The Return of Donkey Kong (Nintendo), Legendary Wings (Capcom), Vulgus (Capcom), Hydlide (FCI), Password (GameTek), Metal Gear (Ultra), Skate or Die (Ultra), Dragon Warrior (Nintendo), Zelda II: Adventures of Link (Nintendo)

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM

Available Soon...

After Burner, Alien Syndrome, Super Wonder Boy: Monster Land, Great Golf, Zaxxon 3-D, Maze Hunter 3-D, Space Harrier 3-D, Blade Eagle 3-D, Monopoly, Parlour Games, Global Defense, Aztec Adventure, Cube Zone, Alex Kidd-The Lost Stars, Ghost House, Zillion II: The Tri-Formation, Fantasy Zone The Maze, Penguin Land, Fantasy Zone II, Rescue Mission, Warriors' Quest, Fantasy Star

The Ultimate Joystick (Beeshu), Rapid Fire Unit

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May / June 1988

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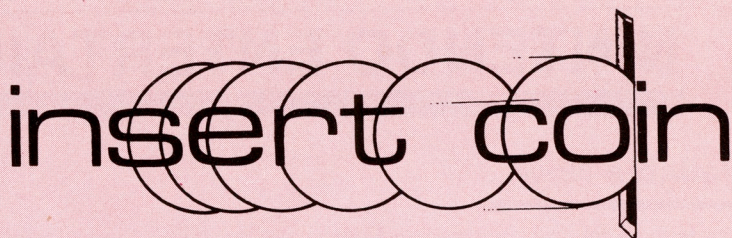
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Let the Good Times Roll!

I just returned from the 1988 Winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, the premier event for the electronics industry. Once again taking center stage at the show were video games. The Nintendo/Sega/INTV booths all but dominated the exhibition's West Hall showroom, and the appearance of even more third-party licensees seemed to create an even larger impact. At the 1987 Summer CES there were fewer than a dozen companies producing cartridges for the Nintendo Entertainment System. Right now there are twenty-three, with even more waiting to throw their games into the ring.

This is very good news indeed.

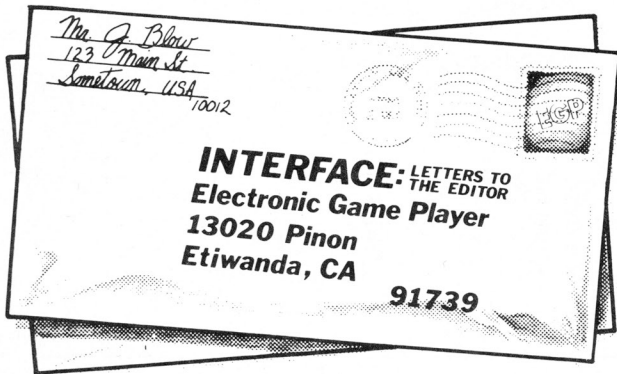
Not only does this renewed interest translate into more games and a wider selection of titles for you, it also shows great confidence in an industry that was all but dead just a few years ago. In the future, expect to see more of your favorite arcade games like After Burner from Sega and Xenophobe from Sunsoft coming home, in addition to an abundance of original titles. You can get the complete story on the CES in this issue of Electronic Game Player. The EGP staff spent five days in Las Vegas soaking up all of the new games and peripherals to bring you a comprehensive preview of what you'll be seeing on store shelves throughout the spring and summer. Believe me, these games are good; more color, action, sound, and even voice in original and entertaining formats! Don't miss this special feature beginning on page 17.

Are video games back from the dead? Or did they even die at all? Roger C. Sharpe, a noted gaming authority and trade writer, gives his assessments and offers a few opinions about the direction the gaming industry is heading. Enlightening reading that begins on page 23.

Plus you'll find all of our regular features including Behind the Screens, Our 'Cades, Player Pro-File, Score, and, for the first time ever, U.S. National Video Game Team endorsements of the best new Nintendo, Sega, Atari, and INTV carts! Just one more feature that proves Electronic Game Player brings you more!

Yep, no matter how you look at it, 1988 is going to be a great year!

Steve Harris
Senior Editor



You're Looking Great!

It's great to see another magazine devoted exclusively to home video games, computer games, and arcade games. I own twelve assorted systems and computers and more than three hundred games, including a coin-operated Ms. Pac-Man machine. I was an avid reader of the old video game mags, and was terribly disappointed when they all went out of business. Video games have always been my favorite hobby and I'm just glad to see someone reporting on all the new video games. Keep up the good work Electronic Game Player! You're looking great!

Steve Johnson
Salem, Mass.

(Thanks for the nice compliments Steve. Video games have always been number one in our book too!)

Just A Short Question

I was wanting to know if you could tell me when Xenophobe, Xevious, Marble Madness, Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, and 720 Degrees will be available for the Nintendo Entertainment System? Also, do you know of any other new joysticks for the Nintendo?

Michael Schwartz
Dallas, Texas

(You sure ask a lot for that 22 cent stamp, Michael! Anyway, here goes: expect to see Sunsoft's remarkable translation of Xenophobe on store shelves sometime in March or April, and Indiana Jones in the Temple of Doom from Mindscape possibly in May. Can't

help you on 720, although we've heard a word or two mentioned about those other two titles. For an up-to-date look at the NES-compatible sticks, turn the page.)

Winning Big!

How about sponsoring some contests in EGP? Players could send in their highest scores or fill out a postcard or something and you could give away a game cartridge to the winner.

Marty Broder
Keokuk, Iowa

(That's a good idea, Marty. In fact, if you turn to page 14 in this issue, you'll find Electronic Game Player's Great Game Give-Away! We're giving away over 50 titles on the Nintendo Entertainment System and all you have to do is turn the page. Good luck!)

Searching For A Cure

Help! I've got a terrible case of video game fever! I own both a Nintendo and Sega system, but I just can't get enough of them! A friend of mine gave me a copy of your first issue and it helped tremendously, but I don't know where to get the next one. Help me out, will you?

Roger Williams
Oakland Park, Minnesota

(Call a doctor! Call an ambulance! Call your local bookstore and they should have each new issue of Electronic Game Player around the end of every other month. If you want to be 100% sure that you'll get each power-packed edition of the magazine, simply turn to page 54 and become a subscriber.)

Got a question or a comment? Complaint or praise? Let us know about it by writing to INTERFACE: Letters to the Editor, 13020 Pinon, Etiwanda, CA 91739. See you next time.

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press start

In the last issue of EGP we tested a number of outstanding joysticks from Nintendo, Beeshu, Wico, and Epyx. Now a second generation of controls and peripherals are on the horizon that utilize slow-motion more efficiently, provide smoother game play, and possess innovative new designs.

Leading the pack is the Ultimate Superstick from joystick giant, Beeshu. The Ultimate lives up to its name with the largest size, the best micro-switch control, and dual sets of 'A' and 'B' buttons on either side of the stick to insure comfortable play for right and left-handed players. Two high-quality rapid-fire adjusters and a slow-motion feature top off this tour-de-force which also comes equipped with LED indicators and a cord that's long enough to let you play from almost anywhere in the room!

QUALITY CONTROL

The Beeshu Ultimate has everything you'd ever want in a joystick, including all of the aforementioned goodies and precise handling that made it possible for our game testers to finish a number of difficult titles (like Star Force). Definitely a good sign that it's a great stick!

Before you make up your mind, however, Data East (yes, that's Data East) has a beauty of a stick that's packed with exceptional control. The Wing Commander joystick isn't as daring as the Ultimate, but it does have a nice design that compliments certain types of game play.

From Nintendo comes the NES Max, the joystick that isn't. The NES Max is really nothing more than a glorified pad controller, made in-

to the shape of a crescent moon to conform to the hand and using a floating thumb guide to mimic the feel of a small track ball. The effect works only marginally, but if you want an advanced pad with "Turbo fire", you might want to check this one out.

Last but certainly not least, comes the Ergo stick from Wico. They say it's ergonomically engineered, fulfilling the goal of optimizing the player's hand-eye coordination while minimizing both physical and psychological fatigue.

The Ergo stick is literally formed around the human hand. It has a soft, skin-like material covering the exterior to absorb perspiration and strategically places the fire button next to the index finger. It's not a joystick in a

conventional sense, but it is well designed.

Regardless of what joystick you choose, you can count on more exciting developments from this important area of gaming in the months to come. Just think, you may never have an inadequate joystick again!

For further information contact:

Beeshu, Inc.
101 Wilton Avenue
Middlesex, NJ 08846

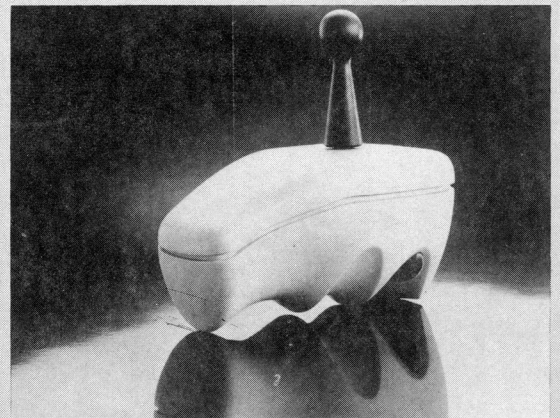
Data East
470 Needles Drive
San Jose, CA 95122

Nintendo of America
P.O. Box 957
Redmond, WA 98052

Wico
6400 West Gross Point Rd.
Niles, Illinois 60641



The NES Max



WICO's Ergo Stick

COMIN' AT YA

Sega has always represented the leading edge in home video games, with the first four meg game cartridges and digital sound. Now Sega is selling their system with yet another innovative enhancement that's guaranteed to change the way we play games.

Using the specially developed Sega Scope glasses with carts like Missile Defense 3-D, you can now be a part of the action as rockets and laser blasts sizzle from the screen and into your living room. Unlike some of the three-dimensional carts

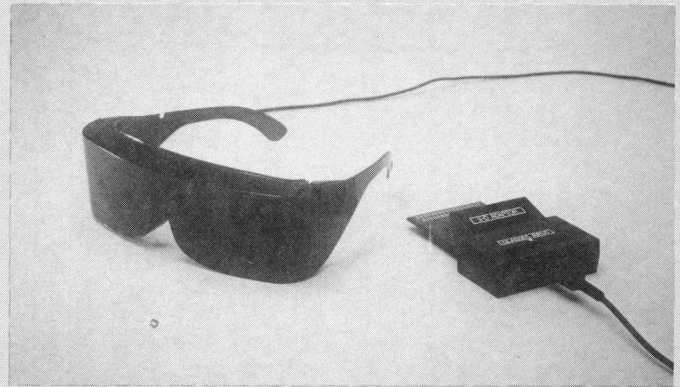
available for the NES, the Sega Scope carts and glasses produce highly detailed and colorful images that are highlighted through the 3-D effect rather than distorted by it. Game screens make full use of the incredible effects by generating surroundings that stretch to infinity and beyond the borders of your television screen!

Future releases into this line of three-dimensional games include 3-D versions of many of the most popular arcade classics of all time, including Zaxxon and Space

Harrier. Sega has also promised no less than four other carts that will all use the same visual embellishments to draw you into the battles and keep you dodging and ducking!

For more information contact:

Sega of America
573 Forbes Blvd.
S. San Francisco, CA
94080



Sega Scope Glasses

SOUND OFF!

As one of the first six companies to produce games for the Nintendo Famicom System in Japan, Jaleco has an extensive assortment of games and technical expertise to bring to Nintendo Entertainment System owners here in the States. One of their first releases, Bases Loaded, takes advantage of several innovations that were pioneered by Jaleco in Japan.

The most noticeable of these features is the incredibly lifelike voice reproduction that has been programmed into each cart. Now you can hear a crisp play-by-play as the umpire actually calls the strikes and balls, the fouls and home runs, the hits and outs! It's not raspy or hard to understand either. Each word is

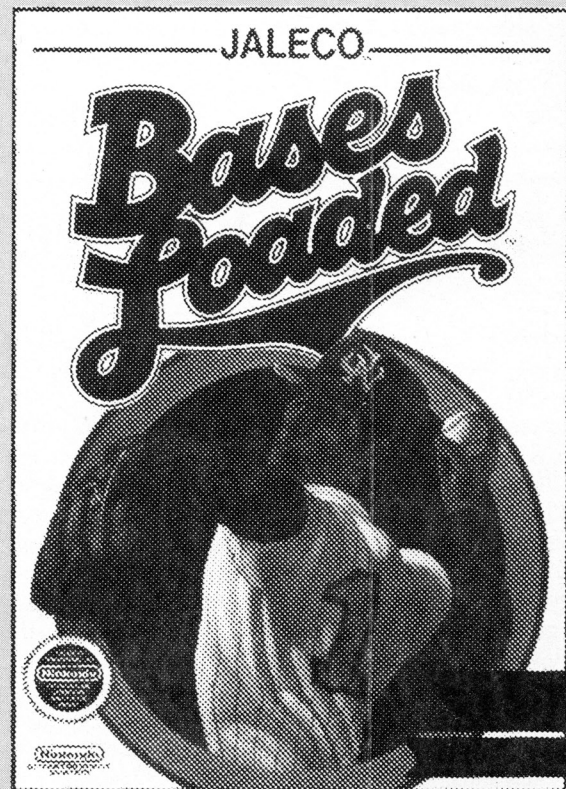
smoothly pronounced and brought almost to life with great emphasis.

Bases Loaded contains over 2.5 megs of memory, more than any other cartridge currently on the market. Almost a full meg of this memory is devoted to the music, voice, and other sound effects in the game, creating great atmosphere within the elaborate play.

So step up to the plate for all the sights and sounds of the ball park. Thanks to the technical wizards at Jaleco, playing games on your NES may never be the same.

For more information contact:

Jaleco USA, Inc.
5617 West Howard Street
Niles, Illinois 60648



Player's Seal of Approval



The U.S. National Video Game Team has endorsed this product in recognition of its superior play value.

PLAYER'S SEAL OF APPROVAL

you supposed to tell if Double Dragon plays as good at home as it does in the arcade? By the photos on the box?

Now there is a way to tell the difference between a good game and a great one.

The U.S. National Video Game Team, an organization of the country's top ranking vidiots, has instituted a special program to let you know exactly what you're getting for your money. Working in conjunction with the game and peripheral manufacturers, the team is honoring top quality products with their special "Player's Seal of Approval". The seal is only being awarded to those games, joysticks, and other items that possess the superior design and play value

that the U.S. National Video Game Team knows players like themselves demand.

The first products to earn the team's approval are the Beeshu line of joysticks, RBI Baseball from Tengen, Fighting Golf from SNK, and yes, Double Dragon from Tradewest. Expect to see more in the months to come.

So rest assured the next time you're at the store to buy something for your game system. Look for the U.S. National Video Game Team's "Player's Seal of Approval" and you'll get a guarantee of over 100 hours of play testing and evaluation from gamers who know what other gamers want. Any way you look at it, you can't go wrong!

Buying video games has always been risky at best. Through all of the fancy packaging and colorful il-

lustrations, there's no way for you to know exactly what you're getting until you take it out of the box. How are

MAY I BUY A VOWEL?

The answer is: "The second-highest rated television game show."

The question is: "What is Jeopardy!"

In an effort to broaden the base of the Nintendo Entertainment System, an exciting new company, GameTek, recently unveiled a number of new games based on popular television game shows like Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy, The Price is Right, and Hollywood Squares.

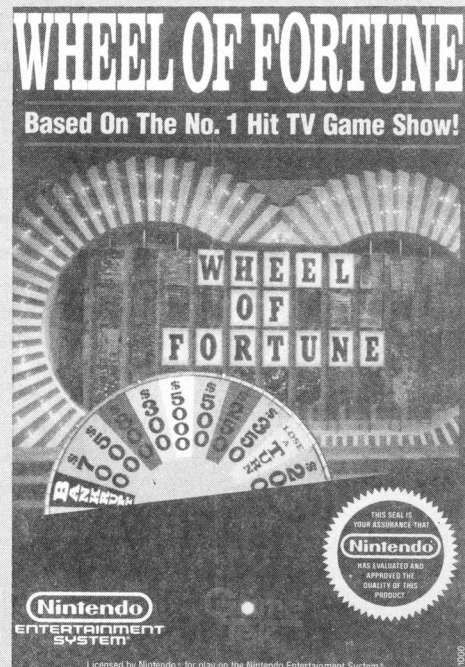
The games are incredibly addictive, providing players and fans of the game shows with that once in a lifetime chance to show everyone

that they really did know the answer before the other contestants.

Both Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy follow every step of the real programs, with the actual theme music, animated on-screen characters, and literally thousands of questions and puzzles offering hours of fun-filled challenges!

For more information contact:

GameTek
150 South Pine Island RD.
Suite 505
Plantation, FL 33324



KNOW THE SCORE!

The Amusement Players Association, the international organization of video game and pinball players, is offering a special twenty-page encyclopedia of games and the game scores of its members.

The high scores have been printed in an annual edition of the associations' **Top Score** publication. **Top Score** keeps members abreast of all the latest APA information and contests, and ranks the highest game scores in the world through the APA International Scoreboard; a clearinghouse for video game and pinball high scores.

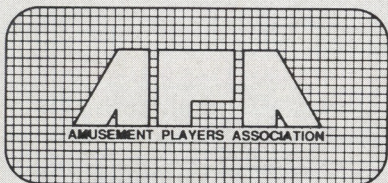
The high score special also contains a list of the top arcade video and pinball games for 1986, an interview with Donn Nauert, the 1986 International Player-of-the-Year, and an official verification form so that you can register your highest totals.

For your copy of the **Top Score** high score issue, send \$5.00 (that includes postage and handling) to:

APA
P.O. Box 1558
Torrance, CA 90505

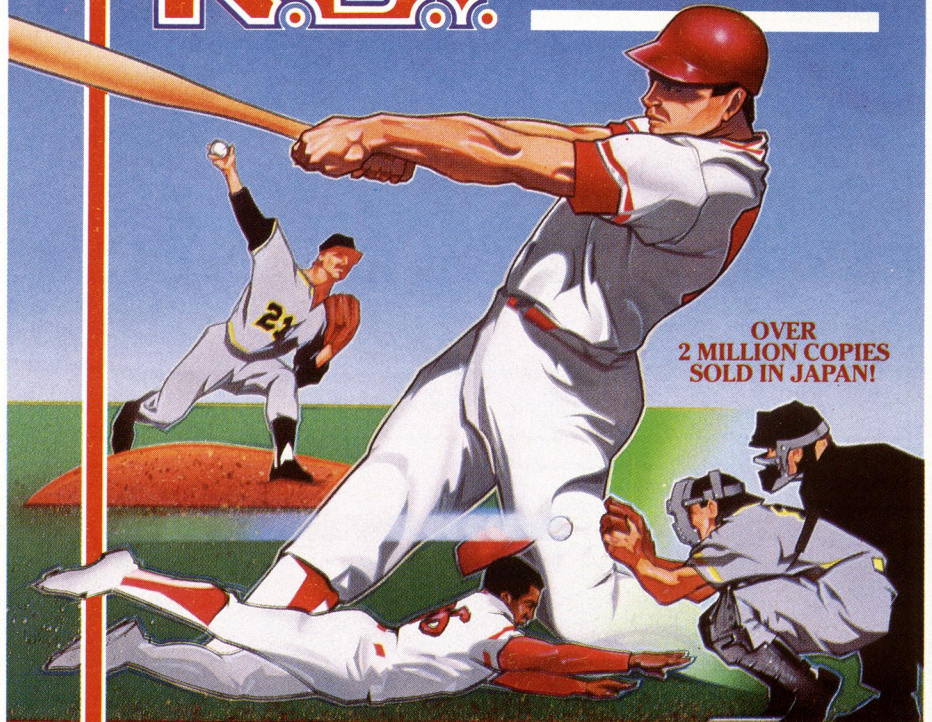
You may also receive annual membership to the APA by sending \$5.00 to the same address.

May your pockets be filled with quarters and your scores always the tops.



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Compete against the computer in a nine-game season. Or challenge a friend to a best-of-seven series.

It's time to stop playing with no-names and step up to the plate with real superstars in R.B.I. Baseball!



TV-like split screens show you all the action and vital player statistics.



TENGEN

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FREE NEWSLETTERS

Game players are thirsty for information about the latest titles and new products. That's the reason Electronic Game Player was born. But unknown to many, there are other good sources of gaming news available absolutely free!

These publications aren't quite the same as EGP, but

they do give you some sneak peeks at upcoming carts, reveal hidden cheats, and sometimes even sponsor contests for T-Shirts and games! They're published for the game companies themselves, allowing Nintendo, Sega, and certain third-party sources to highlight their games in an at-

tractive and interactive manner.

The Nintendo Fun Club newsletter is definitely the biggest and best of all the quarterly publications. It's yours free if you purchase one of their Entertainment Systems and send in the warranty card, otherwise it will cost you a nominal amount. It's loaded with game previews and puzzles, as well as other fun features.

The Sega Challenge newsletter is also packed with hot insights into the latest Sega games. Each issue has special tricks, a high score table, and other

fantastic tidbits. You can even purchase your Sega carts and cards straight from Team Sega for added savings!

Although both newsletters are slightly biased, they are great fun to read and provide plenty of gaming-related activities. Think of them as tasty appetizers to your favorite computer and video game resource!

For free copies contact:

Nintendo Fun Club
P.O. Box 957
Redmond, WA 98052

Sega Challenge Newsletter
New Members
573 Forbes Blvd.
S. San Francisco, CA
94080



FREE BUTTONS GENERATE AWARENESS

Electronics Boutique and Games 'n' Gadgets: the home computer stores, have joined the fight against drinking and driving.

Launching their battle during the last holiday season, buttons stating "I AM THE DESIGNATED DRIVER" were distributed to customers free of charge at any of the 90 Electronics Boutique and Games 'n' Gadgets stores nationwide.

"We want to remind our customers that they can have fun and still be responsible," explained Joseph J. Firestone, the chain's president. "These buttons are designed to reinforce the idea that one person in the car, the designated driver, should always remain sober. If just one of the 50,000 but-

tons we distributed helped prevent one tragedy, it will surely be worth it."

Drinking and driving related accidents are a national problem that take the lives of over 100 people each day and cause close to three quarters of a million serious injuries annually. Electronics Boutique and Games 'n' Gadgets are striving to help reduce these losses all year round. A strong message that will hopefully be heeded and followed by others.

As we reported in the last issue of Electronic Game Player, several chains of amusement centers are sponsoring anti-drinking campaigns to create an added awareness among their clientel. Bally's Aladdin's Castle, Inc. is another



nationwide group that is working closely with local and national chapters of both MADD (Mothers

Against Drunk Driving) and SADD (Students Against Drunk Driving) to educate kids while they play games.

Walk through a toy store in Japan and you'll find the usual selection of trains and baseballs, but you'll also find model kits of spacecraft from popular video games as well as posters and other collectibles bearing the likenesses of characters from Xevious, R-Type, and Out Run.

Video games are big business in Japan, in many ways they're much like motion pictures over here in the states. Believe it or not, you can even purchase the musical scores to games such as After Burner, Gradius, and Victory Road (inset). The Japanese are so fanatical about game music in fact, that you can purchase compiled volumes from individual companies like Namco's Video Game Grafitti and Konami Game

THE PAC-MAN SONATA

Music volumes One, Two, or Three!

Most of the music is available in multiple formats, so you can listen to the "Return in Triumph" score from R-Type on your record player, in your cassette deck, or even if you have a Compact Disc player. It runs from anywhere between 1,000 and 3,200 yen (about \$10.00) and plays for about an hour.

It remains to be seen whether or not video game music ever becomes popular enough to reach these shores. But just imagine the dances if it did! We'd all be doing the Rygar shuffle!



MASTER MONTY



For years the Ritam Corporation in bustling Fairfield, Iowa has been producing a line of computer and stand-alone games under the Monty label. Monty has learned how to play a variety of board games over the years, including a mean game of monopoly. Now Monty has set his sights on another popular multi-player board game--Scrabble.

Monty Plays Scrabble is a portable computer opponent for the classic Scrabble brand crossword game. The self-contained unit took over three years to develop by the Ritam Corp., and boasts a number of user-friendly options. Monty assigns tiles, keeps score, and

can play with up to three players simultaneously at four different skill levels. Monty will even challenge word configurations and offer advice to opponents when asked to.

Additional word modules are available, as well as advanced versions of the basic set.

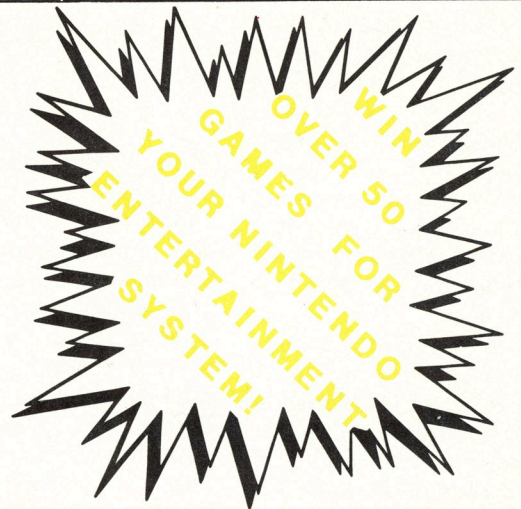
Remember, just like a real person, Monty doesn't always win!

For more information contact:

Ritam Corporation
P.O. Box 921
Fairfield, Iowa 52556

THE ELECTRONIC GAME PLAYER

GREAT GAME GIVEAWAY!



Here's your chance to win an entire library of over fifty great new games for your Nintendo Entertainment System! Hot carts like Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!, Freedom Force, Victory Road, and many more! We're even including some fantastic titles that aren't yet available in stores!

Here's all you do for your chance to win:

1. Print your name, address, city, state, zip and phone number on a post card and mail it to: Electronic Game Player's Great Game Give-Away, 13020 Pinon, Etiwanda, CA 91739.
2. On the same postcard, print the name of your favorite Nintendo Entertainment System game cartridge.
3. Cross your fingers and hope that you win!

We'll randomly select one card and that lucky person will be the recipient of a Nintendo Entertainment System library that will make him or her the envy of the neighborhood! But act today! The deadline for entries is June 30, 1988!

Rules: All entries must be received by June 30, 1988. Sorjana Enterprises or the staff of Electronic Game Player magazine assume no responsibility for postal service mistakes, sunspots, nuclear explosions, or other events which could prevent or delay your submission from reaching our offices. The selection of the games to be awarded can be located around the border of this page but is not limited to same. The winner will be chosen at random. The decision of the judges and the staff of Electronic Game Player magazine is final.

AN EXCLUSIVE CONTEST FROM ELECTRONIC GAME PLAYER MAGAZINE!!!

...It's official! R.O.B., the old dust collector, er, we mean the Robotic Operating Buddy, has been discontinued! It's a terribly sad development from Nintendo, and all the players who used R.O.B. on a regular basis are in protest (is there anybody out there?). But there is a sunny side to all of this! Nintendo's new packaging comes complete with a fantastic full-color game player's book with plenty of game tips and reviews that you will definitely refer to more than R.O.B.! Sorry Robby, you lose...There are plenty of joysticks available for the Nintendo and Sega systems, but radio-control sticks are on the way! I've gotten it from good sources that several companies are planning wireless peripherals for later in the year. We'll keep you posted...Look for Flicky and Opa-Opa hidden on the third level of Alien Syndrome...The Nintendo Entertainment System games you play today were Nintendo Famicom games in Japan years ago. A little bit of reprogramming and some changes in spelling and voila! You've got an NES game pak!...There's a hidden game packed into every Sega system called Snail! Simply push the directional pad up and press both buttons while no cartridge or card is in place and the game will begin. The first ten people to write and tell me how many levels are in the game and what it does when you reach the ending will get their names printed in the next issue...Sega is following Nintendo's lead and will be releasing two games that boast battery memory later in the year. They're called Warriors' Quest and Fantasy Star...Tengen in pronounced Ten-Gan...At the end of Star Force you get a special preview of a new Tecmo game called Super Star Force. I've already seen it and it's quite a sight...

...More and more sports personalities are lending their names and likenesses to consumer and arcade video games. Mike Tyson was duplicated in a very lifelike manner (I still can't beat him!) and now John Elway has agreed to endorse Leland's arcade and Tradewest's consumer version of Quarterback (look at page 32). Don't expect this trend to stop...Vince and Paul, the fighting duo from SNK's fantastic Ikari Warriors and its sequel Victory Road are really Paul Jacobs and Vince Gabriel, the President and General Manager of SNK! When they're not battling enemy forces, these super-heros are selling and shipping games to arcades and stores around the country...Scott Carpenter, one of the original seven Mercury Astronauts, has become the spokesman for the Sega Master System. Expect to see commercials and other promotions featuring Scott in the months to come...Video games are going to the movies! Predator, the action-packed movie that placed Arnold Schwarzenegger against an alien of superior stature and fighting power, and Platoon, the academy award-winning motion picture that traced the adventures of a platoon in Vietnam, are both going to be released as Nintendo Entertainment System games later this year. Haven't played either of them yet, but from what I've heard they're both outstanding...Speaking of video game versions of movies, what ever happened to The Last Starfighter? This film about a star pilot who is recruited via his video game skills was supposed to be first an arcade game, then a home game. The posters for the movie even said Atari would be making it! Couldn't get an answer from them, though, so it looks like this one gets filed into the unknown...



Arnie is bold and bad in Activision's Predator

...Did you know that the video games you play in the arcade may not all be alike? Take 1942 for instance. If you play the Williams Electronics version to its conclusion, you'll get a humorous ending. But if you play the Romstar version, which looks and moves like the Williams game in most respects, and reach the final stage, you'll be treated to a 10,000,000 point award! Just goes to show that you should be selective in who you fight...More than 95% of the coin-op games in Japan are of the sit-down and cocktail table variety...Get ready! There's a new Eugene Jarvis video game on the way! The grand wizard of video game design, Dr. J is responsible for some of the greatest classics the hobby has ever known, including Defender, Stargate, and Robotron. Lately Eugene has been working with Steve Ritchie on pinball machines, but knowing that he's back in the video game world is the best news I've had all year!...Look for Mr. T on Comet pinball...Grab the arm of your chair and hold on to this magazine tight! 1988 is going to usher in a new era of home video games, some great arcade novelties, and...the new Charlie's Angels! Where's the smart bomb when you need it?...Until next time...

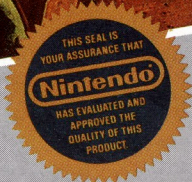
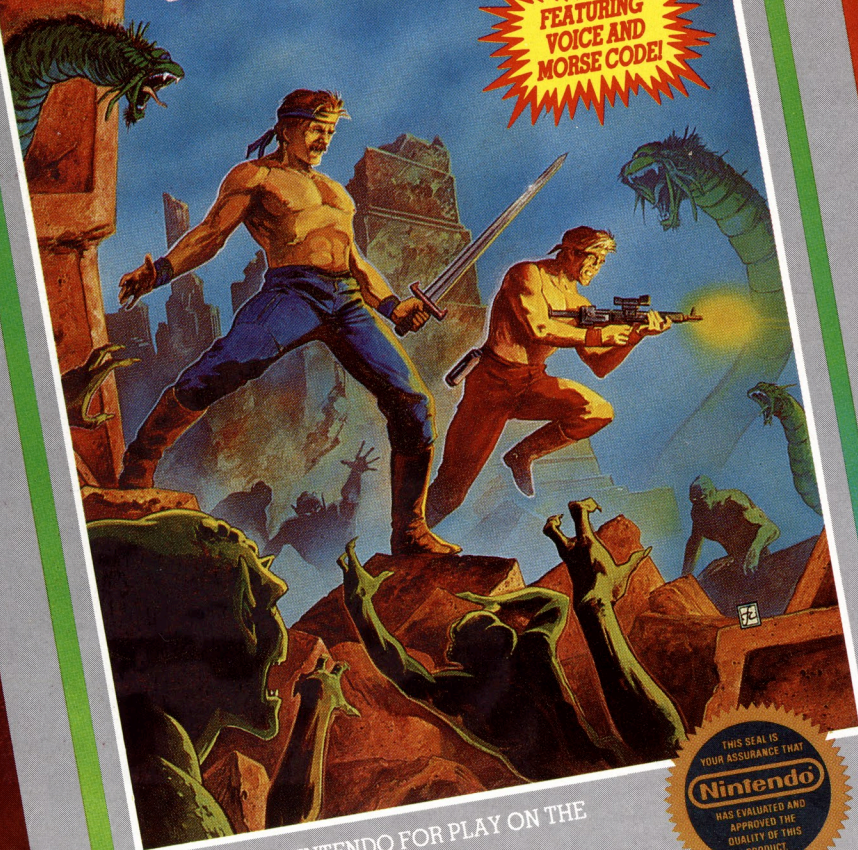
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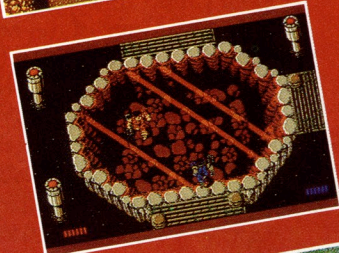
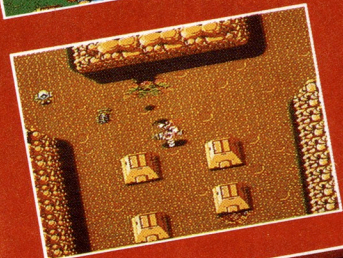
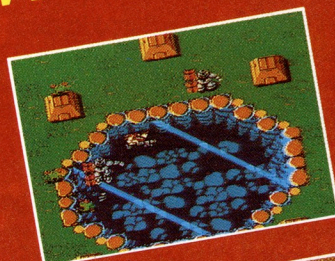
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SNK

**SPOTLIGHT-
ING THE
NEW TRENDS
AND
EXCITING
PRODUCTS
AT THE 1988
WINTER
CONSUMER
ELECTRONICS
SHOW IN
LAS VEGAS ...**



"In this world nothing is certain but death and taxes." Well, almost nothing.

There does remain a constant in the amusement industry - the attraction of the Consumer Electronics Show. Held with flawless timing every summer and winter, the CES is an interesting version of the open market, featuring the latest electronic gadgets and computerized contraptions. You won't find any buying and selling at the CES, however, so for the length of the four day show I remained content with playing the latest home games on display during the day, and sitting in on a few hands of blackjack at night. And my editor thinks I don't like my work!

Looking Back

The seeds of the CES were originally sown to showcase the latest triumphs in the audio/visual field, providing a forum for manufacturers to highlight their newest achievements. As the public's appetite for the high-tech grew, however, so did the CES.

As these markets expanded, the CES became a reflection of the consumer public. Both the Las Vegas (winter) and Chicago (summer) exhibitions have become the breeding grounds for the introduction of all electronic products that display even the slightest potential appeal to domestic buyers. While part of this result can be attributed to our fascination with the unusual, it should not be forgotten that certain products deemed too up-market for the general public have created multi-billion dollar industries practically overnight.

A perfect example of the last statement can be found by journeying back to the late 1970's. Jimmy Carter was our President, Three-Mile Island nearly burned a hole in the planet, and a small company with a strange name unveiled an inconspicuous little machine that would allow you to play games on your television.

Although TV games (as they were called back then) had been around for a couple of years, no one had taken this fledgling technology to the limits that Atari seemingly had exceeded. Not only did their Video Computer System (a precursor to today's 2600) allow you to play tennis, hockey, and other Pong variants (the staple of the gamer's diet way back then), it also gave you the incredible ability to insert new games that were programmed into hand cassettes. Finally there was a video game that could grow with the players!

The sales that resulted from the production of the Atari unit and the flood of interchangeable software from outside companies (something Atari

wanted to avoid but, ultimately, couldn't prevent) was staggering. In less than twelve months time the industry saw a 300% growth, with sales figures peaking at a three billion dollar plateau.

Then, just as quickly as it had materialized, the video game industry fell like pillars supporting Caesar's empire. Sales plummeted, more advanced gaming systems ceased production, and retailers were forced to offer game carts at giveaway prices. The end appeared to be very near. Promoting an abundance of lackluster products, manufacturers were becoming painfully aware of the fact that they had just committed corporate suicide.

Every line of this incredible story took place at the CES. True, it was the decision of the gaming public to stop purchasing inferior titles. But the CES served as the battleground for most of these home video game confrontations.

In subsequent years, the CES has witnessed the development of the VCR

technology (although I doubt anyone could have predicted the role it currently plays for today's entertainment dollar), compact discs replacing older cassette tapes and albums as the ideal medium with which to transfer music, and even such questionable items as the hand held copier. Through all of this, one thing is becoming obvious: the video game wars are heating up once again.

Back From the Ashes

Just as the Phoenix of ancient legend rose from its ashes, the home video game industry has experienced a wonderful rebirth. With the exception of the original 2600 that bowed in over a decade ago, the contenders in this new round of battles are all making their first appearances in the United States.

Nintendo of America, the manufacturer of such notable favorites such as Donkey Kong and Mario Bros., fired the first volleys in the summer of 1985 by introducing revamped versions of their wildly successful Famicom units which have sold in excess of nine million in Japan.

Sega threw its hat into the race shortly thereafter with the debut of its multi-format master system. This ingenious machine is capable of accepting two types of game cassettes, including cartridges the size of credit cards as well as more conventional carts that boast over four megabytes!

Renewed interest in home video game entertainment, however, soared when it was announced that Atari, a company still nursing its wounds but under new management from the incomparable Jack Traimel, had made the decision to reinvest its interest in home video games by developing not one, but two new third-generation machines.

While the three aforementioned companies, along with the up-and-coming INTV Corporation (makers of Intellivision products), have established a secure foothold within the marketplace, the 1988 Winter Consumer Electronics Show provided the first glimpse of upcoming goods destined for the Spring season. Remember, however, that many of the products on parade were in early prototype form, and although initial

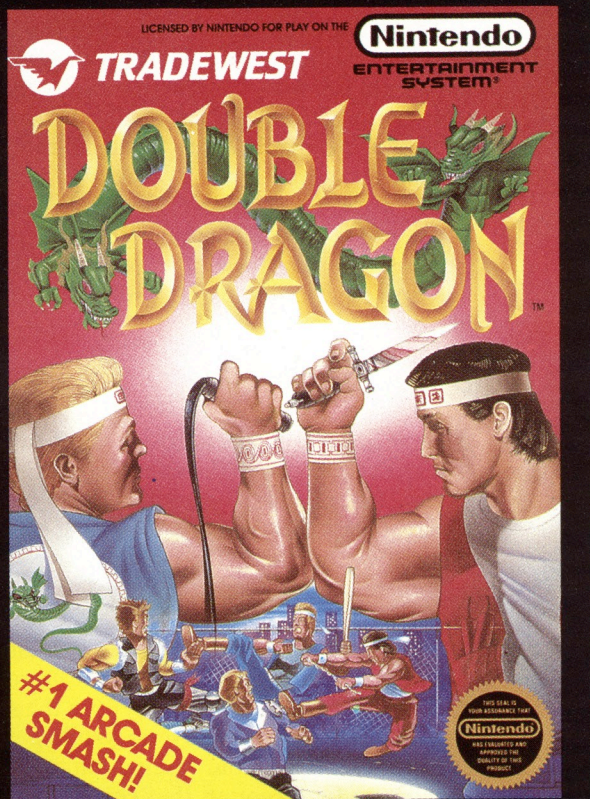
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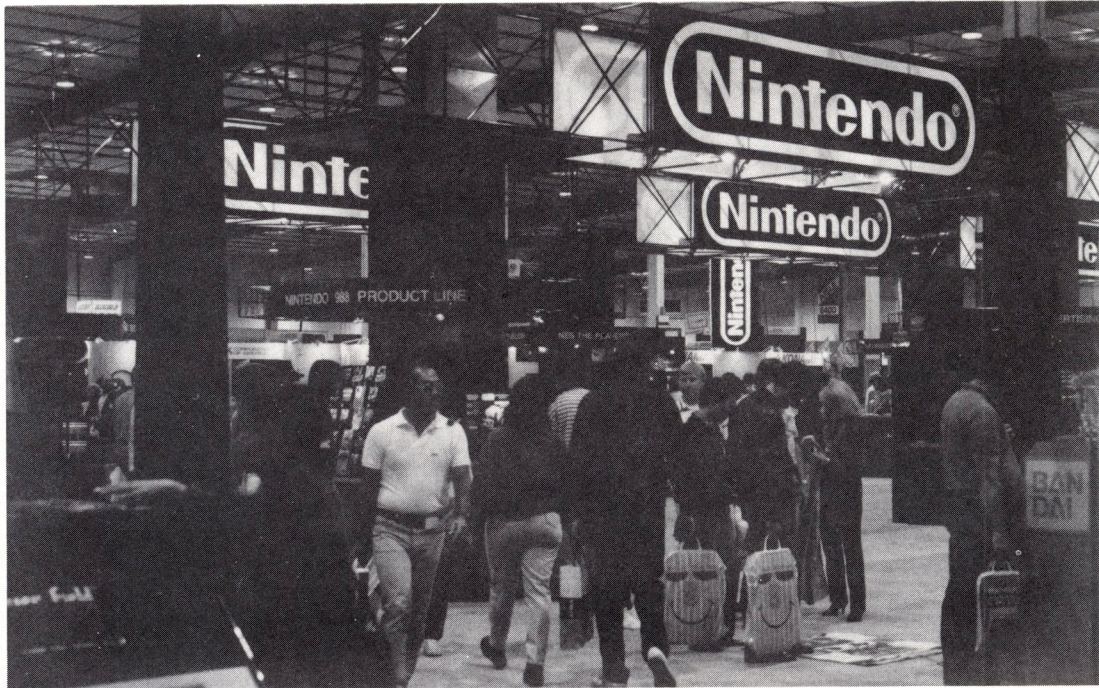
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opinions are usually the most revealing, some of the games we previewed have a long way to go before they reach store shelves.

Playing the Field

While the entire CES occupied approximately 760,000 square feet of floor space, the 103,000+ attendees could view most of the home video game and computer entertainment software in one corner of the Las Vegas Convention Center. All the big names (and a few smaller ones) were there, pulling out all stops to attract buyers to their label. After all, this is a trade show.

One of the most noticeable no-shows, however, was Atari. With three systems currently on store shelves as well as two computers, their disappearance from the CES left many unanswered questions.

Fortunately, Atari appears to be on firm ground. Full page ads in many of the daily trade magazines showcased the Atari product line and explained that Atari would be opting to go to the toy fair instead of the CES. While this prevented any evaluation of upcoming Atari products, it did a good job of reassuring us of Atari's intentions in the coming months.

New Hope For An Old System

While the Intellivision was once the premier gaming machine, it unfortunately didn't have the support and variety of arcade-style games that today's competition enjoys. Now it does. A company called INTV took over where Mattel left off and has revolutionized the games available for the Intellivision consoles.

Translations of popular coin-op titles were highlighted at the CES as well as original entries that showed an equal level of creativity and appeal. Games like Pole Position and Pac-Man that made their debut last year were joined by Commando, Dig Dug, and Pole Position II. Also, computer classics Karateka and Flight Simulator joined the company's line of action hits. While these games are limited in some visual respects due to the smaller memory size of the Intellivision system, they do represent a fairly accurate reproduction of the game play and execution.

Sports games, however, continue to be the strong point of the Intellivision systems. INTV unveiled plans for no less than nine new sports titles as diversified as Monster Trucks. But auto racing, bike racing, and pool stand as more conventional sports that will

finally be finding their way home on the Intellivision.

According to an INTV spokesman, the CES was great and it appears that the system will be given a boost by the wider product line. Whether or not a great number of new systems sell remains to be seen, but with a base of over 2,000,000 units in place, the market for quality game carts is obvious.

Meeting the Challenge

Meanwhile, adjacent to the INTV booth, Sega was celebrating in their own way. Despite early problems with the release of new game cards and carts, Sega, under new guidance from toy giant Tonka, reaffirmed their commitment to the Master System with a gala presentation announcing two new SMS packages and the new After Burner home video game.

Occupying place of pride in the Sega booth were a pair of full-sized After Burner simulators that were constantly flanked by dozens of spectators as well as a beautiful blonde flight crew.

A virtual duplicate of what many have called "the best shooter ever," Sega's home rendition of the aerial warfare classic captures all of the excitement and good looks that made the game so popular with coin-op fans. Rich

graphics and clarity, combined with high-powered music tracks of outstanding quality, supported super-interactive game play that left everyone in the clouds!

Other developments from Sega that were promoted at the CES included a new line of games that take full advantage of Sega's incredible three-dimensional games. Requiring the special Sega Scope liquid crystal 3-D glasses, the new series of carts bring the action right into your living room! The initial entries into this field all relied on familiar concepts, but the second batch of games include a 3-D version of Space Harrier and Zaxxon as well as original projects like Maze Hunter 3-D and Blade Eagle 3-D. All of the three-dimensional games shown are good games in their own right that display real game play beyond the gimmick of the 3-D perspective.

Other Sega carts that deserve mention are the finally completed version of the world's most popular board game, Monopoly. It's slightly complicated to set up, but once the game is going you'll never have to worry about cheaters again! There's even a one player mode for the days when you're by yourself or can't find a partner. Also look for sequels to Wonder Boy (Super Wonder Boy in Monster Land), the classic Alex Kidd (Alex Kidd and the Lost Stars), and two sequels to Fantasy Zone (Fantasy Zone II: The

Tears of Opa Opa and Fantasy Zone: The Maze).

With over 20 games displayed for the first time at the CES, Sega has definitely raised the ante in the home video game pool. While they're falling back more and more on their 3-D games (one of the system's strongest features to which Nintendo just can't compare), they are supporting the line with a great selection of action, strategy, and even role playing games. With the variety that has been promised in the coming months, Sega will be impossible to ignore.

Looking to the Leader

The clearest indication that video games have made a solid return, however, came from Nintendo. Holding on to their position as the goliath of home video game entertainment, Nintendo's presence could be seen as well as felt, with the company and its twenty-two (count 'em) licensees occupying more than 15,000 square feet. All this space was holding a lot more than just air. As could be expected, Nintendo filled their booth with an incomparable roundup of NES compatible games and game products.

The main focus at the Nintendo booth was definitely the sendoff of the Legend of Zelda II: The Adventures of Link. This sequel to the most popular game of 1987 features a fully grown

Link on yet another quest against Ganon and the forces of evil. Like its predecessor, Link comes with a battery-driven memory to store games-in-progress for future play.

Also unveiled were R.C. Racing, an unusual driving game that was heralded as one of the hottest games of the show, and Dragon Warrior, a role-playing game that actually delivers dialogue and lets you respond! DW is so popular in Japan, it even has a sequel! Keep an eye out for both of these hot games in the months to come!

Another buzzword around the Nintendo booth was 3-D. Three-dimensional games for the NES were ushered in by Nintendo and New York-based Acclaim Entertainment last year. This year, however, might witness the introduction of true 3-D games similar to those of Sega. At an earlier trade show, a new space game was introduced that utilized this technology to its utmost, and although the jury is still out on the play value of these 3-D carts, reports from the show were positive and the games are indeed a feast for the eyes. It's quite a welcome sign to see someone taking the NES to new limits.

Konami, currently the king of NES compatible software, didn't disappoint fans with hits like Track & Field, Rush-N-Attack, and Top Gun. This major coin-op force displayed a combination of old and new carts from their strong inventory of arcade titles. Jackel and Contra were the two latest releases to occupy the Konami booth and many more were promised.

"Konami intends to continue producing quality NES games based on arcade and movie successes," explained Konami sales manager Steve Jackson. "We will also work to remain in the forefront of game promotions with events like our Top Gun shoot-out."

Other news from Konami revolved around a new splinter company that will be managed separately, despite the fact that it is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Konami. Ultra Software, will market both home and computer games beginning with Contra this spring.

Another show-stopper came from Sunsoft, the home video game division of the Sun Corporation. Freedom Force, a new game for use with the



Light Zapper, features great scrolling graphics and a terrific shooting theme. "Freedom Force was extremely well-received for all the right reasons. The reception to a Zapper game was phenomenal!" said Sunsoft's Larry Castro.

Sunsoft also previewed Xenophobe in a two-player version that, although unfinished, was quite attractive. They also announced plans for a video game version of a recent Oscar-winning war movie that definitely gets the title of "Most Potential in 1988." Can't say much more about it now, but it will be hot!

A new contender for your gaming dollar, Tradewest came to bat at its first CES exhibition with a trio of major league sluggers. Led by their number one draw, Double Dragon, Tradewest was turning everyone's head with the home version of 1987's hottest arcade game. Tradewest also announced two future carts, Super Dodge Ball and a football game that will be endorsed by Super Bowl champ John Elway. It's called John Elway's Quarterback and resembles the arcade game Quarterback very closely.

Vic Tokai, another new kid on the block, brought a varied selection of titles from Japan that include one of the best arcade to home translations ever. Terra Cresta is virtually duplicated on the NES, with bright, vivid colors and plenty of fast-paced action. Vic Tokai also displayed Golgob, a spy-theme cart with multiple sequences from several perspectives. Golgob also features dialogue and other new play concepts that had unfortunately not been translated from Japanese.

Atari Games, the producers of arcade hits like Xybots and Pac-Mania, officially let their presence be known in the home market with a new company called Tengen (see Behind the Screens this issue). Tengen dished up a nice version of Gauntlet, as well as RBI Baseball.

GameTek found a very receptive audience to their line of video games based on famous game shows. Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy both got plenty of attention during the show, finally making it possible to actually prove that you're smarter than those contestants on television.

Other notes from the Nintendo booth: Taito showed a preview copy of



Bubble Bobble that was simply incredible! All the action and movement from the coin-op sleeper hit were intact, along with most of the hidden bonus features . . . Acclaim ran a tape showing some of the scenes from a video game version of Rambo for the NES. It follows every step of the movie and advance word indicates that it may be Acclaim's best title yet...Tecmo unveiled plans for their own football and baseball games later in the year...Nintendo is producing a new 360 degree rotational pad controller as well as a book with reviews of most of the cartridges and some helpful tips and strategies.

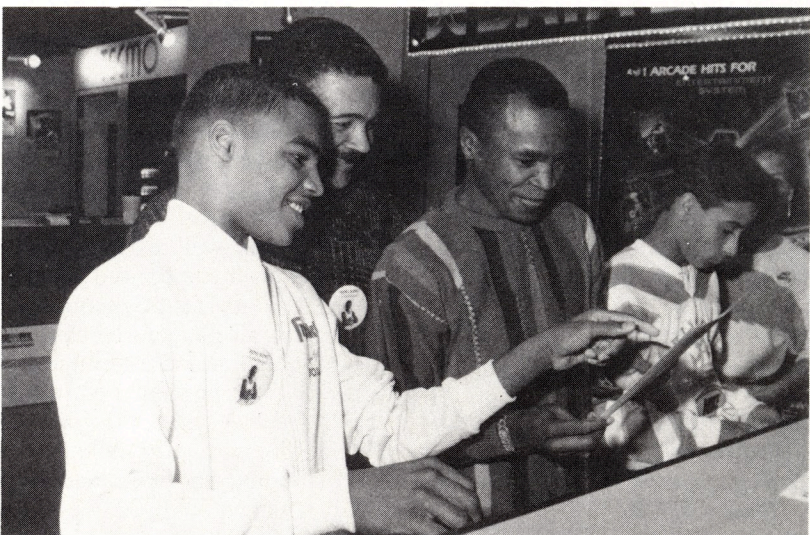
Interface

The computer gaming scene continues to remain popular and the batch

of new products on display at the CES confirms this fact.

Contrary to the home systems of three years ago, computer software hasn't suffered the radical ups and downs of public acceptance. Supported by healthy sales and an increasing pallet of formats (witness the affectionate approval gamers and manufacturers alike have given the Amiga family of computers), computer entertainment has enjoyed fabulous growth. The limitations of the programmers imagination have yet to be seen, allowing fresh ideas to be pumped into a market that many predicted would become stale years ago. Luckily for us, the winter CES failed to indicate any type of negative trends developing within this industry.

The always reliable designers at Accolade didn't disappoint either. Back-



ed by the recent success of their car racing extravaganza, Test Drive, Accolade lined up an impressive selection of diversified titles led by two war games with plenty of shoot-em-up action and a card program that lets you play three different games with Maggie, Gorbie, and Ronnie!

Both The Train and Power at Sea combine arcade-style target contests with subtle dashes of strategy to balance out the play. While the combat scenes are fairly straightforward "line-em-up and blast-em" routines, there are other variables which must be watched and maintained if the mission is to be successful.

Card Sharks, on the other hand, goes

Soft has definitely concocted the right formula for success in the genre.

Some of the best games of the show, however, came from a company that tasted instant fame last year with Defenders of the Crown. The family of interactive games from Cinemaware was blessed with two more titles at the show. Rocket Ranger, an outstanding game that pays homage to the early Commander Cody serials of the 30's, and the equally impressive, The Three Stooges, are visual and audio masterpieces. Both are interactive stories that allow you to participate in famous scenes from movie shorts of yesteryear. And both show the full potential of the Amiga as a gaming machine. Not only

Turning the Page

In retrospect, the 1988 Winter CES was probably the grandest event for home gaming since the high volume heydays of '81 and '82. The computer field continued its reliable track record with better graphics, better animation, and superb overall game play. Just as the computer gaming scene walks the path of industry stability, however, home video game territory is becoming just as hostile. Although the Nintendo commands the highest profile, edging out Sega, Atari, and INTV, many see an encore of the first video game boom to bust being played out once again, this time within the auditorium of the NES. Granted, the majority of the performances are exceptional, but manufacturers must ask themselves if implied overkill will bring a new generation of gamers to a state of high-tech boredom. At this point that's not likely.

Nintendo is maintaining strict control over its licensees as well as the amount of product introduced. While there are now almost two dozen companies producing NES carts, each is limited to a maximum of five titles annually. With such restrictions each of these manufacturers are being forced to develop and release only those games which will attract the highest consumer attention.

As Nintendo draws the lines on the battlefields of the home gaming revolution, all other opponents appear to be pinned down in a cross fire from the company's twenty-two licensees. Despite its new found marketing fortitude at Tonka, the Sega system has lost many of the best arcade titles to the NES because of their lack of third-party support. New and varied arcade themes are what players are after and it's just not happening. Sega needs to evaluate its present philosophies and possibly give outside sources the same chance to produce quality home renditions of popular arcade games from companies other than Sega.

Regardless of company policy, the 1988 CES show was labeled by many as the positive turning point for the second generation of home video game play. If the CES was any indication of things to come, then 1988 will be a very good year indeed!



one step beyond your usual computer card games. You not only have control over which game you want to play (hearts, blackjack, and poker), but you can also choose from six worthy opponents, including Reagan, Thatcher, or Gorbachev. The colorful animation and whimsical prose that these computer opponents spit out succeed in elevating the game above and beyond similar fare.

ActionSoft had a full-sized helicopter sitting center stage in their booth to promote their new 3-D helicopter battle simulator, Thunderchopper. Smooth movement and a realistic approach made Thunderchopper one of the best combat simulations at the show. ActionSoft also displayed a fantastic submarine game entitled Up Scope. Under the hand of Colonel Jack Rosenow (USAF Ret.), Action-

are these games filled with plenty of action, but they also provide plenty of laughs and more than enough surprises. They're campy, hilarious, and completely entertaining and definitely deserving of a "Best of Show" award!

All the other majors were in attendance as well, with quite a few sparkling gems waiting to join existing line-ups. Look for more games using licensed titles like "The Hunt for Red October," as well as more arcade-oriented products for the Amiga and Atari ST. Data East, Capcom, and Konami have all pledged to continue to produce high-action computer translations of their popular coin-ops, with their greatest hits (Trojan, Gun-Smoke, Karnov, Kid Niki, Gradius, etc.) standing out like diamonds in a sandy stream.

VISION QUEST

***Looking at the Past, Present,
and Future of Video Gaming...***

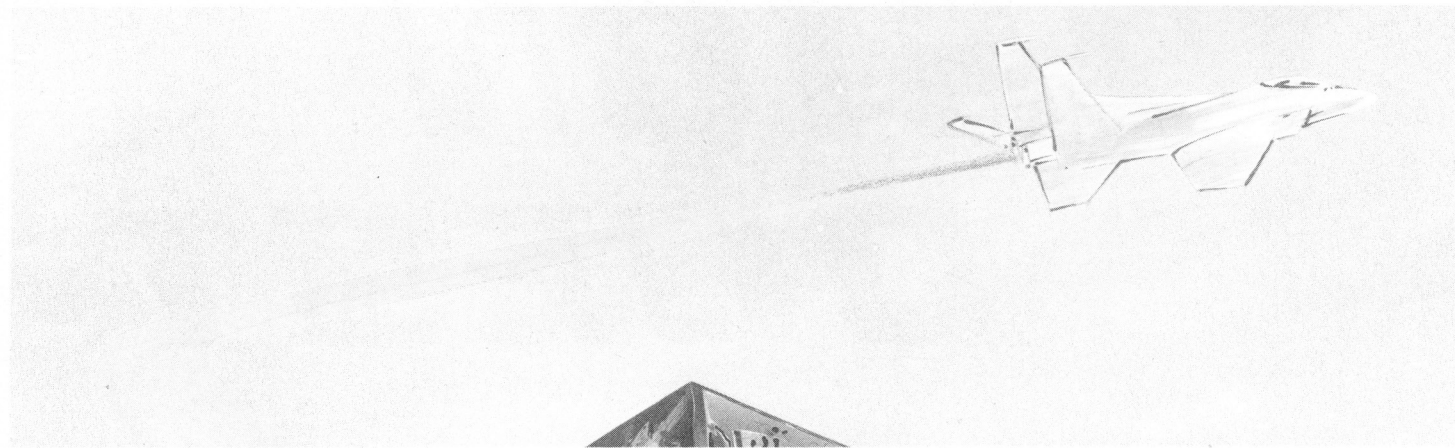
BY ROGER SHARPE



Before you can even begin looking ahead to see what the future holds, it's important to understand, historically, what the video game art form has endured to get to the point where it is today. The story is an intriguing one of success, failure, perseverance, ongoing technological innovations and the promise of limitless wonders bounded only by one's imagination.

For more than fourteen years, I've witnessed first hand just what has transpired behind the closed doors of the powers responsible for the creation of the latest equipment both in the home as well as the birth place of the entire phenomenon--the arcade. In the beginning, the question was only survival and acceptance when Nolan Bushnell introduced Pong to an unsuspecting world in 1972. Many within the coin-operated amusement game industry viewed the new invention with much skepticism, fervently believing the effort to be nothing more than an oddity, or at best, a novelty addition to a universe comprised solely of pinball machines, shuffle alleys, skee-balls and various mechanical arcade games.

This isn't to suggest that the first creations didn't have an appreciable impact, because they did. Limited in scope to what we might think of now as being primitive dodge and shoot scenarios, driving themes, and blockade-type ac-



tion, it was easy to sense that the surface hadn't been scratched for what video could potentially offer. In fact, even initial ill-fated forays into the home with such dedicated systems as Coleco's Telstar and Magnavox's Odyssey 100, didn't diminish the growing luster of what was a maturing adaptation of the available technology.

By the mid-Seventies, advancements in video game design were leading to what would be the first golden age of the entertainment form. Events happened quickly, led by the ranks of Atari, Bally, Fairchild and Magnavox, each boasting their own home systems that featured interchangeable game cartridges.

In a parallel period of growth, the arcade game manufacturers swelled in number to accommodate new forces and talents that would forever change the face of coin-operated amusement equipment. In 1978, Exidy introduced the first four-color video game called Star Fire and Cinematronics (now Leland) burst forth with a two-player vector graphics sensation called Space Wars. In the same year, Atari brought out a new trak-ball control for its acclaimed Football game and Bally unveiled the captivating Space Invaders.

With the passage of the next few years, innovative game themes occurred almost too rapidly, challenging players to master unique worlds as diverse as Asteroids, Pac-Man, Defender, Battle Zone, Missile Command, Centipede, Donkey Kong, Frogger, Zaxxon, Robotron 2084, and SubRoc 3-D. These, along with other select creations, were the games that became the instant classics and helped launch a next generation appearance of home systems from Atari, Bally, Magnavox, Mattel, and Vectrex, as well as the en-

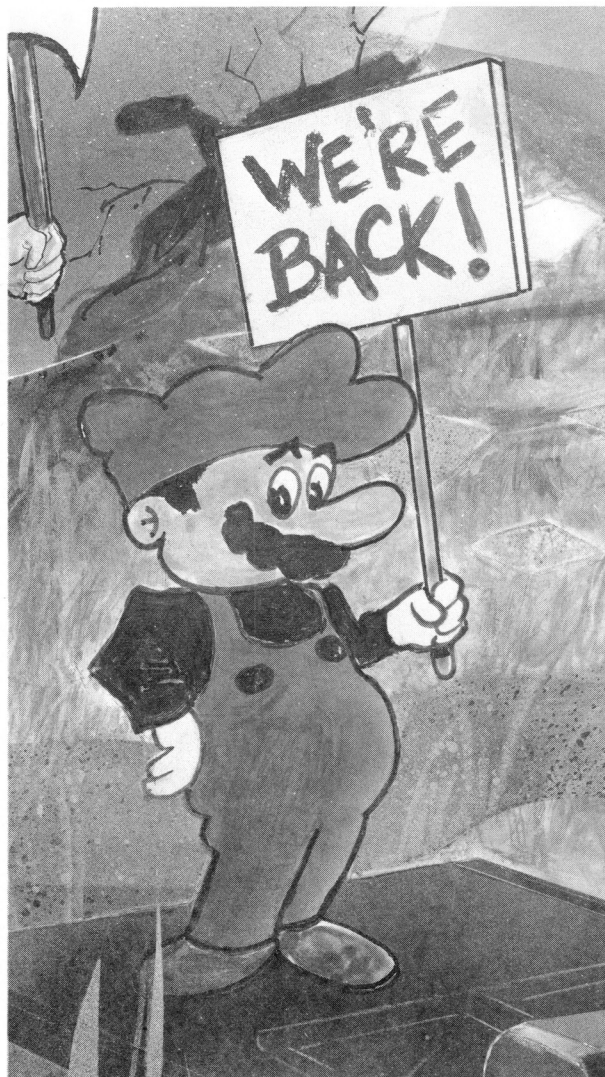
suing hype by the media directed at these remarkable electronic wonders.

Forget about the players who knew what was going on, it was the public in general that was fascinated by the games which only fed into a period of explosive growth that saw coin-operated equipment and their home bound relatives thrust into the limelight. Game rooms popped up on almost every corner and millions of living rooms and dens suddenly found a space for the latest system and its appropriate library of cartridges.

Unfortunately, it was this hype that spelled the doom for the entire video game marketplace as manufacturers, designers and programmers began to believe their own press clippings. Innovation was no longer the motivation; only imitation of what was successful and, as a result, the advancement of the technology stagnated. Familiar themes were followed by ineffective variations and renditions that found an excess of space games, slide and shoots, maze games, jumping/kicking/running scenarios that even the average player could master in a only a few days.

The well of imagination had run dry and the descent from the top

was rapid and crushing as the home market disappeared almost overnight with stories of game cartridges being destroyed or sold at prices under a dollar. In the arcade world, companies vanished . . . driven to bankruptcy by failed attempts and an audience unwilling to invest in band-aid solutions to what was a more fundamental



problem . . . the lack of decent home games.

There needed to be a dramatic leap ahead in terms of how one approached the design of video games. And so it was that many banked their hopes on the appearance of the perceived messiah--laser disc based efforts. Astron Belt, Dragon's Lair, M.A.C.H 3, Cliff Hanger and more than a dozen other attempts only provided some temporary gains as industry veterans turned once again to pinball machines and those other games that had formed the basis of what was once primary arcade fare.

But video wasn't destined to just disappear and companies such as Nintendo, Data East, Taito, a host of firms in Japan and other domestic factories renewed their commitment to lift the entertainment form out of the depths. Much of the success that followed was based on the acceptance of kits that could convert old equipment into totally new and different attractions for a fraction of the price of purchasing a conventional machine. From this came the Nintendo VS. System, a modification of the highly successful Family

Computer (Famicom) home system the company had launched in Japan in 1983.

Video games were back on track. Admittedly, fewer companies had survived the onslaught of a two year drought in profitability, but those who had stayed in business were ready to bring out more sophisticated games that offered state-of-the-art multi-player cooperative play, realistic graphics and sound effects, and story lines that more completely involved players in what was taking place on screen.

So that at the same time such stand-out games as Track & Field, Pole Position, 10 Yard Fight, Punch-Out!!, Karate Champ, Elevator Action, VS. Baseball, Gauntlet, Commando, Hang On and so many other exceptional efforts were bringing players back into the arcades, attention was once again shifting to the potential of resurrecting a new breed of home systems for a generation of players who, by and large, were never exposed to the original VCS, Intellivision or Colecovision.

Although enough time has passed for current manufacturers to have supposedly learned from their mistakes,



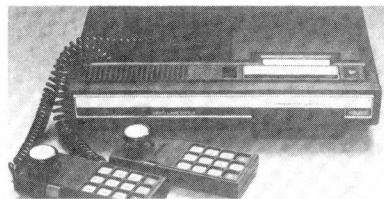
INTV Intellivision

this assumption is far from true in evaluating the present output of coin-op equipment and, to a lesser extent, the latest home systems. Apart from the few departures to the norm, it's still a game of follow the leader when it comes to arcade games. The result is that when a concept or theme works well, it is then knocked off to the degree that there's an oversaturation of similar products in the marketplace.

Putting this in perspective, you don't have to look too far to see the influence of an Ikari Warriors, Mat Mania, Ghosts & Goblins, Kung-Fu Master, World Series and the range of popular



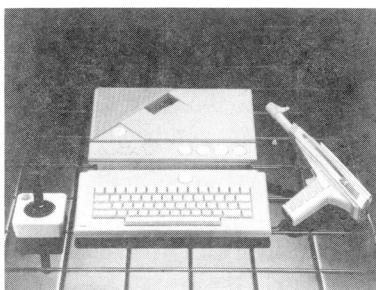
Atari 2600 VCS



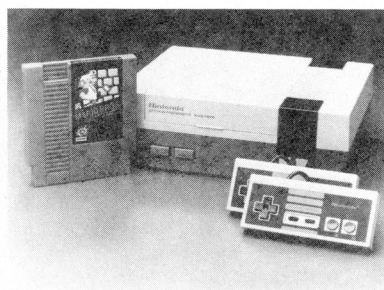
Colecovision



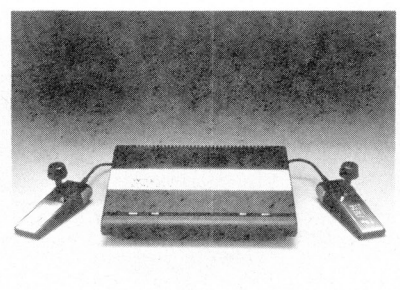
Sega 3-D Super System



Atari XE Game System



Nintendo Entertainment System



Atari 7800 ProSystem

games that have led to spin offs and variations on the same basic premise.

So one can discover an Avenger, Renegade, Double Dragon and the upcoming Vigilante providing some very similar game play; or the appearance of Out Run, Top Speed, Rad Racer, and WEC LeMans; not to mention Quarterback, Touchdown Fever, Gridiron Fight and Tecmo Bowl.

In the play-it-safe world of coin-op games, not many companies are willing to risk an innovative idea unless they have no other recourse in order to suc-

ceed and for players this means that every once in a while we'll see a Xybots, Operation Wolf, 720 Degrees and the few and far between games that dare to be different. This demands that you slightly alter your thinking about what videos might well become if given the chance to progress at a sensible technological pace.

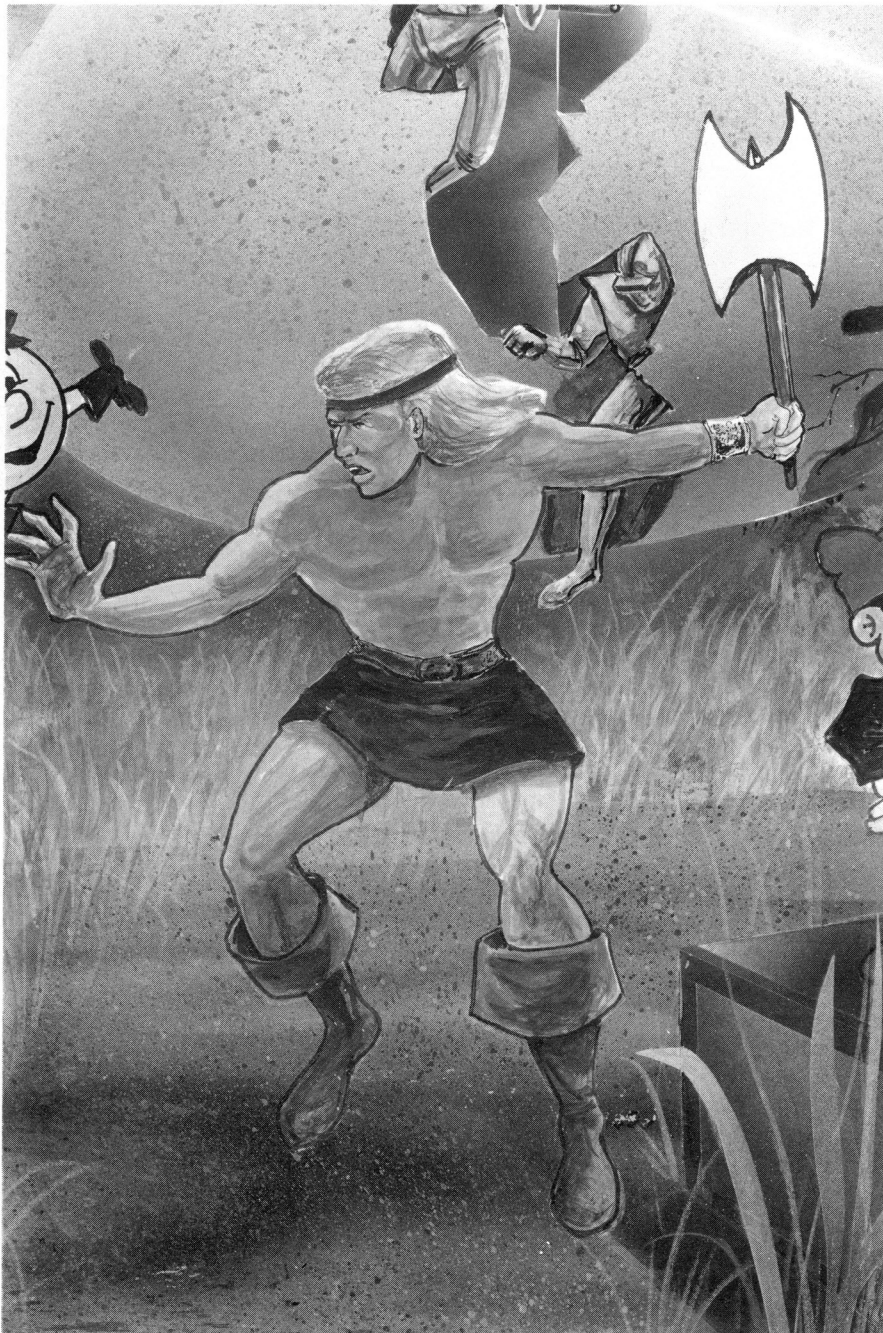
When it comes to the future of video games in the home, however, there are compelling reasons to believe that the NES, Sega Master System, and Atari XE could enjoy a healthy resurgence

built upon the inroads already made which have raised the public's consciousness to this viable entertainment medium. Each of the three major players in the market are taking fundamentally diverse paths to achieve their desired goals which will ultimately make the difference between potential success or failure.

In viewing Atari, it would be easy to think that the 2600 and 7800 are indeed forces to be reckoned with, but both show their age and lack of total support necessary to carry them over the edge. Despite approximately one dozen new titles, the 2600 is the low end when it comes to graphics and sound effects, let alone the type of complex play that today's game players are seeking. The 7800, originally announced in 1984, but not released until 1986, provides the capabilities of playing the entire library of past, pre-sent and future VCS games, thus, effectively, diminishing any long lasting plans for the venerable 2600.

However, the new Atari under Jack Tramiel and family, who forged a brilliant campaign to bring the Commodore 64 to life, are banking on the same thinking for the powerful XE. With 64K of memory, a full-function attachable keyboard and a massive collection of cartridge-based software compatible also with the Atari XL, 400 and 800 computers, the promise of the XE lies in the fact that it will eventually transform itself from a game machine into a full-fledged, basic computer system. The third party supporters which include such names as Microprose, Synapse, Avalon Hill, Broderbund, Sierra, Epyx, Infocom, Spinnaker, and Sirius, (reading like a who's who from the golden age of Silicon Valley), are not really supplying a multitude of new, original programs for the system. Instead, the hundreds of games currently available are dated with only a few games coming out expressly created to suit the XE's unique capabilities.

The hope, obviously, is that sales will increase to the point that they will pay for software companies to spend their time and resources in developing more advanced programs, but the view here is that the primary focus in the months ahead may well be based on educational and personal productivity/enrichment software that will further shift the



XE away from the ranks of the pure video game system.

At Sega the challenge is going to be one of supporting a system without a legion of third party licensees, relying instead on the wealth of material created for the arcade such as *Out Run*, *Alien Syndrome*, and the upcoming *After Burner*. But *Magnavox* serves as a lesson from the past when it comes to a closed-end architecture and operating philosophy that tends to shut out independent participation. Where Sega is most strong, however, is in expanding the boundaries of video game entertainment with the appearance of 3-D effects that are solid and a heavy hitting line-up of more than eight titles by summer and tie-ins with some recognizable themes as *Rocky*, *Rambo*, *Monopoly* and *Ghostbusters*.

For Nintendo, the story is quite different given the advance work in solidifying relationships with almost two dozen outside developers--many coming from the ranks of the arcade where Nintendo can also promise exposure in their *PlayChoice* system upgrade and the ongoing *VS. System*. The attraction for such leading lights as *Taito*, *SNK*, *Data East*, *Konami*, *Capcom*, *Tecmo* and others is a solid aftermarket of profitability and increased exposure to the public that, hopefully, will translate into dollars when these same companies produce new arcade games. It's a wonderfully self-replenishing cycle where six to nine months after you've seen it in the game rooms, it's back for the home with all the same nuances and details that you once enjoyed.

By the same token, for firms such as *LJN*, *Bandai*, *Acclaim*, *FCI* and *Broderbund*, the *Nintendo Entertainment System* is yet another avenue for them to pursue in meeting their bottom line projections for the end of the year sales figures which would otherwise be dependent solely upon other endeavors. So the restrictions of five titles per year with a cap on the number of units actually produced makes for a controlled business enterprise where everyone comes out ahead, especially the player who wants to choose from hundreds of titles compared to only dozens.

Add into this equation the efforts from Nintendo itself, which are sub-

stantial, and it's a simple matter of accepting reality to understand why the NES currently enjoys more than a 75 percent share of the video game systems sold in the past two years. With the success of the in-house developed *Legend of Zelda*, look for Nintendo to lead by example with more fantasy/role-playing games that will take full advantage of battery storage for a feel that more closely approximates some of the adventures formerly available only for the *Macintosh*, *Apple* or *IBM* universe.

But what about tomorrow and are we only kidding ourselves to think that down the road the NES, Sega and XE won't also be relegated to the closet collecting dust rather than undying devotion? Well, first off you have to accept the notion that technology isn't going to stand still, which is both good and bad. We'll be seeing a constant stream of games from both the arcades and of original design, but most important will be the evolution of these game systems into something more utilitarian before the end of next year. Disk drives, keyboards, and a new generation of peripherals that will expand the scope of the basic machines we now view only for fun and games. These forecasts will come true as the manufacturers look for an audience that will be getting older and the ultimate battle against the trade up to a personal computer system.

This will happen if sanity wins out and *Greshams' Law* doesn't prevail, dictating that the bad will drive out the good for an unsuspecting market that doesn't know the difference between a great game and an all out disaster. After all, every title can't be a winner and game players are often not as discriminating as they might be; who can ever forget *Data Age*,

Apollo, *Spectravision*, *Vidtec* and *Starpath* to name just a few of the more memorable contestants in the first video games war. But I for one, will remain the eternal optimist feeling that this time maybe everyone has gotten it right so that we won't be left disappointed, unfulfilled and waiting for the next rebirth. This time, maybe, just maybe, the video game systems will reach their promise and exceed their inherent potential as a viable medium for home entertainment, and in the process, keep the manufacturers of arcade games on their toes striving to better themselves and the equipment they produce.



next wave

By Jeff Peters

Atari's

BLASTEROIDS

The Final Frontier...

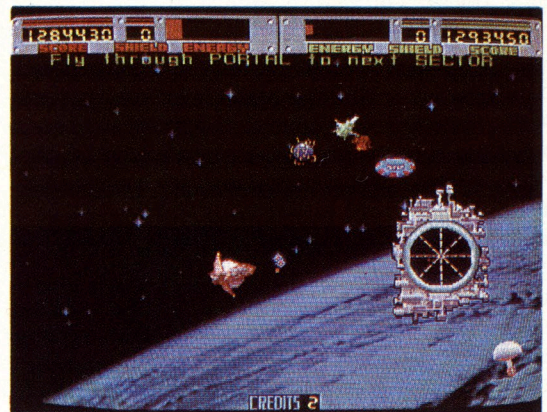
In 1979 Atari changed the way we played arcade video games by unveiling their outerspace shoot-em-up, Asteroids. Since that date nearly a decade ago, Asteroids has gone on to be a coin-op classic; spawning two sequels and eventually going on to be the biggest hit Atari Games has ever had.

Now, incorporating today's current technology with the Asteroids theme, Atari has given new life to this successful space shooter from yesterday.

space fighters of three different sizes by tapping a special 'transform' button below the rotary knob. Each ship has its own strengths and weaknesses; the largest equipped with the best armor but little maneuvering capabilities and the smallest offering top speed but slower missiles.

In addition to the transforming option, you can also customize your ship by destroying enemy saucers which occasionally float onto the screen. As Mukor's scout ships are eliminated, their hidden power-up cargo is revealed. Picking up this debris will award you with dual fire-power, temporary shields or numerous other enhancements.

Instead of relying on a predetermined number of ships like in Asteroids, Atari has provided an energy meter to determine your game time. Collisions with asteroids, enemy shots, and time all decrease this meter so watch it carefully! Red asteroids replenish the available supply, releasing balls that add valuable energy to your ship, or, you can drop in another two-

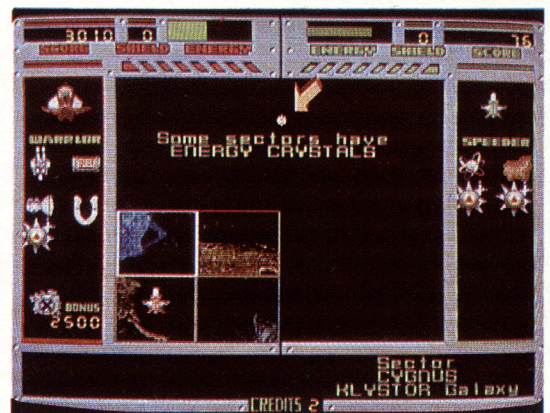


Blasteroids offers sights and sounds that are nothing short of spectacular as you battle your way through four galaxies of renegade rocks and alien encounters for a confrontation with the green slime monster Mukor. "Mukor controls the galaxy..." boasts the galactic giant. While the original Asteroids left you with little to defend but yourself, you must fight Mukor and his minions for the survival of the entire universe. Not bad for a quarter!

But help is on the way! You can now alternate between three different

bits when no one is watching for a quick and easy fill-up!

If intense action is what you demand, then Blasteroids will be just the game for you! It even has a two player option for simultaneous head-to-head battles or, when Blasteroids becomes too



A Blast from the Past!

BLASTEROIDS™

Players select from four levels of starting difficulty.



Mukor must be conquered after clearing all the sectors of each galaxy.



Players choose their own path through multiple sectors of each galaxy.



Red asteroids must be destroyed to obtain fuel.

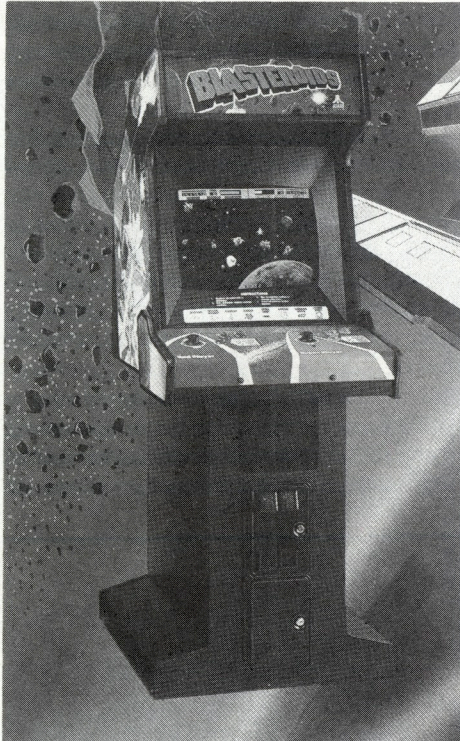


Blasteroids™ has all of the proven player appeal of Atari's 1979 classic hit, Asteroids®, and adds all of the special game play features that today's players expect:

- Colorful, realistic video graphics are actually digitized pictures of real-life objects.
- Atari's new Housequake™ sound system is a definite attention-grabber that provides improved player feedback.
- One- or two-player simultaneous game play insures maximum earning potential.
- Players can switch between three different types of spaceships to suit various game play situations.
- Temporary powers and extra fuel can be obtained by destroying special obstacles.

Players will have a blast with Blasteroids!





much for you to handle alone, you can dock your ships together for extra firepower and heavier armor!

Other high points to this definitive outerspace shooter include a new sound system, engineered specifically for Blasteroids that provides both auditory and tactile feedback. You can actually feel the deep, rumbling sound effects vibrating through the cabinet and control panel!

Those of you expecting the black and white vector graphics of the original Asteroids will be a bit disappointed. Blasteroids has full-

color digitized graphics that enhance the already outstanding game play. The asteroids rotate in three-dimensions in front of a variety of backdrops and moonscapes and an auxiliary screen shows the entire galaxy at a glance!

Blasteroids is a real tour-de-force, blending hot new ideas with the proven play mechanics of a classic. It looks good, plays well, and offers plenty of other incentives to get a whole new generation of players smashing asteroids. Atari's done a great job here, creating a game that goes beyond its predecessor, but doesn't lose its direction along the way. Our pick hit!

Leland's

QUARTERBACK

You break from the huddle and walk towards the line. Quickly you glance left and right reading the defense and setting up the play. Hut one! Hut two! Hike hike! You get the snap and fade back as a wall of defensive linemen charges your position. They close in and you let go with a Hail Mary pass downfield. Your receiver's open and you score!

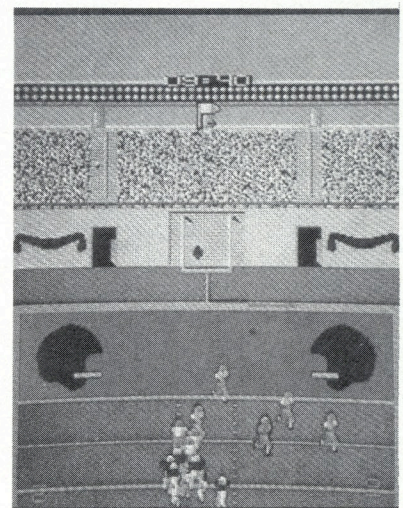
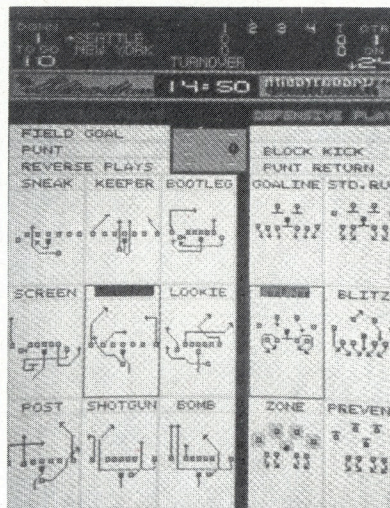
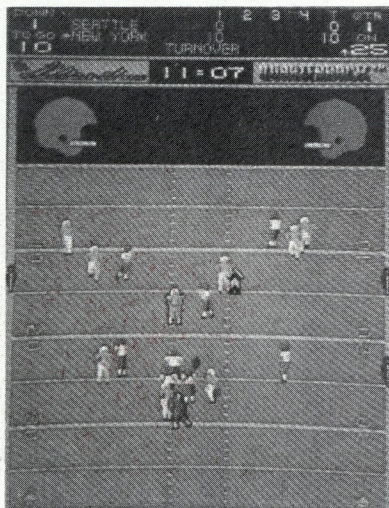
You're the quarterback in Leland's spectacular new football simulation. Just as World Series from Leland went

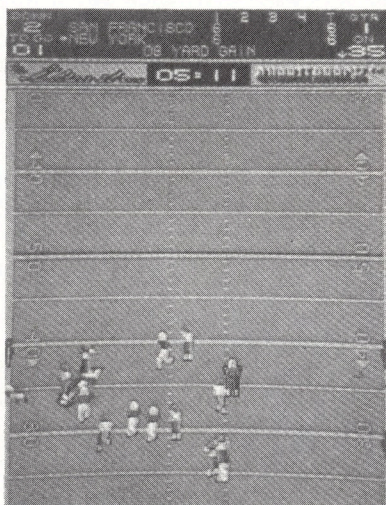
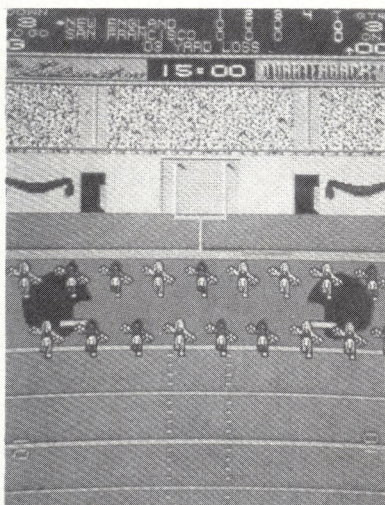
on to become the perennial video baseball game, Quarterback is well on its way to duplicating that kind of success and becoming an arcade classic! You've got complete control over the game from start to finish, whether playing against a friend or the computer. Quarterback is the best reproduction of the Gridiron since 10-Yard Fight, capturing all the sights and sounds of the real thing!

The game opens with a selection screen that lets you pick a team and

team color after entering your initials and birth date into the machine. This feature, pioneered by the technical wizards at the Leland Corporation, enables the game to keep a running score of your record and your performance, as well as your current standing and payroll.

Once you make it onto the field, you're supplied with a wide variety of options. While handoffs and other running plays are unfortunately absent, Quarterback offers an assortment of





HIGH SCORERS
(MINIMUM OF 500 YARDS FOR AND AGAINST)

1: POS	\$500,000
2: RES	\$493,000
3: JPM	\$486,000
4: KEV	\$478,000
5: SRH	\$472,000
6: MLH	\$465,000
7: XLE	\$458,000
8: WCC	\$451,000
9: GRX	\$444,000
10: PAC	\$437,000
11: NSF	\$430,000
12: PEK	\$423,000
13: KKH	\$416,000
14: NZI	\$409,000
15: SKM	\$402,000
16: SVS	\$395,000
17: DTI	\$388,000
18: DAG	\$381,000
19: SFQ	\$374,000
20: BYR	\$367,000
21: XGC	\$360,000
22: ZIN	\$353,000
23: EKH	\$346,000
24: RDM	\$339,000
25: HSN	\$332,000
26: WOC	\$325,000
27: ZIS	\$318,000
28: PSB	\$311,000
29: YRY	\$304,000
30: RYM	\$297,000
47: YRX	\$178,000
48: GAX	\$171,000
49: HJI	\$164,000
50: RYS	\$157,000
51: OSZ	\$150,000
52: HGA	\$143,000
53: BYO	\$136,000
54: ACJ	\$129,000
55: UKJ	\$122,000
56: ZOC	\$115,000
57: ZOC	\$108,000
58: ZOC	\$101,000

passes, including screens and bombs. You can even execute a quarterback sneak and run the ball yourself!

The game plays like real football, and on fourth down you have the choice between going for the first, kicking a field goal, or punting the ball to the other side. If you decide to punt, score, or fail to get ten yards in four plays, the action will switch to defense and a new menu of plays becomes available.

Depending on your offensive or defensive play selection, you're given control over one of your team members, and this highlighted player dictates the movements of the entire line. You can also jump to deflect, dive for passes or make flying tackles!

Quarterback adds extra strategy and skill by using a unique spring-loaded joystick mechanism similar in style to the pitching and swinging arms on World Series. The small sticks have just the right amount of tension to provide a satisfying snap, and depending on the direction and strength of your pull, you can determine the trajectory of the ball from quarterback to receiver with flawless precision.

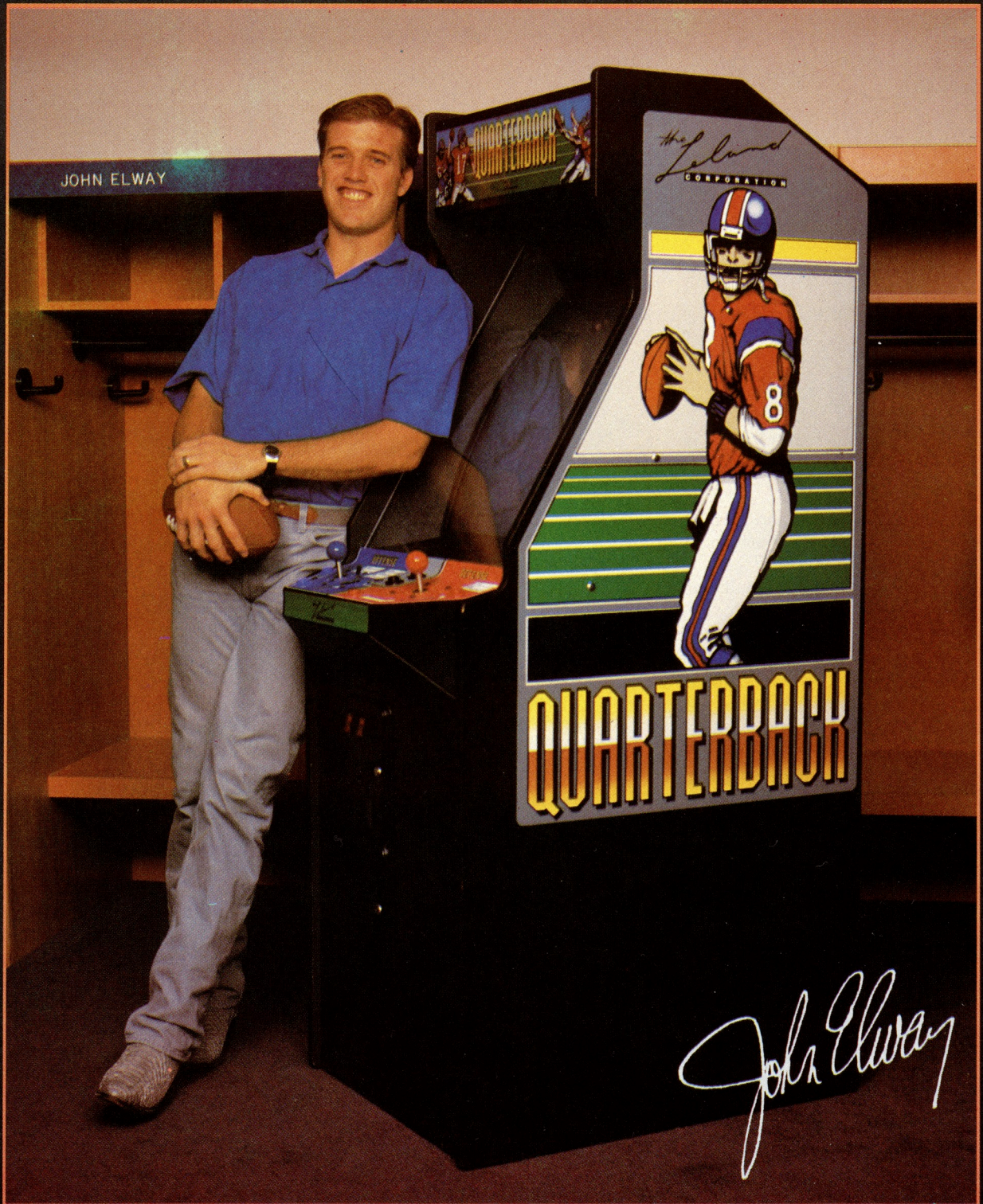
Better practice, though, because Quarterback will be a Nintendo Entertainment System home video game later in the year. All the action and spectacle of the arcade masterpiece will be available in this great new cart from Tradewest (the makers of Double Dragon)!

So get to your local arcade and ask for Quarterback from Leland. Who knows, maybe even John Elway will challenge you to a game!

As Time Goes By . . .

. . . Also Look Out For . . .

. . . Final Lap by Atari/Namco, a new racing extravaganza that's getting plenty of hype. It's from the same group that brought the first real driving game, Pole Position, to arcades everywhere . . . A terrific follow-up to Galaga and Gaplus called, appropriately enough, Galaga '88. This left and right slide and shoot is also from Namco and features plenty of exciting features like warps and bonus stages . . . An unusual entry from Bally called Rabbit Punch that stars a pair of super hares on a seek and destroy mission. You lay waste to a bizarre cast of creatures in outer space, asteroids, and on the surface of the planet . . . Super Contra, the action-packed sequel to Konami's highly-rated fighting game from last year . . . A wonderful arcade version of SNK's home gaming masterpiece, Fighting Golf . . . Thunderblade, the new simulator/ride from Sega, puts you in command of a helicopter loaded with weapons. The game responds to your controls and pivots in a circular motion to create the illusion of movement! . . . Also from Sega comes an intense shooter called Sonic Boom. It uses the familiar jet fighter scenario and highlights some breathtaking graphics as you battle enemy forces over a variety of terrains around the world . . . Pinballs will remain strong as well with the introduction of Data East Pinball's second entry, Secret Service. Initial reports are favorable, but the strong point of this game is its incredible music and sound effects . . . Diamond Lady from Premier has gotten some good play, although some are already saying that it's too easy . . . There are going to be more than enough arcade games being released in the coming months to satisfy all you avid coin-op game players out there. Look for an expanded Next Wave segment in the next issue of Electronic Game Player, including an advance look at some games that are being previewed at an upcoming coin-op video and pinball game convention in Reno, Nevada! We'll give you the complete scoop, along with some photos and other information. Until then, be sure to check out your local gaming center and ask for these new titles . . .

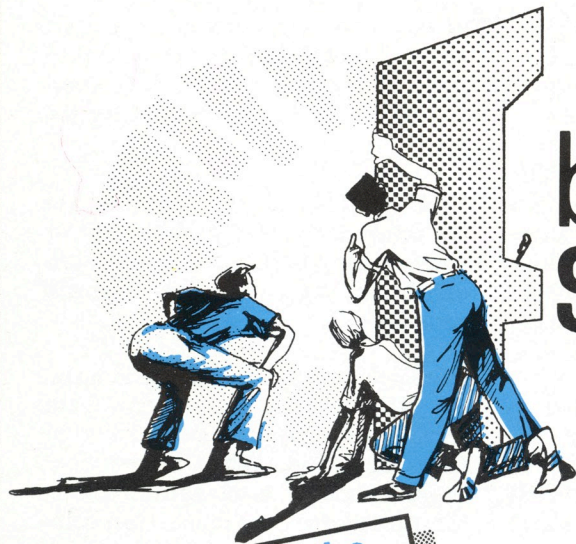


YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT A GAME
BY THE PEOPLE WHO PLAY IT.

QUARTERBACK

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behind the screens

at Tengen

When it comes to the Nintendo Entertainment System, Tengen is looking to be at the center of the action...

The word Tengen, like the word Atari, comes from the Japanese board game of 'Go.' Atari, known throughout the world as the producers of popular coin-operated video games, loosely translates into the strategic equivalent of 'check.' Tengen, meanwhile, is the center point on the Go board from which the play progresses. Tengen is also the name of a wholly-owned subsidiary of Atari that will be bringing the very best Atari and Namco arcade classics home for play on the Nintendo Entertainment System and popular computers.

The EGP editors recently visited the offices that Tengen shares with parent company Atari in Milpitas, California. We were greeted by Tengen's Vice President of Marketing and Sales and General Manager Randy Broweleit, and led to an executive board room to conduct our interview.

We discovered that unlike many of the principle players in the Nintendo Entertainment System drama, Tengen has several obvious advantages. For one, Tengen has a wealth of support ready from Atari coin-op (not related to the Atari consumer division) and a library of recognizable arcade titles from which to choose from.

Secondly, Tengen, like Atari Games, is partially owned by Namco, one of the

leading video game manufacturers for the Japanese Famicom system (the precursor to the American NES). Favorites like RBI Baseball were first unveiled to Japanese audiences under the Namco label.

Tengen also has a wonderful asset in the guise of Mr. Broweleit, an industry veteran with a very unique perspective on the future and the surprises it holds...

Electronic Game Player: Give us some background on Tengen. How did the company develop?

Randy Broweleit: To get a better idea of how Tengen has entered today's

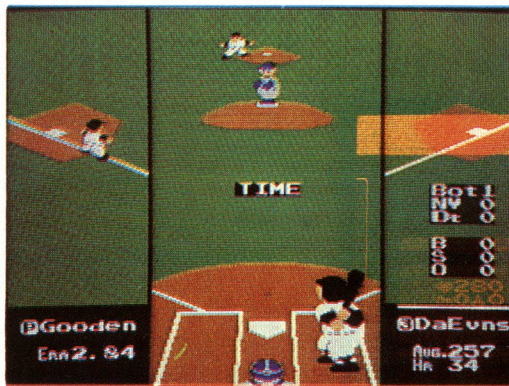
Jack Tramiel; that included the rights to the name "Atari." A majority of the coin-op division was also sold at the same time to Namco, a major player in Japan.

From this thread comes Tengen. To overcome the name restrictions and to realize Atari Games' need for a separate consumer division, Tengen was born.

EGP: How would you describe Tengen's relationship with Atari?

RB: Tengen's relationship with Atari is very close. Tengen is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Atari and the President of Atari Games (Hideyuki Nakajima) also serves as the President of Tengen. While it operates separately, it's philosophically part of the same company.

EGP: Is Tengen simply the old Atari consumer division with a new name?



RBI Baseball

market, you must first look back to the sale of Atari to Warner Communications back in 1982. That was during one of the industry's darkest periods and Warner decided to cut back and sell the consumer video game division to



Gauntlet



Tengen's Randy Broweleit

RB: While Tengen does operate expressly as a consumer division, it's not the old Atari. Today represents a different era and feeling, and Tengen offers a conservative interest in the industry.

EGP: How will you be choosing upcoming NES releases?

RB: It will be a title by title choice representing a combination of the very best from Atari coin-op as well as the extensive library of proven Japanese hits from Namco. Choosing an NES hit makes my job even more interesting. It's basically a gut feeling, but other factors such as controls and interaction limitations do come into play.

EGP: Will Tengen rely more on familiar arcade games like Gauntlet, or will we be seeing original games developed especially for the home systems?

RB: It's usually a safe bet that the huge arcade hits will do well at home as long as they retain their play value when they are translated to the home formats. Both Atari and Namco have a long list of popular games that will be considered for the NES. Tengen currently has no plans to develop original titles, except possibly for personal computers later this year.

EGP: Where does the design and programming of the Tengen games take place?

RB: For the most part both of those activities will take place in the Tengen headquarters located within the Atari

building in Milpitas. Final reprogramming of completed Japanese games like RBI Baseball will also take place in Milpitas.

EGP: Speaking of RBI Baseball, how do you feel it will do when it goes up against the other three baseball games (LJN's Major League Baseball, Jaleco's Bases Loaded, and Tecmo Baseball) due for release this spring?

RB: When Tengen decided to enter the NES marketplace, the two outstanding games we had to choose from were Gauntlet and RBI Baseball. I stand behind this game 100% and truly feel that the features it possesses, like the names and personalities of the real ball players, make it the best baseball game available. It has sold between 2-3 million copies in Japan as "Family Stadium" (second only to Super Mario Bros.), and also did very well here in the arcades. It's a pretty bold statement, but with its universal appeal, it may actually out live Gauntlet.

EGP: Do you think that players will buy more than one baseball game? After all, Nintendo's baseball cart has been on store shelves for almost two years.

RB: I think the baseball fan will buy more than one baseball game, as long as the game is good. I believe RBI Baseball is good and so do the players; it's the only baseball game available for any system to have earned the endorsement of the U.S. National Video Game Team. RBI offers many features that you won't find in Nintendo's game like the actual player recognition.

EGP: Now on to Gauntlet, your second release. How do you think it fares as your first arcade to home translation?

RB: Everyone who's seen it thinks it's spectacular! Any degradation is slight. The engineers overcame many technical challenges to insure that the game action remains true to the arcade original. We've even thrown in a slew of "goodies," including hidden exits

and secret passages to keep the players who mastered the coin-op game constantly surprised! It's one of the best arcade action games available for the NES!

EGP: What about Tengen's interest in the computer market? When will we start seeing computer software available from Tengen and what games will be featured?

RB: Right now we're concentrating on the NES owners, but we may have some computer games available by Christmas, 1988. When Tengen does begin to release game software, look for translations of popular Atari coin-ops. We'd be crazy not to take advantage of the large followings of players that the Atari arcade games attract.

EGP: Tengen appears to be right on track to capture a significant portion of the consumer game player's dollar. What are your personal projections? Do you think the NES can sustain interest with so many dim visions reflecting in the eyes of industry analysts who saw the first video game boom go bust?

RB: I believe that the player base will remain strong for at least the next 18 months. There will be some thinning out, but the market will demand high quality games with so many companies producing carts. It's possible that Nintendo and the other system manufacturers will extend the lives of their units past 18 months. A projected base of 11 million by the end of 1988 can't be ignored, and it is for these reasons that I believe North America will remain strong for some time to come.

Part of that strength will undoubtedly come from Randy and the rest of the gaming wizards at Tengen. The company has a winning formula that is guaranteed to keep us entertained throughout 1988 and long into the future. EGP would like to extend many thanks to Randy Broweleit and everyone at Tengen and Atari Games for making this interview possible. Best of luck in the future!

SCORE

HOW TO MASTER:

OutRun

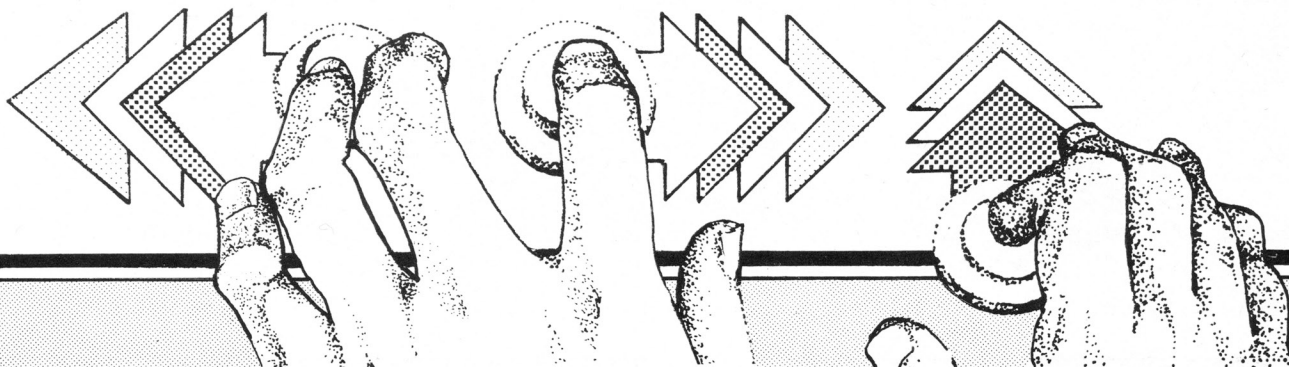
By: Mike Fuller

You sit in the finely crafted seats, glancing momentarily at the gorgeous blonde to your right. Select a tune on the radio and then smash the accelerator to the floor, sending your Ferrari into overdrive and up to speeds of over 200 miles per hour! You skillfully glide your car around a hairpin curve and perform a brilliant out-in-out maneuver to slide past an 18-wheel rig. Suddenly, you realize that your daring has sent you directly into the rear of a sporty foreign auto and your car explodes! Without warning, you see the

words "Insert Coin" appear on your windshield. It's only a video game! As far as video games go, however, Out Run provides more than enough excitement to justify its two quarter boon. Now, for the Mario Andretti in all of us, champion Out Run driver Mike Fuller has compiled some hints that are guaranteed to get you driving longer, going faster, and scoring higher than ever before!

Remember the Basics

There are a few rules of thumb that all would-be Out Runners should observe. Always remember to stay on the insides of the turns whenever possible. This will help you negotiate the curves much more smoothly, without fear of colliding with a billboard. Also remember that the other cars you'll encounter are indeed two-dimensional, so that even though it may appear that you are quite close, you ac-



tually have plenty of room. Always shift from low to high between 150 and 160 km/h and most importantly, you must realize that it is not possible to take all the turns at full speed. Slowing down becomes critical in many situations; don't be afraid to lift your foot from the accelerator.

Know the Score

Understanding the manner in which Out Run awards points is the key to achieving the highest scores. During the race, you're awarded a minimal number of points for the distance you reach as well as for each opposing car or truck you pass. At the end of the race and at any of the five possible destination points, you are awarded one million points for each second that remains on the clock! Therefore the key to world-class scores lies in the shortest and quickest route from start to finish. The one path that most players have found to be significantly shorter is illustrated below. From the beginning, make a left to the Devil's Canyon, then make a right to the Snowy Alps, and then two lefts into the Wheat Field and onto the Autobahn. If followed correctly, this route will usually yield an average of 30 spare seconds (read: 30,000,000 points!).

The Rough Spots

We'll lead you through each of the different stages, including the tough areas to look out for...

From the starting point to the mouth of the Devil's Canyon, it's not necessary to slow down at all. Take the first

area full force but be on the look out for the treacherous 'S' turn that waits near the middle of this stretch. Once you recognize it, be sure that you're positioned on the outside of the first turn (the left side of the screen). Make a sharp right turn as soon as you can and counter with a sharp left turn when it switches back. Timing is crucial here and will probably take a few tries to master.

Devil's Canyon

The first few turns in this stage are really quite easy, but they become progressively complex as you proceed. Maneuver to the inside (right side of the screen) at the first turn marked with a right arrow. The beginning of this turn is not very sharp but as soon as you pass the sign it will become very dangerous and if you're not positioned correctly you'll wipe out or collide with another car. The only other spot that you should watch out for is another 'S' turn that starts as you are about to enter the canyon. You must slow down on this turn, but only briefly to maintain you traction. Remember to stay on the inside of the turns.

Snowy Alps

This segment of the course eats up more time than any other stage. You have to slow down during each of the three big turns. Each of these larger bends are preceded by easy turns. Perform an out-in-out and maintain an approach from the outside of the first turn that will carry you through to the inside of the second turn.

Wheat Field

You can make up time lost in the Alps here. There is only one place that dictates a reduction in speed, the rest of this course can be tackled full throttle! When you approach the 'S' turn (about six turns into the area), practice the technique that you used to overcome the 'S' in the first stage, using sharp turns to the left and right. Again, remember to stay on the insides of the turns even if it appears that you'll crash into an oncoming car.

Autobahn

The Autobahn is without a doubt one of the most interesting of all the Out Run raceways. It begins like any of the other stages but quickly becomes *unlike* any other previous section. After you've traversed a few hills, the road splits into two three lane highways that are separated by hedges. You want to end up on the left side of the hedges when the road splits. Now comes the tricky part. As the first left turn begins, you want to be in the outside lane. Keep your eyes on the hedges. When you see a part in the hedges, nudge the wheel so that you squeak through the shrubbery and onto the opposite side of the road. On the next right turn you must repeat this maneuver. This advanced technique requires a lot of practice, but rewards your skill by taking up to six seconds off your elapsed time. After this point all you have to do is stay on the inside of each turn and you should easily find your way to the finish line and a victory celebration!



Mike Tyson's PUNCH-OUT!!

by Steve Harris

It's not surprising, but Punch-Out!! was a huge success in the arcades. Dual monitors and fantastic graphics made the game come to life in a way that no other video game had ever been able to duplicate. So when Nintendo announced that Punch-Out!! would be coming home for their Nintendo Entertainment System, I was both excited and skeptical. How could they reproduce the sterling animation of the boxers? What about the taunting voice of the unseen trainer and the opponents? How could we play a faithful version of the game without stacking televisions on top of each other?

Well, as I'm sure most of you know, Nintendo has brought Punch-Out!! home with a slew of new fighters as well as favorites from the arcade Punch-Out!! and its sequel, Super Punch-Out!! But the best news of all was the Dream Fight that had been programmed into the higher levels of play. Beat the best and you, as a scrappy fighter named Little Mac, get to go against the baddest--Mike Tyson! Kid Dynamite is the final boxer you must face on your way to the World Video Boxing Association's Title Belt and victory.

Reaching Tyson is hard enough; you must out fox, dodge, and knockout a dozen different fighters ranging from the fleet-footed Don Flamenco, to the mysterious King Hippo. Beating Tyson is another matter entirely! It takes patience and practice, but with the cor-

rect timing, and a little help from your friends at EGP, you too can defeat the World Heavyweight Champ! This article is designed to give you some background information that will help you with all the boxers, as well as in-depth strategies on how to best Mike Tyson.

Your Health Meter

The health meter for both you and your opponent works in the same way. When you hit him or he hits you, a portion of strength will be reduced. When the gauge is depleted, you go down. Go down three times in one round and the game ends with a TKO. If you fail to get up before Mario counts "ten," then the game ends with a KO. Some of the decisions on the earlier fighters even rely on a comparison of your meter to that of boxer you're fighting!

There are some tips that you can use to increase your vitality. Never push the start button before the round begins. The game will automatically decrease your available strength by half. Also, don't forget to push the select button in between rounds to get

successfully make contact, so be sure to time your punches carefully.

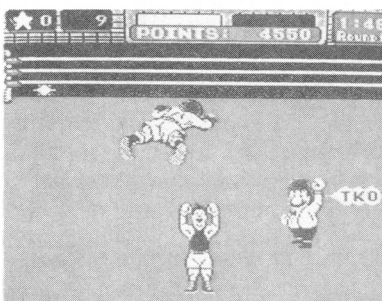
Another important fact to keep in mind is the secret link between your health meter and that of the opposing fighter. If your meter is reduced, the other boxer will receive more health when he gets back up from a knock-down. If you can successfully negotiate his punches and land enough of your own, then you'll go through each round like lightning!

Heart Marks

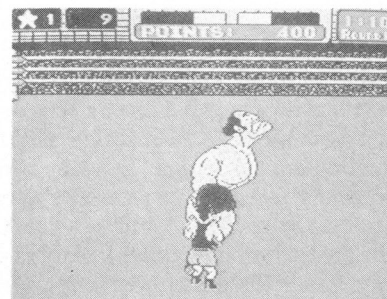
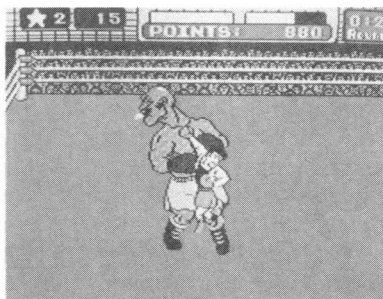
One of the most important differences between Nintendo's home version of Punch-Out!! and the coin-op which it's based on, are the "heart marks" and their role in the game. You start each round with a specific number of hearts that are visually displayed in the upper-left hand corner of the screen next to the stars (more on them later). Each time you initiate a punch, any kind of punch, that does not connect or is blocked by your opponent, a heart will be subtracted. If you get hit you will also lose heart marks, and if you are knocked down, you'll get up with far fewer than you started with.

Now for the bad news. When you run out of hearts, either by getting hit or by not striking the other boxers enough, Little Mac will become fatigued and have to rest a while. Unfortunately, your opponent will not pass you a lemonade and wait. In fact, most of the fighters seem to take advantage of your situation and go all out when you're in this dangerous position. Their hits take more of your energy than usual as well!

Remember to always conserve your heart marks, especially on Don Flamenco and Mike Tyson. They'll



encouragement from your trainer. It translates into extra health when the next round begins. Never get up before the count of "nine." You're awarded with more health the longer you stay down, and if you wait until the end of the count you'll receive all of your energy back! Be careful to time your ascent, because the more times you're knocked down, the faster you must push the buttons and the longer it takes to get up. When your stamina (or that of your opponent) is very low, you'll receive a small boost of energy every time you





Mike Tyson

both bait you until you have none left and are out in the cold!

Uppercuts

Uppercuts are represented by stars in the upper-left portion of the screen. You are limited to a maximum of three. Stars are awarded when you catch the other fighter off guard or at certain portions in his boxing routine. They can be used any time, but it is advisable to stun the other boxer first with an incomplete set of punches (one or two instead of three or four) and then release the uppercut. Most of the boxers will start dodging the third and fourth uppercuts unless they are in the middle of a swing (extremely risky).

Mike Tyson

Once you have mastered the Punch-Out!! fighters (or used the passkey codes elsewhere in this article), you get a one-shot chance to claim your fame in a Dream Fight against Mike Tyson! Be ready to speed up your delivery and response time, however, because Tyson moves faster than anyone else, and his punches are indeed dynamite!

Like the other fighters, Mike Tyson does react in somewhat of a pattern that can be memorized. The real key to defeating him, though, is knowing what moves he'll make in response to visual keys that the game so kindly provides.

For the first minute and thirty seconds of the game, Tyson will come out with nothing but right and left uppercuts that hit poor Little Mac like a ton of bricks.

If Tyson connects with any punch during this time, you'll end up on the canvas. The only way to avoid it is to not get hit; but that's easier said than done.

Since you know that Tyson is going to throw uppercuts, always move to the left with quick dodges when you see him start his delivery. Doing this will bring you back face to face with him and allow you to get to solid punches into his face (one stuns him, the other knocks him back to his senses). If you can do this for the first 1:30, you'll reduce his strength to about half.

From the mid-point of the first round to its conclusion, Tyson will throw a combination of right and left hooks. You can easily tell when he's about to deliver one by watching his eyes. If he winks, make a quick dodge to the left to avoid his punch and telegraph two of your own to his head. This is the most common punch he'll throw through the match so do your best to get it down.

Round two begins with a flurry of body jabs that last until Tyson drains your heart marks. Remember to keep your guard up right when the round begins and if possible, duck the jabs to preserve your heart marks. Tyson will then go back to right and left hooks, so watch his eyes and dodge appropriately.

After Tyson has thrown a compliment of hooks, he'll hesitate, and then throw two uppercuts. These uppercuts do not inflict the same damage as the previous killer-punches, but they do leave Tyson wide open for six solid hits to the head.

Another routine that Tyson will address during round two begins with a short hesitation, then he'll open his eyes wide and flash them at Little Mac. This is your cue to give him a single body blow and then immediately cover up by blocking four jabs that follow. Pause for just an instant and dodge to the left after you've blocked his punches and he'll throw another uppercut. If he hasn't drained your heart marks, give him six shots to the head. If he has, then dodge the first uppercut, and he'll leave himself open after a second uppercut shortly thereafter.

The rest of Tyson's routines are made up of short jabs, hooks, uppercuts, and his "blinking eyes." Learning to recognize each pattern through the methods

described above will maximize your punching ratio and soon let you put Tyson out for good!

PASS KEYS

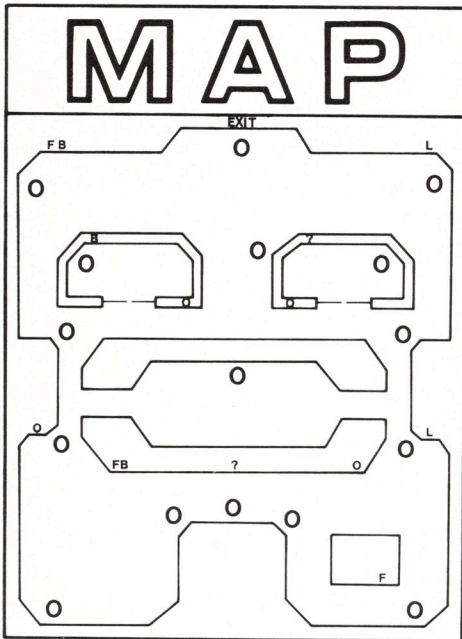
- Major/Minor Title Holder.....
777 807 3454
- Super Macho Man.....
940 861 8538
- Mike Tyson.....
007 373 5963



By Donn Nauert

Capitalizing on the success of movies like "Aliens" and "Predator," Alien Syndrome takes place in six different alien-infested space ships. You must rescue a 16 member crew and exit each of the ships before a series of explosive charges is triggered, automatically destroying both you and your enemy. Before you can escape, however, you must first confront the main creatures that inhabit each vessel and send them into oblivion. As you progress from level to level and from ship to ship, the challenges and difficulty (not to mention the aliens) increases. This leads to a climatic confrontation with the secret entity behind the terror.

There are many strategies and techniques that can be used to maximize your Alien Syndrome scores. Different patterns and playing styles can each bring their own benefits and bonuses. The following tactics are used by Alien Syndrome world record holder Donn Nauert (current high 2,269,200). Donn has perfected the following approach and discovered some interesting hidden items that you may have never heard of along the way.



Round 1

The Weapons...

Although you begin with a pulse rifle which shoots your standard video game bullets, your character's available weaponry ranges from a flamethrower to a laser gun to a mortar which throws bombs. Each of these weapons, in addition to their identifying letters, are summarized below.

(B) - Bombs

Not much use except for shooting at aliens on the opposite sides of walls and other impasses. Should be avoided if possible.

(F) - Flamethrower

A good overall weapon for close fighting. It has a limited range, extending only a short distance from your character. Since you have more control over the firing of the flamethrower, the weapon is best used when the aliens are traveling in packs (rounds 2 and 5).

(FB) - Fireballs

The fireballs are an excellent selection, combining distance and speed.

Because of the weapon's great firepower (you can fire up to five at once), it is easily one of the best power-ups.

(L) - Laser

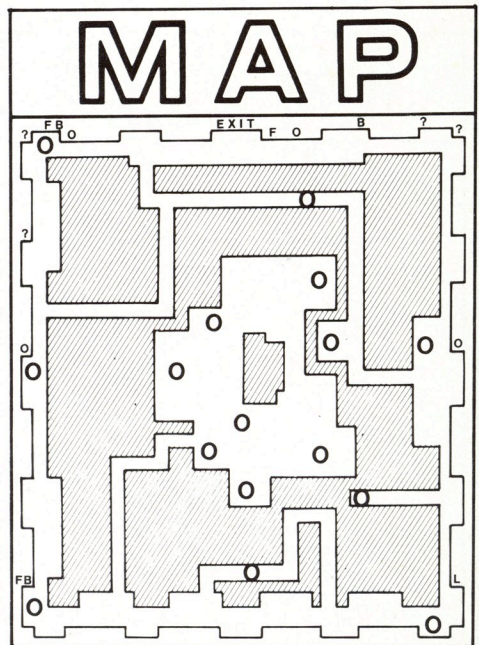
What this weapon lacks in speed, it makes up for in accuracy and power. Although you are prevented from shooting more than two bolts at once, each shot can destroy two opponents. The best of all the available enhancements.

(O) - Option

Rather than increasing your character's weapons, the Option introduces a tiny robot partner that provides rear cover. You can have up to two of the robots with you at all times, supplying additional support every time you hit the fire button.

(S) - Shot

The weapon that you begin with. The applications of this weapon are extremely limited by its range and



Round 3

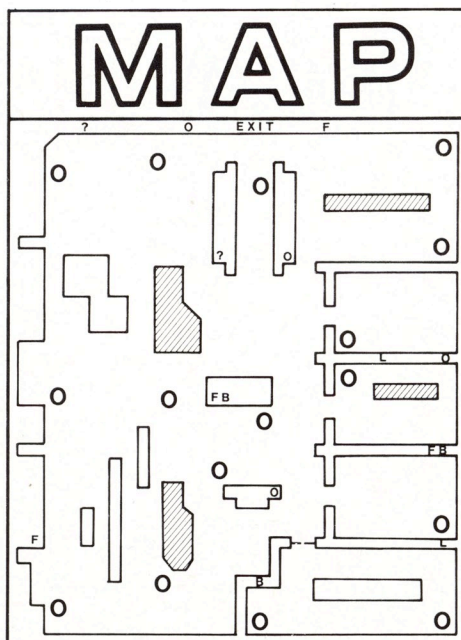
firepower. It's found only on rounds five and six and should be avoided.

The Six Alien Ships...

Although the basic premise of Alien Syndrome remains unchanged from round to round, there are subtle modifications that need to be taken to escape each of the ships. The layout of each of the chambers change as well as the creatures that attack, requiring different approaches and different weapons.

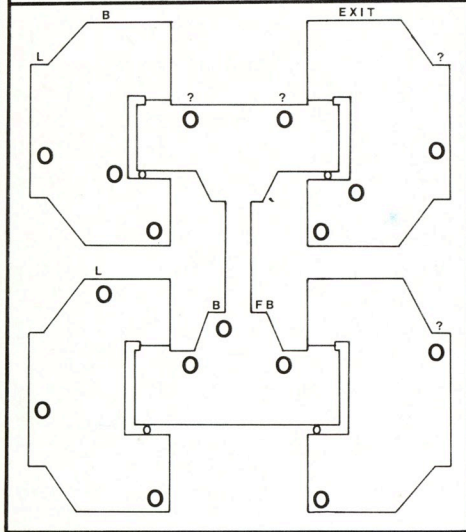
Round One

Begin this round by working in an "S" shape to pick up your comrades, initially moving left and then working your way down and to the right as far as possible. Destroy the aliens as you move to the far right and go up and enter the single room on the right with the question mark. Get the comrade and the question mark bonus before exiting the room and moving left to the second room. Ignore the bomb weapon in this room and pick up the stranded comrade. Finish off the round by clearing the top corridor all the way to the right. Exit with the laser weapon.



Round 2

MAP



Round 4

Round Two

The ship is fairly simple to escape. Work at retrieving your comrades from the middle of the floor plan while moving up toward the exit. Next, concentrate your efforts on the outer edge of the playfield, moving in a clockwise path with the flamethrower. Pick up your remaining comrades and exit with this weapon.

Round Three

Round three is a bit more complicated than the previous level in difficulty only because of the amount of space you have to work within. Seven of your comrades can be found on the platform that you begin on, but the others have been placed on walkways that extend from the outer edge of the ship.

Once you rescue the comrades from the center you can either head directly to the exit, picking up three more comrades as you go, or you can pass the exit and continue to the right to retrieve the rest of your party for additional points. Once you have reached the lower right-hand corner, get the laser and proceed

back up the right side until you come to the first walkway. A comrade will be waiting for you on this dead end strip. Go up to the next walkway and follow it up until you reach the exit, avoiding the enemy fire as you go.

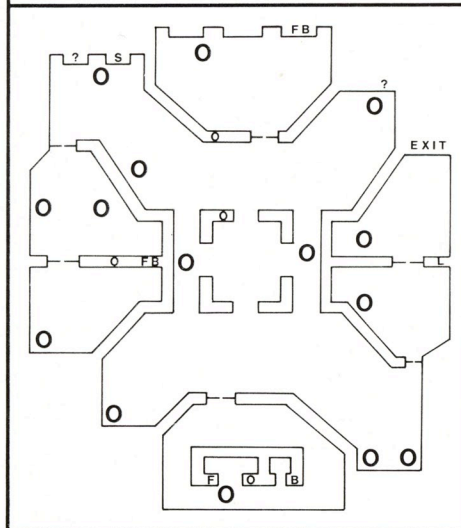
Round Four

Start this round by immediately getting the fireball and taking care of the two alien generators nearby. Then you should use the bomb weapon to eliminate the generator closest to the wall in the room to your left. Enter the room and move to the top to recover the laser. After you have collected the comrades that are in this room, head for the room to the right. Continue by moving to the top left and ending in the top right room where the exit lies. The laser seems to be the safest weapon to finish this round.

Round Five

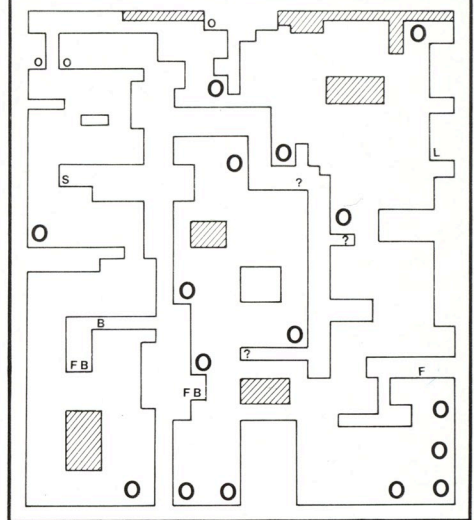
You'll begin round five in the middle of an alien complex. Quickly collect the Options that are both above your starting position. Fight your way to the top right and then move cautiously to

MAP



Round 5

MAP



Round 6

the left along the top. Enter the large room at the top to get the fireball weapon and stranded comrade before heading to the bottom left. From here you need to go up and back toward the middle (where you started) before proceeding down once again. Clean out the bottom rooms ending in the bottom right-hand section. Enter the door to the right and move straight up to find the exit.

Round Six

The last of the levels can be completed by making a lazy nine around the outside of the platform. Move in a clockwise direction around the edges and end by moving up from the bottom to the middle of the map. Don't forget to pick up the fireball weapon at the beginning of the round and stay away from the single shot (S).

The Master Alien...

Unknown to many, there is a secret seventh level in Alien Syndrome which must be completed once the six regular rounds have been cleared. You must confront the master alien who has in-

stigated the invasion and bring him (or it) to justice.

Your only weapon is the single shot, which must be fired directly at the small head that rests atop the larger alien face. After a few seconds, swirling fireballs will enter from the edges of the screen and spin toward the center. Dodge these deadly projectiles by making a quick turn to the bottom right. Once they have disappeared, return fire to the smaller head. After a number of hits the alien will explode and you get a brief intermission before the next, more challenging game begins.

The Wrap-Around Trick

Whether or not this flaw was intentionally programmed into Alien Syndrome remains a mystery, but it does provide a reliable method of netting a minimum of 60,000 bonus points for the destruction of each boss alien. Destroying the end creature in each round with exactly 0 seconds left will award you the 60,000 points. The following tips can make the task a lot easier than you might think.

Round One

Exit the round with the laser weapon when approximately 33 seconds remain on the timer. Shoot the body of the boss alien until it turns to the brightest pink (one shot before blowing it up). When the timer reaches 12-13 seconds, kill the body and shoot the transforming head four times. The head will begin attacking you at 0 seconds at which time you should fire a volley to destroy it.

Round Two

Exit this level with the flamethrower and approximately 12 to 13 seconds remaining so that the creature will be in the midst of jettisoning the attacking spores. First eliminate the circling blobs, then move toward the monster and shoot him 10 to 15 times (counting the hits is difficult, but try your best). At this point you should have between 10 and 15 seconds left. Wait until one second remains before continuing your fire (the alien should be vulnerable at this point) and ignite the creature.

Round Three

Enter the last phase of level three with the laser. Concentrate your initial fire at the legs and once they have

vanished, position yourself in the center of the screen to fire at the eye sockets. After you have hit this target approximately 15 times, allow the worms to pour out and shoot them to gain additional points. When the timer reaches 8-10 seconds, shoot heavily at the center. Again, it is very difficult to count shots.

Round Four

Exit the round with the laser weapon when the horn sounds after one second remaining but before zero. With this timing, the creature will be at the top of the screen. Quickly shoot the alien in the forehead (right behind the glowing red orb) seven times and wait for your time to run down. When one second is left, the creature should be positioned at the top. Fire one more time to destroy the monster and end the round.

Round Five

Exit with the flamethrower when the voice says "10." Locate the hole directly above you and immediately move to the bottom left-hand corner to destroy the alien as it appears. Then direct your fire to the alien emerging from the middle right hole. Run to the upper left to shoot at the upper hole from the left and finish by killing the alien in the far upper right crater.

The boss alien will begin to appear so hide at the top of the center hole to avoid his fire. Shoot the monster 14 times (do this slowly so that you can count your shots). The alien should be up on the count of three (susceptible to your fire) and at one you should release two more shots to destroy him.

Round Six

Enter the final stage with fireballs. Use this weapon for its range and ability to kill the segmented worms. It's very difficult to get the 60,000 point bonus, but it is possible. Try using the force and a little luck (It takes around 35-40 hits to vanquish).

Helpful Tips to Remember...

Always remember to play with the female character who is represented in yellow. Her color offsets the backgrounds of the later scenes, making it easier to avoid trouble and find your position. You'll need to adjust your patterns the second time through because of the shorter time available. Above all, remember to have fun and don't let those aliens get you down!

FREE MEN?

Although it's one of the hottest shooting games ever, Alien Syndrome does not have a reputation in the arcades for being overly generous. Once your allotment of three men or women have been lost, the game ends. There are no free men for saving all of your comrades, for reaching certain point levels, or for having destroyed all seven rounds of invaders.

Contrary to popular belief, however, there are free men! The extra men are sheltered in the question marks that are present on every screen. These question marks can award points at increments of 100, 500, 1000, 3000, 5000, or 10,000. They can also award a special 1UP that does increase your remaining lives by one.

The real trick to generating the 1UP symbols and getting the free men, however, lies with your score. You must have exactly 100,000 points when you touch the question marks. You can get additional men as long as you have exactly 100,000 points and can find question marks.

There are several methods of collecting these bonus lives. The system employed by Donn Nauert, the person who discovered the secret of the hidden men, allows him to retrieve two of the free men while maintaining his scores.

To collect the two free men per Donn's strategy, you must begin in round one. Start by gathering ten comrades as quickly as possible and kill the end creature with more than 100 seconds for the 60,000 point bonus. This should give you a score of 80,000-82,000 for the round and provide you with plenty of time to get the 100,000 points required to accomplish the trick.

Be sure to be near the top of the layout when you hit the 100,000 point plateau. Once you reach 100,000 points hit the first question mark near the top center before moving to the second question mark near the top left. Remember to use the green pods (they generate the green aliens) which are worth 100 points per shot to your advantage.

If properly executed, this great trick will not only get you noticed by your friends, but will definitely improve your game scores.

the home front

by Steve Harris, Steve Ryno, and Ed Semrad

To nobody's surprise, 1988 is shaping up to be a great year! There are already twenty-three companies producing over 100 games for the NES, with even more rumored to be on the way. Sega has previewed a heaping selection of new titles led by the coin-op champ, *After Burner*. Atari is sizing up their game library as well, with dozens of games coming soon, and *INTV*, is finally getting Intellivision translations of recent arcade hits like *Commando* to owners of their old, but reliable, gaming system.

You'll be able to count on a greater variety of games as well. Gametek, a new third-party company, has an entire line of NES games based on popular TV game shows like *Jeopardy* and *Wheel of Fortune*. Sega is increasing their licensing campaign with video game versions of *Alf* and *Mad* magazine. These developments, and others, are going to be changing the way we've come to play video games. In the months ahead you'll see games that don't conform to the normal genres of the medium (like space shoot-outs and maze chases), but instead more unconventional carts without the familiar arcade names will begin filtering into local stores.

Anyway you look at it, 1988 is going to be a landmark year for home gaming. In the coming months EGP will be devoting additional attention to lesser-known, but equally outstanding carts. But for now, let's take a look at some of the hot properties currently on display...

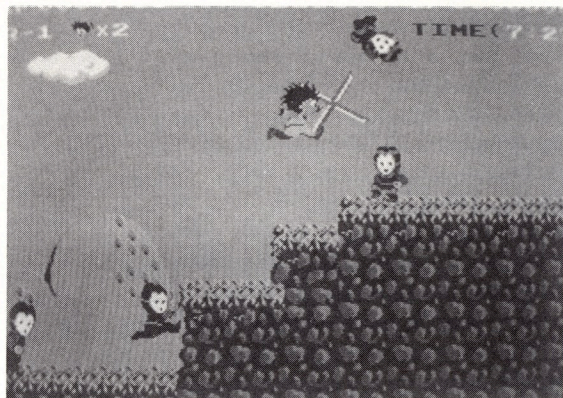
Kid Niki: Radical Ninja (Data East/NES)

Like, totally cool dude! This mega-hip character named Kid Niki is out to stop a nasty assortment of ninja warriors who have invaded his land. Armed with his trusty sword and the ability to perform gold medal jumps, Kid Niki must clear hazards in seven different areas to rescue his punk girlfriend, Princess Margo. A variety of interactive backgrounds, special weapon power-ups, and hidden treasure rooms await Kid Niki on his quest.

Kid Niki: Radical Ninja deviates from the standard running/jumping/fighting games in several important ways. The first and foremost of these features is the actual presentation of the game. Rather than taking the realistic, gut-wrenching approach of most games in this field, *Kid Niki* uses over-blown, cartoon-type images to set the tone for each of the battles. This unique approach adds a style and flavor to a game that otherwise could have been labeled as "yet another variation of a familiar theme."

Unlike the coin-op version of *Kid Niki* (which played to only lackluster audiences in the arcades), the NES version by Irem Corp. utilizes many enhancements that produce even greater depth in the straightforward game play. By including many secret rooms that are filled with bonus points as well as special weapons which increase available options, the designers of *Kid Niki* have increased the playability of the game immensely. The game benefits from these enhancements, making the entire contest that much more enjoyable.

Kid Niki: Radical Ninja is a welcome change-of-pace from Data East, a



Kid Niki

company that has been relying on licensed product in the arcades for years. *Kid Niki* succeeds on many levels using proven play concepts within a wholly-unique environment to produce game action that is definitely worth a look!

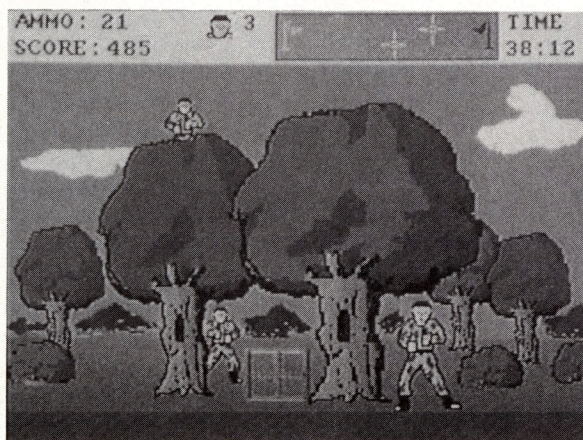
- SR

Gotcha! (LJN/NES)

Support for the NES peripherals (*Zapper* and the now-defunct *R.O.B.*) has been annoyingly absent since the introduction of the system in 1986. Now LJN is seeking to remedy this situation with the release of *Gotcha!*, a gun game that offers more than just shooting thrills.

Gotcha requires the use of both a flat pad controller as well as the *Zapper* light gun. The *Zapper* is used in a traditional manner to eliminate the opponents that constantly fill the screen. The controller, meanwhile, directs the movement of your character either left or right; scrolling the background scenery in tandem with your movements. Using this interesting set-up, you must maneuver across an ever-changing landscape and locate the flag of your rival team. After shooting the flag to secure it, you must make your way back to your base to end the round.

Beyond the novelty of the double controllers, the game play in *Gotcha!* is rather simplistic. The opposing team members appear on the screen, take a foothold, and, if not eliminated in time,



Gotcha

will let loose an unavoidable volley of fire from their Gotcha! paint guns. The action speeds up at a steady pace, however, and when the other team begins to make off with your flag, the game really heats up!

Gotcha! is an interesting target shoot, and a much-welcomed addition to the Zapper line. LJN has done an admirable job with the game. From graphics to music to game play, Gotcha! is a top notch effort. The screen scrolls smoothly behind vibrant and richly detailed characters and backgrounds.

While the implementation of the Gotcha! scenario may sound a bit awkward, the dual activity from both the light gun and the directional controller only serves to heighten game excitement. It's an interesting concept that could have easily failed, but with the supporting features of the game, Gotcha! stands out as a very fun and original contest!

- SH

Freedom Force (Sunsoft/NES)

Sunsoft's latest, Freedom Force, will take a true marksman to master. Assuming the role of Rad Rex, terrorist-basher and soldier of fortune, you must fight off a wide range of assorted bad guys so mean they make Darth Vader look like Captain Kangaroo! There are five levels of play leading to a climatic showdown with the baddest of the bad, Eugene Extreme, at his high-rise hideout.

Freedom Force marks yet another landmark release for Sunsoft. Hot on the heels of their fantastic rendition of Spy Hunter, Sunsoft continues its success with this great game for use with the Zapper light gun. Unlike other gun games, however, Freedom Force incorporates a number of play concepts with some fantastic scrolling graphics that are guaranteed to keep you in the action!

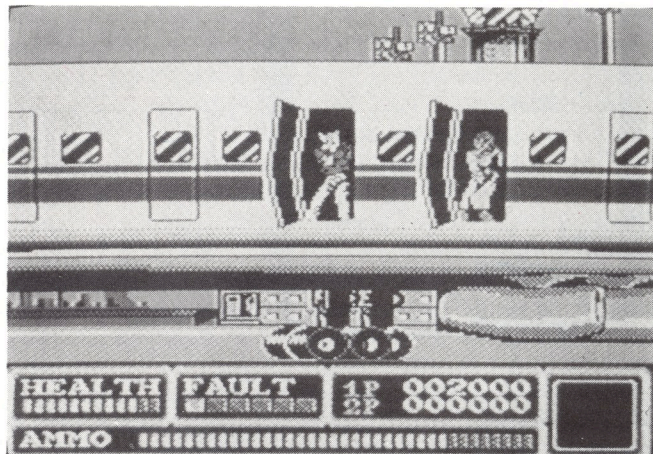
The action unfolds at the airport where Eugene's gang has hijacked a plane and is holding the passengers at bay. With your Zapper in hand, you must pick off the thugs as they appear from open doors. Don't wait too long or they'll open fire on you! And watch out for the hostages that some of these

no good lawbreakers are using as shields. Accidentally hitting three of the innocent captives also relieves you of duty!

The second scene takes place with the enemy agents making their way towards the airport terminal, popping out of windows and shooting from behind bystanders. Inside the terminal, meanwhile, the gang sporadically makes appearances from behind lamp posts and furniture.

Once outside of the airport the action shifts to a park where elite assassins appear from all directions. This leads to a final showdown with the master terrorist on his home turf. Eliminating Eugene and his special group of terrorists results in the explosive demise of the enemy hideout and the return of your kidnapped girlfriend.

Freedom Force spices up this otherwise straightforward theme by offering a variety of weapons and other incentives along the way. The game has been designed to have a definite beginning, middle, and end, increasing the overall enjoyment and elevating the title to something more than just a shooting



Freedom Force

contest. There's mystery and intrigue, and the vast assortment of game characters and settings make the challenges even more enjoyable; the ending even more rewarding.

Sunsoft has also livened up Freedom Force with some of the best graphics and animation you can find on the Nintendo Entertainment System. Each member has his own distinct personality, and each new scene brings with it a whole new cast. The backgrounds scroll beautifully and are detailed to include special visual treats like landing airplanes at the airport and pedestrians in the park. The whole package is rounded out with some jazzy *(continued on page 46)*

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Fighting Golf (SNK/NES)

Everything you could want in a golf game and more has been packaged into Fighting Golf from SNK. From a select cast of four different golfers who each boast their own personal traits, to a complete set of clubs (including woods and irons), to two full eighteen hole courses (USA and Japan), Fighting Golf delivers more options and versatility than almost any other sports game currently available for the NES. A multi-player feature that allows up to four people to challenge strokes, as well as a "Nassau" game that lets the computer participate, and a hole-by-hole "Practice" game, round out the menu of options.

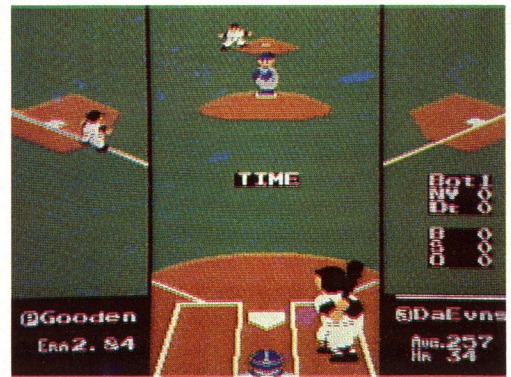
After you've made it to the tee, you can select any one of three isolated angles (your position, the layout of that hole, and the green) before you make your shot. Once you are familiar with the course, you must use the directional cursor to line up your drive, taking

the changing wind speed into consideration and being careful to avoid any trees or hazards. After you're satisfied with the angle of your shot, you must select the appropriate club and use the power meter to determine the strength and follow-through of the stroke.

Fighting Golf does a wonderful job of blending the strategy of golf with the fast action reflexes of the best arcade games. While a simple knowledge of the various clubs helps, it's not necessary since in most cases the game serves as a master caddie and selects the correct clubs for you. Lining up the shots to accommodate for the wind takes time to master, while the reflex meter maintains an exciting and challenging tone to play.

Fighting Golf also supports the game play with some excellent visuals and animation. The majority of the screen graphics are dedicated to an amazing multi-angle view of the action that follows the ball from the club using a variety of detailed backgrounds. The effect generated is much like that of a television camera that tracks the ball throughout its flight. The main characters of Fighting Golf are also animated, beating their feet on the ground when you hit a hazard, and giving the thumbs up when a hole is scored under par.

Fighting Golf is without a doubt the best golfing game ever made. Its interaction and challenge are equaled only by an attention to detail that is un-



RBI Baseball

surpassed. Fighting Golf provides plenty of thrills and stands out not only as one of the best sports games ever made, but as one of the best carts available for the NES.

R.B.I. Baseball (Tengen/NES)

One of the most popular games ever released in Japan, RBI Baseball reproduces the fun and excitement of our nation's favorite pastime brilliantly. RBI Baseball captures all the splendor and strategy of the game, with plenty of personalized features and subtleties ranging from the fleet feet of Willie McGee to the stinging fast ball of Nolan Ryan.

You begin play by choosing which of the ten Tengen teams you would like to represent. The Tengen league includes pro clubs like the Detroit Tigers, New York Mets, and even the American and National League All-Stars. Each of the teams contain all of the world-famous players; duplicating



Fighting Golf

Double Dragon (Tradewest/NES)



Double Dragon

their abilities by perfectly matching their strengths and weaknesses. RBI Baseball is the only video baseball game to have permission from the Major League Players Association to use the names and likenesses of the real pros!

Once a team has been selected you head for the plate for an over-the-shoulder view of the pitch. Depending on the timing of your swing, the baseball will sail into the stands, go foul, rip through the infield, or fall into the catcher's mitt for a ball or strike. You can even bunt and get hit by wild pitches!

You must carefully negotiate the bases while on offense by using the 'A' and 'B' buttons to advance and return. Base runners can try to steal, but if they're not quick enough be ready to get caught in a run down! When you have massed three outs, the sides switch and you take to the mound to pitch and field.

RBI Baseball also has a wonderful selection of animated sequences and musical backdrops to add to the game's enjoyment. A fireworks display greets home runs slammed out of the park, and a colorful newspaper reports on your team's standings after each of the nine games.

The boys of summer are back and thanks to RBI Baseball, the game will never be played the same! RBI Baseball is a faithful copy of its namesake and a virtual duplicate of the coin-op game of the same name. Its lifelike movement, simple game play, and surplus action elevate RBI Baseball to the top of the standings! It's no contest...RBI Baseball is a grand slam hit!

One of the most popular arcade games of 1987, Double Dragon is definitely one of the most anticipated home games of this year. Boasting a multitude of features in its coin-op format, Double Dragon could have easily failed when it was translated for play on the Nintendo Entertainment System. Luckily, the game has been done complete justice; even surpassing the quality of the arcade machine that it's based on!

Double Dragon follows the story of two brothers out to save their city from a gang of thugs. Using a variety of martial arts techniques, you must beat up the various bad guys who stand in your way while avoiding their weapons and return blows. Overcoming the obstacles and avoiding the dangers that lie in your path eventually lead you to a confrontation with a boss villain packing a mean machine gun and the secrets to your journey.

A varied cast of crazies pursue you on your quest, including whip-toting women and neanderthal clones. Each character has his or her own trademark personality, with some of the enemies even carrying clubs and barrels that can be retrieved (and used against them) after they've fallen!

While Double Dragon has equaled the visual and audio excellence of the arcade attraction, it has elaborated the game play in several areas to include challenging new scenes that you won't even find in the quarter-eating coin-op. There's also a unique point system worked into the home version of Double Dragon that enables your character to learn better fighting techniques as you advance! These added screens and strategic incentives make Double Dragon for the NES an even better buy!

The Tradewest home version not only provides these options, it also includes a special head to head vs. mode that lets you and a friend depict any of the Double Dragon characters and duke it out! This "game within a game" is a welcome surprise that's sure to keep your interest even if you do finish the main Double Dragon adventure. The vs. mode packs all the high quality graphics and music of the regular Double Dragon game into an exciting two-player sparring match that stands well on its own!

There's a lot more that could be said about Double Dragon, but that can be summed up best in four words: "Don't miss this game!" Double Dragon has all of the features that made the arcade game so popular. This combined with extra enhancements earn it the honor of the best coin-op to home video game translation ever... a definite classic!

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musical tracks that sound like they've come straight from a James Bond flick.

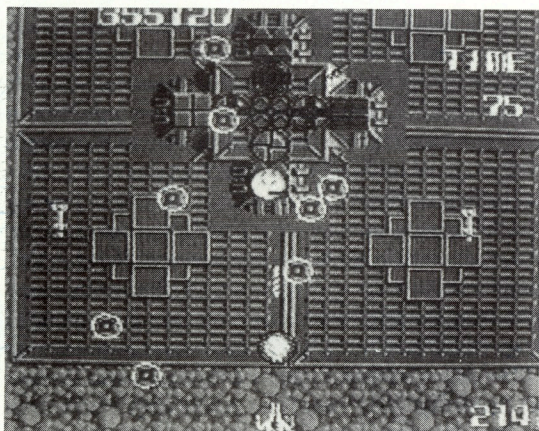
All in all, Freedom Force is an undeniable hit! It's one of the few Zapper games that is supported properly beyond its shoot-it-out theme, and the wide number of interactive targets make it one of the most action-packed gun games available for any system. If you're looking for a true test of your shooting skills, don't pass this cart up. It's got everything you could ever want!

- SR

Zanac
(FCI/NES)

Here comes yet another slide-and-shoot space game for the Nintendo Entertainment System, this time courtesy of FCI. Zanac delivers a lot more than you may expect from your typical blaster, thanks in part to a host of unique power-ups and a special feature that gauges your skill and plays accordingly. Also mixed into the twelve game levels are a wide assortment of alien targets with more than enough challenges to keep even the best space pilots occupied!

Each round takes place over a progressively sinister alien landscape dotted with cannons and protected by a fleet of fast-moving craft. Your Zanac space fighter is equipped with two types of weapons systems; a pulse laser that shoots directly ahead and an option gun that is multi-directional. There are seven other types of weaponry that can be picked up along the way. These are identified by number, and range from shields that protect your ship to energy beams that destroy everything in your path.



Zanac

Outside of the unique power-up features that enable you to customize your fighter to a particular area, Zanac is little more than a straight shoot-em-up. The pure intensity of the alien forces, however, make the game highly playable and very enjoyable. The game has excellent graphics and music as well, taking full advantage of all of Nintendo's capabilities.

Zanac is a true shooting contest that takes a fair amount of skill to complete. Zanac is tailor made for those of you who wouldn't mind another space game for your Nintendo Entertainment System. Zanac gets a confident thumbs-up for having a little more than the competition.

- SR

Ikari Warriors II: Victory Road
(SNK/NES)

When we last left Vince and Paul they had broken through the enemy's defenses, rushed the headquarters of the evil dictator, and saved their Colonel. In appreciation of their heroic deed, General Kawasaki rewarded video's dynamic duo with a special airplane to take back to their homeland for some well deserved rest and relaxation.

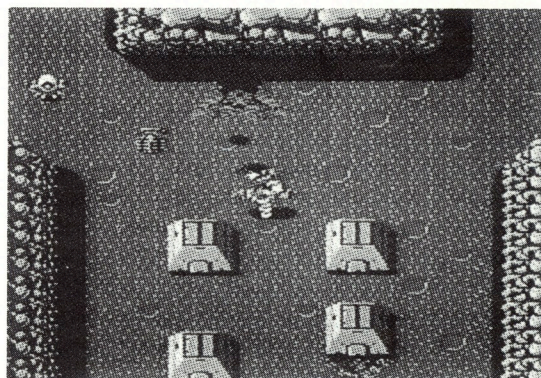
In Ikari Warriors II: Victory Road, we again join the heroes, but this time in a very different setting. A warrior from the future has delivered a message to return with him and defeat the tyrant Zang Zip who has enslaved the people of Earth. Whisked through a time warp,

Vince and Paul continue their struggle to return peace through superior firepower!

As in Ikari Warriors, Victory Road is an intense shooting battle. The game concept of both titles is virtually the same - destroy everything in sight while looking for hidden weapons and bonus items. Ikari Warriors allowed only limited use of the various secret weapons, but Victory Road has a special subscreen that can easily be called up with the select button. This is a good feature and by selec-

tively picking and choosing your weapons, there isn't an adversary which can't be beaten. Don't plan on beginning the game with a full complement of weapons, however, because like Ikari Warriors everything is hidden under other objects including some of the bad guys! Wings, armor, and thunder (to destroy all the enemies on the screen) are but a few of the many helpful power-ups you'll encounter during your adventure.

Another new addition to the Ikari theme that wasn't even in the arcade game is the Barshop. Each stage provides you with a chance to increase your Heart Marks (which are scattered across the landscape) or do some shopping for extra equipment. If you are running low on some of your power-up items you can buy them here from the resident Soldier of Fortune. And, if you're a bit short on Hearts, you can take on one of the three bounty hunters sitting at the bar. These guys are just



Ikari Warriors II: Victory Road

waiting for a fight, and if you beat them you'll get additional Heart Marks.

About the only problem with Victory Road is the game's difficulty. SNK has set the "play advancement curve" so high that, like Ikari Warriors, Victory Road quickly becomes a lesson in futility. They have wisely programmed a continue feature into the game (pushing A, B, B, A, after you lose your life) to allow average players to advance further, but this can be used as often as you like. A limited number of continues, like we're beginning to see in some of the new Sega games, would have been a perfect compromise. The voice feature could have also been a bit better.

Other than these minor problems, the game is outstanding! With its excellent

graphics, smooth scrolling, and very challenging game play, Ikari Warriors II: Victory Road is every bit as good as Ikari Warriors; maybe even better. Thumbs up!

Goonies II (Konami/NES)

Here's an ingenious concept! Take the arcade-style action from the Goonies coin-op game and combine it with a detailed first-person adventure. Throw in multiple levels of play and interactive dialogue and you not only have a great game, you've got Konami's new Goonies II!

Like in the arcade, you assume the role of Mikey the last of the Goonie kids. That wicked woman, Ma Fratelli, has kidnapped your Goonie pals and has hidden them throughout her subterranean home. You'll find secrets and surprises of all kinds as you battle the nasty Fratelli brothers and the dangers of the underground, looking for helpful items as well as your best friend Annie the Mermaid.

Goonies II is basically divided into two very separate sections. The action scenes resemble those of the Goonies arcade game, with strange creatures roaming the walkways around the Fratelli house. These rounds scroll very smoothly to expose all kinds of surroundings (an attic, bridge, underground sea), and ladders and doors are scattered about each level offering quick and easy escape from tight situations.

The adventure sequences, meanwhile, provide a very different perspective on play. The box-like corridors and rooms connect various action scenes and hold a number of special weapons and power-ups that aid in the completion of the quest. Banging on walls could expose a hidden item, or maybe a door, or maybe even a new and more powerful weapon!

It's hard to classify Goonies II as an arcade game or an adventure game, since it's a little bit of both. The game doesn't sacrifice one aspect of the game for the other, however, which provides very balanced and enjoyable play. The individual scenes each add their own benefits to the overall journey, and there's no way to complete the game without first mastering both of the sequences.

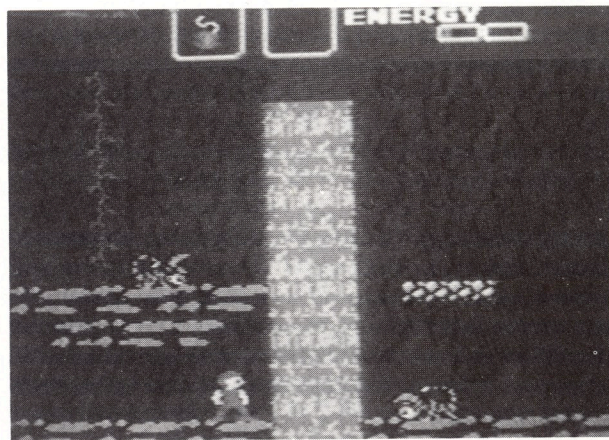
Neither one of the scenes could really support the whole title, but by wisely combining them Konami has produced a very satisfying game with wide appeal. There are different musical tracks for each of the sequences (including the familiar Cyndi Lauper theme music from the movie) as well as graphic drawings of dozens of rooms.

Goonies II is a great game that is sure to get fans of arcade video games interested in the mysterious world of role-playing. Although it's an elaborate adventure, the game comes equipped with a Password function that returns you to your current position with all of your magic implements at a later date. For its crisp execution and wonderful presentation of two separate play themes, Goonies II gets an enthusiastic vote of approval!

- SR

Zaxxon 3-D (Sega/SMS)

Back in the days of the first video game boom, Sega released a revolutionary outer space shoot-em-up called Zaxxon. Zaxxon was revolutionary in several ways, the most notable of which



Goonies II

was the outstanding diagonally scrolling graphics which simulated depth and a true field of movement. Zaxxon quickly took the nation by storm, rising to the top of both the arcade and home charts.


Now that video games are on the rebound from those days, Sega has gone back into its archives and dusted Zaxxon off. This time, though, Sega has added a few new high-tech bells and whistles, namely three-dimensional graphics. The new game, Zaxxon 3-D, no longer uses the trademark three-quarters perspective scrolling of its namesake (first person perspective graphics are used in tandem with Sega's special 3-D glasses), but the 3-D results are better than the original could ever have hoped to be.

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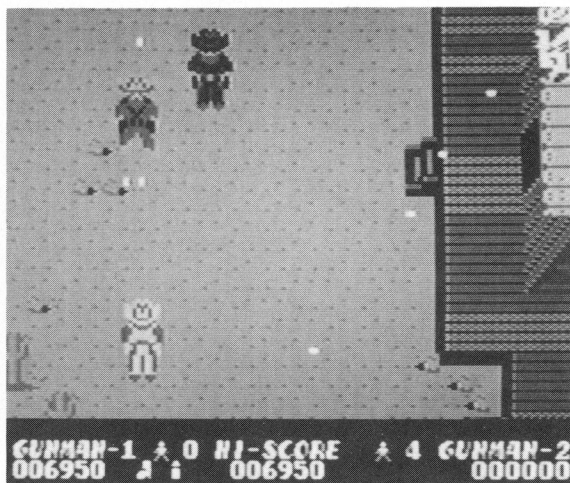
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Gun.Smoke

If you're not familiar with the old Zaxxon, your job is to defeat the Vargan Military Empire which has declared war against Earth and is slowly making its way to our planet. You, of course, are the only person who can save us, so you hop in your special Zaxxon one-man fighter and head off into deep space.

The Vargans are prepared with a complete armada of fortresses containing fuel reserves, floating cannons, and homing missiles. Each alien stronghold is protected by a squadron of Vargan Death Fighters and trailing behind the warships is a dangerous mothership that is also armed to the hilt.

The game consists of three distinct sections of play. The first takes place in outer space, where you have a full field of movement. Death fighters approach and you must react rapidly to their attacks or be blown to bits. Eliminating one group of ships immediately invites another strike.

If you make it through the first phase, you must be ready for the gauntlet inside the trench-type battle tunnel above the alien fortress. You can replenish you depleted fuel supply by shooting the fuel tanks that are located on the surface of the giant ship, along with cannons and ground tanks. Watch out for launching missiles and be careful not to slam into the walls while maneuvering through the small holes in the rapidly approaching (and sometimes electrified) barriers.

Survive this task and the Vargan Mothership is next. No tricks here, just launch a volley of well-placed shots at the red spot on the ship. If you succeed

it's on to the next, more challenging, level of play.

This is the second in a series of eight 3-D games planned for release this year for the SMS. While the initial setup with the glasses and game is costly, the realism of the sharp 3-D images has to be seen to be believed! Missiles fly out of the screen, and the alien platforms seem to stretch into infinity!

Zaxxon 3-D is an outstanding game and worthy of a recommendation. It should be noted that you

can play the game without the Sega Scope glasses in 2-D as well (press the pause button when the title screen comes up, then move the joystick to the appropriate selection and press the pause button again). While the game is not quite as thrilling, it is still every bit as good! Zaxxon 3-D is a great follow-up to Sega's first 3-D offering, Missile Defense 3-D, and provides a clear indication that Sega is quickly becoming the leader in this exciting new field of gaming!

- ES

Gunsmoke (Capcom/NES)

Saddle up "pardner" and find out the way the west was really won! Gunsmoke is the excellent follow-up to Capcom's Commando game. This time, however, the action is set in the old west where you must rescue innocent townspeople from the wrath of a dozen outlaws and their gangs.

At first glance the game play is simple and straightforward. You shoot the various gun-totin' bad guys and avoid the fatal rain of gunfire that is showered upon your character, Billy Bob. Gunsmoke expands upon this premise by including special sub-screens that make better weapons and other power-ups available. This is a great feature, reminiscent of the under-

ground caves in Commando, that you won't find in the arcade.

Gunsmoke also features other enhancements hidden inside of rain barrels that are scattered about each level. Shooting the barrels exposes the power-up items which include enhanced firing abilities, quicker speed, and even a horse! Running over the item adds it to Billy Bob's cache.

Gunsmoke is divided into separate rounds with a boss outlaw hiding at the end of each. These main villains require multiple hits to eliminate and possess greater capabilities than their cohorts. Killing a boss awards bonus points and transports Billy Bob to the next, more challenging level of play.

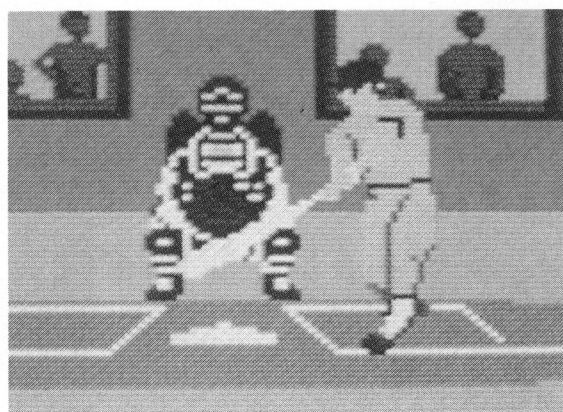
Gunsmoke is a solid game with enough shooting action to keep even the most fanatical game players thoroughly occupied. The game is executed with a great attention to detail with scrolling graphics and some of the most colorful animation available for the Nintendo system . . . another outstanding game from Capcom!

- SR

Bases Loaded (Jaleco/NES)

Ah, it's spring time once again and to sports fans that can only mean one thing...it's time for baseball! To game players though, it means a whole new generation of baseball simulations led by Jaleco's fantastic new Bases Loaded.

Bases Loaded stands out for a number of reasons. To start with, Bases Loaded is currently the most powerful game cartridge for the NES, with over three megabits of memory (two



Bases Loaded

megabits in programming and one megabit in graphics). In addition, a good portion of the memory is dedicated to voice simulation!

Lots of memory and nice voice effects, however, don't guarantee a great game. But in this case the programmers at Jaleco have put everything together perfectly, including virtually everything inherent to real baseball.

You can play *Bases Loaded* against the computer or another friend. If you choose the computer as your opponent get ready for a full season of play. The game comes equipped with a 'password' feature that keeps track of how well you do in a complete 132 game season!

After selecting your team (fictitious teams with fictitious players from Hawaii, New Jersey, etc.), you choose the starting pitcher. There are twelve to pick from, each with his own ERA and distinct personality. Some are right-handed and some are lefties, and each comes with his own strengths and weaknesses.

Now it's time to play ball! As the pitcher, you have a wide choice of pitches to throw. Since the game provides a special isolated over-the-shoulder view of play, you can easily see the results of your pitches and swings. Some of the available pitches are fast, medium, and slow balls targeted for any one of nine different positions ranging from high and outside to straight down the middle to low and inside.

While batting you have an equally diverse number of selections. You can step into a pitch, back out of the pitch, or perform any combination of the above. You can also bunt by moving the bat up or down. True to life, some of the sluggers are right-handed while others bat left-handed.

Fielding the other team's hits is made easier by the computer. It selects the player that is closest to ball and allows you to control that player to the proper position to make the play. If you're really good you can make diving catches to impress your opponent, but if you miss the ball could bounce over your head! Once you get the ball you can throw to any base for the out.

The features don't stop there. You can pick off base runners, steal bases, bring in relief pitchers, select pinch hit-

ters and more! The voice keeps pace with the action, calling strikes, balls, outs, and if you feel real mean, you can throw a high and inside fast ball and bean the batter.

Overall, *Bases Loaded* is about as real as possible. While you can't choose your favorite teams, and you won't recognize any of the players by name, it does provide some of the most extensive play mechanics ever seen. If you're looking for a great baseball game with lifelike action and plenty of features, then *Bases Loaded* may be for you.

- ES

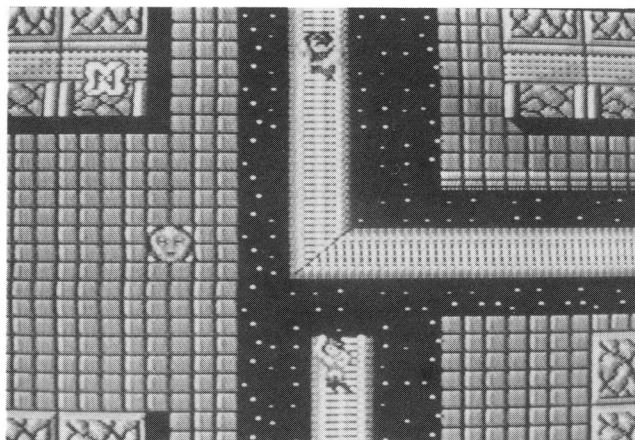
Alien Syndrome (Sega/SMS)

If you combine the best features of a multi-screen maze game with those of a good, challenging shoot-em-up and throw in two megabits of cartridge memory, what do you get? If you have the Sega Master System you end up with an outstanding home version of the popular arcade game, *Alien Syndrome*.

The game is set in the year 2089. The typical fleet of aliens is coming to take over the Earth. The best of our Command Troopers couldn't do anything but get themselves captured. Now, the survival of the entire planet and your comrades rests on your shoulders.

As soon as you land on the first of the alien's seven ships, you know you're in trouble. The ship is so big that you could quickly become lost and to make matters worse, the aliens have activated a special bomb that will eliminate you and your stranded comrades if you take too long!

Luckily, you discover that advanced weapons such as a flame thrower, laser, and bombs, are waiting in different parts of each ship. There are even warp doors which take you to different parts of the ship and special mystery weapons that can make you invincible for short periods of time.



Alien Syndrome

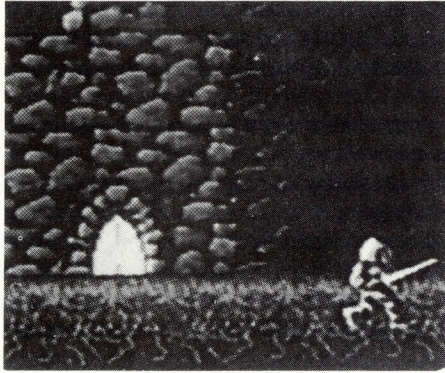
Your friends are scattered about each ship, waiting to be rescued. Retrieving your comrades awards extra points, and once enough have been picked up you can escape through an exit door. Here, the boss alien awaits with his powerful abilities. It takes several shots to destroy these monsters, but once you do the battle proceeds to the next infested ship.

Overall, Sega has done a marvelous job of translating the arcade game. There's plenty of activity, and the graphics and sound effects are very convincing. While I would have liked to have seen a two-person cooperative option, like that in the coin-op, the game still comes off as one of Sega's best. *Alien Syndrome* is a very hard game, however, and it may become frustrating for some. Otherwise, it stands out as a great addition to the Sega library.

- ES

Wizards and Warriors (Acclaim/NES)

Since the introduction of Nintendo's the *Legend of Zelda* last year, gamers everywhere have been clamoring for adventure games that duplicate the action and excitement that *Zelda* delivered. Many of the leading third-party manufacturers have unveiled adventure games of their own, but few have been able to capture the charm, mystery, and excitement of *Zelda*. Enter into this crowded field a new entry from Acclaim Entertainment. *Wizards and Warriors* doesn't rely on



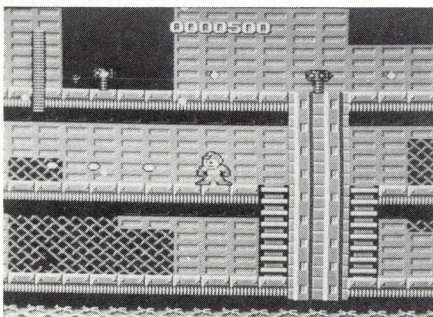
Wizards and Warriors

the same mix of strategy and fighting that *Zelda* and her followers do, but instead offers us a unique three-dimensional environment that requires planning and good arcade-skills to overcome.

You're cast into the role of Kuros, a brave knight who has been sent to vanquish the wizard Makhil. This mad magician has captured the princesses of the kingdom and transformed the land into a dangerous place filled with monsters and beasts of all sorts.

Play begins on the outskirts of the kingdom, and steadily progresses to Makhil's castle. Once inside the castle you must locate the five princesses who are being help captive. This leads to a final confrontation with Makhil and the game's end.

Completing *Wizards and Warriors* is not a herculean task, but it does take quite a while to get down the correct paths through each of the various landscapes. You must maneuver your character up walls by jumping on short ledges and through forests by jumping



Mega Man

from tree to tree. Once inside the castle walls, the layout of each round takes another turn, with an even greater assortment of objects to interact with.

You don't travel alone in *Wizards and Warriors*. There's an enormous cast of evil characters, each with his own personality and individual traits. There are new creatures for nearly every scene. This variety, combined with the sheer size of the *Wizards and Warriors* universe is simply staggering!

The graphics resolution is up to par and the animation in many of the scenes is truly top notch. The game suffers from a slightly dulled color scheme, but this is only a minor distraction. The game boasts a mixed selection of contact sounds, but the whole package is supported by great music that lends atmosphere to your quest.

Wizards and Warriors is well-presented, plays well, and is supported with just the right amount of audio and visual flair to appeal to gamers everywhere. Even though it is unlike any of the other adventure games currently available, it has enough playability to hook any hard-core adventurer. If you're an avid adventure game enthusiast and are looking for a good quest, this is a must-have cart.

- SH

Mega Man (Capcom/NES)

Mega Man from Capcom is one of the most delightful surprises you'll ever find for the NES. While it doesn't have a famous arcade name to fall back on, the game does possess enough of the proven play concepts and high-action sequences that are found in the very best coin-op video games.

Mega Man is a running, jumping, shooting, strategy game that is divided into six distinct levels. Each of the selectable stages are personalized with both the caricature and name of the boss villain who occupies that segment of the game. *Ice Man*, *Cut Man*, *Fire Man*, and *Bomb Man*

are but a few of the opponents you must face.

The surroundings and layout of each of the six levels reflects the powers of the final bad guys. When fighting in the world of *Ice Man*, for instance, you'll quickly notice that many of the ledges and walkways are slick. The same holds true for *Fire Man*, where pools of flame and fireballs fill the screen.

Beyond the basic goal of eliminating the boss of each round, *Mega Man* introduces a number of other incentives that include hidden power-ups, energy balls, free men, and extra ammo. One of the most interesting features of *Mega Man* is the weapon select and enhancements. Once you defeat the end character, you are awarded his special weapon. Consequently, you become more powerful with each successive boss that is vanquished.

Each of the individual rounds have enough content and length to make them play like separate games. The rounds are also comprised of several different themes, so that as the areas change, so do the challenges that await. With six wholly original levels of play, the attraction of *Mega Man* is multiplied even more.

Mega Man also makes fantastic use out of the animation capabilities of the NES. Each of the characters has its own identifying expressions to increase player recognition, and even *Mega Man* is drawn with many lifelike appearances. The rest of the graphics are made up mostly of solid colors, but the scrolling and movement of the background scenery is accomplished very smoothly.

Mega Man also excels on other levels, including great music and sound effects. Each different rounds of play has its own musical score. It's a nice enhancement that makes the game even more captivating.

You can't go wrong with *Mega Man*. It has enough variety and challenge to appeal to practically every type of player, and enough substance to sustain interest long after you buy the game. The execution is flawless and although the game does have a minor continuity problem, the entertainment it offers greatly outweighs any shortcomings. *Mega Man* is winner by any sense of the name. Don't miss it!

- SH

LOGON:

By Jim Gilliam, John Styles, and Todd Rodgers

ORIGINAL HITS AND ARCADE FAVORITES...

The computer gaming market is growing! Led by some of the biggest names (Data East, Konami, and very soon Taito) in the coin-op arena, expect to see more faithful translations of popular arcade titles in the year to come. Following this groundswell of support are more established players like Accolade and Mindscape who are betting on their original versions of classics such as Pole Position, Out Run, and Gauntlet.

Many new companies are expressing confidence in the market for quality arcade-style software. Almost all of the top games of 1987 will be finding their way to computer screens in the coming months, insuring a steady flow of hot properties that will deliver all the excitement and action you've come to expect.

*Expect Data East to continue their line of successful translations with Kid Niki, Radical Ninja, Karnov, and the SNK mega-hit Victory Road. Also look for Data East to bring the cult favorite TNK III to the Commodore, as well as Q*Bert and other entries into their "Moving Target" series.*

Taito is getting ready to make a big splash in the computer software field. Can't give out any details now, but look for a complete story on the exciting expansion of the world's premier game maker in the expanded computer gaming section of the next Electronic Game Player.

We'll be increasing the number of pages devoted to computer gaming in the next and all future editions of Electronic Game Player to more thoroughly report on all the developments and review all the new games. It's just another one of the many benefits you'll receive from each issue of THE Computer and Video Game Resource!

Test Drive

(Accolade/C-64 and Amiga)

Have you ever wondered what it's like to drive a Ferrari Testarossa? How about a Lamborghini Countach. Now the people at Accolade have given you the chance to feel some real power on wheels with Test Drive. Equipped with your favorite sports car and a trusty radar detector, you traverse twisting mountain roads and move between slower moving cars to reach the gas station that waits at the top of each hill. But be careful, police are always waiting to catch hot shots in "hot" cars. You must reach the top in the least amount of time for the highest scores and a chance to challenge other roads.

In addition to the Ferrari and Lamborghini, you can also choose from the Porsche 911 Turbo, the Lotus Turbo Esprit, or the Chevy Corvette. Each car has a distinctive style, from the extraordinary handling and digital dash of the Corvette, to the awesome acceleration and characteristic gate-like shifter of the Ferrari. Each car also carries its own statistics, like top speed and lateral acceleration, along with a very good depiction of the car that approaches photographic quality in the Amiga version.

A joystick is used to steer and shift your car up the hill. Push the joystick forward in neutral to rev the engine, then press the fire button and listen to your tires scream. Hit the red-line and shift into your next gear. Should simply hit-

ting the fire button be too mundane, the game has the option of using actual shifting patterns. Be careful not to crash; you only get five chances to reach the top of the hill. You can out run a police car, but if he passes you and you don't stop, he will ram you and the game ends.

The game graphics are as good as you can get. You can even tell what types of cars you are passing, whether it's an Aerostar or a Crown Victoria. Each dashboard is distinct and operates differently, as do the shifters. There is also a unique name and marquee for each gas station. In the Amiga, some small effects are added, the most interesting of which is watching bugs hit your windshield with a satisfying "splat."

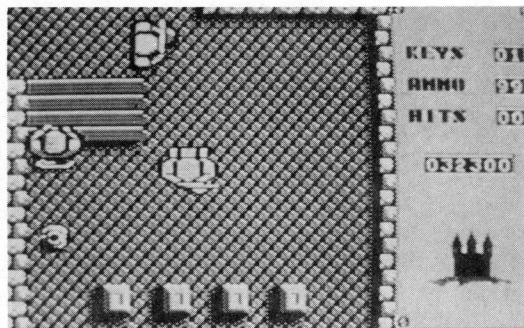
The sound is also exceptional, from the opening theme to the sharp alert of your radar detector. The effects include the realistic sounds of your gears shifting or your tires squealing as you make a hard turn at high speed.

Test Drive proves to be a very addictive game. It taunts you with phrases like "What's the matter, couldn't find third?" to keep the action interesting. It would also be nice if Accolade could put out a data disk with different cars and new roads. But for now, Test Drive stands well on its own. The interaction is smooth, the visuals are crisp and colorful, and the game play rivals any other racing simulation currently on the market. A definite winner!

- JG



Test Drive



Into the Eagle's Nest (Mindscape/C-64-128)

Even though its name and box art may evoke the wrong impression, *Into the Eagle's Nest* is not a text adventure or a battle simulation. On the contrary, *Eagle's Nest* is another high quality action contest from Mindscape that delivers a lot more than just shoot-em-up thrills.

Into the Eagle's Nest is set around a Nazi-bashing World War II scenario. Three of the allies most competent saboteurs have been captured for interrogation at the Nazi fortress known as the Eagle's Nest. This stronghold is guarded by thousands of troops and has the distinction of being the art museum of the Nazi empire. Your mission is to infiltrate the castle, rescue your three comrades while retrieving as many of the stolen artifacts as possible, and blow up the castle with a cache of explosives that have been positioned beneath the building.

In spite of the detailed task you must perform, the game play is simple and straightforward. The joystick controls your character's movements on the screen, while the fire button releases bullets in the direction that you're facing.

As you proceed through the rooms and corridors that make up the castle, you'll encounter a variety of other objects in addition to the Nazi scum who shadow your footsteps. Keys are scattered about and must be picked up to unlock the many of the doors on each of the castle's four levels. You'll also find first aid and food that increases your stamina, and closed chests that can be shot open to reveal priceless

jewels, fatal explosives, or other valuables.

When you begin your mission you carry 99 rounds of ammo. This can be supplemented with extra shells that are stacked in certain areas, although you can never exceed 99 shots. There's also an elevator pass to descend into the lower portions of the castle.

The graphics here are absolutely wonderful! While animation is vir-

tually non-existent, the detailed characters and crisp backgrounds more than make up for the lack of movement. The whole screen scrolls, but unfortunately, it's not continuous. Nonetheless, the effect is still good.

The audio portion of the game is, however, not up to par with the rest of the game. There are very few sounds to accompany the action, but there is a well produced score that begins when your game ends.

Into the Eagle's Nest resembles the arcade mega-hit *Gauntlet* in more ways than one. But while *Gauntlet* failed to be little more than a battle for survival, *Eagle's Nest* succeeds as not only a great arcade-style game, but a great adventure/story as well. On that level, *Into the Eagle's Nest* is better than *Gauntlet* and much more appealing than the *Gauntlet* clones.

Into the Eagle's Nest is an addictive and entertaining piece of software that deserves special attention. The whole package packs an incredible punch with plenty of activity to bring you back for more. File this one under W for winner!

- JS

Speed Buggy (Data East/C-64)

Speed Buggy was one of my all time favorite arcade driving games. I've always been a fan of drivers like *Pole Position* and *Out Run*, but *Speed Buggy* is very different from all of those games. You race your way around cars in a simulated three-dimensional environment, but beyond that similar thread, *Speed Buggy* shares little in



common with other driving games. *Speed Buggy* invites you to run a slalom of gates while boosting your score with acrobatic maneuvers like jumping and riding on two wheels. There are also hidden bonus points and plenty of hazards along the five different race tracks.

Data East, the licensors of the multi-monitor arcade game, have done a fantastic job of bringing *Speed Buggy* (aka *Buggy Boy*) home to computer game players. The programmers have retained the feel of the more expensive coin-op by delivering duplicate tracks with the same turns and dangers, as well as smooth delivery that is aided by some superb visuals. The music and sound effects even approach the quality of the arcade machine, with different backgrounds for each of the separate race courses.

It's a shame, but *Speed Buggy* never achieved the wide-spread acceptance of *Pole Position* or *Out Run*. The game has a lot more going for it too! Sequential gate scoring and time incentives offer more strategy than those shift and steer contests, and *Speed Buggy* still has enough of those games' good qualities to make the title a solid investment. Throw in five different tracks filled with bridges, tunnels, jumps, and wheelies, and *Speed Buggy* becomes even more attractive.

If you saw the game in the arcade or not, don't pass this one up! *Speed Buggy* is not only a faithful rendition of a great game, it's also an outstanding game in its own right! Thumb's up Data East, you score another perfect 10!

- JS

Card Sharks (Accolade/C-64 & 128)

Ever feel like a game of hearts? Or have you ever wanted to play a rapid-fire game of blackjack, but were all by yourself? Did you ever want to play poker with the world's most powerful leaders? Accolade's Card Sharks lets you do all this and more with some fast card action that captures all the subtleties and all the fun of big-time gambling, with very few of the risks. Unlike most card simulations, Card Sharks is filled with dialogue, colorful animation, and the likenesses of three fictional characters as well as the three power brokers: Reagan, Thatcher, and Gorbachev.

Unlike many computer card games, Card Sharks uses crisp animation and humorous wit to keep the game at a quick pace. Each of the three card games featured on the disk are played by standard rules, with a full range of betting options available to both you and the computer players.

Card Sharks includes three different versions of poker, each featuring a 52 card deck and a \$1 ante. Five card draw, standard seven card stud, and Texas Hold'Em rules poker that guarantees some big rewards! Hearts and Blackjack are also represented in a very conventional manner.

Card Sharks does a good job of overcoming many of the problems that computer card games often encounter. But instead of spotlighting an invisible dealer, Card Sharks boosts its appeal by featuring a variety of personalities that include our world leaders. Each one of these players are animated to reflect their cards, their position in the game, and their winnings.

Each of the different characters also speak to one another and to you via cartoon-like balloons that appear above their heads as they speak. The dialogue ranges from the sublime to the side-splitting, and copies the attitudes and the accents of each of the players. Gorbie's anti-capitalistic rhetoric is joined by Reagan's cowboy talk as they argue back and forth. It's a terrific effect that adds tremendous appeal to the game and elevates it high above similar efforts.

Card Sharks is an outstanding game that offers popular card games in an

entertaining and interactive format. Card Sharks has plenty of action against bright, funny people with individual personalities that will have you on the floor! Card Sharks is more than a great card game, it's fun to watch and fun to play. And providing you don't mind that you can't cash in your chips for real green, even you computer buffs in Vegas should find this one well worth the price!

- TR

TNK III and Q*Bert (Data East/C-64 & 128)

These two releases are the latest in a new line of Data East computer games being offered under the "Moving Target" series. Both of these games carry a lower price tag, but not at the cost of game play. Each are fairly faithful in their reproduction of the arcade games on which they're based, but they're not carbon-copy replicas.

Q*Bert is probably the better of the two, with a familiar arcade theme that's never really been done justice on computer screens. There's no shooting, and you can't chase after your monster foes, it's a simple game of strategy and reflex that becomes progressively challenging as you alter the top colors of twenty-eight cubes stacked in a pyramid shape. Creatures pursue from every direction and balls bounce from top to bottom of the screen in an effort to topple poor Q*Bert from his home.

There are discs positioned in various locations that can be used to lure certain nasties from the pyramid and return Q*Bert to the top of the cube maze. All nine levels have been duplicated in the Data East computer version.

TNK III, on the other hand, relies on a much more familiar concept-warfare. TNK III presents the same tank-battle scenario that was popularized by Ikari Warriors, only within more defined boundaries. This was a highly underrated coin-op

game from SNK, that got no where near the attention it deserved. But, thanks to an apparent agreement between Data East and SNK, many of SNK's best arcade classics are finally getting their fair share of play on the Commodore 64/128.

TNK III is similar to Ikari Warriors, except that the action is confined to your tank. You traverse a number of hostile areas along your way to a final confrontation with the cruel dictator. The game also has a wide assortment of power-up features that enable you to increase your energy and available weapons, just like in the arcades! Outside of that feature the rest of the game is pretty straightforward. It's kill or be killed action at its best!

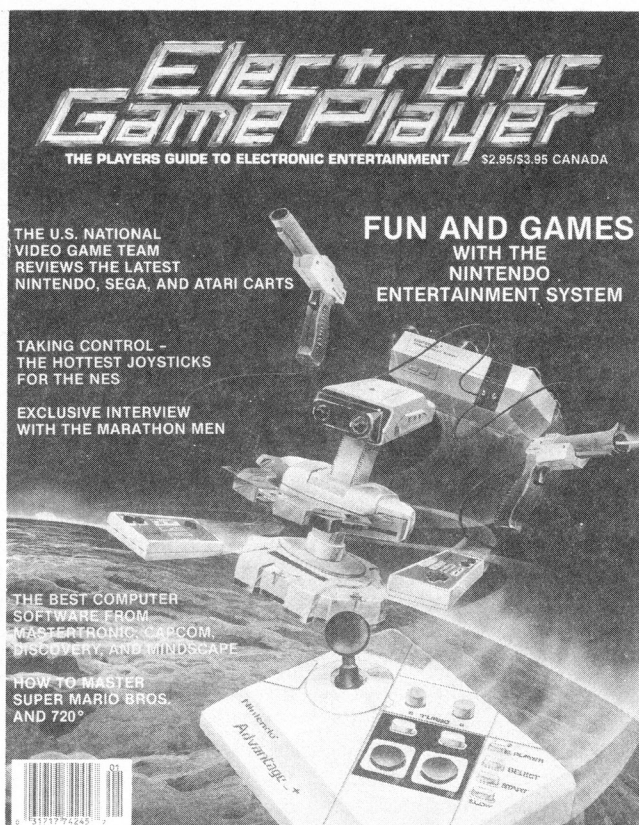
Both titles also do an adequate job of mocking the visual and audio quality of the more expensive arcade counterparts. The musical accompaniment is limited in both re-releases, and many of the animation and scrolling routines are unfortunately absent.

Aside from the cosmetic shortcomings, however, the Moving Targets series appears to be the best buy for the computer gaming fan's dollar. Future releases into this \$12.95 line are not all fully recognizable (they include Last Mission, Fire Trap, and Shackled), but if Data East can reproduce the feel and fun of the games in the same way Q*Bert and TNK III do, then it will be hard to go wrong.

- JS



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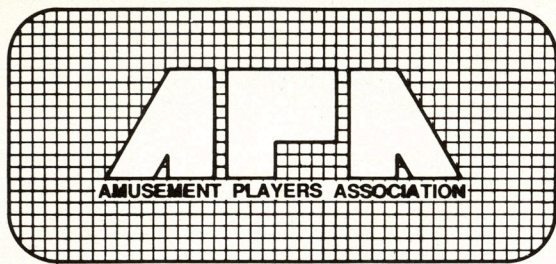
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COIN-OP GAMES

Video Games

GAME	NAME	SCORE	DATE	PLACE
720	Ron Perelman	527,100	07/28/87	Lakewood, CA
1942	N. Watson	12,172,270	n/a	Bridlington, U.K.
1943	Dave Collins	2,513,660	09/09/87	San Gabriel, CA
After Burner	Danny Carranza	14,543,800	01/27/88	Los Angeles, CA
Alien Syndrome	Donn Nauert	2,269,200	02/02/88	Orange, CA
APB	Greg Gibson	1,002,324	01/23/88	Placentia, CA
Arkanoid	Mike Chase	1,366,640	09/23/87	Houston, TX
Black Tiger	Jim Jung	1,090,100	09/17/87	Anaheim, CA
Bubble Bobble	Keith Bradley	4,793,200	n/a	Blackburn, U.K.
Cheyenne	Donn Nauert	319,209,350	06/27/85	Austin, TX
Contra	Jim Hernandez	2,021,400	11/12/87	Newark, CA
Crystal Castles	Frank Sey	902,637	n/a	New Albany, IN
Double Dragon	Jeff Peters	101,920	08/14/87	Rancho Cucamonga, CA
Dragon Spirit	Steve Ryno	211,780	09/17/87	Anaheim, CA
Enduro Racer	Jack Gale	40,973,617	05/20/87	N. Miami Beach, FL
Ghost 'n Goblins	Richard Webb	510,500	06/27/86	Cedar Rapids, IA
Gimme a Break	Carlos Gonzales	2,303	06/28/87	San Jose, CA
Hang-On	Don Novak	40,715,030	06/27/86	Wichita, KS
Ikari Warriors	Stan Szczepanski	1,799,000	06/28/87	Lakewood, CA
Karate Champ	Leo Keller	277,700	09/27/87	Pasadena, CA
Ms. Pac-Man	Darren Harris	878,680	n/a	Staten Island, NY
Night Stocker	John Wilson	7,634,900	06/28/87	Kenosha, WI
Operation Wolf	Mark Twitty	212,350	n/a	Garden Grove, CA
Out Run	Danny Carranza	46,894,110	06/28/87	Lakewood, CA
Pacland	Mark Mendes	4,150,400	n/a	London, U.K.
Pac-Man	Tim Balderamos	3,197,360	01/28/83	Rapid City, SD
Pacmania	Donn Nauert	363,500	01/03/88	Austin, TX
Paperboy	John Phillip Britt	1,136,345	06/28/86	Sunnymead, CA
Pole Position	Les Lagier	67,260	06/27/84	San Jose, CA
Pole Position II (Test)	Jeff Peters	81,870	05/24/86	Rancho Cucamonga, CA
R-Type	M.J.D.	434,900	n/a	Hants, U.K.
Real Ghostbusters	Keith McMiller	1,494,500	11/14/87	Norfolk, VA
Rygar	Tseliang Yang	3,450,570	11/06/87	Austin, TX
Shinobi	Greg Gibson	231,140	n/a	Garden Grove, CA
Speed Buggy (South)	Mark Foster	177,480	06/27/86	Brea, CA
Spy Hunter	Paul Dean	9,512,590	06/28/85	Upland, CA
Star Wars	Robert Mruczek	300,007,894	01/22/84	New York, NY
Super Hang-On (Expert)	Mark Twitty	39,381,040	n/a	Pasadena, CA
Super Mario Bros.	Stephen Sparks	3,055,800	01/27/87	Austin, TX
Time Soldiers	Jeff Peters	155,300	10/10/87	Rancho Cucamonga, CA
Twin Cobra	Shannon Ryan	1,580,780	n/a	Upland, CA
Victory Road	Stan Cejka	1,321,020	03/10/87	Austin, TX
Xenophobe	Mike Ward	2,500,000	01/20/88	Madison, WI
Zoo Keeper	Jack Gale	20,063,920	06/28/85	Atlanta, GA

WE WANT YOU...

... to put down your joystick long enough to fill out this simple questionnaire. We're interested in what you like and dislike about this magazine. After carefully completing this form we ask that you photocopy it (or just rip it out) and send it to us at: Electronic Game Player, 13020 Pinon, Etiwanda, CA 91739. Thank you.

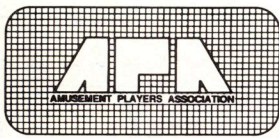
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Game and Computer Section

How much money do you spend on video games each week? _____
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Biggest disappointment in new games: Arcade _____ Home _____
What is (are) your all-time favorite game(s)? _____
What kind of games do you like the most? _____
What kind of games would you like to see in the future? _____
What home game system(s) do you own? _____
How long have you owned it (them)? _____
How many hours do you play video games each week? Arcade _____ Home _____
If you could get another game system, which would it be? _____
Do you own a home computer (yes/no)? _____ If yes, which one? _____
How long have you owned it? _____
What peripherals do you own? _____
What is your favorite game/software on this system? _____
If you could get another computer system, which would it be? _____
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INTERNATIONAL SCOREBOARD

Pinballs

GAME	NAME	SCORE	DATE	PLACE
Arena	Jim Jung	18,237,420	11/15/87	Upland, CA
Big Guns	Jelly Cartagena	58,234,100	n/a	New York, NY
F-14 Tomcat	Jelly Cartagena	38,002,820	n/a	New York, NY
Fire	Jelly Cartagnea	11,444,630	n/a	New York, NY
Gold Wings	David Collins	103,511,930	08/01/87	Pasadena, CA
High Speed	Mark Moore	24,081,920	09/28/87	Marshall, TX
Laser War	Jelly Cartagena	72,483,440	n/a	New York, NY
Pin Bot	Jelly Cartagena	38,483,400	n/a	New York, NY
Space Station	Jim Killey	13,680,40	02/02/88	Anaheim, CA

Home Games

Nintendo

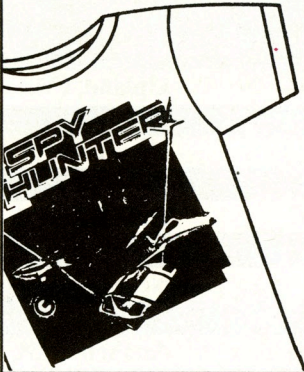
Arkaniod	Chris Ryan	224,800	12/22/87	Kenosha, WI
Elevator Action	Darren Harold	52,000	12/01/87	Elmonte, CA
Gradius	Nigel Planner	984,300	11/12/87	Dayton, OH
Karnov	Ralph Mendes	534,500	02/11/88	New York, NY
Kung-Fu	Randy Fairfax	687,300	10/24/87	Syracuse, NY
Mega Man	Brent Walker	357,200	01/25/88	Austin, TX
Mighy Bomb Jack	Dan Golder	645,750	10/02/87	Durham, NC
Rad Racer	Rick Mayal	28,991	01/22/88	Ottumwa, IA
Side Pocket	Donn Nauert	51,800	03/01/88	Cucamonga, CA
Sky Kid	Shannon Ryan	226,340	11/05/87	Upland, CA
Solomon's Key	Steve Harris	1,207,800	10/29/87	Etiwanda, CA
Spelunker	Charles Leonard	1,689,450	02/26/88	Madison, WI
Spy Hunter	Mike Dean	88,035	12/24/87	Miami, FL
Star Force	Donn Nauert	5,921,500	02/27/88	Cucamonga, CA
Super Mario Bros.	Mark Coral	9,999,950	09/25/87	Anderson, IN
Wizards and Warriors	Jeff Peters	495,800	01/14/88	Etiwanda, CA
World Runner	Vivian Wright	315,320	12/03/87	Lansing, IL
Zanac	Perry Rodgers	14,258,400	02/12/88	Redondo Beach, CA

Sega

Enduro Racer	Greg Wood	08:26:07	12/14/87	Riverside, CA
Fantasy Zone	Jeff Peters	7,948,200	01/21/88	Etiwanda, CA
Kung Fu Kid	Arthur Ayala	426,100	01/01/88	Wichita, KS
Missle Defense 3-D	Mark Rezapanski	637,000	11/29/87	Seattle, WA
Out Run	Steve Ryno	20,447,980	02/07/88	Anaheim, CA
Shooting Gallery	Walter Mitchell	145,000	10/23/87	Millington, TN
Space Harrier	Bill day	7,266,990	11/12/87	Des Moines, IA

For information on how to submit a high score to the APA International Scoreboard, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:
APA International Scoreboard, 13020 Pinon, Etiwanda, CA 91739.

LOOK LIKE A CHAMP! FOR FREE!



Sunsoft, makers of Spy Hunter for the NES, is going to outfit you in the latest video game fashion craze. They will be giving away 12 limited edition Spy Hunter T-Shirts to a few lucky individuals out there. All you have to do is be one of the first 12 people to send in a postcard with your name, address, city, state, zip and, of course, T-Shirt size to:

**Spy Hunter T-Shirt
13020 Pinon
Etiwanda, CA 91739**

**Another great giveaway from your friends at
Sunsoft and Electronic Game Player!**

GAME OVER . . .

Flying High with Sega...

The number two home video game powerhouse is ready to unleash a fantastic new generation of games! Boasting a number of gaming firsts, including true 3-D and carts loaded with over four megs of memory, Sega has reaffirmed their commitment to the Sega Master System. Under the new guidance of Tonka Toys, the Master System has started to gain momentum with players around the world. Coupled with an interactive newsletter and an abundance of action and adventure titles led by the arcade smash After Burner, Sega is well on its way to edging out the lead of its competition. Find out about all these exciting developments and some of the great games you'll be seeing later in the year in this In-Focus segment.

New Life for the C-64?

Largely responsible for pulling the mat out from underneath the Atari VCS and Colecovision earlier in the eighties, the Commodore 64 is now facing some hard times of its own. The king of the gaming computers is finally showing its age against rival machines like the Amiga and Atari ST. Manufacturers continue to support the C-64, but with so much attention being focused on its more powerful brethren as well as the Nintendo, Sega, and Atari consoles, will the 64 be able to sustain interest into the 1990's? Look at what's being done to maintain support and get some conflicting opinions about the current status of the unit.

Taito Explodes Onto the Computer Scene...

A giant in the coin-op world with many proven hits available for the Nintendo Entertainment System, Taito is getting ready to enter the computer software field in a very big way. Get some insightful information on the company as well as a sneak peek at the blockbuster games you'll be playing in the months to come!

Jumpin' Joysticks!

Get yourself ready for another fantastic give-away from your friends at Electronic Game Player! We'll be awarding a variety of joysticks and other peripherals to some lucky winner of EGP's second contest!

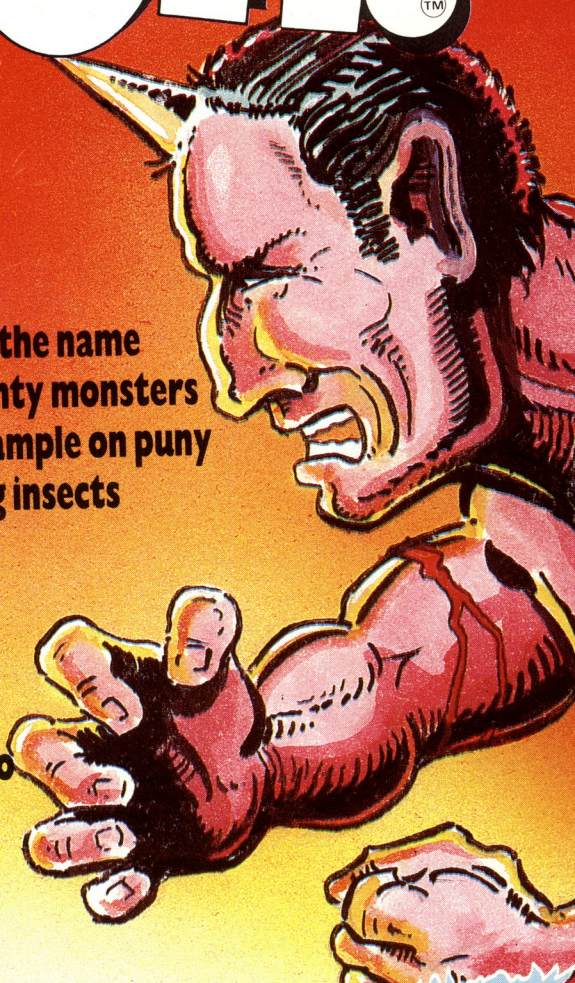
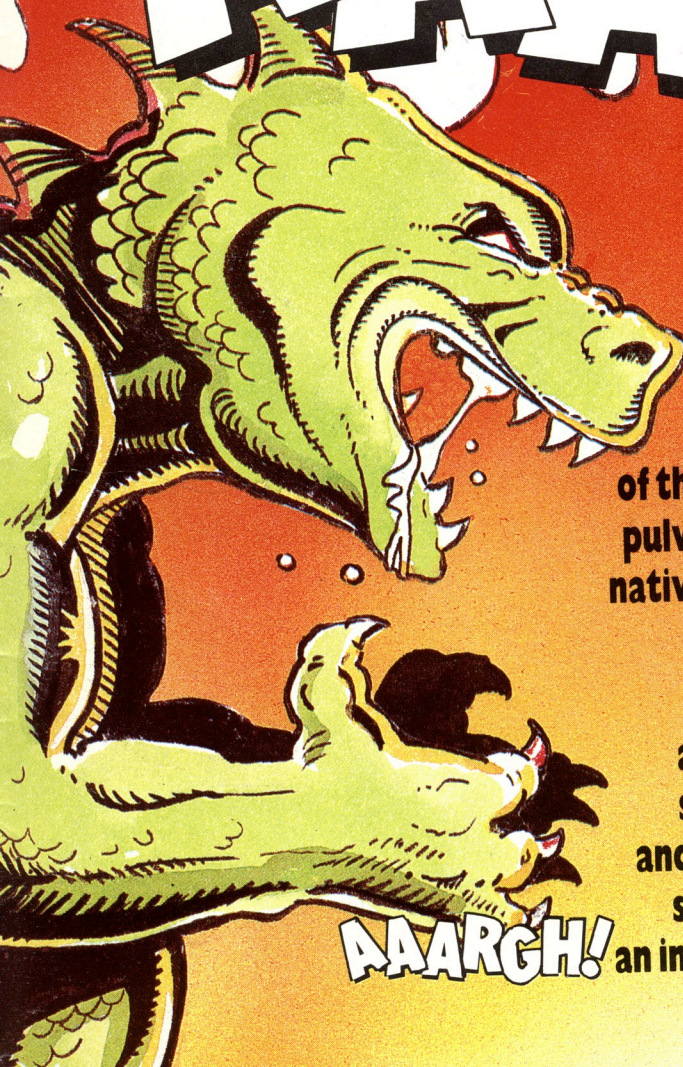
And Don't Miss...

All of the latest home and arcade video game reviews and endorsements, as well as a new expanded computer section...An interview with Don Shulman: Mr. Joysticks...How to Master Twin Cobra, Fantasy Zone, and Double Dragon...Behind the Screens at SNK...plus Gaming Gossip, APA High Scores, Press Start, and much, much more!

**BE PREPARED FOR ALL OF THIS AND MORE WHEN THE THIRD WAVE
OF ELECTRONIC GAME PLAYER REACHES YOUR CITY ON MAY 23rd...**

PUNCH, SMASH, TRAMPLE AND CRUSH YOUR WAY THROUGH

AAARGH!



Destruction is the name of the game as two mighty monsters pulverize buildings, trample on puny natives, torch attacking insects and flying reptiles.

Huge, colorful, animated graphics, superb backdrops and earsplitting stereo sound effects made an instant computer classic.

AAARGH!



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