

**Q. How do you reach over 50,000 computer and console games enthusiasts every week?**

**A.**

**GAMES-X**

# CTW

An ETP PUBLICATION

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COMPUTER TRADE WEEKLY

ISSUE 338

**GAMES-X**

## C65 waits in CBM wings



Is it a C64? Is it an A500? Actually, the C65 is a bit of both

Commodore has developed a machine to bridge the gap between the C64 and the Amiga, but it will definitely not be released this year.

The new product is code-named the C65. It is ISS compatible, which means it would produce Amiga-standard graphics, offers 4,096 colours and uses a 6502 processor.

It comes with a 3.5 inch disk drive and is able to run existing C64 software but software houses would be persuaded to develop super 65 games specifically for the

new machine. No price point has yet been fixed but £200 has been proposed by some sources.

Commodore's retail sales manager Kelly Sumner told CTW: "It is a product that has been developed by Commodore but at the moment we have no plans to release it."

"We have a very good line-up and it would be ridiculous to bring in a product that would compete for production time with products such as the Amiga and the C64."

"It will definitely not see the light of day this year. We review all products on a six monthly basis and this is just

one that we will be looking at next year."

Since making the C64 a cartridge based machine back in March, Commodore has spotted something of a gap appearing in its line up.

That gap would be filled by a low-end computer that is sexier than the C64 but not in the same league as the aspirational Amiga.

At the moment the C65 does seem a likely candidate but Commodore was at pains to point out that, like any hardware company, it is constantly developing new products some of which are released some of which are scrapped.

## Panther to prowl around Europe first

It emerged last week that Atari has decided to ship its new 16-bit 'super console' into Europe ahead of the US.

Code-named Panther, very first quantities of the 68000-based machine with claimed Amiga-bashing graphics and sound could hit the UK prior to Christmas.

The hardware is apparently complete, and all the firm is now waiting on is the software base. Some 13 UK software houses are already developing for it, and once 20 or so titles — retailing at £29.99 each — are ready for release, Atari will breath life into the machine's nostrils.

Whilst actual availability is likely to come in Europe first — where Atari has a far stronger brand name and distribution infrastructure — it may well gain its initial 'launch' in the US. This is unlikely to come at next week's Chicago CES, however, where a behind-closed-doors appearance is probably the most that can be expected.

Atari told CTW last week that if the machine does hit the UK in time for this coming Christmas season, its entry into the market will be handled pretty much along the lines of Sega's Megadrive last year. This means very little marketing support — and definitely no TV ads — with pure street demand expected to eat up all units that arrive.

Atari noted to CTW that, at present, the Panther name is unlikely to be kept — although it did admit that exactly the same was said regarding its colour handheld's 'Lynx' code-name.

When it arrives, the machine will retail possibly as low as £150. It will not be either ST or Lynx compatible.

## Future puts ELSPA's back up

A major row between ELSPA and Future seemed to be brewing last week, over magazines carrying ads for so called 'illegal' back up programs.

So far both EMAP and Newsfield have agreed to remove the offending ads from their magazines. Future, however, is claiming that the issue is not as straightforward as it seems.

For Future it appears that there are several issues involved, the main one being the definition of which devices are actually illegal, and what to do with the genuine devices.

The firm is also apparently concerned that it could be prosecuted for restriction of trade if it makes the decision to withdraw certain adverts.

Commenting on the issue ELSPA general secretary Roger Bennett told CTW: "I have been concerned with the fact that the ads are still appearing, and we have been talking to Future to persuade them that it is best not to carry them. We don't wish to create a confrontational situation, so we're trying to work it out as best we can."

"Ideally I would like to see all the ads out, but if at the end of the day we have to reach a compromise then so be it. It is an issue that a lot of software publishers are up in arms about. But ultimately ELSPA has no mandate to tell anyone to do anything."

"I hope that they will agree not to carry them anymore, but we won't achieve a satisfactory agreement by lambasting anybody. I also don't wish to suggest that Future aren't being co-operative, because they are, but something has to be done."

Continued on back page

## Sega and NEC cut up by looming Super NES

Sega and NEC are preparing for the US launch of Nintendo's Super Famicom console next week by introducing major pricecuts on their own 16-bit systems.

The Famicom — to be called the Super NES in the US — will hit its first official market outside Japan when the Chicago CES kicks off on Saturday June 1st.

The machine, which sold 1.6 million units in Nintendo's home territory between November and March, is understandably causing some concern for Sega and NEC — who have had the 16-bit console market to themselves in the US for some time.

Nintendo projected at January's Las Vegas CES that the Super NES would sell two million units in the US by the end of the year — even though it wouldn't ship until the second half.

With the Super NES expected to be launched at \$169 as a no-game pack and



TURBOGRAFX: Dipping below \$100 to stave off Nintendo threat

\$199 with a bundled title, both Sega and NEC have decided that a price-cut counter-attack is required.

At Chicago, Sega is expected to announce a \$40 drop on the Genesis (Megadrive) to \$149. It may also be planning to bundle

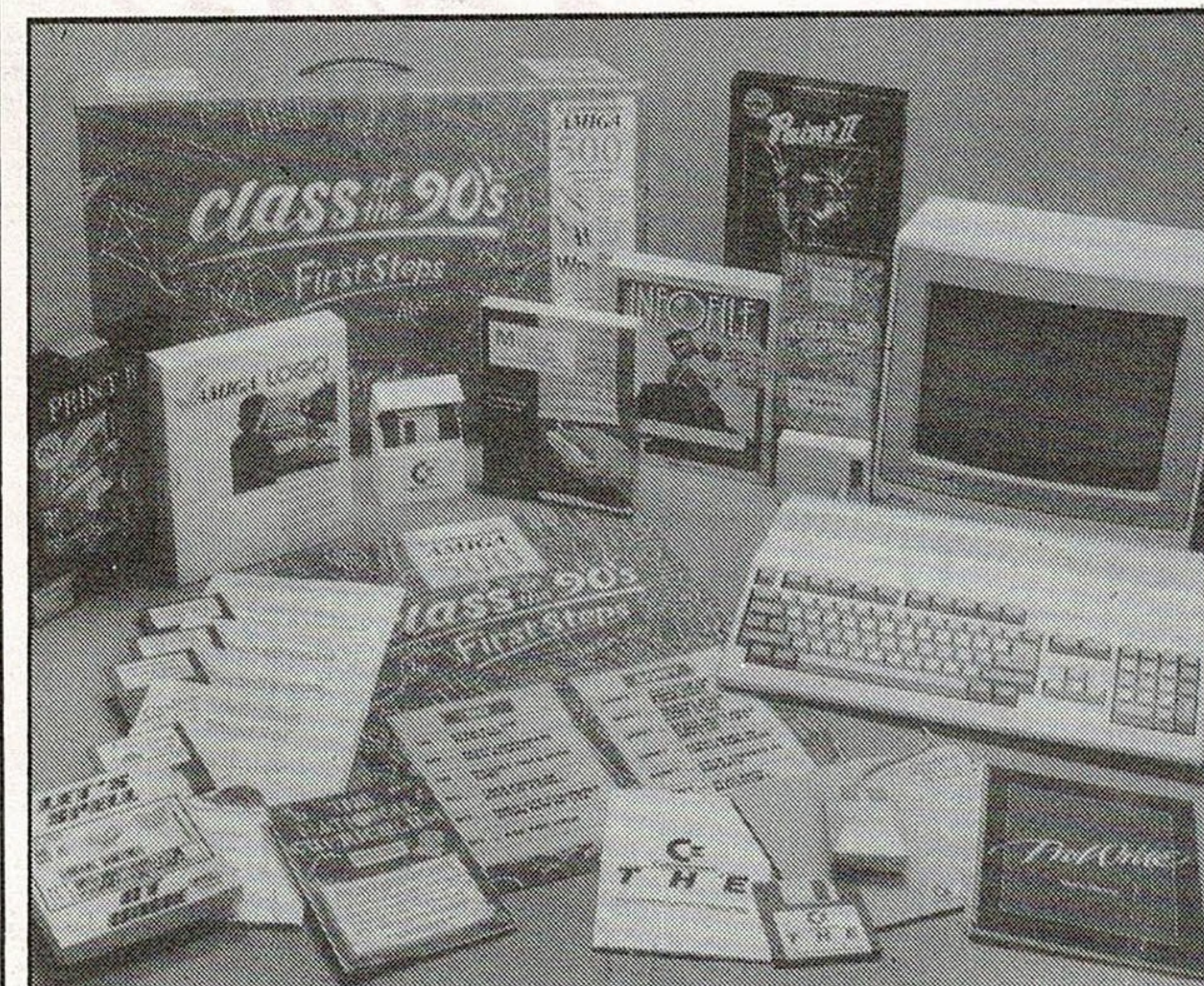
the highly acclaimed *Sonic The Hedgehog* title with the machine.

NEC, meanwhile, has already announced that it is slashing the TurboGrafx by \$75 to \$99 with no game. A higher end bundle will retail at \$149 complete with the

*Bonk* game and a multi-play unit.

Whilst Sega's US move is unlikely to have any immediate effect on UK pricing, it will undoubtedly cause distributor Virgin Mastertron yet more headaches on the grey import front.

## Amiga Steps down by £100



FIRST STEPS: New price, same pack

Commodore has continued its shuffling of the Amiga pack with a price cut on its Class of the '90s — First Steps educational pack.

The bundle, which contains an A500, 512Kb RAM, TV modulator, nine software titles and an introductory video, is being cut from £599 to £499 as of this week.

Commodore's education products manager Peter Talbot denied, however, that the price drop had anything to do with Atari's recently launched £399 education ST pack, The Family Cur-

riculum.

He told CTW: "The pricing on the whole Amiga range has changed, especially with our £299 education offer, and this just brings Class of the '90s into line with those changes."

"The bundle has been such a success that I felt it was crucial to keep the momentum going."

"Obviously I'm delighted that Atari should attempt to emulate what we're doing in the education market, it's a tremendous compliment, but the real thing about this market is being here all the time, not just dipping in and out."

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# ALL CHANGE!

The Europress Group has gone from strength to strength over the last two decades, but the diversity of subsidiaries' names over recent years has tended to obscure the Group's corporate identity. Now the situation could hardly be clearer.

All company names come under the Europress banner. The changes are detailed below:



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Publisher of *Computer Trade Weekly*.  
Managing Director: *Tom Stock*.



## DATABASE PUBLICATIONS

Publisher of *Atari ST User*, *Atari World*, *Amiga Computing*, *PC Today*, *PC Buyers Guide*, *Micro User* and *Let's Compute!*

Managing Director: *Derek Meakin*.  
Publishers: *Peter Glover*,  
*Richard Williams*.



## interactive publishing

Publisher of *ST Action*, *Amiga Action* and *Games X*.

Managing Director: *David Hirst*.  
Publishing Director: *Hugh Gollner*.



## DATABASE SOFTWARE

Publisher of *Fun School*, *Mini Office*, *AMOS*, *STOS* and many more.

Managing Director: *Christopher Payne*.  
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## and introducing...

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# UK firms hit as HK falls in Sweden

The Swedish games market has been plunged into chaos by the sudden bust of leading distributor HK Electronics.

The six year-old firm, based in Solna near Gothenburg, was by far the largest wholesaling operation in the territory — boasting exclusive contracts with the majority of leading US and European software houses, a strong peripherals side and occasional deals with Commodore and Atari.

The plug is understood to

have been pulled last Wednesday (May 15th) by Handelsbank of Gothenburg. The firm's turnover last year totalled some £4 million. There is no official word yet on debts, but they are feared to be somewhere in the £750,000-£1,000,000 region.

No one at HK was willing to comment on the bust, but it would certainly appear that the firm was the victim of a downturn in both economic and market conditions.

The firm was certainly not helped last winter when the Swedish Government hiked its national VAT rate up to 25

per cent. Also, HK is believed to have been hit hard by a number of independents (the firm's main customer base) going under over the past year.

Indeed, prior to Christmas, HK's main rival in Sweden, Alphasoft, curtailed its software business because it was such hard going — concentrating instead on hardware and peripherals.

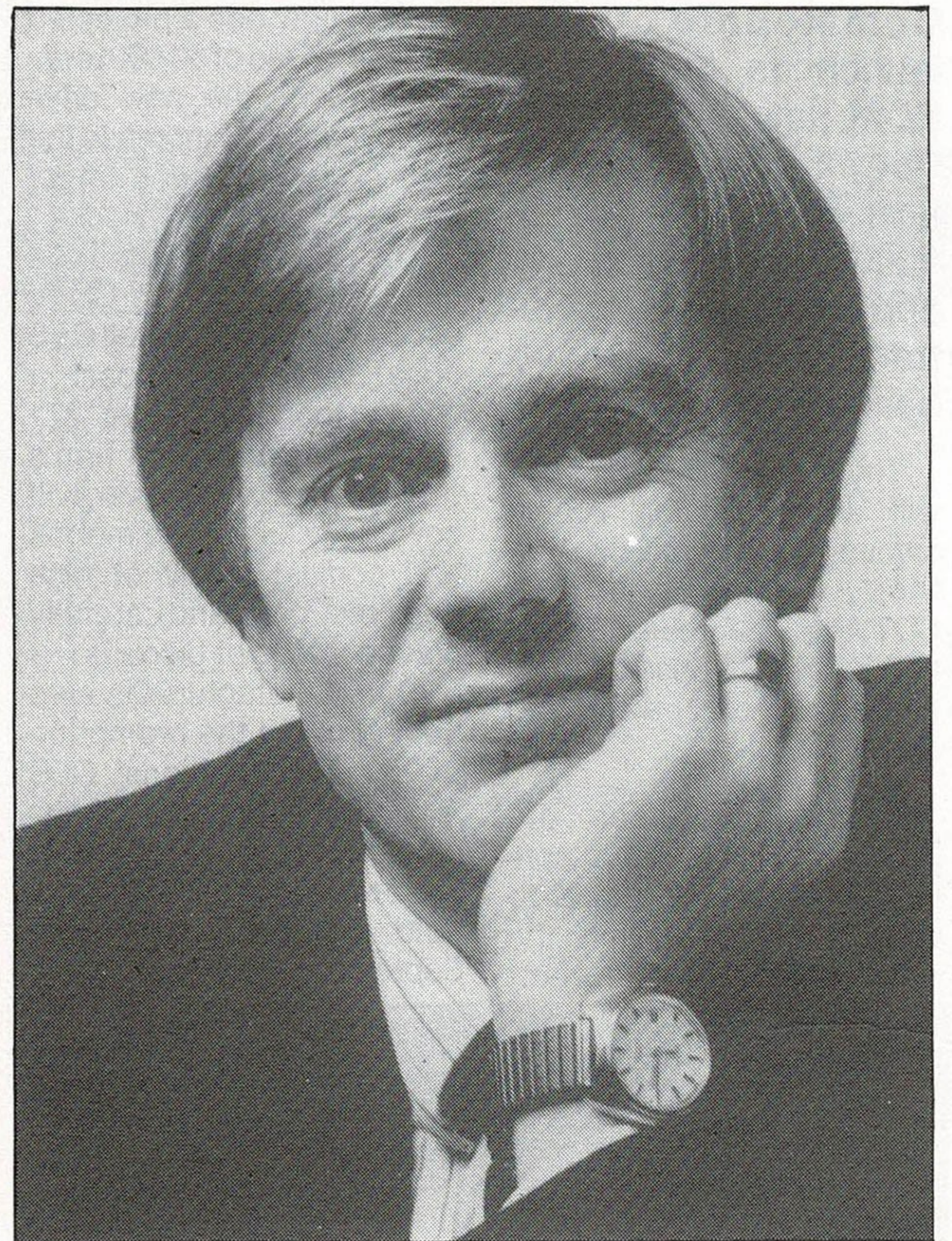
The added factors of piracy and other European distributors selling into the lucrative Swedish mail order firms ultimately pushed HK into bankruptcy.

# Dennis predicts rosy future as Buyer arrives, Shopper grows

Dennis Publishing was pleased as punch last week as it announced the birth of its latest title, *PC Buyer*, and confidently predicted an ABC of 110-115,000 for *Computer Shopper*.

*Buyer* is *Shopper's* sister paper and is seen as almost a *Shopper* for beginners. Dennis' managing director Colin Crawford declared himself "extremely pleased" with the first issue and claimed that it would offer "the most extensive buyers' guide of any publication".

*Buyer* retails for 93 pence with a free disk cover mount and issue number one should actually hit the news stands in a matter of days.



CAWFORD: Happy Shopper

It contains 200 pages, over 100 of which carry advertising, and it has an initial print run of over 115,000. Crawford predicted that it will enter the PC mag marketplace straight in the top three.

Meanwhile, Crawford has stated that he believes *Shopper* will post an ABC figure of between 110-155,000 for the period Jan-June 1991. During the last six month period it achieved 90,205 and a year ago it managed around

70,000.

Crawford offered: "We are maintaining our impressive growth and while you have to be careful with predictions, we are a fair way into this cycle and I would say that I will personally be highly disap-

pointed if we do dip below 110,000.

"We are already very close to achieving 100,000 sales in the UK and when you add on the 15,000 subscribers and the overseas sales, that gives us a lot of confidence."

# EDOS steps into Boots

Entertainment Express has pushed its Electronic Distribution of Software system further into the heart of retail land, through a deal with Boots.

Initially the High Street giant will be taking terminals in just six outlets. The deal completes an impressive hat-trick for Entertainment Express as Menzies and Smiths have already taken on the EDOS system.

There are currently just over 50 Menzies stores equipped with terminals and after the next batch of installations there should be around 75.

Smiths, like Boots, has decided to take a more cautious approach in these early stages and has had EDOS placed in just two stores.

There are already over 20 independents with EDOS installed, and that number looks likely to swell over the next few months.

With these additions in the multiple and indepen-



EDOS: Push in Boots

dent sector it looks likely that there will be over 100

EDOS terminals installed by the end of the year.

# EA lines up sporty trio

Electronic Arts is continuing its console blitzkrieg tactics with the release of three new titles for Nintendo's Super Famicom.

All the games are sports simulations. *PGA Tour Golf*, *Lakers vs Celtics* and *John Madden Football* will be released in the US this autumn.

EA has already placed itself in a unique position in the console world by producing titles for both Sega and Nintendo.

# Nintendo warns of deceleration as '91 figures double up



NINTENDO: Doubles all round

Nintendo offered positive financial results as proof of its continuing success last week, but admitted that the high rate of growth would not continue.

Turnover for the year ending March 1991 doubled to \$3.36 billion while profits for the period were up 96.4 per cent to \$1.01 billion.

Naturally Nintendo was pleased with the figures but

it did warn against unbridled optimism. It stated that it "could not keep on growing like a never ending dream".

It added that it was not unduly worried by the recession currently hitting its US business and pointed to the launch of the Famicom this Autumn which should act as a huge pick-me-up.

At the moment the firm is predicting profits for the year ending March 1992 of \$1.1 billion with turnover also rising modestly to \$3.57 billion.



VIRGIN GAMES: Five to come alive in '91

# Virgin steels itself for Sheffield attack

Virgin Retail's much touted expansion plans seemed to be gradually gathering speed last week as it announced plans for a new Games Centre and promised at least four more in the near future.

There are already four Games Centres, including the two recently launched in Kingston and Oxford. The fifth will open in Sheffield's new Meadowhill shopping centre on June 22nd.

Operations director Gerry Berkley stated that the new store will follow the format established by existing Centres with the emphasis on

computer software and hardware as well as role-playing and board games.

He added: "We should have another four or five to announce in the next few weeks, a few things still have to be signed but everything is at least 90 per cent certain."

"We are definitely planning to have ten standalone Centres by September and then even more in the last three months of the year."

Meanwhile the firm has announced that it will be stocking Sega's Gamegear from June.

Berkley offered: "It fits in very well with the line-up we already have and we'll be supporting it with hardware and software."

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# CBM drives ahead with CES launch

Commodore will launch its Amiga CD-ROM drive at the Earls Court CES Show — the firm having finally officially confirmed its appearance in both the trade and consumer halls.

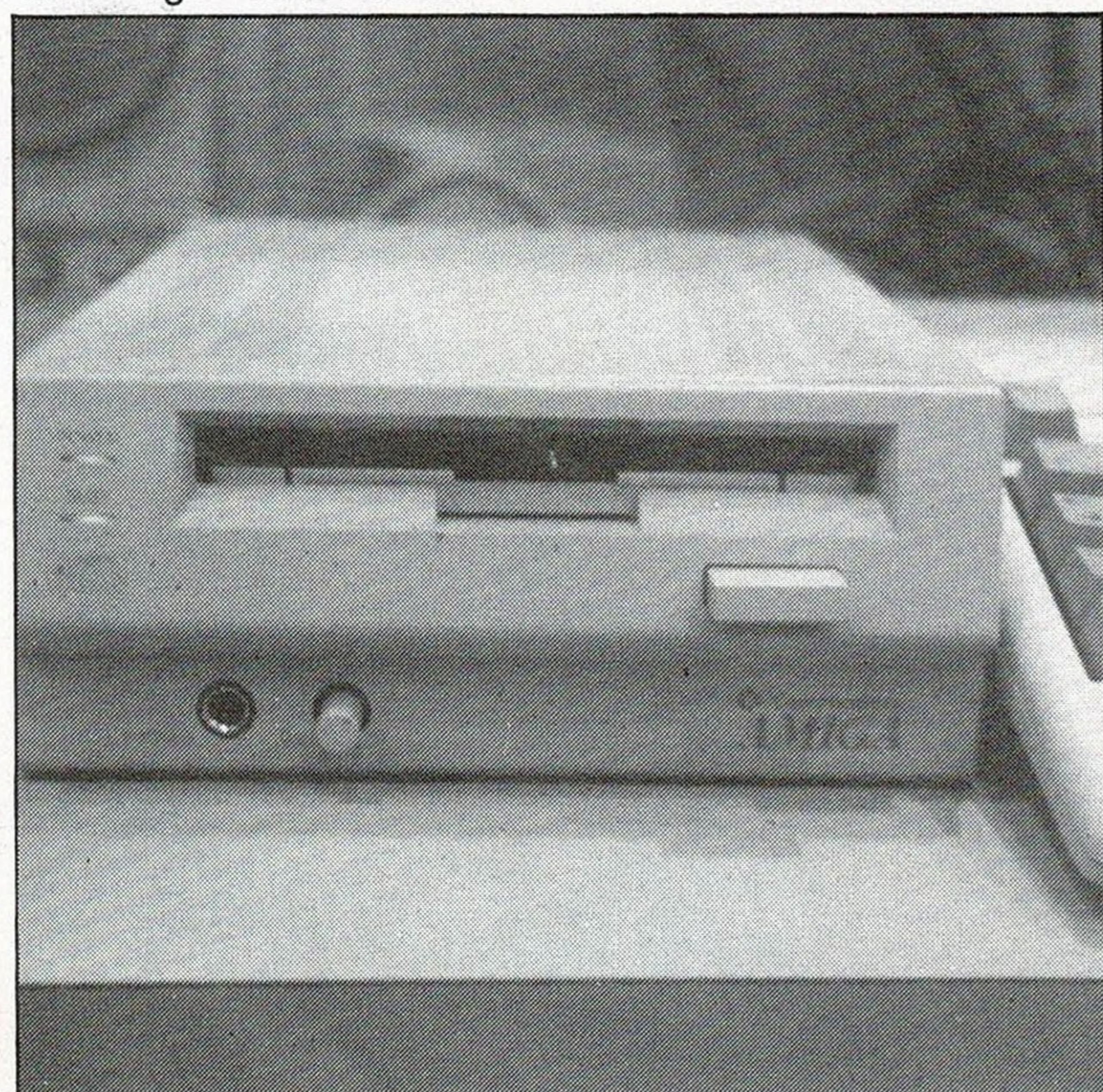
The A690 CD-ROM drive will allow existing Amiga owners to effectively turn their machines into a CDTV for less than £300 — and it should become fully available soon after the show.

Commodore sees the A690 as a key factor in convincing software firms to support the CDTV. Whilst the new age entertainment

system only has a projected installed base of 50,000 units by January, the new drive could massively increase the size of a publisher's target market in just a few weeks.

The A690 will be part of a concentration on the CDTV at CBM's consumer hall CES stand, which will boast a "bigger than ever before" 371 square metres. The firm's trade presence, however, will cover only 30 square metres and consist solely of nice quiet meetings and carefully placed plates of biscuits.

The manufacturer is also hoping to aid the promotion of EMAP Exhibitions' CES '91 with the inclusion of discounted entrance tickets in all Amiga and C64 boxes sold between now and September 5th.



A690: Driving Amiga owners to CD world

# Future hit by slipped disk

It emerged last week that Future's first edition of *Amiga Power* was hit by a glitch on its freebie cover disk.

Some 2,000 disks had to be replaced thanks to loading difficulties on the Mirrorsoft game *Bombuzal*. Apparently, it would not run on recently aquired Amigas linked up to certain makes of TV.

Publisher Greg Ingham explained, however, that a slightly re-programmed version of the game was sent back to all readers who had returned their disk — along with details of an exclusive subscription offer — by way of recompense.

Ingham argued that, whilst regrettable, a problem on 2,000 disks was not a ma-



POWER: Disk slip

major disaster considering that some 87,711 were thrust out into the High Street.

"People that buy disks are used to the slim possibility of them not loading. I don't think anyone really jumped up and down about it," he remarked.

# Ubisoft signs up bunch of Lankhors

Ubisoft has signed up with fellow French publisher Lankhor to market its products throughout Europe.

The firm was launched in 1989 and was previously distributed in the UK by Active Sales and Marketing, but will now be handled exclusively by Ubisoft.

Around 10 products a year will be released on 16-bit formats only, including *Maupiti Island*, *Vroom*, *Outzone* and

something called *Rodi and Mastico*. All are expected to be released before September.

"*Maupiti Island* is a terrific product and we are very much looking forward to launching it in the UK. It is easy to see why the product has gained so many awards in the French market place. We feel confident that a product with so much style and class will perform well over here," said a spokesman for the firm.

# Active to breath life into Dragon

Active has sprung into life with a new range of peripherals due for launch in the next few weeks.

The new line comes from Dragon, an Australian based firm which has just set up a UK base. The first products, a C64 datacorder and a mouse mat, should be

available from Active next month.

According to Active supremo Robert Stalibrass, the datacorder will retail at just under £30 while the mouse mat will be "competitively priced".

In September a number of joysticks will be launched as well as mice for the Amiga, ST and PC.

# Crash blitzes before the ban

Newsfield's *Crash* magazine will be engaging in a final cassette blitz before the ELSPA restrictions come into play in August.

Both the June and July issues of *Crash* will have not one, but two boxed games cassettes on the cover with what the firm is describing as an "unprecedented" number of games demos and pokes.

The June issue will have four games on each cassette, as well as two playable demos from Tengen. The July issue will have two demos and eight games spread across two cassettes.

Newsfield publisher Oliver Frey commented: "Having come to an agreement with ELSPA to do a trial restriction of only two full commercial games a month

for the August and September issues of *Crash*, we felt the readers deserved two extra special issues of their fave magazine.

"This promotion also paves the way for the relaunch of *Crash*, with the August issue revamped, bigger and even better. We have secured some solid gold classics to be cover-mounted on our autumn issues".



CRASH: Taped up

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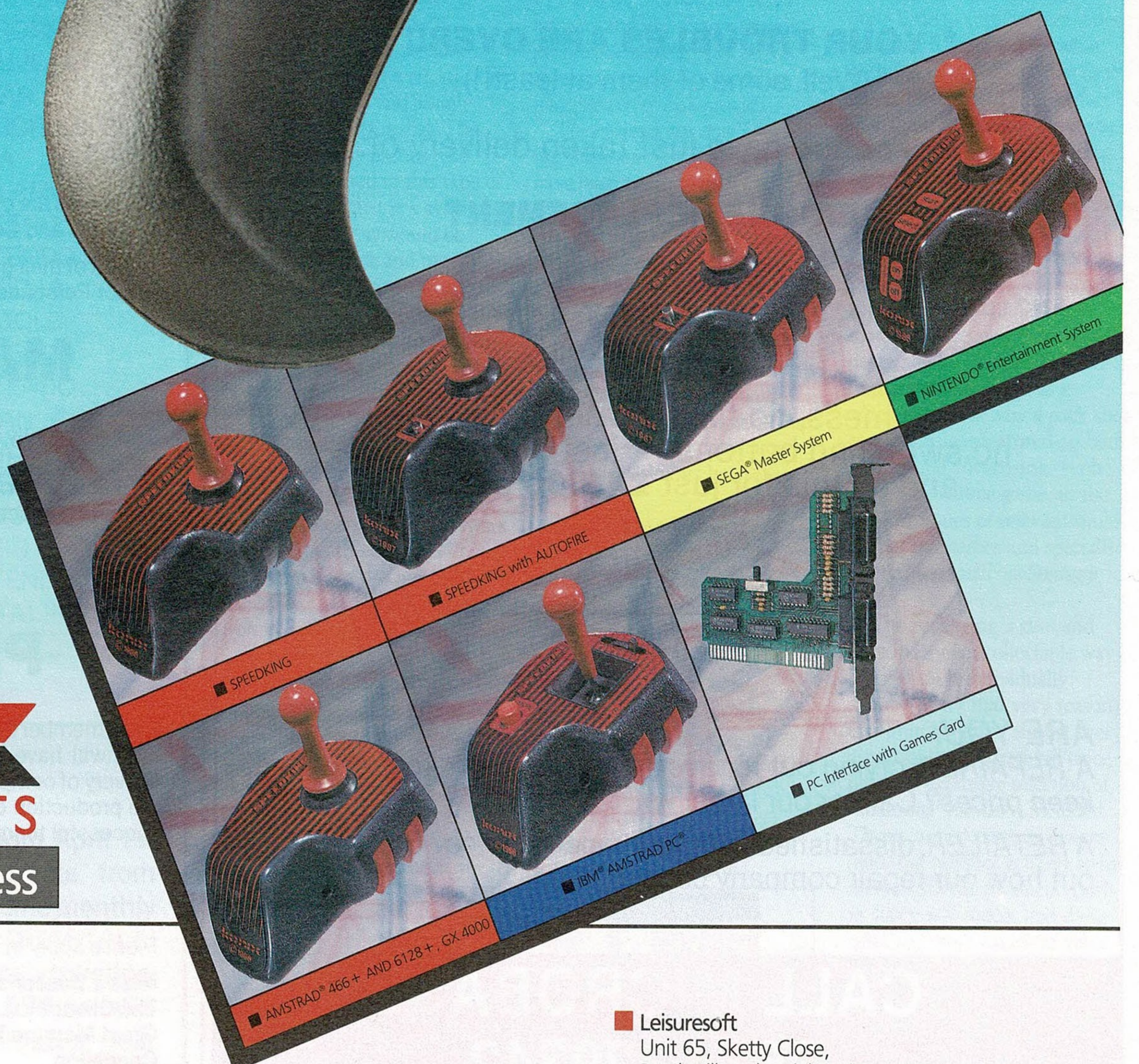
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## Amstrad recovers as oldies die out

The latest figures from Wharton Information Systems show Amstrad clawing back its market share during March, after slipping back in February.

The sales figures through both direct and indirect channels for March show the firm gaining 1.4 per cent to settle at 7.5 per cent. The firm remains in fifth place, but the results are a marked improvement on the previous month when the firm dropped from 10 per cent to 6.1.

Previous months have seen old favourites such as

the 1512, 1640 and 2000 range phased out, which as expected, contributed to the drop in market share.

The firm will be relying on new products later in the year to lead a new attack on the market.

Meanwhile IBM remains on top of the pile with 16.9 per cent of the market — an increase of 2.4 per cent. Compaq remained in second place despite a drop of 1.1 per cent, with ICL gaining 2.2 per cent to consolidate its position in third place.

Total PC sales (direct and indirect) for the month were 79,160 units, with revenues totalling £182.2 million.

## Danes invade again

Danish distributor ScandiaSoft has launched a new range of low cost Amiga business into the UK.

The product is being handled by erstwhile Active Sales and Marketing man John Boyle. There are three products in the range, namely *Interword*, *Interspread*, and *Intersound* — all of which retail for £49.99.

The products have already been released in Denmark for a number of months now and are believed to have sold around 4,000 copies. Already the firm is predicting that it can sell 1,000 copies a month in the UK.

At the moment, distribution is being handled in the UK by Centresoft and Gem, with Leisuresoft looking at taking on the range in the near future.

John Boyle told CTW: "We're confident that we can sell 1,000 copies a month in the UK. There might not be such a demand for the Amiga version of the product, but the PC version should get a very favourable response, and should take off quite well."

"It has already had very good reviews in *CU Amiga*. They said that it compares very well with the stuff that's around at the moment, but the price is almost half."

## 21st Century due for September

Andrew Hewson's new firm 21st Century Entertainment has announced its product line up, including some console releases.

The first title from the firm will be *Nebulus II* which should see the light of day in September, followed by *Rubicon* in October and *Deliverance (Stormlord II)* at the beginning of next year.

In association with a US firm called Razorsoft the firm

will be publishing a number of titles on the Megadrive and other consoles. The first of which is expected to be *Stormlord*, which is due out in June on the Megadrive.

21st Century boss Andrew Hewson told CTW: "We have a good relationship with Razorsoft, and it's possible that we could do titles on other consoles. In fact, we are in active negotiation to put two more out. What we're doing is building up the contacts that I have established in the past."

## Price-cuts slice into Apple corps

The pressure to cut prices in the business market hurt Apple's workforce last week, as it contributed to the loss of some 1,500 jobs.

The cuts — which equates to around 10 per cent of all those employed by the US firm — are part of a restructuring operation being undertaken to slash

operating expenses.

Financial problems have mounted for the firm due to a downturn in the US economy and a price-cutting policy implemented last October to boost market share. Whilst the price-cuts were extremely successful — with Mac shipments jumping by 85 per cent in the last quarter — they have put enormous pressure on profit margins.

## TopCopy gets nice 'n' spicy

Toplevel was whooping with delight last week as *TopCopy Plus* was picked as one of just six software packages to be featured in a leading office equipment catalogue.

The word-processor

(CTW's own favourite) has made it into Spicers' latest edition — which will boast a print run of some 240,000 copies.

It will be accompanied in the small but perfectly formed software section by *Lotus 1-2-3*, *WordPerfect*, *Sage Accounts*, *Timeworks* and *Ability Plus*.

## Alternative plugs in TV

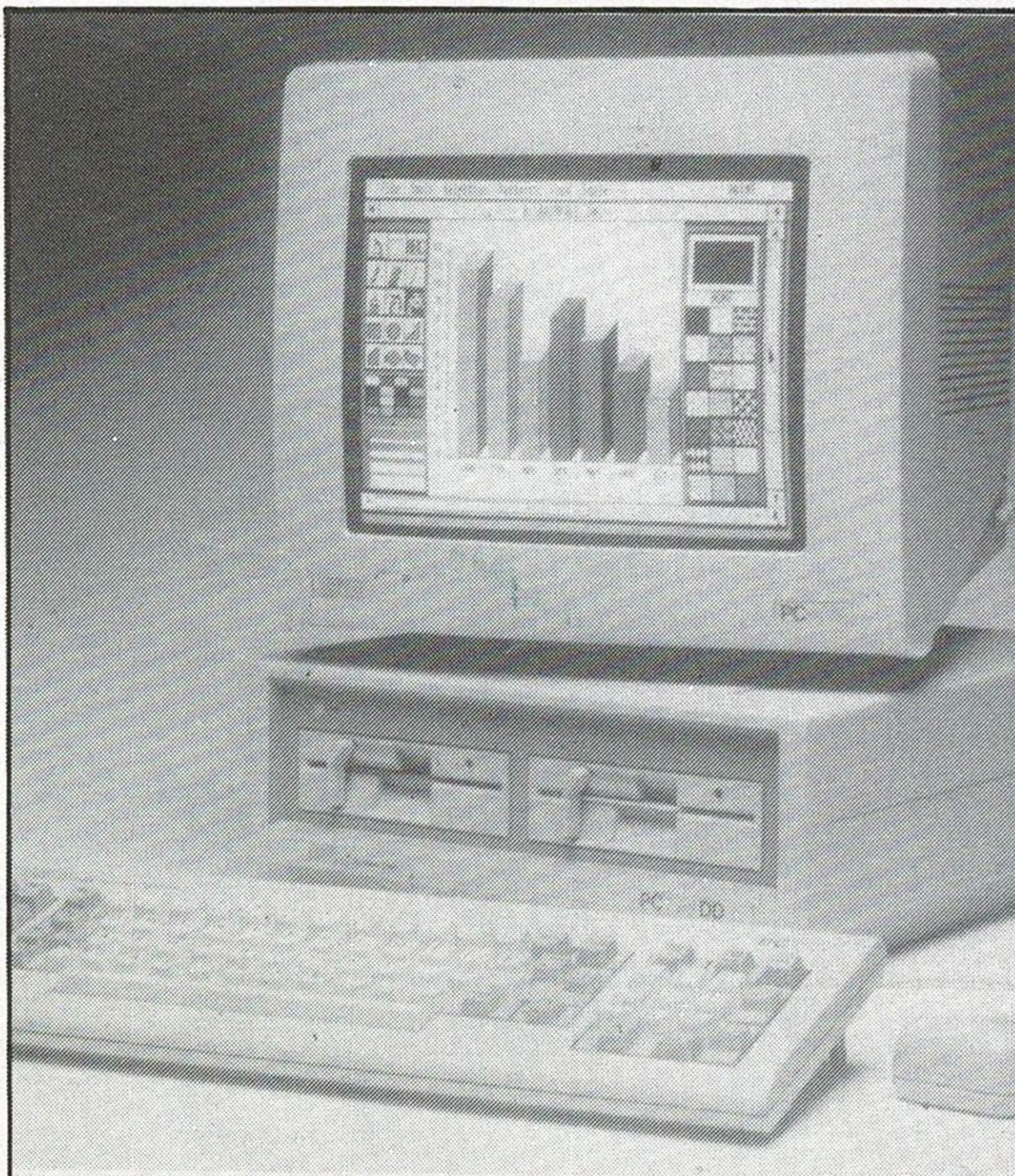
Alternative has guaranteed itself exposure to at least two million readers with a competition in the *TV Times*.

The firm has linked up with Commodore and, of all things, Sooty and Sweep to win a C64 Mindbenders pack and tea with Sooty and Matthew Corbett! Runners up will receive a number of Alternative titles including *Sooty and Sweep's Fun with Numbers*.



Sooty signs up

Alternative boss Roger Hulley told CTW: "We're very pleased to be in the *TV Times* — it's a great boost for us. We've had a competition in it before and we had a great response to that so we're hoping for a similar reaction to this one. We've also done a similar promotion in the *Daily Telegraph* so hopefully that should be a great success as well."



AMSTRAD: Back with a bang, er, pop

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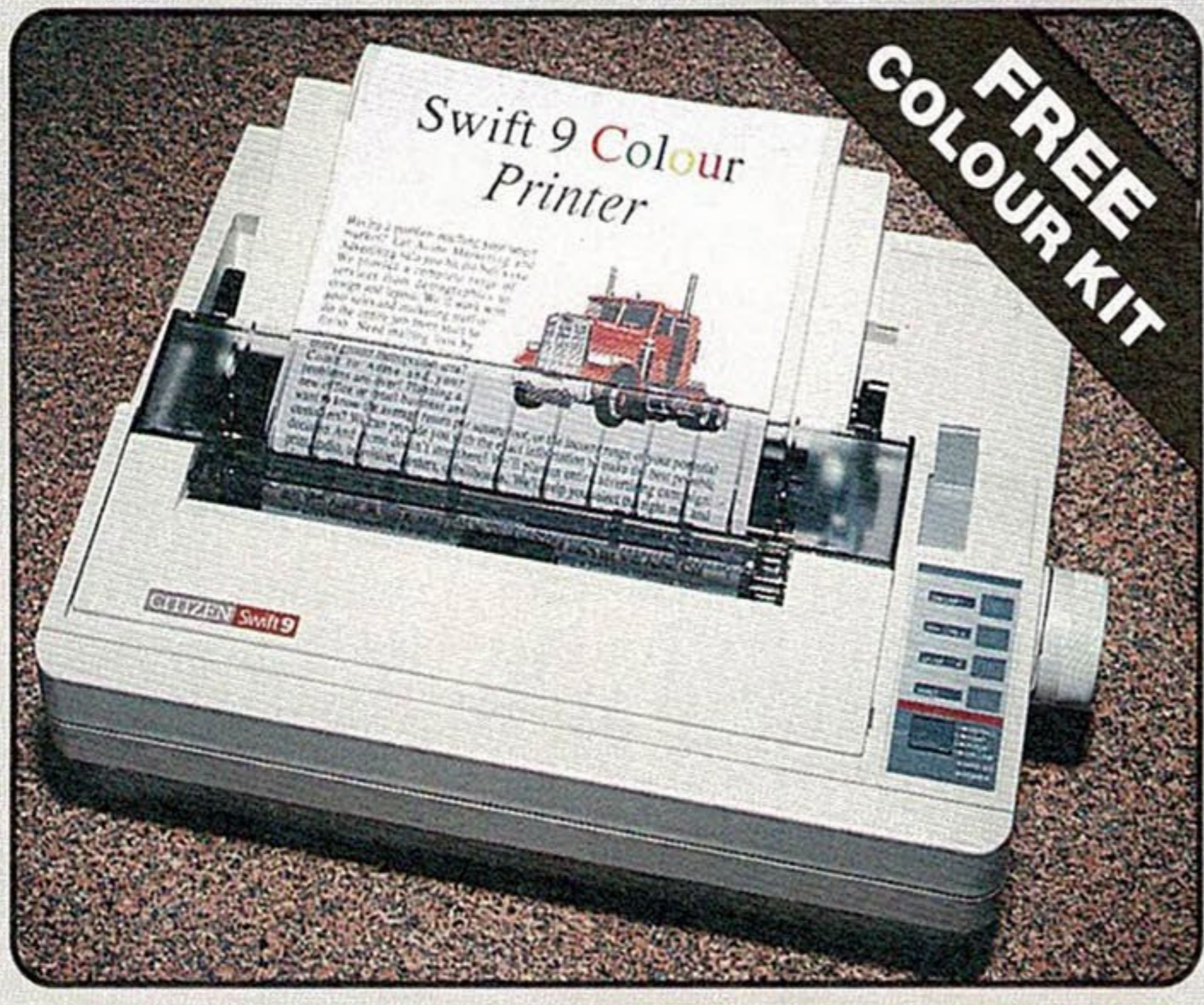
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PRA 1228 Semi-Auto S/feed	RRP (exc): £40.00	DLR (exc): £26.00
PRA 1209 RS232 Interface	RRP (exc): £30.00	DLR (exc): £19.50



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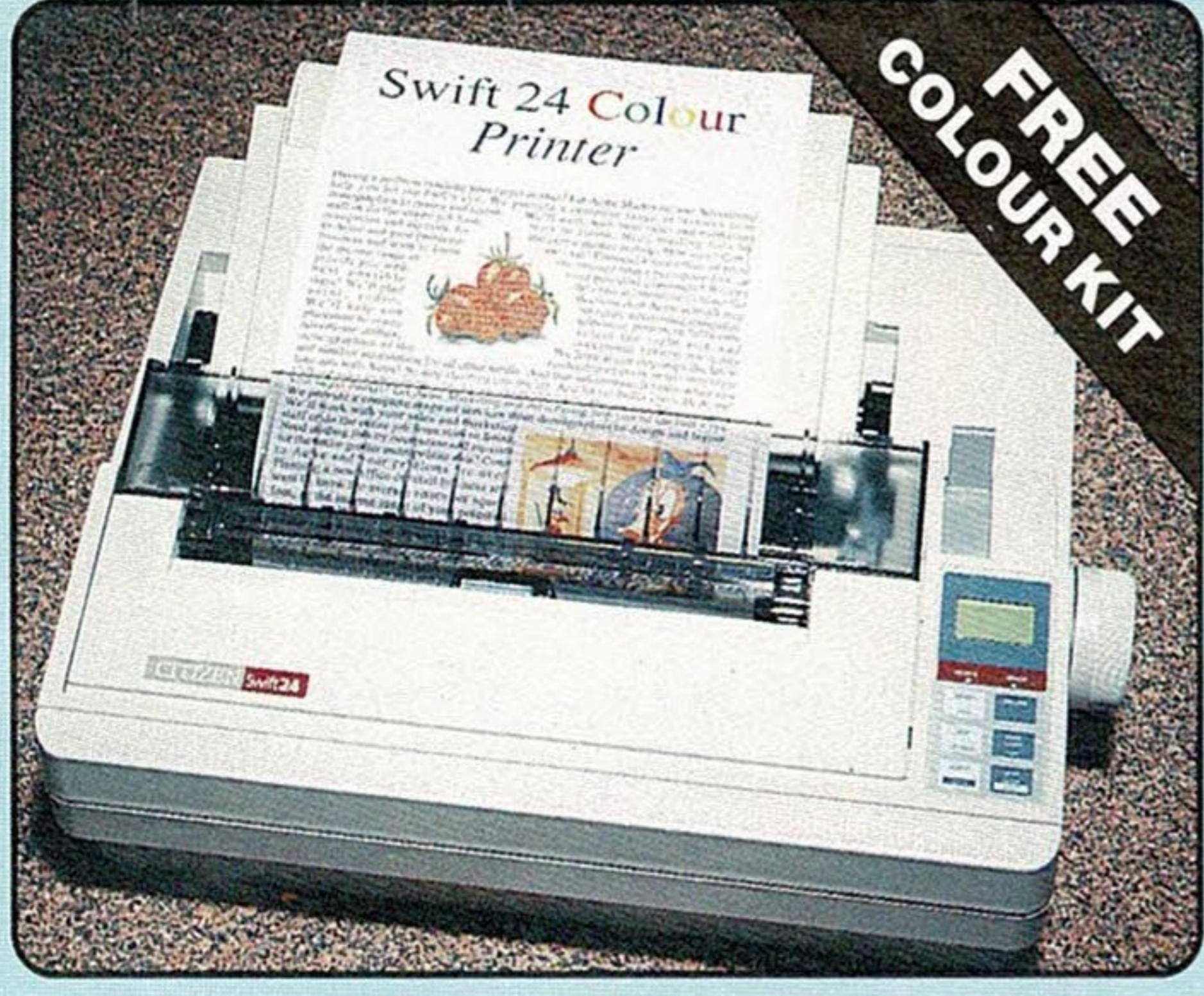
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- 8K Printer Buffer
- Epson, IBM & NEC P6+ Emulation
- Optional Colour Kit
- Advanced Paper Parking

#### OPTIONS INCLUDE:

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PRA 1215 Auto S/feed	RRP (exc): £84.00	DLR (exc): £54.60
PRA 1242 Printer Stand	RRP (exc): £23.00	DLR (exc): £16.10
PRA 1753 Memory - 32K	RRP (exc): £12.00	DLR (exc): £7.80
PRA 1709 RS232 Interface	RRP (exc): £25.00	DLR (exc): £16.25



RRP: £365 + VAT	PROMOTIONAL DEALER PRICE: 40%
NORMAL DEALER: 35%	EXC VAT
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HOLIDAY POINTS: 50	REF: PRI 2524

### 24-PIN 192 CPS DRAFT RRP EXC VAT £489

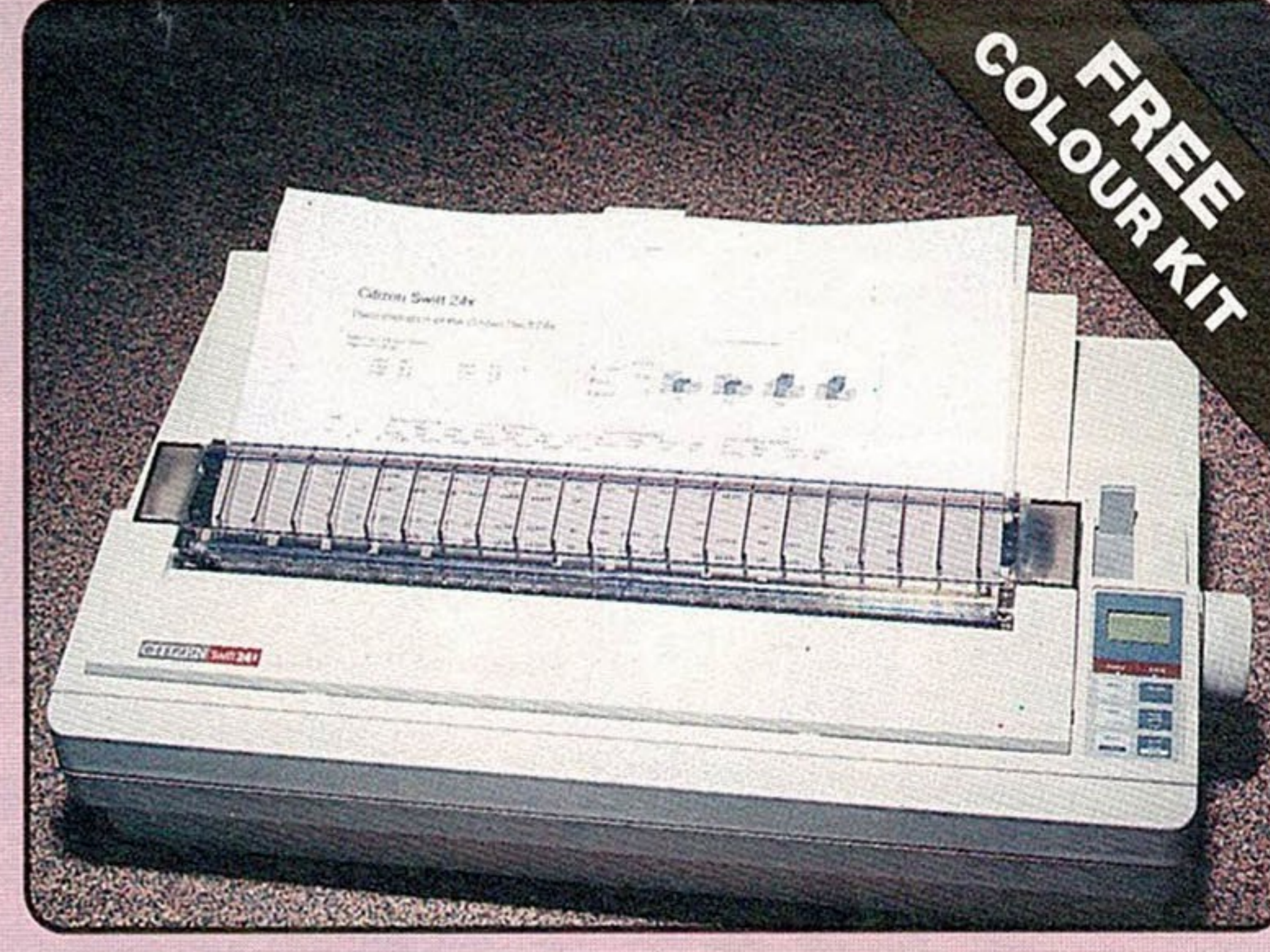
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- 8K Printer Buffer
- Epson, IBM & NEC P7+ Emulation
- Optional Colour Kit
- Advanced Paper Parking

#### OPTIONS INCLUDE:

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PRA 1753 Memory - 32K	RRP (exc): £12.00	DLR (exc): £7.80
PRA 1709 RS232 Interface	RRP (exc): £25.00	DLR (exc): £16.25



RRP: £489 + VAT	PROMOTIONAL DEALER PRICE: 40%
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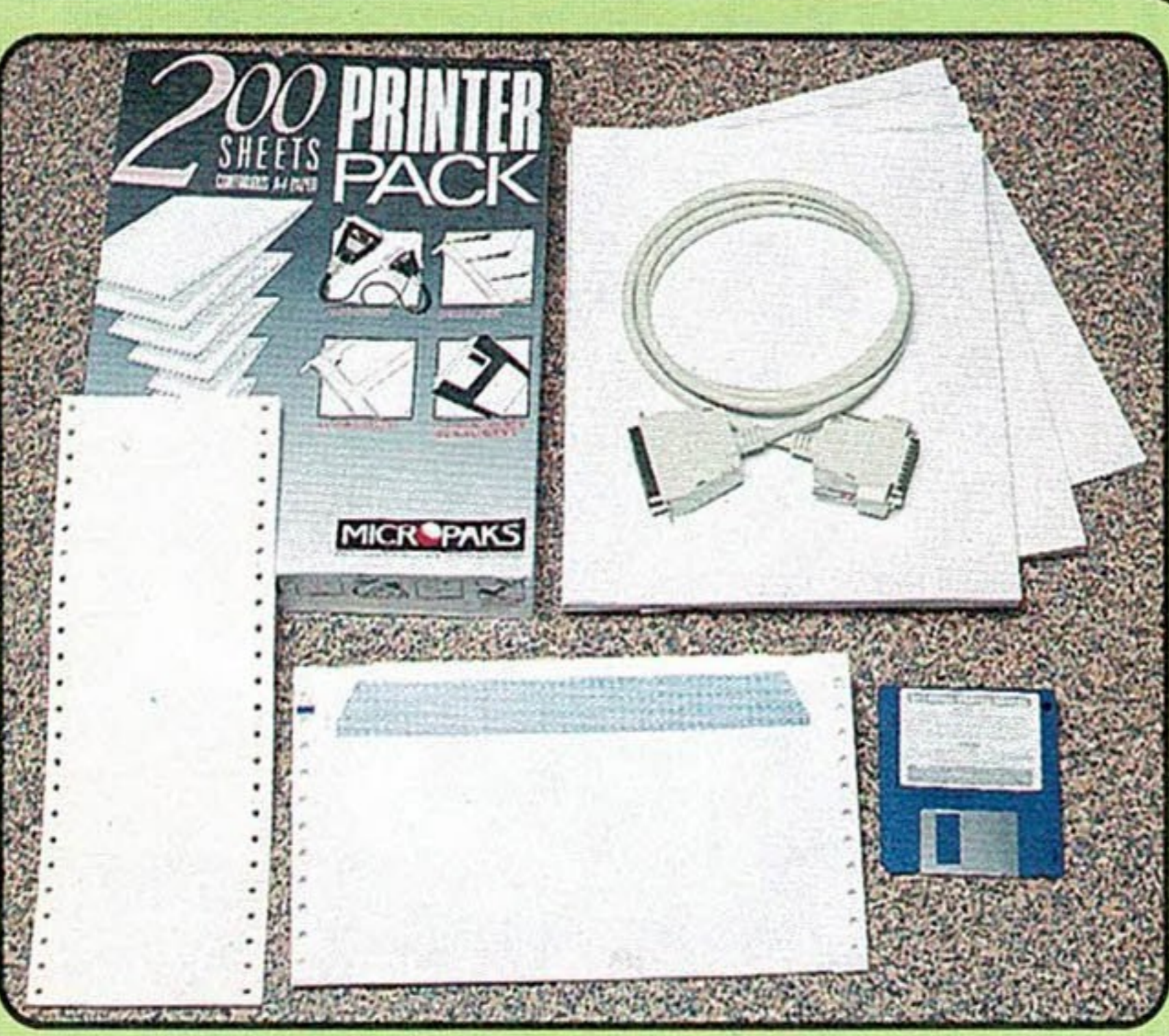
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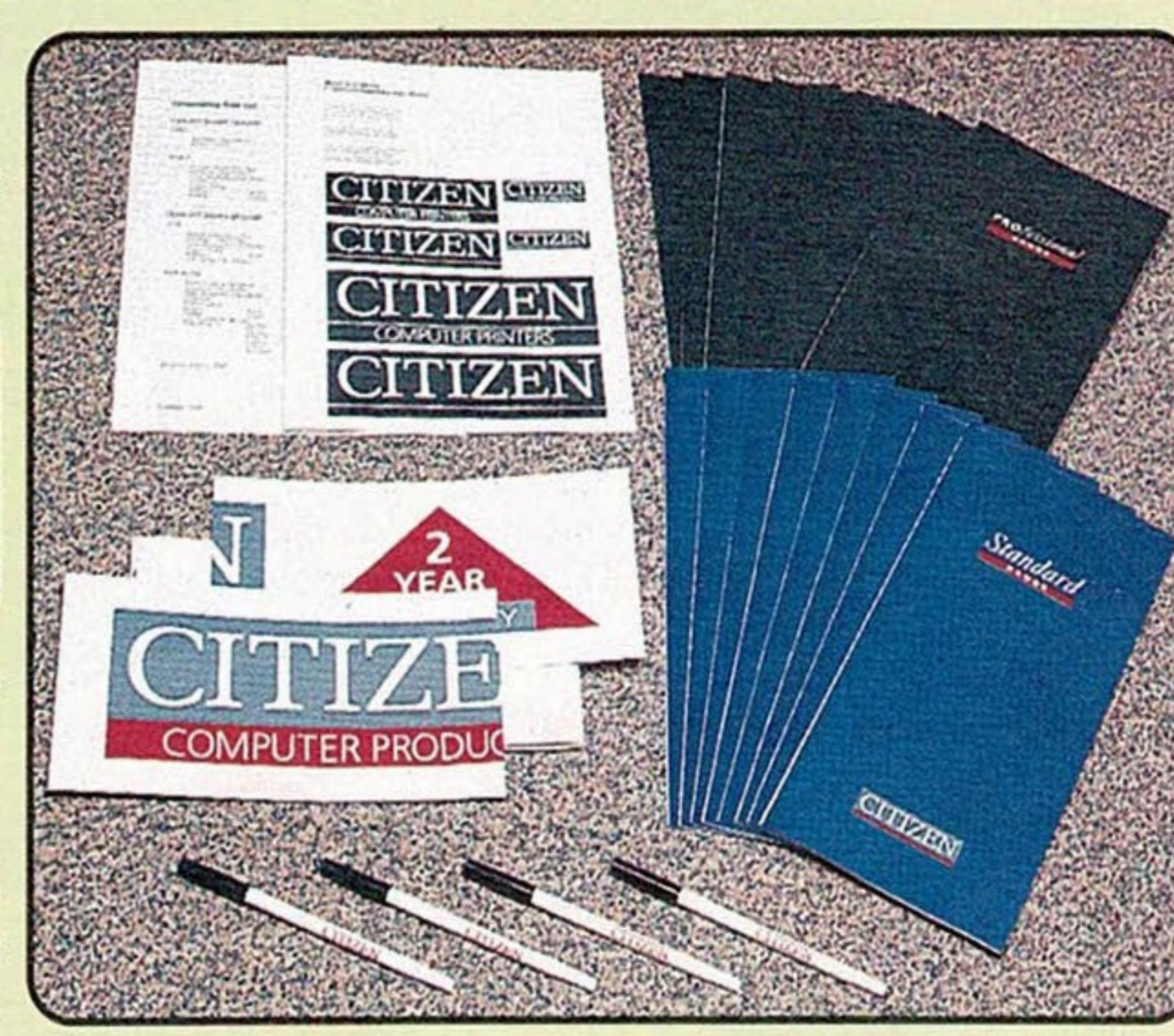
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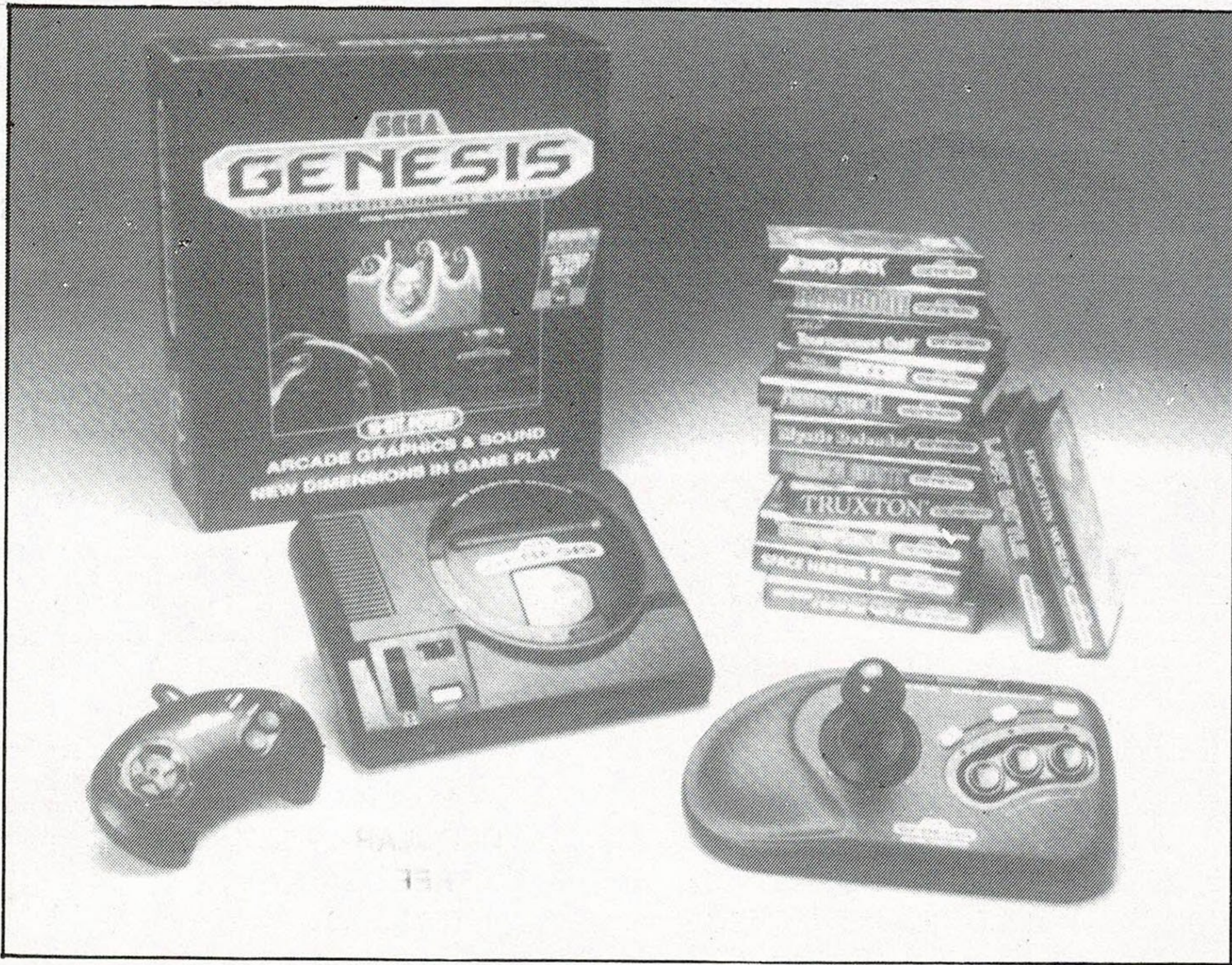
CITIZEN  
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LETTER FROM AMERICA

# FINDING A FRIEND FOR THE LOST NES MONSTER

In the first of a new monthly report on the games market in North America, STEVE HARRIS — publisher of *Electronic Gaming Retail News* — reports on the looming Super NES launch at CES, Sega and NEC's damage limitation tactics, and Atari's decision not to appear at the major Chicago bash...



GENESIS: Set for Sonic boom

The electronic entertainment industry is bristling with excitement on the eve of Nintendo's Stateside introduction of its 16-bit console, to be called the Super NES.

Ever since the machine first debuted in Japan last November, American retailers have been anxious-

ly awaiting the system's arrival to serve as a 'shot in the arm' to both hardware and software sales.

Although consumer interest in video game consoles and compatible cartridges remains high, the large number of software introductions that have appeared in the last twelve

months have succeeded in glutting the marketplace with an abundance of lacklustre product. Now that a newly upgraded machine will soon be available, both Nintendo third-party licencees who are responsible for Nintendo 8-bit, handheld Game Boy and 16-bit software — as well as

retailers — are looking ahead to the promise of higher profits and a resurgence in sales continuity to get them through this Christmas holiday season.

The first pictures of the Super NES have also surfaced in recent weeks in consumer gaming publications like Nintendo's own magazine called *Nintendo Power*.

The machine features a sleek design that is slightly smaller than that of the existing 16-bit Super Famicom (the machine's Japanese version), and features purple and grey buttons atop a white box. Cartridge size and compatibility with Japanese product remain unknown at this time, but if Nintendo remains consistent with its changes between the Japanese and American versions of the 8-bit NES console, it is doubtful that the two units will be able to share the same software.

The initial pricepoint on the Super NES is rumoured to be \$169 with the console, cables and controllers only (no game), or \$199 for the same package plus a game pack-in. At this time, the pack-in was rumoured to be *Super Mario World*, the fourth game in the series and the first to benefit from the enhanced 16-bit graphics that the Super NES will provide (at the time of writing several independent sources had confirmed this, but Nintendo refused all comment until the June 1st

unveiling of the machine during the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago).

Will the system really be able to secure the large portion of the 16-bit market that Nintendo anticipates and be able to edge out its leading competitors — Sega and NEC?

While the superior features of any system will obviously give the machine an advantage when the consumer looks to make a hardware purchase, it ultimately comes down to the titles available as well as the quality of those games. From the initial indications, both Nintendo and the majority of its third-party licencees will deliver ten to fifteen high quality titles within the first sixty days of the system's release. Unfortunately, there also appears to be an equal number of titles that are destined to go flat.

A direct comparison of the Super NES versus the Genesis (from Sega) or the TurboGrafx (from NEC) shows that the Super NES, with its enhanced colour, graphic and sound features, will produce standard scrolling games about 5%- 10% better than the competitors. When you attempt games that feature more high end functions such as scaling or rotation, there's no competition and the Super NES is a 100% stronger machine. And, with a number of hot licencees like *Mario*, *Ghouls and Ghosts*, *Teenage Mu-*

*tant Ninja Turtles*, *Final Fight*, *Gradius* and others, the Super NES is bound to make a very strong showing off the line.

## The first cut is the cheapest

Sega and NEC, however, are countering Nintendo's move into their territory with aggressive products and price cuts on both hardware and software.

NEC announced on May 13th that it would be taking the price of its console, which has failed to pull strong numbers from the launch in June of '89, to under \$100. This move is made, according to many industry analysts, to position the TurboGrafx-16 as a high-end alternative to the Nintendo 8-bit, and not as a rival of either the Sega Genesis or Nintendo Super NES. Whether this strategy will show itself in the end to be a correct move is uncertain — it is already getting play at the retail level, where hardware sales remain strong but have levelled out in recent months.

Sega, meanwhile, will also announce a price cut on June 1st to \$149.95, a full \$40 off the previous Genesis retail price. Another move, which Sega has denied but which many sources indicate will happen, is to put *Sonic the Hedgehog*, Sega's critically acclaimed alternative to *Super Mario*, in the box of a repackaged system

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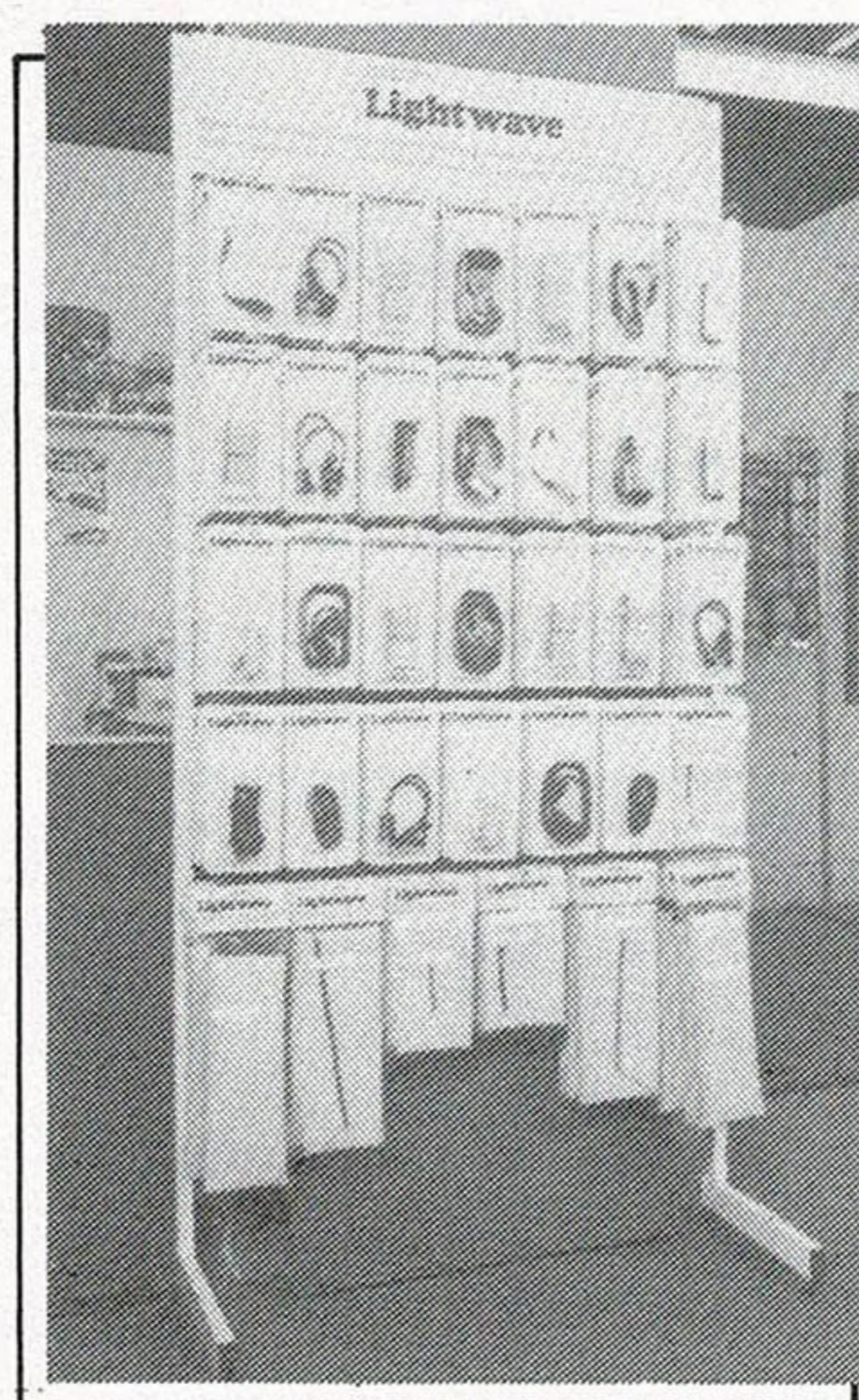
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this fall. In the interim, according to these sources close to Sega, a special coupon will be given when a system is purchased that can be redeemed through the mail for a *Sonic* cartridge.

Although the battle for 16-bit supremacy is garnering centre stage attention in the US, it's the continued concern for the health of the Nintendo 8-bit market that has kept most of the retail establishment occupied leading into the CES.

New commitments are being required of game publishers and many of the smaller companies are

becoming "no shows" for the summer convention. The licensees that are feeling the pinch most are companies such as Mattel — which were buying into the Nintendo market with only one or two products. It is rumoured that up to a dozen Nintendo licensees will fail to make an appearance at the CES.

**Pounds, shillings and Panth**

One of the most prominent no-shows will be Atari, which has instead opted to take a suite in

downtown Chicago.

After creating notable market interest in its Lynx colour portable at the Winter show in Las Vegas last January, Atari has had difficulties in shipping product and the re-designed Lynx has yet to appear. The system is not being manufactured until the full inventory of existing models has sold out.

The lack of a strong CES presence is even more baffling when you consider that the company has made a commitment to a 16-bit console of its own called the Panther. Built around hardware similar to its ST computers, the Panther will feature brilliant colours and marvellous scaling.

Of interest to our industry brethren in Europe, it now appears that Atari will plot an initial launch of the product across the Atlantic to take advantage of the strong label-recognition and familiarity that consumers have with ST computer games before releasing the system in the US.

The future outlook of the gaming market in North America will be shaped by the outcome of the CES, which begins on June 1st and carries through to June 4th.

We'll bring more information of the directions being plotted at the show in next month's column.

*Steve Harris is the president of Sendai Publications, which is launching Electronic Gaming Retail News at the Chicago CES on June 1st.*



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THE INDEPENDENT

# COMIC RELIEF

In which DALE BRADFORD lets off a great deal of steam about the state of the consumer magazine market...

Imagine, if you will, a retailer doing the following: Openly selling piracy aids such as back-up (ho ho ho) cartridges, advertising products which are not available, advertising new release software at heavily discounted prices, displaying "contact" ads in his shop (you know the sort of thing —

Amiga owner wishes to swap all the latest stuff, 100 per cent, no beginners), routinely using bad language in front of his customers, selling wank-ware — digitised porn pictures including animation in the relevant places (chortle chortle), offering his customers the opportunity

to ring up huge telephone bills through useful services such as "how to chat up girls", openly criticising competition either through his own channels or, tediously, through the CTW letters page and, finally, regularly misleading his customers.

Such a retailer would not



Are mags all comics or are they just dandy?

be referred to as an asset to the industry would he? And yet all the above activities are actively pursued monthly by The Comics.

Just as punk was music performed by 19 year olds for 19 year olds, so The Comics seem to be written by 14 year olds for 14 year olds.

Recent articles that spring to mind are "How to crack a game", "Which back-up device?", and even a breakdown of where the £25 goes when a game is purchased that forgot to mention VAT.

Recent articles that spring to mind are "How to crack a game", "Which back-up device?" and even a breakdown of where the £25 goes when a game is purchased that forgot to mention VAT.

When you also consider how many of these comics also give away, on their cover, the same products that we all need to sell to keep our businesses afloat (and the jobs of all our staff secure), no court in the country would convict anyone from within the industry who launched a "Kill The Comics" campaign.

This would start innocently enough by preventing the comic writers from getting to work by hiding their BMX bikes, rising to a peak of unbearableness by hiding their hair gel.

And yet, far from being publicly pilloried for being the unsavoury offal that they undoubtedly are, these comics then have the audacity to sanctimoniously claim that they are keeping certain markets (such as the Spec-cy) alive.

I am very well aware that there are many magazines to which my comments do not apply — we all know who the good guys are and the publishers of these have my utmost respect.

How? By producing magazines that have six or more free games attached to them. Keeping it alive! Golly, what would they do if they decided to kill it off?

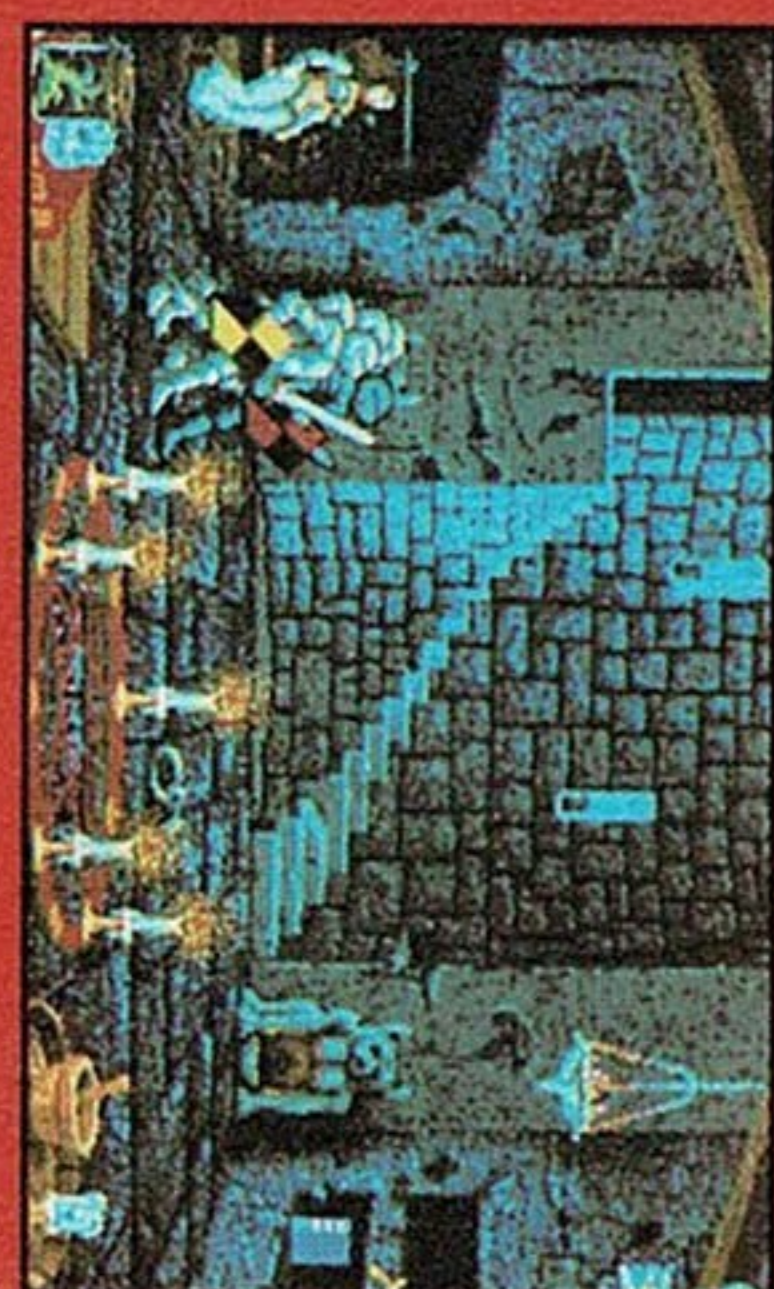
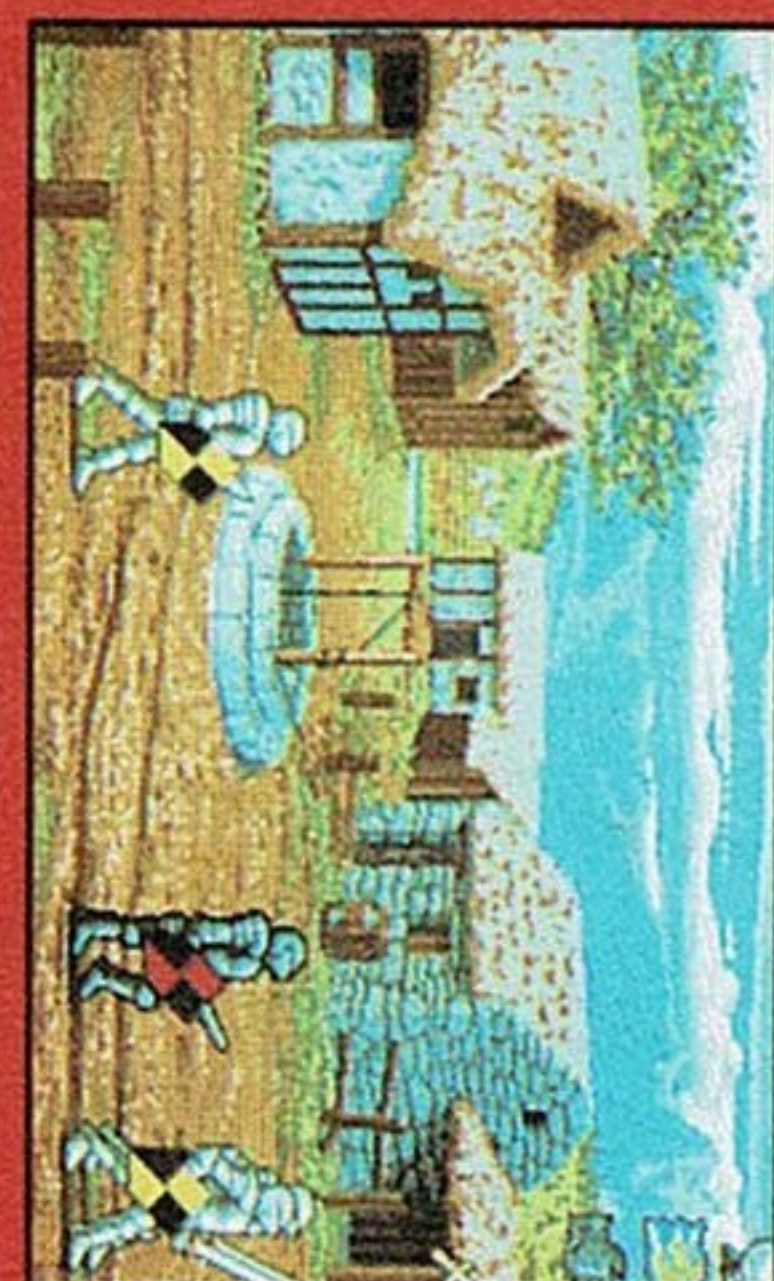
The claims in Spain

And just as three or more software publishers cannot meet together without holding an awards ceremony, whenever magazine publishers get

Continued on page 16



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BODY TALK

# ON A WHINGE AND A PRAYER

In the second of ELSPA's regular intrusions into the pages of CTW, acting chairman DOMINIC WHEATLEY takes a swipe at the leech mob...



EDOS: Retailers' saviour or High Street menace?

Is it me or are there other publishers getting rather peeved at the moment? Peeved? Yes, really peeved off. It seems that this year we've had more than the usual number of visits from "the vultures" casting a hopeful eye in our direction.

I refer, of course, to the two main peripheral businesses that surround software publishing — magazines and retailing. I can hear the gasps! "What us? We're not peripheral to anything! Without us you wouldn't be able to publish and we're sick of publishers telling us how important they are!" Which is rather odd, because mostly they don't, but I aim to redress the balance slightly.

At the same time, this may caution publishers not to shoot themselves in the right foot (the left having been shot off long ago).

It is with open mouthed incredulity that I listen to the marketers of EDOS systems. The arguments are beguiling. Extra cash now, no harm in using the back catalogue (I mean what's it there for?), increase overall sales, perish the thought that the system would carry full price games (glad you brought that up — budget only, did we mention full price games at some retailer demonstrations? must have misheard us). And if anyone swallows all that baloney then they deserve a pants down smack.

The method of downloading software on-

site through a small compact machine (rather like the way pirate retailers do in certain countries) on a disk or cassette, shoving it into a standard plastic case with a small inlay card may sound fairly all right in principle.

But in practice I can see a cheap little disk popping out of a tray with no label or, worse, a badly typed/printed one and shoved into an empty case ('sorry son but you've no idea how difficult it is to keep 3,000 different inlay cards in stock').

**What does the customer get? Something that looks as if piracy is alive and well and now living at the smartest address in the High Street.**

What does the customer get? Something that looks as if piracy is alive and well and now living at the smartest address in the High Street. It's OK to copy software, Menzies does it!

Then there's the argument that says increased traffic through the store equals increased commitment to shelf space. Do you think this is a prime selling point to retailers? I don't.

I would think that its virtue lies in that small compact machine that a moron could use (or two publishers with guidance) and sits neatly on the shelf giving one lots of room to sell other things —

like videos or books or records...ah! you've spotted them, our enemies.

This is not a system for distribution, let's be quite clear, this is a sub-licensing operation. Permission would have to be sought from programmers and any licensors involved. They will want sub-licence royalty rates which can be up to half of revenues.

This means that the dear old publisher could be left with around 12.5 per cent of the RRP — and he has to provide thousands of inlay cards to boot. Are we being conned? Not half.

**Sermon on the mounts**

My next worry is about the magazine boys. The idea of cover-mounting a free game on 16-bit magazines was seriously proposed and it required the full force of an ELSPA meeting to prevent it.

I don't doubt what would have happened had ELSPA not existed we'd have free games on 16-bit mags just as we have free games on 8-bit mags — ELSPA wasn't born when that started.

Now, well done ELSPA, rational argument, show of hands, it's unanimous — so bugger off! But shouldn't the individual publishers that agreed to sell the magazines their games have worked it out in advance? Divided we fall.

I'm very concerned that although the publishing in-

Continued on page 16



WHY THE ANGELIC SMILE?

"STUNNING, IMMENSE,  
EXCELLENT, GREAT,  
DEFINITIVE, ENORMOUS"



BECAUSE  
PEOPLE  
SEEM TO  
LIKE ME!



93%

"Experience a complete virtual reality, inside your computer."

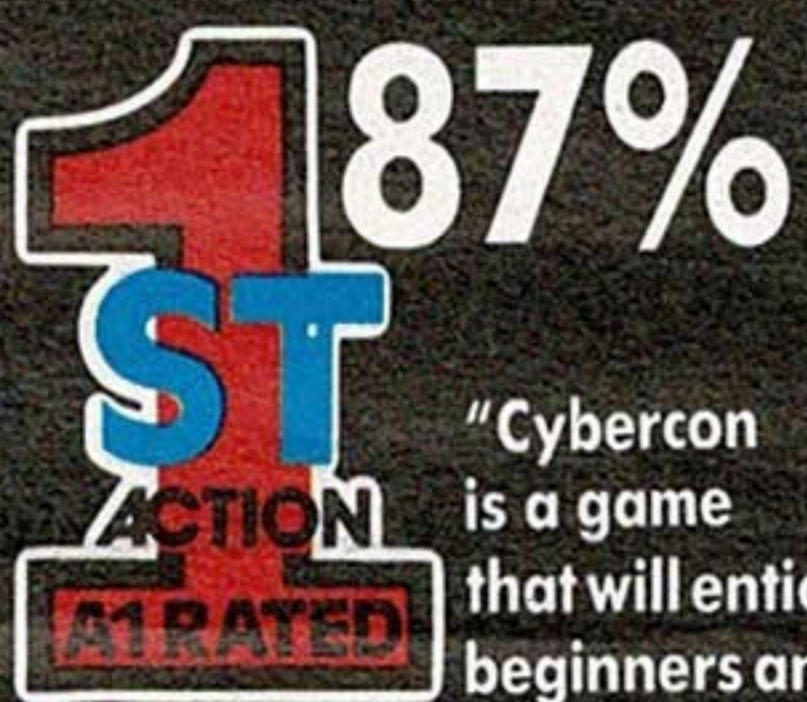
88% **AMIGA POWER**

"A deeply serious, immensely playable and generally ENORMOUS 3D EXPERIENCE that's quite possibly the only game you'll need to buy this year."



"With excellent graphics and acres of game play CYBERCON III plunges you into the heart of a defence complex - GREAT STUFF!"

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87%  
"Cybercon is a game that will entice beginners and keep hardened gamers happy for a long time."

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"A stunning game... Incredible 3D, which is fast and smooth moving."  
**AMIGA**  
FORMAT  
GOLD



87%  
"This is the most involved 3D game I've ever seen."

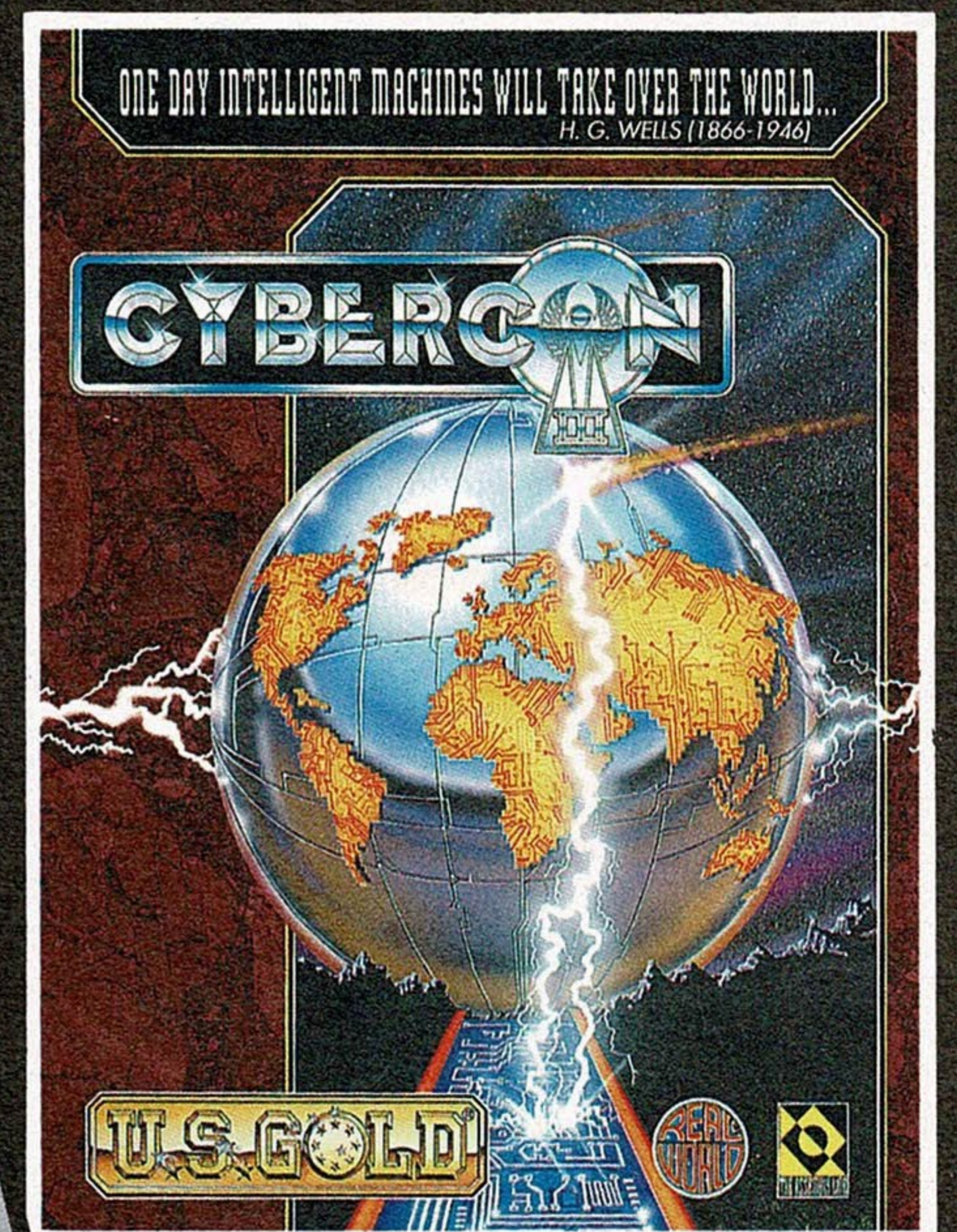
91% **AMIGA ACTION**  
"Assembly Line and Ricardo Pinto have done an excellent job on the storyline and game - you're guaranteed hours of fun playing this game - EXCELLENT!"

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## CTW PRODUCT GUIDE

# 1991: THE HALF-TIME SCORES

Six months gone, six months to go — the year is fair flying by. As a random batch of full-price leisure publishers prepare to leave the tunnel for the second half, CTW looks at the tactics used so far and what might be introduced that could change the game before the final whistle...

PUBLISHER	RELEASES THIS YEAR			BEST PERFORMER	MOST DISAPPOINTING	SOFTWARE AD SPEND SO FAR	BUDGET FOR NEXT SIX MONTHS	TITLES TO COME			
	8-BIT	16-BIT	CONSOLES					8-BIT	16-BIT	CONSOLES	
VIRGIN GAMES	4	6	—	<i>Wonderland</i>	<i>Judge Dredd</i>	£70-75K	£150K +	—	3	2	<i>Realms</i>
OCEAN	2	5	2	<i>F-29 Retaliator</i>	None	—	—	4	10	4	<i>The Simpsons</i>
GREMLIN	3	3	—	<i>Supercars II</i>	<i>Team Suzuki</i>	"More than last year"	"More than last year"	4	11	—	<i>Lotus Esprit II</i>
U.S. GOLD	9	17	4	<i>Monkey Island</i>	<i>Chips Challenge</i>	£750K	£1¼ million	10	20	4	<i>Godfather III</i>
ELITE	1	3	—	<i>Gremlins II</i>	None	£36K	—	4	4	1	<i>Dragon's Lair (NES)</i>
UBISOFT	6	10	1	<i>Pro Tennis Tour II</i>	<i>The Reaper</i>	£30K	£150K	—	8	—	A.C.A.
SIERRA	—	6	—	<i>King's Quest V</i>	None	£50K	£200K	—	39	—	<i>Red Baron</i>
ACCOLADE	2	16	—	<i>Elvira</i>	None (but 8-bit has reduced)	—	—	—	4	4	<i>Elvira II</i>
DOMARK	5	8	—	<i>MiG-29 Fulcrum</i>	None	10 ads per product	—	8	10	2	<i>Pit Fighter</i>
ELECTRONIC ARTS	2	17	6	<i>Powermonger</i>	<i>Match Pairs</i>	—	—	2	25	8	<i>Birds of Prey</i>
MIRRORSOFT	6	18	—	<i>Speedball II</i>	<i>Blade Warrior</i>	—	—	12	25	4	<i>Turtles II</i>
ELECTRONIC ZOO	1	1	—	<i>Eco Phantoms</i>	<i>Combat</i>	—	"less than £500,016" (?)	2	10	—	<i>Magic Garden</i>
STORM	1	1	—	<i>SWIV</i>	—	15 ads	similar	5	5	—	<i>Rodland</i>
PSYGNOSIS	—	6	—	<i>Lemmings</i>	None	—	—	—	10+	—	—
SEGA	—	—	10 (Master System) 11 (Megadrive)	<i>Mickey Mouse</i>	—	—	—	—	—	21 (Megadrive) 20 (Master System)	<i>Sonic</i>  <i>The Hedgehog</i>
NINTENDO	—	—	22	<i>Super Mario Brothers II</i>	None	"A 77% share of voice"	£4 million +	—	—	34	<i>Super Mario Brothers III</i>
MICROPROSE	1	12	—	<i>Railroad Tycoon</i>	None	10-15% of turnover	10-15% of turnover	—	16	1	<i>Gunship 2000</i>

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Review Scores:

C + VG	86%
Amiga Action	86%
The One	86%
CU Amiga	84%
ACE	81.1%



**Price £20.99 — ST & Amiga**



**ELSPA**  
**CHARTALK**  
 Compiled by Gallup  
 on behalf of ELSPA  
 WEEK ENDING May 18th 1991

**ALL FORMATS TOP 20 16-BIT (FULL PRICE)**

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	FORMATS	PUB. LABEL
1	—	—	EYE OF THE BEHOLDER	— AG — —	U.S. GOLD
2	6	—	HEROQUEST	ST AG — —	GREMLIN GRAPHICS
3	4	—	MONKEY ISLAND	— AG PC —	U.S. GOLD
4	3	—	LEMMINGS	ST AG — —	PSYGNOSIS
5	5	—	GODS	ST AG — —	RENEGADE
6	1	—	ARMOUR—GEDDON	— AG — —	PSYGNOSIS
7	10	—	SUPERCARS 2	ST AG — —	GEMLIN GRAPHICS
8	8	—	FINAL WHISTLE	ST AG — —	ANCO
9	7	—	CHUCK ROCK	ST AG — —	CORE DESIGN
10	9	—	MICKEY MOUSE	— — — OT	SEGA
11	18	—	SPEED BALL 2	ST AG — —	MIRRORSOFT
12	16	—	KILLING CLOUD	ST AG — —	MIRRORSOFT
13	—	—	KICK OFF 2	ST AG PC —	ANCO
14	15	—	VIZ	ST AG — —	VIRGIN
15	2	—	PGA GOLF TOUR	— AG PC OT	ELECTRONIC ARTS
16	—	—	TEEN MUT HERO TURTLES	ST AG PC —	MIRRORSOFT
17	11	—	F19 STEALTH FIGHTER	ST AG PC —	MICROPROSE
18	—	—	SUPER MONACO GP	— — — OT	SEGA
19	17	—	WONDERLAND	ST AG PC —	VIRGIN
20	14	—	SWIV	ST AG — —	STORM

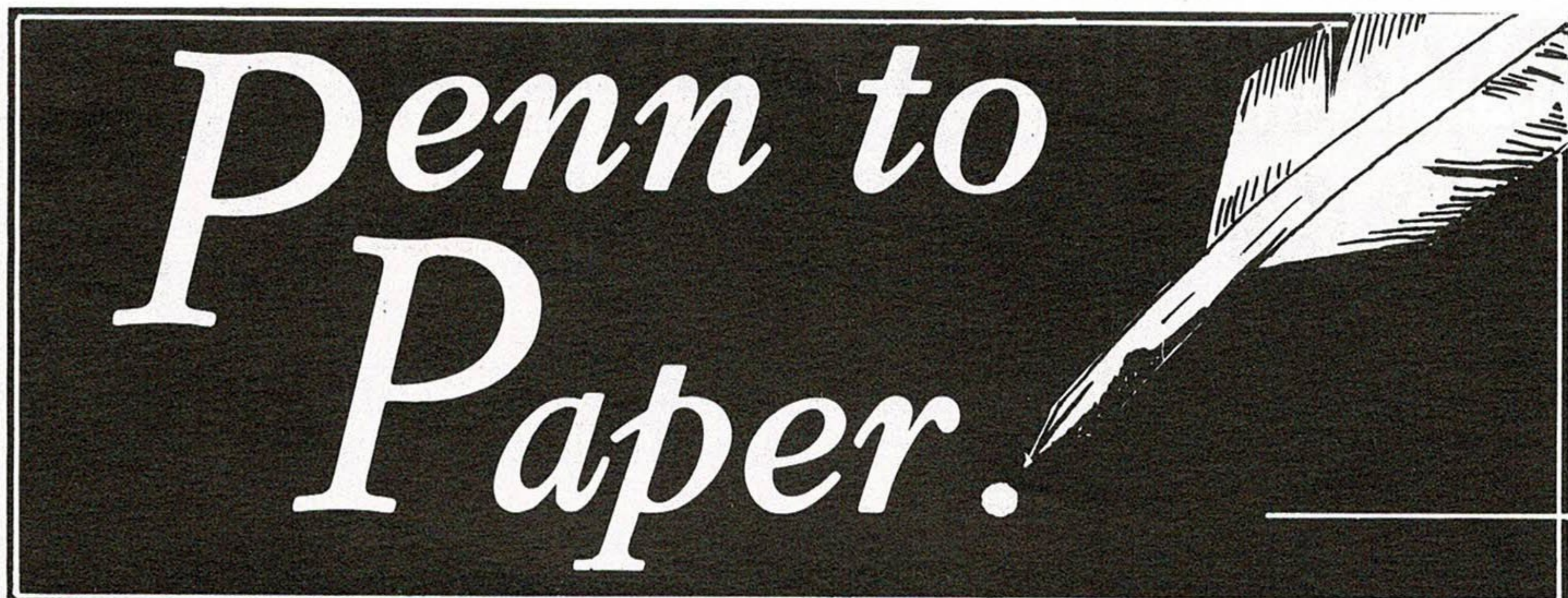
KEY: ST — Atari ST; AG — Commodore Amiga; PC — PC Compatibles; OT — Other

**ALL FORMATS TOP 20 8-BIT (FULL PRICE)**

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	FORMATS	PUB. LABEL
1	1	—	DIZZY COLLECTION	SP CO AM —	CODE MASTERS
2	2	—	TEEN MUT HERO TURTLES	SP CO AM OT	MIRRORSOFT
3	11	—	BIG BOX	SP CO AM —	BEAU JOLLY
4	6	—	POWERUP	SP CO AM —	OCEAN
5	4	—	BACK TO THE FUTURE 3	SP CO AM —	MIRRORSOFT
6	12	—	MOONWALKER	— — — OT	SEGA
7	10	—	CREATURES	— CO — —	THALAMUS
8	20	—	DOUBLE DRAGON	— — — OT	NINTENDO
9	3	—	WORLD CUP	— — — OT	NINTENDO
10	15	—	LAST NINJA 3	— CO — —	SYSTEM 3
11	7	—	SUPER MONACO GP	SP CO AM —	U.S. GOLD
12	5	—	TRACK AND FIELD 2	— — — OT	NINTENDO
13	—	—	SUPER MARIO LAND	— — — OT	NINTENDO
14	—	—	TOTAL RECALL	SP CO AM —	OCEAN
15	—	—	SHINOBI	— — — OT	SEGA
16	17	—	GREMLINS 2	SP CO AM OT	ELITE
17	8	—	HOLLYWOOD COLLECTIO	SP CO AM —	OCEAN
18	9	—	GOLDEN AXE	SP CO AM —	VIRGIN
19	—	—	SUPER MARIO BROS 2	— — — OT	NINTENDO
20	—	—	F16 COMBAT PILOT	SP CO AM —	DIGITAL INT.

KEY: SP — Spectrum; CO — Commodore 64; AM — Amstrad; OT — Other

All Gallup software charts are the copyright of ELSPA from April 1st 1990. The charts published weekly in CTW are extracts from 'CHARTALK' which is compiled in report form both weekly and monthly by Gallup on behalf of ELSPA. There are 22 charts in 'CHARTALK' covering all formats, pricepoints and with market share statistics. 'CHARTALK' is available from the general secretary at ELSPA on 0836 830642/831223 — or write to him at Arden Mill, North Littleton, near Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 5QP.



Sorry, Bob, but there's one smell better than that of napalm in the morning — and that's nostalgia. Mmmmm.

There was a time when text adventures were — well, not all the rage, but there was money to be made (especially with the likes of *The Hobbit*). Nowadays it seems that the consumer's imagination requires more and more

visual fuel to fire it up. Simple illustrative accompaniment is no longer enough, and what is widely known as the Sierra style of adventure is becoming increasingly popular — as even the renowned purists such as Level 9 have conceded.

In many ways it's a great pity. Infocom proved on many an occasion that a well-crafted piece of

text-only interactive fiction was far more atmospheric than almost any arcade style release. Eehee, them were the days, them were, when y' mind were left to make its own entertainment.

Still, there's shelf life in the old dog yet — in budget or compilation form anyway. Or as a completely new venture if you happen to be Palace Software...

**DEMONIAK**

Palace Software  
 Amiga, Atari ST, PC

Palace is perfectly aware of the specialist nature of this particular niche, and yet it's releasing not one but a series of text adventures called Pure Fiction. *Demoniak* is the first, with the second due early next year.

The Pure Fiction series is being pitched as beyond the traditional text adventure. The emphasis is not so much on the use of animated introductory sequence and the occasional picture (though this does help sell the product off the page more than words ever can), but that the product adopts a less linear style of play. The fact that *Demoniak*'s only available to owners of expanded Amigas and Atari STs reinforces this to a degree.

The story and text for *Demoniak* was penned by 2000AD script-writer Alan Grant. This isn't necessarily seen as a sales point in the product's favour (it certainly won't hurt) however it is a pedigree which has at least been of interest to the press....

Palace isn't doing a great deal when it comes to advertising and Point Of Sale. In fact, there's none. The company's relying on creating a strong consumer awareness and a high profile through editorial. The idea is to let any parties who may be interested in this type of product know that it's available. Palace feels that it would be "wasting its time and money trying to reach people who simply aren't there", and it's confident that *Demoniak*'s profile is actually higher than that of some its less cost-conscious releases.

The unusual nature of *Demoniak* has come across in almost all editorial coverage to date, and the majority of reviews have been enthusiastic (84 per cent from *Zero*, 90 per cent from *The Ones*, and 87 per cent from *ST Action*).

With the packaging Palace has opted for a large soft box into which it's placing a comprehensive manual and a *Judge Dredd* paperback (that's the Alan Grant connection for you) to increase the products perceived value. There's also a card included which allows the buyer

to join the Pure Fiction Society, Palace's after-sales support club, if you will, an incentive for the consumer to view the series as a whole.

*Demoniak*'s shelf life should be long, especially with references appearing in Future Pure Fiction releases. It's a long shot, Palace, but it just might work.

CONTACT: Palace Software's Richard Henerley on (071) 278 0751.

**STORMBALL**

Millennium  
 Amiga, Atari ST, PC

What with spice of life being variety and all, here's a product which couldn't be further from text adventuring. *Stormball* is a future port — displayed in three-dimensions no less, which is something of a novelty. Indeed, this unique look makes *Stormball* all the more desirable.

It's fortunate that consumer awareness of the products is strong, with screenshots and name-checks appearing regularly since the word *Stormball* became known. Weighty preview material has been thin on the ground, although earlier this year *ST Format* did run a lengthy and impressive work in progress feature spread across three issues and tied in with a playable cover disk preview.

The reviews are now appearing thick and fast and almost all have been favourable, with a 90 per cent from both *Raze* and *Amiga Computing*, an 85 per cent from *Zero*, an 80 per cent from *ST Action* and an 82 per cent courtesy of *Amiga Action*. *ACE*, *Amiga Format*, *ST Format*, *C+VG*, *CU Amiga* and *The One(s)* have yet to nail their colours to their masts, but the chances of any detrimental appraisal rearing its head are slim.

Single-page advertisements have been placed in the July issues of *C+VG*, *The Ones*, *Zero*, *Amiga Format* and *ST Format*. To coincide with the release of the PC compatible version in a months time, Millennium will be placing machine-specific advertising across a few relevant publications. There's also the possibility of a PC compatible cover-mounted playable preview.

Impact is distributing

thousands of non-playable preview disks, along with 10,000 A4 fliers and 10,000 A2 posters. Incidentally, special window packs are available for the first 50 retailers to contact Impact's John Parker on (0858) 410544.

*Stormball*'s packaging comprises a large soft box complete with a suitably sizeable manual. And rather fetching it looks too. It won't set the world alight overnight, but *Stormball* will undoubtedly spark off a few forest fires of considerable warmth.

CONTACT: Impact's Jackie Talbot on (0858) 410544.

**INFOCOM**

Mastertronic  
 Amiga, Atari ST, PC

*Zork III* is the latest addition to what will eventually be a limited range of 10 titles. *Enchanter* is just around the corner and *Sorcerer* and *Deadline* will follow before July ends. Further Infocom re-releases are unlikely, though Mastertronic is planning to produce relevant three-title compilations (which will appear towards the end of this year).

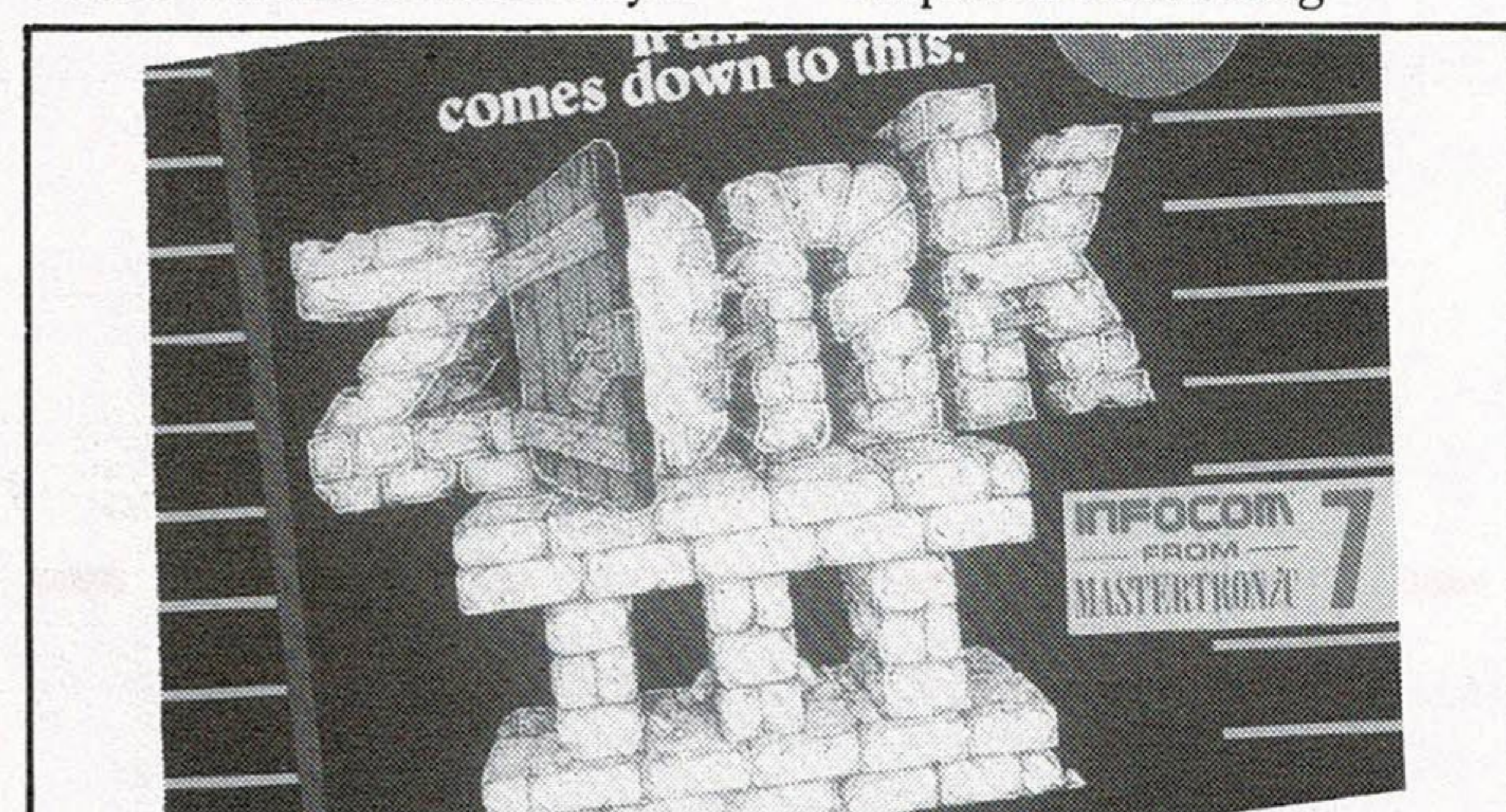
To date Mastertronic has done little to support this series. Not that it's needed to, what with Infocom's reputation as the leader in this field and the fact that these re-releases are at the budget price — a contributing factor to Mastertronic's claim that it's sold more Infocom titles than Activision ever did.

However, to accompany *Deadline*'s releases Mastertronic is producing Point Of Sale material — several thousand A2 posters to be precise. The idea is to promote the range as a whole, which is why a pack shot of every title is featured on both posters and advertising — oh yes, there will be some, in the August issues of relevant multi-format magazines and specialist publications such as *Strategy Plus*.

The packaging's slim and sexy in its own collectable way (every title is individually numbered for that very reason), and in many cases almost every aspect of the original full-price parent's extensive selection of 'additions' has been included. Those in the know, as it were (and that number is likely to increase with the products' push in July), will realise that these titles represent excellent value for money.

CONTACT: Virgin Games Software's Andrew Wright on (071) 727 8070.

Gary Penn is the consultant editor of *Amiga Power*, and writes for various *Future Publishing* consumer titles exclusively.





# ON A WHINGE AND A PRAYER

Continued from page 12

dustry is becoming more professional and mature, we have more and more people looking to cash in on our copyrights. This is short term and destructive.

By all means join the bandwagon — but please don't strip it. I would hope in turn that publishers can spot a vulture when they see one and try not to be tempted by "money now" offers for back catalogue.

Other industries treat their back-catalogue with respect. We seem to run around taking fistfuls of peanuts from any wheeler-dealer we come

across. It simply isn't useful to give the consumer too much choice at too wide a price range. They end up buying less. Presentation is key.

As David Ward said on this subject: "We sell dreams, not commodities, and anything that cheapens

**The Atari ST Powerpack is proof of what I'm talking about. 23 pieces of software (20 games) and retailers reported as never seeing the customers again.**

those dreams makes them harder to sell."

The Atari ST Powerpack is proof of what I'm talking about. 23 pieces of software (20 games) and retailers reported as never seeing the customers again.

Twenty games, two on each disk, looking like plastic confetti. Quite enough entertainment to carry the kid through the honeymoon period and sufficiently tacky to cause him to question the value-for-money aspects of full price software thereafter.

Result? Lots of STs out there being used but nobody

buys software. The irony is that this cynical approach adopted by Atari (and now reversed, I'm pleased to say) did them no favours at all in the long term.

At an industry bash the other day a well known discount software merchant approached me in a group and declared loudly that we hadn't done business together for "a long time". I felt a warm glow of pride. We all seem to have come a long way with our stock control!

Can we now try to control the use of our intellectual property rights? And firmly tell those that look at our business and lick their lips to sod off.

# COMIC RELIEF

Continued from page 10

together, they tend to see the light and produce edicts such as the famous ones "decided" upon at this year's Computer Arena — "we won't give any more games away", "yeah, only demos", "and we'll stop carrying ads for back-up utilities", "yeah right and contact ads". Unfortunately, in the cold light of day, such promises are invariably never kept.

And do you know a funny thing? Not once, in all the years that CTW has been published, have I seen an article which even questioned the influence these comics

have.

Of course there may have been one which I missed, but I doubt it. Oh, I have seen several articles urging retailers to pull their metaphorical socks up and get professional, including a recent one from a dignitary who complained that certain retailers did not vacuum the carpet prior to his visit, but I cannot honestly recall an article about the consumer comics headed "Why do we tolerate this shit?"

And why do we? Or, more pointedly, why do the software publishers tolerate it? Why do they condone it by continuing to pay exorbitant fees to advertise their latest masterpieces? I don't know. A cynic might suggest it is to guarantee good reviews, but I wouldn't dare even think it.

Amateurish, unprofessional retailers will eventually disappear, there are too many good ones expanding around the country for that not to happen, but what about the comics? How can they be shaken up for the good of the whole industry?

One easy way is for the big spenders to hold a meeting (oh all right then, an awards ceremony) and perhaps they could agree that they will only advertise with the magazines that comply with certain conditions such as not cover-mounting games, not printing contact ads as a reader service, not carrying ads for back-up cartridges etc.

**I cannot honestly recall an article about the consumer comics headed "Why do we tolerate this shit?"**

Maybe ELSPA could discuss it at their next meeting? Or is that too easy? I would be interested in hearing other views on this subject, as, I'm sure, would all the journalists who read CTW.

And yes, I am very well aware that there are many magazines to which my comments do not apply, we all know who the good guys are and the publishers of these have my utmost respect.

Talking of magazines, I remember attending a seminar at this year's Computer Arena entitled "Magazines — Lifelines or Leeches" (or something similar). This was not, as its title promised, a debate where both arguments were put; it was a long and elaborate spiel by the speaker arguing why those present should advertise with his titles. Ah well.

**And finally...**

This month's column was going to have been a lengthy critique of the duopoly that currently exists between leisure distributors but, at the time of writing, I have yet to receive replies to certain requests. So that will just have to wait until next month now.

And can I just say a quick thank you to all the nice people who said nice things about last month's CDTV article. I'm sure that article alone did not change any minds at Commodore HQ but if it (and Stuart Garrett's equally valid contribution) helped a little bit then I can rest a happy man.

## GUARANTEE YOUR SUCCESS THIS SUMMER!

# THE 4<sup>th</sup> International 16 BIT COMPUTER SHOW

Europe's biggest 16 Bit Computer Show dedicated to the serious and entertainment market of the ST, Amiga and PC

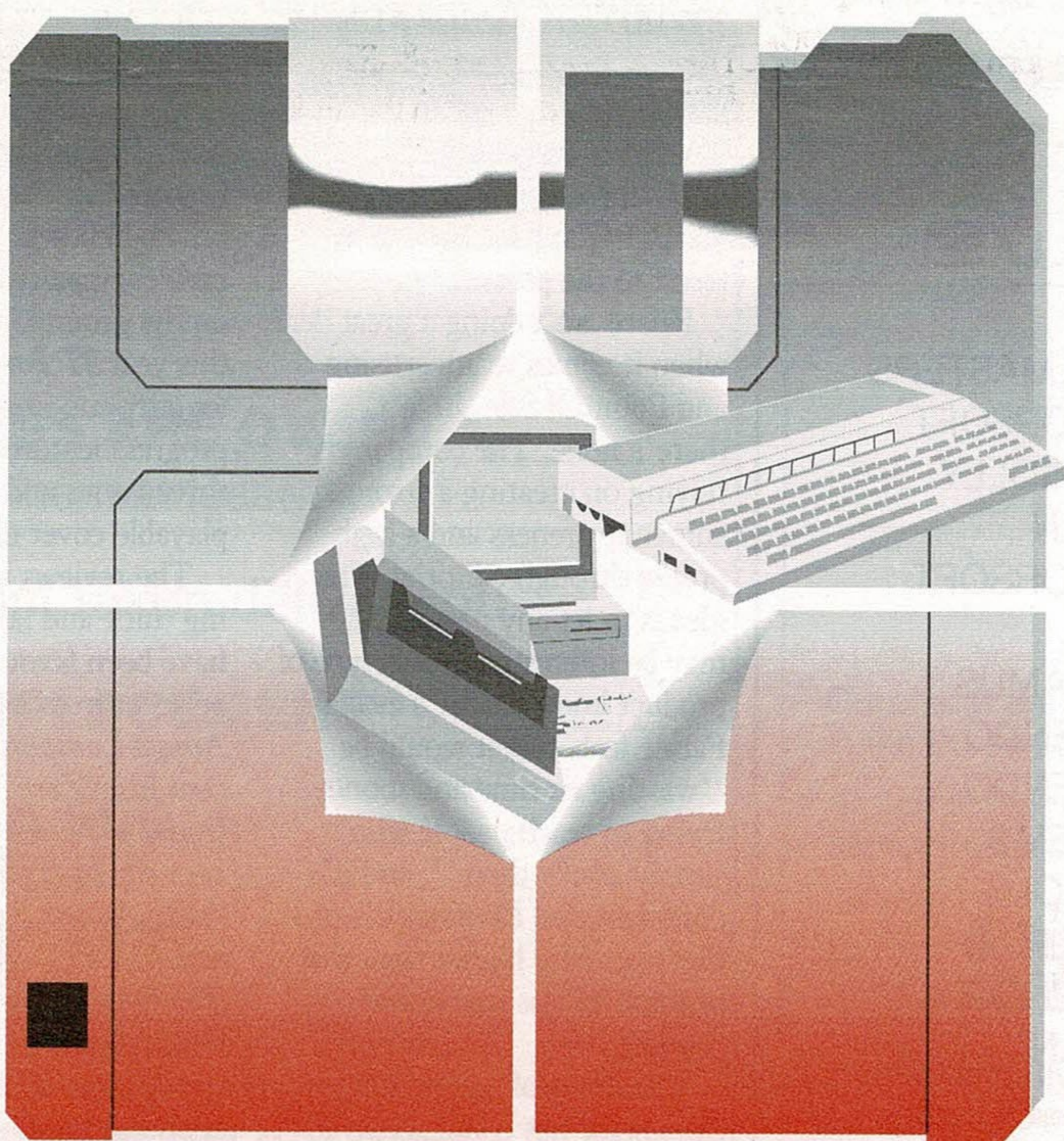
July 12, 13, 14

Open 10am - 6pm,  
Friday and Saturday.

Open 10am - 4pm,  
Sunday.

Estimated  
25,000 visitors

Increased promotional spend including TV advertising



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Nearest tube station - Hammersmith  
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Over 50 new products being launched at the show.

Over 140 companies, including 20 from overseas, will be exhibiting and supplying everything from Hardware to Software, Peripherals to Consumables for your ST, AMIGA & PC — as well as all the latest products from Europe and America.

If you market to the ST, Amiga & PC markets phone now to secure one of the last remaining stands

PHONE KAREN FERRIS NOW ON

081 549 3444



Week 125

# The Release Schedule

27/5/91

Please allow for slippage.

A VITAL REFERENCE TO NEW AND FORTHCOMING LEISURE SOFTWARE. UPDATED WEEKLY.  
 OUT NOW = RELEASED WITHIN LAST MONTH. IMMINENT = EXPECTED AT TIME OF PUBLICATION.

**The Release Schedule**  
 is prepared by  
**Inter-Mediates Ltd**  
 and supported by  
 the following  
 software  
 publishers.

- ACCOLADE
- ACTION 16
- ACTIVISION
- AUDIOGENIC
- B. WARE EDUCATIONAL
- CDS
- CINEMAWARE
- C P SOFTWARE
- DATABASE
- DIGITAL INTEGRATION
- DOMARK
- FLAIR SOFTWARE
- FTL
- GREMLIN GRAPHICS
- IMAGE WORKS
- IMPRESSIONS
- INTERNECINE
- MAGNETIC SCROLLS
- MICROVALUE
- MILLENNIUM
- MINDSCAPE
- MIRRORSOFT
- NOVAGEN SOFTWARE
- OCEAN
- 'ON-LINE'
- PALACE
- PSS
- PSYCLAPSE
- PSYGNOSIS
- SIERRA
- SIMULMONDO
- SOFT STUFF
- STORM COMPUTERS
- UBI-SOFT
- VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC
- VRLI

## AMIGA

20000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA .....	7.99	END MAY .....	ELECTRONIC ZOO
3 STOOGES .....	9.99	MAY 30 .....	IMAGE WORKS
3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	49.99	OUT NOW .....	DOMARK
3D POOL .....	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT
ACCOLADE PRO-SPORT CHALLENGE .....	30.99	OUT NOW .....	ACCOLADE
AFRIKA KORPS .....	29.99	OUT NOW .....	IMPRESSIONS
ARMOUR-GEDDON .....	25.99	OUT NOW .....	PSYGNOSIS
ATOMINO .....	25.99	MAY 28 .....	PSYGNOSIS
BATTLEBOUND .....	24.99	IMMINENT .....	'ON-LINE'
BEAST BUSTERS .....	25.99	AUGUST .....	ACTIVISION
BLADE WARRIOR .....	25.99	JULY 24 .....	MIRRORSOFT
CADAVER LEVELS .....	TBA	JUNE 13 .....	MINDSCAPE
CHALLENGE GOLF .....	24.99	END MAY .....	'ON-LINE'
CHAMPION OF THE RAJ .....	25.99	MAY 30 .....	PSS
CRICKET SIMULATOR (1-MEG) .....	29.99	OUT NOW .....	SOUNDWARE INT.
CRYSTALS OF ARBOREA .....	25.99	MAY 30 .....	PALACE
DEMONIAK .....	29.99	MAY 30 .....	PALACE
DEUTEROS .....	25.99	AUGUST .....	ACTIVISION
ENCHANTER .....	10.21	MAY 28 .....	MASTERTRONIC
FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER .....	25.99	JUNE 19 .....	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
GODS .....	25.53	OUT NOW .....	MINDSCAPE
GUNBOAT .....	29.99	MAY .....	ACCOLADE
HUNTER .....	30.99	AUGUST .....	ACTIVISION
J. NICHOLAS '91 CHAMP COURSE 5 .....	14.99	MAY 29 .....	ACCOLADE
LEONARDO .....	7.99	END MAY .....	ELECTRONIC ZOO
LIFE AND DEATH .....	25.53	MAY 30 .....	MINDSCAPE
METAL MUTANT .....	25.99	JUNE 13 .....	PALACE
MOONBASE .....	35.76	MAY 30 .....	MINDSCAPE
PASSING SHOT .....	9.99	JUNE 17 .....	MIRRORSOFT
PREDATOR 2 .....	25.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS
PRO TENNIS TOUR 2 .....	24.99	OUT NOW .....	UBI SOFT
R-TYPE II .....	25.99	JULY .....	ACTIVISION
SEARCH FOR THE KING .....	30.99	OUT NOW .....	ACCOLADE
SHANGHAI II: DRAGON'S EYE .....	35.99	SEPTEMBER .....	ACTIVISION
SKYCHASE .....	9.99	JULY 24 .....	MIRRORSOFT
SPELL BOOK (4-9 YEARS) .....	7.99	OUT NOW .....	SOFT STUFF
SPIRIT OF EXCALIBUR .....	30.64	OUT NOW .....	VIRGIN
STORMBALL .....	25.99	SEPTEMBER .....	MILLENNIUM
SWAP .....	25.99	JUNE 27 .....	PALACE
SWITCHBLADE 2 .....	25.99	END MAY .....	GREMLIN
TABLE TENNIS SIMULATION .....	7.99	END MAY .....	ELECTRONIC ZOO
TOKI .....	24.99	OUT NOW .....	OCEAN
TV SPORTS(U.S)FOOTBALL .....	9.99	JULY 24 .....	MIRRORSOFT
WATERLOO .....	9.99	JUNE 17 .....	MIRRORSOFT
WORLDS AT WAR .....	24.99	IMMINENT .....	INTERNECINE
XENON 2 .....	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT

## ATARI ST

20000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA .....	7.99	END MAY .....	ELECTRONIC ZOO
3 STOOGES .....	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT
3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	39.99	OUT NOW .....	DOMARK
3D POOL .....	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT
AFRIKA KORPS .....	29.99	OUT NOW .....	IMPRESSIONS
ARMOUR-GEDDON .....	25.99	MAY 30 .....	PSYGNOSIS
ATOMINO .....	25.99	MAY 28 .....	PSYGNOSIS
B. SPELL CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	19.95	OUT NOW .....	B. WARE
BATTLEBOUND .....	24.99	IMMINENT .....	'ON-LINE'
BEAST BUSTERS .....	25.99	AUGUST .....	ACTIVISION
CADAVER LEVELS .....	TBA	JUNE 13 .....	MINDSCAPE
CHAMPION OF THE RAJ .....	25.99	MAY 30 .....	PSS
CRYSTALS OF ARBOREA .....	25.99	MAY 30 .....	PALACE
DEMONIAK .....	29.99	MAY 30 .....	PALACE
DEUTEROS .....	25.99	AUGUST .....	ACTIVISION
ENCHANTER .....	10.21	MAY 28 .....	MASTERTRONIC
FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER .....	25.99	JUNE 19 .....	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
GODS .....	25.53	OUT NOW .....	MINDSCAPE
HUNTER .....	30.99	AUGUST .....	ACTIVISION
LEONARDO .....	7.99	END MAY .....	ELECTRONIC ZOO
MASTER TIME .....	17.95	OUT NOW .....	B. WARE
METAL MUTANT .....	25.99	JUNE 13 .....	PALACE
MICRO FRENCH ST+ (GCSE) .....	24.00	OUT NOW .....	L C L
PASSING SHOT .....	9.99	JUNE 17 .....	MIRRORSOFT
PLAY SPELL PLUS .....	19.95	OUT NOW .....	B. WARE
PREDATOR 2 .....	25.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS
PRO TENNIS TOUR 2 .....	25.99	OUT NOW .....	UBI SOFT
R-TYPE II .....	25.99	JULY .....	ACTIVISION
SCHOOLTIME MATHS .....	14.95	OUT NOW .....	B. WARE
SKYCHASE .....	9.99	JULY 24 .....	MIRRORSOFT
SPELL BOOK (4-9 YEARS) .....	7.99	OUT NOW .....	SOFT STUFF
STORMBALL .....	25.99	SEPTEMBER .....	MILLENNIUM
SWAP .....	25.99	JUNE 27 .....	PALACE
SWITCHBLADE 2 .....	25.99	END MAY .....	GREMLIN
TABLE TENNIS SIMULATION .....	7.99	END MAY .....	ELECTRONIC ZOO
TOKI .....	24.99	OUT NOW .....	OCEAN
TV SPORTS(U.S)FOOTBALL .....	9.99	JULY 24 .....	MIRRORSOFT
WATERLOO .....	9.99	JUNE 17 .....	MIRRORSOFT
XENON 2 .....	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT

## AMSTRAD CPC

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	T	24.99	MID JUNE .....	DOMARK
3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	D	24.99	MID JUNE .....	DOMARK
FROST BYTE .....	T	2.99	JUNE .....	MICROVALUE
FUN SCHOOL 3 (OVER 7'S) .....	D	16.99	MAY 30 .....	DATABASE
FUN SCHOOL 3 (OVER 7'S) .....	T	12.99	MAY 30 .....	DATABASE
HELTER SKELTER .....	D	15.32	OUT NOW .....	AUDIOGENIC
HELTER SKELTER .....	T	11.23	OUT NOW .....	AUDIOGENIC
HEROQUEST .....	D	15.99	END MAY .....	GREMLIN
HEROQUEST .....	T	10.99	END MAY .....	GREMLIN
LONE WOLF-THE MIRROR OF DEATH .....	D	15.99	OUT NOW .....	AUDIOGENIC
LONE WOLF-THE MIRROR OF DEATH .....	T	10.99	OUT NOW .....	AUDIOGENIC
PREDATOR 2 .....	D	15.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS
PREDATOR 2 .....	T	11.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS
SWAP .....	D	TBA	JUNE 27 .....	PALACE
SWAP .....	T	TBA	JUNE 27 .....	PALACE
VIZ .....	D	15.32	END MAY .....	VIRGIN
VIZ .....	T	10.21	OUT NOW .....	VIRGIN

## IBM & PC COMPATIBLES

20000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA .....	3.5	7.99	END MAY .....	ELECTRONIC ZOO
20000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA .....	5.25	7.99	END MAY .....	ELECTRONIC ZOO
3 STOOGES .....	3.5	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT
3 STOOGES .....	5.25	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT
3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	3.5+5.25	49.99	OUT NOW .....	DOMARK
3D POOL .....	3.5	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT
3D POOL .....	5.25	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT
BACK TO THE FUTURE 3 .....	3.5	25.53	JUNE 20 .....	IMAGE WORKS
BACK TO THE FUTURE 3 .....	5.25	25.53	JUNE 20 .....	IMAGE WORKS
BAT .....	3.5	30.99	OUT NOW .....	UBI SOFT
BAT .....	5.25	30.99	OUT NOW .....	UBI SOFT
BATTLEMASTER .....	3.5+5.25	29.99	JUNE 13 .....	MILLENNIUM
BATTLETECH: CRES. HAWKS' REV. .....	3.5+5.25	35.99	SEPTEMBER .....	ACTIVISION
BILL ELLIOTS NASCAR RACING .....	3.5	30.00	JUNE 20 .....	IMAGE WORKS
BILL ELLIOTS NASCAR RACING .....	5.25	30.99	JUNE 20 .....	IMAGE WORKS
BLOODWYCH .....	5.25	25.99	JULY 10 .....	IMAGE WORKS
CHAMPION OF THE RAJ .....	3.5+5.25	25.99	OUT NOW .....	PSS
CRYSTALS OF ARBOREA .....	3.5	25.99	MAY 30 .....	PALACE
CRYSTALS OF ARBOREA .....	5.25	25.99	MAY 30 .....	PALACE
DEMONIAK .....	3.5	29.99	MAY 30 .....	PALACE
DEMONIAK .....	5.25	29.99	MAY 30 .....	PALACE
F-14 TOMCAT .....	3.5+5.25	35.99	JULY .....	ACTIVISION
F-29 RETALIATOR .....	3.5+5.25	34.99	OUT NOW .....	OCEAN
FALCON V3.0 .....	3.5	TBA	JULY 17 .....	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
FALCON V3.0 .....	5.25	TBA	JULY 17 .....	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
IBM SPELL BOOK (4-9 YEARS) .....	3.5	24.95	OUT NOW .....	SOFT STUFF
J. NICHOLAS '91 CHAMP COURSE 5 .....	3.5	14.99	MAY 29 .....	ACCOLADE
J. NICHOLAS '91 CHAMP COURSE 5 .....	5.25	14.99	MAY 29 .....	ACCOLADE
LEMMINGS .....	3.5+5.25	34.99	OUT NOW .....	PSYGNOSIS
MARTIAN DREAMS .....	3.5	35.76	JUNE 6 .....	MINDSCAPE
MARTIAN DREAMS .....	5.25	35.76	JUNE 6 .....	MINDSCAPE
METAL MUTANT .....	3.5	25.99	JUNE 13 .....	PALACE
METAL MUTANT .....	5.25	25.99	JUNE 17 .....	PALACE
MOONSHINE RACERS .....	3.5+5.25	30.99	JULY .....	MILLENNIUM
PREDATOR 2 .....	3.5	25.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS
PREDATOR 2 .....	5.25	25.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS
RIDERS OF ROHAN .....	5.25	34.99	JUNE 26 .....	PSS
SECRET MISSIONS - LD .....	5.25	15.31	OUT NOW .....	MINDSCAPE
SECRET MISSIONS 2 - HD .....	5.25	15.31	OUT NOW .....	MINDSCAPE
SECRET MISSIONS 2 - LD .....	5.25	15.31	OUT NOW .....	MINDSCAPE
SHANGHAI II: DRAGON'S EYE .....	3.5+5.25	35.99	SEPTEMBER .....	ACTIVISION
SKYCHASE .....	3.5+5.25	9.99	JULY 24 .....	MIRRORSOFT
SKYCHASE .....	5.25	9.99	JULY 24 .....	MIRRORSOFT
SPIRIT OF EXCALIBUR .....	3.5	35.75	OUT NOW .....	VIRGIN
SPIRIT OF EXCALIBUR .....	5.25	35.75	OUT NOW .....	VIRGIN
STORMBALL .....	3.5+5.25	30.99	SEPTEMBER .....	MILLENNIUM
SWAP .....	3.5	25.99	JUNE 27 .....	PALACE
SWAP .....	5.25	25.99	JUNE 27 .....	PALACE
THINGS TO DO WITH NUMBERS .....	3.5	24.95	IMMINENT .....	SOFT STUFF
THINGS TO DO WITH WORDS .....	3.5	24.95	IMMINENT .....	SOFT STUFF
TV SPORTS (U.S) FOOTBALL .....	3.5+5.25	9.99	JULY 24 .....	MIRRORSOFT
WATERLOO .....	3.5	9.99	JUNE 17 .....	MIRRORSOFT
WATERLOO .....	5.25	9.99	JUNE 17 .....	MIRRORSOFT
WORLDS AT WAR .....	3.5+5.25	29.99	IMMINENT .....	INTERNECINE
XENON 2 .....	3.5	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT
XENON 2 .....	5.25	9.99	MAY 30 .....	MIRRORSOFT

## COMMODORE 64/128

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	D	24.99	JUNE .....	DOMARK
3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	T	24.99	JUNE .....	DOMARK
ATOMINO .....	D	14.99	MAY 28 .....	PSYGNOSIS
ATOMINO .....	T	9.99	MAY 28 .....	PSYGNOSIS
ELVIRA-MISTRESS OF THE DARK .....	D	24.99	JUNE .....	FLAIR SOFTWARE
EXTREME .....	D	12.95	OUT NOW .....	DIGITAL INTEGRATION
EXTREME .....	T	9.95	OUT NOW .....	DIGITAL INTEGRATION
FROST BYTE .....	T	2.99	JUNE .....	MICROVALUE
FUN SCHOOL 3 (OVER 7'S) .....	D	16.99	OUT NOW .....	DATABASE
FUN SCHOOL 3 (OVER 7'S) .....	T	12.99	OUT NOW .....	DATABASE
HEROQUEST .....	D	15.99	END MAY .....	GREMLIN
HEROQUEST .....	T	10.99	END MAY .....	GREMLIN
LONE WOLF-THE MIRROR OF DEATH .....	D	15.99	OUT NOW .....	AUDIOGENIC
LONE WOLF-THE MIRROR OF DEATH .....	T	9.99	OUT NOW .....	AUDIOGENIC
PREDATOR 2 .....	D	15.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS
PREDATOR 2 .....	T	11.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS
SUPREMACY .....	D	20.42	END MAY .....	MELBOURNE HOUSE
SUPREMACY .....	T	15.32	OUT NOW .....	MELBOURNE HOUSE

## CDTV

HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES .....	CD	29.99	IMMINENT .....	'ON-LINE'
PSYCHO KILLER .....	CD	29.99	OUT NOW .....	'ON-LINE'
WOMEN IN MOTION .....	CD	29.99	OUT NOW .....	'ON-LINE'

## SPECTRUM

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	T	24.99	MID JUNE .....	DOMARK
FROST BYTE .....	T	2.99	JUNE .....	MICROVALUE
HEROQUEST .....	T	10.99	END MAY .....	GREMLIN
LONE WOLF-THE MIRROR OF DEATH .....	T	10.99	OUT NOW .....	AUDIOGENIC
PREDATOR 2 .....	T	11.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS

## SPECTRUM+3

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT .....	D	24.99	MID JUNE .....	DOMARK
HEROQUEST .....	D	15.99	END MAY .....	GREMLIN
LONE WOLF-THE MIRROR OF DEATH .....	D	15.99	OUT NOW .....	AUDIOGENIC
PREDATOR 2 .....	D	15.99	OUT NOW .....	IMAGE WORKS

## MACINTOSH

HARDBALL 2 .....	29.99	MAY 29 .....	ACCOLADE
J. NICHOLAS '91 CHAMP COURSE 5 .....	14.99	MAY 29 .....	ACCOLADE

## ARCHIMEDES

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**SPEAKEASY**

# Kicking to be clever

Following Ronnie Dungan's timely piece about C64 magazines, ('Alive and kicking' — CTW May 20th) there are a couple of points worth noting.

- *Commodore Format* will have an official ABC sales figure at the earliest possible opportunity. Magazines have to have been in existence for a full six month ABC period (either July to December, or January to June) before they are accepted for an ABC. *Commodore Format* was launched in September, and so will have an ABC for the first half of the year. We con-

to launch something compatible with a 64 but not called a 64, and partly to ease the selling-in process to the distribution trade.

- Ronnie offers a drollery which some of your readers may have missed when he avers that *Amiga Format* and *ST Format* are the "so-called" market leaders. Up to a point: on the last ABCs, *ST Format* sold a tad under 50 per cent more than its nearest ST rival, *ST User* (55,455 to 37,351), whilst *Amiga Format* was a mere 66 per cent ahead of *CU Amiga* (47,091 to 50,161).



COMMODORE FORMAT: Ingham bullish

fidently expect the figure to demonstrate what the market has known for some time: that *Commodore Format* is the UK's biggest-selling C64 magazine.

- *Commodore Format* was not actually launched on the back of Commodore's plans for a cartridge-based console. Had it been, we would not have taken the decision to cover mount a cassette with every issue. We would have launched the magazine regardless of the console: in our view, there was a massive base of 64 owners not being especially well served by the existing titles. Further, it fitted in with our aim of catering for all major machine owners with single format magazines.

- Ronnie is a little wide of the mark when he says that "...it could well be that many of its readers are buying it because it gives a sense of belonging to the 16-bit market with *ST Format* and *Amiga Format*... A rather strange sense, granted, but nevertheless if it sells mags then Future will be more than happy to cater for such sad cases." People buy *Commodore Format* because of what it is: a damn fine 64 magazine. The notion of reflected glory is a peculiar misinterpretation for the motives for buying a magazine. The name "*Format*" was chosen partly to keep our options open should Commodore decide

Despite the Cassandras predicting doom for the ST, *ST Format* will show a sales increase comfortably into the mid 60,000s this time. (It already sells more than any of the 16-bit multi-format magazines too.) *Amiga Format*, meantime, will smash clean through 100,000 (and then some). A combined 170,000-plus rather puts Hugh Gollner's complaints about *The One (And A Bit)* into perspective, wouldn't you say?

- The quoted ABC drop for ZZAP is incorrect, and not for the first time. It has actually plummeted by some 12,000 copies from 55,479 to 43,046 — clearly illustrating the immediate impact made by *Commodore Format*.

- "...Spectrum mags would probably go down like a lead balloon if there were anything less than half a dozen games on each issue": possibly. *Your Sinclair*, which on the last round of ABCs sold 20 per cent more than *Sinclair User* and 50 per cent more than *Crash*, has never had as many cover games as half a dozen. More remarkably and interesting, its ABC will actually show a useful rise this time, bucking all trends.

Anyway, that's enough tub-thumping, pedantry and over-sensitivity. Love to all.

**Greg Ingham**  
Publishing Director  
Future Leisure  
Future Publishing

# Rick and riled

I read with interest this idyllic Saturday morning Rik Haynes' reply to my letter of May 13th. My first impression was that it was very well-written and easy-to-understand for one of Rik's pieces — my congratulations to him.

Now, to business. Oh dear, I do seem to have pushed Rik out of his pram this time, don't I? The only problem is, I seem to have got his little brain-cells in a muddle as well. He spends most of his two-column temper-tantrum arguing the toss over the potential of multimedia, when that's not what I was addressing at all! I was simply voicing my doubts about (1) the CDTV's multimedia ability, and (2) Commodore's round-the-twist efforts to market it as such machine. "JUNGLE BOOK KING OF THE SWINGERS MAYBE I'M AMAZED U2?" I mean, what planet are those people living on?

Anyway, I'm not going to pursue this line of argument as I'll only end up getting Commodore riled. It's much more fun to argue with Rik, as anyone who has ever done so will tell you. For a start, his "what would Gary have said about television" argument is as old as the hills and simply doesn't hold water.

It's easy to do: take one invention that has already proved itself to be a success (i.e. television) and compare it with some new innovation (i.e. multimedia) and by association you make the new innovation suddenly look like a more viable proposition. Trouble is, the comparison isn't a fair one. We can't be expected to be blindly enthusiastic about every new invention that comes along simply because television was a success.

Rik also wrongly points out that we can all sleep soundly in our beds in the knowledge that multimedia will be a big hit because major companies like Sony and Phillips are pumping large amounts of money into it. As I remember, those same two companies invested even larger sums of money in Betamax, V2000 and Laservision — all three of which crashed and burned

disastrously in this country. You can't make a product a success simply by throwing money at it. If the public isn't interested, you're doomed.

"We are, whether Mr Whitta likes it or not, living in an information society," Rik writes, and the goes on to talk about data overload, multimedia and his old favourite, CDI. Hey Rik, you may live in your own little *Blade Runner* fantasy world, but don't drag me down into your personal hell.

Considering that Rik is "not in the habit of writing for free," I find it strange that he should go to such lengths to put me down when all I was doing was voicing my own personal opinion. Or perhaps Rik doesn't believe in free speech. Or democracy. Perhaps he should go and live in Russia. I hate to say it, but I can't help thinking that if there had been more people like Rik Haynes during World War II, him and the rest of his Nazi playmates would have been jackbooting their way up Oxford Street a long time ago.

It's not that I'm narrow-minded about future technology it's just that I think it's very easy to be blinded by science and whatever the current industry buzzword happens to be — a point which I feel is proven by Rik's continual journalistic hyperbole. What I'm asking for is a little objectivity among journalists rather than this alarmingly increasing tendency to wet their pants at something just because it's new.

Anyway, I won't take up any more of your time — the Cup Final is on in a minute (come on you Spurs!) and I suppose I'd better let Rik get back to listening to his animal noises. But I will close with this one thought: does anybody really think that Rik, who is "not in the habit of writing for free" would have gone to the effort or writing such an empassioned retort if I had used someone else's name as a throwaway joke in the final line of my letter? Remember Rik, this is not personal. It's strictly business...

**Gary Whitta**  
24 Oil Drum Lane  
Shepherd's Bush

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Mega Drive	\$20-50	\$120	\$120	100	Yes-\$20
Turbo Graf	\$25-45	NA	NA	70	Yes-\$35
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# Every EDOS has its day

I would like to thank Dominic for the opportunity to reply to his statement concerning EDOS (see page 10). However, I stand by my comments made at the ELSPA meeting which were spoken with complete sincerity and with no attempt to hide either our achievements to date or our longer term ambitions.

I do not feel that more need be said as the success of the system is evident for all to see. The one point I

would care to make I have taken from the *Collins English Dictionary*:

**LUDDITE** — any opponent of industrial change or innovation.

Nuff said!  
P.S. Congratulations to Tottenham Hotspur — though it breaks my heart to say it.

Regards  
**David Croweller**  
Entertainment Express  
West Lothian

# An a-pauling error

It's time to face the truth over your story headlined "C&VG chews on a new Boon" in the May 6th issue of CTW. A strange mix of fact and fiction, indeed.

I was intrigued to find I was "acting editor" for C&VG. This came as some surprise since I left the magazine more than three years ago. In CTW parlance, this makes me distinctly erstwhile in the EMAP stakes.

However, just in case the memory of me remains so vivid in the mind of EMAP Images that they think I still work there, I shall be sending an invoice for my sterling efforts.

Your story — I won't call it a report — then becomes strangely accurate about me. I am involved in "various new projects" and "Complete Guide-Style" publications — the quarterly *Complete Computer Entertainment Guide*, in fact, published by Newsfield.

It's also nice to know "longtime C&VG man, and - *Mean Machines* editor, Julian Rignall will remain as managing director." What

does Terry Pratt have to say about this? No doubt you have a letter from EMAP Images correcting the rest of the story.

**Paul Boughton**  
Freelancer  
Enfield

— *We honestly believe that it was C&VG publisher Graham Taylor who made the original slip — saying Paul Boughton instead of real acting editor Paul Glancy. He, however, denies this so we won't even mention it.*

*Instead, can we argue that you consumer games mag journalists are so similar in writing style/wacky nicknames/cautious reviewing that all Pauls/Trevs/Nicks/Steves merge into one after a while? No, better not.*

*As for the claimed Julian Rignall slip. Everyone knows it's he and not Terry Pratt that makes all the decisions at EMAP Images.*

*The 'Rignall for MD' campaign starts here (and we've already got backing from Future, Newsfield and Interactive).*

# Hugh the hell are you?

Dear Mr Gollner of Interactive. Are you calling my magazine a poof?

**Ciaran Brennan**  
Editor  
*The One*  
EMAP Images

# A WYSIWYG's a long time in PR politics

I have been involved with the computer industry for many years now, yet I continue to be amazed at the way so much of the industry flannels its customers with jargon.

I can think of no other 'profession' which has such a high opinion of itself, yet which regularly delivers so little to its paymasters.

Perhaps I am just becoming a young cynic, but does anyone know whether WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) is the world's longest acronym or just one of the greatest PR cons of the late 20th century?

Certainly, the current economic difficulties have forced many companies to look long and hard at the returns on their IT investments. It comes as no surprise to most of us that so few companies can find any real pay-off, even in strategic terms.

Putting together a string of screen formats to con an

unsuspecting potential customer is not difficult, even using a 3GL like Basic. With all the hype surrounding WYSIWYG, it is even easier to lull prospects, including those who should know better, into the illusionary utopia of instant development.

Without the triggers behind them, 4GL generated screens are utterly useless in any real sense.

Perhaps if the industry spent less time inventing gobbledygook acronyms like WYSIWYG, we may actually start presenting our customers with systems that deliver the goods. On second thoughts, if the idea caught on it would probably become WYWIWYG (What You Want Is What You Get) and become just another hollow promise conjured up by marketing men.

**James Lodder**  
Director  
NBA Computing Ltd  
London



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## Yep, they're back again...

The pendulum swung back towards Atari Games/Tengen last week as it gained an important victory in its epic struggle with Nintendo.

On March 27th, Nintendo successfully served a preliminary injunction on Tengen prohibiting it from continuing to market cartridges for the NES console and requiring all such product to be recalled. The decision caused much delight in the Nintendo ranks, but — like Forest fans watching Gazza stretchered off at Wembley — it seems that they started singing too soon.

Judge Fern Smith of the Ninth District Court in San Francisco has granted Tengen's motion for a stay of that preliminary injunction, and once again the firm can manufacture and market its NES games. Indeed, it has been given the green light for six months, or until the matter is heard on appeal.

In case anyone has forgotten (or is trying to), the battle between the two firms began in December 1988 and revolves around Tengen's claims of monopolistic practices by Nintendo and Nintendo's claims that Tengen is infringing copyright by manufacturing its own NES cartridges.

Backing the decision, Judge Smith stated that the issues involved in this aspect of copyright law are complex and that "Atari's arguments in this difficult area of the law are not frivolous".

## Future & ELSPA

Continued from front page

Future was reluctant to comment on the situation but group publishing director Greg Ingham stated: "This is an extremely complex issue, and there are a lot of ramifications to be considered. We agree to the principle of pulling ads for devices which aid piracy, and we want to work as closely as possible with ELSPA to reach a decision that will benefit all sides, but obviously, because of the complexities involved and the importance of this matter it will take some time to sort it out."

## MAN BITES PITBULL

Having been fooled with the 'Vicar eats baby' ruse, you've fallen for it yet again haven't you, and once again there's no mention of Ian Paisley in this story because it's another survey reminder. Now although you all collect your CTWs in handy binders, some of the more absent minded types among you may have mislaid the survey form which was enclosed in Issue 336. So once again, all you have to do is give us a ring and we will send another survey along post haste. The numbers are 0438 310106, 310182, 310184, and 310185. Anybody that has a survey but hasn't sent it in has no excuse, so send it in (please) OR ELSE!

# Nintendo fires up Gameboy with £750K TV ad assault

Nintendo has just begun its biggest ever TV campaign for the Gameboy, with an ad spend of just over £750,000

The campaign will run until the end of June and is being handled by ad company Geers Gross, focusing on the *Super Mario Land* game pak. In the ad Mario is apparently seen on a New York skyscraper saving the world

from a martian, as he is wont to do.

The 30 second ad will be seen on over six channels throughout the country including LWT, Central, STV, Yorkshire, and Tyne-Tees, achieving over 400 TVRs throughout its four week run.

The firm is hoping to introduce 20 different Game Paks in the coming months.

Nintendo's Mike Hayes told CTW: "We advertise the NES all year round and we eventually want to do the

same with the Gameboy. We're doing this campaign now because we've got good quantities of stock and a strong range of software titles to back it up. Spending so much on TV ads before would have been pointless because we couldn't meet demand."

Meanwhile, in the US the machine has apparently generated a colossal \$1.1 billion dollars in sales during 1991, which means a total of five million Gameboys and 25 million Game Paks.



GAMEBOY: The TV blitz begins

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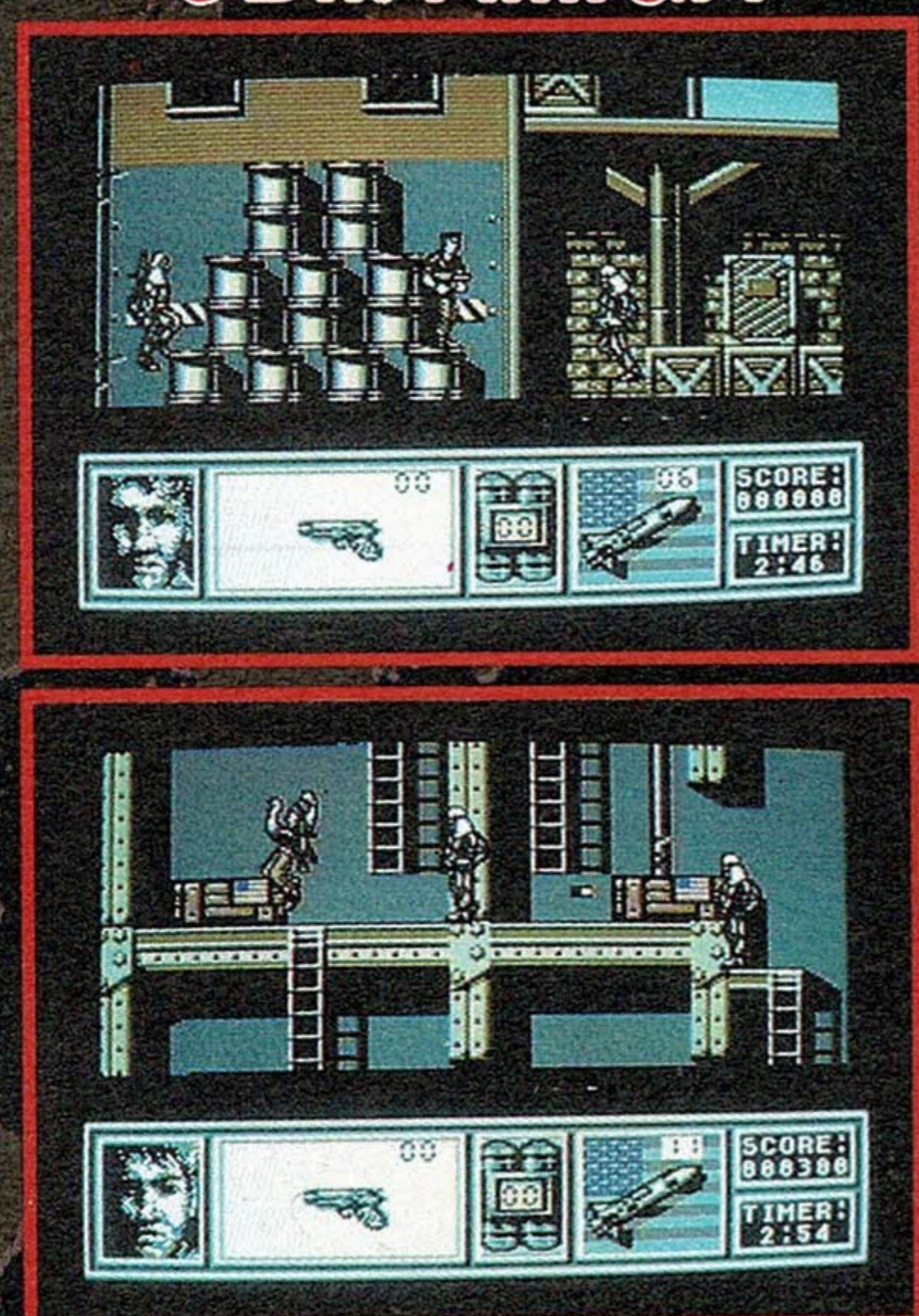
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