

ACE

MAGAZINE
OF
THE YEAR

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- CPC ■ SPECTRUM ■ PC
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game technology...

If your copy of The ACE Challenge is missing when you purchase the magazine, ask your newsagent for a replacement.

A PC ENGINE FOR BRITAIN

The secret's out! See page 27...



RED *hot* TAPE

US technology is transforming the humble video tape recorder into a fully interactive games system. Find out more on page 35...

Plus...the latest games, including *Vette* and *The Untouchables*;

David Braben on *Elite 2*; and a maniac's guide to 16-bit racing





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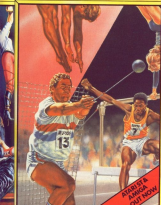
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 0333 581181

CIRCULAR DISTRIBUTION
 Latest Image, Barnwood Green, 97

TYPESETTING
 G&C, 70-72 Longwalk High Street, London,
 SW14 3JL 0753 6100

PRINTING
 G&C, Park Road, Bristol, 11 Park
 Road, Parkborough, PE11 2DN
 0333 581181

PRINTING
 Secret Valley Press, Camphill

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THE SECRET'S OUT27

Why NEC (other, too) delay. Sega stall, and Nintendo fails, a small British company has produced a proper PC version of the infamous NEC PC Engine. It's unaffordable, unofficial, but available - and it works a lot better than any other unit we've been to date. Thanks to some careful re-engineering...



RED HOT TAPE35

Who is Looking for Clues? And why is so much attention being lavished by games technologists on the humble VCR? John Cook reveals the secrets of System X interactive video and explains how new developments could get Walt Disney and Dreamworks taped up.

THE MANIAC'S GUIDE.....89

Which 16-bit racing game takes pole position? And how does Continental Circus, just released, fare against the competition? Tony Dillish, who was born on the back seat of a Corvette with a joystick in his mouth, reports...



Continental Circus leading the pack!

ALL THIS AND ELITE TWO.....41

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Jon Bates checks out Mac II and Windows and discovers even more powerful ways of getting your wings into flight.

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Here is this month's star game, accompanied by Batman, Day of the Viper, Almost Dead, Shovel, and a host of other contenders for autumn gold.

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How you now wondered which game really tops the reviewers' charts?

THE FINAL VERDICT

This month ACE introduces a dramatic new section that gives readers the invaluable information about the games on disc and the companies who produce them. Every month, you can turn to The Final Score section in the Post Pages and discover:

- how every title reviewed that month by any reputable games magazine has scored over 80.
- which software houses are currently at the top of the games league, and which games are top 1 for each machine.
- PLUS how you can win some great prizes!



Mark Sangerman - Game of the month!

PSYGNOSIS

Psychognosis are offering five lucky Amiga/ST owners the chance

to

GAMEPLAY 2000

Right at this very moment in the City, huge fortunes are changing place not over oil, or transport, or gold, but over the rights (they're called 'intellectual property rights') to the great names in entertainment. If you have the right, for example, to exploit Michael Jackson's music, you're a very rich man indeed. But by the year 2000 all the conversion outlets for these rights will have been exhausted.

You'll have seen the film, read the book, scratched the LP, lost the musicassette, bought the CD, and borrowed the video. There's only one other outlet left for the big boys to make money out of: computer games. And believe us, there are some very powerful people getting very excited right now about about computer entertainment. Watch this space...for the next twenty years.

GAMEPLAY

SCREEN TEST41

Find out what happens when the team that programmed Falcon power up a Corvette and burn across San Francisco in full vector-graphic glory; the result is fierce and a 100% ACE Rating. And don't miss Day of the Tiger, Batman, and the Populous-Promised Lands club either...

ARCADE ACE22

Two 50000 chips help Sega's CP System board launch SH Squadron and Clash n' Clash. Plus the first installment of our guide to soundin' like an arcade professional - don't game, go SMP and clean up on the SMP.

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FREE ISSUE!.....84

ACE is the only magazine to bring you authoritative coverage of tomorrow's entertainment technology today - its subscription keeps you up-to-date and gets you a free issue into the bargain.



RAINBOW WARRIOR - the most important launch of 1987

SPECIAL!

to walk away with an armful of red hot software on p85.

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SAM COUPE ARRIVES ■
 LOGOTRON SPLITS ■
 NINTENDO HELPLINE ■
 INTERPHASE... GUE SOON ■

ACE NEWS

SAM COMES OUT AT LAST!



Bruce Gordon and Alan Miles with the new SAM coupe computer.

MET's long awaited SAM Coupe has finally appeared in its finished form. The machine was presented to the press in London on Tuesday 12th September by its creators Bruce Gordon and Alan Miles of Meta Gordon Technology.

SAM is situated in being an 8-bit machine, while most of the machines launched last year seem to have been based around 16-bit micro-processors. SAM uses the ever popular 3508 processor which runs at a tidy 6 megahertz. The choice of processor is not really surprising since one of SAM's main assets is its Spectrum compatibility.

Because the SAM should automatically run most existing 486 Spectrums software, there is already a huge range of ready to run games available for the machine, making it a good option for existing Spectrum owners.

SAM also boasts a superior BASIC, written by Dr. Andy Knight, author of Beta BASIC, as well as 250K RAM upgrade to 512K, and 8 channel stereo sound. In addition to the standard Spectrum screen mode, SAM has three other modes, going up to 512 x 192 pixel resolution in four colours from a palette of 128. There is also a

lower resolution 256 x 192 pixel mode which allows 16 colours on screen at once.

The machine also supports a mouse, lightpen, and lightgun, parallel or serial printer, Modem, and one or two 3.5 inch disk drives, in addition to a standard cassette deck.

Adding to the specification we have seen, SAM is undoubtedly a very nice machine. It boasts better sound than the ZT but hard to achieve admirably, and faster disk drives than both the ZT or Amiga. But despite this the question still remains as to whether an 8-bit machine can compete in a market that is now dominated by more powerful 16-bit machines.

It is entirely possible that SAM will attract Spectrum owners who have yet to upgrade, but, in the long term, MET will have to win the support of most of the major software developers if its small new niche is to survive. Further details from Miles Gordon Technology on 0370 791100.



SAM the cartoon character!

RIIDE OF THE FUTURE



Author's Impression

Innovative US company Walt Disney is achieving cutting edge computer graphics and simulator technologies in *Back to the Future*, the latest attraction at the Walt Disney World

theme park in Florida, USA. *Back to the Future* is a collaboration between Walt Disney and Industrial Light and Magic - a division of Lucasfilm which created the special effects for the Star Wars and Indiana Jones films. Other encounters of the Close Kind and ET. The ride is an fantastic voyage-type journey through the immense system of the human body, using Disney's newly developed theatre-simulator technology, where the whole audience experiences a real physical sensation from sitting in the cinema and watching the film.

AMIGA IS TV STAR IN DENMARK

Danish TV has come up with what must be the ultimate Amiga game. The game, *Oswald The Polar Bear*, sends you as a cute Polar bear. The object is to jump between ice blocks while avoiding birds, whales, and mean Eskimos. As well as avoiding the nasties you must try to collect as many packages as possible. The number of packages you collect affects your score at the finish line.

So, I hear you cry, what is so amazing about this? Well, what makes *Oswald* a little different from the average Amiga game is that it is played on Saturday nights on National TV and viewed by thousands of people. Unlike most game shows, the players do not even have to be at the studio; the keypad on an ordinary push-button phone is used in place of the joystick. The computer at the television station interprets the tones sent by the players' phone and converts them into movements. Obviously this won't work if you have a dialphone (at any rate you'd have to be pretty quick with the index finger to manage with one).

The prize you receive depends on the number of packages you manage to collect. Of

course the real bonus for Danish gamers adds to the opportunity to have their skills admired by television viewers nationwide. But now for joystick wallops there...

As telecommunications and microcomputer technology become more sophisticated we are likely to see more applications of computer entertainment on a larger scale.

Television games like *Oswald The Polar Bear* and *BallUser Games* by MUD and *Shades* are pointing the way towards more social computer entertainment than the present dominant mode.

It is entirely possible that the single gamer using his computer or console alone at home could soon become a thing of the past.



Oswald - Denmark's latest TV Star!

LOGOTRON WRIGHT OFF

Michael Hayward, the former Managing Director of Logotron, has bought the recreation division of the company. The new operation will go under the name Logotron Entertainment Limited but will be totally independent. The new company also has rights to the entire range of existing Logotron games. These include six of the first games to receive an ACE 900+ rating, Stamp, and more recently, Arkhegion.

Eight new titles are planned for the coming year, together with specific titles for the anticipated 15-bit console market.

Harbert Wright, who was formerly publisher of the Logotron range, will not be playing a role in the new company, Wright took over as publisher shortly after the launch of Logotron's first game, Ark, and has been largely responsible for its success in the 16-bit market, and for making headway in the tough American market.

Harbert is currently promoting the programming but responsible for Stamp, but he is keeping his long term plans closely guarded for the moment.

The education and business divisions of

Logotron have been sold to the Longman Group, making them the largest educational software operation in Britain. The new group will be called, rather inventively we feel, LongmanLogotron, and will be marketing a product range made up from both companies' lists.

THE CHALLENGE

By splitting away from their parent company, Logotron are taking the trend for software houses to get larger and larger and less and less independent. Although it is becoming more difficult for small independent operators to survive in what has increasingly become a cut-throat industry, Logotron have proved a worthy contender for the big boys with ACE being one of the first 900+ ACE-rated titles.

Unfortunately there's no doubt that today's games are demanding more and more cash to get on the drawing board to the market. When CD and other above-average media-borne items appear, the costs could put the small publishers out of business altogether.

DELUXE PAINT II ENHANCED FOR PC OWNERS



Tokubaneum having a ball...

PC owners who use DPaint II from Deluxe Arts can now upgrade to an enhanced version for £30. If you do not yet own a version of DPaint, the enhanced version can be purchased for £19.95.

The enhanced features include Fluid-filled printing,

sculpted colour fonts, pattern-printing, a slide show routine, and new brush modes. All of the additions seem fairly cosmetic, so it might be better to try before you buy. Details from Deluxe Arts on 0753 45465.

HELP AT LAST FOR NINTENDO ADDICTS

Are you a Nintendo Game addict who just can't stay away from your machine? Do you suffer from severe attacks of frustration because you find it impossible to finish Super Mario Bros? Then help is at last at hand.

A Nintendo hotline has been set up by Club Nintendo. A 'trained and helpful Game Counselor' will be on hand to help you with all your personal Nintendo problems. If you're a little depressed because your player sprites all seem sad, why not give the helpline a call on 062 955500 for a technique or cheat to inject a little life into your game-play.

The Club Nintendo magazine is published every other month, and includes reviews, previews, readers letters, and hints and tips. You can subscribe free for a year by sending in the card included with new Game Paks or by sending your name and address, along with your Nintendo's serial number to Club Nintendo, PO Box 30, Coventry CV1 3BE.

The existence of both the helpline and the club are signs of the growing popularity of Consoles in this country, and of the increased commitment within the industry to cultivating the now vast console market.

MUTE PC OWNERS GET SOUND FOR A PRICE

PC owners who are exasperated at the continuing lack of second sound generation on even the newest PCs can achieve relief with the Stereo Blaster from Data Liberation Limited. This fifty little edition boasts no less than 12 stereo polyphonic voices, a 2.5 watt amplifier, and volume control. It will connect to headphones, a stereo system or directly to speakers.

The unit is already supported by games from Sierra Online, Electronic Arts, Madragon, Cinemasoft and Origin. As a bonus, it comes supplied with a copy of StereoBlaster from Sierra On-Line.

Dedicated music software to drive the unit is available from Creative Labs, the designers of the module. This includes an intelligent organ program that is supplied with the package.

The module comes as a half-size expansion board for the primary slot of an IBM compatible VME, and will be launched at the forthcoming PC Show. Further details from Data Liberation Limited on 0983 864674.

The market for the Game Blaster is going to expand almost entirely of PC owners who use their machines for entertainment. If a company like Data Liberation can recognize the size and strength of such a market, then can't it time that IBM opened its eyes and began to recognize that the PC is no longer a mere niche over to the business user, but has generated a large following of other enthusiasts as well.

SPEAKEASY

Good news for software developers comes in the form of the IBM Speech Development System from Applied Microsystems Technology. The SDS uses revolutionarily software techniques to achieve a high rate of data compression without sacrificing the quality of the reproduction. The unit achieves a compression rate of 15:1 and a data rate of just 2 kilobits per second.

For those not technically minded, this means that it is possible to squeeze the minutes of speech into the amount of memory previously consumed by a mere few seconds using conventional techniques. What's more, it still sounds nice!

TOO LATE FOR GAZZA?

Ensigns have come up with the most incredibly original game idea ever! A soccer simulation endorsed by one of the leading lights of the game: Paul Gascoigne. Only trouble is it's been done so often before.

Ensigns have rather kindly said that they don't need if you

don't support Spurs — you can still play Gazza's Super Soccer. But whether there are any soccer fans out there who still don't own a computer simulator remains to be seen. If you're one of them, contact Ensigns at 0268 541126 for further information.



Paul Gascoigne indulging in a little post-goal playfulness

The implications of a technique like this being applied to games software are intriguing. Until now, when speech has appeared in entertainment software, it has been either robotically minimal or of appalling quality. The SMS could very well be the first practical solution, the only disadvantage is that the unit will set you back £3,000. High computers can contact AMT on 01 492 3333.

DRAGON USERS LEFT OUT IN THE COLD AGAIN

The 8-bit Micro show will be held at the Teworth Arts Centre on the 29th November. The show caters for owners of the Commodore 64, 16, and +4, the Atari

INTERPHASE OUT SOON FROM MIRRORSOFT

After an incredibly long development period, Interphase is finally ready. The game is set in the future, a time when experiencing other people's dreams has become the equivalent of video games (can it be true?).

As a one-time professional dreamer you must enter the mainframe computer at The Corporation in an attempt to stop them enslaving the minds of the populace.

The interior of the computer is generated with super-fast 3D

Mid vector graphics that make Starfighter look positively primitive. The game, in which you adjust security systems to allow your female companion to break into the Mainframe building, also looks very playable.

A full review will be printed in next month's issue, but from what we've seen so far, Interphase looks like a winner.

Details from Mirrorsoft on 01-900 1454.



XL/50, the BBC Micro and Electron, Spectrum, Oric, Amstrad CPC, MSX, and Zenith. As usual Dragon owners have been forgotten about, not to mention Microtech owners. But that's enough moaning from us, we're pleased to hear that 60k micros are still being supported at all.

There are still some spaces available at £25 for a 4-foot stand (plus £5 if you need a power port.) Contact Delmont Berts at 8 Healy, Luton, Bedfordshire, MK17 2BP.

AMIGA ANIMATIONS

A computer animation festival was held between August 26th and September 2nd by the Amiga Centre, Scotland to coincide with the Edinburgh International Festival. The entries were judged by Len Brown of Reddemon Polytechnic,

Jack Garner of 4 Video Broadcast Ltd, and Nick Masters of TV Production Magazine.

The winners were Mark Wirt for Maggie Goes Green; Jonathan Grant (aged 10) for Jo's Poodles; Dileo Sharma for Royal Bank of Scotland Logo; and John Armstrong for Digies.

In addition there were three second category winners, and 13 other prize winners. The prizes were donated by ten companies associated with computers or animation.

Martin Lowe from the Amiga Centre commented: 'We have seen some amazing talent within the Amiga community and look forward to next year's competition entries. The exhibition has attracted a wide range of people, some who have never before seen computer animation.'

For further details concerning the festival contact Martin Lowe on 031 557 4392.

THE ACE CHALLENGE

The PC Engine, scooped in this month's issue, the Atari Multi-System, the Amiga - even the Commodore 64 in its day - have all proved that imaginative hardware design can generate some truly great software.

All of us who are dedicated to games playing must realize that we now stand on the threshold of a whole new age of computerized entertainment. Games are moving away from their old Space Invader image and into a new age of mass appeal.

Right now, much of the attention is being paid to consoles, since these appear to deliver more fun-for-bucks per buck than the current range of 16-bit computers. But it would be a great shame if the more we all know and love were to disappear and be replaced by small lumps of featureless plastic - however good the games are.

Hence the ACE Challenge, a staggering \$75,000 to be divided between the manufacturer of the ACE Challenge Machine (subject to certain conditions as outlined in the ACE Challenge Charter - see below) and the programmer of the first ACE rated 16-bit game to run on the new machine.

But it's not the money that's important - all the grand signs tell you it's how much we're committed to seeing some real, fun, genre-revolution hardware taking its appearance on our sitting room tables.

As an ACE reader, you'll doubtless be so committed to the future of computer entertainment as we are. We don't want to monopolize the discussion - we want to involve you too. So if you want to contribute your own points of view to ACE, either on the ACE Challenge itself, or on the subject of Advanced Computer Entertainment in general, get pen to paper NOW and tell the world. We'll reserve a special section in the magazine each month for those of you who write in about the Challenge, together with your suggestions, criticisms, and perhaps even your own challenge!

We'll also keep you informed about any developments related

addressed 44 envelope.

Keep your fingers crossed, and remember: electronic entertainment is THE watchword for the 1990's. As an ACE reader, you're right in the front line of the revolution.

IT'S NO MYTH

Here's the exclusive 16-bit screenshot of System Three's highly

real and re-released products, selling for a meagre \$4.99 each. The 21 titles scheduled for immediate release include Road War: IST-Amiga - the Amiga version is a specially enhanced version not previously released, Speedtime Assassin: IST-Amiga, California Golf: PC only, Kelly's IST-Amiga and World Data: IST-Amiga and PC. With the average high cost of 16-bit games, let's hope other software companies follow Yip/Masterbyte's historic lead...



System Three's Myth - not to be confused with the Magnate! arcade adventure of the same name.

to the ACE Challenge, whether they be in hardware or software. Not only will we be printing letters in the magazine, but we're offering readers a chance to receive a personal update - all you have to do is send us a stamped, self-addressed envelope (44 star-marked Challenge Update and we'll send you an information sheet as soon as we have something to report. That way, we'll be kept in touch with some of the most exciting developments in entertainment technology today.

You can also receive full details of the ACE Challenge itself in the Challenge Charter, a document that includes the full conditions under which the £50,000 becomes payable. These are outlined on the back page of the ACE Challenge booklet (on the back cover of this issue - or write to us for a copy if yours is missing) but the Charter contains the full spec. The Charter is available on request and receipt of a stamped,

registered 44 star-marked envelope. Taking the role of a time-travelling hero, you visit planets like Hell and Medusa's Caerules, battling skeletons and four-headed Hydrants. Myth is a puzzle oriented arcade game with style and quality associated with System Three's other releases such as Last Ninja: Myth is available now for ST and Amiga, and PC gamers can also look forward to a version for their machines, no release date as yet.

THE CHEAPEST 16-BIT GAMES EVER!

Leading budget software company Yip/Masterbyte has launched a starting line low cost 16-bit budget label. 16 Bit games are a combination of top

GET YOURSELF A WALKING, TALKING PC ROBOT

What will those crazy Yanks think us next? The latest contender for your trusty old PC is Newton, the intelligent robot that can walk, talk, work, play, learn, teach and even make the best 3D 32' high robot wear a sophisticated speech synthesizer and recognition system allowing it to understand and act on personal human instructions. Newton's internal control mechanics are controlled by an onboard microcomputer, with a PC providing the application programs. Newton also includes a built-in 300 baud modem for communication to the outside world. Further details can be obtained from US developer SynPat on 800 298 376-3303.

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Special Thanks from the Amiga version

AMIGA DESIGNER BY COMING SOON

ACE LETTERS

THE SOUND OF MUSIC, THE JOY OF CONSOLES, THE FRUSTRATIONS OF FLIGHT SIMS... YOU WROTE IT, WE PRINTED IT...

FLY ME

I must confess that I bought my Atari ST for the sole purpose of flying Aircraft Simulators. There are plenty of them around at the moment, and to end of them waiting in the wings, so you might think that I would be a happy amateur pilot. Sadly I'm not, and it's all to do with the variation in key-board controls.

Why can't the programmers standardise on a keyboard control system that is common to all simulators? If I press the "G" key on Combat Pilot, the F16 undercarriage comes up; on Falcon, I get viewed out of the cockpit for a satellite view of the aircraft... To get the undercarriage up on Falcon, I have to press "G" for "gear", if I do that on Combat Pilot, it's requesting a full-down landing from the control tower (which is a bit embarrassing when you're only just taken off). It's all very confusing, and leads me to the conclusion that it's better to decide on one simulation and stick with it, rather than keep buying the new ones that come out and have to go through the process of learning a totally new set of commands.

The one I'm sticking with is Combat Pilot. Its graphics aren't as good as Falcon, but it has an extra feature that wins hands down for me:Joystick in the Fighter Joystick would say: as option for two joystick control. You just click on the computer graphics on the menu-screen, and select the option. Then, when you arrive at the cockpit screen, you simply swing the mouse, and plug in a second joystick, and suddenly you have the throttle control in your left hand, where it should be, and like a real airplane. You also have left and right rudder control on this stick, which on the right-hand stick you have the normal yaw and pitch directional controls.

The ability to change speed with a flick of the left joystick is exceptionally useful in dogfighting and ground attack, and saves fumbling for the "slow" and "brake" keys like you have to do when flying Falcon, and as the Big Z is about to blow you away.

To take notes, see Future Flight Simulation Programmers, two pp

PUMP UP THAT VOLUME!

PRIZE
LETTER

Why don't most reviewers comment on the brilliant music included in some games for the computers with good soundchips? The Amiga has a custom chip and facilities for an amplifier to be connected and the results of certain groups' efforts to include modern music in games is sometimes quite stunning. So let's have a mention in the future if you can. To show you what I mean, I have compiled a top 10 list of the best tunes that my Amiga-1004 commands and I pump-up the volume for

Game	Composer	Composer/composer
BLOOD MOTHER: main theme	Amiga	Ray Florinck/Piggyback
SANDSCAPE: main theme	Old script	Bob Hubbard/TheMatrix
RENEGADE: leading music	Old	Unknown/Imagine
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN: main theme	Amiga	Juan Lopez/Discovery
LES STORMS: all themes	Amiga	T & M Italia/US Gold
SAVING: (Steps 1 and 3)	Amiga	Karen Collier/Firebird
HYBRID: main theme	Amiga	P Van Der Valk/Discovery
BAAL: main theme	Amiga	Ray Florinck/Piggyback
R-TYPE: leading theme	Amiga	Chris Hurdless/T. Dreams
GAZETORN: main theme	Amiga	Tim Drayton/Memory Design Technologies

A.Jeffs, Brenton

Any more music charts out there... or graphics charts, or generally GEEK...?

sticks really is the only way to fly. And it's the only way you're going to get this customer to climb into my swan-tailed cockpit.

M.G.Foster, Conkridge

UNHAPPY

I would like to enter a game in machine code but I have come across a problem. I asked my cousin who is a programmer to a large company to give me some assistance. He answered "Sorry I can't help you - I don't know how to do it", so I go to my other cousin who is a programming expert for another company - same reply. Then I go to a friend who has a list of qualifications relating to computing. I ask him for help, again I get the same answer as before.

Fairly enough though, all of these people have said to me that game programming is far too simple and uninteresting - if this is the case how is it that some of them could help me?

As I live in Birmingham which

is the worst city to become interested in games programming, I have no way of getting any help with my problem therefore I must forlorn my project.

Nigel Smith, Birmingham

We have two suggestions.
(1) Change your address.
(2) Change your last-page.

DESPERATE

Software houses must be under the impression that they can treat the buyer with absolute contempt. They keep us waiting for months on end for their product, they do not reply to any queries, and they never supply any helpful hints about their games. It annoys me to see page after page of tips and games from readers when in fact, these should be supplied by the software house.

I have an absolute string of A and O letters but I also have a string of games which defied completion. No help from the software house however, no help from

the instruction book and no help when asked for.

I don't think I can stand much more of it. As limited, is a Computer and an Amiga could be for sale very shortly.

Robert Lamb, Cullingham

PRIZE QUESTION

I am writing to ask why you have not yet printed the results of a couple of recent competitions, i.e. Commodore/PC, Radio Ace competitions. I am aware of the recent takeover by IBM? but please could you print the results soon?

When you were running the Ace card competition you said you would do something similar in the future so when do you think you will do it?

I think that when you print screenshots on any game you should also print what graphic versions they are. Please could you bring back Ace In The Road.

Edwin Birch, Cullingham

All the price winners are named in this issue - check the Price Pages for details. ACE On The Road will continue to appear on an irregular basis, whenever we find someone interesting enough to write about. Stand by for reports from most British software houses, as well as America and Japan. As for the ACE Cart, we will be replacing this with a new competitor, to be out monthly. It's called the Final Verdict, and you can find out more about it on page 237 - The Final Verdict starts next month - don't miss it!

AN APPLE A DAY...

In an Apple II owner (more specifically the MAG) I find it disappointing that magazines in the UK more often than not simply ignore the computer's existence. There are over 550 Apple II games currently available (many of which have been reviewed in ACE), with over 200 Apple II/II+ specific entertainment programs including the popular like in Master Earth and Computer Master. Your lack of reference to these computers when compiling a Release Box is surprising.

The Apple II has been around in various forms since the late 70s, and despite Apple UK's apparent lack of interest, the line, introduced in 1976, is still available from authorized dealers. The 68000 based (1600 K) is a range 40K computer. Features include 4096 colours, 640x350 resolution RGB output, standard Apple Desktop Interface (Mac style WMP), SRS internal RAM expansion, 1MB ROM expansion, 7 expansion slots, and peripherals (keyboard, disk drives, mod etc.) they interchangeably with those from the Mac.

As for music/related bells and whistles to your MUSIC series the 850 has a built in Economy Digital Oscillator Chip (as used in the Image Music Synthesizer with 30 parallel oscillators producing 15 sound channels. An Analog/Digital converter is also available on the cassette decks, set to monitor 1/4" of dedicated issued RAM. Surely quality worthy of mention in your Music series (please note B. Bates).

The 850 may not be as popular in the UK as it is in the United States, but a better computer with these features should not be ignored or forgotten by a magazine dedicated to Advanced Computer Entertainment.

Dr K. Kishinev, Wittington

CONSOLES MATTER

When I opened the issue 241 I was overjoyed to read a letter from a fellow Sega user. (Thanks Steve)

Sega's are underrated by the Amiga and ST users because they think they are cheap and nasty, but people like me have spent £1000 on our consoles, buying games like *Millionaire*, *Beast*, and *Shinobi*, but Amiga and ST users can't get us like 20% cash. Score now:

Sega 1. Amiga, 0% etc 0.

But there's a problem for us Sega owners, and that is that the games cost between £15 and to around £45. And the Amiga and ST games differ more.

Sega 1. Amiga 0% etc 1.

Here's another one for the Sega: the actual consoles/computer costs about 1/3 of the Amiga and 1/4 of the ST.

Sega 2 Amiga 1.

But there's a few more points for the Amiga and ST's. They are 16 bit and they have got better sound and graphics.

Final Score - Sega 2 Amiga 0% etc 3.

So who cares? we love our Segas.

Chris Brown, Epsford

If only the whole subject was as simple as football, we could all set up the scores, make our buying decisions, and the happily ever after. But it really isn't that at all. Consoles offer none of the computing applications versatility of computers, but on the other hand the new range of consoles (Amiga, Engine, 32bit) Sega's are likely to make most current home owners look a little wobbly on the ground front. There's only one realistic decision: get both a computer AND a console!

I am thinking of buying a console. First I thought about buying a good old Sega Master System then thought I'd wait around for the Sega Megadrive because I wanted a 16 bit, but I didn't want an Amiga or an ST because all I do is play games on it, but what for like to know:

1. When will the Sega Megadrive be launched officially in Britain and how much will it cost?
2. How much will Sega Megadrive games cost when officially launched over here?
3. I heard that there was a special converter for the Megadrive which enabled you to play old Sega games on the Megadrive is this true and if so does this mean that when played on the Megadrive they have 16 bit graphics and sound.
4. Will all Sega games like *Gulfair* and *Afterburner* be available on the Megadrive.
5. Will all the PAL and SCART that keeps popping up in adverts for the PC Engine and Sega Megadrive.

Stephen O'Brien, London

There is no official launch date yet, but distributors Virgin reckon it will be in the first quarter and you, but probably not before March. This would seem to indicate around May 1990. The price of the games has yet to be fixed but the hope is that they will not be more than current Sega titles. The converter does exist, at least on Virgin's list, but none in the UK has yet seen a sample. The 32bit games will run on the 32bit versions and Sega refers like *Gulfair* and *Afterburner* may not be converted to Megadrive versions.

Finally, PAL and SCART refer to video data standards and compatibility. A PAL output will drive any UK colour TV, whereas SCART outputs to monitors, although some UK TVs also have a SCART adaptor. You should beware of buying 'grey imported' versions of the Megadrive or the PC Engine since the quality of video output cannot always be guaranteed.

ACE is currently reviewing its policy on other machine's formats. See next month's issue for the result. We thank you for the interest...

GLOWING TRIBUTE TO RISING SUN

I feel I must complain about your review of Lords of the Rising Sun in the June issue.

I have played the game for weeks and at one time for 8 hours, and the following day 7 hours. I lost, but I was completely fed up by this great game. What other game can keep you interested for 15 hours? And you still want to play it afterwards... I say we'll stick to Coo

owners, who always produce fantastic Amiga software - The Only One who produces software always worth buying.

I. Hayward, Bournemouth

How much did they pay you?!

8-BIT BEANO

I'm not going to talk about software (Amiga, ST or Amiga, Commodore) etc...

What if I told you that on November 20th the '8 Bit Movie Show' is to be held in Tamworth. Yes, that's right. No 15 bit machines allowed. The following can attend:

CGA, c16/+4, MSX, CPC, Spectra, BBC/Electra etc... Entrance is 75p per person

which includes foodies, a free drink to win an Atari (SCAT), and don't forget all those stands with bargain priced games, joystick, new software up and running, etc. Maps are available with bookings to the address below

D. Betts, B. Husley, Lakeside, Tamworth, Staffs, B77 2NF.

BBS BABY

I have started a new BBS running on a 1940 ST specifically aimed at the ST. I would appreciate it if any BBS users out there would log on and leave some feedback (not about discussion areas they would like to see, help lines they think may be useful etc.)

The name of the BBS is the Seven, it runs on V21/33 modes,

CRACKED?

I live in Holland and, as you may or may not know, almost every computer hobbyist in my country gets off to licensed software in time. When I bought my first computer (Olivetti) I thought this was a normal situation, but as I began to read English magazines I discovered that the foreign attitude towards this behaviour was completely different. Unlike in this area.

A friend of mine who also owned a C64 at that time, went on holiday in the English coast. He brought his computer with him (including about 2000 cracked software files). His cousin, who was a C64 owner also, was very pleased to see this enormous amount of software. His friend offered to copy all the software he wanted. Now his cousin was even more happy - until he discovered that everything was cracked. From that point he didn't even want to play the games anymore. And the disks that already contained some cracked stuff? Guess what he did with them. Yes, he cleared them all!

I don't know what you think of this country's behaviour, but we Dutch people find it to be weird. I really do not know anybody in Holland (and I'm really not only talking about friends, but computer owners from all over the country) who would act like he did.

Sometimes I really feel pity for all those gamers who can only buy about ten or three titles a month with cash in their wallets. This too, nowadays I see on Amiga 500, and I'm absolutely happy with it (it's a computer science student) but I ask myself if I would have purchased it if I wasn't able to get all my software for free (and so thank my teachers - follow me everywhere in Holland) and, between the lines, did you know that three of my friends bought an Amiga 500 just because they were allowed to copy my software for free at school.

Perhaps you already know, but let me tell you this. I possess about 200 of the latest software titles, that means all big titles that you review in your mag! I guess you are not very pleased to hear that, but that's just the way things are in Holland. You know that people consider me crazy if I go to the store and purchase some software? Unless it's stuff with a lot of documentation.

Eddy Borneman, Holland

Unfortunately Holland isn't the only country to take this attitude to piracy. The same situation exists in many other European countries, with Greece and Italy being historically inclined to software piracy (though the situation is improving). And as regular Amiga users we all know, we're already impacted on the piracy situation in Denmark. These countries all have one thing in common: they pirate imported software. Ultimately it's British and American companies who lose the money and not German, Italian, or Dutch ones. Perhaps that has something to do with it... There is also the question of price, with games costing more (sometimes far more) in different territories. But after 1992 the price problem should cease to be and, whether the hobby will come to an end or not seems less likely.

As a dedicated games player, I have become so disgruntled with the state of current software that I feel I must let my views be heard.

Having been in the games "scene" since those early "Bioshock TV Games" were around, I have played many games for many hours. However, recently, games do not seem to be holding my attention for more than a few hours. As you will have noticed there is no address on this letter. This is because I am a so-called "cracker" of games. After three years of owning my ST, I am totally fed up with the trash that appears. I mean, the games on the ST are so bad that I now play on my old Atari 8-bit more than the ST - which is hardly a good advertisement for new technology. I shall remain a pirate until the software house (and their sales and release agents) which live up to their Megabyte, and stop their prices. Games should be "playable". Kick Off proves that gameplay can be a substitute for Megabytes of graphics, and games should be based on gameplay, not graphics and sound, and these two should only be added up after the gameplay cannot be improved any more.

The 8-bit prophet

and used 8x1 format. The number is 01-802 9199 and is available from 9pm to 4am Monday to Saturday.

Paul Baker, Wood Green, London

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

Whatever happened to Superior's Conceptor, which was being advertised to be released for the Amiga and ST from the Antareses in June 1987?

Also what happened to Line's Dragonlayer, which was advertised to be released for the Amiga in January 1989?

A.Jeffs, Braintree

Dragonlayer has been 'delayed' but is on its way. As for Conceptor... we were unable to contact Superior at the time going to press, but we'll keep you posted.

ARCHIE BARGIE

I've found a company who are producing a whole range of software for the Amiga, including games resembling Quilva and After Burner. The company is named Cambridge International Software, tel. 01-278 6623. The company plans about 25 products by December. These also include conversions of Dungeon Master and other popular games. This software will surely help bring the Amiga into the limelight. Lastly, thanks for a super mag - the Amiga seems to be creeping slowly into Amiga more and more frequently...

K. Farred, London

Other machine owners can take comfort from the fact that all titles will be converted for most popular formats.

AMIGA MYSTERY

After playing Xyzite, I powered off my Amiga for 30 seconds as normal. Switching it back on again I was met with a dull grey screen and that was it...

Can you help? My Amiga won't work properly, refusing information from disks and sometimes never coming on at all!

Wix (no address supplied)

It's a shame you became victim of the only intelligent mag around.

As the only intelligent mag around, we have decided, after lengthy discussion, that your computer is possibly...British.

We believe that the solution may be to...or...get it mended. Etc...Etc...Contact your dealer, or someone...

ACE PRINTER

After playing Footstar on my Amiga I took time to gladly send you all the codes for all the levels. I have printed them out on my colour printer and stuck them on a card especially for you.

Julian (Bash), Newcastle

We were very impressed by the print out, Julian. We were even more impressed by the printer's apparent ability to print out - on the reverse side of the paper - a page from another magazine.

VIOLENCE

I have recently discovered that if a game really annoys you then a simple solution is to take it out of the disk drive and make some words growing roses at it. If doing this seems gratifying to you then you are probably a bit of a snooty person. If anyone out there in stupid land thinks the staff, then they should come and see me so I can tell patch their stupid faces and tell give them a good stiff kick up the rear.

Jimbo Carlsson, Coventry

The words growing roses make perfect sense to us, though we did that first, then saying sounds work better. However, our psycholater was disturbed by the level of violence implicit in the latter 'half' of your letter. Seek assistance.

KICK OFF

After the success of Kick Off on ST, Amiga, and C64 (and the Spectrum version currently being released), we've decided to take the plunge and produce Kick Off 2.

We thought it would not be a nice precedent, however, if - instead of simply going ahead and producing the game to our own specifications - we asked current players of Kick Off to send us their suggestions for features that could be included in the new game.

If you've played Kick Off and have some ideas for gameplay or presentation that you'd like to see included in the new game, drop at a line at Amco, c/o 20, Burnham Trading Estate, Laxson Road, Bedford, Kent, OX1 5BH.

And Gupta, Amco Software Ltd

Player Manager

BRINGS THE QUALITY OF "KICK OFF" TO THE ART OF MANAGEMENT

- Play the BEST soccer simulation. Bristling Pace - Pixel Perfect Passing.
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- Over 1000 players in the league. Each player with a unique combination of attributes.
 - A lively transfer market. Haggle or barter for the best deal.
- Facility to focus camera on any player on the field. Have a hard look at a player on the transfer list.
- Load and Save game facility. League and Cup tournament.



Bring Back The Glory Days. That's the brief of the newly appointed PLAYER MANAGER, an international class player, as he takes charge of a third division club. His success depends on four distinct aspects of the game.

PLAYING SKILLS OF THE MANAGER

This part of the game is a refined version of the KICK OFF, retaining it's pace, flavour and the universally acclaimed game play. Play in your position or control the nearest player. The first option combined with a fair trade tactic can play havoc in the opposition goal mouth.

MANAGERIAL SKILLS

Devising winning tactics, acquiring players with right skills from the Transfer market and selecting a team with the right balance is the test of the Managerial skills. He must aim to get promotion as quickly as possible while he can still influence the results as a player and before the age starts to effect his pace and stamina. When to hang his boots up is the toughest decision he has to make.

TACTICS

Four well proven tactics are provided to suit most situations but you can design your own tactics. The pitch is divided in blocks. Place the ball in a block and move the players to the required position. Repeat the process for each block. See the tactics in action using the Ray Trace facility.

THE PLAYERS

Over a thousand players in the four division leagues. Each player with a unique combination of the following attributes: SHOOTING ACCURACY, PASSING ACCURACY, PACE, STAMINA, APPLICATION, AGGRESSION, HEIGHT and TACKLING SKILL.

These attributes are influenced by the player's Age, Moral and Physical Dexterity, Quality of Experience, Weight, Temperament and Morale. There are several other factors such as injury, disciplinary points, undesirable playing position which influence a player's performance.

None of other factors like referee, injuries, disciplinary problems, team morale etc. can try to waste the best laid plans of a manager. The PLAYER MANAGER brings everyday realities of a Manager's life, his talents as a manager and a player into a sharp FOCUS. THE FOCUS IS ON YOU.

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COMING SOON...

OLD GROPER GETS HIS GRUBBY MITTS ON MORE GOODIES...

Old Groper's back with another sackful of autumnal goodies, ready to sort out the hot shots from the lame shots. Here's his report on the latest offerings for your favourite machines, and as he's in a generous mood there are a couple of snazzy screen-shots for you to drool over. Enjoy...

US Gold has been very busy recently grabbing plays from the big screen and putting them onto your monitor. If you thought the hype surrounding the latest Indiana Jones game was a bit overdone then you ain't seen nothing yet. US Gold's describe their latest personality remake as having the biggest total album of all time, winning 6 Grammys, 7 American Music awards, 4 American Music awards, and the SPM award for best international artist.

No, it's not Roland Rat, it's none other than big, bad Bieker Jackson. Before you get too excited, the game has nothing whatsoever to do with sappy fans, pet chimpanzees, or bad nose jobs. Instead it is based on Michael Jackson's first film, Moonwalker. If you haven't seen the film then you'll probably want to know that the story involves the rescue



Tip: One here (that's one in the hundred great) success in Moonwalker is the game, coming soon from US Gold.



Both Moonwalker and of a spot of business. Michael starts his stuff in the original Moonwalker film.

of Michael's good friends from the diabolical Mr. Big.

With the passing of a shooting star Michael gains amazing powers of transformation! (much cheaper than using a plastic surgeon!) Michael uses his powers to defeat the evil Mr. Big and his henchmen and rescue his friends,

also managing to find time for the odd song or two. US Gold tell us that the rescue of Michael's kidnapped friends combined with the extraordinary transformation, battle and chase sequences make Moonwalker an ideal title for conversion into a home computer game. Moonwalker can be expected on all formats in mid-November. Hmm... should be fun. Goope awaits the results with interest.

The Chappie and chappies don't at USG are also making good use of their TSR license. Over one year after its launch on the C64 and PC, the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons game, Post of Rodance is to be released for the ST, Amiga, and Mac. USG are convinced that the new releases will take worldwide sales of the game through the quarter million barrier. Sell down US Gold, that's two achievements with one product. The biggest selling Computer RPG, with the longest release schedule! The Post of Rodance (due in October) release is to be closely followed by Hilltop (November). Fortunately AD&D fans will not have to wait as long for the next game in the series, Dragons of Flame. This game, set in the Dragonstone universe, gives you the chance to take part in the quest of the 'Companions of the Lance' as they

ADVENTURE FOR MANIACS

Freak from Luculler Games, who recently brought us Indy The Graphic Adventure, is a rather more macabre romp involving the evil Dr Fred, unlike conventional adventure games. Maniac Mansion is completely mouse-driven, so there is no tedious typing. There are seven different characters for the player to control, each with their own distinctive talents and personalities.

Luculler promises that the game will be equally appealing to both seasoned adventurers and novices. Since it is spread over 50 rooms containing 450 different objects it should certainly keep even the quickest adventure hound. US Gold are distributing the 16-bit version of the game, which will be available in late September. Also due soon from Luculler is Battle of Britain, the game which seeks to recreate the RAF's finest hour. It should be available in November.



Could she be the next victim in Maniac Mansion?



Battle of Britain from US Gold.



A Dragon of Flame adventure awaits. There's a sting in this tale!

continue their fight to save Kyrin from domination by Takhisis, the Queen of Darkness. Dragons of Flame will be out into October for 16-bit machines, while 640 owners can expect to see it late November.

FIVE TO DRIVE

Out in November for the Amiga (with an ST version to follow six weeks on) is Drive! Five, the latest game from Digital Magic Software. No ordinary driving game this: it provides you with no less than 5 different vehicles to race. These are a truck, a Formula one car, a bike, a



The *Driver*'s *Force of outlaws!* Digital Magic Software gets inside the game!

common or garden car, and a floppy. There is even a jinxed bonus level! Amiga owners will be pleased to learn that the game has been developed on that machine. DMG tell us that this results in better versions for both the Amiga and the ST. The game will retail for £24.95 on the Amiga and £29.95 on the ST. *Roover* is a nice piece of the driving force behind *Driver*'s force, although I'm sure you would much rather look at the game instead.

BITS 'N' PIECES

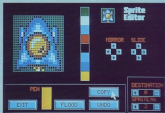


Double Dragon II may not be as cute as *Superfish*, which should please adults about one up adults.

OUTLAW SHOTS 'EM UP

Outlaw Productions' *Shooting Up* (distributed by) is coming for the ST soon. The STOS version is already out for the Amiga and OSA. It allows the construction of stand alone shoot-em-ups which can be freely distributed

to friends or software houses, although don't expect to see too many SOUAs and ocs in the top ten. SOUAs should be available in October/November priced £29.99



High Mastermatic continues its support of the Sega system with the release of two more games, *Casino Games* (£24.95, November), and *Wanted* (£19.95, December), the latter also from High is *Double Dragon II*, due in November (£26 for the PC £29.95), ST and Amiga (£19.95), Spectrum +3, C64 disk, and CPC £12.95 £14.95, and Spectrum, OSA, and CPC £84-£95.95.

The Edges are currently hard at work on *Pranoid* featuring (lovable old) Snoopy and the conversion of the arcade sensation *Contra*. The latter features the largest sprites ever seen in a computer game. In fact some of them are so large they won't fit on the screen! Make of that what you will. Both programs will be shown at the PC Show. Speaking of which... see you all there!

ACTIVISION IN POLE POSITION?

Anyone who frequents arcades can not have failed to come across Sega's superb game *Power Drift*. For the benefit of those that haven't, it is a fast 3D racing game that knows speed off Out Run. Old Groper certainly doesn't ring Activision the bells of converting it though. The task has been assigned to veteran programmer GNL, who was previously responsible for the Super Hang On. *Power Drift* should be out on all major formats in time to grace a few Christmas stockings.



Revving up for the start of a mean race in *Power Drift*, also from Sega Activision.



Being driven round the bend by *Power Drift*, Activision's forthcoming conversion of the excellent arcade machine from Sega. No hydraulics though... sorry!

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SPECIAL LEISURE WEAR OFFER
SEE PAGE 108 FOR DETAILS



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Q: WHERE CAN YOU FIND:

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A: IN THE "THRILLTIME" COLLECTION OF COURSE!!

Probably the most attractive buy this year, the "THRILLTIME" collections are lavishly packaged in unique collector boxes and mastered onto premium quality Gold and Platinum cassettes. Each title is recorded on to its own, individual cassette/disk side (for maximum reliability and longevity) and is fully documented in the detailed instruction booklet enclosed in each package. And, if this was not enough, every "THRILLTIME" collection contains a special leisurewear offer (see opposite for details).

PLUG 'EM IN...

PLUG IN PCB EXTENSIONS - AND PLUG 'EM IN VIOLENCE FIGHT...

Last month we talked about the cost of silicon in general and how Sega had invented its System 34 to try and rationalize things - keeping the same hardware in the box and only changing the software. Capcom, another major Japanese based company, have tried a slightly different tack with their advanced CP System Board.

Apart from being a very tightly spaced out board, the CP system approaches the problem of obsolescence from another viewpoint, being a halfway house between completely soft on one hand like System 34, with disk loading) and being completely hardware, like a conventional PCB.

Although the whole of the system is hard-wired, it is made up of interlocking motherboards - so if you wanted to change the output game of a board, in theory you would just replace the necessary sections, rather than having to invest in a completely new board.

This is particularly useful for Capcom, as CP boards are not cheap - hardly surprising as the company threw millions of dollars and a lot

of time into the whole project.

Like many of the newer high-end boards, the CP has got 2 65800's (chipping away inside, but the real mystery of the thing is how custom-designed, very highly integrated chips, that make it really fly. Capcom is understandably reluctant to reveal more.

Games on the system so far however, see below, are all technologically outstanding in their own ways, but other than *Slinder* have proven little originality at gameplay that it's only a matter of time before the Capcom technique come up with something that makes the new system really shine - and that'd be guaranteed to blow away almost anything any other board could deliver at present.

CP SYSTEM TITLES TO WATCH OUT FOR...

There's a list of current games that use the CP System Board. If you spot a cabinet running one of these in your local arcade, keep an eye on it - because it's likely another game is able to spring up on the system, and chances are that Capcom will be developing some particularly strong titles for it.

Forgotten Worlds - Graphic tour de force, but a non-standard control system limited its appeal to arcade operators and so its overall numbers in the field.

Dynasty Wars - The subject matter (oriental heroes scuffling through armies of cannon fodder) is a little to alien to Westerners, but the game itself has some nice, if unspooktacular, touches.

Slinder - Most innovative of the CP games, with artificial gravity fields injecting much needed novelty into this combat jump-jumpy.

Blow - Licensed from the movie and no relation to the little known Miniboyage home format product. Another combat jump-jumpy with high graphic content.

U.N. Squadron - Latest release on the system, a left-right shooting shooter, in the mould of *Blitzkrieg*. Overly conventional gameplay - but I bet it's got some depth in those corners. One of those start places (Japan, Tank and...San Ito).

▲ CP System Board - Interlocking with memory, ROM's, and everything.



Slinder - Follow up to the smash hit *Slinder* of Gen. Now, *Slinder* is made for both on home formats by Ito and by the creators, they injected their lovely graphics, but shows little enhancement by the original gameplay.





Cue Brick

CUE BRICK

Confused? I was. Recently bought and a few variants game on home format about 3 years ago and now a similar thing has turned up as coin-up from Boston.

One brick's another attempt by the coin-up business to come up with a successor to Tetris - still reportedly going strong in the arcades of this. It's well implemented and a pleasant change for the "disengage from Tetris" job, but it's not intuitive enough to make the same impact as Tetris.



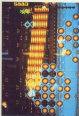
Mushroom Fight

VIOLENCE FIGHT

What else can they do to beat-tetrisup? Make the sprites even bigger, that's what. Current award for huge sprites goes to Taito's Violence Fight - which also boasts a complex array of moves, choice of character at the

start of the game and painfully realistic punching sounds. Combine this with the "search it" control system that was experimentally used on Street Fighter - and the experience would almost be like going to an England match.

When the punchy version of Street Fighter first appeared in Japan, there were claims of elderly gentlemen exploiting weak factors as the aggressive instincts of a lifetime suddenly poured out and were unleashed upon the innocent machine. You have been warned...



OMEGA FIGHTER

There will always be games around like Omega Fighter - from minor league UFL. Heroic or evil, auto fire and billions of sprites - take me to the funny farm, Buddy.

Auto fire, auto lock, auto off with high-brain functions, you just focus just in front of the screen so you can take the whole of the area in at one time and get on with the processing required to plot the likely path of enemy fighters and bullets, taking the appropriate evasive action.

Local synthesis with the machine - the old junkies' Mervyns, I like this one!

Omega Fighter

GAMP AT ANP'S

Like any other area of trivia, this has its own trade jargon that can seem very confusing to the outsider. In that game you're playing JARRNA computer? It's a PCB? From now on, we'll put a regular column telling you in-or some of the trade terms and secrets... This month - how to tell your ANP's from your GMP's.

ANP - Stands for Amusement with Prizes. And what sort of machine would that be? Well, believe it or not, we are talking about the good old one armed bandit - the fruit. But the name - Amusement with Prizes? Well, it's called Amusement with Prizes because it's for amusement only. In other words - it's rigged. All perfectly up front of course - but inside even the most genuine looking of ANP's is a fairly sophisticated circuit that ensures that the machine plays a precise percentage overall of everything it takes in, that percentage being set on the UK by the government.

Play ten one evening and you might come out on top, play ten evenly evening of your life and you may be amused but you'll certainly be out of pocket.

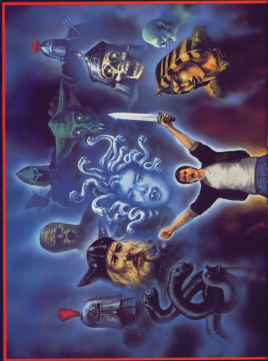
One funny thing about an UK ANP's - fruits can quite easily be programmed to work on a normal TV screen - and many are in the UK, in the UK, however, video fruit machines are not popular. It seems that UK punters think that as long as there are mechanical bits inside the ANP's, there's a chance they can beat the odds... **SUCKERS!!!**

SNP - now this is more up my street - Suit with Prizes - that category of machine being presently dominated by Taito (SNP's of various types). For your money in and - assuming that you have a brain the size of a planet - you can walk away with a winner. And because it's all skill, the operator doesn't need a gaming licence to run it - real, eh?

Real, because if the programming and design of the machine is sophisticated enough you can make sure that, although it's theoretically possible to get serious about one of the games, you'd have to be a conversant with the reactions of Bruce Lee to do it!

One particular non-trivia SNP that's to mention it is a fixed version of the old card straight trick - First the Lady. Four versions of "cards" are laid out before you and "spaced" over very quickly. When they stop you have to select which one was the best to be turned over.

Theoretically this is a skill-based game, but when the flipping gets to be sufficiently fast, the game becomes a straight-forward turkey shoot. This is because "vision game" (the bending of the eye - which makes image inversion possible - to retain an image for 1/10th second) starts to set in, and for most months it is simply not possible to tell which card was "spaced" when. How nice - and to gaming licence needed here, your honour.





ATARI

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Actual C64 Screenshots



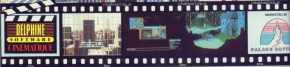
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SCORE

THE SECRET'S OUT!



NEC's blockbusting PC Engine has been re-engineered by a British company to produce a fully-operational UK version. Classic arcade action is now only £199 pounds away!



The PC Engine has been driving up the software levels of committed gamers' play for almost two years. Now, at last, you can get your fix on a real-life UK console that really delivers the goods.

Plans of the Engine didn't filter through to Britain from Japan until just over a year ago, and since then there have been a number of unauthorised imports of varying degrees of quality. People have swapped their up, however — the systems look good, the systems look good, when the machine appeared, although the unit faces tough opposition from the Sega Megadrive (but here not Euro) and the yet-to-appear N64, both of which are technically superior.

However, it's the games that have got the best clamour for Engines. For some reason, the NEC machine has generated some superb titles — probably something to do with its success in Japan — and the range of software, combined with the technical excellence of the games, makes the machine a very attractive proposition.

But there's a problem. The only Engines on sale in this country have been Japanese imports. These machines expect not only a different power supply, but also a different HVDC TV system to output through. Dealers have got round this problem by adding or various doublers that convert the UK mains voltage to the required levels and output a proper PAL TV signal.



'We are desperate to promote the PC Engine the way it should be...as a fully-functional equivalent of NEC's block-busting Japanese version. If NEC were to do it themselves, we'd be delighted to support it, but in the meantime the PC Engine Plus has to be the only alternative for the UK games enthusiast.'

James Denton

James Denton of Merton Technical Services is nothing if not an arcade fiend. Not on the heels doesn't have the official blessing of NEC, the PC gives you everything you'd expect from an authorised UK Engine. Merton have, aided by Warwick Electronics' Mike Philips, provided a quality power supply and — most importantly — re-engineered the TV output and made alterations to the case that ensure the Engine Meets away to do its job properly. The result is a real little unit that will accept all the official peripherals (many other UK versions can't, because you have to plug in a PAL decoder) — and most importantly — delivers a superb sharp display. And it costs £179.99, cheaper than many less impressive offerings...

ARCADIE MANIA

James Denton of Merton Technical Services is nothing if not an arcade fiend. Not on the heels

At least, that's what the doublers are meant to do. The trouble is that all too often they are of inferior quality and degrade the performance of the machine. The resulting problems all fit the machine right where it hurts on the gameplay: from fast the Engine Trouble level on this page.

Under Merton and Active Sales's marketing, James Denton of Merton reduced the PC Engine delivered a letter showing in the UK and together with Active's Robert Stallone they set about producing a machine that would give UK gamers the true Engine experience. Inspiring units from Japan, they've re-engineered them and turned out something they call the PC Engine Plus.

Although it

SYSTEM SUPPORT

As the console scene begins to hot up, the contention between the PC Engine and the Sega 16-bit Megadrive grows by the day. Although neither machine is officially available in the country there are a great deal of suppliers already selling both. Assuming that you're already decided to add a console to your collection, and that a Nintendo or a N64 is not for you, should you run an Engine or drive a Megadrive?

The deciding factors have to be support and software. The Megadrive is likely to be launched officially by Virgin in the country around Easter 1993. Virgin have already given a good deal of support to the Sega MasterSystem and will doubtless continue the tradition with the Megadrive. You can expect a steady stream of software and perhaps even a regular magazine to back up your purchase.

The NEC PC Engine is a more obscure prospect on the support side. NEC themselves have still not decided whether to support the European market or not, and this long delay would seem to indicate that the company is more interested in Japan and the USA than in Europe. If this is the case, we can hardly expect much support from them even if they do officially release the product here. The same thing happened with the Nintendo, which — although 'officially' launched here some time ago but has a very chequered history and is only now getting anything like the support it needs.

The PC Engine Plus, although an excellent product, is still an unauthorised import and the companies producing it are unlikely to be able to ship many units in some respect this may help on the support side — you're more likely to get individual attention — but in the long term it means that the machine is unlikely to achieve the sales needed for widespread game news support, dedicated magazines, and so on...

ENGINE TROUBLE

Typical problems experienced with unauthorised PC Engine's in the UK are generally caused by either an unstable power supply or a poor quality modulator.

The basic system requires an input from the power supply of around 9 to 10 volts. However, many supplies tested by Merton were actually outputting as much as 12 or 13 volts. This isn't going to stop the machine from working, but it has a whole load of knock-on effects.

The first thing that happens is that the Engine's regulator, which receives this current and outputs it at a steady 5 volts, begins to overheat and drive out more current. This in turn affects the modulator, which itself begins to overheat and send more current to the display — and at this point you really begin to notice it. For example, the PC Engine can display 16 colours at once and change these colours very rapidly, giving the effect in a game of having a very large colour capability. This is often used on, say, large end-of-level screens where the programmer might show upon several different shades — from the red areas at the peaks to produce a delicately shaded terrain.

Unfortunately, red just has to be one of the areas of the display spectrum most affected by current fluctuation, and instead of below shades, with an over-heating modulator, all you're likely to get are smudgy pink, or smudgy red, or smudgy white. Not only that, but 'white' itself can set in, with the image swimming in sync with the soundtrack. Not very attractive. And then there are associated problems of a rolling display, or of other subtle scrolling effects that weren't exactly what the programmer intended.

Any PC Engine sold in the UK (since NEC have yet to produce a proper Euro-version) is going to have to tackle these problems. The PC Engine Plus has certainly succeeded better than most — and without any doublers. The quality of the display is excellent and the unit doesn't overheat. Definitely a good buy for Engine freaks and game enthusiasts alike.

of the PC Engine Plus will be an extraordinary beast called the Personal Arcade Plus. This little number (big number, actually) gives you a complete savings bar-stick machine in one nice form — at all you do is plug in your Sega, Nintendo, PC Engine, or Atari console and the beast cravily takes over, giving you a nice little floating center in the sitting room. Doubtless, the enterprising gambler will fit their own coin slots and call the neighbours' hand.

Remember, too, that the only mod Sega Megadrives, clearing them to be the only mod to fully compatible with the Genesis software range and with future UK software to be released when Virgin launch their version next year.

PC ENGINE VS MEGADRIVE

Gamespace is what it's all about, so, you'll probably ignore the question of support altogether (see panel opposite) and make your decision entirely on the basis of the style movements in Allen Chan-Sun Champion A man for a woman's eye or own heart...

The PC Engine already has an extensive software base, compared to the modest amount of titles available for the Megadrive, but is quality more important than quantity? Sega obviously don't think so - in fact they don't seem to think of the Engine as a great threat since they have allowed versions of some of their own titles to be released for it, a rare concession in the console world where the usual rule is 'my machine, my games, and everyone elseg off'.

Sega's *Space Harrier* - the highly successful 3D shoot-'em-up - has been converted for a great many machines but the PC Engine version is closer to the arcade original. The scrolling is beautifully smooth and the speed of some levels is positively nerve racking. The graphics are almost identical to the coin op and all the levels are present.

The sound on *Space Harrier*, however, is quite poor compared to other titles on the Engine and although all the speech is there, none of it is intelligible if you turn back at the Megadrive, however, you'll find that Sega have chosen not to release *Space Harrier* at all, but instead have created *Space Harrier 2*.

The first game which shows what the Megadrive can do is *Ghosts and Goblins*, a coin-op version of Capcom's arcade classic; the sequel to *Ghosts and Goblins*. Taking the role of Arthur the Knight, you run, jump and shoot your way through the levels to kill Laster and rescue the princess. This is a perfect adaptation of the coin op, both graphically and audibly, the only difference being that you don't have to feed it your hard earned cash. *Ghosts and Goblins* is quite simply one of the best platform games available in the home.

The PC Engine may not be able to beat the Megadrive in the platform game stakes, but it does have the best shoot-'em-up you can see, in the shape of *Gunbound*. *Gunbound* is a vertical blast with the most awesome array of weapons



Space Harrier 2 follows in the same vein as the original as far as game play is concerned, but what is more the similarity ends. The graphics and speed would put the coin op original to shame. Even really huge entities glide around the screen without slowing down, leaving nothing to derive from the basic atmosphere induced white physics. The sound complements the quality of the game with some excellent tunes and the best digitized speech for a coin op. Although *Space Harrier 2* is the most impressive game of its kind, it hardly stretches the Megadrive to its limits and as good as it may be, it is very likely to attract fans of the original.

You can't buy a Konix (yet), you want something beefier than a Nintendo, and you're a games connoisseur. In fact, you're a funny, alien-bashing so-and-so. Which games powerhouse should you go for?

seen is a game. There are nine extremely long levels, each containing quarters which must be defeated if you are to progress any further.

Although *Gunbound* is a touch on the easy side, it is never boring since the pace is always fast and furious. However, if the ease of play does not appeal it is also the only game I know of with a cheat mode that makes the game more difficult.



Ghosts and Goblins on the Megadrive.

To declare one of these machines superior would be difficult and misleading. The Megadrive is the more technically advanced, but the software and peripheral support is relatively poor. The PC Engine, on the other hand, has a large range of software available and peripherals which include the already popular CD ROM player.

Which of the two consoles to buy is a matter of preference and patience. If you are looking for a high quality range of top class software, you would have to opt for the established PC Engine. However, if you are willing to hold out for a few months until the Sega releases become more frequent and Sega hopefully supports the machine, you may decide that it will well worth the wait.

Space Harrier on the PC Engine.

SOFTWARE FOR THE ENGINE: WAS IT WORTH THE WAIT?

At last a technically reliable PC Engine has appeared for the UK market. The technical superiority of the hardware is not worth anything, however, unless the software available for the machine comes up to scratch. Here we present an overview of a selection of the software currently available for the PC Engine in this country and address the question on most game players' lips: 'Was it worth the wait?'

R-TYPE

R-Type began life as a hit arcade game from Irem Corporation. It was the first shoot-'em-up to really make use of power-ups for the player's craft. The additions available in the game are not merely gimmicks, but essential if you are to complete the game. The game is practically indistinguishable from the original. Great graphics, great sound, and plays like a dream.

The only problem with R-Type is that it won't fit on one cartridge. Hudson Soft have put the game on two cartridges (three levels on each), both cartridges are available separately, but you will have to pay twice as much if you want the whole game.

POWER LEAGUE II

This game is a simulation of baseball featuring extremely nice 3D graphics. In terms of sheer attractiveness nothing on the 32 or Amiga comes close except *Demolition* (TV Sports: Football). The appearance of this title is good news for prospective and existing PC Engine owners since it is an indication that the machine is attracting more than just conversions of arcade games.

LEGENDARY AXE

This is a fairly standard platform game, very similar in atmosphere to *Eid's* aging game, *Beyond the Ice Palace*. This was quite an early release for the PC Engine and has now been

superseded by much better software, unless you are a real platform addict! I can't really recommend this one.

CYBER CROSS

This is another early release, but thankfully it is a lot more playable than *Legendary Axe*. This one is a martial arts type game set in the not too distant future. It is certainly nothing special. There have been many martial arts beat-'em-ups appearing over recent years, and *Cyber Cross* doesn't really offer anything that you haven't seen before. Having said that, it is a reasonably competent effort.

PAGLAND

The original *Pagland* arcade game from Namco is getting on a bit in years now, not to mention the Pac characters who inhabit it. Nevertheless, it is still quite a good game, and should appeal to younger players as well as old timers. It is nice to see that a few old favourites are being launched for the Engine as well as the very latest releases. Let's hope even more are forthcoming.

GUNHED

As a vertically scrolling, shoot the aliens, shoot-'em-up *Gunhed* holds no surprises. It's very fast, and very colourful, but other than that there's not really a lot here to hold the interest. There are already some far superior shoot-'em-ups available for the Engine (at least in type), so it is difficult to see the having much appeal for Engine owners.

FINAL LAP

This is at first sight a three-dimensional racing game a la *Pole Position* but also seems to have



A typical end-of-level enemy in R-Type.

a quest of some sort involved. The alien actually got to play all of this one because of a slight complication. None of us can read Japanese incidentally, this is one of the pitfalls of buying PC Engine software at present, although admittedly this was the first game that presented complications.

SIDEARMS

Sidearms is a conversion of an ancient but enjoyable sideways-scrolling shoot-'em-up, which once again involves running yourself with more and more powerful weapons. The action is certainly fast and very, very hard. But the game also has an addictive (but not too time appealing).

THE NINJA WARRIORS

A good conversion of a rather more recent martial-arts game from Irem. There is a slight twist to this one in that the ninja's opponents are robots, and as you get damaged sections of glowing *chakra* are siphoned off (which is certainly a nice touch if you like the combat game).

IN CONCLUSION

Looking at the titles currently available for the Engine the impression you are left with is that the good majority of games released are going to be arcade conversions. The Engine is, however, superbly suited to the type of game (at least what you get) will be acceptably close to the original.

Titles like *Power League II* and *Final Lap* are indications that there might be one or two games that break the mould, and *Pagland* is a good sign that there will be one or two golden titles among their ancient heads.

Obviously because the Engine is not yet officially available for the UK, British owners are going to have to put up with software aimed at the Japanese Market. This means Japanese instruction booklets and Japanese on-screen messages in some games. Whether this situation will change in the near future remains to be seen. But you can rest assured that what is currently available for the Engine was definitely worth waiting for.



Pagland's looking pleased with himself in PaGLAND, but not for long...

WATCH YOUR SCREEN – SEPTEMBER



TM



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POWER DRIFT



IN POLE POSITION...

SEGA ACTIVISION

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GUESS WHO'S COMING TAY



...GAVE THE WORLD AGAIN?

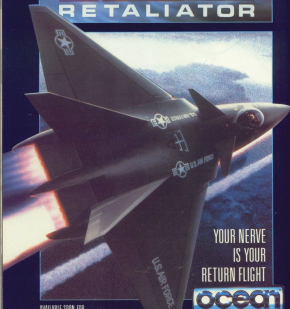


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RED hot TAPE



If you thought that all you did with VCR's was watch *The Fly* and *Game with the Wind*, think again. John Cook checks out a box of tricks that can turn the humble vid into a powerful games system...

In the field of consumer electronics, the success story of the decade, or both (both in the Atlantic, has to be the Video Tape Recorder. Probably the most sophisticated of pieces of electronic equipment ever to enter the home, the VCR has rocketed from zero percent market penetration in the seventies to the present, almost saturation level. Now many people do you know with a TV without a VCR?

Of course, the dream of the marketing entrepreneur — once a piece of equipment is installed into the home — is to get an associated piece of hardware installed next to it as fast as possible, to enhance the utility of the original machine and prolong its useful life. But after head cleaners, dust covers and servicers tapes, where the hell do you go with a VCR?

The problem is that in its unadorned form, watching a video is a completely passive experience and the medium itself totally sequential — you sit there and watch a pre-recorded tape from the beginning right through to the end. What the VCR lacks, being the old interaction with the movie viewer, is that magical attribute, interactivity.

Video cameras, it's true, have allowed the cinematically gifted consumer to put down his own images on tape but, once the image is captured and in the can, the control over the image itself is limited — unless you have full access to the editing suite and even then you still haven't got past the problem of the complete lack of interactivity.

So what are millions of consumers unknowingly waiting for? Interactive VCR, that's what, and the whole concept is a lot closer to coming to market than you can imagine, with the first unit launched onto the market in the USA this month — the Ideal Videomaster System. And if you're thinking that this is of no interest at all, you're wrong. Interactive VCR isn't necessarily all about expensive training schemes — it's about games, since most of those VCRs in the home are there for one reason or another. The big boys know when they're on to a good one...

THE COST

The Videomaster is aimed primarily at younger gamblers, and although it's certainly not the total fulfillment of the promise of what interactive VCR can offer, it's definitely a step in the right direction, demonstrating the basic principles that will apply to systems following on — it and when they happen.

Priced at under \$100 retail, the Videomaster can overlay computer graphics onto a video image, letting you play simple games side by side with cartoons or TV images. The code for the games is encoded on the video tape, interlaced with the video signal, so the video "knows" what point the tape is at in the run — and so when to end the game and start loading the code of another.

In effect, the interactivity is limited to the player and the graphics, with the video image serving to introduce the various games and act as backgrounds to them, so its usefulness is limited, but it does serve to show that the principle of interactive VCR can work, and work well. Early laser disk games worked in much the same way, overlaying a computer generated image of a space-ship on an exotic video landscape. They were pretty stiff by today's standards, but the baffles have something up their sleeves that could change everything...

IVT VS CDI

Both Interactive Video Tape and Compact Disk Interactive are still in their infancy — but if you're a fan of the proper to write either of them off, in each case, be superior than the other. On the face of it, CDI has to win hands down. 800 Meg of superior access data, a powerful 80000 based machine, and the might of big electronics companies behind it. But look what happened between Laserdisc and VCR in the past.

Price is a powerful factor, and it's well known that if CDI comes to market in the next year, you are going to have to look out an excess of £1000 to grab it, initially. That's a lot. And CDI, in its present configuration, isn't difficult to animate a whole screen of video technology.

Tape has no problem with this, but its sequential access is more tricky to handle and certainly more limited — interactive VCR would need a 4 track system to truly compete. The technology is there, and a high end interactive VCR system would retail at less than £300 — if only the will was there. Interesting, isn't it?

HYPER-INTERACTIVE

These other systems, presently under wraps, are truly interactive and can produce fabulous results. Unfortunately we can't, for legal reasons, mention the unit by name — so well call it System X. Check this out and get excited...

System X has four independently accessible tracks of video on a single tape with 12 tracks of sound. There's a sophisticated control so all the tracks can be displayed simultaneously, if necessary with complete control over the viewing window for window size plus a high resolution graphics overlay capability. This is the kind of spec that makes professional game designers drool — it does, truly give you a chance of true interactivity — the kind that is only in prototype with CDI at present.

HOW VIEWMASTER WORKS

Exactly how do you make VCR interactive? It's not easy, but with a little technological know-how, it can be done. The Viewmaster system is relatively low-tech, with a single video track that is constantly running, the normal audio track, and an extra track of digital data — used for game codes and sound effects — spaced in an interval called the Vertical Blanking Interval (see Figure 1).



The video frames cause the phosphor screen from top to bottom, alternating the information to produce light. By altering the intensity of the beam as it travels, areas of light and dark are built up, creating the visual image. When the beam reaches the STOP point, it has to travel back to the START.

This is the area of the screen beyond the usual scan of the beam that makes up the TV picture every 50th of a second. In fact, it's the area where, on a UK TV picture, the Teletext information is displayed, needing, of course, a decoder to display the

information as actual screens of text.

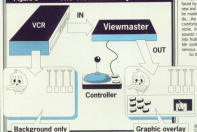
It's easier to think of VBI like this: when you think of tape — it takes a finite time for the beam to make its way from the bottom right of the screen back up to the start of the next frame at the top left. Considering that the tape is running at a constant speed while this is happening, it means you have a small area of tape between each frame, which you can use as you wish. (See Fig. 2).



The tiny time gap as the electron beam flies from the bottom of the screen back to the top is the second to interact. Two extra techniques, providing a 'wide door' for data to be transmitted and processed by the Viewmaster unit, the beam, is represented by the Vertical Blanking Interval (VBI).

In the case of Viewmaster, it's used to carry the program code to the Viewmaster unit, exactly like you'd load a program into any tape-based computer — only as it's giving the information in the gap between TV frames (and not on the audio channel either, remember) — the loading of the program is completely transparent to the user.

Figure 3 The Viewmaster system



The Viewmaster isn't much more complicated than, say, a floppier. It's a graphics-generating device that sits between the VCR and the TV with electronics to scan back its own graphics onto the VCR's video picture. It's these graphics that form the interactive part of the experience, with the video forming the background and a link between the games. When the time for a game has elapsed, the old program code is dumped, and new code downloaded for a new game, while the game itself is being 'restarted' by a new section of video action. Simple, but effective.



Edudity can Educe in your head at The History Garden Inn... The message on the backboard could be generated by the Viewmaster if gameplay demanded...

This technology has already been developed by an American company (so called, to park one) and could be the next big one at a price point of about \$200. Interested? We wouldn't bet the house with this baby, however, it is that the system has exceeded the original backers' expectations... and now they don't know what to do with it. We'll be back in a cordially invited to send eight figure cheques into the Ace editorial office and we'll do our best to put you in touch with the relevant group!

Along with this level of technology, the level of interactivity, does seem (especially by these normally over-care marketing sections) into paragon of cinematic action. The problem is, there has never been the kind of interactivity we are talking about in a consumer electronic product. And few people have the confidence in the intelligence of the general public and the vision in design and exploitation teams, to realise the full potential such a system could have. In the eyes of the men in suits, it's video user's hand (spare eyes, optical train), and are only able to understand words beginning with 'Kugly' or 'M'...

System 3 is stuck with the same problem faced by CD and similar technologies — it is so new and so, generally, revolutionary that it can be made to do almost anything you want it to do... the only thing it can't do is stick in a comfortable and easily classifiable marketing niche, in a situation where many millions of pounds must be spent to bring such a system into fruition, the robust quality of such flexible systems make execs and backers alike, nervous. Very nervous.

So that is the state of play with interactive VCR at present. One simple — but effective for its target audience — system on the market now. At least one technically advanced system waiting for someone to do something with it. And millions of consumers with VCRs waiting for something that will change the video tape machine into a games machine. Or a powerful educational tool. Or an exciting information provider. Or anything that anyone with enough imagination can program it for: if only the Cosmic Female Control had a last forward...

THE CINEMAIWARE CONNECTION

So much for the hardware — but what about the software?

Ideal — backers of the Viewmaster — originally approached Edudity to produce a game for the system using the world famous Edudity

characters, such as Donald Duck, Goofy and everyone's favourite robot, Mickey Mouse. Having no experience in the game field, who else should Disney approach in turn to produce it for them, but the masters of the interactive movie on computer - the Commodore Corporation?

Experience and expertise gained through producing classic games like *Defender* or the *Crown and Rocket Ranger* proved useful for the company, who handed over the project to its Interactive Dept, headed up by movie star movie maker David Burdick. Design and production was done in-house, with the actual programming of the *VideoMaster* and done by local technicians. After "trying a bunch of ideas" and no months of hard work, the Disney-Cartoon movie was born.

The tape is a series of 8 simple arcade games (mostly overlaid on video) linked together by cartoon footage introduced by Disney character Ludwig von Drake.

In fact, although the running commentary made by Ludwig is all about the *VideoMaster* and tell you how to play all the games, only missing cartoon footage was used by Commodore - it was carefully selected and re-edited by Disney to a newly written script. The effect is very convincing.

GETTING FIRED UP

Ludwig introduces a segment of cartoon classic - such as Goofy trying to shove coal into a furnace - and then goes on to explain how the game works. Cool and furnace graphics are now overlaid onto the bottom half of the screen and the user has to try and fire the coal into the furnace, while the furnace door is open - using the controller. After a set period of time (if the game actually must be ended at exactly the right time or the overlay effect would be spoiled) the game ends, Ludwig goes into his next routine and the unit remembers your score.

At the end of all nine games (around 30 minutes of elapsed time), you are given a total score and invited to play again. Simple, but effective - lots of the target age range love the idea of cartoon characters actually talking to them and enjoy the challenge of the basic hand/eye and puzzle games.

How much have they got that repeat too - the Commodore-developed Disney tape is loaded with the machine, with extra tapes (see above) is all featuring *Scarsie Street* and *Muppet* characters ranging in at around \$25.

WHEN WILL WE GET IT?

The *VideoMaster* concept was developed as far back as 1982 with the Belgium firm of Sytel originally planning a four track system. This was soon scaled down to the single track that now exists to keep it in the price bracket suitable for the toy market - below \$100.



David Burdick - of Commodore

SYSTEM X

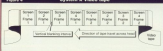
Getting four tracks onto a piece of video tape is much harder and requires a fair amount of electronic wizardry to both compress the tape and switch freely between them. What happens is this...

On the video tape hold the information for each track is not sequential, but interleaved between information for other tracks (see Fig 4). Thus the information for Track

separately coded window or just filling the screen like a normal TV picture.

As well as being able to select between tracks - as allowed by the program - the System X unit can overlay complex graphics onto the video images, which can be under the control of the user - as in a game - or just used as a combined or other type of graphic overlay. The overhead in inter-

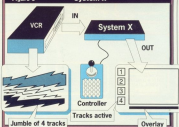
Figure 4 System X Video Tapes



is found on frames 1, 5, 9, 13, etc. That for Track 2 on frames 2, 6, 10, 14, and so on. Of course, the VCR is still used to carry code to program the System X unit, which selects which tracks to display, and how to process them. As desired, all or any of the tracks can be played at once - or repeated over and over if you wanted, each in its

leaving the frames in this fashion is a reduced frame rate on screen, but the lowest that System X goes to, even when also playing all four tracks at once is 15 frames per second - only marginally more than NTSC quality and still pretty good by standard video game standards when you consider the image quality of the VCR.

Figure 5 System X



Major development of the system went from 1986 to 1988, with the unit now coming to market in Fall 1989. The principle concept of Audio Switching was developed by Michael Freeman of ACTV in New York, along with Eric Sackett of Sytel. Other key engineers working on the project included Eric Beck, Tim Edden and Tom Joyner, along with Gary Evans who was responsible for the inclusion of the colour graphics chip, the unit was originally designed with a black and white overlay display in mind.

Gary himself is confident in the future of both the product and the underlying concept - "I think, to us that interactive television is

inevitable", he states, although at the same time worried that the complexity of the concept makes advertising and marketing a real problem - "having to rely at the end of the day on simple word of mouth endorsement".

When will the *VideoMaster* be on sale in Europe? Long term plans exist, but it all depends on the initial success of the unit in the US and Japan. Converting the system to PAL and SECAM TV standards is possible, but not easy due to different resolutions and frame rates. Only time will tell whether it makes the big jump over the pond.

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A LONG HARD ROAD...



When Eugene Lacey visited David Braben in his Cambridge retreat, he expected to hear all about *Elite Two*. But Britain's most respected programmer took him far beyond it, with some compelling – and unexpected – comments on the future of games technology...

When coauthor of *Elite* David Braben gets time to relax, his inspiration for only has to stroll to the balconies of his stretch Cambridge flat and gaze out across the Cam to Magdalene College. Just a few feet below its window students and tourists punt up and down slowly within ear shot, though the noise translation is usually just one way: "It's amazing," he remarks, "...the number of tourists who don't realize I'm the *Lord Dunsen*."

The professor flat and Aunt Quince parked in the garage are the spots of *Elite* and *Wings* – kind of offices all over the world, but it's typical of the calm, unassuming personality of Braben that he should reward his proceeds from the enormously successful games in a place to work. Not a Ferrari or Paul Smith suit in sight, just a very nice place to live and work – which is precisely what David Braben has been doing for the last eighteen months – coding away on *Elite II*.

RING THE BELL

Although the entrepreneur could reach Braben and Bell – Braben's former flat mate, and co-

author of *Elite*, he fell in no longer involved in the development of *Elite II*. "We started on the design of *Elite II* in 1984 when we were still at University," he Bell wrote an interactive language to write it, but we were forced to stop. After about a year we decided to give up. The design for *Elite II* was very ambitious. It was running – but too slowly. It just wasn't doing what we wanted it to do. We were programming on the BBC and in the end decided it was foolish to design a game that could be done on an IBM machine. We fell then gave up on the project."

The famous Braben/Bell partnership thus reached an amicable conclusion and *Elite II* was shelved until Spring '87 when David Braben decided to resurrect it after competing *Wings*. But don't get too excited – there's still at least another year's work to do on the game before it hits the shops in Christmas 1990.

The game is designed to follow logically from *Elite*. It takes a lot of the ideas that we know we couldn't do in *Elite* and incorporates them. There will be very much greater scope in terms of what the player can do – for instance

all the planets will be modeled correctly and you will be able to fly down to the surface... There will be cities on the surfaces of planets and a lot going on for the player to do."

"The graphics will be very much different to what's gone before. Despite some people saying the graphics in *Wings* represent the planet sequence of *Elite II* that is absolutely untrue. It is not all of that style now. Everything will be in first person view as it was from a space ship. Unlike *Elite* the player will not be restricted to a space vehicle. There is a car that can be driven as well – and a VERY large space ship."

"There is also a war going on. The player can decide the extent to which he wants to get involved and interact with it. The trading will be there, but it is a much more low key game – and it will be far more realistic."

Braben is particularly pleased with the *Elite II* map. It will completely simulate a galaxy, unlike *Elite*, which was a pretty poor start with its two dimensional map with its two thousand planets. "I have someone describing *Elite* as a 'pretty poor star' is a sobering experience for a game reviewer. But Braben doesn't seem to make sacred cows out of his previous successes.

ON FUTURE COMPUTERS AND THE ACE CHALLENGE

Braben is not convinced the ACE Challenge Computer is the way forward.

"It seems incredibly complicated. Your plan is to have more or less the best of everything. If I were building a machine for the future – I would

"I didn't set out to think how I could do a better *Elite* – a sort of *Elite* with bells and whistles. The Basic *Elite* design was very simple. The computer didn't have to keep track of very much – all that is kept track of is the number of kills, legal status, amount of cash held etc – there will be a lot more for it to do in *Elite II*: internal politics and so forth."



put in just one very powerful custom chip because then the circuit board gets really simple and the cost of external links comes down - and if you imagine that a future machine will need very fast access to the RAM - and possibly a very wide bus - say 640k, or at least 320k, then you've got all these tracks on the circuit board which takes the cost of the machine enormously.

Braben's dream machine is likely to be based on some of the latest chip designs. 'The 58800 processor or Intel's i 860, they are two very interesting processors. They both do as well as write the chip - floating point is the instruction set - rather than having an external floating point processor.'

These chips are yet to be incorporated into new computers but they are certain to be used in the near future with IBM announcing an intention to use the i 860 - a development welcomed by Braben. 'Gains are made for the i 860 that up to 170 MBPS can be used at peak execution speed. With that sort of power it seems totally unnecessary to have a separate chip to do things like 3D maths as you suggest in the ACE Challenge design.'

"Filled polygons are certainly not going to be flavour of the month for very much longer."

Braben believes that many future hardware designs are making the wrong assumptions about what the software will be like. Although the use of customised chips - such as the filter in the ACE Challenge design, for example - are useful for fulfilling certain computer design requirements, they are limited to that function. Braben would prefer a more flexible computer that can adapt to - changes in software design. He illustrates his point by referring to 3D designs, adding that our ACE Challenge computer would be a pain in the neck to use. 'At the time the Amiga came out, the first 3D games that there were were like *Drawn* - they got a line drawer in the filter and everybody did line drawn games. That was thought to be the future of 3D programming, but if you look at 3D games now very few of them are line drawn. Filled polygons are what you've got now, but even they are certainly not going to be flavour of the month for very much longer.

ON FASTER PROCESSORS AND MORE MEMORY...

'It will make a big difference...if you make the effort, having more memory will make things go faster because instead of evaluating functions you can have them in a big table. You then just get it out of the table pre-calculated.'

'Speed will make things easier - the games will be able to do a lot more in the time allotted - people like nice smooth displays and it will be possible to include a lot more detail in these smooth displays. Games are currently running quite slowly. You will be able in the future to have a lot more interaction with moving objects. I would like to think we can approach the interactive film stage in games.'

There are a whole lot of ways 3D graphics can be modified.'

Once you start talking about machines in three or four years time you've then got sufficient power to start doing things like real reflections. The current set of machines can only sort manage to polygon draw. They can't do things like arbitrary beveling, shadowing or reflections. Polygons are useless for doing things like reflections because it's not only going you're drawing - you are actually drawing images of what a reflective surface would look like.'

INTERACTIVE MOVIE TYPE

Despite claims by various companies that they already provide interactive movies, Braben is far from convinced. 'We are nowhere near it... I mean something where it would be like buying a video and interacting with the world portrayed by the images you see, that kind of things in years and years and years away - you can't even do it on *Conys* now.'

Braben sees a long hard road to the interactive movie world but is confident we will get there. He believes the necessary steps are 'a lot of effort in software and the new kind of hardware along the lines of the i 860 type. From its sheer speed and generality of its instruction set, that is approaching the sort of speed we'll need.' If Braben could have taken

an 4860 back in a time slip to around about 2064 (the world would have been a very different game).

More sophisticated game designs are needed to exploit the power of the new machines to the full. Braben believes there are signs already of games designers using greater power more intelligently. The problem with development currently is the limitations of the machines. 'You may decide I want to do this, now this is going to be amazing, but then you realise it is going to run something like once every four minutes, it's nuts at all. On the other hand, we have still got a lot more to get out of the Amiga and the ST.'

ON 32 BIT COMPUTERS AND ENDING CLOUDS

On 32 bit computers Braben is a firm fan of the *System* and believes the Future FM Towns is 'very interesting' but believes for the game in the short term '...it is not as big a leap as from 0 to 16 bit because the main thing people have noticed from 8 to 16 bit has been the increase of colours and the resolution of the screens. The improvement from 16 bit to 32 bit will be massive. It will be more of a subtle thing. The graphics are doing more, they are more sophisticated.

'Games like *RTType* don't need the power of a 32 bit processor. The Amiga already has



'to *Three* the game was designed to run on a machine that is not truly capable of doing a proper 3D full world view - it is capable of doing it, but I liked the idea of putting shadows on the trees and there is a fair bit of detail in it. With an i 860 computer...it would be possible to have a horizon going off into infinity. One of the main problems of the game is that you can't see very far. A first person view would also have been possible. The game design from the point of view of what the player is doing is very simple.'

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no trouble recording something like 8-type. If you've got a more powerful CPU, it just means the processor is going to spend more time doing nothing. However, the sort of games where it will make a phenomenal difference are games of the 3D/3D enhanced type where it does require a lot of processing power to get anything that looks impressive. As far as 8-type games are concerned the power will verify effect the graphics and also the feel of the game. It will be possible, for example, to have big swirling clouds."

"It will become more and more the case that the design of the game is more important than the speed of the machine."

"With something like the PS towers machine relatively few games will fully exploit the screen. Anything that involves a two-dimensional display — the 8-types and Defenders of this world — will only see a limited improvement with increased computing power since it comes to the point where the computer can repeat the entire display 50 times a second, with no problem, further increases are redundant."

"However, there are game designs coming through that will exploit more sophisticated graphics and I believe people will eventually be amazed off the unimpaired variation on 8-type. The only type of game that needs greater power is the 3D game or the scenarios with very, very intricate game play — certain simulations, for example."

ON CD SOFTWARE

Sharon follows the vast amounts of memory made accessible by CD:

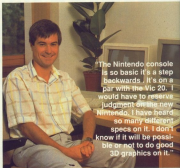
"...is more likely to be used than the minis power of processors, it would be very useful to have access to vast databases. You could provide vast maps of areas in which you could adventure. You could have adventures taking place in real towns. That sort of thing is just not possible at the moment. People state a sort of stab at it with memory disks for flight sims where you could about make out that you are flying over San Francisco with a very basic outline of the Golden Gate bridge. We talking about something where you can actually walk down the streets and explore — and then you can set a game scenario within that reality. That amount of data would be very useful."

ON CONSOLE AND VIC 20

"The PC Engine has the same problem as the machine suggested in the ACI Challenge. They have pre-announced the type of graphics. That is probably fair enough in something like the PC Engine. It is drawing very large bit dumps, sprites, and a large number of colours, and is doing it reasonably quickly."

"But it is a fairly slow machine and also the sort of machine that it is very hard to do a different type of game on. The CD or it is just a gimmick. It's really little more than a fast loading device. I don't consider that to be a form of CD."

Many thanks to David Sharon for granting us this exclusive interview. We look forward to getting our hands on Elite II...and Elite III...and...



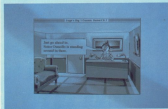
"The Nintendo console is so basic it's a step backwards. It's on a par with the Vic 20. I would have to reserve judgment on the new Nintendo. I have heard so many different specs on it. I don't know if it will be possible or not to do good 3D graphics on it."

ON COSMIC OSMO AND HYPER-DRIVE GAMES

Never mind the quantity, what about the quality is Sharon's view of Cyan Software's much talked about Macintosh game.

"Things like Cosmic Osmo are an amusing revelation. They're just set an enormous number of pictures on a disk all listed Hypercard-style. It's very easy to make a lot of data — even compressed pictures occupy quite a lot of memory. It's an interesting idea to see that exploration is the sole point of the game. Exploration is fun — but it does need an awful lot to support it. That can't be the only thing in the game. There has to be other things going on if it's just a plain ship — however beautifully drawn there is ultimately no point. It's a pre-designed tree, a sort of Dragon's Lair."

"What's more, it isn't a world that you can arbitrarily explore. You can't blow a hole in the wall and go through it. It's all pre-announced. Once you've done it, you've done it. There may be one exploit you haven't opened but that's it."



Cosmic Osmo — just a cosmetic improvement?

STRYX



- Ultra smooth 3D ray scrolling
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- Multi-directional free format weapon usage
- Large playfield for even more action.

You're really up against it this time. These evil robots have finally opened and turned their horribly powerful weapons on their kind human masters.

Someone's got to stop it before it all gets out of hand. I mean, you just can't have bloodthirsty Cyborg assassins roaming the streets of Dome City and expect the citizens to just sit up with it. Who or what is going to sort out the mess? You guessed - you get the job.

Fortunately, you are just a little bit on the special side. You are Stryx, the product of Project Alpha Omega, the meanest fighting, smartest thinking machine ever invented. Half-man, half-robot, you are the business, the only one who can stop those wicked Cyborgs.

You'll have to work hard, though, blasting hordes of the revolting creatures (such a sad waste of scrap metal) and rescuing the kays to the Uferatos.

So Stryx, you'd better get your arse back on for some big heavy robot stomping through the interminably complex underground world of the Dome cities. It's a tough assignment, and time is running out.

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SCREEN TEST

PIC CURVE POWER

The PIC—Predicted Interest Curve—is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around. Here's why...

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's adrenalin level after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, and one year. But it tells you so much more than that: just what your interest level will be at any given time (although that's obviously important in itself).

For example, a high one-minute rating means that the game must look terrific and get you all excited from the very go. That means it's probably a good game to show off to the neighbors — after all, they probably aren't going to pay attention for much more than a minute, after which they'll go back to drinking coffee and making rude remarks about those awful hostile games the boys play these days.

The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot about a game too. If there's a dip there, followed by a rise, you've got a game that may take a bit of getting into — not recommended if you like to get down to something quick and easy. Alternatively, the graphics may put you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the PIC command for more details.

Finally, you've got the month and year ratings. The better a game holds up here the more deserving it is of your hard earned cash.

PIC game construction takes a lot of playing on the part of ACE reviewers. PIC curve analysis is an art in itself. The reward is knowing just what you're getting when you make the decision to splash out on Makani Macintosh Gallybears... or F15 Strike Eagle II — just one of this month's excellent examples of today's software technology.



The mountains glow with certain promise on the horizon of Continental Circus from Virgin/MacIntros — see the 16-bit racer feature starting on page 78.

DON'T FORGET THE UPDATES!

We don't just review the latest releases. We also check out conversions of old games onto new formats. So there could well be a recent conversion of YOUR machine...ST, PC, and Amiga owners get lucky this month on pages 87 and 88.

THE ACE REVIEWING SYSTEM

ACE GAMES

The unique feature to the ACE reviewing system clearly has proved that not a game designer can afford a certain level. The review is submitted by a customer to help why he/she chose it. It is a critical view to the PC Game Power on this page.

Software also comes from various sources that give us information on a specific market. These reviews include steps for...

GRAPHICS

Graphics is the graphic display on the monitor of each machine since the screen. It is a high-tech area that has been the focus of many high-tech and developing steps...

AUDIO

Audio is the sound of the computer in the form of a high rating of...

CONTROL

Control is the way the player interacts with the game. It is a critical view to the PC Game Power on this page.

SO FAST

So fast is the speed of the game. It is a critical view to the PC Game Power on this page. The rating may be lower than you expect...

GAME FASTEN

Game fasten is a measure of speed in an advertisement. Games like Amiga and King Island require almost zero time to play but are not necessarily addictive. Many games have not been because they are designed for instant collection. Games don't have to be better than a computer — they can be both.

ACE RATING

This is the star placed out of five at the end of the PC Curve. To get a really high rating a game will not only have to be very good but also have to be fun to play. It is a critical view to the PC Game Power on this page.

ACE is a major game, recommended without reservation.

ACE-800

ACE-800 is a superb game that performs better than any other game on this page.

700-750

700-750 are highly recommended, but probably have a number of bugs to fix the game that has the edge off it.

500-600

500-600 are the first step when it comes to the best of the best.

500-600

500-600 are the first step when it comes to the best of the best.

400-450

400-450 are the first step when it comes to the best of the best.

300-350

300-350 are the first step when it comes to the best of the best.

200-250

200-250 are the first step when it comes to the best of the best.

100-150

100-150 are the first step when it comes to the best of the best.

50-100

50-100 are the first step when it comes to the best of the best.

0-50

0-50 are the first step when it comes to the best of the best.

THE TEAM

Mark Peterson is the editor of the original edition of the award-winning magazine. Known to thousands though for his other publications, including Linux World Journal, his PC guide, and the Daily Square (which is the most well known magazine), he has a long history in the computer industry. He is a former editor of the magazine and has been a member of the ACE team since its inception. He is a former editor of the magazine and has been a member of the ACE team since its inception. He is a former editor of the magazine and has been a member of the ACE team since its inception.

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We don't review anything until we are 100% certain that we're got it right. We've checked them out thoroughly — now you can too.

BAT

OCEAN relicensed to clean up – again.

THIS must be the first time I can honestly say "Great game, shame about the film".

No, I didn't like the movie. Not that it must have made as everyone has seen it by now any way and regardless of what I thought of it there is no doubt that it provides excellent material for converting into computer entertainment.

This is the best of the mid-89 film bookbusters to be converted to the home computer screen. We've had James Bond, Indiana Jones, and now the Caped Crusader from Gotham City enters the fray in what is by far the best of 'em all in terms of computer entertainment.

Right from the opening screens you can see and hear the quality of the conversion and get to grips with the Batgame you have always wanted to have a go at. There is the famous Batcave with its Bat anchor that telefers into window ledgers and enables our hero to swing into action. As well as the Bat-shurikens that the super hero can lob at the villains to "knock" them out of the action.

The game commences in the warehouse of Ace Chemicals where all sorts of toxic substances are leaking from pipes and dangerous gasses being evolved into the air. The Joker's men are everywhere and Batman needs to be visible to avoid them. His Bat suit has been made impregnable to hot jets – up to a certain number. He is, however, helpless against the bombs being lobbed at him by the green suited villain. These will knock him off his rope or fall men should they make contact through time.

The opening platform level makes for an absorbing game in its own right. Strapping around on the ropes is excellent fun – and nothing has ever been done like it before in a platform game – unless you count *Coltiber* in the jungle, in which case you're probably too busy collecting a pension to play this game. Of course there have been other ropes before but nothing as sophisticated as this. You have to be a sure shot when you throw your rope in order to swing into the right position, knocking a few villains into the middle of next week as you fly through the air.

Another local graphical touch is the way the hot-rag flies out when you jump to a platform below. The game has quality written all over it.

There are five levels in total. As well as the Ace Factory you will see action in the Bat Cave, Batmobile, Batwing, and face a final showdown with the Joker in Gotham Cathedral.

All of the sections of the game are entertaining and exciting but the real thrill of the game is when you sit behind the wheel of the Batmobile. Ocean have correctly given the most attention of all – and what an excellent job they have made of it.

It plays like a sort of Bat-style Chase HQ concept which – considering Ocean have the rights to that concept – looks well for more titles to come from the Manchester games house. The aim of the game here is to sort out the Joker's rat which is speeding through the streets of Gotham City.

Taking the controls of the Batwing looks like another 3D game which has been superbly executed. Reminiscent of *Abominator* as you swoop low over the carnival taking out the balloons filled with nerve gas that the Joker is using to hold Gotham City to ransom.



The mouse tells you what is happening.



Batmobile enters the 1989 Grand Prix.

MAN

The final confrontation with the Joker takes place in Gotham Cathedral. This is another platform after which is very similar to the Neo Platform. The map is different though - and equally wild - so be prepared to get down a few simple sketch maps to help you find your way around as you track down the opportunity.

Golan have captured all of the atmosphere of the film but have sensibly concentrated on a few of the action sequences. This makes for fun-entertaining and challenging arcade games at the end of which if you're successful you'll triumph over the Joker without having to go through a complex arcade-adventure style trial (except as you do for example, in the recent Neo Action game). Maybe after tomorrow's will learn a lesson here.

Golan are to be congratulated for putting so much effort into an excellent arcade game - especially when, given the Bethesda, even Bethesda's Space Invaders would have won them the number one slot on all formats. Proves that cynical commercialism does not always triumph over high personal and professional standards.

■ SuperLabs



George Takei - Commissioner's job is the pack to sell Amiga's this time.

SPECTRUM VERSION

Only two colours in certain levels but retaining the same game play as the other versions. The Batmobile level is slightly different on the Spectrum in that it is a horizontally scrolling road - as opposed to the 3D version described above. Every bit as much fun to play as the 16-bit version.

GRAPHICS: 7 IS FACTOR: 4
 AUDIO: 7 FUN FACTOR: 8
ACE RATING 911

AMIGA VERSION

Full of sound and graphics tricks. There is a 3D/2D screen when Jack Nicholson's Joker appears, lighting and slow pace if you have ever noticed in the past movie! For superior sound and speed to all other versions as the things few or its enemies and shows its superiority in the Super Invader game.

GRAPHICS: 8 IS FACTOR: 5
 AUDIO: 8 FUN FACTOR: 8
ACE RATING 922

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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It'll take you a while to work out the Joker. It is good for doing so, but ultimately that hope will pass as will the appeal of this game.

The Dodgehemmer — choose this option for raw power, but don't expect it to have an advantage.

MIRROSOFT set down their wheels where 'God Save The Queen; has a different meaning...



VETTE

AND now the latest in a long line of 16-bit racing games, but it's a good enough to track Start Car Racer off the top spot (read on and discover for yourself)...

The Vette (short for Corvette, not the James Herriot type) has always been an immensely popular car, both for its looks and its power. For some strange reason, however, it has never had the benefits of factory sponsorship like Ferrari and Porsche have. Even so, that hasn't stopped Corvettes owners taking them out on impromptu races through the city streets now and again. You are one of those owners.

Just a glance at the program and packaging will tell you that Vette is going to be something special. Programmed by the creators of the aerial masterpiece Falcon, Vette has all the complexity of design combined with clear simplicity in presentation that made Falcon a winner — and should make Vette a winner too.

First of all, you have to choose which of the four Corvettes to race, from a 1989 Stock, the safest and slowest, through to a custom Slaghemmer, with awful handling but capable of some immense speeds. Then you can choose which of the opponents to challenge, from a nice easy Porsche through to a Ferrari F40. Finally, you choose the race track.

At this point, things really start to get interesting. The four races are basically from A to D in San Francisco. The amazing thing is, and this hasn't been done in a racing sim before, is that you are aren't told any route to take. Instead, it's up to you to find your own way there as you race through an accurately mapped version of the gay capital of the world.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Run at the start, fan halfway through, and still fan at the end... it's one of 'flow' games!

Essentially, what you get as a result is a bundled different games in one. You can play Beat the Police in the Narrow Back Streets, for example, or Race Across the Centre of the Park and Try to Kill as Many Pedestrians as Possible. The possibilities are almost endless...

The city itself, and therefore the whole game, is laid out with filled sections, and very impressive they are too. Skyracers are real skyracers, you can almost hear the sounds of screaming kids on the school buses and you can occasionally feel the bumps as you run over little sales contracts with shopping.

As with Falcon, you have many different views to choose from. You can look out left, right and forward windows, with or without interior of the car to give you a wider view, or if it's more of an arcade game you want, you can choose the helicopter view, which gives you an Outlaw sort of viewpoint (and, incidentally, sees as it plays).

Controls are as easy as falling through a cancelled trap in the middle of a dark forest. Keys 1-5 change to gears 1 to 5, A sticks the car on Automatic transmission, C switches on and off the Cruise Control, and the usual joystick movements cover accelerate, brake, steer left, and steer right.

So how does it rate as a game? Brilliantly. We've waited for this one for quite a while and we're happy to say it's been worth every penny. It's fast, realistic, exciting, fun and there's enough variety to keep you playing for ever, or maybe just a little less than that. It doesn't quite have the edge over Start Car, but it sure isn't far behind.

— Tony Gillen

PC VERSION

Vette supports all video graphics modes and looks great in all of them too. The system is amazing fast and smooth and the use of video is split on. The sound is limited (surprise, surprise), but the game-play certainly isn't. Check specs to your software dealer or listing.

GRAPHICS 4 IS FACTOR 4

ASOUND 4 RUN FACTOR 4

ACE RATING 926

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IMPRESSIONS

TINTIN ON THE MOON

INFOGRAMES grow a little tuft of hair.

In my youth, Tintin has to have been one of the most influential figures I ever came across, next to Asterix. And who could forget the massive two-book epic, *Destination Moon and Conquest Of The Moon*. Cos, what a spiffing life Tintin led. Here and his pals, Captain Haddock, and Professor Calculus and his fowlsie dog, Snowy.

Now you too can live the space-bound adventure that marks as a deep milestone in my reading life as *Lord Of The Rings*. Race through the stars in one of man's greatest ever achievements, the rocket ship, and land where no man has ever trod before. That mysterious-bunk-of-look that hangs so ominously in the night sky, the moon.

But bad things are afoot. The dastardly Colonel Blain has snuggled aboard the ship with the intent of sabotaging the mission. As you fly through space he will plant bombs to blow up vital parts of the ship and will set fire to others while at the same time trying to kill you with his high intensity laser gun and thing so all your jobs.

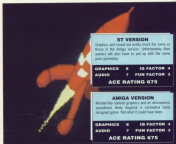
But before all this happens, you have to fly through space a little. As you race through the first person perspective starfield, objects race out of the screen at you. Things you should avoid are large lumps of rock called asteroids (or in their native french Asteroides). The other things that race toward you should definitely be collected. Large yellow pockets of energy race at you, and these have to be collected to top up your energy level. There are also red pods that race at you. Collect 8 of these to reach a flying section, of which there are four. Finish a section and you go into Tintin mode.

The game changes to a side on top screen arcade adventure. On the left hand side of the

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Initial graphical interest that quickly dissipates thanks to the lack of gameplay.



Asteroids in ST? Tintin's ship attempts to avoid the passing boulders, and usually fails!



Flies and jets underneath to **HELL**, actually make it take space in the sky!

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	1/19/98	NOVEMBER
AMIGA	1/19/98	NOVEMBER
EPIC 32X	11/19/97 - 1/4/98	NOVEMBER
AMSTRAD	11/19/97 - 1/4/98	NOVEMBER
OSAYES	11/19/97 - 1/4/98	NOVEMBER
IBM PC	1/19/98	NOVEMBER

screen is a bar of warning lights. At the start of the section a couple of them will be lit, and during the course of the section more will light. The idea is to use Tintin to put out all the lights. Two of them show pictures of your friends. If they light, it means that on that part of the ship, the appropriate friend has been caught by flares, and you must untie them safely by touching them. Another one that tends to flash a lot is the fire light. These mean that somewhere on the ship a fire has been started. You have to find a fire extinguisher and put all the

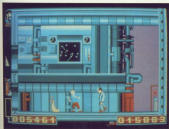
fires out. The final light that flashes is the bomb light. This is your main priority. Find the bomb, so matter where it is, and defuse it by touching it. Once you've turned off all the lights and captured the evil flares by jumping on them or hitting him with the fire extinguisher. Once you've done that, it's back to another lot of flying. And that's the game, aside from a usual section at the end where you have to land the rocket on the moon. Not much to it, is there?

And that's the real problem. The graphics are brilliant. They really capture the atmosphere of the cartoon strip, with excellent use of color and high resolution sprites, though the animation is a little bit on the dinky side. The sound effects are great too. Lots of good FX and Snowy's bark is brilliant.

Playability is awful. On the flying section, it's almost impossible to judge where the rocks and pods are going, let alone catch or avoid them, whatever the case may be. On the second section, Tintin walks very fast and is very laggy, which makes accurate control a little difficult. Also, just while you're looking for a fire extinguisher, flares will start a whole herd local elsewhere on the ship. Flares themselves are far too much of a problem. In the way that you can't hurt him, get his car stuck on, stomp on you, or do anything he wants to.

Tintin could have been great. The designers had a lot of potential to play around with. Once again, potential has been wasted.

● Try It.



Oh, okay, a fire has been started on board, and Tintin has forgotten to collect the fire extinguisher.



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As you can see, the graphics don't do justice to the machine; the soundtrack is equally poor.

SHINOBI

Is VIRGIN's beat-'em-up just a load of nunchukkas?*

AS a ninjabo, Shinobi was no great shakes. It didn't do much to further the beat-'em-up genre, and it didn't boast brilliant graphics, sound or action. Even so, it was good fun, and it didn't seem that difficult a task to convert it. What the 32-bit versions got to offer?

The scenario runs like this. On your graduation day from a secret oriental ninjas school, Bushi Fox - a former pupil gone to the bad - turns up. With a flash of dark ninjas magic he freezes you and splits away the entire junior class.

But someone you'd call a complete baby to his last, he knows you a challenge: give him all the school's gold so it's lights out for the bad des. Unluckily, the school has recently moved up all the gold it had, so it's up to you to don those ninjas slippers, firmly grab hold of your shurikens and set off.

As the deadline for the ransom is arising, you find Bushi Fox's hideout. The action's divided up into five missions, each containing

four multiloaded stages, packed with Bushi's henchmen - guntoting orinobas, samas, people who look like Spideeman, and the shokkoonying guards. You'll also find several captives: the number you've got to release on a particular stage is shown in the bottom left hand corner. Since you've freed them all, you can move onto the next.

At the end of each mission you'll face a hefty boss, who's usually about ten times

tougher than anyone you've faced on the level so far. Getting killed by him? It's pretty easy, so you'll be grateful for a couple of continue options.

Each stage is set against a time limit - if you complete it within the time, your remaining seconds are converted into bonus points. You can also get points and extra power-up weapons (for example, a pistol for missing the cute little ninjas kiddies). Missing the space bar activates your ninjas magic - your man goes crazy, unleashes some smoke balls and splits into many parts. It works a bit like a smart bomb.

If you like the controls, you won't find these conversions snail. They're snailly and snailly very good, and the control method is a realword. The man-bobos are going to try if we get any more like this!

AMIGA VERSION

The first thing you notice is a wrong tune, followed by some horrible graphics. The lovely-sounding and floppy graphics result in one along the ground, the soundings are very poorly coloured and the scrolling is jerky. You can get some fun for a while, but not much.

GRAPHICS IQ FACTOR
SOUND FUN FACTOR
AGE RATING 30 C

ST VERSION

Like the Amiga, except that the character jumps a little more slowly, which makes some bits control difficult. A nice pass program which supports title of the software's address, if you're permitted.

GRAPHICS IQ FACTOR
SOUND FUN FACTOR
AGE RATING 30 C

RELEASE BOX

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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A bit depressing, eh? But really much we can say about SHINOBI from this...



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UNTOUCHABLES

EASY TOUCH FOR OCEAN

THE *Untouchables* was the film that finally secured Sean Connery's position in the Hollywood league of super stars - and not before time. It's totally brilliant, cut on video, and worth \$1,500 of anyone's money. But the main point about it is that it provides excellent material for a computer game. And - surprise, surprise - Ocean has the rights to the computer game.

The game follows the plot of the film closely - unlike their other current film license (AGE-rated) is there very paged *Samurai*, which picks up on just a few of the more action-packed sequences. Say what you like about *Samurai* - they may be a license to print money, but if they were all produced to Ocean's standards we'd probably be happy to spend it.

The *Untouchables* casts you as Dick Peck, leader of the crack team sent to a warehouse where you have to find ten pieces of evidence concerning the illegal bootlegging of booze.

Succeed in this level and you soon get down to some serious shoot 'em up action with heavy *Capone* types as the game reproduces the famous bridge shoot out scene from the film. The screen scrolls horizontally from left to right in this section, as you attempt to pick off the criminals hiding behind cars with your telescopic gun sights.

If you survive the one then it's time to set up a 'meat'. A railway station is chosen but of course it's a double cross. Now ready for his 'B', or rather you do it all for him through the medium of your joystick.

If your joystick and Mouse do make it to the station then you get to play a starring role in yet another famous shoot out - one of *Capone's* greatest moments of combat that reads any scene you'd care to mention from recent releases - including *Die Hard*. *Capone's* men have a hostage in this scene - so only a crack shot can win the game with 'dead eye' precision on that famous 'B'. The game concludes with Ness shooting it out with a bunch of hoodlums on city rooftops.

We were hoping to receive a re-releasable version of *The Untouchables* for this issue, but the software was delayed at the last moment so don't expect to see the game on the shelves until late October - well send the ACE boys round to give it a hand time, and you the review, and thank.

Meanwhile, Ocean have a 'certain other



'film license' with which they intend to extract a few kilobits out of you before they launch the *Untouchables*. If the latter is so good as the *Holy Game of Golf*, then it'll be worth waiting for.

1

The *Untouchables* earned their name because they couldn't be bought off by the Mob. When it comes to film licenses for games it's certain *Manchurian Candidate* would have six pretty *Untouchable* themselves.



The illegal liquor factory scene on the Spectrum. Even Ness and his men are about to break up the party. Al Capone isn't going to like it.

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DAY OF THE VIPER

ACCOLADE attempt to revitalise 3D maze games.

WAY back in the days of the good old DOS, when the computer entertainment industry was still in its infancy, a software designer by the name of Malcolm Evans wrote the best game ever to appear for that machine. It was called 3D Monster Maze, and was set, not surprisingly, inside a large maze with two inhabitants: You, and a rather hungry Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Despite the primitive graphics of that early Sinclair machine, and the fairly limited gameplay, the game managed to generate a superb atmosphere that kept me, amongst others, coming back to the game again and again.

Now, eight years later, on a machine many times more sophisticated than the IBM, Accolade have produced another 3D maze game.

Although Accolade's offering is more colourful, more complex, bigger, more varied, and faster, in essence the gameplay has much the same appeal, and the same shortcomings.

The story behind Day of the Viper centres around a fairly important spaceship known as GAI (Genetic Android Race). GAI was created as a prototype artificial man who could be given all the boring dirty jobs that nobody else wanted to do, and would never complain about them. GAI was, at first, a great success, but very soon began to experience neurosynthetic modelling, the robot equivalent of a bad migraine. This did not make him too enamoured of his creators, so he decided to get his own back and spawned an unstoppable robot army.

Now GAI and his metal minions rather cutely called GAI-groyles (spelt), have taken over the Sun League Defence Force Base Complex in situation somewhat akin to Colored Gaddafi overrunning the Pentagon!

Obviously something had to be done. The Sun League realised in the typical fashion of governments that their space fleet wasn't really up to the task of rolling the galaxy of his latest Frankenstein's monster so they cast around for an alternative solution.

Fortunately for mankind there is, as anyone the Nexus Project. The project involved the creation of the Vipers - powerful attack androids operated remotely by highly trained human operators.

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to utilize the laser and deactivate the defense computers (it's amazing what you can do with a humble ST unit!) This is the only way to destroy GAV and his buddies and prevent him from sapping out humans.

The Viper craft displays three two monitors and a number of icons. The rightmost monitor is the most important as this shows a 3D view of the mass in front of you, as well as the pointer for manipulating objects, and gunights when your weapon systems are activated. The leftmost monitor toggles between various other displays.

The most useful of your status displays is a plotter which makes a map for you as you explore. It's very extensive feature in a mass game! There are also other navigation aids like floor coordinates (which can be recorded at strategic points for later reference), and a heading indicator. All these items are quite essential since the corridors on all the floors are exactly the same shade of dull, identical in almost every respect.

You also have to tend various other items of equipment to assist you in your quest. Each of these is powered by a different component on your control board. These can be destroyed if you sustain too much damage. You will then have to hunt for replacement components to regain use of the equipment that has been affected.

Damage is incurred by stepping on mines or encountering GAV's gel builders. These misadventurous contraptions have a nasty habit of snaking as on you from behind and firing away while you are still in the process of turning. Getting hit of them can also be a bit tricky since most of your sideways must be hit in specific places if they are to be destroyed.

Before you can enter any of the rooms on a level you have to find the appropriate access cards. These are colour coded (as of course are all self-respecting 34th century access cards). Many of the rooms are vacant, but others have specific purposes, such as repair rooms, communication rooms, power rooms, security rooms, and so on.

Before you can make use of the facilities

available in any room, however, you must possess the appropriate piece of equipment for use in that room. For instance, you require a communication module.

These items are scattered about the complex and can be collected and placed in your ten storage compartments (and repaired). There are also other goodies to be found lying about in corridors, including power restorers, and damage repair pods.

One ingenious and very useful aspect to the game is the use of the right mouse button. By pointing to any object in the game and clicking the right button your message window will identify the object for you. This is extremely handy when you come into a room that appears to be full of interesting items only to be informed by your message window that it is in fact vacant or empty. Just think of the fruitless minutes trying to manoeuvre background graphics that you have been spared.

Each floor takes a fair time to explore, so when you consider that there are five buildings, each with five floors, you realize that you are not going to finish this game in a single evening. This wouldn't be so bad if the exploration of floors was a little more interesting.

Getting from floor to floor is achieved using the lifts. Finding the location of the shaft in each building is no easy task, so you will have to explore at least one floor of each building thoroughly before you can progress. To move from building to building you must locate the shuttle, which is another tedious affair.

While *City of the Viper* is a brave attempt to emulate a hardened slur, it doesn't really add enough to the tedious process of exploring the mazes to make it enjoyable. Once you have been wandering around for a while you will begin to get bored with the same old unchanging view of the complex through your monitor. Even the collectable objects don't inject much variety.

No doubt, players who perseveres with the game and manage to progress to the later stages will be suitably rewarded with more interesting gameplay, but there is not really enough variety in the early stages of the game

to sustain interest for long. The problem is that all of the locations look the same or very similar, so once you have seen one floor, you've seen them all.

The game reminds me a great deal of *Star Control* 1 which was another beautifully good piece of software, spoilt by unimaginative and unworld graphics. For my money *Viper* is too much like those old 3D maze games to have any real appeal.

■ Laurence Scotland

STAR CONTROL
Whether the graphics or sound of the game really match the ST and the gameplay is any good is left. Having said that, there is a game in the console where if you are prepared to persevere. Definitely worth a try!

GRAPHICS: B PG FACTOR: P
AUDIO: B FUN FACTOR: B

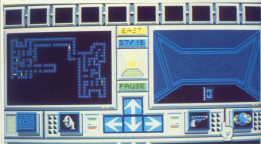
AGE RATING: G15

RELEASE BOX

ALFA ST	24.995	OUT NOW
AMIGA	24.995	NOT YET
IBM PC	24.995	1990

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE

you probably get better the further you get, but how many people will stick with it?



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Zeus must force the first incarnation of the evil Lord of the Underworld, Hell, abductor of the Goddess Athena.

ALTERED BEAST

The faces of darkness have gathered together, and Hell, Lord of the Underworld, has captured the goddess Athena. Zeus, who's more or less the top dog in the confusion, decides that the only way to deal with the bothersome Hell is to raise a brave and fearless warrior from the grave and endow him with supernatural powers.

This is where you come in. You are quickly rolling away in your grave when Zeus comes along, rouses you, and commands you to save his daughter. You begin as Zeusman, and face a fairly limited repertoire of attacking moves. These are enriched in the inimitable tradition of beat-'em-ups, by using various combinations of special equipments and the fire button to achieve punches, kicks and jumps.

Your opponents, the minions of Hell, have

Activision
present Sega's
Beast of a game
unaltered...

a number of different methods of attack, the most odd being that employed by the jumping rock creatures. If you fail to dispatch these quickly they will completely envelop your head, causing death if you fail to shake them off quickly.

Most of Hell's creatures can be destroyed early once you have learned the best technique for dealing with them. For instance, the rapacity of your opponents on the first level can be put out of action safely by delivering punches in a sawtooth flick from a crouched position.

Scores of the creatures, when destroyed, deposit a mystical globe. If you collect five before it disappears off the edge of the screen, you are awarded extra powers. The extra power is most likely to be a power punch. This gives your punches an extra added boost.

Occasionally the globe causes you to be

transformed into a type of beast with greater powers than Zeusman. The extra powers you gain in your transformed state are pretty well essential when you come to the end of a level. Here you meet an incarnation of the evil Hell himself, which differs on every stage. He takes quite a bit of hitting before he disappears off to the next stage, and while you are trying to dispatch him you are bombarded by a barrage of tactics, aimed at your destruction.

If you do manage to complete a level you are, unfortunately, deprived of any powers you may have gained before you continue. This means that you begin each stage as Zeus man with no power punches, and you must build up extra powers again during the level.

The original Sega coin-op was admittedly not the most stunning game to have emerged from the company recently, but it did have the virtue of being very playable and not too difficult to get into. This first class conversion shares the same qualities. It certainly doesn't break any new ground, but both graphics and sound are very competent, and the gameplay is superb.

The game is probably at its best when the two-player option is selected, but if you play on your own you should still find yourself making some headway after a little practice.

If you don't like beat-'em-ups, then there is not much here to interest you. If you expect the grade original, however, then you will not be disappointed by Activision's effective conversion.

—Lawrence Butler

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A good conversion but you will probably get bored of it quite quickly.

RELEASE BOX

BMPC C24956 C21108

AMIGA VERSION

There is nothing here that truly entices the Amiga, but it is a good game nevertheless. It seems a pity that it has the edge over the original thanks to the Sound from Programs, although the latter has superior soundtracks. Surely a good buy if you're the sort of thing.

GRAPHICS 7 10 FACTOR 4

SOUND 8 10 FACTOR 4

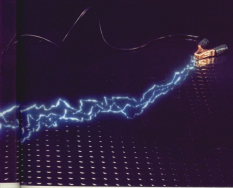
AGE RATING 835



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RAINBOW WARRIOR

WITHOUT a shadow of a doubt, *Rainbow Warrior* is the bravest and most adventurous software launch of 1989. This is especially true when the film behind the product is Microprose, a company renowned for its military simulations, rather than games that actively discourage violent action in favor of peaceful lobbying on environmental issues.

The intention behind *Rainbow Warrior* is to inform while entertaining. The game is divided into six main games, each of which represents a different campaign. These can be played in any order, but they must all be completed before you can play the final game, *Free the Spirit of the Rainbow Warrior*.

Campaign #1: *Offensive Waste* simulates the prevention of the discharge of radioactive waste at sea. You control a barge and must guide it clear down four pipelines which lie close together. The traps at each of the pipelines is infested by a number of hazards, including web and mutated sea creatures, which have

Microprose leave tanks and planes behind and get Environment Friendly



various detrimental effects if the dolphin or dove comes into contact with them. The general appearance of the game is very similar to the ancient *Scuba Dive* from Daniel Software. Unfortunately it lacks the latter program's playability, and the resulting game is brutal and boring.

Campaign #2: *Coast Dumping of Nuclear Waste* requires you to clamber aboard the dumping ship 'Geil' and climb to the top of its three dumping cranes that dump them. To stop the dumping ship attempt to prevent you doing this by harassing you with a boat, or throwing things at you. They also control the deck and will throw you overboard if they catch you. The game is so easy that it is hardly worth playing. Indeed I would be surprised to hear of anybody failing to complete it on their first attempt.

Campaign #3: *Save the Whale* is easily the best of the bunch. You control a killer whale

Breakout revitalized by a killer whale

Modes of *Bravo One* lost with some of the playability.

which moves left and right beneath a picture of the Greenpeace "Save the Whales" poster. By tilting balls of water at the poster you cause parts of it to appear. Movable various objects traverse the screen. Some of these will begin to hide the poster again if you hit them, while others will help you out by revealing large sections of poster or awarding you high power super balls. While the mini game has more playability than all the other games put together, it is still very tiny.

Campaign IV: *Stop Acid Rain* is based upon a Greenpeace demonstration in 1984 in which children successfully hung "Stop Acid Rain" banners on several offending chimneys across Europe. In this simulation you must collect the individual letters of the phrase "Stop Acid Rain" from passing vehicles, and hang them from the correct chimneys. A workman, policeman, and occasional trucks are all hazards which must be avoided if you are to succeed. The collection and deposit of banners in the correct places is a miserably tedious affair, and you soon begin to look forward to being run over by the truck rather than have to endure seeing the game through to the end.

Campaign V: *Stop Green Depletion* would be tedious if it wasn't so pathetically simple. Your task is to prevent the depletion of the ozone layer by throwing snowballs at attacking acid cats. If the cats manage to destroy all the ozone in one particular spot a radioactive by-product appears which you must then avoid. This also affects the normally docile penguins who develop a sudden lust for blood. The sight of an inhuman penguin lurching with murderous intent towards the campaigner had me in stitches, especially when I discovered that they could be deterred by a landing a cold snowball on the back!

Campaign VI: *Save the Seal* from *Cutting* has you helping between our fleet armed with a can of spray-on-de-ICE (see one below), in an attempt to save the baby seals from the fathers. Despite frequent attempts, I repeatedly failed to spray the seals. Either I was missing the post of the game or it is completely unplayable given the evidence of the previous games, I suspect the latter.

The final game Campaign VII: *Free the Jaws of the Rainbow Warrior* will not, I feel, be played to many. The obvious task of battling through the six boring and unplayable mini-games in order to qualify is likely to prove too much for all but the hardest games players.

Windows Warrior is really a wonderful opportunity. While it is a game that breaks the mould and branches into territory that has been previously ignored by both software houses and games players, all it is likely to succeed in doing is discouraging any similar attempt in the future. I cannot fault the graphics, sound, or general presentation. I thoroughly command the concepts and philosophy behind the game. All, as much as I would like to, I cannot honestly recommend this product to anybody. Too little thought has been given to playability, and in consequence a potentially exciting and more game has been ruined.

The only inspiring aspect of the product is the manual. This contains fascinating accounts of the Greenpeace campaigns that the games are based on, and even then most of the inter-



PIPES OF AIR ENERGY
SCORE 4 CRED 10 TIME 0:44



Watch out for the killer penguin!

matter has been lifted from *The Greenpeace Story* by John May and Michael Brown.

If you really want to learn about and support Greenpeace then you are better off not buying this game and sending the money directly to the organization instead. Do otherwise, and you are sure to be disappointed.

■ Laurence Corbett

RELEASE BOX

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AMIGA	04-058	IMMINENT
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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Will be played once, then filed in the bin.

ATARI ST VERSION

The graphics and general presentation are very nice, and the game plays rather pleasant (despite which change with each subgame, but the whole thing is extremely unplayable. Defeating an uncommitted St and/or Greenpeace instead!

GRAPHICS 7 HD FASTROM 4
AUDIO 7 FUN FACTORS 1

ACE RATING 425

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Greg Norman
The Great White Shark

You've got plenty of choices among the machines you can find on. If you don't like the mouse-heads or the feasting smoochies, you can always pick an giant bouncing burmer or magic molar.

DUCKS — who can resist them? Lerp certainly couldn't, before she got kidnapped by the evil Achaache The Great. But it is, there she was, gaily gambolling and frolicking with her feathered friends, Din and Pin the duck, when suddenly a great black shadow appeared, trapped her in a miracle ball and whisked her off to Achaache. How, as self-respecting web-footed creature would you like to rescue her, would it?

This is where you take over, guiding the left a friend able to play Pin through the six very cute but dangerous winking levels of totosha. These are real plants filled with all manner of awesome creatures: mouse-heads, flapheads, bouncing burmers, roaring lower smoochies, cows or clouds. Same pags frolicking around on tobeys — and that's just for starters. At the middle and end of each land



DYNAMITE DUX

we're got to do battle with some heavyweight enemies. For example, in the jungle you'll fight a huge rock-man, and in Japan a dragon and an angry weather formation.

To help you progress, you're adept in the art of killing enemies on the nose. There are two basic combat moves: punching, which gets rid of most opponents straight away, and a megapunch, caused by holding down the buttons, which puts the wind up larger enemies. Luckily, there are also weapons lying around which keep you armed to the teeth: a rocket-launcher, guided missile gun, flamethrower, rocks, bombs and water pistols. The biggest is not always the best in some situations.

You can fire and fight in eight directions — careful, because some enemies turn round and try to bite you, or sneak up from behind. All weapons, however, have a limited lifespan, as shown at the bottom of the screen. The ducks have a similar power meter for each of their two legs; when these legs run out, you're an omelette (continue for three more credits; otherwise it's apple sauce time for our web-footed friends).

If conversion of an obscure coin-op, *Dynamite Dux* is excellent fun to play. It can be frustrating when you're on your own and you keep getting mangled by an unrelenting opponent because you haven't got the firepower, but that's the only reason. If you like your action colorful and feisty, this is the game for you.

● Gordon Lightfoot

ACTIVISION'S cute coin-op conversion involves a very silly mix of beat-em-up and shoot-em-up action — but does it fit the bill?



There are two big enemies on each level. The first one, built very thorough, is enough to mow you, at the end, can only be killed by real hard ducks.

AMIGA VERSION

With colorful, cartoonish graphics and a series of vibrant soundtracks to accompany each level, all you need is accuracy and challenging gameplay to keep you hooked. The Amiga version has all these qualities — or has it not?

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	9
AUDIO	8	FUN FACTOR	9
ACE RATING 84.3			

RELEASE BOX

STAR 87	27-296	8/8/87
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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



INFESTATION



INFESTATION

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Your task as Kai Sober, Agent of the Interplanetary Federation, is to travel to Alpha 8, investigate and end the alien threat. Your mission will not be an easy one. As well as the mother alien and its eggs, you will have to deal with hostile droods and computer systems, radioactive areas, and things unknown.

INFESTATION is a truly atmospheric experience. Don't play this game when you're alone... it may well be your last!

Screen Shots from the Atari ST version. AMIGA XTAPI ST 124.95

PSYGNOSIS - GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

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Battle it out on the track against other computer controlled rivals, such as, Dave Devil and Road Hog. Race and jump so fast that your car starts to break up under the strain and then accelerate even more. There's no prize for being second best in this game - it's all or nothing.

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*Micro
Style*





A typical end-of-level enemy. Note that for the best game as well as the best game, two heads are better than one!

As the title suggests, there is a simultaneous two-player option. This gives you the opportunity to either compete or cooperate with a friend. There are shades of *Blaster*! Many fans, and the *Prognosis* game the pair of Gemini Wing stars seem to be pitched for simultaneous play. If you're battling on your own you are going to have to work just a little bit harder to make much progress. But from the extra challenge will prevent this game being relegated to the back shelf too quickly.

You are armed with twin lasers, a fairly effective way of dispatching individual creatures, but not much use when you're surrounded by a screen full of malicious enemies with countless missiles tumbling in on you. Fortunately there are more useful weapons to be had. These come in the form of *Gambols*, of which there are ten types, including extra weapons,

GEMINI WING

DIE Mutant Alien Scott! basically sums up the philosophy behind Virgin Mastertronic's latest contender in the shoot-em-up class. The alien hordes are a little upset because the *SpaceDay Spirit* (which sounds suspiciously like a certain real Sunday rag) got a little carried away and pitched a galaxy wide missile carrying the aforementioned headline.

In consequence the proverbial *Wingmen* have decided to gang up on the instigators of the magnificent green and blue planet where all the trouble is coming from (and who can blame them?)

On any other day of the month this would have been... well, a bit of a disaster really, but fortunately for us Gemini good ol' weapon consultants have just put the finishing touches to the Gemini Wing project. This awesome system equips you and two fighters with an array of lethal weaponry ranging from the modest three-way fire ball to the overpowering wind-screen wiper of death. Frightening isn't it?

What this all adds up to is yet another screen for a vertically scrolling, side the nation, collect the nifty add-ons, and give the occasional snorefest-guardians a tasty feedback type after, sound familiar? Yes, you've seen it all before, so how does Gemini Wing compare to the rest of the shoot-em-up field?

RELEASE BOX

IBM XT	£19.99	MINI-DISK
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alien blaster...

AMIGA VERSION

Nothing to complain about here - smooth scrolling, very nice graphics, and a varied sound track that is so good you actually want to keep listening to it rather than turn the volume down. Nothing new, but a very competent effort nonetheless.

GRAPHICS 7 10 FACTOR 4
AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 6
AGE RATING 700

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A reasonably entertaining title - but there's not enough here to hold attention for long.

bonus points, a speed-up and an extra life. The *Gambols* can be collected by shooting small colored creatures or the larger *Wingers*. These carry a tail of about eight *Gambols*. By shooting at the alien you can cause the tail to cycle through the available options.

You can hold up to ten *Gambols* at one time. The first three of these appear as a tail behind your fighter craft, while the remaining seven are shown in a little window to the side of the screen. If you are having a particularly bad time you can always steal the other player's *Gambols* by flying through his tail, and give him a bad time instead (beware on your).

The first *Gambol* in the tail is activated by holding down and then releasing fire. It is quite gratifying to release a fire ball just as a whole flock of unsuspecting aliens are shooting down the screen towards you. It can be very frustrating though when you have a juicy appearing code of death about 99% in life, and four bonus point *Gambols* to get rid of before you can use it.

The graphics are quite nice, and the sprites varied and unhampered, but don't expect any *Xenos* if style parallels anything here. What really makes the game is the sound track which is neither as bland or as repetitive as standard shoot-em-up scores. If you already have a reasonable selection of shoot-em-ups in your collection then *Gemini Wing* is not going to give you anything you haven't already got. But having said that if you want something with a simultaneous two-player option and you find *Blaster*! boring and *2D Death*! forgettable then a little bit today, then you should certainly take a look at *Gemini Wing*.

■ Laurence Stafford

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Screen Shots taken from the Amiga and PC Versions.

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PSYGNOSIS
GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

WHEN the original game of Populous was released earlier this year it scooped a massive ACE rating of 94.3, as well as numerous other accolades. What made Populous the most important game of 1989? Well, it was its striking combination of originality, inventive graphics and sound, and superb playability.

The game casts you as a god whose objective is to set up your own people's development and hinder those being allegiant to a rival deity. This is achieved by raising and lowering the landscape and affecting various disasters on your enemies like floods, earthquakes and volcanoes.

By now there must be thousands of build-ing gods out there steadily conquering the hundreds of lands incorporated in the original game. But sooner or later even the slowest, most prudent beings are going to run out of new lands to conquer: a situation likely to leave many Populous addicts suffering from various withdrawal symptoms. But never fear, help is at hand in the form of The Promised Lands.

The latest release from Electronic Arts contains five new landscapes to revitalise those appetite Olympians desperate for



Wily Land is an excuse for some 'total' graphics: your little humans are replaced by grinning red and green monsters who build extremely weird houses.

The 50 Plains resemble a programmer's nightmare. The land is crisscrossed with jagged pipes, streets with cigarette butts, coffee mugs, and pencils. The buildings begin as small computers like Windows System and grow up into huge C++ supercomputers. Take a good look at the flags...

Not exactly a new release this, but certainly something for POPULOUS fans to get all worked up about...Get yourself a

THE PROMISED LANDS

shot in the arm with this new scenario disk from ELECTRONIC ARTS.

another fix of quakes, volcanoes, and floods. The original game is loaded as normal, and then the new disc (EGA is preferred) is inserted once the game has begun. The landscapes that are played are the same as those in the original game (beginning with WILLY LAND and ending with 50 PLAINS... that would be fitting), but the 50 Plains, WILLY LAND, the Plains, Five Worlds, and Seven Worlds have been replaced by five completely new world types to play on. In World 1 that be pigs and... There are Pigsie the Pansion, 50 Land, Wily Land, Wook Land, and The 50 Plains.

Each of the new scenarios features new graphics for the land, water, people, and buildings, all of which are novel to say the least. So new though the initial shapes of the landscapes are the same they have a completely different appearance, and this cosmetic change alone goes a long way towards revitalising the game's appeal.

The Promised Lands delivers more than 40-teen graphics though. You will notice that all

of the lands are a lot harder to conquer, and even on GENESIS the opposition seem to multiply at an alarming rate. So don't expect to find that just because you've already played the game you can easily overcome lands you are familiar with; it's a whole new challenge.

The Promised Lands is a little expensive for what amounts to a face lift for the original game, but it is still worth a look if you have exhausted the possibilities of the first set of landscapes but still enjoy playing Populous.

■ Luciano Sottori

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ALL FIRE

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VARIOUS SECTIONS

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RED HEAT

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ROBOCOP



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COMM

AS a boardgame, Pictionary is quickly catching up with Trivial Pursuit in the Poppy After Dinner game stakes. So it seems almost logical to release Pictionary the computer game as a follow-up to the most successful computer board game in the world.

Pictionary is, in many terms, a cross between Snakes and Ladders without any snakes or ladders and Cluedo. The way the game works is like this. The computer draws a picture for a human player does it you're playing with two teams or more and you have to guess what word the drawing is trying to identify before you run out of time.

There is an option to let the 'buzzer' while the picture is being drawn, but that might let you a move. For example, the computer draws a hand and a section of the forearm. Player one buzzes in at this point and shouts out 'hand'. Player two is much more intelligent. He sits back and waits for the drawing to be finished. Sure enough, the computer then draws an arrow pointing to the joint between the hand and the forearm. The word is 'wrist'.

To win the game, you have to go all the way round the board and land on the End square first. By correctly guessing a Pictionary (by telling the computer you got it right, just as in Trivial Pursuit) the computer throws a dice and moves you along that number of squares. This reliance on luckiness was one of the main objections to the computerized Trivial Pursuit.



Pictionary is not just a pretty Parrot!

is just how imaginative and casual, and sitting down and watching it draw is like having your very own episode of Catchphrase, minus the annoying Irish bloke.

It isn't more fun than Trivial Pursuit was, and what's more you don't need to know everything about everything to play it.

■ *Andy Gillen*

DOMARK

go doodling in a game with a built-in paint package that

PICTIONARY

so it's a pity that it's still here in the later release.

There are plenty of game options, including a large array of different player formations. You can play one, two, three or four players, where the computer draws all the pictures, or you can play two, three or four teams, where one member of each team has to draw the picture prompted by the computer.

The highlight of the game, and the most integral part of the program is the art package you have to use to doodle. Surprisingly enough, it's very good. Very easy to use, it's designed to be 'instant'. Everything you need is right in front of you. No sub-menus, no hunting for the right tool. Even if you're not a dab hand with art packages, a few minutes on the Practice Draw option will have you putting down More Lines for Metallics logos, depending on taste all over the shop.

After playing it for quite a while, both against a human opponent and against the computer, the most surprising thing I've found

ARCAD VERSION

Lots of color, lots of varied actions make the game really interesting. Fun for two, but could get very dull playing solo. Five three character have in the classic board game throughout.

GRAPHICS 8 **NO FACTOR 7**
SOUND 8 **FUN FACTOR 7**

ACE RATING 790

RELEASE BOX		
IBM PC	£29.99	AMR9207
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could challenge
Trivial Pursuit

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Shore safety keeps you going, but even that path in the end...

BLADE WARRIOR



The beast was present in
the land and from tower
to tower the sorcerers
rose called upon him.
As night encroached and
set the sun to flight,
his legions made ready
to conceal the tablets
that would see daylight
burnished leaves.



So, as the same last
bleeding light drained
from east to west, the
slain came forth, ready
to debate against the
legions of the night,
using all his might and
skill in this tale of
minds and sorcery.



Screenshots from Amiga version



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ACE AND PNYGNOSS OFFER YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO WIN UP SOME OF THE LATEST AND GREAT-EST GAMES FOR THE ST AND AMIGA.

COMPETITION

GAMES UP FOR GRABS

Get your grubby mitts on some great goodies from the guys at Psygnosis, and have a go at their recent gorgeous games.

If you read our feature on Liverpool based Psygnosis in the September issue you will know that the company is currently producing a whole host of amazing games for 16-bit machines.

The most recent release was the amazing *Doctor of the Beast* for the Amiga, reviewed in October. We were very impressed! Graphical is the game pushes the machine further than anything seen before. But *Beast* is by no means the first Psygnosis release to attract press and public alike.

Ever since the launch of its first mega-games, *Stratagem*, Psygnosis have built a reputation for excellence in 16-bit games and are

particularly renowned for their quality graphics and sound.

With titles like *Barbarian*, *Blaxx* and *Demons* already to their credit, Psygnosis are now set to release even more stunning games in the run up to Christmas, and we're giving you the chance to have six of them absolutely free.

The first five correct entries out of the additional list will receive copies of *Trial*, *Blaxx*, *Moby*, *Never Alone*, *Interceptor*, *Matrix Monsters*, and *Stryx*. In addition Psygnosis are throwing in a Psygnosis T-Shirt and a *Beast* T-Shirt featuring the brilliant Roger Dean artwork.



ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS...

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1. This fascinating scientific 3D game of strategy and quick thinking has you rearranging tiles to form patterns. Not as easy as it sounds when you have to contend with giant chess pieces, never mind the disappearing tiles and moving restraints...

2. As intergalactic agent Kai Solar, can you clear the infected space base of alien eggs and activate the nuclear power source before time runs out and the galaxy is overrun?

3. The aim of the game is to capture target items as you cruise above a huge grid in your fighter. But watch out for the marauding Hunters, Tankers, and Blaxx Gals.

4. Three for the price of one in this mega value games compilation.

5. If cash is short, why not go on an Alien Safari and earn some extra cash for buying the baddies?

6. The cyborgs have run amok and the some central committee are in hysteria. Only the top secret project alpha can save the day!

- A. TRIAL
- B. INFILTRATION
- C. BLAXX MOBY
- D. STRYX
- E. MATRIX MONSTERS
- F. NEVER ALONE

Rules

1. The closing date for entries is November 2nd 1988.
2. Employees of EMAP or Psygnosis are not eligible for entry.
3. The editors' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

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RELEASE DATES
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AMGA - NOVEMBER
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A close-up photograph of a hand holding a red joystick controller. The hand is wearing a black grip. The joystick is red with a black grip and a black base. The background is dark.

QuickShot
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MAKES THEM BETTER THAN
THE REST....**

Performance



THE MANIAC'S GUIDE TO BURNING 16-BIT RUBBER

The scream of tortured rubber, the sweat pouring down your brow, the roar of the crowd... Can a racing sim give you all this? Can it give you more? Tony Dillon grits his teeth and presents the maniac's guide to 16-bit tarmac torture...



Driving games have always been popular, ever since the days when Atari's *Pole Position* first hit the streets, and gave the average man in the street a chance to try out every boy's fantasy. One or two enhancements have been made in the years since, however, and in comparison to today's arcade *Mean Streets*, for example, *Pole Position* feels almost primitive. Ever so, a drawback it was, one which led the way to one of the most popular forms of computer entertainment. But which one of its successors should you go for?

This month sees the appearance of two new additions to the computer racing family—*White and Continental Circus*. *White* arrived at ACE just too late to make it into this article, but you can check it out in Screen Test here in the Screen Test index on page 4 for its location. Before you check out the new contenders, why not drive off down memory lane and see if there are any secondhand models you could go for...



Start Car Racer Monoprice

After a lightning qualifying lap, *Start Car* takes up lead position on the starting grid and at the same time places itself in the annals of computer history as being one of the most amazing replicas to watch, let alone play. The opponents are your good self and a computer player. The objective: do it number of laps on a track with the essential aim of beating the computer. The track: a continuous loop of tarmac.

The strange thing is that the track is raised, at its lowest point some 25 feet from the ground, and all the tracks are full of beach-crocery steep climbs and dips. At high speeds,

it's more than a little easy to fall off. The game is first-person perspective, with the outside world made up of really fast smooth-filled vectors, and the suspension of realism is unbelievable. Your stomach actually churns as you shoot off the edge of a jump into thin air, before plummeting downward, headfirst into another piece of track.

An amazing experience, and a clear winner. Where can things go from here?



R.V.F. Monoprice

More *Monoprice* racing, only this time it's on a bike. The champion in the first *Super Hang Racing Game* stakes, and a superb simulator, R.V.F. put you, as a worthless little motor man, into the world of performance bike racing as none other than the Honda RVT750, a limited build custom racer based around the best selling VFR750.

Detail was always one of *Monoprice*'s strong points, and there's no lack of it in R.V.F. Everything has been finely calculated, right down to the position of the rider who turns his head to look over his shoulder at passing bikers, and after a crash runs the bike along the track before mounting and riding off into the sunset.

Brilliant graphics, brilliant sound, brilliant game.



Ferrari Formula One Electronic Arts

A bit old this one, but still a game that was way ahead of its time to start with. Take the mouse in your hand and take the wheel of a Formula One Ferrari racer on some of the most famous racetracks in the world. It's all there, from qualifying laps and trophies, right down to wet tracks, where you can alter wheel settings on your car to improve the performance.

It's noted for its unusual steering mech-

anism. Rather than use the mouse to turn the steering wheel, you actually point the mouse to turn the driver's head, and the wheel would turn in kind. The more you turned your head, the more the wheel turned. The peculiarity of this meant that you could turn to look round a bend as you were turning it, giving you warning of any cars ahead and generally making the game more realistic. The sensibility of the control made the car very hard to drive, but once you were used to it, you wondered why nobody else ever copied it. A true thoughtfest.



Super Hang On Activision

Not so much a simulation as a perfect arcade conversion, *Super Hang On* was essentially *Hang On* with a few extra frills. For a start you could race one of four courses, each set in a different continent and ranging from Asia (Lanz) to North America (Ferry Hand). Another great gameplay feature was the Nitro button: when your bike reached 280 MPH, you could press Nitro into the engine to give the bike a little more kick, boosting it up to around 340 MPH, which is a stupid speed to try and take a corner at, and usually results in people falling out of road and flying a liver 7 into the nearby stratos.

The screen update, of both the road and the spacers, is perfect. The road itself is as smooth as the ACE. As for Manager (as a date, and the hills are realistic enough to make you try and look over the crest of them. Great game, excellent conversion.



Lombard RAC Rally Marlboro

Slip into the leatherout surroundings of a Ford Sierra RS Cosworth, and take part in what the net not a major racing event, but it still has some the less.

Race through many types of terrain, and

in mountain or forest, and through many types of weather conditions, such as fog or night. As you race the qualifying races, you can earn yourself money to improve your car, though after just finishing the course quickly or by making a TV appearance, where you are ranked on the history of rallying, as supplied with the game.

As you race, you take the unusual position of sitting behind yourself in the car, in which position you can clearly see the road ahead through the windshield, as well as all the little driving movements you make, such as turning the wheel or changing gears. All this goes toward giving the game a nice atmosphere, and though the variety of gameplay may be a little less, it's still a game fit for playing for a good while yet.



The Duel - Test Drive II

Accelerate

Accelerate hard to fight all the Test Drive wrongs with The Duel, and to an extent they succeed at. Still keeping with the theme of illegal high-speed performance car driving, either a Porsche 959 or a Ferrari F40, this time they add a bit more of a game to it rather than endless A to B as fast as possible. This time you're in a race, either against the clock or a computer-controlled driver, and you have to race first over hilly terrain, then up into the treacherous mountain roads and then down again on the other side, all the time avoiding the general public and trying to stay ahead of the computer driver.

There's nothing serious about the game. It's not a lot of fun. It doesn't claim to be technically or visually accurate, but they should if they fight those boredom bugs with the Super cars expansion disk, which gives you another five cars to play around with, and the California Challenge disk, which gives you a fair racing mix from the suburbs of California to the tip of Baja.



Grand Prix Circuit

Accelerate

Very similar to the Test Drive series both in look and feel, GPC let you compete in a Formula One Championship with a car of your choice. Though not as technically brilliant as Formula Formula One, it is, as with Test Drive, great fun to play.

Graphics are quite limited, but what is there is well used. The other cars are very detailed and the update is surprisingly smooth. The lack of roadside objects is a bit surprising, but I don't think this was ever meant to be taken seriously anyway. As before, it's fun.



Highway Hawks

AMCO

It is, in no uncertain terms, a clone of arcade favorite Road Blasters. It's just sad that it happened to be much better than the official conversion.

Steer your buttoned Ford Corvair at stupid speeds down stretches of motorway defined as 'dangerous'. As you race along over land and sometimes over sea, you meet various other vehicles. Trucks, when shot, can drop weapons and supplies, or just a headache or two. Other cars may drop fuel for you, or they may shoot at you. Whatever the case, all it takes is a quick squeeze of the trigger on your part and that's the last of them.

The road is incredibly smooth, as is all the in-game animation. Control response is fast and the action is well paced. This is how Road Blasters should have been.



Test Drive

Accelerate

The original performance car game. Select one of five supercharged sports cars, and take them for a heavenly spin around a winding

mountain road. Avoid the police wherever possible and try not to hit other cars or fall off the road.

Great open release, but looks a bit dated now. The screen update is appalling, which leads to almost no sensation of true speed, and the basic problem is that it's just too easy. That linked with the lack of variety makes the game short-lived, innovative though.



Roadblasters

ES Gold

The logical follow up to Out Run in the arcade, and sponsored by toy giant Mattel, Road Blasters had the same behind-the-car view as Out Run, only this time gave you a gun, so instead of avoiding the bad guys, you now got to take them out in a really satisfying way.

Lucky, 24 ES Roadblasters almost totally fails to capture the spirit of the original. It's slow, playable and generally a terrible conversion. It stinks.



Out Run

ES Gold

Now this is a major failure. The original arcade driving game, and also one of the biggest selling games of all time. Also one of the most disappointing conversions of all time. Almost unrecognisable from the coin op, the graphics are all garishly coloured and disgustingly blocky. The road update is so terrible that sometimes where you can't tell if the road is bending left or right and the sound is terrible.

One of the biggest failures of all time.

Late starters.

And that's only the start. Soon to come are the conversions of Chase HQ and N.E.C. Le Mans from Ocean, Wild vector arcade classic Ward Drive from Bomark, Gattuso Formula from ES Gold and Powerball from Activision. Watch the space.

Ballistix



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The aim of the game is simple - score more goals than your opponent to win the match. Doing it is a different matter as opponents hit the screen with dozens of balls, tunnels hide them from view, bouncers bounce balls all over the place, ballistic red arrows speed them up to almost impossible velocity, magnets pull them away from your control, and much, much more.

Ballistix is incredibly flexible, too. You can play against the computer or another player, set the speed if you can't stand the pace, define where the balls are fired and their velocity, rank up bonuses that will get you extra goals and then, at the end of an exhausting game, set your name in pride of place on the high-score table. And it's all played to the accompaniment of a throbbing sound track and a crowd that applauds your every goal.

Ballistix is definitely not a game for wimps. It's tough, fast, challenging and incredibly competitive - in fact, it's just the kind of game you like.

AMIGA/ATARI ST £16.95 PC £24.95 C64 DISK £12.99/TAPE £9.99

Screen Shots taken from the Amiga version

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UNCOOL CONTROL?

Joysticks just don't cut the mustard when it comes to racing sims — find out why, and what could replace them...

Remember the first time you sat in an engine-driven machine? Remember the realistic way the car responded to the slightest turn of the wheel? Remember pulling the wheel hard over to take round one fast and then gently slipping round the next? To do the same thing with any of the computer conversions... You can't feel any real because compared to the sophisticated controls on the arcade machine your computer's joystick feels like a floppy ball next to a Porsche.

Ever since Atari established the standard protocol for joysticks on its console, we have in the '70s, computer gamers have had to put up with a control that is about as sophisticated as a light switch. The problem is that the majority of computer joysticks are digital. They only rely around to five switches — four for the directions, up, down, left, and right, and one for the fire button. The advantage of this system is that, not only are the joysticks cheap



Ranx — Jim Barr's *Ranx* game, to be launched with the machine, makes good use of analogue control — the feel as you lean into the bends is far more realistic than it could be with a simple eight-direction joystick.

and easy to produce, it is also easy for the computer to read and use the signals generated by them.

Digital joysticks are fine for platform games or shoot'em-ups, but what happens



Jim Barr looking at one of the two competition programs running on the *Ranx* at the launch of the console. The game *Ranx* (see advertisement elsewhere) was one of the few games to make good use of the analogue control potential of the *Ranx*.

when you want to simulate a lap round Grand Prix or a dogfight between F-16 and a MiG? For these applications you need more sensitive control than just left, left or left right, you also want to be able to control the speed of the turn, with a standard digital joystick this is just not possible.

Some companies have made attempts to rectify the situation by producing yokes. These are shaped like wheels or aircraft controls to give you more of a realistic feel. These devices are however, the same old digital joystick in a different guise. They might look the part, but they certainly won't be any more responsive than your ageing joystick or keyboard mode!

The answer is analogue controls. An analogue joystick, rather than simply turning microswitches on or off, produces a continuously variable signal depending on how far you move the stick off-center. This is achieved by using two potentiometers, or variable resistors, one for movements in the x-axis and one for movements in the y-axis. These might, for instance, produce voltages between -1 volt for left through 0 volts for centre to +1 volt for far right.

The difficulty with this system is that the computer cannot read analogue values directly so these have to be converted into a digital form first using an analogue/digital converter — the same game used in sampling sound. This does of course mean that analogue joysticks are both more difficult and consequently more expensive to produce. You are therefore unlikely to find analogue joysticks becoming very popular for use with existing computers, although in the old days the BBC and the Dragon computer both had analogue control capability. Dedicated arcade machines and consoles are a different story entirely.

The new *Ranx* machine, unlike the majority of existing consoles uses an analogue control system. This means that you could experience the same sort of sensitive control on *Ranx* games as you do with *Duress* and other similar arcade games. Combine this with the *Ranx* chair and you could soon find yourself getting far closer to the feel of real motor racing than you ever dreamed possible without leaving your sitting room!

There's just one snag here: the *Ranx* has yet to actually appear in the shops. Let's hope that other manufacturers take the lead in the meantime and start offering us more sensitive control mechanisms.



This is no yoke, it's serious. The *Ranx* uses analogue controls, giving precise control over speed and steering. This, combined with other features as shown in this illustration, sets your racing games a whole new feel. Come on everyone! Let's have some control!



← Lap up Grand Prix glory in Virgin's Continental Circus

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AMIGA VERSION

An excellent conversion that has retained all the features of its 2D/3D parent for the most part. It may not be the most spectacular release this year, but it is very playable and enjoyable — and that's what counts in the end.

GRAPHICS **8** 10 FASTFOR **8**
 AUDIO **8** 5 FUN FACTOR **9**

ACE RATING **875**

CONTINENTAL CIRCUS

VIRGIN/MASTERTRONIC'S lap of honour...

ONE of the more popular and annual arcade racing games to emerge over the last couple of years is Virgin's Continental Circus. The game itself did not really offer anything that hadn't already been exploited by many other Prix-Position clones — what was unusual about it was the 3D-LSD graphics mounted on a go-kart-like car in front of the screen. If you managed to get these positioned correctly and comfortably (not always an easy task, especially when the go-kart was a bit wobbly) you were treated to a fast 3D display with opposing cars appearing to shoot out of the screen towards you.

The 3D effect had, not surprisingly, been dropped from this conversion, but in all other respects the game is identical to the original. Apparently the sprites and background graphics have been ported directly from the arcade machine, and they do indeed look very nice. Perhaps more importantly, noise of the speed or playability of the original machine seems to have been lost on this conversion. This means that makes up for the loss of the three-dimensional element and really proves that the graphics on the original machine were more of a gimmick than an essential accessory.

Continental Circus puts you in the seat of a high performance racing car, competing against 200 other drivers in a series of Grand Prix set in Brazil, America, France, Mexico, Germany, Spain, Mexico, and Japan. Each course is progressively harder and you must have attained a specific ranking before you can compete on each track. You begin with a rank-

ing of 100, so you certainly have a lot to prove.

Although the controls are reasonably responsive, steering round bends or other cars takes a little mastering at high speeds. It is all too easy to slide across the track into a slower vehicle or off-road and end up trailing wretchedly. If you do happen to collide with something your car is damaged but you still have a short amount of time to steer it into the pits. Once there your car is fixed, repair the damage and get you back on the road again. Rather hopefully the clock is stopped while this is happening.

One thing to be careful of if you do crash is to make sure you stay in the middle of the road as you pick up speed again. That way the passing cars will attempt to avoid you by passing on either side. Attempt to steer right or left before you have picked up enough speed and you are likely to find another driver coming up fast from behind resulting in an exhilarating second collision.

Should you have a double collision or take too long to reed into the pits then your car explodes in a spectacular ball of flame. Provided you have time left on the clock you can continue with a new car but you will still have lost valuable seconds.

In a similar manner to 2D Colin's Out Run you have a limited amount of time to reach the next checkpoint, which you must do if you are to continue to the end of the course. Take too long and you will end up back on the grid again, and with a lower ranking. You will find

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Quite a challenge that should keep you coming back to the track for some time.

ported making a real effort to achieve full credit ranking to qualify for the next course in the series, especially as you get to the tenth lap-around. It's intensely annoying when you hopelessly come off the road at the late curve and end up losing valuable seconds or crashing completely, but extremely rewarding when you finally get it right.

Continental Circus offers fairly simple gameplay, and while the graphics and sound are good they are not as complex as those found on many recent 3D games. Heavy rain that the game seems on its playability, which is of course the most important aspect of any racing game. It also has that addictive "One more time!" quality that keeps you coming back for more. Definitely one of the more successful arcade conversions of the year.

■ Lawrence Kushta

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RELEASE DATE:
29th NOV. '89

COMMODORE RELEASE DATE:
27th NOV. '89

The last released Steve Bak's 'Dogs of War'.

Steve Bak's 'Dogs of War' is a top-down action game. The player controls a team of soldiers in a battlefield. The game is set in a war-torn area. The player's objective is to destroy the enemy's base. The game is a single-player game. The game is a top-down action game. The game is a top-down action game.

- 320x200 resolution
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- 16 sound effects



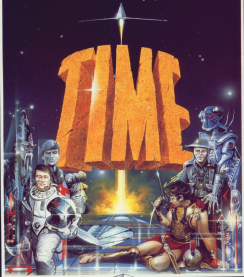
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UPDATES

THE LATEST CONVERSIONS GET THE ACE TREATMENT...

AMIGA



3D POOL

Monoprice Amiga £29.99

If previous pool sims on any computer have been limited by a top-down or side-on perspective, Monoprice's offering, however, allows almost limitless ways of spying on your shot with a unique 3D system which rotates the table.

Most of the aspects of pool as seen by you can be adjusted, play ball sizes and masses, vary the power and angle - in fact, just about everything apart from spinning one ball around another. It's a nice trick to get into, however you haven't got a cue to be anything up with (you have to rely on the 'center of the screen' in relation to the cue-ball), but it's almost rewarding because of the freedom it offers. It'll be a long time before you feel your first success, though - so be patient.

The one big question mark is why it's a fair more expensive than the £75 some additional standard cues (and cues don't affect the accuracy to a great degree, and apart from that the action is much to be desired. A good simulator with so many balls, it would please golfers, but then pool fans have been getting computer pool since 1981 and there don't seem to have been any major advances in accuracy - the rules of the game take care of all that.

ACE RATING: Fair

F16 COMBAT PILOT

Digital Integration Amiga £24.95
386 Version reviewed
16-bit 3D Ace Rating: Good

Amiga owning flight simulator fans can't see much to sleep up of real. Those masters of simulation, Digital Integration, have finally released the Amiga

version of F16 Combat Pilot, and it's the best of the bunch.

D's latest masterpiece has you strapped firmly into the cockpit of the highly sophisticated F-16C Fighting Falcon. Your objective is to successfully complete five missions representing the possible

roles of the F16. These are Combarble (air to air intercept), Hammerhead (offensive counter-air operations), Deepstrike (interdictor/strat), Thunder (strat/bomb), Close air support, and Watchtower (intrusion/escort). One of the missions have been successfully flown you are allowed to take part in operation campaign, which is a full-blown campaign.

There is also a training option which gives you the opportunity to practice your flight and landing, as well as each of the set missions. If you are a new player it is best to make full use of the training option before you tackle any of the missions for real.

The Falcon is a deceptive aircraft in many respects. It is surprisingly easy to get into the air, and you will soon feel yourself doing rolls and loops with ease. The aircraft's stability is quite excellent and the flight systems do tend to look after you if you try to overstretch yourself or the Falcon. Having said that, landing the Falcon is a fairly tricky manoeuvre which takes some intensive practice to master. You will also find that getting the aerobics right is not so simple when you've got a couple of wings on your tail.

The one thing that becomes quickly apparent as soon as you get the Falcon in the air is the nature of it's control by the program. As with other Digital Integration flight simulators, the ground detail is minimal for speed, but the response and feel of the aircraft is superb. The attention to detail that has also been a hallmark of D's productions is certainly not lacking here. We want to take a quickie to one side to see what's ailing you, or look over your shoulder to locate that mag that has entered your radar's blind spot? No problem with this simula-



tor, around view can be obtained with one key press.

As if the excellence of the flight itself wasn't enough you can also see your pilot's log for future use, create your own weapon configurations (which can also be saved), and set specific weather conditions. If that still isn't enough then why not hook up to a friend's machine and engage in a one-on-one dogfight via a modem or serial link?

F16 Combat Pilot has taken one man years to develop, and showing it you can feel the quality

of the work that has gone into this production. Considering that F16 retails at the same price as many other inferior games it also represents very good value for money. If you are a connoisseur of flight simulators then this is an essential addition to your collection. If you are only looking for a single flight simulator to log, then without question this has to be the one.

ACE RATING: EXC

ST

BLOOD MONEY

Pygmalion ST £4.95
Amiga version reviewed
July Issue/Ace Rating: Fair



After locking the ladder in Mexico, you thought you'd take a little vacation, and what better way

to spend your hole than on an alien-killing safari? Well, that's what Pygmalion have got in mind for you: four worlds of death, destruction and lunacy. The situation is this: it's a jungle out there, and where comes red in tooth and claw, so what you need is handy weaponry. Spread throughout each world are a number of treatment shops, where you can purchase such handy gadgets as throwy fire, bombs, acid rain - all of a sort, however. How do you get the money? By killing aliens. Simple.

In fact, ST Blood Money is a little simpler than the joystick based Amiga version, and manages better for it. The music and sound effects are a little wacky and the shooting slightly jerky, but the graphics, though tough, is at least compelling. Worth a look.

ACE RATING: Fair

PC

**MENACE**

Pyropose PC (24.95) Amiga version reviewed Issue 15 Ace Rating 6/10

As we have come to expect from Pyropose's Psychone label, the graphics in Menace are superior to the average PC game, but in every other count there is nothing here that you haven't seen in other shoot-'em-ups. The game sets you as a lone fighter attempting to defeat the six evil rulers of the planet Draconia. Each one is encountered in a different scenario and each has to be tackled in sequence.

Your fighter begins with a full shield and relatively unimpaired firepower. As you advance with the myriad alien life forms besetting you your shields are gradually depleted. If they should be completely run down your ship will be destroyed. Fortunately your firepower can be upgraded in the time between 'levels' the additional manner. This is done by destroying all of the aliens in a single wave.

When the last alien explodes, it deposits an oblong tablet. Flying over this will gain you a thousand point bonus. If you have time though you can pepper the oblong with shots and turn it into a more useful item like a canon, laser or mine stealer. The extra bits are pretty much unnecessary too. In the later scenarios the opposition don't leave you much of a margin for error so you need all the help you can get.

Instantly you are greeted at the end of each scenario by an evil of level guardian. These have a wide span which if hit enough times will cause them to explode. Unfortunately life is made more difficult by having to avoid the

large number of missiles being constantly emitted by the units. Success in destroying your adversary and you are rewarded with progression to the next level.

Although Menace doesn't break any new ground it is a very playable and attractive PC shoot-'em-up that certainly wouldn't look out of place in the most impressive collection.

ACE RATING: 6/10**MICROPROSE SOCCER**

Microprose PC (24.95) C64 version reviewed Issue 17 Ace Rating 6/10

Over recent months there has been a gamut of soccer games for 16-bit machines ranging from some really dire efforts through to all-singing, all-dancing first class simulations. Fortunately Microprose Soccer falls into the latter category.

When the first version of the game for the C64 was launched, back in February this year, it was awarded an impressive Ace Rating of 9/10, and rightly so. At the time it was easily the best soccer game available, although now Anzo's Kick Off provides strong opposition.

This conversion to the IBM PC has lost none of the superb playability of the original game. Its overhead view of the pitch is used to great effect, and enables you to see exactly who is in control of the ball at all times. It also allows a wide variety of kicks to be implemented ranging from a simple stop shot to scissor kicks and banana shots. The game is accompanied by a rather strained sounding city team the PC's sponsor. There are some very nice touches too. Goals, for instance are shown again in fly style action-replay, complete with a video reending effect.

The game implements two sets of rules: good old Association Soccer and Indoor Five-a-side American rules. There are four competitions that can be played: Microprose International Challenge

Archival Club across the pitch need look no further. Microprose Soccer is a definite winner.

ACE RATING: 9/10**BAAAL**

Pyropose PC (24.95) ST version reviewed Issue 19 Ace Rating 7/10

In the tradition of good old Hammer Horror an unrepentant archaeologist uncovers an evil that has lain hidden for thousands of years. The removal of an ancient tablet releases the demon Baal who takes possession of a time travel war machine with which he intends to rule the world. A mob squad of Time Warriors is quickly set up — their objective is to kill and destroy Baal and return with the Time Machine.

Baal is, basically a very attractive looking platform game. You have to guide each of the time warriors through Baal's lair, which is of course populated by a number of devices traps and monsters. There are some obstacles which have to be thought about if you are to get past them, which saves this from being a mind-numbing jumpy shoot 'em up. There are also nice weapons to be collected to ease your progress through the game. You'll need 'hell-fire' — the fire is a fun one and certainly not easy.

As with all Pyropose games, the animation is excellent and completed

ed by nicely drawn multi-layered backgrounds. The PC version looks as good and plays just as well as the Atari version, and although this is by no means the worst, most original game I've played, it does feature interesting and then most efforts in a similar vein. A worthwhile buy.

ACE RATING: 7/10

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AMIGA / ST



GAMES: SUMMER EDITION

US GOLD CYCLING, CBA version reviewed issue 15, Ace Rating 750

How joystick waggling from the masters of sports simulations. Ego. This time the scene is the 1988 Olympics in Seoul. The game is apparently officially endorsed by the American Olympic team, which of course has absolutely no bearing on its quality. There are eight different events, 10 compete in: Sprint Cycling, 800m Hurdles, Shown Parallel Bars, Rope, Pole vaulting, Archery, Hammer Throwing, and Shooting.

Some of the sports look a bit blocky in comparison to many ST and Amiga games, but the superb three dimensional background graphics more than make up for

this. These are well-demonstrated by the superb action at the stadium at the end of the opening sequence.

Some of the events, like Archery, are easily mastered, but Shooting, Rings, and Parallel Bars all

require a degree of skill that will take considerable practice to acquire. This is no problem as there is plenty of opportunity to practice individual events before competing for real.

Any one who enjoys sports simulations is going to love this game, which has to be Ego's best yet. All of the events are easy to learn, but present enough of a challenge to keep you engaged for some time. As an added bonus there are also attractive in-game economies. A must for all joystick athletes.

ACE RATING: 900

SPECTRUM +3

APB

COMARK CHASE STARS ST version reviewed issue 26, Ace Rating 760

APB was one of those arcade games that, while it was far from advanced on the graphics and sound front, scored highly in the playability stakes. Colourful, cartoon style sprites and easily mastered gameplay gave it an appeal lacking in many more sophisticated machines. It casts you as officer Bob, a hardworking highway policeman trying to keep up with his daily quota of arrests, while speeding round the streets in your car avoiding minor offences. You may also have to follow up an ill Points Bulletin for the arrest of a major criminal. Once you have this, it's back to the sta-

tion to squeeze out a confession.

When this latest Temco version was accessed on the Amiga ST it looked fine. The programmers had managed to capture the same amusing cartoon quality of the original version. The Spectrum version suffers seriously because of the loss of this aspect. While the sprites are all well drawn and animated, the monochrome green display looks dull and manages to make the game appear tedious and uninteresting.

This version is still highly playable however, and if you are a 'Spectrum owner' who liked the arcade original then you can probably live with the inadequate graphics. I can't be keeping anybody's interest for long though.

ACE RATING: 600

HILLSTAR

US GOLD SHARPS, CBA version reviewed issue 31, Ace Rating 710

Hillstar is another SHARPS game in the advanced Dungeons and Dragons series. Having refined the elaborate design that accompanies the 16k screen you are presented with a set of 'Camp Options' that allow you to feed and save characters, or create new ones.

Once you have chosen the character you wish to play with then the game begins with a ride to the town of Hillstar. This involves an arcade style sequence

in which you control the speed of your horse and its jumping. To get to the town in one jump you must leave over the objects in your path.

Within the town you are free to explore as you wish, and can follow any quests that become

apparent during your exploration. There is also a further arcade sequence to be enjoyed by entering the arena. The game now becomes a primitive combat affair.

Enter a building and the view changes from 2D with map to a large Gauntlet style perspective. Inside the building you can explore further, opening chests, and avoiding guards and floor traps.

Hillstar is really presented, and the gameplay is polished quite well, but there is not really much here to keep you entertained for long.

ACE RATING: 750



ST

TV SPORTS: FOOTBALL

COMMARK CBA/AM, Amiga version reviewed issue 18, Ace Rating 800

The ST has certainly had its fair share of sports simulations, and numbering among those are plenty of attempts at capturing the essence of Soccer. American Football seems to be a bit harder to come by, but gridiron fanatic need look no further. Commark have finally released the ST version of the ultimate American Football game.

If you are already familiar with Commark's interactive music software then you will not be surprised to learn that graphically the game is excellent. During normal play the grid is shown in a high 3D perspective from the Offensive end, but when a field goal is attempted an impressive 'Hickie's eye' perspective is adopted. Admittedly there are some attractive TV style sequences at full-time and before the game.

From the main menu it is possible to view game schedules and team standings as well as playing exhibition or league games. There is also a fairly essential practice

option which allows you to try out various plays as either offence or defence and to improve your punts and field goals. Once you are feeling confident by off to the field for a real game.

For each down you have a short amount of time to call a play before the view of the grid appears. During the actual play the computer controls all the players, but the one or two other human controls. This feature is intelligent in so much as the computer gradually learns your style of play and tries to emulate it.

Unless you hold a game set to view it at a later time, all other games in the league that do not involve human players are played simultaneously. By holding games you can then view them to observe future opponents' tactics.

American Football fanatic will love this game, but if you are a beginner, don't worry. It's not too difficult to get into, and there is a comprehensive booklet of the rules of the game included with the software. There is also a lot to learn by simply sitting back and letting the computer play itself. Unreservedly recommended.

ACE RATING: 900

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IN SEQUENCE

ON BATES CHECKS OUT TWO VERY IMPRESSIVE PACKAGES...

As reported last month, the British Music Fair this year saw the launch of several new pieces of software. ACE picks the best of these and subjects them to the usual rigorous session on the test bench. Two exciting new packages are up for consideration, the all British 'Virtuoso' sequencer for the ST and the first advanced music package designed solely for the Amiga, the much awaited 'Music X'. Which one is the best? Jon Bates delivers the results.

VIRTUOSO

There is a MIDI sequencer designed to rival the best that the foreign software houses can put out. It isn't a package with top professional specifications but at a price that is competitive enough to appeal to the average home user.

The first thing to note about Virtuoso is that it has done away with the ST GEM environment. The claim is that GEM is slow in operation and meant that operations took a longer time than was acceptable for studio work. Digital Music, the developing company for the package, has therefore written a completely new multi-tasking operating system designed specifically for Virtuoso. This has given the software several advantages over any rivals.

The first thing is that the resolution per quarter note that's recorded in traditional terms is 480 clicks. To put this in perspective it actually means that every note worth a quarter of a bar is split into 480 click intervals. If my about takes me the well this is a rate of 1200 clicks per bar, which subdivides any of its beats by eight.

Other advantages are that all disk operations are carried out as a background operation, leaving the program to run. Recording and playback are carried out as work is saved to disk which saves quite a bit of time. The same goes for print outs. It has very generous but loading capabilities so that instead of having it scribble about for lots of pages to note the various relevant information it can be used as part of the program and printed out



Music X - multi-option, multi-tasking and more besides!

as you work. Finally the screen refreshes itself much faster than the ordinary ST program.

All this super speed and features superiority wouldn't count for a jot unless the program was easy to use and its intricacies easy to follow. Thankfully this is pretty well true of Virtuoso as all mouse actions are duplicated on the query keyboard and there are no display menus.

Virtuoso is divided into several main pages. The main area of activity is the block page. Up to 96 tracks make up a block in section of a piece, and each track a separate instrument and these run from the top of the screen and can be scrolled through. The screen design is not unlike that with the controlling icons set to the right along with the counters and section markers. Since there are no menus, all the functions you want are on-screen all the time.

All active tracks have a bar meter and can be set to on or off. However in the block page it didn't seem possible to 'lock' any one track although you could do this from the edit page. Recording is subject to options. Apart from the usual straightforward recording you can also have automatic stop in and out at specified bars, and cycle record, with the latter you can either tape a track up part by part or do a multitrack, which lets you try out different ideas for say a solo and each pass it takes on a separate track track. You can then pick the best or edit two or three takes together.

After recording your first track the options

for real time processing are formidable; being real time it is not altering the actual track data. Apart from quantize there is the extremely useful addition of volume. Most MIDI devices now obey volume control and it means that successful balance can be set up from the screen rather than fiddling around with sliders and mixing desks or, even worse, the buttons on the front panel of a tone module - a definite real-life discomfort.

Many other options are available on-screen as well - program change, pan position, looping, track delay, tempo, note limits, velocity and compression plus individual MIDI filters. Tracks can be cleared, copied and removed completely.

By linking up a number of tracks, you have created a section of music - the block - which you then file away by moving to the library page. One thing I found a bit quirky was that to work on a new block you have to create or copy the old block in order to make a space for it in the library - which seemed a bit odd.

Editing can be done in two ways. The graphic editing is done rather in the manner of a piano roll. The notes roll down from top to bottom of the screen in the form of squares or ovals and the pitch is indicated on a piano keyboard under which the display scrolls. The keyboard is movable in all directions and can also be displayed either in part or in full.

The other method of editing is by a data screen which shows all the data related to every MIDI event numerically. Quantize is data editing here and an extremely wide range of options is open for you. Apart from the Note On and moving notes there are some very nice ways of shifting infinitesimal amounts of time surrounding the notes, thanks to the high resolution. Notes can be captured around a definite beat to user-definite amounts. The strength of the quantize can also be set as well as useful features such as deleting all double notes, linking up chords to start together and a bounce function which adds a percentage error to

DO CLICKS MATTER?

Virtuoso can divide a four-beat bar into 1920 time slices or clicks. So what?

If you want a piece to be recorded via MIDI with every fine nuance of phrasing and timing a high resolution like this is essential. It will also come into its own for absolute accuracy when synchronized up to film and video. It's not that other software is inaccurate - just that this one is more accurate. It follows too that any corrections you need to make can be done with extra fine accuracy.



Written for the ST - fully specified, powerful, and easy to use.

mechanical tracks.

If that is not enough, another page, called the *Zone* page, lets you define areas of tracks and get it to work to reset any of the note parameters recorded: the note numbers themselves, the velocity, the length, the start time, a re-occurring the entirely new pre-defined periods either up or down, although volume didn't appear to be an option. Other processes controlled by the *Zone* page are file merging, and general cut and paste facilities.

Blocks are started into a full-on piece in the *Arrange* page. There are eight streams that can run simultaneously and so therefore up to eight blocks can be run at any one time. Tempo values can also be inserted here although transcription didn't seem to be an option.

Written well used in its own format or MIDI file format and there are options within the program left for future developments such as using 54 tracks of MIDI, assigning notes or MIDI events to control parts of the program and synchronization from SMPLE format. Also getting a superb and very well thought through program.

Written ST £279.00

Contact **The Digital Muse** or 01-646 2645

MUSIC-X

Music X is not only a sequencer but also a voice programmer, a sampler, and a MIDI controller. It takes full advantage of the multitasking capabilities of Amiga and is the first package specifically designed for it. Although it will run on an Am50, it is recommended that you have at least 1 megabyte of RAM. As a sequencer it doesn't need any external MIDI devices. Since it can play back four samples/instrumental sounds simultaneously it makes an ideal starting point for anybody who hasn't got any MIDI-equipped instruments. The program does not come with a MIDI interface; it will work with any Amiga MIDI interface to take your pick.

Three disks make up the total package: the program disk plus examples and utilities. There is also a very comprehensive 500 page

SAMPLING

Music X will work with both PFF and Taurus formats. It gives all the relevant details regarding the sample, highest notes range, memory size and timing and the channel to which it is assigned. You can set and edit the samples via the editor that has, amongst other things, a 16 stage envelope for the sound with variable sustain-pedal. Samples are also sequenced up and unrolled controls designed with to make more memory space. The Amiga will only run four samples simultaneously but these can be swapped around automatically to give a really big sound to the track you are working on.

musical.

The default page is the sequencer equipped with the familiar tape recorder icons of Pause, Record and Stop with Fast Forward and Back. In addition to this are Begin - which is in effect jump to zero - and End which locates the last two bars if you wish to add on extra notes or continuations. All the icons behave very much as you would expect with no nasty surprises.

There are four Cut buttons which can be set at any point within the piece for fast access to crucial points. You can compare the stored versions of parts with the version just recorded by hitting Preview which plays back the record buffer. Once based on the sequence list, its status is listed. Bar length, memory size, MIDI channel, time code, name and whether it is playing the internal voices or MIDI external voices. The internal voices are treated as MIDI channels and there is provision for more MIDI instruments to be added at a later date.

Any sequence can be turned off and on although not in mid flight. Once the piece is playing, the top right hand window shows the sequences that are playing at any given bar the tempo is set from the slider and if you want to alter the number of beats per bar this is entered for by a large amount of bar signatures.

On the sequencer page the output channels can be set - all input channels are set from the filter page. The sequencer will punch in and out either automatically from setting the bars or manually. As you would expect, sequences can be copied, merged, over-recorded, over-dubbed or specified events extracted.

Music X has very comprehensive synchronization features. It will respond to its own internal clock, external MIDI clock, external Video clock, which can be used as a guide for tempo against notes, the new MIDI time code, and SMPLE timing code; for the latter you will need external SMPLE hardware. It will also sync up with drum machines and other sequencers to any given point by using the MIDI song position pointer.

For editing, there are two methods: the Bar Editor which is a bar graph display and a data stream editor (level editor). In the former, notes are represented by objects with different MIDI channels having different colours; upright

bars refer to the velocity and afterwards, these are overlaid on a grid and the display scrolls from left to right. On the far left is a vertical pane keyboard which provides a pitch guide, although notes are not actually highlighted on it.

Quantization will only work on notes once they are in memory - there is no quantize on record and so it is all done after and not real time. Having set the grid size to which the main note should conform, you then quantify the notes, to within a certain percentage after note. Quantization can also be applied to velocity and afterwards which includes the ability to increase or decrease the velocity and/or afterwards over a specified area, either linearly or with a random factor - 'humanise' for want of a better word.

Editing is achieved with the cursor with the options of add, move, delete, mark, cut and paste. Notes can be lengthened or shortened by dragging on them. There are some more facilities in the edit mode and you can hear the sequence back either as it's own or with the rest of the sequences. Unfortunately the screen keeps scrolling after you hit the stop button which made it awkward to locate a point exactly and there didn't seem to be any way to manually scroll through the part of your live speed and hear the notes although you can hit the scroll function off.

Transposing sequences is via the File Sequences, the method of song events mode. It also seemed to be the only way of transposing entire sequences, which I found not to be the most satisfactory of methods. Perhaps a window that would have allowed direct assembly of sequences would have been better. Data is saved in three formats and there is an additional utility program to do the conversions: Music-X file, MIDI file, which enables it to be loaded into other MIDI sequencers, or Amiga SMPLE files.

The filter page maps out the MIDI information coming in and routes it to wherever it is wanted. This is a most comprehensive page which will also modify MIDI messages or set as shifting any highlighted up into a split MIDI keyboard. It will also multiply or divide steps like pitchbend so that they don't have to be another when swapped from one instrument to another. Any setup you make is stored in one of four templates.

Music-X is unique in that it is a complete set of programs under one umbrella and if departments are very well suited to it. All Amiga owners should start saving how - even without MIDI you can still use the internal voices. There were one or two things that I felt were missing, but overall the first package that has graced the ports of my Amiga.

Music-X Amiga £199.00

Contact **SDS**, 01-533-1399

VOICING IT

If you get working with MIDI instruments, the Librarian page will collect the voice information from all the synths in the set up. As this is a real need some sort of MIDI harmoniser is there. Some are already provided, but it is not too much problem to create your own. In this section are three excellent graphic voice editing programs for the DOUTY 104, TONAL and DUB. These are not just set up with some of the advantages of Music-X is that editing facilities will be available to adjust that part of the program. But for the ability to create a synth without re-loading it would greatly aid those that find this program useful.

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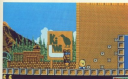
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TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

A HELPING HAND, COURTESY OF OTHER ACE READERS



New Zealand Story

C64 POKES GALORE

Courtesy of Game Galactor, reading here are a few helpful all-rite tips to get you C64 games playing a helping hand. For all of these pokes you should load the game as normal then read and enter the poke followed by the SYS call to restart the game.

NINJA COMMAND

POKE 10451,170
SYS 14848 or SYS 13811 for the top score

BOMBS

POKE 13417,170
SYS 957

POKES

POKE 5790,100
SYS 2172

COMPACTOR

POKE 2090,165
SYS 2113, then read and enter SYS call again.



UCHIHODE TO KILL

POKE 8448,170
POKE 14730,170
POKE 10094,170
POKE 11585,170
POKE 15185,170
POKE 61642,170

also POKE 13996,170 for unlimited ammo.

SYS 5146 for SYS 32768 for a life message.

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY

How is it that the programmer of the dated game of 1989 also turns out to be the most top-mounted. Steves in They of Labin tell us how to get infinite lives.

While playing, press the DEL key and the game will react to the title screen. Now type M and the laser gun sound will be heard. Now type in sequence MOFHEK-TUCHENWENGDARD and a fancy title tune will be played. When you next start the game your character will show a small tent and a 9-life.

They also send us the following useful tips:

LEVEL 1,2 Shoot the boulders and collect the blue "E" on the floor to the right. Now hop back to the point you started at and stand on the last two blocks on the left side of the second floor. Shoot towards the left wall while doing key hops. A large black hole will be in it and will appear. Hop inside this and you will reappear underneath the hole.

LEVEL 2,3 Find a balloon and float up to where the bears or balloons emerge. Stand to the right of the green left-pointing arrow and shoot the bear's balloons away. Repeat this until another hole appears. Now hop into the hole and this will get you underneath the tree again.

LEVEL 2,4 Just before you reach the lion stand on top of the steps and shoot towards the right wall. A hole will appear. Hop into this and you won't have to kill the big bad creature.

Let the bugs duplicate and shoot them to get a selection of

world goodies like Potions. These make you invincible for about 20 seconds, or Books (which kill everything on the screen).

If you are a double-clicked C64 owner here is another infinite lives cheat for New Zealand Story from Brian Docherty, Glasgow.

Place the side of your hand over the keys RLC,LR. Now bring the palm of your hand over S, D, F, G, H and press the spacebar. The border will turn grey indicating that the cheat mode has been activated. This cheat will also work at level nine of Dunderbar.

DUNGEON MASTER

Nathan Powell from Gackman provides a little help to those still puzzling over this superb game from Mirosoft.

"What is underfoot is still over-foot". Place shields from skeletons on the previous page and step out of the way to dodge the bullets. Now walk into them.

"This fourteen takes one walk". It also takes one coin.

"Time to off the ground". Hit and load. Drop items not needed to fight and press the game on, then

0-110



Dungeon Master

LEVEL	ITEM	ABILITIES
12	Armour of Gaur	Makes you hard, use
10,11,12	Armour of Lyle	Weights less
7	Bolt Blade	Shoots lightning "
7	Crown of Nerves	+10 wisdom
11	Diamond Edge	Extra damage
7	Dragon Spit	+7 Mana
14	Eye of Time	Freezes life "
7	Feral Pendant	+1 Wizard Level
14	Fire Staff & Power Gem	+2 Priest
7	Flameball	+12 Ammo
13	Flame	Shoots fireballs
11	Fury	Shoots fireballs "
10	Handcleave	Extra damage
7	Harried	Creates little light
7	Inquisitor	+7 Mana & extra-dam
12	Masterkey	Door within door
11	Moonstone	+7 Mana
12,7,9,13	Ra-Rays	Doors within doors
7	Ruby Key	As above
11	Sapphire of Lyl	+8 Mana, heals & light
10	Snake Staff	+8 Mana, Heals
7	Staff of Chaos	+4 Mana
10	Staff of Mana	+10 Mana, Duped
9	Storm Ring	Shoots lightning "
3	Top Wand	+6 Mana, Extra spell
6	Vampiric Staff	+4 Mana, Strong spell
7	Winged Key	Access to level

BATMAN

THE PENGUIN'S MANSION

SECOND FLOOR

MAP OF THE SECOND FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

MAP OF THE SECOND FLOOR



If the Penguin and Joker are making life just a little too difficult then this tonic for infinite lives from Mark Lawrence of Berkeley should come in handy.

10 D88 00076295A
20 FOR P-1 TO 151
30 80A0 42A-VML*MF+AS
40 000000A-A
50 PLOT 5
60 CREAT-VMB*P0000000
70 CALL CREAT
70 REM TYPE IN THIS LISTING
AND SAVE FOR FUTURE USE
80 REM 80007 BATMAN.D58
AND RUN THE PROGRAM
90 REM GAME SHOULD LOAD AS
100 DATA 419A, 0014, 4979,
0007, 7E30, 2709, 737F, 2028
110 DATA 5105, 777C, 4079,
707F, 2C78, 0004, 413E, F19A
120 DATA 2280, 5080, 8708,
0080, 40FA, E14C, 39FC, 0480
130 DATA 4280, 5AC1, 5079,
404E, FE4A, 3A00, 2AB0, 2040
140 DATA 0008, 5880, 4280,
40FA, 0370, 149C, 8000, 387C
150 DATA 0000, 000A, 4110.

0008, 384A, 0000, 419A, 0000
160 DATA 7000, 7000, 40FA,
000A, 404E, F14A, 4A80, 6680
170 DATA 009C, 700C, 990C,
E118, 7000, 4979, 8007, 0800
180 DATA 413E, 497C, 037F,
419A, 0000, E12A, 4000, 0000
190 DATA 438A, 080C, 727F,
0000, 9400, 2000, 4000, 7200
200 DATA 940C, 3040, 001C,
3041, 0012, 4600, F038, 2007
210 DATA 217C, 5054, 4152,
0800, 317C, 5400, 8600, 4000
220 DATA 0000, 419A, 800A,
547C, 4079, 2A80, 4079, 4400
230 DATA 0940, 3700, 707C,
E030, 1281, 379C, 4079, 4079
240 DATA 8007, 080A, 47FA,
0004, 600C, 4278, 000C, 270C
250 DATA 0380, 000C, 707C,
137C, 0080, 807F, 4000, 5706
260 DATA 230C, E074, 0000,
2140, 1800, 3480, 9000, 1000
270 DATA 404E, 2180, 1800,
319C, 4079, 1800, 4000,
347F
280 DATA 4140, 4004,
8973, 8027, 0480, 7A9F,
6280, 0000

While still on the subject of Batman — The Caped Crusader, J.Palk of Berkeley has completed the following maps for the Penguin Game. He tells us that a map for the Joker game is not necessary since there is only ever one route to follow.

Here is a very useful list of objects in the games, also mapped by Mr.Palk:

THE PENGUIN — A DIME ON THE MONEY

Item	Usage
Scanner	Beats it to it
Game Disc	Insert the disc
Police Badge	Don't make me use this
Key (Ballcock)	In a pickle
Grenade	No Pea! Soap!
Rope	Getting you-tired!
Lock	Black Room
Lift Key	Getting back up again
Ball	There at dart board!
Pass Card	A clue—open it up
Video Tape	Play it
Key (Ballcock)	Locked door
Ball	Stop! Stop!
Trumpet	On the right track

Video Disc
Tronkey's Magnet
On the right track
Steals items
Spies

The following items exchange for strength: Bread, Canned Drink, Baked Sweet, Fried Egg, and Beans.

THE JOKER — A FETE WORSE THAN DEATH

Item	Usage
Bolt	Black Room
Crozier	Men at work
Lock	Second Black Room
Gasmask	It's getting smelly
Fiber Twine	To allow eating
Blue Caltrop	To diffuse bombs
Money	Has the penny dropped
Arms	Use with gas to load it
Gun	Open window!
Stinglance	White Room
Handcuffs	Arrest the real Joker
Joker Card	To go through Joker door
Knife	To see Robin
Play Card	Simply use once then drop
Camera	As above
Hammer	As above
White Elephant	Arrest him, capture it

The following items exchange strength for: Carrot, Fat, Canned Drink, Carton of Milk, Plum Duff, and Mouse Mashed!

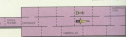


THE PENGUIN'S WAREHOUSE

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

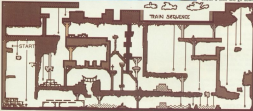


Level 2

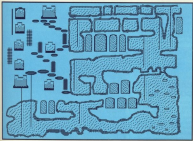


The map of 100 Gold's latest joint with old Indy was made up from those supplied by P.J.Grogg of Chesham and Richard Davis, London. P.J.Grogg also provides a few tips for completing the first level:

Go down the rope slowly. At the end of it, jump to the other rope quickly. Wait until the man has thrown a knife and go down the



Level 1



Level 3

rope quickly. When you are at the bottom, go right. Wait for a piece of rock to fall and then jump up the rope. Walk along the platforms and get the torch. Now go back and chip down onto the whip. Kneel down until the gunman has stopped firing and they whip him quickly. Go right and you reach the two gunmen. Kneel down until they turn around and then jump over the barrels. Now follow them and when they turn around, whip them. When jumping onto ropes, go to the bottom of the rope before you jump or you will die. Jump off at the end and whip the man. Wait before climbing the rope because of rock falls. Take one torch and climb the rope. Stay on the rope until the released man has just gone up. Jump across and wait. Jump onto the second rope and follow the man up until you see the first man go down. Jump across, climb up the first rope and jump into the siding.

run into the passage at the other end of the corridor.

"Don't let a closed door stop you!" Drop it down in other words. "Have stall pass!" Unless you have a lock, chop this door too.

"Cast thy influence, cast thy might!" Use the 2D spell to open the door, then throw an item across the pit. "When is rock not rock?" When it is an illusion a piece to the left (The wall).

"The wall says nothing"; Not much anyway.

"This is my prisoner, let him suffer!" Don't take orders. "Throw something you don't need at him, or it'll fail!"

"You will regret that!" Not if you want to go on to the next level. "Steal Cut!" Put a gold key in the lock and a transporter will appear. Make worms follow you to it. Go in and wait a few seconds, then go in again. You should land on them. If not, try again. On the second level there is a door you need to open with a gold key. Don't. Just chop it down and keep the key.

"Lighter than a feather!" Air! No Dorbanite.

"Where my hidden furnace, the destroyer, the ruler?" Become a snake and go left until the end, right until the end, and so on.

"Is death still thirsty for blood?" Put a gold coin in the small hole in the wall.

"Middle room!" You need a bow, gold coins and then go to open gate, but with Mirror of Glass so well, you get a prize.

DRAGON NINJA

Mark Russell from Southeast explains how to dispatch your opponents.

Samurai Warriors

Run under them as they are in mid-air. As they land, perform a back kick.

Crawling Ninja

Armed — attack down-right, left. Unarmed — Kick down-right, left.

Guard Dog

As for 'Crawling Ninja'

Grey Ninja

Drop to lower level or super jump to higher level just before he starts to throw the sturvivors.

Pat Fire-Breather

Armed — just keep striking him. Unarmed — Super punch and spinning kick.

Second Level Guardian

Super Punch, keep standing on top of the track.

Green Muffling Ninja

The spinning kick and Super



Revenge on the Bege

CONSOLE CORNER

DOUBLE DRAGON — SEGA

For infinite lives on a one-player game, play through to level four, then move directly up to a door-way. Move to the centre of the door and do leading reverse kicks until PUSH START appears for Player 2. You will now have infinite lives. If you are playing a two-player game then let player 2 off at the end of level 3 and then follow the same procedure. Both players will now have infinite lives. (Clare Green, Luton)

RAMPAGE — SEGA

When the GAME OVER sign appears push both buttons and you can continue. This will work up to three times. (Paul Lane, Brent)

ALTERED BEAST — SEGA

If you find those energy squares is not much to start with then push diagonally up-left simultaneously with button 1. You will now begin with five

energy squares. (Paul Lane)

GRANDS — NINTENDO

Pause the game and press up twice, down twice, left, right, left, right, and unpauses the game for nearly all the weapons. (Gaston Lee, London)

DRUNKEN MASTER — PC ENGINE

Turn the machine on, then off, then on again. Hold down the RUN and SELECT buttons. Next release the RUN button and push UP once. Now release the SELECT button and push UP five times. (RGT) on line.

DOWN twice, and LEFT three times. Choose the stage and make yourself invincible. You will be returned to the title screen. (Gaston Lee)

SHOOT HOUSE — SEGA

To gain points for extra time quickly, jump on about 15 arrows on a screen, then everything will turn yellow. You can now walk through everything, getting 3000 points for arrows, dappers, and machines. On screen 2, avoid by jumping in a dagger before tackling Doctor in. (Steven Lowy, Dorchester)



Altered Beast on the Bege

Push on the question key to get rid of him. When he tries to jump over you, give him a kick-kick.

Armoured Ninja

Armed — Keep hitting him. Unarmed — Super Punch. Position yourself right in front of him. When he does his super kick, jump into the air.

CARRIER COMMAND

If you're having trouble taking over enemy islands or occupying neutral islands then try this. When in range of an island turn to the map. Zoom in on the present island. Now simply press F8 and the island is yours!

(Susan Harris, Haleside)

YOUR NAME IN LIGHTS?

Do you often buy supposedly difficult games, load them with hours, and then wonder what all the fuss is about? Can you crack and hack even the most secure new releases quickly? Are you capable of mapping games clearly and producing sound tips for novice players? Is the answer to any or all of these questions in yes, then you may well be the sort of person we're looking for: the plan to set up a team of test games

crackers to produce the best tricks, tips, and cheats available anywhere. If you are prepared to contribute regularly, for a tiny reward of course, and think that you can come up with the goods, then send samples of your work to:

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TITLES



WONDERSBY II

SEGA

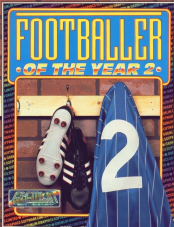
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THIS IS REALITY



With the price of beer replacing our Post-It a Game Boy is budget get games has never been more infeasible. You can now buy a budget 8-bit cassette for the same price as two pints of Tennents Extra at the ACS. Items favorite eating late City Fresh, Farmington Larder. What's more, six pints of Tennents Extra will net you a 16-bit disk now that the new wave of budget floppy and CD titles are beginning to appear.

Of particular interest this month are Crystal Castles, World Class Leader Board, Football Manager, Paperboy, and '96 in Hong Kong - all for the price of a pint or two.

SOLDIER OF LIGHT

Amiga CD32
Spectrum, Amstrad, C64

Forcing shoot 'em up in the Forgotten Worlds, Cozmoize issues. Lots of power ups, the odd bit of platform leaping, and particularly violent end-of-level rambles make SOI an OK - but far from exceptional - shoot 'em up.

All 8-bit versions reached a completed level in both graphics and sound.

It will be seen, if slightly over-rated comic conversion in its day Good buy for those determined to have every coin-op that ever blazed in their collection.



JACK THE NIPPER

Amiga CD32
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Jack the Nipper gave us computer gaming one of its most treasured gimmicky devices - the 'Naughty-dinner'. Every time Jack got up to a piece of mischief like fighting the cat, smashing plates, or taking out stairs at people with his one cheater so his 'Naughty-dinner'

BLASTS FROM THE PAST

BLASTS FROM THE PAST BREAK OUT ON BUDGET...

If you've missed out on some of the great all-time hits of yesteryear, now's your chance to pick them up at knock-down prices as software houses continue to release chartbusting games on budget labels. Here's this month's guide to unmissable bargains...plus the addresses to order from if you have difficulty finding them in your local corner shop...

ter' would go up. The nippy-clad Jack makes for an amusing, multi-level challenge. Puzzles of medium difficulty level and lots of laughs.



WORLD CLASS LEADER BOARD

Amiga CD32
C64

The classic golf game from Accolade has undergone an almost constant process of upgrading, leveling, and development of new courses. World Class Leaderboard was one of the later versions and has therefore bene-

fited from these improvements. It offers a 3D view of the course with excellent graphical representation of trees, bunkers, water, and the green. The player can select from a range of clubs, make adjustments to allow for wind conditions and set the power of the shot by using the ballometer to the right of the play window. Across a range of machines the Leader Board titles have the edge on the competition. At a less than a tenner this is an excellent purchase for your ST.



RAMBO

Amiga CD32
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad



Rambo looks wrong in Spectrum graphics.

This was Dream's dagger for Christmas '85. A four-directional scrolling shoot 'em up pinned on the face of the Stallone commando movie hero. Just using a major add-in to the Spectrum console - Commando.

More footage to be rescued behind enemy lines - but this time the player needs eyes in the back of his head as the enemy troops come at you from all directions. A variety of weapons are at your disposal including grenades, bazookas, and an army tank. Later in the game you have to find the cheeper and ferry our more hostages. Graphics based on a Vietnam scenario as per the film are coded to a high standard on all 8-bit machines. Tough action 'em up with a fair degree of planning and strategy required to be successful.



T320

Amiga CD32
Spectrum, Amstrad, C64

The Atari console really turned heads when it showed up in the shelves in the Summer of '87. It looked like the trendiest thing you ever saw with its state-of-the-art look in multi-colored Rembrandt, gilded bar set, and hand-carved music pumping out of the cabinet. US \$200 were straight in for the home rights and it turned up at Christmas of the same year.

Unfortunately, the gameplay never really lived up to its splendid name and basic game ideas. This was not Atari's fault. They made a good job of most of the 8-bit conversions. C64 was the best, Spectrum and Amstrad completed.

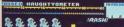
The aim is to successfully regulate the four players - winning points and prizes. Skating between challenges can be hazardous as the Rocks, Skiers, and Body Builders that also inhabit the sheets are not at all keen on skate-boarders. A must for skate-boarders.



FOOTBALL MANAGER

Amiga CD32
ST, Amiga

From could well have a claim in the games business by being their classic football management game at £5.99. This could be good news if other companies follow suit. FM is the standard management soccer game. Pick your team, study form, check the league position, - as all there as you become 'Oligarch' for an afternoon. Highly recommended.



Jack's 'Naughty-dinner' setting will make it be seen as something not worth that tag.



ROAD RUNNER

Encore £2.99
C64, Specc, Amstrad

This Atari classic grabbed stacks of coins when it appeared in the arcades early in 1987. It made the strange decision to cast the game player as the Road Runner rather than Wile E. Coyote — the hapless hero of the cartoons who never quite manages to catch that stunted bird. The aim is to put as much distance between you (Road Runner) and Wile E. as possible.

All of the bits of the cartoon are here — the puff of smoke at Road Runner's feet as he leaps on the jet-powered state board, for example. There is also the pop-art style escape route and the various bits of grain to be grabbed up by the bird as he moves. A simple but amusing conversion of the Atari classic. Good fun — even if you only get a few days' challenge out of it.



BATTY

Encore £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Batty is an Arkonoid clone. You use your balls of fire to take them out one by one. Various power-ups can be caught to enable you to do this faster. Clones of this type of game were launched about three years ago as the software industry demonstrated its traditional lack of originality. Still — the games are highly addictive and Batty is no good a rendition of the genre as you are likely to see.



GREEN BERET

Hit Squad £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

One of the first military shoot 'em ups, and a monster hit in the

arcade world in its rescue from Bush left to right taking out the Russians as impressive back drops of a naval base, aircraft base, missile base, and giant army rocket launchers and tanks scroll past.

Intelligently thought out, shoot 'em up with excellent graphics and implemented on all 8-bit systems.



YIE AR KUNG FU

Hit Squad £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

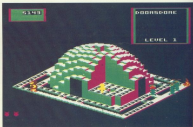


Gets platform experts in the Bubble Bubble tradition.

arcade when launched by Taito way back in 1985. Screen started up with the honor consensus in Summer '86 and now they offer you a second attempt to rescue the hostages on £2.99.

Deep colored enemy lines in hotspots are roped to stalks about to face the firing squad. You are one of the great best com-

A classic Konami beat 'em up that earned Dinan a chart tooting position in the Spring of '86. You are the linear controller Dabing who must kick the 87'71 out of ten opponents in your quest to become the King of Madras. Two impressive backdrops — an ornate temple and a water fall provide the setting for the scraps. The



Crystal Castles — a classic 3D style Pacman with secret passages and a wicked witch to crush.

opponents have differing abilities and weapons such as Stars and Munchies so it is essential to master the variety of different kicks, punches, leaps available to you in the Ar. There are sixteen possible moves in two modes which puts the Ar Kung Fu a notch or two above the multitude of beat 'em ups that have been launched over the years. Again, all 8-bit titles were converted to a good standard.



BOMBJACK II

Encore £2.99
C64, Specc, Amstrad

Dino had high hopes for the sequel to the late platform classic in Spring '87. Although the game play never really matched that of its stable mate Bubble Bubble, it was a good, addictive, platform challenge nonetheless. The cute character from the original game is not quite so cute in this sequel as he comes armed with a knife to deal with his adversaries. The floppy has a semi-3D effect as BU leaps onto the screen as he explores his platform. These are scattered with treasure which BU must collect — being careful to avoid the mutated dinosaurs who would prefer to keep the treasure themselves. Not in the first division with Bubble Bubble but in the same league.



CRYSTAL CASTLES

Hit Squad £2.99
Amstrad, C64, Spectrum



A paper pile of newspapers are up for grabs if our delivery boy can avoid the Hammer 20.

MIG 20 - SOVIET FIGHTER.

Codemasters £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Codemasters' choice of aircraft for the arcade game is very clever: NATO calls the Russian jet as the best fighter to emerge from their designers' pens. Although the USSR will not admit it, informed sources think it is a match for the F15 Falco.

Unfortunately you cannot get much of an idea of what the plane is like as it appears very small on screen, and there is no manual at all. Gameplay makes up for it though, being Defender-like as you pick up bonuses for bonus points. Not a real simulator - but it still has lots of stats to be watched - fuel, distance, weapons, to name but three. Best of all though, this is your turn to be the enemy.



ALIEN SYNDROME

Real £2.99
Atari ST, Amiga

This Sega course gathered a cult following in the arcades in 1987.

By the end of level number 12 made up of what looked like a mass of giant bats' eyes could really make you think if you happened to wander into your local arcade after a gaming lull, it's a few directional controls with an overhead perspective - in the style of Gauntlet.

The aim of the game is to rescue your colleagues whom the aliens have caged in 16 cells along the walls of each level. As you set about doing this you will also have to evade the aliens who are determined to hang on to their captives.

By comparison with the latest conversions for 16-bit machines Alien Syndrome now looks very tame. Graphically the 16-bit versions compared favourably to the coin-op original. Fine for a while but lacking in long term appeal.



Make for a moderately amusing game.



GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Brooks £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad



Arms outstretched, the living dead are everywhere after the Ghosts and Goblins - in his quest to rescue his princess.

Ghosts and Goblins was one of the first really huge arcade adventures to appear in the arcades. It was so big, and so tough that you had to pump pockets full of change into it to get anywhere. For this reason most people believed the Capcom title would consist of little to home use.

Well indeed it did. You play a knight in shining armor sent on a mission to rescue a princess. Travelling horizontally you have to evade the various ghosts, ghouls, and living dead who emerge from their graves to thwart your quest. Well decorated with Maguire accolades when it was launched in Aster 86 and, in 1989, a solid budget purchase.



Another cult coin-op classic is about to invade not on budget, and luckily for you if you missed it the first time - highly likely as its launch at full price three years ago was a strangely low key affair. Strange when you consider that the 3D Pacman style game was one of the most addictive cabinets ever to stand in an arcade. You play the part of Fred, by the first who must gather all of the gems (dots) around the floor of lightless ice structures. Each level must be completely clear before progressing to the next and Wileys must make use of the lifts, pellets, ramps and ice-axe powerups if he is to succeed. The skeletons, bees, Gerni Gators and Bermuda the witch are keen looking on to the game. Ultimate boredom yet totally unobscure die arcade entertainment.



MONTY ON THE RUN

Kix £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Go there with the best of platform games produced for the home systems. Monty has two main strengths - funover in abundance and a brilliant 'Looty Tunes' style sound track. The aim of the game is get the recently escaped from freedom prison Monty safely out of the country on a chivalrous tunnel before the cops catch up with him. Various bats have to be evaded and used if Monty is to succeed. The puzzles are intricate as the game plays with great speed. A fine platform classic.



PAPERBOY

Brooks £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

The Atari coin-op became Ellen's biggest ever hit in the Aster of '86 and its software proof of the fact that a paperboy's job is a tough one. Plop on your slippers like filled with a basket and get those papers delivered. If the sounds tell, law is strict that in the States it is acceptable for paperboys to sling the papers into the gardens without dismounting. The speeds things up a bit but it's still no pushover with hazards that include cars, workmen, drunkards, and aggressive lawbreakers out to cripple you. Bonus points can be earned by lobbing the papers through the windows of non-subscribers. Maybe not should by this. Several levels, and extremely well included graphics on 8-bit format make for a budget classic, worth two pints of anyone's beer.



ARCADE FLIGHT SIMULATOR

Codemasters £2.99
C64

Arcade Flight Simulator from Codemasters is a bit heavier on the arcade than on the simulator. Don't expect anything akin to Air-Don in this one. Having said that it does have a bit more to it than simply flying around the screen blasting the enemy. You have to refuel, check your ammo, and drop bombs on enemy targets. As you progress through the levels there are more targets to be taken out. Some real aerial combat scenes.

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NINTENDO UPDATE

Whatever the attractions of the new 16-bit consoles, Nintendo owners can still take comfort from some of the best gameplay on offer.

Nintendo are emerging as the EM of computer games. With a virtual monopoly of the games scene in America and Japan and a rapidly growing empire in Europe, their power is astounding. In recent years this power has been used to file up exclusive rights to almost every major console licence going. Big name Japanese companies like SNK, Taito, Capcom, and Sega have all signed deals with Nintendo. This is good news for Nintendo owners - but bad news if you own anything else, as Nintendo will be able to use their muscle to block the launch of these games on any other system.

Here are four of the latest offerings, including a real gem: Tetris, running on the Gameboy hand-held. Playing Tetris on the home with head-phones on is an experience worth paying a lot of cash for...

IKARI WARRIORS

Two player warlike in the jungle

SNK's Ikari Warriors is typical of the new wave of titles. You won't see it on the PC Engine, Sega, or any other console. It's a two player shoot 'em up where you and a chum as Paul and Vince with secret orders to invade an enemy nation!

The game proceeds in four divisions - Commandos as loaded as enemy troops come in you. Stacks of power ups are up for grabs to help the dynamite duo in their manoeuvres. There are grenades which you will need to take out the pill boxes, tanks, gates and choppers.

Brain work is the key to success in Ikari Warriors. You need to advance in planned stages - involving each other as you advance at times. Tacky situations can be avoided by picking up 'X' power ups. These act as smart bombs - wiping out everything on screen.

Graphics are convincing - particularly the

opening screen which shows Paul and Vince's plane crashing into thick jungle foliage. The over head view of the game itself is characterised by desert, jungle and rivers - with the enemy emerging from native huts, and barbed wire...

As a shoot 'em up Ikari Warriors isn't going to win any awards. The game play seems a bit dated - particularly in the way the power ups work. You don't have any control over them as you do - say in *Q*bert*. The conversion has the speed of the arcade original but is slightly let down by vast differences in graphics.

If you think the console go for it. But make sure you have *Gradius* in your collection before you buy Ikari or any other Nintendo shoot 'em up.

£29.99 on cartridge.

Wanted: Simple shoot 'em up with little testing appeal.



Ikari Warriors was quite liberally a monster hit in the arcades. Here is a hunting experience on the Nintendo.



GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Spooky goings on in Nintendo land

This classic Capcom coin-up provided a tough challenge for gamers when it hit the arcades in the Summer of '86. You had to pump pounds worth of coins into it to explore its seemingly endless fairy tale world. Thankfully, its conversion to play at home gives you a more realistic chance of cracking it.

You are cast as a Knight in Shining armour clad eventually - when you find the armour that it was his. To progress the beautiful princess locked behind a castle (used by the devil - Zorro).

Wise up! It may be a costly job but it's cute, addictive and good fun.

There are seven levels to be explored before you come face to face with the Devil - beyond the seventh gate. Various weapons need to be picked up and used if your knight is to defeat the various ghosts, goblins, living dead and zombies that the devil brings into conflict against your knight.

Your weapons are Torches, Swords, Axes, Crosses, and Jewels. Tearing up is essential when you confront the end of level demons. You dream on to win a key to the next level.

The success of the coin-up was largely to do with the fairy tale appeal of the graphics. The castles, churches and graveyards were so convincing that it was easy to lose yourself in the atmosphere of the game. The Nintendo struggles to emulate this world - with very glibly graphics. The game play still manages to provide a tough challenge that is going to take some time to complete.

Lots of hidden characters and pitfalls will be discovered as you play the game - like a Magician who has an annoying habit of turning you into a frog, and the Red Devil who seems invincible.

The trouble with the Nintendo is that, despite it having a library of coin-up conversions far larger than any other console or

The arcade hit comes to Nintendo, but will it prove as popular?

computer, the machine lacks the graphical power to emulate them effectively. This is not a problem in some of the excellent original Nintendo titles like the Mario series - where the games have been designed within the framework of the NES's capabilities. But in games like Ghosts and Goblins it is really stretched. Having said that - it is still recommended to fans of the series-up. All of the game play is there.

\$29.99 on cartridge

Verdict: Arcade adventure that you won't want to put down until you have rescued the prisoners.

RUSH 'N ATTACK

All Russians and save per charm

Rush 'N Attack will be more familiar to most gamers as Green Beret - which was what the game was called in the UK. The Rush 'N Attack title was the American name for the game. For reasons that lesser to Nintendo they have decided to market the game under its American handle in the UK.

If you are now totally confused let us remind you of the scrolling shoot'em up with the impressive military backdrop of a naval base, a missile base, army barracks, and air force base.

The aim of the game is to rescue the hostages that are taken to a port awaiting the living squad. As you dash from left to right the enemy soldiers come at you in waves. Armed with a commando rifle you will also need to pick up a shoulder mounted bazooka if you are in progress to the next level.

The secret of the game is timing, leap, stab, and run at just the right moment to kill the enemy and get on to the next strategic point in the game.

Green Beret/Rush 'N Attack is everything you could ask for in a 'leaping if' shoot 'em up. It runs the way you can go a bit - climbing onto tanks or planes, without degenerating into a total platform exercise.



Green Beret, an Atari hit now on Nintendo. Same game - different title!

Best thing of all about it though is its end game sequence - assuming that you are macho enough to get there. And no, AOE is not going to describe it for you just so you can brag that you did it all on 'er lard.

\$29.99 on cartridge

Verdict: Good, tough arcade conversion that doesn't suffer at all from NES's weak graphics.

TETRIS

The hard hat standard

OK, so the Atari Lynx hand held may have a full colour LCD display. It may have a processor that moves faster than an Amiga. It may also have software like California Games and stacks of other 'quality' American games waiting in the wings but I would trade all of these for just one go on Game Boy Tetris.

If ever there was a computer game argu-

ment for Gameboy Tetris has to be it. Designed by a team of Moscow University students the game takes Space Invaders, turns it inside out, adds a geometrical jigsaw puzzle challenge with a few fancy elements thrown in.

You get just one go. The aim is to place the squares, oblongs, L' shapes, rods, and single cubes together in such a way that they form a solid horizontal line. Using your game controller the same as a joystick in Nintendo four directional pad you can rotate the shapes, to find the best position for them to fit the puzzle.

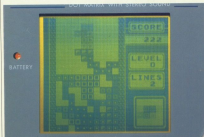
If you can learn it the second they appear on screen then you can whizz them into position with your controller by keeping your finger pressed in the direction you think it will fit.

It's simple to learn, yet extremely difficult to master. For this very reason it is the best game you could think of to convert to a hand held. It doesn't need flash graphics or sound - although in the sound department it performs pretty well on the Game Boy in full stereo through Nakamichi-style head phones.

The beauty of Tetris is it gives a hand held game in it gives a purpose to the seemingly pointless pursuit of computer game high scores. Everyone wants to hit ten occasionally - on a train, a bus, or even in a Cornish hotel without spring water to make a 15-min break from a heavy workload of transcendental meditation. Tetris is so totally absorbing, addictive, and easy to get into that it achieves this far better than anything else that currently exists in the growing library of portable computer entertainment. It is, in fact, a meditation in itself.

\$29.99 on cartridge

Verdict: A game to test a lifetime. It is to silicon what Chess is to cardboard and wood.



Tetris - a deceptively simple idea makes a superb brain game. The blockbuster social computer game is now available for the Gameboy!

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ADVENTURE

INDIANA JONES GETS HIS OWN GRAPHIC ADVENTURE

For those of you who saw any of the Indiana Jones movies, and came out of the cinema wondering what it would be like to actually live a hero, your chance has now arrived in the graphic adventure version of the US Gold arcade game.

The first thing you notice about Indy is its impressive packaging. Aside from the six loose theme tin disks that the CD version comes on, there is a code translation table with its transparent film decoder, and a sixteen page copy of the Dr Henry Jones's Great Plans, containing various clues and background information for the game. Already you are



Next place, but the animation is a bit dodgy.

colly, Indy can generally out-punch them by just speed.

The graphics are mostly of a high standard, as you would expect for this type of game. The backgrounds are all well drawn and in many cases animated. Simple effects, such as lighting, combined with some clumsy effects really enhance the atmosphere. Although small, each character is well defined and detailed but their animation is simple and unconvincing. In the movies, the characters become smaller still, and only the small section of screen directly in front of our hero, is visible.

Sound is reasonably well implemented,

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US GOLD/LUCASFILMS follow arcade action with graphic adventure

beginning to feel the part and you haven't even switched on your computer!

The game itself is an arcade-adventure in older style to previous Lucasfilm/US Gold releases (as McRackin and the After Mordorians). The main action takes place in the centre of the screen, any game messages or dialogue appear above it, and below it your inventory and a list of verbs. The game is controlled almost entirely by the mouse, sentences can be constructed by clicking on the appropriate words, and Indy himself is moved around by using the 'walk' verb and pointing the cursor in the action window. The addition of a 'find it...' verb allows you to identify any object that may be of significance.

Your first task is to locate the computerised version of the Great Plans, which can be opened up at key moments to give additional clues to those in the written version. Having found that, it's off to 'leave to search for the entrance to the first of the maze sections, the catacombs, and a clue to the location of the Holy Grail. All subsequent locations are taken straight from the film, but your correct course of action is not necessarily the same as Henry's.

The puzzles are not particularly difficult but at times you may wish to reveal to heaven our brain and light, rather than argue your way out of trouble. Although pitfalls can be rewarding, giving holy extra items, using a light has a nasty tendency to end the game. Combat is the weakest aspect of the game - as you would expect from an adventure-oriented release - and as there are only three punches and three blocking moves, fighting is easily mastered, and although opponents vary in dif-

LANDSCAPE	85
Background graphics are attractive and well defined, but the character animation could have been better.	
INTERFACE	80
The graphics interface of this game isn't really intuitive, although it has several inventory tags and the combat system is a breeze.	
CHALLENGE	80
Lots to do, but don't expect to reach your heroic status.	
SYSTEM	80
For the mouse click mapping? (Requires an extension from the McRackin, but another tag away from the ultimate ultimatum to the last gold mining?)	

ACE ADVENTURE RATING 820

Strong atmosphere makes the game difficult to appreciate, but no doubt you would want to return to it once it has been completed.

RELEASE BOX

CD-ROM	£14.95 (3 disks)	MINI-DISK
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there is the obligatory missing condition of the film's theme tune and some well-used verb effects, but the cacophony that accompanies the first maze is irritating rather than atmospheric.

The main problem with this game is the constant disk accessing, every new location has to be loaded in. This is not helped by having the game spread over six disks, so there is a fair amount of disk swapping to be done as well. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the puzzle clues before each load, leaving you staring at a blank screen until the next is ready to be drawn. Worse still is that the consequences of many of Indy's actions also have to be loaded in, which is totally inconvincible when many of them are only simple animations lasting a couple of seconds. On occasion, certain actions, not least when loading a saved game, require several disk swaps, often using the same disk several times! The programmers could have arranged their code so that actions that follow one another are on the same disk!

This aside, there is much to recommend about the game. It is very well presented and has tremendous depth. The majority of the problems are not too hard, particularly for people who have seen the film, and being unable to solve one puzzle does not necessarily lead to a dead-end, as not all need to be solved to complete the game. Even so, it is not a game that will be finished overnight, as each of the main features is a game in itself.

Fans of the Indiana Jones movies will get a lot from the program, but be warned: progress can be very slow.

— Tony Rubin

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CTW Survey '89 CTW Survey

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7. Commodore User
8. Gamesweek
(Combined with Pop mid-Feb)
Sinclair User
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IT'S HORRIBLE!

Horrorsoft are launching a game endorsed by the American vamp
Elvira, a gal with a great...er...future...er...in front of her...

Elva Maitoni of the Dark lady's fame. By figure as she settles into the deep padded chair in the lounge bar of the Charleston Hotel Mayfair. A pot of tea is infused and duly appears with a side plate of buns, scones, Minc, and Rich Tea biscuits. ACE's reporter is beginning to feel nervous. Where's the vamp with the huge bosom, clinging black dress with plunging neckline, her rich spicy heels and long black wig?

All in her hat! Cane, alas, as Elvira is all packed to jet off to Las Vegas in the morning where she is about to carry out another personally-endorsed for a new petrol table.

Wearing trousers and a linen cardigan she couldn't have looked less like the sexy star of America's hit *Elvira* television horror show. Elvira is the alter ego of American Actress Cassandra Peterson, her character introduces the coast to trend TV show from a haunted house ga-ga jet set.

The show consists of reviews of old horror classics. Elvira introduces the films, usually seductively before the commercial breaks, and interrupts every so often to state a wry comment on the actual or the plot. Her wags are picked up by her army of fans and she has come up with some outstanding pot downs in the night years the show has been running. One like explained to her 'why they put fan bags on anyone's mouth' was so bad that 'even the audience who use it on a plane walked out'.

Movie *Macabre* started out as a local show in the Los Angeles area in 1981. Since then Elvira's popularity has spread to almost every TV station in America. The movie reached new pith in Los Angeles in 1987 when Elvira's high rating was broadcast in 33. Maitoni reported sales of 2.2 million pairs of 30 pinners in LA alone.

TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ELVIRA

- (1) The famous Elvira body measures 34D-24-34 and is 5'6" inches tall.
- (2) Elvira's favourite horror film is "Phony 3 From Outer Space".
- (3) Most sexy female vamp apart from Elvira? "There isn't one".
- (4) Favourite male actor - Michael Caine.
- (5) Most terrible thing about London "you gun drive on the wrong side of the road".
- (6) Favourite Elvira endorsed product "The most expensive one".
- (7) Favourite brand of tomato ketchup - "The health shop one without additives - garden lady health value".
- (8) Elvira has never been to Transylvania but her brother is in law firm.
- (9) Elvira was the last recipient of one of the original *Oracula Society Awards*.
- (10) Elvira has an Apple Macintosh at home but never uses it plus games.

Elvira has become a major star of horror. Gary Nisman said of her 'Elvira is outstanding...well two bits of her anyway'. This popularity has spawned dozens of fan clubs and - in true American fashion - warehouses full of Elvira endorsed products. 'You can get records, posters, greeting cards, make up...costumes, books, models, wigs, a Petal Gate from Williams (and, shortly, a computer game courtesy of Horrorsoft).

Elvira hasn't seen or played the computer game but she knows all about it.

'Elvira sets up these Horror Recorders in a castle which has been taken over by an evil force. You have to find the Sorcal of Spiritual Mending to stop the wicked Director from raving the world'.

Despite being well briefed about the computer game Elvira's eyes really light up with genuine enthusiasm when asked about...the petrol table...

'That's my thing. It's got me actually speaking in it. It's great fun, the enthusiasm for the petrol is sure to understand when you learn she gets ten free ones as part of the deal. What are you going to do with ten petrol tables?'

'I'll have one at home, give one to my Mum and Dad they collect all my stuff and probably use the others for charity promotions'.

The Elvira video and computer game will be in the shops at the end of the month.

GREAT NEWS!

The adventure column has been severely limited in recent months, but we are now delighted to announce that from next issue, the column will be edited, expanded, and ruled with a rod of iron by Pat Winterton.

ACE readers should already be familiar with Pat - she used to contribute a regular column (Pat's Posh) on adventure utilities and she currently runs the *SPAC User Group*.

Pat will be guiding this column through the coming months, at a time when the adventure market is changing as never before. As well as reviews, guides, and tips, the column will also feature regular analysis of new developments in computer fantasy. Stay tuned!



TIME TO TRAVEL ON...

Charmatops have been releasing new releases in their native France for their Future Wars - Time Travelers adventure. The game is the work of Paul Calais who has spent the last three years developing the player interface.

It comes as no surprise to regular ACE adventures readers that there are similarities

with James Leavelle's *Ball Larry and Police Quest*, games in the animation and large number of graphical locations. We're already pointed out in past issues how popular the SierraOn-Line range is in the States...and even traditional companies like Magpie's *Scrooge* are casting envious glances at the system and talking about doing more animation.

Despite first impressions, however, the interface itself on *Time Travelers* is surprisingly similar to a traditional adventure. A window offers a number of choices on each location. Apart from the obvious direction options, there are

PALACE are launching a new French graphic adventure.

also examine, search and talk options.

The commands are implemented very quickly - giving all of the puzzling fun of an absorbing adventure without the hassle of typing in lengthy commands and watching your thumbs while the computer considers its response.

The storyline is a strong one. Earth is under attack in the 43rd century from an alien race. The advanced SDI defence system has been undermined by the aliens traveling back in time and planting bombs at strategic points before the defenses were built. Your quest starts in the present and brings you to the Middle Ages, Prehistoric times and the distant future.

Throughout the game the French flair for graphics is very much in evidence. Look out for a full review of this ST, Amiga, and PC title in next month's ACE.



Out and about in Future Wars...

NO PROBLEM!

Jean-Francois telephoned me last month to complain about my giving her solution of *Beats of Darkness* which she had sent when I was writing the *Player's Journal*. Jean tells me she doesn't believe in solutions being printed - particularly since it means she gets less calls on her telephone!

Well, Jean, I have to agree about computer solutions, but I made an exception with *Beats of Darkness* because it is one of the most interesting games I have ever come across, and I can well understand why publishers' Taskwad want to be shortly after releasing it.

And as far as calls are concerned, by now *EVERYONE* ought to know about Jean's helpline service, which has been going for several years and has stocked up literally thousands of calls. You can contact her on 0202 7941 55 and she can give help on most games.

Meanwhile, here's a brief selection of tips from the files of *The Player* and *The White Wizard*...and thanks to Mark Penfold, Jason Wiley, and 'Janet' for sending them in! Robert Morgan of *Magpie* should be pleased - we've got the solution to the first part of *Minifighter* that he so urgently requested!

SORCERER OF CLYMARQUE CASTLE

The kitchen needs examining more carefully!

KENTILLA

To prevent a good-ol' fry up with Zeids, give her a human present at Timandra. This allows you to get the scroll!

MORONON'S QUEST

Don't recall that Gordon moment while in the arena. Don't refer to the Tele-sport shop; they're out of stock.

STATIONFALL

Look at your watch and the chart before launching. Getting into the village is a pressing problem.

BUREAUCRACY

Mail order print? Read vertically. For cut-ride to airport the dough must be authentic.

For ID and password include hyphen!

LINKING HORIZON

A meal is the key - try the fridge and then the microwave. Actually (remains the White Wizard) some of the responses regarding the master key are a bit misleading; suffice it to say that you will be able to borrow it once you've fed it's owner.

ZZIZ

To enter mansion, by door. When window opens climb vine. Then climb down.

KARLETH

Spin bar by Mokikey. The tablet strap takes you to a dime. The coin is in the ruins of the citadel.

TROG TIMES

Grapple in the tower on the island. To free use pagones.

KENTILLA

To the rope in the skeleton then pull. Then pull again.

MINIFIGHTER

Help with part one...

Examine the rubble at the civic centre ruins.

Give the snowstorm to Gary.

Break the cobwebs in the building to find the hidden object.

Don't drink the water. It is contaminated.

Use the wrench and the chest to break the chains in the ruined building.

Wear the gas mask in the industrial wasteland.

A ship will arrive in the docks at 3pm on Wednesday.

Give the dead dog to the robot boss.

To get into a tunnel - INHALE, HOLD BREATHE!

To metamorphose you need to be in a horse, then METAMORPHOSE!

PHOEN

To destroy the ship, empty the petrol, burn the rig with the lighter, and run off the ship.

After finishing your tasks in Part One, go to the fence and

1

Vigilante from US Gold

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3

The New Zealand Story from Ocean

Fiction-based under that will have your standing in your hand.

Really Nelson has created for you 20 of story that's friends from the New Zealand you, and if they don't make them all by reading they'll be stuffed, covered and available at Main's table.

New Zealand Story is incredibly cute. It is an amazingly addictive game, and the difficulty being for those who just right.

Amiga Format 80%



New Zealand Story	Price	Code
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Atari ST	Cash £ 9.99	8F10022
Amiga	Cash £ 4.99	8F10022



4

2

Indiana Jones The Last Crusade from US Gold

Relive the greatest action scenes from the greatest movie of all...

The game is played on four action-packed levels and will become the classic two-for-one arcade game.

You have the opportunity to increase your personal score with every featured stage, valuable object found and enemy dispatched.

■ A copy of the "Indiana Crusader" which includes the manual and photo CD, is included with the software.

■ An added feature of a flip-along title to capture and hold on to all objects.

The graphics are superb, the action is fast and the game is easy to play!
ST Format 80%.

Indiana Jones - The Last Crusade

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SHADOW OF THE BEAST



IN THE PINK

This month's Pink Pages give important notice of a **whole new section** – **The ACE Stockmarket**, in which up to date market research will be giving the **definitive Final Verdict** on the games we play every month. There's also good news for competitors – we've really taken the **puzzle and crossword sections** in hand for the first time since the transfer of the ownership of the magazine. We'd like to apologise for the delay in printing **prize winners**, but now you can turn to the section beginning on page 51 and find out whether you've **struck lucky**. We're delighted to announce that the teething period is now over, and from now the Pinks will be **bursting with health**.

The **ACE Guide To The Games You Have To Have** adds in a whole new section as well this month – on **console games**. Even if you don't have a console this section gives **important information** that could affect your buying decision, especially since buying a console is all about **software choice** rather than hardware specifications.

However, if you're looking for a new computer and **concerned about specs**, you'll be pleased to hear that next month will see the return of the **ACE Upgrade Guide**. We're currently working on this section to make it better than ever before – and it will include a **far greater range of machines**, complete with up-to-date sales information – **just in time for Christmas!**

Finally, we haven't forgotten those **greedy so-and-so's** who like to get **something for nothing**. There are the infamous **Pink Pages compos**, in which software houses fall over each other to shower **lucky readers with gifts**.

The Pinks...Britain's only **blushing guide** to computer entertainment...

THE ACE STOCK MARKET

NEXT MONTH ACE WILL BE LAUNCHING A WHOLE NEW SECTION: THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO GAMES REVIEWS IN THE UK. YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIND OUT - AT A GLANCE - WHICH GAMES ARE WOWING THE REVIEWERS, AND NOT ONLY THAT, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WALK AWAY WITH SOME GREAT PRIZES EACH MONTH!

Buying software is still something of a gamble. Even when you've started through the reviews, examined the screenshots, and peered over someone's shoulder to see the shop demo, you still can't be 100% sure you'll be playing the game *exactly* in six months time - never mind six weeks or even six days time. And with full-price titles still mostly over a tenner and 16-bit games near £20-£25, buying software is an investment. An investment in which you can't be at all sure of your return.

Here at ACE we hope to make investing in games both more a little less fraught with peril... and give you some fun to boot. Welcome to the ACE Stock Market... and as an ACE reader you automatically qualify for a place on the ACE Stock Exchange floor.

Here to help you (or check up on) companies' track records and their performance over the months, not in financial, professional terms - we'll use that in *The Economist*, thank you - but based simply on the quality of their output releases.

You'll be able to monitor publishers and their publishing habits, watch their fortunes rise and fall through the retail market in the pre-Christmas season or games fairs/retail cut from every software house under the sun, to the four markets of the summer months, when sales and output often drop to a trickle.

We'll be tracking the performance of every game in every review published in the UK. We'll monitor how highly each title sales people, and how well its graphics and sound capabilities score. And when we've compiled the mountain of statistical data, we'll hand it over to an expert in the field.

We've enlisted the aid of a qualified data-processing and market research professional, Geoffrey Hughes, to develop a set of statistical counters that will sort all these numbers to give a meaningful set of figures of the and - games' quality 'share price' for each month's set of releases for each publisher. It will take into account indeed all ratings, weighted against the number of games produced. There will be an overall figure and separate scores for graphics and sound.

The counters will make allowances for individual past sales (two-fifths a title regularly-rated games higher than other magazines, for example) and will also take into account the different reviewing systems used. We hope to be able to cover graphics and sound ratings as well as overall numbers at a later stage.

As competition between publishers throughout the year, you'll be able to keep your own portfolio of their progress. Then, when it comes to buying games, you'll be better informed about the track record of the best (or worst), and the amount of risk involved.

THE TRADING COUNTERS

The ACE Stockmarket will be divided into 'Trading Counters'. Each of these counters will cover a specific area of the market place (the counters are described below) and will quote 'prices' and market positions. Prices will be awarded to ACE readers who can pinpoint these prices and positions in advance. A full explanation of the system will be printed in next month's ACE together with the first entry form. Alternatively, you can get details by sending an A4 stamped addressed envelope to The ACE Stockmarket, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

THE 8-BIT COUNTER

It's difficult one this, since you can't always be sure which title will corner the field. This is an opportunity for some real risk taking. All Continental Europe really cut the market on the smaller machines! One thing's for certain - this counter is going to put a lot of very hard into the 8-bit debate...

THE 16-BIT COUNTER

Here you can find out which is the most highly rated 16-bit game of the month. Can you predict which titles Ataris and ST owners will be using most in the future. All Microsoft's interface has to be the best of the market? Is it PowerSoft's one to watch? If you've got your finger on the pulse, you could get your hands on some big big prizes.

THE MACHINE COUNTER

This counter will test the various titles of MACHINE POWER. It will enable you to not only see which game the reviewers are really tipping for your money. But why will it help you to decide which games to invest in, it will also give you a chance to measure your knowledge of your niche's capabilities for certain types of software. Pick the right games in the right positions, and you could get very pretty.

THE COMPANY COUNTER

Now it's where the fun really starts. Using almost 100 companies are taking the breathers in the market (SMB). Each a company title to see up the market on the back of a single introduction file, or all the goods (and many at the top of the league) for the American software houses ruling the UK scene, or a stream heading to own? Get it right, and get rich, well, almost!

TITLE FIGHT...

Here's a selection of recent titles together with average ratings to give you some basic data that will help you take over the ACE Stockmarket floor when trading opens next month. Start your research now - you're going to need to track the performances of games AND software houses - this list is based on actual reviews published in recent weeks and is **UNLARGE GAM** so don't miss the opportunity!

GAME	SOFTWARE HOUSE	SCORE
Rock Dangerous	Firebird/Microprose	85
Sinder	US Gold	88
James II	Image Works	93
Tank Attack	CDS	78
Fast Break	Accolade	49
Oil Imperium	ReLine	78
Castle Warrior	Delphine/Palace	60
Shufflepuck Cafe	Domark	71
88 Points Bulletin	Domark	75
Turbo	Microlossions	85
Shadow of the Beast	Pygmalion	87
Battle Valley	Hexxon	81
Genial Wing	Virgin Mastertronic	61
New Zealand Story	Ocean	88
Rainbow Islands	Firebird/Microprose	87
Passing Shot	Image Works	65
Paperboy	Dile	79
Popolco: The Promised Land	Electronic Arts	86
Blade	Firebird/Microprose	58
Thunderbirds	Grandlam	86
Conflict Europe	Image Works	71
Senatch Freddy	Mindscape	83
Leonardo	Starbyte	71
Jack Nicklaus Golf	Accolade	64
801	Microstyle	68
King Arthur	Infocom	82
F16: Combat Pilot	Digital Integration	89
Robocop	Ocean	49
Great Courts	Ubi Soft	78
Sleeping Gods Lie	Empire	76
Barbarian II	Palace	76
The Champ	Line!	45
Chariots of Wrath	Impressions	71
State of the Art	Line!	38
Indiana and the Last Crusade	US Gold	61
Journey	Infocom	78
Nightswan	Magic Bytes	63
Alan Lupin	Gamestar	36
Beam	Magic Bytes	72
Grand Prix Circuit	Accolade	51
Kut	Exoco	86
SD	Activision	57
Sam and Jerry	Magic Bytes	47
Spots	Tempan/Domark	81
Suban III	Tycooft	80
Navy Moves	Dynamic	34
Sim-Play Basketball	Mindscape	75
Snatch	Virgin	77
Approth	Hexxon	71
Justice to Kill	Domark	71
801	Greenin	69
High Steel	Screen 7	39
Proba	Image Works	72

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Are you an ACE Stockmarket wizard? If so, you could take a slice of the cake each month as we dish out prizes to enterprising readers...

Different people like different games - and that goes for reviewers as well, and even for magazines. Here on ACE, for example, we favour games that demonstrate originality and can be seen to further the cause of computer entertainment. But just how good is your own instinctive feeling about a game? Or about the fortunes of a software house? We're going to give you the chance to walk away with big prizes each month if you can predict the way the 'shares' are moving in the ACE Stockmarket...

HOUSEY HOUSEY

We'll also be printing each month the names of the software houses whose products feature in Block Exchange ratings, and their order of ranking according to the reviews they've received in the current survey period. If you fancy your knowledge of the games scene, you can join in by sending us your predictions for future months: if you can name the top five software houses you'll pick up a valuable prize (details in the Stockmarket Launch Issue next month). Beats the stockmarket any day...

HIGH PERFORMANCE

You can also win prizes by naming the top five games for any of the top machines in correct order. There are further prizes going each month for the man who hits the nail on the head.

BONUS PRIZES!

If either prize goes unclaimed, it's added to the jackpot for the following month. Market conditions are pretty tough out there, so expect to see some pretty hefty prizes building up during the months ahead...

Finally, we'll be offering regular bonus prizes, so keep tuned to The Final Verdict and sharpen both your wits and your pencil!

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THE GAMES YOU HAVE TO HAVE...

SOMETIMES YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO FACE UP TO THE TRUTH. YOUR SOFTWARE COLLECTION IS GETTING YOU DOWN, YOUR DOG'S SICK, YOUR FRIENDS ARE CONVINCED IT WAS YOU THAT LOST THE WINNING POOLS COUPON, YOUR MOTHER HAS DECIDED YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR IMAGE, AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND (OR BOYFRIEND) HAS JUST BEEN EATEN BY A BOTTLENECK...THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT...GO OUT AND GET A NEW GAME. AND TO MAKE SURE YOU REALLY SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE, HERE'S A LIST OF GAMES YOU'VE JUST GOT TO ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION.

ARCADE STYLE

Including coin-op conversions. Games with a high fun factor and plenty of addictive action feature in this category.

ARKANOID

Amiga • Spectrum
\$7.95 • C64 \$8.95
\$2.75 • Amstrad
\$8.95 • £14.95 •
Mac/SE/II \$8.95 •
Ami 27 £14.95 •
MSX \$8.95 • MSX PC
\$2.95

Conversion from Atari's coin-op, it is still the best version of the classic breakout. Simple to control, the player controls a ball at the base of the screen, shooting it left and right. The object is to keep a ball ball intact, bouncing off walls to destroy formations of bricks in the top half of the screen. Eliminates all the bricks and more of to the top of 20 screens. Clear video features color blocks to the addictive look. A 16-bit color conversion. Advanced controls and has the a different look on the same theme and some play more, by MSX is repeat, which also points to the difficulty levels more gradual. • ACE RATED 4.5

BOUNDER

Amiga Graphics • Spectrum
\$7.95 • C64
\$9.95 • £12.95 •
Amstrad \$9.95 •
£11.95

A great arcade bounce-pong, and very addictive too. This game is full as it bounces from one platform to another, high above the vertically scrolling landscape. Land on marked squares and you can stay aloft longer or gain a mystery bonus. Fill in a gap or hit one of a game's many targets, however, and you'll lose a life. Bonus (floating) sections at the end of each level help vary the pace, and those tough gaps really keep you coming back for more. Bright, witty graphics, great music - and it's so playable. • ACE CLASSIC

BUBBLE BOBLE

Amiga • Spectrum
\$7.95 • C64 \$8.95
\$2.75 • Amstrad
\$8.95 • £14.95 •
Ami 27 £12.95

Possibly is the essence of the blockbuster coin-op conversion. This one's a friend also (sublime) drawing direction. Sweeping through 200 maze and platform screens, fighting off the "bubbles" by encapsulating them in your fish. Yes, to save them into jelly fish. More firepower and various bonuses await as you reach the more difficult levels. Continuously great fun, it's a little on the lengthy side. Can also be played as one player against the computer. • ACE RATED 4.5

CONQUEROR

Spectrum • Archonides
\$24.95 • £19.95 • £11.95

Once added to your very own clan (and the enemy is close combat and also your strategy for the campaign. This is a strategy game to get to grips with, but if you've never you'll find you soon become mesmerized by the thing. If you don't give 1MB. Much though - target it! • ACE RATED 4.5

ELIMINATOR

Amiga • Spectrum
\$7.95 • £2.95 • £4.95 •
C64 \$9.95 • £14.95 •
Amstrad \$9.95 •
£14.95 • Ami 27
£19.95 • Amiga
£19.95

Graphically wonderful modern first-person 3D FPS, which will test your joystick muscle out. It's not how you doing on the setting. Though it's tough to get to grips with at first, the addition level is so great you'll keep coming back for more. • ACE RATED 4.5

EXOLON

Amiga • Spectrum
\$7.95 • C64 \$8.95
£2.75 • Amstrad
\$8.95 • £14.95

Graphically superb but, mainly scrolling shoot-em-up which you're not, dark and jump you're not along a character's orbit blasting away at alien defences. It's not a missile-launcher are used to blast the boss, but it things are well thought out. Amstrad for extra protection and his price. • ACE CLASSIC

NEW ZEALAND STORY

Amiga • Spectrum
\$9.95 • C64 \$9.95 •
Amstrad \$9.95 •
£19.95 • Amiga £24.95

Although popular at the point is a head to head with Rainbow Islands. New Zealand Story is not a game to be ruled out. It is immense fun to play. Provides lots of varied action across many levels. Definitely worth checking out. • ACE RATED 4.5

GIDS

Amiga • Amstrad
\$29.95

A magnificent French shoot. The Gids are trying to win to save them, but the Soviets aren't going to let them go without blowing missiles, rockets and a number of other weapons at you. Included with the program is an editor facility that allows you to design your own scenarios - great stuff. • ACE RATED 4.5

PITSTOP 2

Amiga • C64 • Amstrad
\$24.95 • C64 \$9.95 •
Ami 27 £24.95 •
MSX £24.95

In competition with the Star Wars and Summer Games 21 thrilling racing game where the winners will win the and you can race the computer or a friend. Lots of different Grand Prix events, five slow-outs and of course the all-important champion awarded to give you fast Grand and your team a nice racing beat. • ACE CLASSIC

POWER-DROME

Electronic Arts • Amiga
\$24.95

This expert arcade-style futuristic driving simulator will have you enthralled for months to come. It may not have the same feel if you're used to playing with, you'll be playing this for months. • ACE RATED 4.5

PURPLE SATURN DAY

Amiga • Amstrad
\$24.95 • Amiga
£24.95

A terrific mix of games that delivers punch both on and visual. The consistently good gameplay ensures you'll enjoy playing each sub-game time and again. It's a little tricky to get the hang of, but neither it and you'll be pleased you purchased. • ACE RATED 4.5

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Amiga • Spectrum
\$9.95 • £14.95 • C64
\$9.95 • £14.95 •
Amstrad \$9.95 •
£14.95 • £14.95 •
Ami 27 £24.95 •
Amiga £24.95

The sequel to Bubble Bobble is a cutting store of fantastic. The graphics and sound are superb, as is the gameplay. One of the best and rated arcade games.

sions of the year that should not be missed.
ACE RATED 900

RVP

Morrisville, VT 05470, Amiga 629.99

RVP offers a near endless supply of fast-paced (like a rock) air-to-air war zone fronds. Attention to details paid-out at every tickle with your side going the like a push that budget into an above the norm. An excellent mix of arcade and simulation.
ACE RATED 910

SPIDERTRON-IG

En Information • Atari ST 119.95\$

Guide your spider-like character around the game area, collecting colored gems in the correct order. The built-in constructor tool means you're knocking out your best levels at the coin counter.
ACE RATED 960

SUMMER GAMES

Games 100-000 • C64 29.95 • 119.95\$ • IBM PC 129.95\$

Five sporting simulations are all high quality but none have quite captured the playability and style of the original. Summer Games and its immediate successor, Summer Games 2. One to six players can take part in high jump, gymnastics, spring-board diving, sky-diving shooting, swimming, pole-vault - and others - with lovely large graphics and smooth animation. Control of your athletes can be done also as precise as recommended.
ACE CLASSIC

SUPER SPRINT

Electric Dreams • C64 29.95 • 119.95\$
 Amended 20.95\$ Super from 20.95\$ • Atari ST 119.95\$

One of the better coin-op conversions. Currently available, 999 up to three players. All competing at once, the action is fast

and furious and it will take a fast-tuned-or-to-com-plete some-of the more torrid circuits that appear later in the game.
ACE RATED 940

THRUST

Firebird • Spectrum 41.95 • 104.41.95\$
 Amended 41.95\$

Surprisingly sensitive controls and a range of firing of realistic physics make this budget title an above the norm. Flying through the caverns of an enemy-held planet, you have to pick up fuel and destroy hostile gun targets without crashing into the target walls. Tough enough as it is, but that you'll get to shake the return journey with a heavy load thing under your craft. Very mean, very addictive.
ACE CLASSIC

URIDIUM

Firebird • Spectrum 29.95 • 104.29.95\$ 119.95\$ • IBM PC 29.95\$ • 119.95\$

The pace of resistance of scrolling shoot-em-ups: from the straight-out and attacking side-wide dodging around very tight structures. Great realistic-looking backgrounds and the smoothest scrolling - you'll see you get this build and shooters about the opposition. If game not to be missed, especially you that C64 version comes packaged with the excellent Programmer.
ACE 6 ADDED

ZARCH / VIRUS

Superior Software • Archimedes 119.95\$ • Firebird 2.5 and 99.95\$ • Amiga 29.95\$ • Atari ST 21.95\$ • Same disk version under development

A solid three-dimensional shoot-em-up with such graphic perfection and smoothly addictive gameplay that it becomes an instant classic. Now the 200k version has arrived and they're just as good as the 320k version.
ACE RATED 900

ADVENTURES

After a brief surge of RPG-related popularity, the traditional text-entry adventure is rapidly disappearing. But for those of you who savour the powers of the imagination, the verbal twist, and the thrill of encountering other characters, this game genre still has much to recommend it. Here are some of the all-time great computer fantasies...

BEYOND ZORK

Information Systems • C64 41.95 • Atari ST 124.95\$ • Amiga 41.95\$ • IBM PC 124.95\$

Information's attempt to muscle over the role-playing market is a great success. Locate the hidden Caves of Zorker in a game that combines the wit and ingenuity of one of the world's most original software companies with state-of-the-art parsing and graphics. Inherently fast with an immense mapping facility.
ACE RATED 900

CORRUPTION

Legend • Amiga ST 129.95\$ • Amiga 129.95\$ • PC 129.95\$ • Spectrum 119.95\$ • C64 127.95\$ • Atari ST 129.95\$

The tale of insider dealing, bribery and crooked business deals is welcome to appear - especially who prefer to wander through wet dungeons with walls oozing treasure. But for those who are fed up with traditional adventuring, it's like a breath of fresh air. Superb graphics, great atmosphere and a scintillating plot makes this a terrific game that goes from the start.
ACE RATED 900

FISH

Electric Dreams • PC 29.95\$ • Amiga 29.95\$

How gracefully the Corollis, better game design than Asterix, and set on sailing in the

Pearl. This is definitely NOT the land version of a Quest Of Thorns. Good stuff indeed.
ACE RATED

GUILD OF THIEVES

Random • C64 41.95\$ • Spectrum 29.95\$ • Amended 41.29.95\$ • Amiga 29.95\$ • Atari ST 29.95\$ • PC 29.95\$

One of Britain's newer adventure software houses - Magenta Studios - has again produced a fresh look treasure hunt with superb graphics and some very intriguing puzzles. Pleasant balance helps to create a convincing game world with humor and imagination.
ACE CLASSIC

INGRID'S BACK

Level 9 • Atari ST 279.95\$

A great follow-up to Queen Sargon. Level 9 has really got to grips with the use of characters in their games and how to program them very effectively.
ACE RATED 900

JEWELS OF DARKNESS

Random • C64 41.95\$ • Spectrum 129.119.95\$ • Amended 29.95\$ • Amiga 29.95\$ • PC 129.95\$ • Amiga 29.95\$ • Atari ST 29.95\$

Level 9 has put together three of their classic releases, Cobalt Adventure, Dungeon Adventure

and Adventure Quest in one bundle. The games have been updated with graphics and larger sound files and are as close to the original spirit of adventuring as you're likely to find.
ACE 6 ADDED

LURRING HORROR

Information Systems • C64 41.95\$ • ST 41.95\$ • Amiga 41.95\$ • PC 124.95\$

Information's tribute to H.P. Lovecraft and the horror-fantasy genre sends you into a hell called in your discovery something very early looking towards your college laboratory. Superb text-only game that defies you to step it after dark.
ACE CLASSIC

TIME AND MAGIC

Mandarin • Spectrum 114.95\$ • 114.95\$ • C64 114.95\$ • 114.95\$

PUZZLES

If you're after a game that will provide you with a real challenge, without necessarily requiring large doses of strategic thinking, then it's a puzzle game you want.

BONE-CRUNCHER

Superior Software • C64 29.95 • 119.95\$ • Amiga 29.95\$

At first sight this recent release may appear to be nothing more than a first-person shooter. However there are a number of innovative gameplay features which give Bone-Cruncher a feel all of its own. Righty seems intended for those who prefer to solve problems rather than shoot them.
ACE RATED 900

BOULDERDASH

From Leisure Corporation • Spectrum 62.95\$ • C64 62.95\$ • Amended 62.95\$

A game that has truly thrived - instant addiction.

Amended 62.95\$ • Atari ST 62.95\$ • Amiga 62.95\$ • PC 129.95\$

The completion of the Level 9 games, Lords Of Time, Mad Moon and The Price Of Magic have been re-written with better parsing, bigger worlds and an enhanced video. Superb value if you don't already own them.
ACE RATED 910

ZORK ZERO

Information Systems did not do much. What this space for price info. Rightly available with a variety of changes that make for instant addiction. A lot more dramatic interaction would have been fine a real hamster, but even so it remains one of the best games of the year to be.
ACE RATED

long-term challenge, for only a moment as the clock ticks down and extremely tight puzzles. The most collections hidden in corners, hiding away and hidden to get far things. Boulder Dash and Queen's Quest are almost damage, with the puzzles are often hidden in seemingly impossible walls. Complex but fun. BoulderDash is a nice fit you can't afford to miss in its budget price.
ACE CLASSIC

DEFLORER

Electric Dreams • C64 29.95\$ • Spectrum 29.95\$ • ST 29.95\$

Optics are the order of the day here but the options presented in the player have to connect a ball laser to a receiver and the same line-bending it

number of cells that are on screen as well. You'll need to make full use of the screen, fire-escape corridors and interesting and exciting big blocks! You'll need to advance your aim. Clear the first screen and you'll only have 20 more to do. Fascinating staff that's for sure! **ACE RATED 88+ - 91**

MEGALUS

Intrepid • C64, £8.95 •
£14.95 also Atari ST
£14.95 ds

Quite easy to be the first of eight players using the set of platforms, lifts and ladders that form the track. It's a highly original game that strikes a fine balance between frustration and addiction, added to which is the replay value. This makes it a great-looking, playable winner of a game. **ACE RATED 88+ - 94**

BENTONEL

Intrepid • Spectrum £9.95
C64 • £14 £9.95 •
£14.95 ds • Amstrad
£9.95 • £14.95 ds •
Atari ST £14.95 ds •
Amiga £19.95 ds

Stunning and compelling strategy game played over the computer surface of a planet dominated by the Soviet. Absolutely you have to absorb energy while trying to stop the tentacles from absorbing yours. A clear brain and fast finger fingers are both necessary in this very original challenge. 10,000 possible landscapes given. **ACE RATED 88+ - 95/94**

SKULL DIGGER

Intrepid • Atari ST £19.95

Stunningly done that completely outdoes the original on this particular machine. Again four levels stretch ahead yours dig for diamonds in caves over a hundred different screens - with a time limit for each screen. Multilevel screens on display based screens is legitimized in a shower of shooting power and with entertaining two player option. **ACE RATED 88+ - 97**

SPORE

Intrepid • C64 £11.95 •
Amstrad £11.95 • Spectrum
£11.95 ds

The winning combination of strategy, frenetic blasting and great graphics make Spore a worthy full-price release - what is for you then to be able to pick it up for £1.99? **ACE RATED 88+ - 94**

TETRIS

Microsoft • Spectrum
£8.99 • C64 £8.99 •
£11.95 ds • Amstrad
£8.95 • £11.95 ds •
Atari ST £19.95 ds •
Amiga £19.95 ds • £8 PC
£19.95 ds

A fascinating geometrical puzzle, the Russian puzzle game has the obscure mathematical logic of packing into a cut game. One of the lines, shapes fall down onto one's rectangular playing area. Left to their own devices they'll pile up and they reach the top of the screen, your task is to guide them down and past them lightly so that doesn't happen. Different variants have proved to be either variable in their difficulty aspects, but the totally simple idea behind them means they will work for you whatever your machine. **ACE RATED 88+ - 94**

THINK!

Intrepid • C64 £1.95 •
Amstrad £1.95 • Spectrum
£1.95 ds

Originally released by Amstrad, it's still good, but now available for a fraction of that from Intrepid. It's a heavily addictive game played on a full-grid either one or two players in which you attempt to connect four counters, horizontally, vertically or diagonally. **ACE CLASSIC**

XOR

Capitaine • BBC £8.95 •
£17.95 ds • Amstrad
£8.95 • £17.95 ds • Spectrum
£17.95 ds

Extremely tricky maze game involving the player controlling two strands, and collecting marks through 25 mazes, which

increase in complexity as you progress. This is later stages, but each challenge is in itself, often thinking the maze and just waiting to follow your own trail to a pre-empted

end. Later on, things get a bit harder, transformations and dots compare against you. Smooth scrolling, simple graphics, this one requires playing to complete successfully.

SPECIALS

Original works that are simply unclassifiable feature in this section.

ATF

Electric Dreams • C64
£8.95 • £12.95 •
£8.95 • £12.95 •
Amstrad £8.95 •
£12.95 • Spectrum
£8.95 • £12.95 ds

Excellent combat flight simulator that's a bit of a change for flight simulators. The simulator special is, the emphasis is on cold action, the result being a terrific hit. **ACE RATED 88+ - 95/94**

DARK SIDE

Intrepid • C64 £9.95 •
£14.95 ds • Amstrad
£9.95 • £14.95 ds •
Spectrum £9.95 • £14.95 ds

The second game using the three-axis joystick using system, which sets more of an arcade challenge. The 3D graphics are quite superb as are the action and graphics. **ACE RATED 88+ - 95/94**

ELITE

Intrepid • C64 £14.95 •
£17.95 ds • Amstrad
£11.95 • £14.95 ds •
Spectrum £14.95 •
£17.95 ds • £14.95 ds •
Amiga £14.95 ds •
Spectrum £14.95 ds

One of the best space trading games. Like all a standard for other companies to be like. One of the first space games to use vector graphics, it's a shooting and trading effort set across several galaxies, with plenty of variety in the game play. The combat logic is superb in individual ship systems, it is the greatest of games in the galaxy. Single ships with your best full combination. Either way there's a real sense of control, light and, and a big thank to

your best systems. **ACE CLASSIC**

INCREDIBLE SHINING SPHERE

Electric Dreams • C64
£8.95 • £14.95 •
Amstrad £8.95 •
£11.95 • Spectrum
£8.95 • £11.95 • Atari
ST £11.95 • Amiga
£19.95 ds

A multi-maze world where maze, sun and water combine to provide varied scenarios. Single puzzles and endless mazes (you can still have something around it). **ACE RATED 88+ - 94**

MAGNETRON

Intrepid • C64 £8.95 •
£12.95 • Spectrum
£8.95 • £12.95 ds

Puzzles and action flow faster than ever. Save the world by destroying eight satellites. Strategically from enemy ships to upgrade your own ship and your fully-made your job a little easier. The ideal game for Spectrum has looking for a similar, nice challenge. **ACE RATED 88+ - 95/94**

QUEDDEX

Thalania • C64 £8.95 •
£14.95 ds

A truly impressive and long game you must play a mazelike but through two different screens of mazes, puzzles and obstacles, all with a set time limit. This simple game conceals a host of added features to make it particularly pleasing you can carry over memories to the next screen, for example, and handle the different screens or

played in an order you wish. Excellent graphics and really absorbing play. **ACE RATED 88+ - 94**

SPECTRZY

Electric Dreams • C64
£8.95 • £14.95 •
Spectrum £8.95 •
Amstrad £8.95 • £14.95 ds

Thrilling fast pace your spinning ball over high obstacles and out last points, against a fantastic level. The game landscape is a vast system of obstacles, traps, towers and beams, which surrounded the ball traps - and 90° cuts to risk. Floor switches activate the obstacles traps, but having been in the right order can be faster than it looks. It's fast but easy and a lot of nice features, but the explanation the thing. **ACE CLASSIC**

STARGLIDER II

Intrepid • Atari ST
£24.95 • Amiga
£24.95 ds

One of the finest examples of a game using vector graphics to the full advantage, gets the odd 3D treatment and comes out looking very good. You've got a large base to compete and there's plenty of action to destroy, making the combination of blasting and explore when that starts local down the computer. **ACE RATED 88+ - 97**

TAU CETS ACADEMY

Capitaine • C64 £8.95 •
£14.95 • Amstrad
£8.95 • £14.95 •
Spectrum £8.95 • Atari
ST £19.95 • Amiga
£19.95 ds

Flight simulator, shoot 'em up and a sequel which are both excellent smooth and well put together. The attention-to-detail is impressive as you get off on learning situations as a game world. **ACE CLASSIC**

WARNING!

Games can damage your health. ACE recently learned a copy of Tetris from the real game is a member of a leading UK manufacturer who "never played games". The publisher, unfortunately, unfortunately took PC as a form. When we attempted to return the real thing we were told to "use Tetris" as the publisher on the real Tetris game. ACE received a complete game by Tetris UK.

Is Tetris you get to design your own space station craft as well. **ACE CLASSIC**

TOTAL ECLIPSE

Intrepid • C64 £9.95 •
£13.95 ds • Amstrad
£9.95 • £13.95 ds •
Spectrum £9.95 •
£13.95 ds

The final game using the Panasonic system is a bit of a departure from the last two, but it's still an incredible game. Incredibly simple to be getting around the track in the 25000 time to present the most surprising. For arcade gamers who love games, the Panasonic system is a gem. **ACE RATED 88+ - 95/94**

WIZBALL

Capitaine • C64 £8.95 •
£14.95 • Amstrad
£8.95 • £14.95 •
Spectrum £8.95 •
£14.95 ds

Second World and you get the colour features which are great on displaying the landscape and rendering the landscape very well. One of the most playable games around, despite the simple screen. **ACE CLASSIC**

'Ere, You!

Did you fit in the questionnaire on page 147? ACE UK software can be won by those who get the most stamps. Send us...

RPG

Role-playing games have exerted an enormous influence on modern game-styles. They combine the atmosphere of text adventures with the action of arcade games and the brain exercise of strategy - but their graphical presentation tends to be weaker than other game genres. Gameplay centres around developing characters by raising their experience and skill levels in conflict with other, computer-controlled enemies. All that - and a good tale...

THE BARD'S TALE II

Electronic Arts, C64
£24.95, Amiga £24.95/£30

The highly successful predecessor to Bard's Tale II: BT II has the advantage of being slightly easier to advance. The Amiga version features some very nice sampled music charts when you enter a temple and excellently coloured graphics. And of course, you can addise your favourite characters, their attributes and equipment for use in BT II.
+ ACE RATED 800

THE BARD'S TALE III

Electronic Arts, C64
£14.95/£20

The latest Bard's Tale game offers a number of refinements over its predecessors (all of which are still well worth taking a good look at). First, the graphics are better presented. Second, there are ranged combat moves from which take careful account of the distance between you and your opponents. Finally, the game's logic and requirements are easier to follow.
+ ACE RATED 800

BATTLETOCH

Infocom, PC, £29.95, £7

Battletoch features some incredible cartoon sequences, arcade-style action, role play and strategy in about a dozen

plots, full game. A full-length RPG purchase even though it comes out on an Ace rating.
+ ACE RATED 800

DUNGEON MASTER

Electronic Arts, C64
£14.95/£20

Quoted as being a 'role player in balanced Computer Entertainment', Dungeon Master offers 14 levels, loads of spells, atmospheric graphics and sound. All going to make Dungeon Master one of the best... role-playing adventures to have appeared on any machine.
+ ACE RATED 800

POOL OF RADIANCE

SSI, C64, £14.95/£20

SSI are very keen to be offered to explore the complex concept of the AD&D system on a computer, but they managed superbly. An RPG/Adventure game that will appeal to not only AD&D fans but to anyone looking for an involving game that will keep them playing for months.
+ ACE RATED 800

ULTIMA V

Origin Systems/Commodore
£40/£42.95/£40 (PC)
£29.95/£30 (Amiga) £24 (enhanced)

Automating level of detail in the role-playing info-

med era. Travel road between facing the experience and learning the magical, tactical and geographical secrets that will enable you to defeat the forces of evil for background. Superb

rom, great feeling inter-act, and tough challenges galore.
+ ACE RATED 800

WASTELAND

Electronic Arts, C64
£14.95/£20

epicard options which enable you to play with, work-out chess problems, etc against a few computer opponents.
+ ACE CLASSIC

COLOSSUS MAH JONG

SSI, C64, £9.95/£14.95/£20
£14.95/£20 (Amiga)
£9.95/£14.95/£20

Marx-style oriental game of strategy and chance. A later program and a short manual make this an easy to use and highly entertaining piece of software for veterans and novices alike.
+ ACE RATED 800 - C64

INFOGRAVES' BRIDGE

Infogrames, Amiga
£12.95/£20.95/£30
£22.95/£30

BRAIN GAMES

Fed up with mindless blasting? Want a game that offers you an opponent who's worthy of your skills? Then this is your section...

Chess Master 2000
Electronic Arts, C64
£9.95/£14.95/£20
Amiga £24.95/£30
£21.95/£26.95/£30 (PC)
£24.95/£30

Strategic chess game on the fringe, with excellent graphics. 20 or 30 square points, 12 levels of difficulty and all the playing options you could wish for. Plus some fairly silly special conditions.
+ ACE CLASSIC

COLOSSUS CHESS 4

SSI, C64, £9.95/£14.95/£20
£14.95/£20 (Amiga)
£9.95/£14.95/£20
£24.95/£30

Bested for first machine owners, with a choice of 20 or 30 size, complex levels of difficulty, and a

Change amount/matched USA shipping custom duties and labor costs in this role-playing title. The atmosphere may not be as good as the Bard's Tale series of games, but

the extra dimension of strategy from the cut-scenes and special variants of the BT games well repay
+ ACE RATED 800

Surprisingly the best of all contract bridge simulations, with large playing cards depicted against a suitable green-lane background. Plays a good game for a computer, which after all is a lot shorter in the imagination and fan department, and has fairly a wide range of systems and holding conventions which you can toggle off according to your style.
+ ACE CLASSIC

POWERPLAY

Infocom, C64, £8.95/£14.95/£20
£14.95/£20 (Amiga)
£8.95/£14.95/£20
Amiga £7.95/£14.95
£7.95/£14.95/£20

If you want to try out your general knowledge, the excellent graphics better of with this original and challenging combination of

strategy game and test their wit by the absolutely massive setting. Total Points, Powerplay a game with very pretty multi-colored and brilliant Olympus, forms of the Gods.
+ ACE RATED 800 - Amiga

SCRABBLE

Electronic Arts, C64
£12.95/£20.95/£30
Amiga £9.95/£14.95
£24.95/£30 (PC)

The hugely popular word game translated very successfully onto the micro. Fast, excellent graphics, and a surprisingly large vocabulary from 80,000 items make some change finding words in some areas slow. Good enough to give even strong human opponents a tough game at the higher levels.
+ ACE CLASSIC

WAR GAMES

Fancy yourself as a master of grand strategy, marshalling hordes of troops and sending them off to do battle on your behalf? Look no further than the ACE war games section...

ARMHEM

SSI, Spectrum £9.95/£14.95
Amiga £9.95/£14.95
£29.95/£30

One of the oldest quality wargames still in the market, Armhem was also only the latest in the field. It has all the expected elements: the scenario map editor and use of the toughest computer opponents you could ever wish to meet. A thoughtful plotting sequence which can be directed as one of the old masters.
+ ACE RATED 800

CONFLICT EUROPE

Infocom, ST, £4.95/£9.95
Amiga £24.95, PC, £34

The 15 bit progression of Theatre Europe. Lots of nice graphics and sound effects. The computer-aided intelligence was marginally sophisticated but still enough to give a challenging game. The counterbalance between strategy and instant feedback throughout. Great for beginners and veterans alike.
+ ACE RATED 800

THEATRE EUROPE

SSI, Spectrum £9.95/£14.95
£24.95/£30 (Amiga)
Amiga £9.95/£14.95
£14.95/£20

The perfect game for 8 bit users who go green with envy when they look at Conflict Europe. Theatre Europe is the forerunner to be recalled. Its fast play are well as sophisticated, but on the whole it still is one level of a game.
+ ACE RATED 800

UMS

Infocom, ST, £24.95/£34.95
£24.95 (Amiga)
£24.95, Amiga £24.95

Probably the greatest war game to date. UMS uses 3D systems enables the creation of almost any bit of military. It will set a very sophisticated and complex opponents and scenarios up. On top of this are still in some ways a very real simulation. It is long you going for more things to be useful purchase.
+ ACE RATED 800

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Dungeons Master (First Amiga)	16.95	16.95	Police Quest 2	16.95	20.95	Whod	PC/CD	PC/CD
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CONSOLE WARS

Console war is about to break out in the high street with the Sega Mega Drive and Atari of yesterday for their share in the hot up to date. The PC Engine (and the PC Engine Plus - see page 17-20) will also be available in certain specialist shops. Next year will herald the arrival of the Sega Mega Drive and possible consoles like the Game Boy and Atari Lynx. All machines sport a library of impressive games. Here is ACE's top five for each system.

NINTENDO

SUPER MARIO BROS

The undisputed king of video platform-type video adventures, Mario is a game few bought but Nintendo got to be able to play Super Mario Bros - which is packed full with bonuses. It looks dead simple to Nintendo fans, please "use the Mario name" at the beginning. But despite it remaining a hit - with eight years, each containing four 1000 new worlds to be explored. The game is controlled with exact levels, "warp" umbrellas, traps such that you never get of playing it.

ACE Rating 9/10

SUPER MARIO BROS II

Like the same story line as the first game - Princess Daisy is in trouble again and it's Mario to the rescue. The game play is entirely different, by how to collect things as you travel - "warp" will enable you to open the doors to the secret levels and some are useful at the end of the game as you continue them to play the last

machine. This time Mario can protect himself by picking up objects and following them at his enemies. Excellent but particularly when Mario continues, the game fun to the end of the game.

ACE Rating 9/10

MINE TYSON'S PUNCH OUT

Beats the previous 1987's out of any other some boxing game on any other console or computer. It's not that good like the first's hardware may be technologically soft, they can still capture an excellent game onto a cartridge. You face six opponents before coming up against Tyson. All of the punches, kicking and dodging are extremely realistic. There are also lots of historical battles.

ACE Rating 9/10

GRADIUS

The best shoot 'em up ever really available on the. There are others going through but this one is by far the best of the current range. Based on the 1981 coming with lots of power ups and outrageous difficulty levels. Very small but gets more accurate shooting and precision fire control. Extremely unique, desirable shoot 'em up.

ACE Rating 9/10

LEGEND OF ZELDA

Golden cartridge and a massive manual sort of make up for the hefty 140 price tag on the game. The control pad enables you to travel the extensive land and make connections to take part in the non-playing story. Head that console can be as good as not playing games as they are for another environment.

ACE Rating 9/10

PC ENGINE

R-TYPE III

Really amazing that you have to purchase the cards to get it right for us. They do provide sound and entertainment once you get them up and running on your Engine. Identical to previous versions in every detail. Some of the other engines actually prefer the Engine version to the arcade. You battle with the evil Bats-Legs. Some of the best thought out enemies ever to appear on the type of game. Highly detailed and a commander never seen on a home system.

ACE Rating 9/10

WORLD TENNIS

World Tennis is the PC Engine's all time sporting best. It got maximum enjoyment out of the game you must allow proper system setup. Set this, and four of you can enjoy a game of tennis. The game has everything - superb graphics, top spin, drop shots, volleys and totally convincing 3D screen capture. As if that were not enough, it also comes in for good measure.

ACE Rating 9/10

MR HELI

The 1988 hit coming in another year perfect companion on the PC Engine. Play your custom style through the dual city complex caverns - destroying enemy bases and collecting fuel capsules. A superbly fun action.

ACE Rating 9/10

GAMMED

For amateurs, spend and then playing entertain need Gammed, probably

the best shoot 'em up for the Engine. The objective is to destroy eight space fortresses in a vertically scrolling landscape. The static ships, obstacles that can power up are a visual delight.

ACE Rating 9/10

FINAL LAP

A superbly slow racing game. It will screen presentation is selectable for a two player mode to head, up to sixteen Grand Prix circuits can be chosen from thirty of them famous tracks, and there are twenty six other cars to be topped up as you attempt to get into pole position.

ACE Rating 9/10

SEGA MASTER

World Soccer - the best kick off game using for the SE and Mega Drive was the ACE first soccer game. It has superbly accurate of the player control of the ball, passing and shooting. It even has a comedy shot out randomly drawn ball.

ACE Rating 9/10

YS

A huge scrolling world full to be explored, obstacles can be captured, goods can be purchased - medieval villages, and a great deal of role playing depth is packed into the game.

ACE Rating 9/10

WONDER BOY III

The Wonder Boy series was Sega's answer to Capcom's Yoko Kamekura the Bubble Bobble and the Original Gary 100 has been turned into a

Dragon and must find Salamander. Seem to turn format back into a Wonder Boy Platform, should be up to the highest order.

ACE Rating 9/10

R-TYPE

An excellent shoot 'em up, sending the classic from shoot 'em up. All of the bits are there, and the great green space ship on level three - just a bit glitchy - highly recommended.

ACE Rating 9/10

CALIFORNIA GAMES

The classic Tony Danza sports simulator. Surfing, BMXing, park skating, skate boarding and roller skating. Superb graphics on the Sega - and bags of fun. But fun in the surfing level, but they are all great fun.

ACE Rating 9/10

SEGA MEGADRIVE

THUNDER FORCE

Of the few Mega Drive games to survive in the import shops. Thunder Force is the one that proves that the PC Engine will have some serious competition from the machine's 1990.

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

ACE Rating 9/10

the screen has never played better on any home system. The graphics are so huge, unadorned and detailed that you can almost feel every punch and kick as you battle through the levels.

ACE Rating 9/10

SPACE HARRIER II

There are 12 levels of action to find your way through the Mega Drive conversion of the classic Sega shoot 'em up. You have battle to the point with a jet pack on to take and handle along across his arm. The 3D scrolling terrain, with its chequered floor and horizon that appears to move the screen down for a 3D sensation rarely achieved on a home game.

ACE Rating 9/10

GHOLSTH/MPH OSTS

The sequel to Ghosts of Roblox has nothing been in the arcade but already the Mega Drive conversion is ready. It looks indistinguishable from the arcade original as you fight your way through 16-bit levels, in a quest to rescue the princess.

ACE Rating 9/10

SUPER THUNDERBLADE

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ACE Rating 9/10

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BUGGY BONANZA

To help celebrate the launch of its *Drivin' Force* racing-sim, unrepentant games developer Digital Magic Software is generously giving away 100 Buggy 4x cars to ACE readers.

Drivin' Force is one of the many racing-sims vying for pole-position in the Christmas games race, so to make it stand out from the crowd Digital Magic Software has some unique features, including the ability to drive a truck, formula one car, bike, car

buggy and even a jet ski. *Drivin' Force* uses a new graphic animation technique to give it an arcade feel - in terms of both appearance and speed - which DMS hopes to utilize in its future releases. *Drivin' Force* will be on sale next month for £7 (£12.95) and Amiga (£24.95). In the meantime, here's your chance to play around with a rifty little piece of buggy kit, courtesy of the guys at DMS.

To win a Dandy

Dash buggy kit car from Nikeo, all you have to do is find 500 special words (three relate to Digital Magic Software, the other three are vehicles found in *Drivin' Force*) hidden in the word grid below.

Write down the six words on the back of a postcard (including your full name and address) and send it to: 54900Y BOMANZA, ACE, Priddy Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Entries must be with us by 2nd November.

A	N	S	N	C	M	P	B	C	Y	P	Z	C	C
J	Z	B	R	T	C	E	F	A	B	C	A	G	X
U	E	Y	X	F	D	C	F	E	M	C	F	K	E
Z	Y	T	S	C	E	N	X	K	J	C	Z	I	C
P	A	C	S	C	R	P	I	C	N	P	S	R	
V	C	I	B	K	N	D	T	B	E	H	P	I	C
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R	R	G	B	F	C	T	H	C	F	G	K	L	N
Y	B	S	G	Z	R	Z	D	T	I	I	S	X	I
C	C	D	A	L	P	T	S	C	L	U	M	G	V
P	C	J	C	A	B	C	C	M	K	V	J	L	I
C	X	K	S	F	A	P	C	G	A	I	C	A	R
B	E	F	T	F	E	L	M	K	C	G	J	R	D
I	L	C	L	N	D	M	J	L	L	V	L	M	E

TAKE IT IN 'YER STRIDE

Good old US Gold is flushed with the success of its latest chart-topping Capcom coin-op conversion, *Strider*. In fact, USG is so pleased with the favourable response to *Strider* that it is giving away TEN free

Strider T-shirts and TEN free *Strider* posters...

Available across all major formats, the 10-coloured *Strider* (see review in last month's ACE, page 47) is the latest, and possibly the best, Capcom coin-op con-

version ever - and that's quite a feat considering some of Capcom's previous gaming blockbusters like *Commando*, *Operation Wolf* and *Forgotten Worlds*.

So what could be better

than being seen around town wearing your very own *Strider* T-shirt, or what about inviting a few friends round for drink, chat and a glimpse of your new *Strider* poster (displaying the wall and hiding the damp patch)? Here's all you have to do to make your dreams come true...

THE COMPETITION

Just answer the three easy questions below, and include a gameplaying tip on your favourite US Gold game (for instance, what's the easiest way to complete California Games, or have you found a hidden cheat mode in Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade?).

Which of the following games is not a Capcom coin-op?

(a) *Commando* (b) *Shovel'n'Guns* (c) *Terminator*

2. Who produced the *Forgotten Worlds* coin-op?

(a) *Capgold* (b) *Capcom* (c) *US Compap*

3. Where does Capcom come from?

(a) Japan (b) Southend-on-Sea (c) Florida

Send your answers on a postcard to:

TAKE IT IN 'YER STRIDE, ACE, Priddy Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Don't forget to include your full name, address, and that US Gold gameplaying tip. Entries must reach us by 2nd November.

ABSOLUTELY FOOTBALL CRAZY!

If the football season just isn't exciting enough for you (know what we mean Spax's supporters?) you may be able to lift your soccer blues with the latest release from fledgling software games company, Impressions. *Soccer League Soccer* is a "totally new generation" of football management simulations containing the very best features of old generation football management sims with a wealth of stunning new fea-

tures, including full player control and a vast array of player details. *Soccer League Soccer* is available now for Spectrum (£24.99 cassette) and £7.99 (CD-ROM 1994).

But enough of this free impressions publicity, what's in it for you? Well, just to get you in the soccer mood, Impressions is giving away TEN free Subbuteo kits (complete with green table cloth and goalposts with

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colour of course).
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reach us by 2nd
November.

instance: what's the
hidden cheat code
in Cyberboid, or
how do you get
past the end of
level 3-guardian in
Asteroft?

INTO THE VAL-
LEY..., ACE, Pri-
ory Court, 30-32 Far-
ringdon Lane,

LONDON EC1R
3AU. Closing date
for the competition
is 2nd November

INTO THE VALLEY...

handles attached to their feet) and TEN has pairs of foote socks (odd Heinson's Battle Valley is a lousy treat for any Amiga owner wanting to get a little bit more from a shoot-'em-up. And now, thanks to ACE and Heinson, here's your chance to lock into TEN's free copies of Battle Valley on the

Amiga...
Reviewed in last month's ACE (page 73), 815-rated Battle Valley is a strategic shoot-'em-up placing you in control of a speedy attack helicopter and a mobile armoured vehicle in a hectic attempt to thwart a deadly terrorist attack. Featuring an impressive three level parallax scroll,

booming sound FX and a decent depth of gameplay, Battle Valley gives any self-respecting Amiga gamer a run for their money. Fancy testing Battle Valley-out for yourself? Then just answer the three over-to-simple questions below - plus, include a gameplaying tip on your favourite Heinson game (for

1. In the movie Battle Beyond the Stars, which actor took the TV show The Warriors played the lead role (note: you can use Heinson character name from The Warriors)?
2. How many people took the Valley of Death?
3. What Heinson game features an armoured vehicle, an attack helicopter and a multitude of terrorists?

Send your entries on the back of a postcard (including your full name, address and that Heinson gameplaying tip) to:

- # LISTS
- Another batch of informative, interesting, intelligent and completely unique ACE lists, compiled by the ACE staff on their way to work this morning.
- 4 What's Jane Smith's telephone number?
 - 5 Et, um, it's the again, what does Old Grasper look like?

- FIVE PHONE MESSAGES RECEIVED BY US TODAY**
- 1 Er, er, oh just forget it.
 - 2 Why Haven't you reviewed Starblade II yet?
 - 3 One chicken chow-main, special fried rice and some prawn crackers.
- OUR THREE FAVOURITE CHARACTERS FROM A TV CARTOON SERIES**
- 1 Oliver from The Real Ghostbusters.
 - 2 Mafly from Wacky Races.
 - 3 Nobby from Society Doo.
- OUR THREE LEAST FAVOURITE PC**

CHARACTERS FROM A TV CARTOON SERIES

1 Penelope Pitsoop from *Wacky Races*.
2 All Smurfs.

3 Pentira from *Thundercats*.

Do you think you can do better? Or would you just? So get writing to **LISTS, ACE**, Priority

Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

STOP PRESS

SHOW'S LAST STAND

If you are reading you this at the PC Show - taking a quick coffee break, pint break, or stale, plastic-clad sandwich break, and feeling completely cracked and wondering why you bothered in the first place then sorry no more. This is likely to be the last PC Show you will have to attend.

The show organisers - Mindbault are not running a PC Show next year and VMLU (publishers of *Personal Computer World* magazine) do not have access to either Earls Court or Olympia next September - the month in which the show is traditionally held.

But just in case this news might make you go home happy I am sad to have to inform you that there are plans afoot - as you say, chump, and wonder how you are going to get home to stage the event again next year!

EMAP International Exhibition - (part of the same company that owns ACE) plan to step in with a rescue bid. Informal sources suggest that EMAP are prepared to dump up a whopping £250,000 to spend on advertising for a new games only show. The working title for the new show is 'The European Computer Leisure Show'.

If EMAP can put the show off it will be a considerable achievement as only two years ago they ended up with huge credits on their faces after a

disastrous attempt to sell an alternative show at Ally Pally - in North London.

The new PC show - as EMAP are billing it, is believed to have the backing of a national newspaper group. EMAP sources will not confirm which newspaper group - though it is unlikely to be the Mirror Group.

MAXWELL CLOSES MICRODEALER

The long-established Microdealer distributor has ceased trading as of the week before the PC Show.

The Maxwell owned distributor was one of the longest established firms in the computer games industry and the shock waves of their closure are only just becoming known.

Longest have been ongoing throughout the PC Show - the effect of the closure will be felt on Microsoft - publishers of *Spectrum Holobyte*, *Image Works*, and *Cinemaware* games.

The Maxwell Group have already disposed of a number of companies in order to fund a £3 billion expansion plan.

16 BIT GAMES FOR LESS THAN A FIVER

Three industry writers last week caused a stir by appear-

ing naked in an advertisement in the computer games business trade journal (*Computer Trade Weekly*) to advertise a new range of 16-bit software for under a fiver.

The label is to be called '10 MB' (I bet you didn't know that. That was what they were going for) and The One

magazine, did you?) and will have some darned impressive re-releases in its list of offerings. Watch out for *Farm*, and *Spy* in amongst a host of others.

EPYX CONSOLE THEMSELVES AFTER MASSIVE JOB CUTS

The one time leading California software house - Epyx - have laid off fifty staff and announced that they will cease publishing computer games. The company will now concentrate on developing games for other publishers - particularly Nintendo titles, and on the development of the Atari Lynx.

hand held, originally an Epyx design.

Meanwhile the latest trade gossip from the US suggests that the Nintendo Game Boy is streaking ahead of the Lynx in the popularity league - with both trade and punter alike.

EUROPEAN COMPUTER ZOO

Former UK boss of Microdealer Stuart Bell, has quit the company to set up his own computer games company - interestingly named *European Computer Zoo*. The rumour mill has it that Bell will be taking with him certain key staff of Microcross.

Bell claims that the company have ten new games ready

to publish.

Microcross have yet to announce a replacement to head up their five-label, Tebury-based games company (labels include *Micro Status*, *Microstyle*, *Microcross*, *Firebird*, and *Hammond* - at the last count).

BILLY THE FISH IS FULL OF WIND

Amongst a deluge of new Vic Comic merchandise is the *Billy the Fish* inflatable. A definite must for any trendy lager lout on the beaches this Winter. If *Billy the Fish* is not to your taste you might like to put the following items on your Christ-

mas list: *10 Book of Crap Jokes*, *Fan Stage 1 Shirt*, *10 1990 Calendar*, *Johnny Farnham Boxer Shorts*, and *10 The Sexist Condoms*. The next edition of *Vic Comic* will be in sale in mid-October.

WINNING STREAK!

Mad Surgeon Competition

Judging by the large number of entries for our Mad Surgeon Competition, you must all be a pretty blood-bred Ready bunch who obviously can't wait to start looking over the body!

And the five lucky would-be Orishans, who each win a copy of both our "Tomorrow's Life & Death" game and a £1000 worth of Best Lard Oil, £100 each of Serravallo's, £100 each of Wood's, £100 each of Kilmichael's of Scotland,

and King's Roburion of Lincolnshire. Your games are being sent free only to you, so please use Good Lard with most school. Oh, and try not to make too much of a mess on the carpet...



Lifetime Drive Comps

It's quite amazing just what you can do with a publicly sold if you try hard. Here's what the five lucky owners of MG's Lifetime Drive made of the one.

"Well, Mike, I know I was a mistake to sell you this one through 'Liberty'!" — A Tyrol, London.

"Not all because the body does software center!" — Steve Wood, Water Hampton.

"Not all because the body does... other ladies dressed as men!" — Jason Foster, Heywood.

"When they said I won a Lifetime Drive I instantly thought of a Red Convertible and a long nose!" — Chris Cole, Plymouth.

"Can I get my Rags into your Lifetime Drive Plan? Not will for gain the result of your RAG deal." — WING, York.

LMO LONDON MAIL ORDER LMO

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MS-DOS 6.0	560	MS-DOS 6.0	570	MS-DOS 6.0	580
MS-DOS 7.0	570	MS-DOS 7.0	580	MS-DOS 7.0	590
MS-DOS 8.0	580	MS-DOS 8.0	590	MS-DOS 8.0	600
MS-DOS 9.0	590	MS-DOS 9.0	600	MS-DOS 9.0	610
MS-DOS 10.0	600	MS-DOS 10.0	610	MS-DOS 10.0	620
MS-DOS 11.0	610	MS-DOS 11.0	620	MS-DOS 11.0	630
MS-DOS 12.0	620	MS-DOS 12.0	630	MS-DOS 12.0	640
MS-DOS 13.0	630	MS-DOS 13.0	640	MS-DOS 13.0	650
MS-DOS 14.0	640	MS-DOS 14.0	650	MS-DOS 14.0	660
MS-DOS 15.0	650	MS-DOS 15.0	660	MS-DOS 15.0	670
MS-DOS 16.0	660	MS-DOS 16.0	670	MS-DOS 16.0	680
MS-DOS 17.0	670	MS-DOS 17.0	680	MS-DOS 17.0	690
MS-DOS 18.0	680	MS-DOS 18.0	690	MS-DOS 18.0	700
MS-DOS 19.0	690	MS-DOS 19.0	700	MS-DOS 19.0	710
MS-DOS 20.0	700	MS-DOS 20.0	710	MS-DOS 20.0	720
MS-DOS 21.0	710	MS-DOS 21.0	720	MS-DOS 21.0	730
MS-DOS 22.0	720	MS-DOS 22.0	730	MS-DOS 22.0	740
MS-DOS 23.0	730	MS-DOS 23.0	740	MS-DOS 23.0	750
MS-DOS 24.0	740	MS-DOS 24.0	750	MS-DOS 24.0	760
MS-DOS 25.0	750	MS-DOS 25.0	760	MS-DOS 25.0	770
MS-DOS 26.0	760	MS-DOS 26.0	770	MS-DOS 26.0	780
MS-DOS 27.0	770	MS-DOS 27.0	780	MS-DOS 27.0	790
MS-DOS 28.0	780	MS-DOS 28.0	790	MS-DOS 28.0	800
MS-DOS 29.0	790	MS-DOS 29.0	800	MS-DOS 29.0	810
MS-DOS 30.0	800	MS-DOS 30.0	810	MS-DOS 30.0	820
MS-DOS 31.0	810	MS-DOS 31.0	820	MS-DOS 31.0	830
MS-DOS 32.0	820	MS-DOS 32.0	830	MS-DOS 32.0	840
MS-DOS 33.0	830	MS-DOS 33.0	840	MS-DOS 33.0	850
MS-DOS 34.0	840	MS-DOS 34.0	850	MS-DOS 34.0	860
MS-DOS 35.0	850	MS-DOS 35.0	860	MS-DOS 35.0	870
MS-DOS 36.0	860	MS-DOS 36.0	870	MS-DOS 36.0	880
MS-DOS 37.0	870	MS-DOS 37.0	880	MS-DOS 37.0	890
MS-DOS 38.0	880	MS-DOS 38.0	890	MS-DOS 38.0	900
MS-DOS 39.0	890	MS-DOS 39.0	900	MS-DOS 39.0	910
MS-DOS 40.0	900	MS-DOS 40.0	910	MS-DOS 40.0	920
MS-DOS 41.0	910	MS-DOS 41.0	920	MS-DOS 41.0	930
MS-DOS 42.0	920	MS-DOS 42.0	930	MS-DOS 42.0	940
MS-DOS 43.0	930	MS-DOS 43.0	940	MS-DOS 43.0	950
MS-DOS 44.0	940	MS-DOS 44.0	950	MS-DOS 44.0	960
MS-DOS 45.0	950	MS-DOS 45.0	960	MS-DOS 45.0	970
MS-DOS 46.0	960	MS-DOS 46.0	970	MS-DOS 46.0	980
MS-DOS 47.0	970	MS-DOS 47.0	980	MS-DOS 47.0	990
MS-DOS 48.0	980	MS-DOS 48.0	990	MS-DOS 48.0	1000

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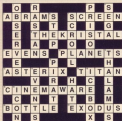
BUDGET 500		COMPS 500	
Amiga 500	510	Amiga 500	510
Atari ST	520	Atari ST	520
Compaq 386	530	Compaq 386	530
IBM PS/2	540	IBM PS/2	540
MS-DOS 5.0	550	MS-DOS 5.0	550
MS-DOS 6.0	560	MS-DOS 6.0	560
MS-DOS 7.0	570	MS-DOS 7.0	570
MS-DOS 8.0	580	MS-DOS 8.0	580
MS-DOS 9.0	590	MS-DOS 9.0	590
MS-DOS 10.0	600	MS-DOS 10.0	600
MS-DOS 11.0	610	MS-DOS 11.0	610
MS-DOS 12.0	620	MS-DOS 12.0	620
MS-DOS 13.0	630	MS-DOS 13.0	630
MS-DOS 14.0	640	MS-DOS 14.0	640
MS-DOS 15.0	650	MS-DOS 15.0	650
MS-DOS 16.0	660	MS-DOS 16.0	660
MS-DOS 17.0	670	MS-DOS 17.0	670
MS-DOS 18.0	680	MS-DOS 18.0	680
MS-DOS 19.0	690	MS-DOS 19.0	690
MS-DOS 20.0	700	MS-DOS 20.0	700
MS-DOS 21.0	710	MS-DOS 21.0	710
MS-DOS 22.0	720	MS-DOS 22.0	720
MS-DOS 23.0	730	MS-DOS 23.0	730
MS-DOS 24.0	740	MS-DOS 24.0	740
MS-DOS 25.0	750	MS-DOS 25.0	750
MS-DOS 26.0	760	MS-DOS 26.0	760
MS-DOS 27.0	770	MS-DOS 27.0	770
MS-DOS 28.0	780	MS-DOS 28.0	780
MS-DOS 29.0	790	MS-DOS 29.0	790
MS-DOS 30.0	800	MS-DOS 30.0	800
MS-DOS 31.0	810	MS-DOS 31.0	810
MS-DOS 32.0	820	MS-DOS 32.0	820
MS-DOS 33.0	830	MS-DOS 33.0	830
MS-DOS 34.0	840	MS-DOS 34.0	840
MS-DOS 35.0	850	MS-DOS 35.0	850
MS-DOS 36.0	860	MS-DOS 36.0	860
MS-DOS 37.0	870	MS-DOS 37.0	870
MS-DOS 38.0	880	MS-DOS 38.0	880
MS-DOS 39.0	890	MS-DOS 39.0	890
MS-DOS 40.0	900	MS-DOS 40.0	900
MS-DOS 41.0	910	MS-DOS 41.0	910
MS-DOS 42.0	920	MS-DOS 42.0	920
MS-DOS 43.0	930	MS-DOS 43.0	930
MS-DOS 44.0	940	MS-DOS 44.0	940
MS-DOS 45.0	950	MS-DOS 45.0	950
MS-DOS 46.0	960	MS-DOS 46.0	960
MS-DOS 47.0	970	MS-DOS 47.0	970
MS-DOS 48.0	980	MS-DOS 48.0	980
MS-DOS 49.0	990	MS-DOS 49.0	990
MS-DOS 50.0	1000	MS-DOS 50.0	1000

Business Machines			
Amiga 500	510	Amiga 500	510
Atari ST	520	Atari ST	520
Compaq 386	530	Compaq 386	530
IBM PS/2	540	IBM PS/2	540
MS-DOS 5.0	550	MS-DOS 5.0	550
MS-DOS 6.0	560	MS-DOS 6.0	560
MS-DOS 7.0	570	MS-DOS 7.0	570
MS-DOS 8.0	580	MS-DOS 8.0	580
MS-DOS 9.0	590	MS-DOS 9.0	590
MS-DOS 10.0	600	MS-DOS 10.0	600
MS-DOS 11.0	610	MS-DOS 11.0	610
MS-DOS 12.0	620	MS-DOS 12.0	620
MS-DOS 13.0	630	MS-DOS 13.0	630
MS-DOS 14.0	640	MS-DOS 14.0	640
MS-DOS 15.0	650	MS-DOS 15.0	650
MS-DOS 16.0	660	MS-DOS 16.0	660
MS-DOS 17.0	670	MS-DOS 17.0	670
MS-DOS 18.0	680	MS-DOS 18.0	680
MS-DOS 19.0	690	MS-DOS 19.0	690
MS-DOS 20.0	700	MS-DOS 20.0	700
MS-DOS 21.0	710	MS-DOS 21.0	710
MS-DOS 22.0	720	MS-DOS 22.0	720
MS-DOS 23.0	730	MS-DOS 23.0	730
MS-DOS 24.0	740	MS-DOS 24.0	740
MS-DOS 25.0	750	MS-DOS 25.0	750
MS-DOS 26.0	760	MS-DOS 26.0	760
MS-DOS 27.0	770	MS-DOS 27.0	770
MS-DOS 28.0	780	MS-DOS 28.0	780
MS-DOS 29.0	790	MS-DOS 29.0	790
MS-DOS 30.0	800	MS-DOS 30.0	800
MS-DOS 31.0	810	MS-DOS 31.0	810
MS-DOS 32.0	820	MS-DOS 32.0	820
MS-DOS 33.0	830	MS-DOS 33.0	830
MS-DOS 34.0	840	MS-DOS 34.0	840
MS-DOS 35.0	850	MS-DOS 35.0	850
MS-DOS 36.0	860	MS-DOS 36.0	860
MS-DOS 37.0	870	MS-DOS 37.0	870
MS-DOS 38.0	880	MS-DOS 38.0	880
MS-DOS 39.0	890	MS-DOS 39.0	890
MS-DOS 40.0	900	MS-DOS 40.0	900
MS-DOS 41.0	910	MS-DOS 41.0	910
MS-DOS 42.0	920	MS-DOS 42.0	920
MS-DOS 43.0	930	MS-DOS 43.0	930
MS-DOS 44.0	940	MS-DOS 44.0	940
MS-DOS 45.0	950	MS-DOS 45.0	950
MS-DOS 46.0	960	MS-DOS 46.0	960
MS-DOS 47.0	970	MS-DOS 47.0	970
MS-DOS 48.0	980	MS-DOS 48.0	980
MS-DOS 49.0	990	MS-DOS 49.0	990
MS-DOS 50.0	1000	MS-DOS 50.0	1000

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Computers	Peripherals	Software
Amiga 500 500	Amiga 500 500	Amiga 500 500
Atari ST 500	Atari ST 500	Atari ST 500
Compaq 386 500	Compaq 386 500	Compaq 386 500
IBM PS/2 500	IBM PS/2 500	IBM PS/2 500
MS-DOS 5.0 500	MS-DOS 5.0 500	MS-DOS 5.0 500
MS-DOS 6.0 500	MS-DOS 6.0 500	MS-DOS 6.0 500
MS-DOS 7.0 500	MS-DOS 7.0 500	MS-DOS 7.0 500
MS-DOS 8.0 500	MS-DOS 8.0 500	MS-DOS 8.0 500
MS-DOS 9.0 500	MS-DOS 9.0 500	MS-DOS 9.0 500
MS-DOS 10.0 500	MS-DOS 10.0 500	MS-DOS 10.0 500
MS-DOS 11.0 500	MS-DOS 11.0 500	MS-DOS 11.0 500
MS-DOS 12.0 500	MS-DOS 12.0 500	MS-DOS 12.0 500
MS-DOS 13.0 500	MS-DOS 13.0 500	MS-DOS 13.0 500
MS-DOS 14.0 500	MS-DOS 14.0 500	MS-DOS 14.0 500
MS-DOS 15.0 500	MS-DOS 15.0 500	MS-DOS 15.0 500
MS-DOS 16.0 500	MS-DOS 16.0 500	MS-DOS 16.0 500
MS-DOS 17.0 500	MS-DOS 17.0 500	MS-DOS 17.0 500
MS-DOS 18.0 500	MS-DOS 18.0 500	MS-DOS 18.0 500
MS-DOS 19.0 500	MS-DOS 19.0 500	MS-DOS 19.0 500
MS-DOS 20.0 500	MS-DOS 20.0 500	MS-DOS 20.0 500
MS-DOS 21.0 500	MS-DOS 21.0 500	MS-DOS 21.0 500
MS-DOS 22.0 500	MS-DOS 22.0 500	MS-DOS 22.0 500
MS-DOS 23.0 500	MS-DOS 23.0 500	MS-DOS 23.0 500
MS-DOS 24.0 500	MS-DOS 24.0 500	MS-DOS 24.0 500
MS-DOS 25.0 500	MS-DOS 25.0 500	MS-DOS 25.0 500
MS-DOS 26.0 500	MS-DOS 26.0 500	MS-DOS 26.0 500
MS-DOS 27.0 500	MS-DOS 27.0 500	MS-DOS 27.0 500
MS-DOS 28.0 500	MS-DOS 28.0 500	MS-DOS 28.0 500
MS-DOS 29.0 500	MS-DOS 29.0 500	MS-DOS 29.0 500
MS-DOS 30.0 500	MS-DOS 30.0 500	MS-DOS 30.0 500
MS-DOS 31.0 500	MS-DOS 31.0 500	MS-DOS 31.0 500
MS-DOS 32.0 500	MS-DOS 32.0 500	MS-DOS 32.0 500
MS-DOS 33.0 500	MS-DOS 33.0 500	MS-DOS 33.0 500
MS-DOS 34.0 500	MS-DOS 34.0 500	MS-DOS 34.0 500
MS-DOS 35.0 500	MS-DOS 35.0 500	MS-DOS 35.0 500
MS-DOS 36.0 500	MS-DOS 36.0 500	

CROSSWORDS 17



CROSSWORD CRAZY

You might have noticed that Crossword Solutions in recent issues have been, well, lacking only. Sorry! We've been so busy here at MSRP since our move to EMAP that some simple results have got a little behind. But, as you can see on our editorialing November with a grand catch-up, the here goes with the solutions and answers for crosswords 15, 16, and 17.

Crossword 15

ACROSS: 5. SWORDS 7. NEBULUS 9. TREE 10. RENAISSANCE
11. ROBERT 14. SUMMIT 17. FACSIMILE 18. STUPID 19. FRANTIC
20. TERNON

DOWN: 1. ENTERTAINMENT 2. BEANO 3. DUNGEON MASTER
4. MUDDY 6. CURSOR 13. ASHBY 13.GI HERO 15. BARD
16. ANTON

The answer to Monday's was from Huntington, Middlesex.

Crossword 16 (A)

ACROSS: 5. HYSTERIA 7. ANOM 8. METRE 9. DUCKT 10. MAEL
STROM 11. LUDICRUS 14. EPISODE 15. AMIGA 17. MURKIN
18. EXTENSOR

DOWN: 1. BYTE 2. PAGER 3. CAPCOM 4. POSTAGES
10. MULTIPLE 11. INGENIE 12. LAIDES 13. ROMAN

The answer to Star Word of Walsingham.

Crossword 16 (B)

ACROSS: 6. ANOM 7. TYPHOON 9. OCCURS 9. FERRARI 11. BLISS
MONKEY 13. VERMINATOR 16. PREDICT 17. RAMBO 18. DETOURS
19. ITTUS

DOWN: 1. DRACULA 2. MONACO 3. CHERRYWORDS 4. CHERRY
5. CORBA 10. SMART CARD 12. MOEBIUS 13. WOODS 14. ANAK
15. DANCE

All these answers will shortly be receiving a cheque for £25 which they can cash at our first class on their favourite piece of software.

PRIZE PUZZLES

Now that we've cleared the backlog of Crosswords, here are a few outstanding prize puzzle solutions.

Puzzle 16

Answer:

$$\begin{array}{r} 423 \\ \times 44 \\ \hline 2115 \\ 423 \\ \hline 234123 \end{array}$$

Solution:

The problem is to find two three-digit numbers which have a product in which the second digit is a 7. Further, all digits used, excluding those in the three substrates, must consist of only digits from 1 to 6 inclusive (i.e. those numbers which can be represented by the dots on a standard die).

For the purposes of the problem the substrate at line 1000 tests a given variable (DS) to determine if it contains digits other than those permitted. The substrate returns a variable FLAG which has a value of zero if the string under test contains only the digits 1 to 6. A value of 1 indicates that the test has failed.

The initial variables are generated by the two loops A and B. Each is tested by the substrate and line 140 also checks that the product will have six digits, as required by the puzzle. Once a possible pair of numbers has been found the three sub-totals are calculated (DS, DS, and DS) at lines 170 to 200. Each of these is also tested by the substrate in turn. Should any value fail then the next value of B is taken. Finally, the product is tested, first by the substrate and secondly to check that the second digit is a 7. Line 200 then prints out the values which pass all of these tests.

```
100 FOR A=111 TO 999:GOTO 1100
110 DS=45:GOTO 1100
120 IF FLAG=0 THEN GOTO 130
130 FOR B=111 TO 999:GOTO 1300
140 IF DS=111111 THEN GOTO 150
150 DS=45:GOTO 1100
160 IF FLAG=0 THEN GOTO 170
170 DS=45:GOTO 1100
180 DS=45:GOTO 1100
190 IF FLAG=0 THEN GOTO 200
200 DS=45:GOTO 1100
210 DS=45:GOTO 1100
220 IF FLAG=0 THEN GOTO 230
230 DS=45:GOTO 1100
240 DS=45:GOTO 1100
250 IF FLAG=0 THEN GOTO 260
260 DS=45:GOTO 1100
270 DS=45:GOTO 1100
280 IF FLAG=0 THEN GOTO 290
290 DS=45:GOTO 1100
300 IF FLAG=0 THEN GOTO 310
310 PRINT DS, DS, DS
```


CD ROM EXTRAVAGANZA

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for — the results of our grand CD-ROM giveaway. We had enough e-mails received reading all of your entries, and went through agonie being to make a decision. But here it is: the lucky winner of a Commodore PC 10 with Hitachi CD-ROM drive and a copy of the CD Defender of the Crown, is T. Bentley of Wood, Somerset.

Twenty winners up, who all receive copies of Commodore's list and booklets. Lots of the following names: Jason Burgess, Mike and Corinne Hayes, Profrisco, Richard Taylor, Bradford, Steve Mills, Birmingham; Matthew David Wall, Dartford; Ian Migneco, Ayr; Nick Olay, Llandudno; S.H.Fed; John of Meri, David Gray, Southold; Peter Nugent, Billesley; Simon Collins, Swansley; John Murphy, Haverford; Andrew J. Reader, Middleham; R.J. East, Colyton; Craig Whelan,

Here for your delight and delectation is the winning entry:

"I couldn't wait to get home and load my listed Commodore CD ROM game, and I wasn't disappointed it was the latest licensing deal 'Sales — The Computer Game.' I controlled the hero, Bobby, as he raced to the rescue of his wife Fern. She was in the clutches of an evil plastic surgeon, intent on changing her into someone completely different. This horizontally scrolling shoot-em-up had plenty of buddies to contend with — runaway cars, gun-toting, double-crossed oil-men and a slyly bad who could cause suffocation by clinging on tightly round the throat and kissing 'I Love you Dealer'. But what I liked best was that it was impossible to die. Every time I lost a life, I found myself back in the shower. It was almost like a dream."

T. Bentley, 111 Station Street, Stockton Park, Wood West Lane

Wood, Birmingham, Ian Wang, Light water, and J. Rogers, Glasgow.

SPANISH FLY

Getting off with a friend for the years Spanish Grand Prix is Gregory Alexander of North London, who recently named his Associate games in our Spain Com.

article. Congratulations to Alexander, and come welcome to the rest of your staff just have to watch it on the telly...

FUN, FAME, AND FERRARIS

Winner of our System 3 Competition is C. Berkeley of Maidenhead. This lucky person receives a free ride in one of the Ferraris belonging to System 3's Mark Cape, as well as a 400-mile, and other goodies. There is just

one catch: we need a full report on the latter's drive by next Monday. Or, alright, you can fax it in the longer than...

The winner is A.J. Hubley of Stockton, Somerset.

PUZZLE 17

Oh dear, puzzle 17 seems to have got lost somewhere along the line. No prizes

for spotting that there wasn't one!

PUZZLE 18

Answer: Apart from the example given (15 x 93 = 1395) there are six other ways to do the same trick:

$$\begin{array}{r} 21 \times 60 = 1260 \\ 27 \times 87 = 2343 \\ 27 \times 81 = 2187 \\ 30 \times 51 = 1530 \\ 35 \times 41 = 1435 \end{array}$$

and $80 \times 85 = 6880$

Solution: The problem involves finding all possible combinations of two two-digit numbers, the product of which in each case comprises of the same digit 4s. In other words the two initial values are held by the two loops A and B. To avoid duplication of answers the value of B is always the greater of the two. The product of these two numbers is calculated line 1200 and this value and the values of A and B are converted to string variables.

To determine if the product consists of the same digit as its generating values a simple technique is used. First, the strings A0 and B0 are combined into a single string C0 and this is passed to the subroutine at Lines 1000 to 1090. The purpose of the subroutine is to rearrange the contents of the string C0 into numerical order (actually determined by the ASCII codes of each character in the string). This is done by using a modified 'bubble-sort' in which each character in the string is compared with the next character along (line 1010). If these two characters are out of order line 1020 transposes them. When this happens a flag (F) is reset to 1 (line 1030). This procedure is repeated along the length of the string until no further switches of characters are made. This is indicated by the flag remaining at its initial value of zero. When this happens the subroutine is terminated.

The 're-order' digits returned from the subroutine are stored in variable C0 and the digits of the product are sent to the subroutine (line 1090). If the string so returned is identical with that in C0 then the contents of variables A and B are printed out.

```
100 FOR A=10 TO 99:AS=STR$A$
110 FOR B=A TO 99:BS=STR$B$
120 P=A*BS:PS=STR$P$
130 IF P=1000 THEN END
140 ZS=AS+BS:GOSUB 1000
150 Z=ZS
160 ZS=PS:GOSUB 1000
170 IF ZS=ZS THEN PRINT A;" ";B
180 NEXT B
190 NEXT A
200 END
1000 F=0:FOR G=1 TO 3
1010 F
1020 G,G,D)=MD$ZS,G+1,D) THEN
1030
1040 ZS=LEFT$ZS,G
1050 ZS=ZS+1,D)=MD$ZS,G,D)+MS
1060 G=G+1
1070 F=1
1080 NEXT G
1090 NEXT S
1100 IF F=1 THEN GOTO 1000
1110 RETURN
```

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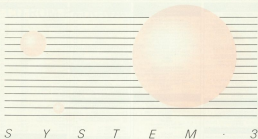
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The BLITTER END

JACK INTO THAT BOOM BOX, MIKE



W have heard of subliminal advertising, but this is ridiculous. The little thingy - sorry, little thingy - pictured above is the DynaMike. According to the press release, the DynaMike "...lets you do really fun things with your voice." It also "...comes with a special jack so you can use it with a boom box. What really convinced us, however, was the promise that with the DynaMike we could "...sound like Michael Jackson when he hits a high note." Wouldn't you be hitting the high notes with something like that? We practically went through the roof...

Editor will not be appearing in his usual spot next month. He will instead be retiring graciously to the Bahamas. The reason? By next month, he will be drinking rum, thanks to a program from IBM of Norwich. The item in question is the ...official computer version of the newly released Greyhound Calculator. This program works out how fast each dog is...and calculates the final result of the race. It shall retail at \$34.95 which, considering how accurate it is, is a very cheap price! Sounded rather plucky to us, until we were told that "to use this, starting off with just \$5, we made nearly \$200. We can also order in copies and is eagerly accepting old winners in every race, with \$5 on each dog. See you on the track, comrades...

nothing succeeds like success. The month we were joyfully joined by the tributes, signed by Monte Carlo Casino - a budget title from Codemasters. The cassette itself features a testimonial that declares: This is probably the most realistic, most plausible casino game ever - It's absolutely brilliant! The testimonial is credited to one David Darling, who is a director of...Codemasters. Perhaps they should take out a license on IBM's Greyhound Calculator.

And taking of budget titles, what just came across one of the lowest budget titles ever. The ISO label features the company's logo in blizzarding primary colours on the reverse of the cassette tape. Smooth the tape, in lay terms, reads the immortal message "Create your own ISOlabel budget CD around the above and stick a variety on to the back of the card using sticky tape." Sales are booming...

Soccer stars are laughing all the way to the bank these days, thanks to over-enthusiastic software companies. Screen 7 recently announced proudly that it had signed up Steve Jones of Leeds United and that it would be launching the Steve Jones Soccer Spectacular in November of this year. This is a revolutionary marketing approach. It comes very hot on the heels of Michael Marshall, Manchester United, Liverpool FC, Gary Lineker, Gazza, George, Benny Deane, and Dwight Hughes, to name a...er...few. Attention Screen 7: His name has not just failed, it has now passed into myth and legend. He more bells, PLEASE...

Editor would like to welcome some new talents to the ACE Team. You'll be getting to know these guys very well over the next few months.

THE ACE CHALLENGE!

Find out more about the ACE Challenge on page 12 - whatever others might say, we're putting our money where our mouth is!

We're also determined to carry on the ACE tradition by giving you a magazine that respects your burning obsession with the best things in life - so tell us more about yourself on page 88 - and maybe win a prize into the bargain!

so we felt it only right to give you an introduction so you know what you're letting yourself in for.

Taking the Deputy Editor's hat is Mike Higgins, previously Reviews Editor on New Computer Express. Mike celebrated his appointment by immediately leaving for Disneyland and investigating the technology behind the ride there - and you can find out more about his experiences next month.

Wringing the acute game judgement to bear on new releases from now on will be Laurence Southall. Laurence had to make a tough decision should he follow the family business, or should he play it safe. The family business, perhaps we should mention, is embarking. Say no more, except that Laurence has put in more hours on computer games across more machines than most people, which gives the alternative a handy surmise.

You're going to see a big change in the way the magazine looks over the next few months as Design Editor Jim White gets to grips with the advanced technology we use to produce the magazine. A new set of pencils have been ordered, and the most game last week to ask the Transmogrifiers. Jim has an unorthodox addition to the PC Expert...and he's Suburban Dorian.

Finally, Royal Emerald joins our crew of regular contributors. Royal's specialty is console technology - at home he has, amongst other things, a PC Expert plus CD-ROM, Megabyte, Nintendo and a host of other surprises. We're so jealous that we won't tell you anything else about him...

THE UNTOUCHABLES



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