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for the Coin Operated Entertainment Industry

PLAY METER

September 1, 1981

Volume 7, Number 16

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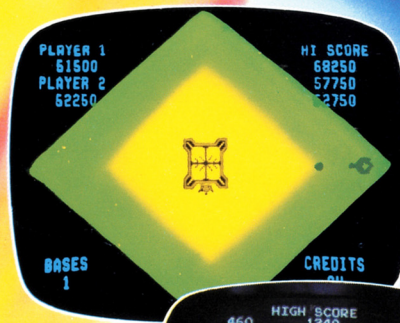


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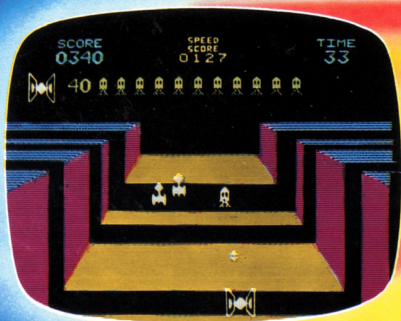
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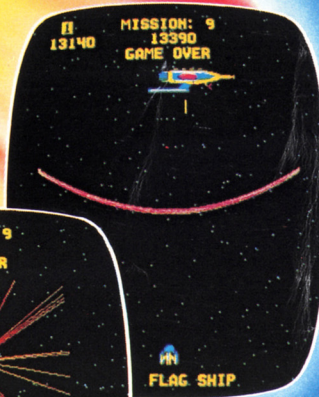
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PLAY METER
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Play Meter's Distributor Survey 23

From this first-ever polling of the handlers' sector of the coin-op industry, a number of measures of the health of their businesses can be made. Here is our analysis of the Distributor Poll's findings.

The Leisure Market 50

A thorough summary of the size of the free-time players market: enlightening comparisons of cash spent in the United States for the various separate fields of entertainment—movies, boating, media, etc.—are outlined for this in-depth piece by Marion Cutler and Jane Patterson. It's worthy of study by anyone with a pocketbook interest in coin-op.

He Dealt with the Man in the Blue Suede Shoes 41

A newcomer to the industry may look on *any* coin-op piece as a 'pot of gold.' But the game may be more of a millstone around the neck — particularly if the seller had dealt out of his overnight case... 'How to Know When You've Been Burned' is an alternate title for this *exclusive Play Meter report*, first-hand from an operator who found out.

Ups and Downs of Used Game Sales 52

Unloading equipment that has worn out its usefulness in cash-box draw is an eternal question for the operator. What's happening today at the distributor level—their attitudes, break-even point for taking used equipment in trade, and other insights — is presented in this article by Valerie Cognevich.

Editorial	4
Mailbox	7
Coinman Interview	8
Equipment Survey	24
International News	38
Music Programming	45
Frank's Cranks	56
News	38, 60-65
Technical Topics	68
Critic's Corner	72
New Products	75
Classified Advertising	77-83

COVER: Photography courtesy of Monroe Distributing Company.

UP FRONT

There's been some rumbling around the industry lately that the distributing sector is doomed. There are those who fear that, sooner or later, the bottom is going to fall out—leaving the industry in the midst of a severe financial crisis. There are some who predict disaster as a result of a glut of new higher-priced equipment, higher interest rates, and credit limits stretched to the extreme.

And then there are those who are of the opinion that the role of the distributor has been reduced to that of a mere "order taker." There are even some who predict that distributing concerns will vanish completely and manufacturers will begin selling direct to the operating sector. Thank goodness there are a lot of people like myself who believe all that is a bunch of pessimistic baloney!

Before I started up *Play Meter*, I was a distributor. I spent several years running a distributorship here in New Orleans and I can well remember the ups and downs as well as the trials and tribulations. I can only imagine how much more complex the business has become.

Confronted by a troubled economy, a volatile market, and ever-changing technology, distributors today are faced with the toughest of times. There can be no doubt that the vast majority of our nation's distributors have successfully met the challenges of today's market. They are, indeed, alive and well and intend to remain that way.

As for those pessimists out there, I suppose a few words to the not-so-wise are in order. As far as a financial crisis might affect the industry, I say forget it. This industry is fundamentally a cash business. As long as our operators keep from overextending themselves and meet their current obligations promptly, there will never be trouble.

The so-called glut of new equipment is simply a matter of supply and demand. A big increase in the demand for new games naturally produces a big increase in the supply of new equipment. As soon as

demand begins to taper off, so will the supply. When demand picks up again the economic cycle will begin again. Elementary economics, my friends, not a glut of product.

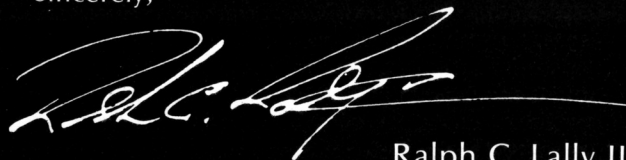
As for higher prices, I suppose the advent of convertible games may be our only salvation. Prices could plummet dramatically as a result of this competing mode. That all remains to be seen, however.

If anybody is to blame for distributors becoming saddled with the label "order takers," it would have to be the manufacturers. For it is they, through no fault of their own, who made games that were so popular that it was impossible to keep up the supply from the factories. Consequently, severe back-order situations arose and left the distributors holding the bag.

And if you think that manufacturers selling direct to operators is such a great idea, think how long it will take you to get delivery on a hot new game. If you think you have trouble getting new equipment from your local distributor who serves several hundred operators, think of how long it would take to get delivery from one manufacturer serving 9,000 operators. By the time you got the game, it would most likely be obsolete.

A distributor is a salesman, repairman, financial adviser, businessman, and investment counselor all rolled up in one. He provides the vital link between the manufacturing and operating sectors of the industry. Rest assured: as long as there are operators, there will be distributors. Long may they live!

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Ralph C. Lally II
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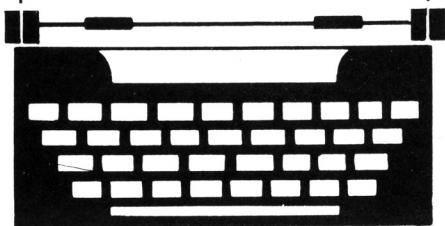
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Letters to the editor . . .



Call for help

Technology has really grown. From up/down paddles to back and forth *Galaxians*. From motors in pins to little magicians.

Now that we have come that far, no one has told us how to put the little magicians back in the games once they fall out.

If you have been right on top of the industry all this time, you probably have some idea of what's going on. I am one who is lucky, by doing a lot of reading, going to schools, buying tools and parts...

These [servicing hitches] are just a few of the problems operators (I'm sure it's not just me) have to contend with.

Other problems are parts availability: 200-300% mark-up on prices from distributors to us.

Soon manufacturing companies will own everything, building and putting out on location...Help!

Bruce M. Michaud
Upstate Vending Service, Inc.
Lake Placid, New York

Takes it seriously

An indication of how serious my son David is about the coin machine business is that he now takes home *Play Meter* instead of *Playboy* magazine.

Gerald D. Goudeau
Gerald's Amusement Machines
Lafayette, Louisiana

Pool at 50¢

Changing over to 50 cents play on your pool tables is not as simple as just changing the slot to 50 cents.

The first thing you do is to go to the location and sit down and talk to

the owner about this change. If he O.K.s it, then you've got to talk to the day shift and the night shift help, and if everybody agrees they can stand the hassle the customers are going to give them about this change—then you would order the coin slots and make the change.

Otherwise I think you're spinning your wheels.

Al Gorman
The Al Gorman Company
Jacksonville, Florida

Movies move players

Help! I'm sitting here night after night with a captive audience of movie goers. Would like to acquaint these people via my large screen, to my newly opened arcade next door and invite them all to stop in when the shows are over for a few games before heading home, but have been unable to locate any footage.

There are three major film companies now in the arcade game business. How about some good

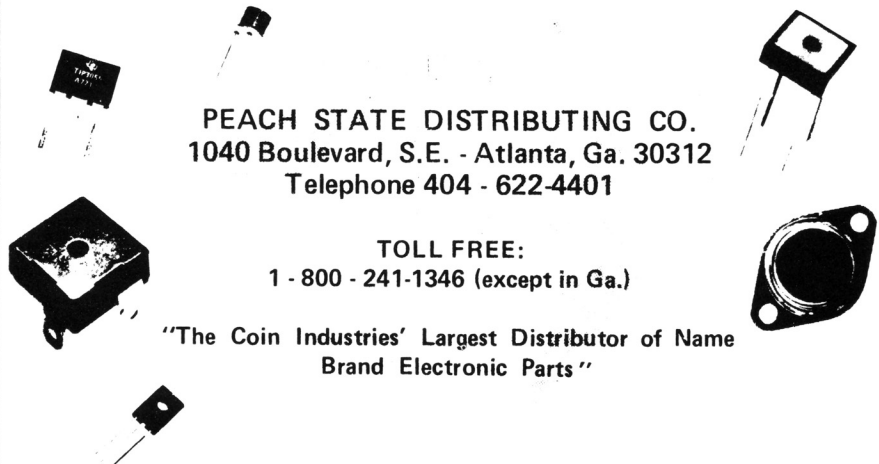
footage, creating impulse play that we can incorporate into an in-house trailer. (Please no slides.)

Fred Dunkeld
Tahqua-Land Theatre
Newberry, Michigan

[Ed.: Here's another vote for some kind of industry-supported advertising to the games consumer.]

Something on your mind you want to vent? Got a gripe? Full of praise? Have a question? If you have comments on the coin-operated entertainment industry, write to Play Meter. Our "Letters to the Editor" columns are dedicated to you, the operator/reader.

All letters must be signed; if requested, only initials will be used or the name withheld from print. Please include return address (although, for the sake of your privacy, addresses will not be printed). All letters are subject to standard editing. Be concise.



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Coinman Interview: **Al Rodstein**

Al Rodstein, president of Banner Specialty Company, is our Coinman this time around. Al is one of the leading distributors in the country today; so we wanted to talk with him about the health of the distributing business today in order to see how the changes within the industry are affecting the supplier link. His interview, we believe, offers some perceptive insights into the industry from the viewpoint of the distributor.

Our Coinman entered the coin-operated amusement field in April, 1935 as an arcade operator. He quickly branched out to a street operation in Philadelphia where he operated music and games and later added on a separate cigarette operation. Then in 1938 he opened a jobbing service known as ARCO Sales Company, a company which was to help him through the war years. In 1941 when the war started, ARCO went into the business of refurbishing old pinballs into new ones. There was a great market for refurbished pinballs at that time because all non-essential production—such as the manufacture of pinballs—was forsaken for the benefit of the war effort.

After the war, he started operating vending equipment under the name of Variety Vending Systems and games under a company known as Amusemat Corp. Then in 1949 he joined Banner Specialty as vice president. About ten later, he bought the distributorship and by 1961 had sold both his vending and amusement operations to The Macke Company. He took leave of absence from Banner at that time to serve as senior vice president for Macke. In 1971 he returned to Banner in the capacity of president.

Banner, which was established in Philadelphia in 1917, added its Pittsburgh branch in 1937 and, under Rodstein, expanded to a Baltimore branch office in 1973.

Our Coinman served at one time as president of the Pennsylvania Automatic Merchandising Council and, in 1964, received NAMA's Chamber's Award for the nation's outstanding legislative effort. The NAMA recognition was given to him for his help in leading the successful effort against a move in Pennsylvania to levy a \$50 per vending machine tax per year.

Active in civic and business organizations as well, he serves on the board of governors of the Federation of Jewish Agencies and on the board of the Israel Bond Organization. An avid golfer, a spectator of all sports, and a fan of Philadelphia teams—Al is also a trustee of the Pop Warner Little Scholars national junior football conference. He is married and has three children, all of whom at one time or another worked in some capacity for Banner.

PLAY METER: With the current Hit Syndrome which is rampant in the country today, we hear some talk that distributors are forsaking their responsibilities of salesmanship and are becoming mere order-takers instead. Would you agree with this general assessment of distributors today?

RODSTEIN: I would hesitate to answer it for all distributors, but it seems to me that the objective of all facets of the industry are similar. All of us—distributors, operators, and manufacturers—are trying to maximize our income. And, in so doing, it's only natural for the so-called "hit games" to enjoy larger runs at the manufacturing level. And, consequently, there will be more of this type of game that will be sold as opposed to those games which are not in this category.

So I would not agree that all distributors are becoming mere order-takers, as a result.

True, there may be a tendency on the part of some people to take the easy way out and take orders for the top game and neglect their responsibilities to those games that are not the very hottest. But I think it's only natural for anyone in this business to try for the better return on their investments; and the distributors, by pushing the superior money-making games, are really making the operator healthier and doing themselves and the manufacturer some good. When we get those games that are not hit games, it behooves all of us to try to limit the production and sales and distribution of them since they are not going to make the operator as good a return on his investment. I think the solution is really more comprehensive testing on the part of the manufacturers to produce an even greater percentage of hit games instead of producing those that are not hit games.

PLAY METER: Then is it a valid concern to say the operator could be unbalancing his route by overinvesting in a particular piece?

RODSTEIN: This was true years ago when changing machines from location to location was prevalent. The games would last in a location maybe a month or six weeks; then the players would be looking for a new game in that location. But this has changed in recent years. Games are lasting longer on location. Those games that are in the so-called hit category are really amortizing themselves in their very first location. So the operator doesn't really have to look so much toward switching games in locations anymore. They stay longer. They earn more money. I don't think you'll find many operators who have injured themselves by buying too many hit games. Nobody lost any money on *Space Invaders* and *Asteroids*. And I don't think they'll be losing any money on *Defender*, even if they do buy more than their normal numbers for their routes.

PLAY METER: At the recent Amusement Operators Expo, it was brought up that many operators are afraid they are overbuying on particular games but still are not sure where they should draw the line. This seems to indicate that the current Hit Syndrome has blurred the lines of equipment budgeting, that there are a whole set of rules out there. If this is so, shouldn't the distributor, for his part, take a closer hand in helping the operator, to make sure he doesn't overbuy, so that that operator will be around as a customer in years to come?

RODSTEIN: Those operators who are willing to accept advice from their distributors in the area of equipment budgeting surely have found out that two heads are better than one. A distributor, having a broader view and a lot of experience, should be able to help the operator

with today's budgeting problems. But we should keep in mind that budgeting for equipment purchases in the games business is by no means an exact science. Equipment budgeting can be more readily accomplished in the vending equipment and music equipment categories because it's not as difficult in these categories to forecast the useful economic lives of those pieces of equipment.

Let's assume that an operating company has budgeted \$100,000 for the purchase of new games in a fiscal year. In the year when *Space Invaders* was released or in the year when *Asteroids* was released, it would probably have been profitable for the company to have stretched its budget to purchase those games in even greater quantities than what they normally would have.

So, you see, the budget in games has to be flexible. It can't be fixed. Let me cite you a specific example. An operating company that is part of a large national firm which operates vending, music, and games, recently came upon an opportunity to acquire a chain of some 40-odd convenience stores as locations. The manager of the operating firm came to me and explained the situation. It would require about \$100,000 over and above his budget capability, he explained, and he asked how could he handle it. I told him he should go to his superior and explain to him that this was unforeseen opportunity and the budget was for the replacement of equipment on existing locations, and here was an opportunity to acquire what amounts to another little route. He should first try to get a special dispensation so that he could increase his budget for the purchase of the games.

If they wouldn't do that, I told him, as his distributor, knowing that he is extremely credit-worthy, we would consider leasing the equipment to him so that he could acquire the additional locations without changing his budget. So, to me, it's more a question of the feasibility of the increased budgeting than it was in the budgeting per se. Of course, this could apply in music or vending too. But the point is the starting budget for an operator isn't necessarily going to be the one that is going to hold up for twelve months.

There will also be some years when the equipment that's offered isn't that great and so you won't see where it's even feasible to expend your entire budget. It's more a question of feasibility than it is one of budgeting. Or, perhaps, I should say it's a combination of the two.

PLAY METER: Then are there times when, as a distributor, you counsel operators against buying specific types of machines or against particular models?

RODSTEIN: Yes, there are such times. A distributor must do everything in his power to help the operator maintain a viable business.

Using the same example I started with, if a company has budgeted \$100,000 for the purchase of new games but there is no exceptional game product available, it may not be wise to invest the entire budgeted amount. Now I've seen in national operating companies where they have some pretty rigid budgeting restrictions, where they're almost like the federal government, and the manager feels that if he doesn't use his entire budget, even in a mediocre product year, he won't get a higher budget the following year.

With games, it's such a strange animal. You can't do as you would in the vending business where you can figure this machine will be good for eight years and you've got so much replacement to do and so on. It's pretty exact science with vending and music because they don't have the revolutionary products appearing as we have in the

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games business. It's more evolutionary. With games, the longevity is such a great factor in the return on investment, but it is hard to gauge what that longevity will be.

A distributor can counsel operators along these lines. He'll know that some equipment is better in the arcade and some is better in the streets. And there are some geographical preferences that will show up from time to time. It's not necessarily true that a big hit in Pittsburgh, for instance, is going to be a big hit in New Orleans. So these things have to come into consideration.

We're really deep into testing, test reports. We may know that even though an operator thinks a certain game is tops, he shouldn't load up on it because it's not good for him. Maybe he should only have one. So there is definitely a need for the distributor to counsel the operator—even if that means to counsel against buying at times. There are certain operators who might want to buy extra large sitdown units that cost a lot of money. And the distributor may know that these are good in arcades but will have a short life in a street location. So we really have to counsel the operator, and the smart operator listens.

Another example is cocktail tables. There may be some places where cocktail tables can't make him any money. But we'll know from our experience that there are situations which would indicate a couple of cocktail tables as opposed to uprights. And this new slimmer cabinet styling is still another example of something which is turning out good for some locations and not for others.

PLAY METER: Well, is it your feeling that the operator is not relying as much as he should on his distributor?

RODSTEIN: If I were an operator today, I would certainly try to learn as much as I could from the distributor who has this broader view, who has been engaged in field testing, and pre-production models. Certainly I would avail myself of all the information I could, and the reliable distributor will not mislead his operator/customer. We're not in the business of selling an automobile where the guy comes in once in five years to buy a unit. We sell this man on a continuous basis, monthly, even weekly in some cases. So it's in our best interests do guide him as honestly and efficiently as we can.

PLAY METER: From what you're saying, games budgeting was a more exact science in the days before, say, solid state pinballs than it is today. Is that correct?
RODSTEIN: Yes, definitely.

PLAY METER: So today's operator needs help in figuring his budgeting, but you also seem to be implying that operators are extremely hesitant to sit down with distributors to rely on their advice. Why is that? Is it the fear of having the fox mind the chicken coop?

RODSTEIN: Not too many operators are free with the balance sheet. And you really can't help the fellow with budgeting until you know all the factors. But, for those who are willing to do this with the distributor, there is no question that the distributor can help him. He's certainly not a know-all, but he definitely has a wider view, and he should know how to help since he knows what's coming down the line.

PLAY METER: Price and availability appear to be among the most important considerations today for

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operators when they're buying. And when we talk to most distributors today, they tell us times are great, they're selling everything they've got. This brings us back to the question we asked in the beginning of whether the distributor has a diminished role today—are price and availability becoming the prime considerations?

RODSTEIN: If price and availability become the prime consideration of an operator in purchasing new equipment, then that operator is making a big mistake. Price is only one factor in the equation. Income is the other. When you put the two together, it equals your return on investment. And it's the return on investment that should be the operator's prime consideration when buying new equipment. That means he has to consider the reliability and expected longevity of the investment. But if the operator is only considering the price and availability of the equipment—if he can get it today—then he's really making a mistake.

PLAY METER: How would you describe the operator's perception of the distributor today? Does he see the distributorship as merely a place where he buys his new games and sells his old ones? Or does he see the distributor as providing an essential function?

RODSTEIN: I can only speak from my own viewpoint, but I think our operators/customers are appreciating the distributor's role more and more all the time because we are the place where he gets the support for his games. With the kinds of money the used ones are selling for today, they know purchasing the game is only the beginning. An operator needs to know he can rely on that distributor's support, parts, repair service, and all the other things we do for him.

From my observation, there's a greater realization today of the importance of the distributor. I think the technology has had a lot to do with that. For example, we can exchange boards for the operator right over the counter. And so we can keep them in business by minimizing the downtime.

Let's say a man has a video game that does several hundred dollars a week on location, and he gets a call on the game. He gets there and finds the thing is all scrambled up on the tube, and he doesn't know what's going on. Now this game may be grossing fifty dollars a day or thereabouts. All he has to do is have a messenger run the board over to our place and hand our man the board and he gets a new one right there over the counter. And if we happen not to have the replacement, we'll repair the board while he waits. The point is he doesn't suffer any downtime to speak of.

That fact alone has made the operator appreciate the distributor to a larger extent than he did in the days when he had a so-called mechanic on the street who could fix his electro-mechanical pinballs with spit and chewing gum and keep them running. Today it's pretty rare when a man can repair a board on-site. So he knows he can rely on us distributors for that service, to keep his games operating, maximizing his income and minimizing his downtime. That's why I think the operator is beginning to appreciate our reason for being there.

Now that's not the only thing he appreciates. I think he appreciates all the other things we do for him, like helping him with deliveries and installations, projecting pro formas and expenses, arranging special financing, offering the leasing option when he only needs the equipment for a short time. There are many reasons for the operator's growing awareness of the distributor's worth. Any you also have to realize that the stakes are



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greater now, too. You're paying more for the machines. You can't afford to have that machine sitting idly on location. It has got to be up and running and collecting those quarters. Maybe that will show why the distributor is not merely an order taker today. He still has his selling and servicing functions to do for his customers.

PLAY METER: What then should an operator consider before he buys equipment from a distributor outside his own area?

RODSTEIN: All the things I've just mentioned. He'd be well-advised to secure his equipment needs locally because the purchase of the equipment is only the beginning. Support of the equipment with parts, boards, and repair backup for the entire life of the equipment is accomplished much more successfully by buying locally than if he were to buy his equipment from a long distance away.

The promises of 24-hour turnaround time on board exchanges from remote areas are seldom kept. The operators, I think, have found that out. We had an occasion just recently where a customer sent in two boards on *Deluxe Asteroids* that had to be repaired. But our repair department, in checking the serial numbers, found that these two *Deluxe Asteroids* boards were not from games which we sold. So we politely called the fellow up and asked him to pick his boards up. Now, I don't know how long it took that gentlemento finally get his out-of-town distributor to fix that game, but he may have been out of business for as much as a week or two with those two games. And if he was, at the rate of income that's expected from a game of that type and a game that costs that much money, the \$50 or \$100 he may have saved from bootlegging them in from out of his area was lost and even more so.

PLAY METER: Would you say the tendency of operators to buy outside their territories has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

RODSTEIN: On balance, it's probably as much as the same as it's always been. There will always be a certain percentage of operators who want to save that small stipend going in, and they're shortsighted because of it, not thinking of their purchase as something that's supposed to last the life of the equipment. I think it may fluctuate up and down with more or less operators trying it, but I think most of them come back to the realization that they're better off for the life of the equipment if they buy locally and allow their local distributor to enjoy a fair return on his investment.

PLAY METER: Conversely, does it, in your opinion, reflect on the manufacturer who opts to sell direct rather than sell his games through the distributor network?

RODSTEIN: I think you'll find the same conditions prevail. If an operator buys direct from a manufacturer, I don't think the manufacturer can supply the instant service on repairs. He may offer it, but I don't think he'll be able to supply it. And he won't be able to help with delivery, financing, installation, or even timely delivery. If the factory is going to ship an operator one machine, God knows when the operator is going to get it. But if he buys it locally, he could get it today or tomorrow.

PLAY METER: How is today's operator different from operators in the past? And, along those lines, how is today's distributor different?

RODSTEIN: As far as operators, the recent entries into the field seem to be either younger of age or spirit or

both. And they seem to be more flexible in their approach to the types of equipment in a location. They don't have such a fixed view of operating as did the operator in the past.

For example, there were operators in the past who operated only pinball machines. They didn't operate jukeboxes or arcade games. And there were operators in the past who said they were merely music machine operators and did not want to bother with games. But today most operators are open to operating all different types of equipment to fully supply a new account that opens up. And that's the principle difference there for the operator.

As for the distributor, he has really got to be different in that he needs to exercise greater discipline over himself and his larger organization. His mistakes are

“More professionalism is required in the eighties if the distributor to succeed and achieve a fair return on investment.”

magnified because there is more money required to operate a successful distributorship nowadays. And more professionalism is required in the eighties if he is to succeed and achieve a fair return on his investment. The size of the investment is also constantly increasing, and the cost of the money has become a greater percentage of the sale than it was in prior decades. That means today's distributor has to be a better businessman than he has been in years gone by. And the same holds true for the operator.

PLAY METER: What kind of credit terms do you, as a distributor, feel are fair to your operator/customer?

RODSTEIN: My view is, to customers who have proven themselves credit-worthy, we should accommodate them up to thirty days on an open account basis. Or on financing games, twenty percent down with six, nine, or twelve months to pay the balance. Anybody who can't get that game paid for in twelve months has probably put the game in the wrong place. And that means he has a serious problem as far as locating his equipment.

That should be the accommodation of credit. Thirty days open with six, nine, or twelve months on financing. That's what I feel is reasonable in 1981. Now what credit terms will be reasonable in subsequent years will depend to a great extent on the general economic picture and the availability of funds to our industry.

Now, if you're talking about music and vending, you could give somewhat longer terms. On music, you could go all the way up to 24 months and, in exceptional cases, even as high as 36 months, where it's really a stable company that's well-established with a track record of being extremely punctual.

PLAY METER: The reason for the question is that we're trying to find out if distributors—not necessarily yourself—but distributors in general are experiencing higher accounts receivables than in years past?

RODSTEIN: Yes, absolutely. This is becoming one of the most significant problems in the distributing business today. The receivables are ballooning. Prices have been, as you know, rising significantly. And they're continuing to do so at present. And there's no reason to believe this

condition will be reversed in the near future.

So there's a problem brewing there of, in some cases, inadequate capitalization and, in other cases, of too high a leveraging problem—for both the distributor and the operator. There's no question the manufacturer is not in a position where he can afford to be too magnanimous. He's got to pay for his parts and supplies and components promptly if he wants to stay in business. So he's got to be a lot stricter with the distributor, and the distributor has to be a lot more disciplined himself than he's been in the past. He'll have to be circumspect and deliver equipment only to those operators who discharge their responsibilities on time and who pay their open accounts meticulously. After all, in what other business does the supplier deliver units that sell for three and four thousand dollars apiece on an open account basis?

When I went to buy a new car this year, from a friend of mine who I've known for, oh, thirty years, someone who is a big car dealer, even he wasn't as easy on the terms as we are in this business with our customers. When the car was ready for delivery, I was out of town and so he specified that whoever picks up the car for me should take with them a certified or cashier's check. That car cost around \$14,000.

My point is we're delivering units that are three or four thousand dollars each, and very often the operator is getting more than one at a time. So we are also involved in delivering that kind of valuable product that runs into the thousands of dollars. Now what other industry will deliver items like that on an open account basis and be sloppy about the way they get paid for it? Who has that kind of money to fool around with? Nobody. Everybody's finances are limited, even General Motors'. So I think we've matured in this industry to the point where, to continue to remain viable and successful, we'll all have to conduct ourselves very closely in the area of credit.

I've had distributors tell me they're worried because they have operators who were on their books for \$20,000 last year and who are now around \$100,000 this year. It's a matter of real concern. But what I say to that is look at the man's credit behavior. If his credit behavior warrants that kind of accommodation, then there's nothing wrong with it, as long as he continues to meet his obligations on

“I say, look at the operator's credit behavior. If it warrants your accomodating him, there's nothing wrong with doing so, as long as he meets his obligation on time.”

time. But, in the aggregate, when you consider how our receivables have ballooned, if we're not careful and circumspect, we may have some fallouts among the distributors.

PLAY METER: From all the reports of distributors experiencing higher accounts receivables levels, would you conclude that operators are indeed overbuying at this point?

RODSTEIN: Some are. That's why it behooves the distributor to become very circumspect as to whom he delivers this equipment to. As a distributor, it will be in my best interest to help a good operator grow by giving him higher credit limits, but I have to be quite certain it is feasible for us to do so for him. As a distributor I have to look to how he is going to use this investment to pay off

for him so that he can pay me off. That's what really comes into play.

On the other hand, if it's an operator who has a fixed number of locations, and he's not growing in terms of the number of outlets, and he merely wants us to finance him to a greater extent every year for existing business, then we're looking for trouble. If he's not growing but just wants to owe us more money for the same size business, we're going to get into trouble with him because he's not going to be in the position to pay us. What is required is a reinvestment on his part, a proper allocation of reserves for replacement of equipment.

He's earning good money, but if he doesn't set aside on a proper replacement basis, taking into consideration inflationary aspects of our equipment situation, we're heading for trouble if we extend him additional credit. If he has a fixed number of locations and thinks X percentage of his income was good for replacement for 1979 or 1980 and so that should be sufficient for 1981 or 1982, then he's making an awful mistake. The question I have to ask him is what is he doing with all this money?

The fact that guy owes us more money is not in and of itself a matter of concern. It's how he uses that increased accommodation. That's where the distributor's concern comes in. I would be very happy to give this company I mentioned earlier the forty units to put in the convenience stores because I know they are a growth outfit and are going to pay their bills. They're going to continue growing. But if you let a standstill outfit owe you more every year, then you, as a distributor, are going to get yourself into trouble.

Maybe you can see the distributor is in the position of having to call some pretty close ones now. That's one of the reasons we've gotten into the computerization of our accounts receivable. We are now in a position to know in real time what the status is. We don't have to wait for a receivables list to come in from our branches that can be several weeks old. Actually, they used to be five or six weeks old before we saw them.

Now that we're on real time, we know what the status is on that account every day. Before, with a remote branch, if they gave you a list of their accounts receivables at the end of the month, by the time they mailed it, it was at least five weeks old from the first day of

"Video sales are still up as compared to sales last year ... though the pinball increase is impressive at this time."

that month to the time you got it. The numbers are just so damned big that if a distributor is not on his toes and minding his business on a real time basis daily, he's going to have some problems.

PLAY METER: What about the leasing option?

RODSTEIN: Leasing is no less a task for the distributor, because whether the operator buys or leases the machine from the distributor, the distributor still has to buy the machine from the manufacturer. There are exceptions to the rule where the distributor would lease equipment, as I mentioned earlier, but it is the exception. I don't know of any distributor who is anxious to lease

equipment, who is leading with it or advertising it. But it's a different situation with the vending and music because that equipment is not obsoleted as readily.

PLAY METER: Since last year, would you say pinball sales re up or down compared to last year?

RODSTEIN: Pinball sales for the first four months of 1981 against the first four months of 1980 are trending up. If you would have asked me this question earlier this year, I wouldn't have answered it the same way. But in the very recent past we have had some very revolutionary games come out which are appealing—*Xenon, Black Knight, Mars, Deluxe Eight Ball* among

"We've gotten into computerization of our accounts receivable. Now we know what the status of every account is, every day."

them. And these games are really selling. Sales are up as a result of these highly appealing games.

PLAY METER: What about videos? Last year was a bumper year for them. Are video games sales at the same level, down somewhat, or still increasing?

RODSTEIN: Video sales are still up as compared to sales last year. In fact, the increase in video activity is still greater than the increase in pinball activity, though the pinball increase is impressive at this time.

PLAY METER: Do you think the video boom is going to last?

RODSTEIN: Yes. I don't think it's a bubble that's going to pop in the future. The reason is that it's not a local phenomenon. It's an international phenomenon. The human race has been playing games for quite some time now, and the rate of technological advance is such that I think the possibilities of electronic games are unlimited. The pace is such that I think the manufacturer will continue to be able to make it interesting for the consuming public for the foreseeable future, like the movie business. Because we are in the entertainment industry and this is a high-tech field, I don't see this phenomenon as a bubble that will break. We've got a lot of smart people who are trying to entertain other people, and I think we're going to continue to entertain people.

PLAY METER: Let's assume we're all faulty prophets. What indicators should an operator look to, which would indicate a downturn in video activity?

RODSTEIN: The good operator should monitor his averages very closely by type of equipment. The best clue when video as a class would begin to lose favor would be when income per video per week starts to decline or some other type of equipment starts to increase in relation to the video. So it's strictly a statistical procedure. Of course, when we get finished with it, it's the bottom line that counts, his return on investment per dollar.

If I'm getting back X percent for every dollar I invest in video versus a lesser or higher percent for every dollar I

invest in some other game type, whether it be pinballs, pool tables, or jukeboxes, that's what I'm looking for as an indicator. That's about the best analogy you could expect see.

PLAY METER: Let's put it this way. We started to see quite a few closeouts before pinball fell on its hard times last year. And that turned out to be an indicator of rough times ahead for pinballs. Now recently we've witnessed one recent drastic closeout of a video piece on a large scale, Battlezone. Is there anything foreboding in this?

RODSTEIN: No, that was more the function of the overproduction of a particular game. It was more a misjudgement of the market than it was a commentary about the whole class of games declining.

PLAY METER: What are your feelings about the used game market?

RODSTEIN: The market for used games has deteriorated, and it appears that operators are beginning to recognize worldwide that they are getting a better return on investment from new games than they are in used games. So it really boils down to this: The distributor can only move a certain quantity of used games, and then it's mainly into new arcade operations. Now if he doesn't have any new customers who are opening new arcades, then he's stuck. So there's really the lack of a steady market for moving used games.

What I'm saying is the operator cannot just count wholly on the distributor to accept his used games in trade because the distributor who accepts the game is on trade is really buying that game back from the operator. But if he hasn't got a place to sell it, then he's not going to buy it. You're seeing now where distributors are

becoming more discriminating as far as the games they'll buy back. Since this resale market is so unstable, the distributor cannot be counted on to be the unloading depot for used equipment.

PLAY METER: And of course this will affect the operator's buying decisions.

*RODSTEIN: Of course, its already entered into it. The smart operator knows that he cannot count on any fixed number of dollars of resale value. He's really got to figure on use of the game mainly and very little of the resale value of the game. Of course, there are exceptions. If a guy came to us today with a *Space Invaders*, we would probably still give him a good dollar for it because it's a good game, even though it's three years old. It should be written off in three years, but it's still worth a lot of money today. I guess *Asteroids* will be in that category, but by and large, it's best not to count on getting too much back for the game in a trade-in after you're through using it. This is different with pinball, however. You can use a pinball for three years and still get a lot of money for it after that time.*

*PLAY METER: Of course, as you just pointed out, with *Space Invaders* and *Asteroids*, there are exceptions to the rule, but what would you say an operator could reasonably expect as far as the lifespan of a video?*

RODSTEIN: For economic life during which time a pinball and video will earn a decent return, I'd say three years would be right. I may be a little hard on pinball when I say that because videos play themselves out quicker than pins. The play appeal of a pinball is still longer than that of a video, maybe because there aren't that many of them being produced. On videos, I would say

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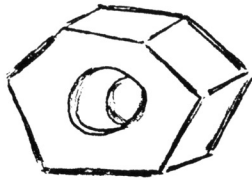
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three years. On pins, it would be a little longer. We used to say five years, maybe we should say four years now. If you keep your books on a three-year depreciation basis for both, though, you're going to be safe. If you want to stretch it out a little with pins, I guess you can.

PLAY METER: As a charter member of the distributors' association, would you care to comment on what were some of the motivating factors which brought all you distributors together.

RODSTEIN: A trade association is a well-established vehicle to upgrade the standards of the industry. It's done that in other industries. And we formed this thing to try to improve the lot of everybody in this industry, and obviously the distributor in particular. We are interested in the acquisition and dissemination throughout the trade of statistical information as compiled by an independent third party, like NAMA does. Also, we're looking for information on insurance programs, workman's compensation, news about personnel policies, publishing a newsletter, letting people know what's going on throughout the business. There were a lot of reasons. We also felt that forming the association could help us improve our service to our customers. This way we will know systems and procedures which our fellow distributors employ that are successful. We think the association will give us a chance to exchange our views.

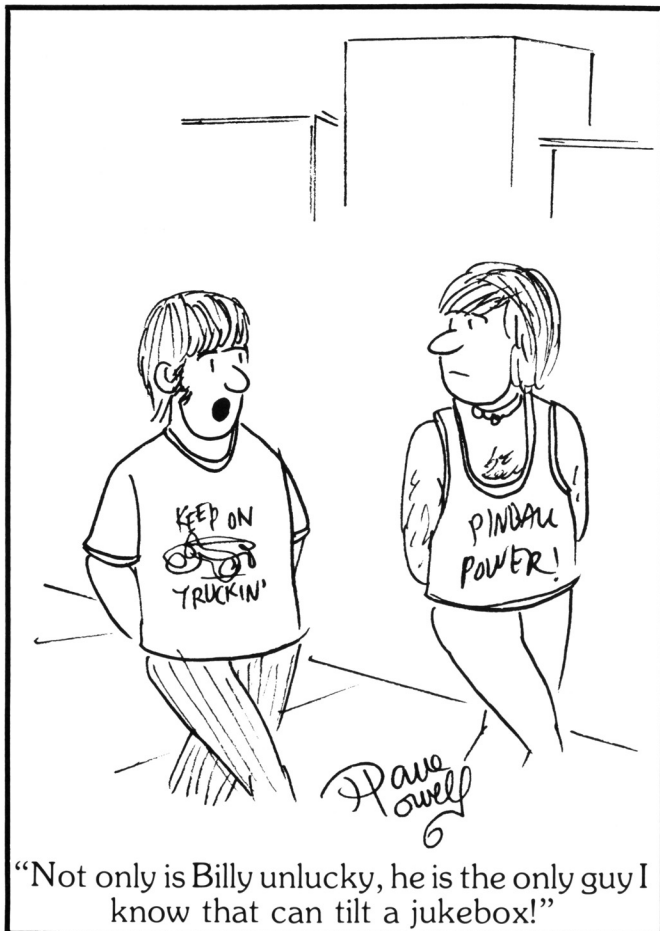
PLAY METER: Do you see a distributor who operates as being in a position of having a possible conflict of interest?

RODSTEIN: An operator's best interest will not be best served by patronizing a distributor who competes with him on the street for the locations. Here is a clear conflict of interest in my opinion.

However, this conflict of interest is not present in the case of arcades or these new types of restaurant arcades because these types of operations are filling a need which does not conflict with street operations. A distributor, for instance, who opens a Chuck E. Cheese or a Pizza Time Theater isn't hurting anybody. He's filling a need which street operators are not willing to get into. The investment to open one of these outlets is very high, and they are offering a service to families and customers who are not frequenting regular street location, such as cocktail lounges and bowling alleys. So those distributors who are involved in those types of operation, I'd say don't have any conflict of interest. That is really one of the main reasons why I was prompted to sell my operation in 1961. Maybe I would have been better off if I had kept it. (laughs)

PLAY METER: One final question, What should an operator look for in a distributorship?

RODSTEIN: A good distributorship is one that relies on a consistent basis on its support services after the sale—such as parts, repairs, and board exchanges. These are the earmarks of a good distributorship. A good distributorship will also have an ample display of the latest releases. He'll offer guidance with equipment buying, financing, and is also capable of helping you project income and expenses for potential locations. Also, a good distributor is someone who isn't afraid to test what may look like a far-out piece of equipment. He'll be open to field testing new equipment types and then report to his operator/customer if the equipment is good, bad, or indifferent. ●



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The state of the distributorship

The median of business revenue for a U.S. amusement and games distributorship can be placed at \$2.3 million annual sales, with a range of yearly revenue between \$1.05 million and \$6.85 million. In that distributorship the average collection period for a sale can be figured at about 54 days, while typical credit terms to operators are 30 days.

These and other facts about the handlers' business health and operating methods could only be guessed at, before the introduction this year of *Play Meter's* Distributor Survey. For the purposes of monitoring this vital link in the industry, the survey was mounted and more than 400 distributorships contacted—in fact, every American distributor known to be in business.

Play Meter Publisher Ralph C. Lally II commented, "From the input of distributor responses to this first-ever survey instrument, we will be able to gauge the growth of the industry at one of its most essential junctions, the distributorships throughout the nation, over coming years."

The survey asked distributors, among other questions, "What do you like most about the distributing business?" From a variety of answers, the most common responses were "the apparent security from (economic) bad times" and "constant changes" of the industry.

On the other side of the coin, "What do you dislike most?" was answered by the largest number in that some operators are slow to pay for equipment or that the accounts receivable are a constant problem (26 percent of distributor respondents).

The nature of the distributor, his staff, the services offered, and typical methods of transacting business emerged from the statistical portrait derived from the *Play Meter* survey.

For example, the average time the distributor has been in business is over 22½ years with the range of longevity of those responding falling between three and 61 years. Some eight out of ten distributors were "independent, locally owned and operated." About half of the companies had branch offices.

Employed by the average distributor responding to the survey were 25 people. On average, eight of those persons are servicemen or technicians; five are employed as sales personnel. Probably related to the figure for more service personnel than sales force is the fact that four out of ten distributorships say they operate music and games as well as sell and service what they sell.

Distributors are often cited as the sources of aid for the operator when equipment breaks down. *Play Meter's* Distributor Survey shows that only half of the handlers offer field service to troubleshoot equipment they sell.

Distributors have their own problems along the pipeline of coin-op equipment also, they indicated. Asked if they were "satisfied with current manufacturer warranty programs," a majority (69 percent) said No.

Credit terms extended to distributors by manufacturers are on a 30 days basis in the majority of cases (80 percent), with the next most frequent terms being 45 days.

According to the survey results, distributors usually extend the same

Equipment: Top Movers

Scores reflect sales in the first two quarters of 1981, following January 1st, as reported by distributors in their ranking of top selling equipment.

TOP SELLING PINS

1. **BLACK KNIGHT** (Williams)
2. **XENON** (Bally)
3. **FLASH GORDON** (Bally)
4. **EIGHT-BALL DELUXE** (Bally)
5. **FLIGHT 2000** (Stern)
6. **BLACKOUT** (Williams)
7. **MARS/god of war** (Gottlieb)
8. **SPACE INVADERS** (Bally)
9. **FREE FALL** (Stern)
10. **JUNGLE LORD** (Williams)

TOP SELLING VIDEOS

1. **PAC-MAN** (Midway)
2. **ASTEROIDS** (Atari)
3. **DEFENDER** (Williams)
4. **SCRAMBLE** (Stern)
5. **GORF** (Midway)
6. **PHOENIX** (Centuri)
7. **BERZERK** (Stern)
8. **CRAZY CLIMBER** (Taito & Nichibutsu)
9. **STAR CASTLE** (Cinematronics)
10. **ASTRO BLASTER** (Gremlin)

PlayMeter

Equipment Poll

The following are rankings of the top videos and top pinballs making above average weekly gross collections nationwide. The dollar amounts appearing are the average weekly grosses as reported to Play Meter magazine through its regular national operator survey, including both arcade and street locations. Games with less than adequate responses (less than fifty percent) but with above average collections are so noted. Games not appearing on the poll either (1) did not generate over a ten percent response rate to provide an adequate representative sampling or (2) did not register weekly gross collections above the national average. **Special note should be made that these earnings figures are gross revenues. When computing operator revenues, these amounts should be reduced by fifty percent to reflect the most widespread industry practice, that of granting fifty percent commissions to the location owners.**

TOP PINBALLS

Thirteen of 22 pinballs (59%) with a response rate over ten percent have above average earnings.

TOP VIDEOS

Fourteen of 26 videos (54%) with a response rate over ten percent have above average earnings.

	June 19	July 3		June 19	July 3
National average for pinballs	\$89	\$98	National average for videos	\$155	\$162
* 1. EIGHT-BALL DELUXE/Bally	\$150	\$163	1. GORF/Midway	\$196	\$225
2. BLACK KNIGHT/Williams	\$134	\$152	2. PAC-MAN/Midway	\$207	\$213
* 3. FLIGHT 2000/Stern	\$120	\$150	3. DEFENDER/Williams	\$220	\$210
* 4. XENON/Bally	\$126	\$133	4. SCRAMBLE/Stern	\$206	\$207
* 5. FLASH GORDON/Bally	\$109	\$123	* 5. ARMOR ATTACK/ Cinematronics	\$196	\$197
* 6. BLACKOUT/Williams	\$97	\$118	6. ASTEROIDS/Atari	\$184	\$192
7. FIREPOWER/Williams	\$93	\$101	7. BERZERK/Stern	\$175	\$189
8. SPACE INVADERS/Bally	—	\$99	8. PHOENIX/Centuri	\$169	\$187
			* 9. ASTRO BLASTER/Gremlin	\$165	\$176
			10. ASTEROIDS DELUXE/Atari	\$171	\$162

* Conditionally Rated— Weekly average based on less than 50% response rate

Provisionally Rated Pinballs and Videos

(Above average earning games, with a response rate between 10—25%)

PINBALLS

Provisional Ratings	June 19	July 3
MARS/Gottlieb	\$186	\$181
FIREBALL II/Bally	\$121	\$136
LIGHTNING/Stern	—	\$120
JUNGLE LORD/Williams	\$119	\$113
ALIEN POKER/Williams	\$94	\$106

VIDEOS

Provisional Ratings	June 19	July 3
WAR LORDS/Atari	—	\$177
RED BARON/Atari	—	\$173
CRAZY CLIMBER/Nichibutsu	\$176	\$169
CRAZY CLIMBER/Taito	\$177	\$163

If you would like to join the ever-growing number of readers participating currently in the survey, write: Play Meter Equipment Poll, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, LA 70184.

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credit terms to operators as the factory allows them: 30 days, net, was given as the credit terms to operators by 65 percent of the responding distributors. Next in frequency was a 30-to-90 days "variable" period of credit (15 percent of respondents).

Credit terms to operators otherwise were given by 5 percent or less of the distributors as one of the following: 2 percent discount for cash, "conditional sales contract or cash," 90 to 120 days term of credit, 30 days with 2% added on after that time, or "C.O.D."

A small percentage said no credit terms were offered to operator-buyers.

Cash flow

The health of the distributorship can perhaps best be gauged by its percentage of gross receipts held as receivables. The national average from the survey was 14.7% receivables.

Distributors having zero receivables were 4.5 percent of the respondents. The largest percentage have between 10.1 percent and 20 percent of revenues in receivables—just over 45 percent of the distributors responding.

An equal proportion fell short and

went over that range of receivables: 18 out of 100 distributors had 6 to 10 percent of their sales tied up in receivables, and 18 out of 100 had 20.1 to 30 percent in receivables.

Those with over 30 percent receivables equalled 13 percent of the firms, with none reporting receivables over 43 percent of sales.

Sales trends

The health, or lack of it, in the various entertainment modes was indicated by the distributors answering *Play Meter's* survey. Asked to describe the sales activity of the different types of equipment now, compared to the same time last year, the distributors responded as follows:

Phonograph sales were down, said 55 percent of the respondents; jukebox sales were the same as last year, said 33 percent; and 12 percent of the handlers expressed phonograph sales as increased.

For videos, the cards were clearly cut—95 percent of the handlers saw sales rising as compared to 1980, and only 5 percent said video sales were "the same." (No single respondent described video sales as "down.")

Not so with pinball; 86 percent of handlers surveyed said pingame sales were down, compared to 1980;

8 percent said activity was "the same" and only 6 percent described pinball sales as increased.

Coin-op pool tables rolled along on a steady course in 1981, it seemed: 67 percent of distributors said sales were "the same" as last year. However, twice as many (22 percent) said pool table sales were down than the distributors who saw sales increase for tables.

Winning equipment in sales was clear-cut also. *Black Knight* (Williams) led the pack of pinball games handily in being scored high by distributors in their sales since January 1981. (See chart for the top ten list in pins and videos.)

Pac-Man (Midway) outdistanced *Asteroids* (Atari) and *Defender* (Williams) to be rated by distributors as the heaviest seller in videos in the first half of 1981.

Distributor characteristics

Some things could be said about the typical distributor—including the fact that he doesn't exist, as our statistical abstract of the 22.6-year-old firm collecting receivable accounts within 54 days and hiring 24.8 people.

But from the statistical model of *Play Meter's* survey came those and other figures concerning the typical



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distributorship. It handles five to six equipment lines exclusively; it shares four to five lines with another distributor in its area.

When long-term financing is offered (78 percent of the distributors), the long-term interest rate is 15.16 % on average—with a range of rates between 10% all the way up to 28%. Method of computing interest is most usually add-on (80 percent of operators) rather than simple.

Distributors are found to deliver sold equipment in their own vehicles, according to 78 percent of responses; 22 percent said they do not deliver.

Equipment is leased by distributors in only 17 percent of cases. When videos are leased; the range of weekly lease amounts is between \$50 and \$85; for pinballs, the range is between \$35 and \$75 weekly; and phonographs command between \$20 upward to \$75 weekly when leased.

Most of the distributors surveyed (64 percent) were not yet members of the distributors association, AVMDA, but several indicated their intent to join AVMDA soon.

On the matter of the introduction of the new interchangeable cassette video game systems, the greatest

number of distribs (43 percent of the respondents) said they do not favor the concept. However, 34 percent were "undecided" on the interchangeable system, while 23 percent were in favor of the cassettes.

Crossover business with the sister industry of vending was indicated in that 70 percent of the distributors sell vending equipment as well as amusement equipment. (Only amusement distributors were polled.)

Importing of games for resale was indicated as a business practice by 29 percent of the U.S. distributors responding to the survey.

Attitudes

The feelings of the distributors about the coin machine industry and their place in it was revealed by their answers to questions on what they "like most" and "dislike most" about distributing.

Answers to "like most" were commonly:

—"Apparent security from economic bad times" (10 percent);

—"Constant changes," "the excitement," or "the challenge" (26 percent with the three similar responses combined);

—Also: "Being a leader in a fast-moving, exciting business;" being

able to serve your customers' needs properly;" "having the freedom that comes with being a small, independent businessman;" "like the people;" "like the games;" and: "It's like being in an adult toyland."

Answers to "dislike most" were wide-ranging after the comments that "operators who do not pay on time" or collection of receivables were the most irritating problems. Some other negative comments about distributors' situation were:

—"Competitive prices force low-margin sales;"

—"New games comes out too fast. The quality is not always very good;" "fast depreciation and short useful life of equipment;"

—"Manufacturers who do not ship on the date promised;"

—"How to overcome the bootlegger who offers no service or parts" or "unethical operators who make the industry look bad."

—Interest rates were complained about, as were "greedy factories" and "the poor image of the industry."

And, agree or disagree with any of the above, one distributor stated a chief gripe that may be shared by all of us at one time or other. His biggest problem? "Monday morning."

—Survey analysis by Ray E. Tilley



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'The Satellite in Your Living Room'

Coin-op challenge potent in new leisure modes

By Roger C. Sharpe

Here it is the middle of August in the year 1981 and the coin machine industry, video in particular, is enjoying a rebirth of interest. Late spring stories on such television shows as ABC's 20/20 and NBC's News Magazine, as well as a host of other local programs have "discovered" those "new" games called *Space Invaders* and *Asteroids* and have done reports on the popularity of video.

Even print media have gotten into the act with newspapers and such magazines as *Science 81* finding their way to cover the video explosion. Not since the mid-seventies, when pinball had its day in the sun, has the industry been given such publicity.

What may be interesting, as a complimentary phenomenon, is the success of electronic games for the toy industry as well as the more sophisticated home computer market. For the toy market—the glut of hand-helds, which were basically copies of each other—the saturation of games caused prices to bottom out and a situation where the strong survived and continue to thrive with newer applications and efforts to drum up interest and business.

Not surprising, they've looked to the arcade games for their inspiration and no less than half a dozen *Space Invaders*-type games exist, although the major companies are also trying to innovate.

A trip to the Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago (held at McCormick Place with no less than 900 exhibitors) was something I took for *GQ Magazine* and what I saw tended to reaffirm many of the thoughts I've had in recent times since I've had the opportunity to watch this market more closely.

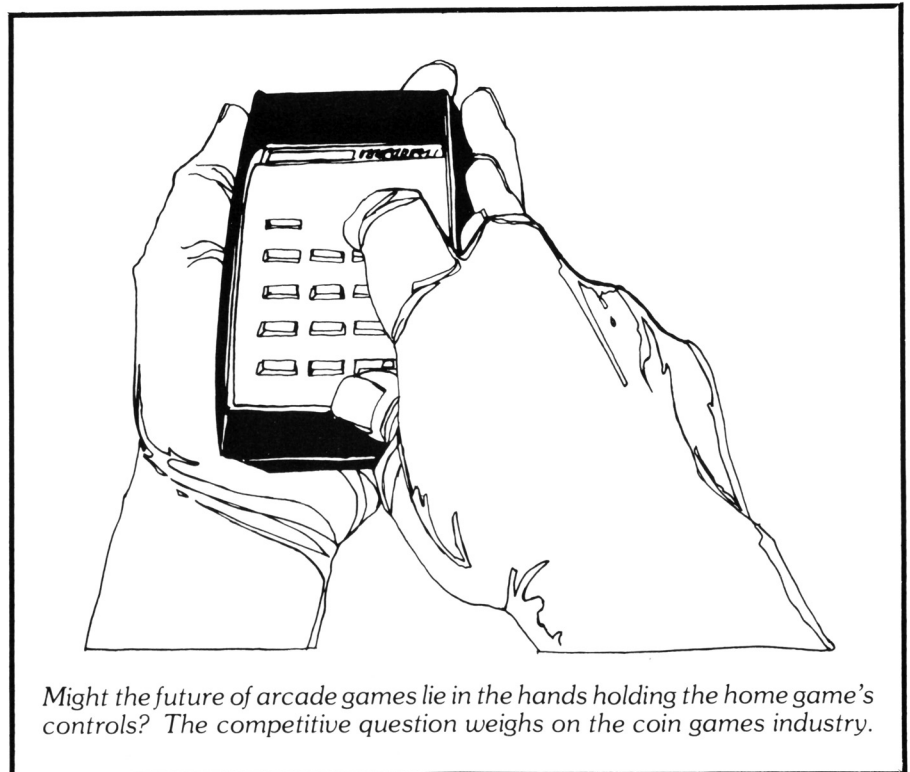
Admittedly, the major excitement has been with video discs and recorders, but the game aspect has also held firm and gotten its share of notice.

Mattel and Coleco, to name just two, have forged ahead of the pack with some very interesting games in the hand-held format that offer two- and even four-player capabilities, with much of the effort geared to sports related motifs such as Mattel's *Championship Baseball* and *Football* and Coleco's *Head-to-Head* series of games, which, for what they're supposed to do, do it very well.

On another front, computer systems continue to proliferate with

more than eight manufacturers offering their own versions of what they think the future family will need. Part of the terminals, floppy disks, keyboards, modems and all the rest, has been the application of video games cartridges with an ever-expanding array of offerings to keep parents and kids in front of the boob tube pressing their hand controls.

Mattel's Intellivision, which I've spoken about in the past, is a super system that provides some of the best graphics around, while Atari continues to blitz the competition with its never-ending supply of games, including the recent arrival of *Asteroids* and *Missile Command* for the home. And other companies are



Might the future of arcade games lie in the hands holding the home game's controls? The competitive question weighs on the coin games industry.

just as serious in their products.

In fact, the growth and success has spawned software manufacturers such as Activision and Avalon Hill Games which are going one step further in the sophistication of their offerings, especially Avalon Hill with incredibly complex play better suited for computer freaks and those who have been banging out their own creations in their spare time at IBM, Control Data, and other computer companies.

Impact on coin-op?

Together, what the influx and continuation of toy and computer manufacturers means for coin-op, is that the growth and improvement is going to have to keep going in order to provide different machinery than what one can buy for home use. It's not direct competition, but the foolish companies will be the ones who ignore what's happening in other fields that might have an impact on coin-op business.

However, as I've said in print and in person, video game players, if they have the same game at home, will probably play less at the arcade and more at home, unless they can get something different at the arcade besides ambiance. This isn't to

suggest that arcade owners suddenly have to worry about a possible fall-off in their business because of the home games.

For the longest time many people have liked to comment to me that, because I have seven pinball machines at home, I probably don't go out and play that much. I've always been quick to reply that I still play as much, if not more, at different locations and that owning my machines was just an extra bonus. However, I do recognize that my affection and affliction with pinball goes beyond the usual and what some would consider the normal bounds of attraction. But I also do know that those current models I have, I never really played that much on the outside just because I knew I could play them at home, and so I played other machines.

The question is, what will the impact be with the ready accessibility of video games for the home? Will others also react similarly, and if so, can the coin-op models continue to be just that much more different and special? I think they can, only because of the experience and available technological freedoms that are found on location pieces versus their take-off counterparts.

The only fear is whether things continue to be that much different for the player.

In the long run, both video and pinballs, as well as all the other forms of leisure time entertainment such as movies, will have to adapt to a society where people will have more in their living rooms than anyone ever thought possible before. Just look at the video (television variety) revolution with Betamax and disc players coming out with all sorts of possibilities, including the availability of first-run movies such as "9 to 5" which was released for the home only ninety days after it began in theaters, even before some outlying areas got a chance to spend money for a theater ticket and popcorn.

And imagine those who now, or soon, will own projection television sets with seven-foot screens: they will have an occasion to call up the neighbors for a friendly evening of watching tapes or discs of their favorite feature films.

Home entertainment sweeps

Add to this the growing access of cable television and what it means. The sports world in particular is trying to deal with this now in terms of opening up their books, as is the

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case with football and baseball; take the fact that such teams as the Seattle Supersonics of the NBA are offering all home games on cable to their fans for only \$120 for the season. It's probably less than the travel, parking, and other extras a fan would have to pay, not counting the price of seats, if he were to attend the game in person. Even the Chicago White Sox have sold their rights for home games to a cable network. Can others be far behind?

And what about the super stations and the fact that in a city like New York, if you have cable, you also get

Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Boston, as well as a slew of other programming beyond all the sports possibilities; that makes it hard to leave home, when everything is there in front of you.

There's much to be said for being able to tape a late night movie or TV program and be able to play it back at a more convenient time, or buy a feature film of the present, such as "Superman" or "Alien" (can "Star Wars" and "Empire" be far behind?), as well as those golden oldies you'd like to see time and again. Add to this the capability of catching more

sports on cable than you ever thought possible, as well as networks, and you get some idea of the competition.

Then there's the home computer, which will be a part of all our futures and the inclusion of games along with help for balancing the family budget and helping the children with their homework. It's frightening when you think about it and what it might mean to the neighborhood theater and the local arcade. But there's even more that's going to have to be reckoned with, as a new addition to the home entertainment sweepstakes begins to make its presence known.

The winter Consumer Electronics Show held in January of this year featured three companies that were pushing the idea and hardware for satellite television hook-ups for the home. By June, in Chicago, the number of companies had grown to eight, with over a dozen different types of "dishes" for private use. In addition, a dazzling exhibit by Japanese giant Matsushita, which produces equipment for Panasonic as well as others, showed off (in a booth that rumors said cost them two and a half million dollars) a variety of technological wonders for almost every type of personal and business application, plus 3-D television, and something else—a version of those large satellite dishes that was so small it could fit on a patio or next to a bookcase in the living room without taking up much space. The capability? The same as the larger versions.

And what can a satellite in every home mean? Well, how about access to the world of visual entertainment with over 100 stations possible to tune into from almost every nation in the world that's broadcasting via satellite. So if you want to watch something that's being televised in Japan, just tune into the appropriate station and enjoy the show.

It's all mind-boggling when you begin to think about all the strides being made to, in essence, keep people indoors in their own living rooms. What the impact will ultimately be for coin-op equipment remains to be seen and surely no one at this point could even venture a guess, but one thing that's true is that the games will have to continue to provide more and more to lure players back for a chance to spend their money.

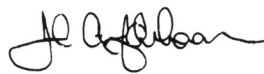
The direction the rest of the decade takes should prove interesting, if world peace and the horrors of the economic situation can be dealt with. Time will tell. •

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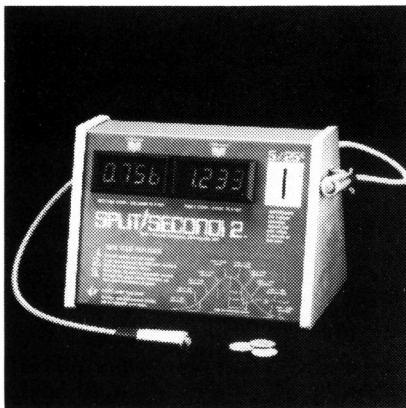
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The mission of the player is to defend Colony 7 from the evil "Jarvians". The enemy's fighter ships make intelligent strafing runs over the Colony to penetrate the protective shields. The Colony's cannons send converging pulse rays to explode the enemy's fighters before either the cannons or the entire Colony is destroyed.

The Colony flashes a "Caution" on the screen to warn of impending danger when the enemy's "Advisor" or "Scout" appears. The player will earn a high point value if he destroys the "Advisor" and the less time the "Scout" has to fly, the fewer replacement fighter ships will be called up to attack the Colony.

If a player does not destroy the "Bomber" or its bombs, its sure-fire aim will wipe out his cannons.

At the end of the first squadron, the player receives points for each structure left standing on the Colony . . . points that increase in value at the end of the next squadron!

When the situation seems desperate, the player can hit his "Mega-Blaster" button which destroys everything in the range of its radiating explosion or can activate the "Eradicator" which wipes out everything on the entire screen. The "Mega-Blaster" is powered by the fuel cells on the Colony . . . 3 cells for 3 "Mega-Blaster" hits per Colony . . . while the "Eradicator" can be activated only once per Colony.

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THE IDEA BANK

Let charity help coin-op

From England comes the framework of a bankable idea for operators to spur play on older machines. The hook: give away part of the proceeds on a regular basis to a charity.

Before the reader groans at the apparent stupidity of the idea, he should read a bit further and consider some real possibilities of stimulating play revenues through a charitable tie-in.

The model from Great Britain is a national charity for muscular dystrophy which recently made the move itself to cash in on the space games craze in Cambridge colleges. The non-profit group asked to put its own leased video games in student common rooms and share the proceeds, the trade press in London reported. The students association voted on whether to add a second machine to share 50 percent of profits for muscular dystrophy. One machine in student rooms at Cambridge was already reported to be taking in £100 a week.

Operators elsewhere can follow on this plan in the following manner. Contact the manager of chain stores "Z-Shops" in your area. Agree upon Charity ABC for which a portion of the revenue will be devoted on a regular basis.

The agreement should be to continue to collect your normal share, usually 50 percent of the cash box, plus service charge if that applies to your route. The revenue division can be set at 50 percent to you/25 percent to the location/25 percent to the charity (if that is the amount of proceeds you agree upon).

What enticement, then, is there for the location manager or owner?

There is, number one, the good will for "Z-Shops" that is engendered by announcing (with placards, newspaper advertisement, or otherwise) that "proceeds from play of this pinball game will be donated to Charity ABC." No deception is involved: movie theaters and other amusement centers—including the sites of coin-op games tournaments—regularly guarantee that the proceeds from a day's event or so will go to a given charitable cause. The term *proceeds* assumes that overhead must be met: salaries paid,

the lights and electricity paid for, etc.

In this case, the professional operator's provision and servicing of the games is part of the operating overhead for the store. Further, the location's share is justified by its own overhead, plus the devotion of a certain floor space that might otherwise be taken up with goods or other sales area such as in a bar.

You can't directly measure the value of good will; but it is possible to take a tax deduction for charitable contributions. Advise the location owner of this aspect, adding that he can in effect decide to set any percentage of his half that he will donate to Charity ABC. However, do not attempt to advise him on tax law; simply suggest the idea and let him consult with his accountant and/or tax lawyer. His balance sheet is his own business, but the charitable contributions aspect may not have occurred to him.

For your own benefit, you may be able to place a dated machine in this location and stimulate its play simply due to the donation aspect. Many merchandise counters display collection boxes or cards for charitable contributions, and the charities collect large sums from these sources. Why should the customer not feel that he is receiving something—play time on the game—for his contribution of quarters?

It is worth trying, to see whether an older machine will increase its action with the charity tie-in. Otherwise, the charitable aspect may well open the doors of a new location, one which will take other games of your line after the "for charity" machine pays off for the "Z-Stop."

And after it's all done, you can feel good about having helped some proceeds for Charity ABC.

—by Ray E. Tilley

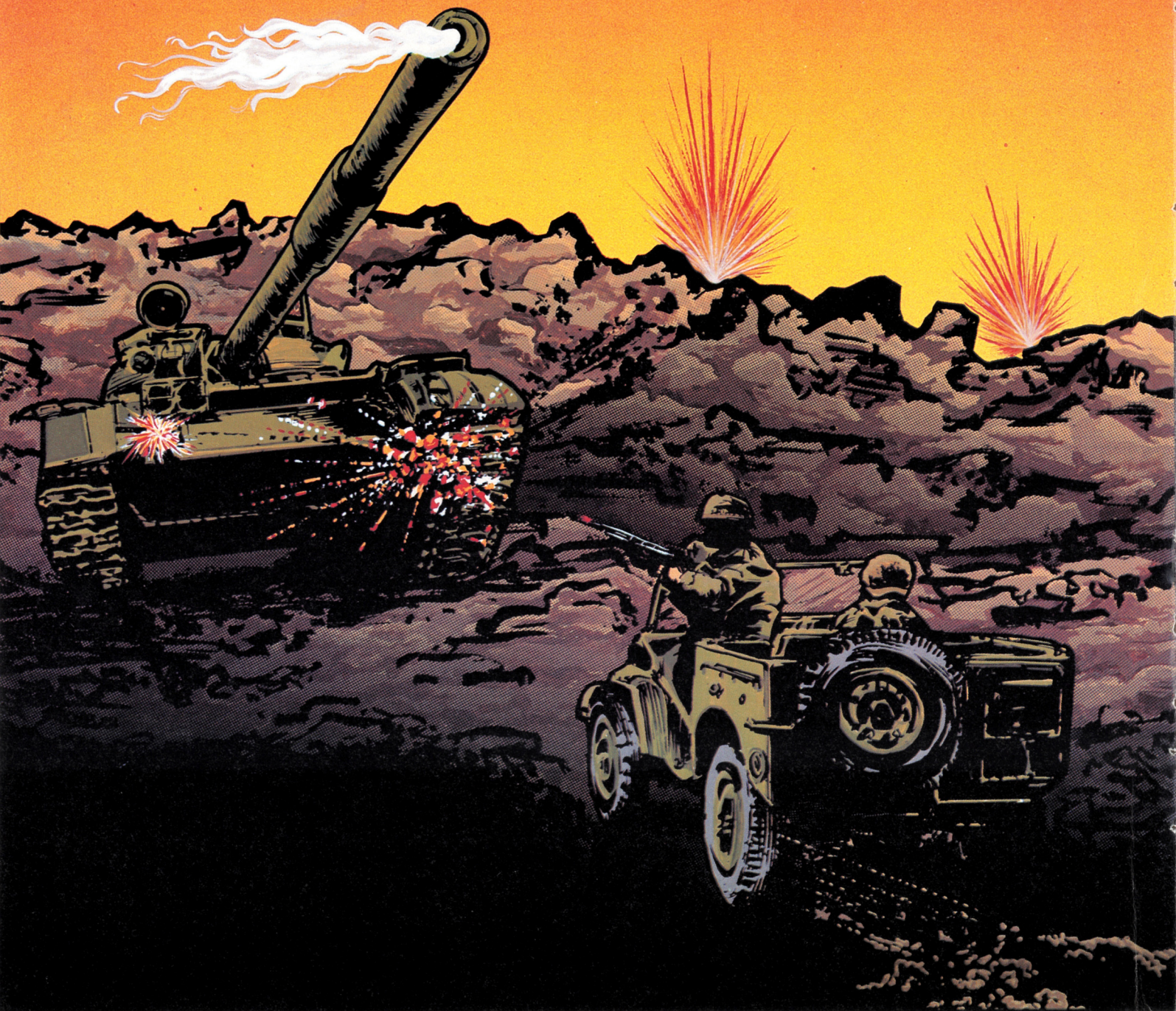
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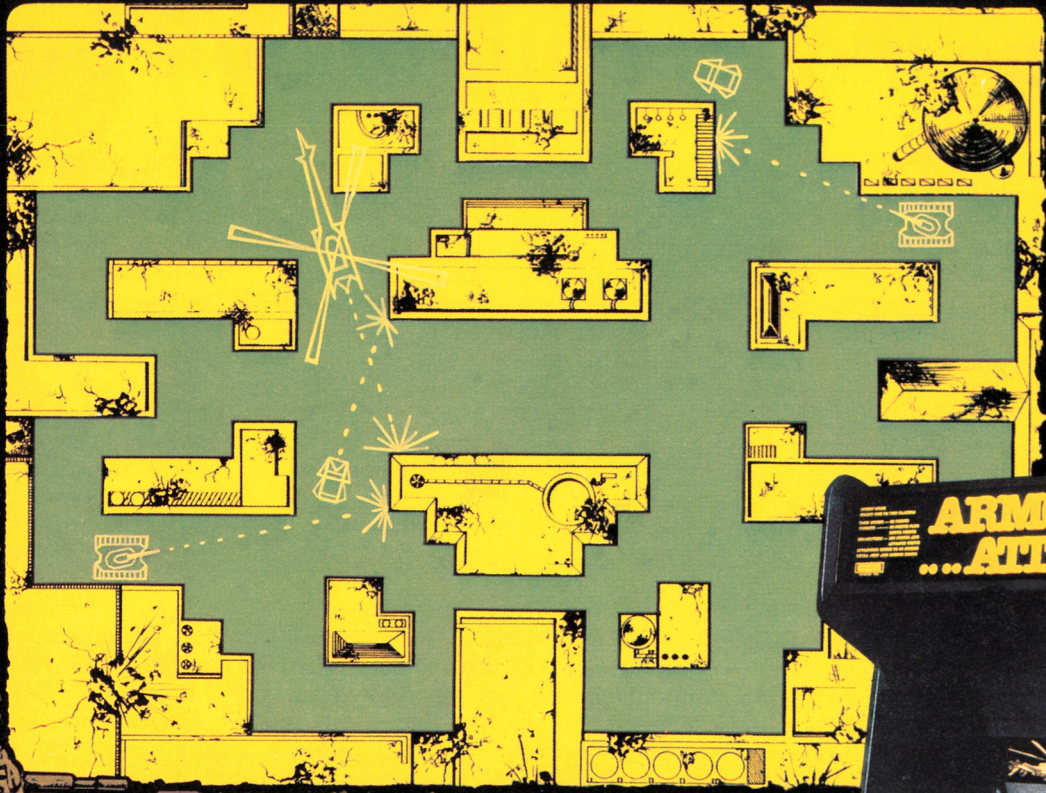
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Video operating in Britain: Has the revenue bubble burst?

Once bitten, twice shy seemed to be the British outlook as the Japanese and American coin machine industries developed the latest trend in the amusement industry —video games. But as the major manufacturing companies snowballed success with *Space Invaders*, *Breakout*, etc., the British adopted a bolder outlook. In less than three years they have created a market that has not only accepted the glut of games regularly being produced but one that is now impatient for new product.

In building this massive demand, however, the British coin machine industry has been infiltrated with a great number of new small companies and even smaller operators. An estimated 120,000 video games are sited in public houses, clubs, etc. in the U.K. and earned £260 million last year on site.

But the bubble appears to have burst and, predictably, the smaller operator is suffering as the video games boom slips towards a severe slump in Britain. For some time now, since the successful launch of *Scramble* to follow *Defender* as the year's most sought after game, U.K. distributors have been confronted with a harrowing vacuum which has accounted for the continuing increase in new companies being introduced to combat a massive conversion market.

Indeed, a not too surprising ability

of a number of leading games manufacturers in the U.K. to open their doors with a similar view has been revealed.

This vacuum, though, could well prove a blessing in disguise; the great leveller the video games industry in the UK needs at present.

Profitability picture

With the abortive attempt to create a British manufacturers' association already a thing of the past, the British Amusement Caterers' Association (BACTA) is looking into the state of the video industry. The profitability in operating video games is diminishing fast through overbuying and undercharging, they believe. As a result, and having already been able to examine cost figures submitted by major operators, they are undergoing a survey among BACTA members.

The survey comprises a guide to costs in which depreciation, average parts costs, installation charges, collection, service, administration, unsited stock depreciation, and finance are all accounted for.

After the removal of VAT (Value Added Tax) from the gross returns from a machine, the operator usually splits his net take with the site. But the big query is whether or not the majority of operators actually cover their costs with their share.

An example of average figures worked out by larger operators

showed depreciation at £9.61p each week; average shares, £2; installation and changeover costs, £1.50p; collection, £3; service and workshop, £4; administration, £2; unsited stock depreciation, £2; and finance at £1.75p —a total of £25.86p a week!

Meeting the replacement cost, or even offering normal maintenance, of the latest and more sophisticated, complex video games is getting beyond the smaller operators' reach. Many of them have already suffered to the point of giving in and stories are rife throughout the industry in the U.K. of warehouses stacked with unwanted games. This can be backed up with the recent spate of trade advertisements offering as much as £800 off a deal which combines an old game with a new one.

It has often been suggested that some of the major coin machine firms have not reaped the rewards they should have made from the video boom in Britain. Pirating of games has caused immense problems and some brewers, it is suggested, have demanded more video machines than a site's "take" can accommodate.


Controls still loom

On top of this there are the cowboys —fly-by-night operators who have muscled in on the video boom, undercutting established operators. Videos, unlike other amusement machines, are not licensed or controlled and the antics of a few fringe suppliers have prompted some people to suggest that the Gaming Board should take command of the video business.

There are new games ready to convince the operator that all is not lost. And, despite the manufacturers' probable desire to save their new product for the prestige Tokyo and Chicago trade shows later this year, a new launch campaign is already confronting, indeed confusing, the British operator...one of the games aptly being titled "May Day!"

—from *Play Meter's International Desk*

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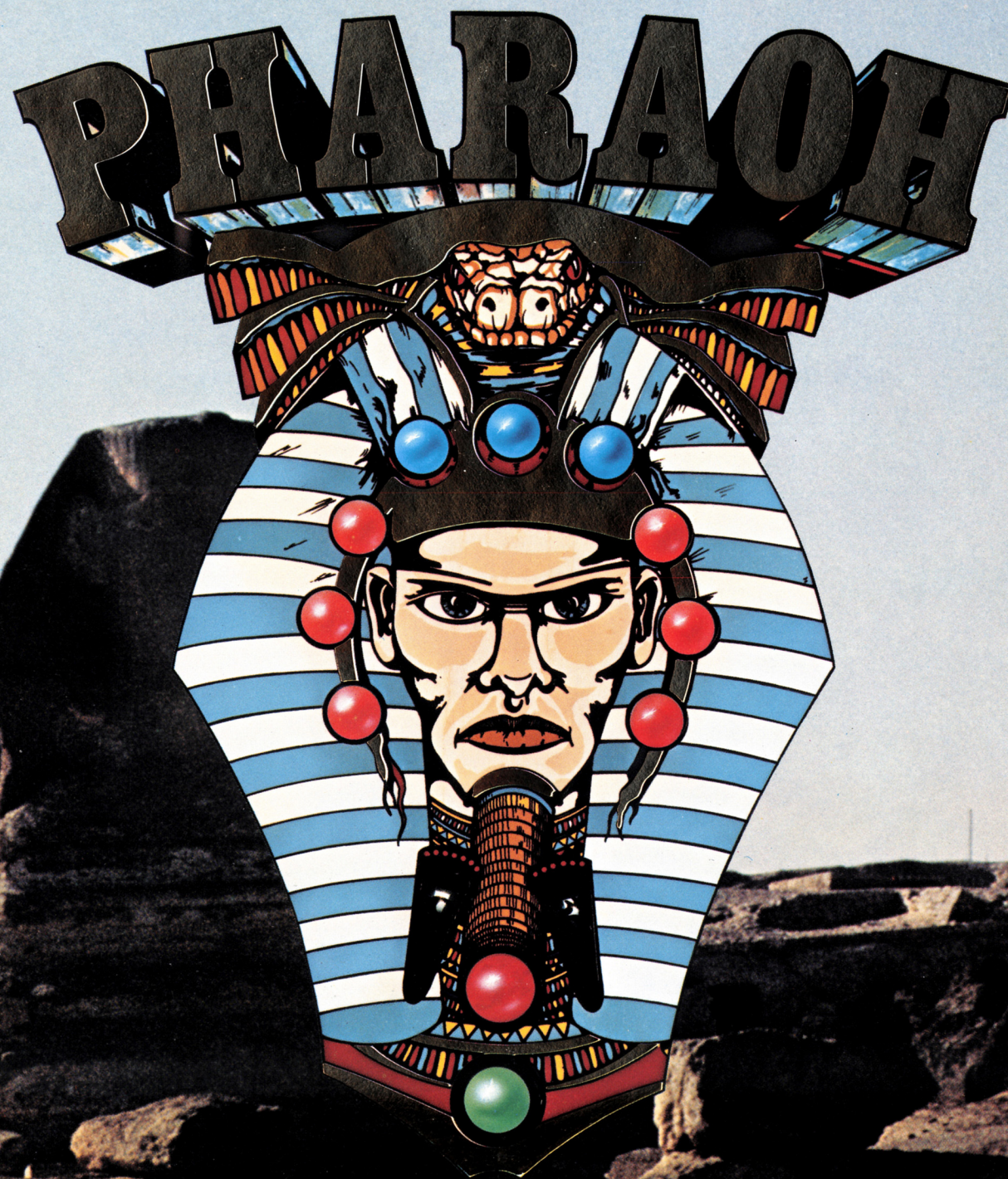


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COLLECT BONUS Make both lower banks when flashing, lighting "Hidden Tomb" to collect Bonus!

? LANES Spot "Mystery Lanes" by entering "Slaves Tomb" for mystery points, bonus advances, bonus multipliers or special!

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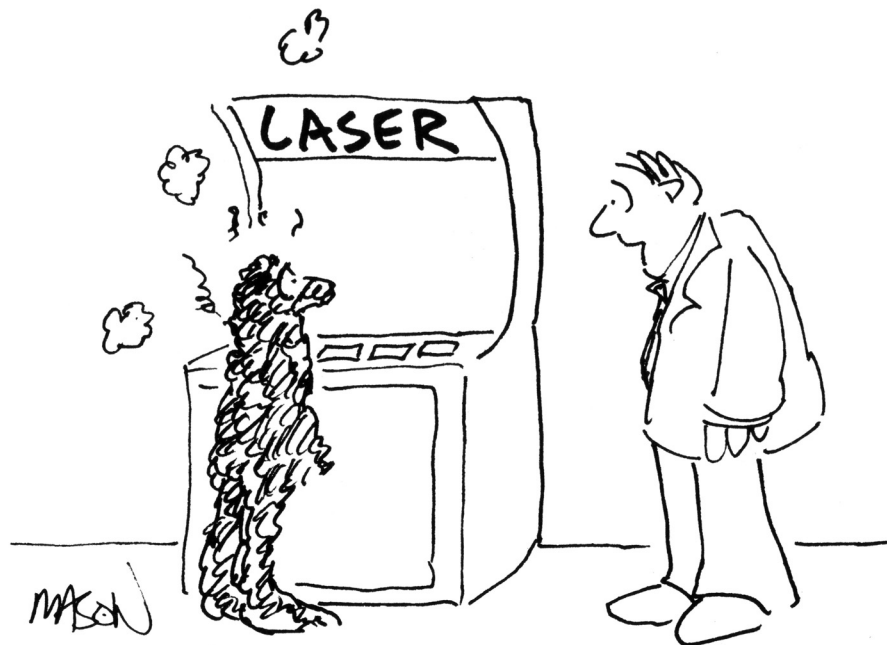
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He dealt with the man in the 'blue suede shoes'



"I thought there was something wrong with that game when I bought it..."

Like many persons today, Randy G. Zammatta of Chicago was interested in operating coin-op games, earlier this year. He now admits, "I didn't do my homework." His innocent mistake apparently was to buy games from an out-of-town seller without knowing either them or the trade generally. Because of promises by the seller and their later actions, or lack of action on behalf of the operator-buyer, Zammatta now has "a bitter taste in the mouth." He was left with coin-op games of marginal quality, that he could not find locations for, three months after their purchase.

The sales company will not be named below, because of possible pending legal action which the games owner is contemplating. But, in a conversation with Play Meter, Zammatta outlined his experience as an instructive lesson for others, such as location owners, who may see coin-op games as merely a "pot of gold" rather than as a well-planned business venture.

—editor

Q.: Were you just starting plans for a route when you got in touch with this sales company?

A.: Yes. It started when I went to an entrepreneurs' exposition in Chicago. When there, I ran across a salesman for the company. He explained to me how this is a booming industry, and that you can make a lot of money at it, and all this

good stuff. They had three games exhibited out there—cocktail videos.

I said I was interested in looking at an investment, and the representatives (for an Indiana-chartered company) told me you could make \$75 a week on a machine. They made it sound like you could make more, but they said that was the figure they "liked to work with," even though you could make more.

They said they were setting up interviews for people they would accept. In other words, they made it sound like... "we're looking for people with growth potential." At the interview, the salesman did most of the questioning. One of the statements I remember very clearly is: "We manufacture our own games," and he showed us a movie of their manufacturing plant, that they said was in Florida. Then, you know, we asked him what type of profit potential there is. He said, "Well, here's what the magazines say," and showed articles from *Time* or something, saying these machines could make \$300 a week or like that. He said, "But we like to work with the \$75 figure. We don't want to overstate our product."

Q.: The *Time* article didn't have pictures of the games you were being sold?

A.: No.

Q.: What kinds of games were being sold?

A.: They had pinballs and videos,

and I bought videos called "Laser" and "Moon Lander." The salesman said, "Would you be comfortable with the figure of \$75 as a base? I said yeah. But the whole thing was leading you to believe you could make more.

Q.: Did they show you any trade magazines in this industry?

A.: No,

Q.: Did they have any kinds of

"They told me they had a location-finding service that would locate for you and show you how to do it. I couldn't get through to them."

documents or statements from their customers in support of their claims?

A.: They had written things about one guy who they said was a 60-game dealer for them and showed him with a Corvette in front of his house.

Q.: Did you contact anyone they referred you to, and did he confirm the income figures?

A.: Yes, I did, and he said it worked out real well for him. Again, you can tell someone, 'Hey, say this for me...' He couldn't say they earned the \$75 per week, but he showed me articles that led you to believe the machines could make \$300 a week, or \$150-\$200 a week.

Q.: Did the salesman in the first place say the machines would make \$75 a week?

A.: Yes. He said \$75 a week, my half; \$150 total.

Needless to say, I was hesitant. I didn't buy the games the night of the interview, but I was called up at work a couple days later, and then a gentleman, who said he was the game company's sales manager, asked, "How were you treated?" and said, "I'd like to get together with you and talk to you about our service." And he was playing the concerned sales manager type of thing.

So I went down to where they were staying at the Holiday Inn, and talked to them, bought the games that day (February 18) and got delivery about a month later, a shipment from Schenectady, New York.

He told me he was trying to get the sale because they needed seven

distributors and only had got six distributors—owners or whatever. The games were \$3,490 apiece.

Q.: What other types of promises of income or return on investment did they make, if there were any?

A.: They also told me that if I was to expand, say, within four months, I would only need to put down 25 percent of the cash needed for the next machine....that I would be able to make that \$1700 in four months and that they would finance it for me.

Q.: What were the terms of sale of the first two machines—cash?

A.: They wanted certified checks or money orders. Everyone did (pay cash). The deposit was \$1300.

Q.: Had you made any comparisons, shopping at distributorships around Chicago?

A.: I was a little naive. I didn't investigate it. I didn't shop. The sellers made it sound, more or less. "If you don't get in now, you're not going to be in." I wasn't aware of the costs of any comparable type of game...

Q.: Did the sellers, in so many words, tell you that you could operate the machines yourself, that you wouldn't have to hire anyone?

A.: Oh, yeah, they said it would take a half hour a week for each machine.

Q.: That would include collecting from the cash box?

A.: Yes.

"I was a little naive. I didn't investigate. I didn't shop around. I wasn't aware of the costs of any comparable game."

They had a training school, that they said would train you to work on the machines. It was a one-day seminar type thing.

Q.: Any cost?

A.: No cost to you; they said they would do it. They gave you a seminar and that's where you gave them the rest of your payment—the balance of which for me was \$5,680, in a certified check (payable to the seller of the games).

The seminar, held by a separate company, was pretty good. They have an engineer, who most of the time will tell you where the problem is.

Q.: Finding locations—how did that go for you?

A.: Finding locations was rather difficult at first, because most places I went to had machines in. Needless to say, there was plenty of competition from machines made in Chicago. But I secured a location for one, in a bar, and for the other one I haven't secured a location yet, but I'm working on that.

They told me they had a location finding service that would locate for you and show you how to do it, and that after you went out with them, you could probably locate machines yourself. You had to pay for the service. I went to contact them and couldn't get through to them.

"The game would not be competitive alongside the large manufacturers' machines—it doesn't have the quality."

Q.: You have more or less constantly sought another location from February 18 when you bought them, for three months now?

A.: Yes.

Q.: As to the serviceability of the first machine you placed: have you had any problems with it?

A.: In the beginning, it didn't power-up when you plugged it in. But I called (the independent service technician), he told me the exact problem with it, I went out and fixed it, and it's been running pretty good since then.

Q.: That's your machine, "Laser." Was there a brand name on it?

A.: See, that's one thing I found, too, when I went a little further into the business—I noticed all the machines had company names on them, whereas this one doesn't. You would think a company that wants to be competitive would put their name on their product.

Q.: Whenever you went into the components of the machine, was there any such brand lettering on the circuit board, or foreign words?

A.: No, nothing; everything just blank.

Q.: What are you doing with the second machine, "Moon Lander"?

A.: Trying to get it placed, presently. It's sitting right in my living room.

Q.: How would you characterize the sellers, and how do you feel about the whole experience of buying their games?

A.: I feel they were a little shady in selling me their product. Any way they could avoid a situation, they would—certain things like when I wanted to sell the machines back to them, I said: "Look, I paid \$6,980 for these machines. I want to sell them back to you. I'm willing to take about a \$1,400 loss, because I'm taking a total loss with one sitting here."

By the way, my one machine that is placed, makes \$15-\$16 a week.

Q.: Of course, if it's the only game in a location, you might expect it to be played more—

A.: [interrupting] Frequently.

Q.: You have the only keys to the cash box, don't you?

A.: Yes, I do.

Q.: And the game has been in working condition and in a bar. Are there other machines competing with it in the bar?

A.: No. But it wouldn't compete with other machines; it doesn't have the quality, I know that, of the large manufacturers' machines.

Q.: Please explain how you felt that you were dealt with unfairly after the sale. Did they say they weren't interested in buying the game back—?

"The seller would only buy the game back if I signed a statement that it made \$40-\$50 a week. Mine made \$16 a week."

A.: Even if I took a loss. They said the only thing they could do for me was, if I signed a statement that the machines made me 40 or 50 bucks a week, and I had no problems with them, and that the service was good—that they could try to resell those machines for me. But they want to have a written statement from me to that effect.

Q.: They wanted you to say you were making \$40 to \$50 a week per machine, and you told them you were making \$15-20?

A.: Yes. Plus, they had told me I would make \$75 or more, and then wanted me to say I made \$40-50. In other words, they were trying to cover themselves legally, so that if they couldn't sell the machines, and I went to court with them, they would have a legal recourse in saying "Here's a signed statement from this gentleman..." I was talking to the same individual who sold me the machines.

Q.: When it was suggested that you would make \$75 a week, net, was that in writing, a contract, or in a brochure?

A.: No. He had a scratch tablet, and it all was written on that.

"I would stress, if you're going into the business, investigate it first. Look at the demand in your market for the product you're buying."

Q.: And when you tried to get to the location finding service—?

A.: I could not even get through.

Q.: Had you failed to secure locations by the time you tried to contact this location service?

A.: I had tried to secure locations myself, because the service, they had said, wanted \$175 a machine to locate it. I wasn't about to pay \$350 to locate two machines. I'm a person who can talk for myself, but after awhile I got pretty discouraged because I'd been diligently trying. So I called and tried to get the phone number of the location service, but there was no one there. The sales firm said they were sorry, that's the only number they had. I just couldn't get through.

Q.: How would you summarize your feelings about your treatment in this sale and since then?

A.: The coin machine business, they'd make you believe, is one you could make money at. But after the initial sale, I never heard from them until I started calling them back. They had said they'd call you and "try to be of assistance to you," and all this...

Q.: And how does this makes you feel toward operating games?

A.: To tell the truth, I knew there is

money to made in the business. If I had it to do over again, I would go through a distributor...I should have done my homework better—but I didn't. You know—they made you feel this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and that they were a small company that was gonna expand to be another Bally, and if you didn't get in now, you wouldn't be in, and all this.

Q.: Will you invest further or look into legitimate coin-operated games operating?

A.: I might, in the future...But again the main thing is to secure good locations—I'm not saying I couldn't.

My personal recommendation to anyone who wants to go into this business is: go to the trade associations, the trade magazines, look at what you're going into before you do it, and be sure you can be competitive. Because that's the major problem I have now, my competitive weakness because I don't have a quality product.

Unfortunately, I acted before I thought. I only knew there was money to be made in it, but I did not know the trade itself. I could probably still make it work, but just the way they (the seller company) had handled me, has gotten me P.O.'ed I don't need that kind of

"If I had it to do again, I would buy through a local distributor."

aggravation. They definitely did some things that weren't legal. The machines I have, I am going to try to get located in good locations. And I'm going to investigate every legal recourse against the company.

I would like to stress, if you're going into this business, investigate it first; like the old saying, "Buyer, beware." I'd have been better off taking the money and putting it down on a bar, because I know the bar business.

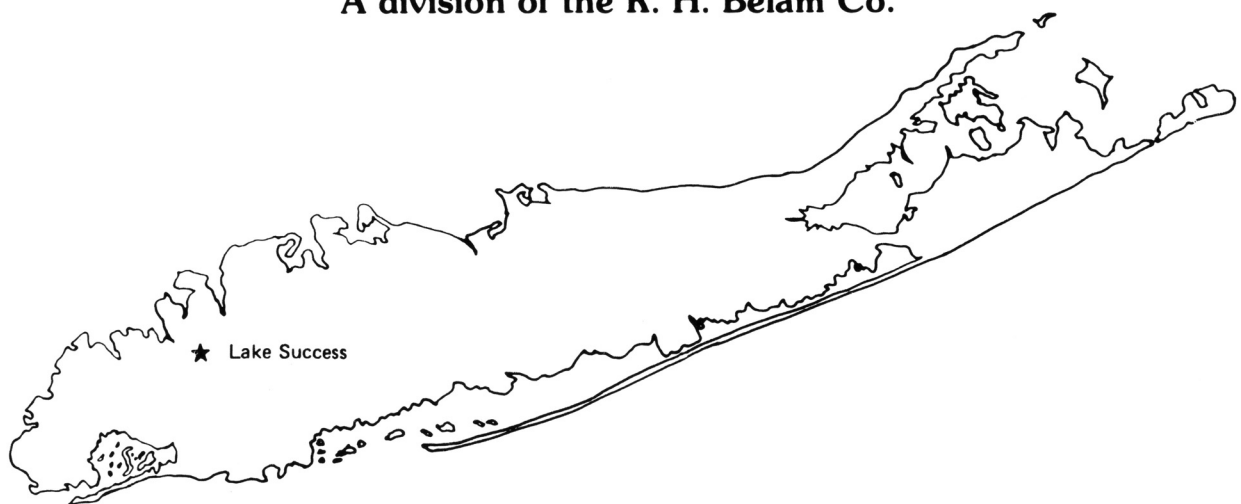
The whole thing kind of leaves a bad taste in the mouth. But if people are going into it, I would suggest they look at the demand in their market, before they buy the product.

I'm a heckuva lot wiser now about this business than I was going into it. ●

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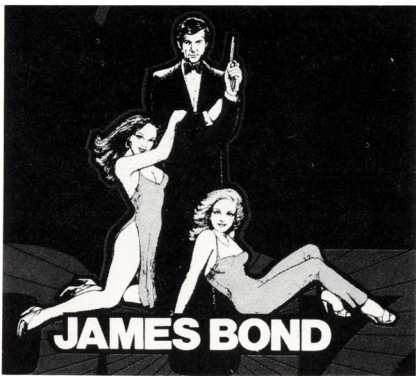
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MUSIC PROGRAMMING

By Pat Matthews

“A spy in your soup”



007...double oh seven...magic words which have crept into a whole new generation! Universally known numbers which are easily recognizable as, say, 86 or 99,* numerical monickers from a different type of spy story. What this all is coming to is the dawning of a new James Bond flick which will as usual become an instant success, then a classic, and naturally spawn a classic tune from its score. The last to fall into this mold was Carly Simon's million seller "Nobody Does It Better" from 1977's *The Spy Who Loved Me*. Now there's Sheena (not of the jungle variety)!

For Your Eyes Only—Sheena

Easton—Liberty/1418

The above mentioned Carly Simon James Bond movie hit was the first from said movies to depart from the scintillating brassy "spy sound." And this one takes "Nobody Does It Better" one better, if you will. It sounds nothing like movie music and that's a plus, as I see it. Certainly, no one seems to be doing it better musically these days than Sheena Easton and this time out she gets to showcase a very polished full vocal range. Positive hit material; 9 *out of 10* for sure.

Nothing Ever Goes As Planned—Styx—A & M/2348-S

It's also from the *Paradise Theater* lp and starts with that pulsating rock sound which fills the album. Lyrically, it seems to parallel their most recent smash "Too Much Time On My Hands," which probably makes sense since it's culled from the same "concept" album. A nifty percussion arrangement and nice guitar work highlight this song which should be heading for the top as you read this. The only thing which sets this apart from other Styx tunes is the use of horns. Very limited use, but effective; 9 *out*

of 10, at least.

Endless Love—Diana Ross & Lionel Richie—Motown/M1519F

Here we have one of the premier songwriters of today teamed with one of the loveliest ladies on the love song around. This one's from a movie, too, but who cares? It's another example of a song which doesn't need the movie to sell it. I'd even go as far to say, this song may not even need radio airplay to be a hit, but stations don't seem to be following this pattern. Everyone's playing it! It's a multi format/chart smash; 10 *out of 10* everywhere. Oh, and they sound great together, by the way.

You're My Girl—Franke & The Knockouts—Millenium/JH-11808

This band is the closest we're gonna get to the "Mony Mony" Tommy James & The Shondells sound of the Sixties. Plus, they're rockin' a little bit more than their time out with the Doobie-ish "Sweetheart." The song is very upbeat, bouncy, bright and pop. This group will grab many diverse audiences before they're through, I guarantee it; 8 *out of 10* or higher.

Don't Give It UP—Robbie Patton—Liberty/P-A1420

Before I ever heard this record, I had this feeling that it would be a hit. Then early radio airplay caught my ear. Then I heard it and my premonitions were justified. Of course, it's the first time out for Patton, who sings pleasant enough—but there's something more to his vocals...something I can't put my finger on, except to say there's a distinct commercial quality about it. He wrote the song and it in itself has plenty of pop appeal to it. Great late summer record. Top Ten here comes another new one! *10 out of 10*, natch.

Cool Love—Pablo Cruise—A & M/2349-S

How long has it been? Seems like forever. It's been over a year, I'd say! At any rate, Pablo Cruise is back. The only difference is the addition of guitarist Angelo Rossi making the group a quintet for the first time. And producer Bill Schnee has been released in favor of studio control booth veteran Tom Dowd. The music hasn't changed much. It's still good! This one has a kind of relaxed

flow to it with piano up front to add to the breezy feel. Excellent harmonies, as usual, are featured. That "tropical" sound is back. And not a minute too soon. Now, I think I'll go find my "Place in the Sun" and enjoy it while the Cruise-in's good; *9 out of 10* and counting.

Just Be My Lady—Larry Graham—Warner Brothers/WBS49744

This man has certainly come a long way since his "I'm gonna add some bottom..." days with Sly & The Family Stone. Now his bass vocalizations are turning the ladies on all over the continent. This one's simple in its message, but sultry in its method. Another instant smash. Crossover will happen. Dancin' close together to the Top Ten—*10 out of 10*.

**Editor's note: For those readers whose memory is not as long (or who aren't as old) as Pat Matthews, and to forestall all the letters and phonecalls on "Who or what is 86 and 99?"—he refers to the old Don Adams and Barbara Felton television show, "Get Smart!" Quiz question: What name did they give their child?*



Goodrow

Amstar engineer

Amstar Electronics Corporation has announced that it has a new director of engineering, Charles J. Goodrow, to spearhead new product development.

Goodrow, a native of Boston, has been active in the computer consulting field for 14 years and has designed and implemented computer operating systems for many varied applications. After receiving an electrical engineering degree from M.I.T., he was involved in computer time-sharing efforts. As a consultant he has assisted various companies with their computerization projects.

He has constructed operating systems for turnkey file management and data entry equipment vendors. Sak's Fifth Avenue of New York utilized his talents to implement their nationwide point-of-sale credit authorization system.

The government has benefited from his classified work with the Atomic Energy Commission and his Department of Transportation/Federal Aeronautics Administration data-link experiments which proved the feasibility of air-to-ground communications via computer. The *New York Times* uses a computerized typesetting system which he designed and installed using heuristic character recognition techniques. The Bell System uses cable testing systems which he has designed.

Amstar has redesigned its line of video card games and recently developed its new game *Laser Base*. Hank Vandendop, executive vice president, said: "It was only a short while ago that it would have been impossible to attract someone with Mr. Goodrow's qualifications in our industry. We are proud for our company as well as for the industry."

Play Meter Picks...

I DON'T NEED YOU—Kenny Rogers—Liberty
SWEET BABY—Stanley Clarke & George Duke—Epic
QUEEN OF HEARTS—Juice Newton—Capitol
BETTE DAVIS EYES—Kim Carnes—EMI America***
A LIFE OF ILLUSION—Joe Walsh—Asylum
ALL THOSE YEARS AGO—Dark Horse—Warner Brothers***
THE BOY FROM NEW YORK CITY—Manhattan Transfer—Atlantic***
MODERN GIRL—Sheena Easton—EMI America ***
JESSIE'S GIRL—Rick Springfield—RCA
THE ONE THAT YOU LOVE—Air Supply—Arista ***
YOU MAKE MY DREAMS COME TRUE—Daryl Hall & John Oates—RCA ***
THEME FROM "GREATEST AMERICAN HERO"—Joey Scarbury—Elektra
WINNING—Santana—Columbia
GEMINI DREAMS—Moody Blues—Threshold—Polygram***
SLOW HAND—Pointer Sisters—Planet
TIME—The Alan Parsons Project—Arista***
ELVIRA—The Oak Ridge Boys—MCA
HEARTS—Marty Balin—EMI America***
THIS LITTLE GIRL—Gary U.S. Bonds—EMI America
IN THE AIR TONIGHT—Phil Collins—Atlantic
URGENT—Foreigner—Atlantic***
LADY (YOU BRING ME UP)—Commodores—Motown***
ROCK AND ROLL DREAMS COME THROUGH—Jim Steinman—Epic/Cleveland International***
(THERE'S) NO GETTING OVER ME—Ronnie Milsap—RCA
DON'T LET HIM GO—REO Speedwagon—Epict***
TOUCH ME WHEN WE'RE DANCING—Carpenters—A & M***

***denotes records reviewed previously by PLAY METER

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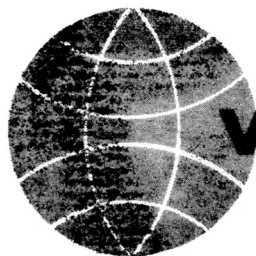
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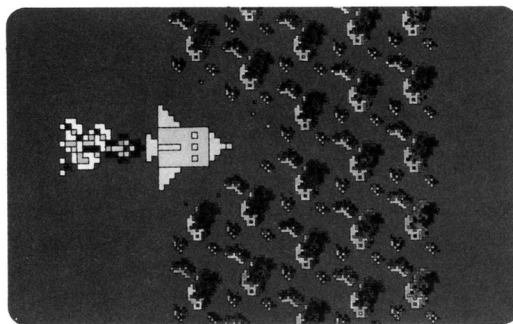
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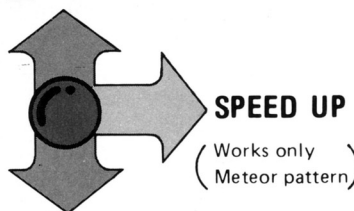
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- Dodge + Shoot the converging Meteor, speed up to avoid the collision
- If you put coin additionally before game is over, you can play the game continuously

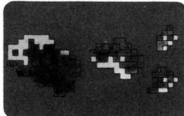



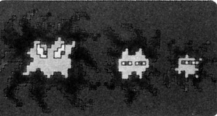



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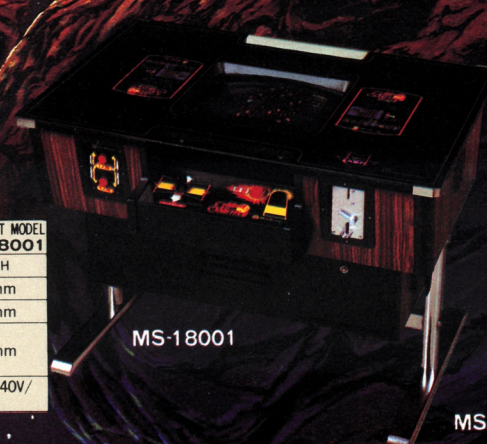
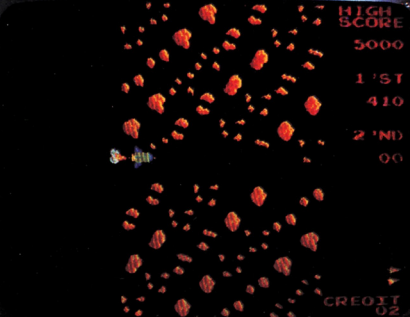
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Width	850mm	870mm	600mm	466mm
Depth	545mm	560mm	690mm	560mm
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The Leisure Market

By Marion Cutler and Jane Peterson

The time has come for the amusement games industry to take the marketing lesson from television and outdoor recreation industries: begin to tap the adult market by suggesting that games can be 'educational' and 'good for you.'...Otherwise, the industry will be left with the diminishing numbers of the youth market—and only youth can enjoy pleasure for its own sake...

To better tap the leisure time and dollar of the American public, those in the amusement games industry need to know how leisure time and money are being distributed and what is changing in the American attitude toward leisure and what isn't.

Leisure may not be a new phenomenon, but its definition has changed so drastically during recent years that recreation entrepreneurs have been left catering to the shop-worn idea that leisure is merely time spent "not working." Once this idea is laid to rest, the amusement games industry could face some very profitable opportunities for

expansion.

Clarifying the relationship between recreation and leisure is the first step in seeing the broad picture. The latest information available—a 1975 study undertaken for the Census Bureau—shows that urban Americans have an average of 38.5 hours of free time available each week. Americans distribute 18.2 of those hours (47%) on Media and divide the remaining 20.3 hours among Organizations, Social Life, Recreation, and "Other" (hobbies, gardening, etc.). Within this 20.3 hours, Recreation receives an average of 1.3 hours per week, or 3.4% of total leisure time. Of those

surveyed, only 8% reported playing games and cards as their favorite leisure activity.

The economic picture tallies well with this data. The latest figures available from the Bureau of Census show that in 1977 Americans spent \$1.2 billion dollars on Recreation, or 6.7% of the total personal expenditure of \$1,206 billion.

Commercial Participant Amusements (a category that includes billiard parlors; bowling alleys, dancing, riding, shooting, skating, swimming places; amusement devices and parks; golf courses; sightseeing; and private flying operations) received 8% of the \$81.2 billion in contrast to the 24.2% or \$19.7 billion received by TV, Radio, Records, and Instruments for purchase and maintenance.

Why does television siphon off so large a share? Where are the other leisure hours and dollars going? To answer these questions, we must examine the transformation of leisure from "off-work" time to "my" time.

The U.S. Declaration of Independence begins by establishing "the pursuit of happiness" as our "inalienable right." Yet for almost 200 years Americans did not seem to believe it. After all, the work ethic made "work" of most leisure time by insisting on family, social, civic, or religious obligations. Today such duty-bound leisure is nearly dead.

Apparently, Americans have rejected the idea that it is necessary to spend leisure time feeling obligated to first one damned thing and then another. Sounds like good news for recreation industries? It is, but only potentially.

The problem is that the work load—once a combination of duty and long on-the-job hours—justified any leisure by making us feel we, by God, deserved it. But now, with the work ethic down the tubes, that automatic justification has dis-

1977 PERSONAL CONSUMPTION

RECREATIONAL EXPENDITURES	1960	1977
TOTAL (in billions)	\$17,855	\$81,200
Books and maps	1,139	4,338
Magazines, Newspapers, Sheetmusic	2,164	9,037
Nondurable toys and Sport supplies	2,477	10,140
Wheel goods, toys, sports, etc.	1,976	11,644
Radio & TV, Records, Instruments	3,003	18,005
Radio & TV upkeep	774	1,741
Flowers, Seed, Plants	703	4,075
Admission to amusements (movies, theatres, sports, etc.)	1,652	7,089
Clubs and fraternal organizations	728	1,792
Commercial Participant Amusements*	1,200	4,110
Parimutuel Net receipts	539	2,032
Other	1,500	7,213

* Includes: billiard parlors, parks, bowling alleys, dancing, riding, shooting, skating, swimming locations; golf courses, and amusement devices.

Other: lotteries, pets and pet care, cable TV, film and photographic work, sporting and recreation camps & services.

appeared. And Americans are apparently uneasy with the idea that we could simply do something enjoyable without having to deserve it or justify it. Yet the new definition of leisure is just that: time we call our own, time we spend doing what we enjoy doing.

Instead of the old notion that time had a three-way split: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of sleep, and 8 hours of "living," as Americans, we now find ourselves with an 8/6/6/4 split on weekdays (Sleep, Work, Personal and Family Care, and Leisure) and with an 8/6/10 split on weekends (Sleep, Personal and Family Care, and Leisure).

So we have an increasing amount of free time and almost no experience in enjoying ourselves without justification. The bridge for this gap is obvious, and it is found in nearly every leisure pursuit: the twin rationales of "educational" and "good for you." With these rationales, Americans can bootleg any kind of enjoyment or pleasure.

Leisure expenditures

With this realization, it is easy to begin interpreting the distribution of leisure hours and money. Both the media and the outdoor recreation industry lean hard on the rationales of "educational" and "good for you"—and take the biggest share of the money. We've already seen that in 1977, media received \$19.7 billion or 24.2% of personal expended income. In that same year, outdoors recreation picked up most of the money from two categories: (a) non-durable toys and sports supplies, \$10.1 billion; and (b) wheel goods, durable toys, sports equipment, boats, and pleasure aircraft, \$11.6 billion.

Obviously the rationales work. Yet playing cards or games is, generally, not something that can be passed off as educational. Consequently, these activities are often rationalized as "good for you" in the specific sense of "profitable," because 40% of those who engage in games play for money.

So, what is the bottom line? The time has come for the amusement games industry and others in the recreation business to take the marketing lesson from television and outdoor recreation industries: begin to tap the adult market by suggesting that games can be "educational" and "good for you." Otherwise, the industry will be left with the diminishing numbers of youth—because, in our society, only youth can enjoy pleasure for its own sake,

at least so far.

But how much free time do adults have to convert to recreation? Is the time-potential sufficient to warrant a marketing effort that stresses these rationales? Look at these figures and decide for yourself. Of the 38.5 leisure hours a week, the average urban American invests 3.8 hours in Organizations, 18.2 in Media, 7.8 in Social Life, 1.3 in Recreation, and 7.8 in "Other leisure" (listed in chart "A"). Certainly some of those "other" leisure hours could be converted to justified recreation.

Let's examine who has the most "other leisure" to transform to recreation, including amusement games. Those with the most other leisure time are the single employed men (8.6 hours per week), married housewife (8.4), and single employed women (8.1). Married employed women and men have fewer untapped hours (6.5 and 5.8 respectively), but even those hours are many more than the average 1.3 hours being devoted to recreation.

In terms of age, the 18-25 years olds have the most other leisure time (9.8 hours per week) followed by those 56-65 years old (8.5 hours per week). The educational level data corresponds because those with some college have the most other leisure time (9.0 hours per week) followed closely by the pre-high school dropouts (8.6 hours a week). Changes in American educational patterns account for this correspondence: more young adults have enrolled in college since 1965 and many older Americans never completed 8th grade.

Here's the composite: those with the most other leisure time to tap are the 18-25 year old, single, employed men and women who have some college experience; the housewife; and those over 55. But remember, everyone has at least 5.8 other leisure hours available, so tapping the leisure market is going to require that the amusement industry open its doors with games that can entertain any age and both genders.

Once enjoyment is no longer treated as illicit or childish, but begins to be treated as something that is educational and "good for you," who knows...we might all profit.

[Ed. Note: The authors are professional freelance writers specializing in the research of sociological topics such as aging, and are based in Dallas. Peterson teaches writing at Richmond Community College, and Cutler holds workshops in business writing.]



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'With chocolate available, who cares about spinach?'

The ups and downs of the used games market

By Valerie Cognevich

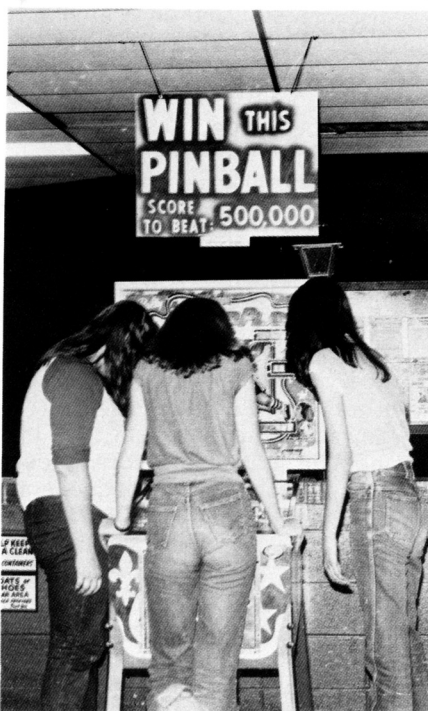
Every new machine rolling off the assembly line is destined to become a used piece of equipment. Unfortunately, the supply of new machines is filling the demand at such an accelerated rate that there are more used machines than the market can handle. As a result, the majority of distributors report that their used equipment sales have fallen off...drastically. So drastically, in fact, that most distributors seem to view used equipment with a jaundiced eye.

While a few distributors feel that used equipment is still an important part of their business, even they did not paint a rosy picture of the used equipment market situation today.

Distributors have been forced into adopting new policies and practices to protect themselves from warehousing games that are dust collectors and not coin collectors. As a result, distributors have been pressured into becoming extremely selective about what they will take on a trade-in. The trade-in value of what they do take is viewed through a more critical eye. Some have accepted trade-ins as an obligation, a built-in loss that has to be figured into their cost of doing business. And some have stopped taking trade-ins completely. Obviously, this is the extreme solution.

These measures became a reality with the tapering off of used equipment interest. Ira Bettelman of C.A. Robinson & Co. in Los Angeles sums it up, "My people are so busy serving chocolate cake, who cares about serving spinach."

In the 1981 *Play Meter* Distributor Survey the question was asked, "What is your trade-in policy?" The distributors answered that their trade-in policies were much more strict than they once were. Twenty-



Is this what's coming to be the fate of used equipment — giving it away?

one percent of those responding said that they "would take equipment at a fair price (usually Distributors Research Association's book value or less) only if it would be resaleable."

Another common response was that the distributor would take "one trade per one machine sold, at D.R.A. prices." Several distributors said they would only consider trading for "anything we originally sold." Approximately eight percent of those responding said that their distributorships took no trade-ins.

To fully discern what made it necessary for distributors to change some of their thinking on used equipment, one must first under-

stand what is happening at the operator level and his buying habits.

Operators' selectivity

Now, more than ever, distributors observe, route operators are centering their purchases on one, two, or three machines. The operator, who at one time would purchase several different types of games to facilitate rotating them among locations, is now buying multiple units of the same type of game. He isn't as concerned with variety anymore. The operator who would typically buy a used piece for an average account on which he did not want to spend a lot of money, is now opting for the new game with the great reputation and just hoping everything will be fine. He isn't buying the used pieces like he once did.

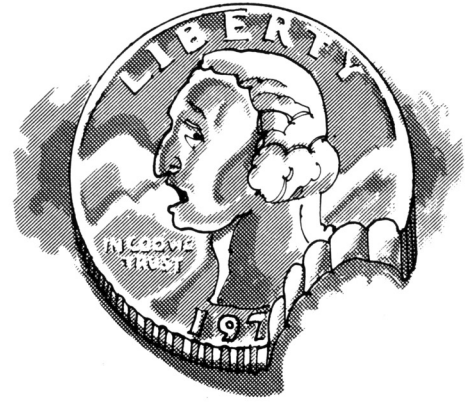
The arcade operators are not buying the same quantity of used games either. At one time, they bought maybe half new, half "leaners" or used games. Now they are banking games—three, four, five, or more of the same hot game and finding collections are better.

Eddie Griffith of Monroe Distributing in Cleveland, Ohio expressed his philosophy of the ultimate aim of operator buying today. "A good operator today," he said, "who does not operate a lot of second class locations would be better off buying the best equipment and trading it sooner to get the highest trade-in possible and then go on to the next hot game. The return on his investment would be phenomenal."

Today, however, even the operator who does stay with the latest hot game is not trading in the old game but is finding other outlets such as selling to smaller operators.

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This way he can see a better return on his investment than trading it to his distributor. New games are depreciating so fast that operators barely, sometimes never, have time to see a return on their investment.

Jim Frye of Brady Distributing in Charlotte, North Carolina, in telling what occurred in his company, perhaps described what other

'We built up huge inventories of electronic flippers that were traded in on the video games. That's levelling off, but we had to bite the bullet.'
—Jim Frye

distributors experienced. "We were just not prepared for the change in the marketplace when Bally introduced the first electronic flipper," he said. "We sold huge numbers of these because operators were trying to get as many as they possibly could. We were taking so many electro-mechanical flippers in on trade that we had to start taking them on a one-to-one, buy-a-new-game/trade-an-old-game basis.

"We still ended up with more electro-mechanicals than we knew what to do with," said Frye. "We had to tell our operators that we could not take any more electro-mechanicals on trade until we got rid of what we had. When we finally would have been able to take more electro-mechanical flippers, most operators had gotten rid of theirs already.

"The same set of symptoms presented themselves again," he continued, "when *Space Invaders* was introduced. We started building up huge inventories of electronic flippers as operators traded them in on the new video game—until we reached the saturation point. Now that's beginning to level off, but we had to bite the bullet on a lot of those games."

As distributors realized the saturation point could be reached very quickly if operators were allowed to trade in all of the equipment they wanted to get rid of, selectivity became inevitable.

Location demands

Operators' buying habits changed as the locations became more demanding—that is, demanding the latest games. These

locations were in a position to select the games more than ever before. Player enlightenment and expansion (more than twice the number of people are playing coin-op games today as compared to only five years ago) have made locations "hit-game wise." Their players—professionals, businessmen, housewives, etc.—are finicky about what they will play and are expressing their desires to the locations, the locations are telling the operators, the operators... well, you get the idea. These people, for the most part, are not seeking used games.

Bettelman draws an amusing parallel. "We used to have peripheral areas (they could have been only 100 miles away but we called them the boondocks) that we could razzle-dazzle with a 6-month-old game. They were thrilled to have it. We couldn't exactly drive up in a Chevy and say, 'Here's your Rolls Royce;' but we could drive up and say, 'Here's your Buick.'

'Locations aren't impressed with 6-month-old games any more, and demand only the newest models.'
—Ira Bettelman

"Now," he continues, "we drive up in a Chevy and they not only know it's a Chevy but they ask, 'Where's the Buick!' Even those locations are not impressed with a 6-month-old game any more and are demanding only the newest models."

So the depth of buying is gone; the variety is gone. But the used games are still there.

Now that the distributor has had to become selective about what he will take on a trade-in, he has to place a value on it. Distributors say that years ago the mark-up on new games was greater, giving them greater leeway in making that final deal on a trade-in. Now the distributor doesn't look on the used games so much as a profit venture but a burden. He has to be realistic about what he will be able to get for them when he sells (if he can sell) this equipment; he must take into consideration how many he has on hand already—and just how good are the new games now hitting the market.

By the time he sets the value, more often than not, it is not as much as the operator wanted to get. The

operator then will most likely decide to just hang on to the game. The operator will not only sell to other operators, as mentioned above, but is finding other alternatives.

One operator reports that he has been donating his hard-to-move pieces to local worthy causes. He said that he has scored a lot of points in his community by donating old games. The respect that he said he has gained was worth far more than what he could have gotten on a trade.

Though both operators and distributors are also tapping into the home market, most distributors look upon the home market with disdain.

Since taking trade-ins puts the distributor in a precarious position, some have stopped taking trades altogether. New Orleans Novelty Company in New Orleans, Louisiana, which has a meritorious reputation for its used equipment, does not take any games in on trade-ins. The distributorship takes used games on consignment only. New Orleans Novelty re-conditions the games at their owners' expense. Louis Boasberg, New Orleans Novelty president, firmly contends that no game will leave his warehouse without being in A-1 condition. The games are then sold to the numerous markets New Orleans Novelty has developed.

New Orleans Novelty only takes a small percentage of the sale price, and many operators are taking advantage of this program, said Boasberg. New Orleans Novelty

'Distributors today can't afford to have a lot of capital tied up in used equipment. The market for it is dubious.'
—Louis Boasberg

does not, however, take any game over three years old. As Boasberg stated, "Distributors today just can't afford to have a lot of working capital tied up in used equipment with the market for it today so dubious."

Trashing of equipment, *literally*, though it really hurts, may start becoming more commonplace. Warehousing games that aren't moving and are staying on the inventory list month after month costs money. Eventually the

distributor has to choose between the value of the game and the value of his warehouse space. The distributor who takes games he doesn't really want—the ones thrown in to make a deal—has little choice sometimes but to junk them. The firm has always taken trades and so the obligation to take them now comes into consideration,

Though distributors have made some changes, drastic or subtle, in handling used games, one thing remains the same. That is that operators expect honesty and reliability in doing business with their distributors. One operator said that even though he doesn't even ask to trade games in any more, because his distributor doesn't take trades, he is still loyal to that distributor. "My distributor is very honest about games hitting the market," says an operator; "I know I can count on him for fast service, too. That's what I expect."

Jim Frye says, "Today being in the operating and distributing business is like being married; you've got to be good for each other. We, as distributors, must be very careful that when we sell an operator a game, we are honest about what the return on his investment will be because when he puts that first game in a location and the cash box doesn't give him an adequate collection, he won't be back for the second one. And if we're not honest with him, he might not be back."

Operators shouldn't expect a distributor to be a garbage disposal for used junk, and distributors shouldn't have to be. Today an operator has the opportunity to be educated in the industry more than ever before. He should study carefully what games are coming out and try to form an idea about each one on its own merits and not just that it comes from a manufacturer with a good reputation. Even the big manufacturers do occasionally make a lemon.

Manufacturers have tended to overproduce games, which hurts everyone, many industry people contend. Manufacturers, critics say, need to ascertain the market and give one game a chance before putting out a new game and another and another.

It happened with electronic flippers—just too many games entering the marketplace. That's levelling off, and now there are signs it's happening with videos.

The only solution to the saturation of used games, one distributor said, *must* begin with new games. •

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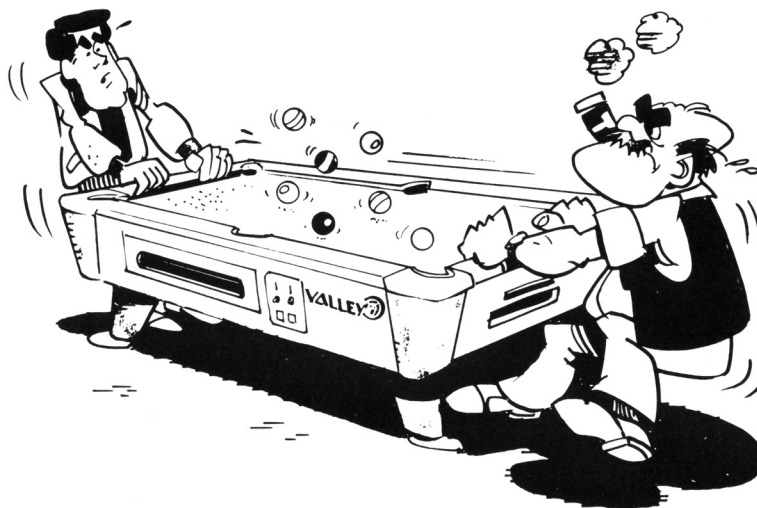
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FRANK'S CRANKS



By Frank Seninsky

Producers should realize players are rough on joysticks

This issue's review/description will be on *Pulsar* by Gremlin/Sega. But before we get to this game, there are a couple of service problems that I've encountered that maybe you can eliminate or solve quickly.

The first concerns the control panel buttons on Williams' *Defender* as well as the flipper buttons and magnet energizing buttons used on Williams' pinball games: *Firepower*, *Black Knight*, *Jungle Lord*, and *Pharaoh*. All of these buttons are the same kind. The problem is that these buttons can vibrate loose and can very easily be unscrewed from the outside of the game.

I have heard of an arcade owner who found that all of the buttons on his *Defender* had disappeared. The most obvious solution to avoiding this happening to you (and how many of us carry that many spare buttons around?) is to check all these buttons regularly and keep the backing nuts on as tight as possible without stripping or cracking the plastic threads.

If this doesn't work, then "Crazy Glue" or plastic cement or "lock tight" will help keep the nuts from vibrating loose.

In locations where the players deliberately unscrew the buttons, try drilling a small hole under the panel (or inside the cabinet for pinball games) next to the outside of the button nut (doing this on both sides would be even better) and putting in a wood screw with a washer that should keep the nut from loosening. It may even be necessary to use screws that are long enough to go all the way through the panel or cabinet and partially into the bottom of the top section of the button case. The whole idea is to keep the button case from turning.

Of course the best solution would be to have the manufacturers or



Gremlin/Sega's Pulsar

even a parts supplier make button casings with extensions under the top lip that would fit into notches in the top of the panel or cabinet. This would certainly keep the casings from turning, if the nut could be kept on tightly.

The Midway buttons used on games such as *Space Invaders* and *Galaxian* are similar but shorter and fit tightly into the panel. These buttons don't loosen up as frequently as the Williams buttons and therefore are more difficult to twist off from the outside.

The second common problem, similar to the one just mentioned, involves the panel microswitches and their actuating buttons that are used on Atari games, (*Asteroids*, *Missile Command*, *Deluxe Asteroids*, etc.). The actuating buttons as well as the top screw-on caps can also easily be taken from the outside of the game.

Often, after responding to a service call that an *Asteroids* or *Missile Command* is out-of-order,

we find that the button has fallen inside the cabinet and the top cap is nowhere to be found. Sometimes the actuating button has also been pulled off.

Lately, Atari has been using plastic caps to mount these microswitches to the control panel. These caps easily crack or their threads get stripped even when they are tightened properly. It is recommended to replace all of the black caps with the metal ones made by Atari. These caps will not solve the problem entirely but will definitely reduce the chances of having the caps vibrate loose. They can be tightened down with more pressure than their plastic counterparts and they won't crack easily.

It's too bad that the switch threads are plastic and can be easily stripped. How nice it would be if these threads too were made of metal and could be locked in.

The red LED (or plain black) actuating buttons on these switches can be pulled off from the outside if a good grip can be applied. Most of the buttons that I have seen are sticking out above the caps too far. It is recommended that even less than 1/16-inch of the button should be above the cap.

A washer and a spacer nut are supposed to be underneath the control panel on the micro-switch threaded shaft to properly space the switch so the top button doesn't stick out too far. On earlier games the washers weren't supplied. The spacer nuts are very thin and really don't allow the switch and cap to be properly tightened.

If you can use enough washers to space the switch correctly and keep the metal caps tight you should not lose any actuating buttons. If this doesn't also keep your caps on, then all I can suggest is also putting a

screw from underneath the panel into the bottom of the top metal cap. This will surely keep them from turning.

Also when changing these switches (especially on *Missile Command*) be careful not to reverse the common and normally open wires. If you do, the missiles will not fire until the button is released. This can turn players off to the game. On the start buttons for player 1 and player 2 it really doesn't matter if the switch is hooked up wrong but if it is, someone will probably copy the wrong wires when replacing the firing switches.

PULSAR/ Gremlin/Sega

The *Pulsar* that I received had no book of instructions. It made me feel like we all did a few years ago when none of the games came with instruction books or even schematics. For the July 1 *Play Meter* issue which reviewed *Astro Blaster*, Gremlin supplied adequate schematics and instructions so at least I know that one exists somewhere.

The control panel on *Pulsar* has one-player and two-player buttons, one fire button and a four-direction joystick control. Each of the buttons controls has a micro-switch instead of the commonly used gold leaf switches. The four micro-switches on the joystick assembly have rollers on their actuating arms. The joystick shaft is strong and goes from 1/2 inch diameter to about a 3/4-inch diameter shaft.

A metal collar has been placed over the shaft for added protection. Rubber grommets are attached to the joystick assembly to act as stops in all directions but the metal collar can also make contact with the metal cutout hole in the panel. Whenever metal can hit metal on a joystick control there will be problems. The shaft will become worn and the cutout hole will get larger. Then the switches will be bent out of adjustment or broken.

The joystick can easily be pushed and pulled in a vertical direction which will further cause problems. The manufacturers should realize how rough the players are on joystick controls.

Gremlin has also insulated each microswitch from the metal panel back with insulation paper in the shape of a 1-inch X 1 1/2-inch

rectangle. This is a good practice.

Three wing nuts, washers, and lockwashers must be removed to take off the control panel. I feel this is a poor design. It is too time-consuming to remove and replace the panel. There is not enough length on the harness wires attaching to the control panel. The panel can only be moved a few inches from the cabinet before the wires pull tight. These wires should be disconnected before you can turn over the panel to work on it.

The cashbin pulls out easily and is made of sturdy metal. The cashbin frame is also metal and is securely bolted to the cabinet. There is a 1/2-inch plywood panel separating the cashbox area from the back of the game. To get to the cashbox from the back of the game is very difficult. The whole plywood section would have to be removed. This is a satisfactory design when compared to other games that have no barriers at all between the cashbox and the back door.

There are two 1 1/2-inch lips or extensions from the cashbin frame leading to the bottom of the coin chute guides. These extensions line up well but there are no adjustments if the coin door is ever bent and they get out of line.

The coin return assembly is very simple yet very effective. A rounded-end rod about 1/4 inch in diameter pushes a small metal arm which pushes the lever on each coin chute. A roll pin keeps the rod in place and acts as a travel stop. The whole assembly is simple to adjust if the coin door ever gets bent. Only one screw will have to be removed to take the assembly off. The coin chutes are held in by 3/8-inch wide metal tension levers. Kicking or punching the coin door will not jar the chutes out of position. With these two features coin jam should be kept to a minimum.

A plastic coin return flap has been used and it can easily be broken off. Metal flaps have proven to be far superior. One coin return cup, located between and below the coin chutes, is provided. Since the return cup is far enough away from the bottom of the chutes, penny flipping is very difficult if not impossible. Using one coin return cup in the center would seem to be a better design than the more common

method of having a coin return cup below each coin chute.

Some negative aspects in the cabinet design include:

(1) Gremlin has again used a cabinet where six phillips screws hold in the back door top section. Once this section is removed the bottom section just falls out.

(2) Only three phillips screws hold on the bottom bracket that holds in the marquee. How many marquees have you had stolen?

(3) There is no slam switch on the coin door to protect against a player getting free credits by punching or kicking the door.

Pluses

Some of the positive aspects in the cabinet design include:

—A 110-volt convenience outlet has been provided inside the game.

—The monitor has been tilted back and is easy to work on and adjust. Adjustment pots include horizontal position, horizontal hold, vertical position, vertical hold, brightness, and focus.

—The duel logic boards and transformer have been mounted on a shelf one foot off the cabinet floor and can easily be worked on from the back of the cabinet.

—A control bracket has been attached to the coin box frame which houses a volume control, service switch, and a demagnetizing switch. All three are easily reached from the front coin door.

—The front of the cabinet has been painted black going up from the bottom about one foot. This color handily hides kick and scuff marks and scratches.

—Metal protective edges have been provided on the bottom of the cabinet, the sides, and on the front overhangs that will protect the edges from chipping away. This is an excellent feature.

Overall, *Pulsar* receives a 5 out of a possible ten. No major design changes were incorporated in this model as compared to past models.

Contributor Frank Seninsky is president of Alpha-Omega Amusement, Inc. which operates a route including over 50 college game-rooms and Wizard's World Arcade on the New Jersey Shore.

'Crazy Glue or plastic cement or "lock tight" will help keep the nuts from vibrating loose.'

Coming game intro a 'mystery'

Innovation in games & PR at Pacific Novelty Mfg.

Pacific Novelty Manufacturing, Inc., which produced an innovative and distinctly un-spacelike video game in its *Shark Attack* (nee *Deep Death*) in 1980, has announced that it kept its corporate hands busy in its Marina del Rey, California design shops and will introduce two new pieces this summer—one of which will not be a video game.

Brian Semler, president of Pacific Novelty explained: "*Shark Attack* started well, with some nice orders. But, since we're small, it was tough to produce them in any significant numbers. We licensed Game Plan to produce the *Shark Attack* cocktail tables, assuming we could handle the demand for uprights.

"But we couldn't," Semler continued. "The orders kept growing." The upright version of *Shark Attack* was licensed also to Game Plan. (See New Products section, this issue.) "Now we have our energy and manpower concentrating on our two new pieces that are really special," Semler added.

Toward the object of introducing the first of the new pair of Pacific games, Marketing Director Wayne D. Crawford dashed out the following "news release." (We say "news release" in quotes because, when it arrived at *Play Meter*, we first thought some writer had mailed a mystery manuscript to us by mistake. We checked with Crawford, and he said, "No mistake, I wasn't

writing for Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine—but the new game is a 'mystery' piece; it isn't just a video.")

Mystified, we read the following through to the end...

"The Case of the Novel Novelty...or how I took a chance on something different and made a million bucks"

By W.D. Crawford

"CHAPTER I"

It was Wednesday in Los Angeles. Brian Semler smiled and inhaled another load of nicotine. It was Wednesday everywhere. Semler knew that. He was smart. Perfect for the amusement industry.

Shortly after he arrived at his palatial Pacific Novelty Manufacturing compound (Semler also had an imagination) he gathered his staff so they could synchronize their watches. ("What the hell, it worked for Errol Flynn.")

"Men...We are about to undertake a very important mission."

The mousey blonde looked indignant, but Semler was unmoved.

"Men, some of us will...will..." He searched for the precise words, but his charges, especially the fat one with the drool, expected the worst.

"Jeeze boss—will...will bite the dust?"

"No, fat man. Will...get rich!"

The charges were relieved. They would be unaffected.

"Who's gonna make all this money, boss?"

"Operators all over the world," exclaimed Semler.

Human Mortar

Later. The dust around the chalk board was growing. And so was the fat man. Except for the drool. Mix him with chalk dust and he became human mortar. "Is there a buck in that?" thought Semler.

But back to the important business.

"Men: Again."

"Five hundred more times?" queried one of the weary.

Semler nodded and the tired chalk squeaked in unison. (Well, almost.)

"It's a coin-operated amusement device.

"No one has ever seen such a device.

"Special meeting will be held around the country for our best distributors and their operators.

"Because of hefty earnings, special hernia insurance will be offered.

"Everyone will want this device.

"Only the fortunate will get them."

One of the chalk arms stopped.

"What do we call this thing, boss?" Semler studied his dusty troop.

"Don't worry about it. I'll tell you on the 30th...and bring your chalk."

On Bad Days...

You know its going to be a bad day, when...

—you call suicide prevention and they put you on hold.

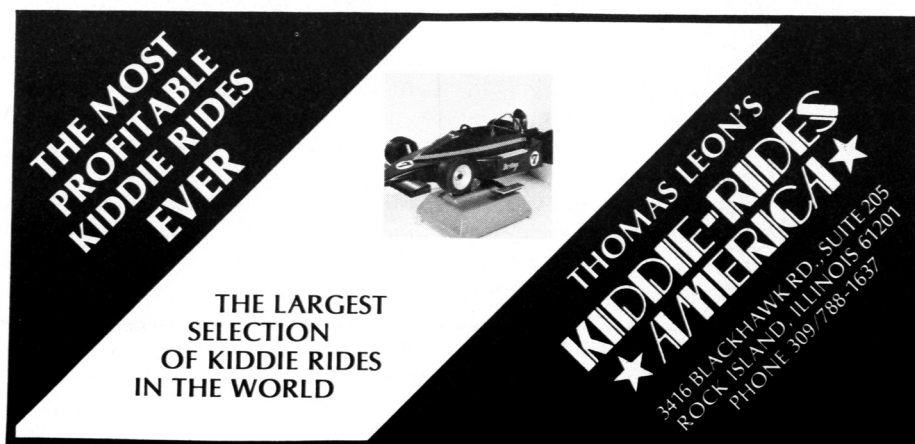
—you see a *60 Minutes* news team waiting in your office.

—you turn on the news and they're showing emergency routes out of the city.

—your twin brother forgets your birthday.

—Wisconsin Music Merchants Association Newsletter, May, 1981

PLAY METER, September 1, 1981



THE MOST PROFITABLE KIDDIE RIDES EVER

THE LARGEST SELECTION OF KIDDIE RIDES IN THE WORLD

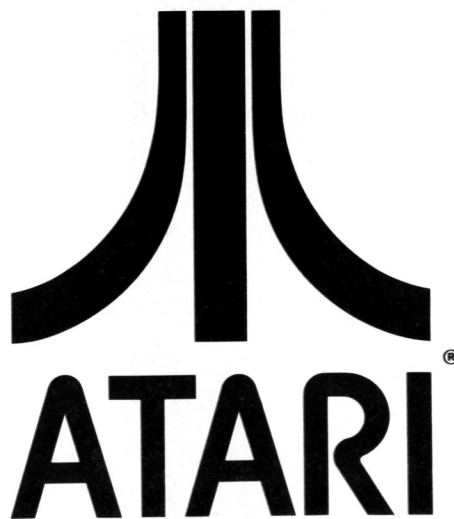
THOMAS LEON'S KIDDIE RIDES AMERICA

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ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS 61201
PHONE 309-788-1637

ATARI[®] announces it's no longer just a game.

**ATARI will aggressively enforce
all video game copyrights and
trademarks against any infringers.**

ATARI is giving notice to all manufacturers, distributors, and operators that it will pursue a broad campaign to enforce its video game copyrights against infringers. ATARI will use all legal means available to immediately halt any manufacture, distribution or operation of a copy of video games made by ATARI. Anyone who purchases such copies is at risk of forfeiting such a game.



 A Warner Communications Company

MIDWAY'S COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT POLICY

FAIR WARNING!

WILLFUL COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT IS A FEDERAL CRIME!

Title 17 of the United States Code contains the following provisions:

"Section 506. Criminal Offenses

(a) **CRIMINAL INFRINGEMENT.** -- Any person who infringes a copyright willfully and for purposes of commercial advantage or private financial gain shall be fined not more than \$10,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both: Provided, however, that any person who infringes willfully and for purposes of commercial advantage or private financial gain...the copyright in a motion picture...shall be fined not more than \$25,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both, for the first such offense and shall be fined not more than \$50,000 or imprisoned for not more than two years, or both, for any subsequent offense.

(b) **FORFEITURE AND DESTRUCTION.** --When any person is convicted of any violation of subsection (a), the court in its judgement of conviction shall, in addition to the penalty therein prescribed, order the forfeiture and destruction or other disposition of all infringing copies or phonorecords and all implements, devices, or equipment used in the manufacture of such infringing copies or phonorecords."

Although the United States Customs Service has for some time enforced copyrights in original audio-visual works embodied in video games such as **GALAXIAN™**, **PAC-MAN™**, and **RALLY-X™**, and the Federal Courts have recognized the validity of such copyrights, there are some manufacturers, distributors and operators who continue to flaunt the law by dealing in infringing games. These companies undermine the creativity which is essential to the life of this industry.

Because of the serious nature of this problem, Midway now gives notice that it intends to seek criminal prosecutions against such companies in cases of willful infringement of its copyrights in **GALAXIAN™**, **PAC-MAN™**, **RALLY-X™** and **GORF™**, as well as in its newest game, **WIZARD OF WOR™**, and other video games when released. Midway will also continue its activity to obtain enforcement of its copyrights by the U.S. Customs Service and the International Trade Commission, and by civil actions against infringers for injunctions, damages and profits. At present, Midway is actively engaged in such civil actions in the U.S. District Courts against numerous defendants. In some of these actions the defendants' games and circuit boards have actually been seized by the U.S. Marshal pursuant to the impoundment provisions of the Copyright Act. Every available legal action is being taken to protect Midway's proprietary rights in its original and highly successful video games.



MIDWAY MFG. CO.

A BALLY COMPANY

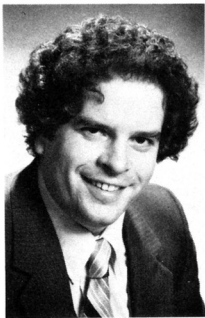
Franklin Park, Illinois 60131

Sales chief for Seeburg

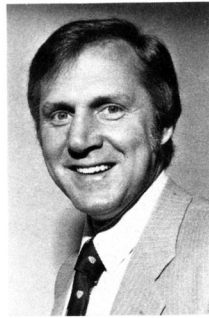
Ronald Monzo has been appointed national sales manager for Stern Electronics, Inc., Chicago. He comes to Stern from ACM Electronics, Ltd. of New York City, where he served as divisional president for wholesale distribution of electronic equipment.

In his new position, Monzo's primary responsibility will be administration of sales activities in Stern's Seeburg phonograph division.

A veteran sales executive of the recording industry, he resides on Chicago's Near Northside.



Monzo



Polanek

Heads Stern engineering

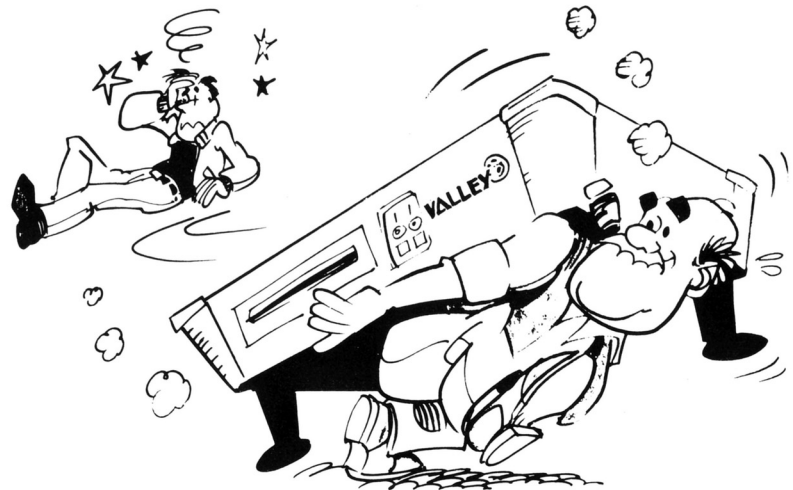
Edward Polanek has been appointed to the newly created post of executive vice president of corporate engineering for Stern Electronics, Inc. His appointment was announced by Gary Stern, president and chief executive officer.

Polanek will also continue to serve as president of Universal Research Laboratories, Inc. (URL), a Stern subsidiary in Elk Grove Village. His additional responsibilities will include the administration of technological research program and new product development for Stern's coin-operated amusement games and Seeburg phonograph divisions.

Polanek formed URL in 1970. The company has since grown to be a major supplier of solid-state technology to Stern and the O.E.M. contract market. He formerly served as chief engineer of consumer products at Seeburg Corp.

A graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology with a B.S. degree in electrical engineering, Polanek resides with his family in Woodstock, Ill.

MR. OPERATOR:



In spite of everything you do, are your tables going ... going ... gone?

If your answer is "yes", see page 65.

UNLESS YOU HAVE MONEY TO BURN



YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF TO SEE
WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

BRADY

DISTRIBUTING CO.

1900 W. Morehead St., Charlotte, N.C. 28266, P.O. Box 668263
(704) 373-1211 Telex 572-452

Call for coin-op color artwork

Shutterbugs in the coin-op industry have a chance for fame and a bit of a reward through the pages of *Play Meter*. The editors are interested in colorful subject matter...so we are soliciting color pictures of industry-related subjects.

Subject matter is open to your selection: games, games rooms, close-ups, long shots, people, no people, pretty girls, muscle men—whatever you see that is suitable for color photography and has a connection to the coin-operated amusements industry. There should be no overly commercial, product or service nature to the picture, however.

The better color materials for reproduction in the magazine or on its cover are color slides or transparencies, so submit one of those if possible. In color prints, only shots of excellent quality will be considered, and prints should be no smaller than 8 X 10 inches. (Do not send undeveloped color film.)

Care will be taken to return all

unused material. Remember to enclose materials in a firmly-packed envelope to protect film in the mails. Prompt replies will be given regarding all photo materials so submitted.

Decision on the use of any submission will be made by the publisher and staff of *Play Meter*. The photographer, by submitting color shots, implies that the photography is his own property, offered for use in *Play Meter*.

If the coin-op photographer wishes, he should state technical photographic information (f-stop, speed, type of film, exposure time, camera make, etc.) to be printed in connection with the photo when printed.

Photographer will receive full credit in the magazine and a stipend. The work of amateurs will be given full consideration.

Mail color material to: *Play Meter*, Coin-Op Art, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, Louisiana 70184.

Happy shooting!

Marcia Young rises at Taito America

Taito America announced the promotion of Marcia Young to the position of sales administrator.

Ms. Young has been with Taito America for the past two and one half years as group service representative. Prior to this, she was freight forwarder with Karl Schroff and Associates.

"Marcia's experience and performance with Taito have shown that she will be an asset to the sales force. She will be coordinating sales

activities and market research as well as maintain constant contact with Taito distributors," said Jack Mittel, president.

"Taito's recent growth and a future that is sure to bring even more success make it mandatory that we begin to enlarge our sales staff. We are pleased to be able to recruit from within our ranks someone that has the ability and dedication to the industry such as Marcia," stated Mike Von Kennel, sales manager.

PLAY METER CALENDAR

August 14-16

Music Operators of Minnesota, summer meeting, Cragan's Pine Beach Lodge, Brainerd

September 11-13

North Carolina and South Carolina coin operators associations' combined annual convention, Carolina Inn, Columbia

September 25-26

West Virginia Music & Vending Association, annual meeting, Ramada Inn, South Charleston

October 6-8

JAA Convention, International Trade Center-Harumi Bldg., Tokyo

October 7

Ohio Music and Amusement Association dinner and drawing, The Tangier, Akron

October 7-12

Japan Electronics Show, Osaka International Trade Fairgrounds, Osaka

October 12-18

Taiwan Electronics Show, World Trade Center, Taipei

October 14-20

Korea Electronics Show, Exhibition Center, Seoul

October 15-18

Enada Show, Rome, Italy

October 16-17

Amusement & Music Operators of Virginia, annual convention, Holiday Inn, Richmond

October 29-November 1

NAMA annual convention-exhibit, McCormick Place, Chicago

October 29-31

AMOA Exposition, trade show and convention, Conrad Hilton, Chicago

November 25-27

Incomat Exhibition, Salzburg, Austria

December 9-12

Forainexpo, Paris, France

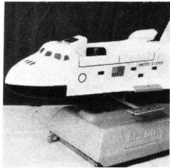
January 18-21, 1982

ATE, Birmingham, England, National Exhibition Centre

January 21-24

IMA, Frankfurt, Germany

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THOMAS LEON'S KIDDIE RIDES AMERICA

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Banner. For Blue Chip Investments.

Buying a game is a lot like buying a stock. Each one is an investment, and you expect it to pay you handsome dividends. But you need an investment counselor. Someone to help you choose your investment, and help you manage it once the choice is made. That's exactly what Banner has been doing since 1917. And that's what we do best.

We supply you with equipment that is right for you. We help you finance, install, and service it. And we get it to you fast.

And we're always right there to help you keep on top of the market. But the market can be risky, and that's why you need Banner.

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 **BANNER**
The operators' distributor since 1917.

Sega projects expansions of 'Pizzazz' fun restaurants

Sega Enterprises, Inc. plans to introduce its P.J. Pizzazz family fun restaurants throughout the United States, according to David Rosen, chairman and chief executive officer of Sega.

Rosen's announcement was made on the occasion of the first anniversary of the opening of Sega's P.J. Pizzazz prototype in West Covina, California [See *Play Meter*, August, 1980, page 23.] Owned and operated by Sega, P.J. Pizzazz is a futuristic concept which combines dining and entertainment featuring a variety of pizzas and other foods from an inviting menu, live entertainment, and a full complement of sophisticated computer video amusement games.

Rosen said, "P.J. Pizzazz is a family fun restaurant and entertainment concept which is proving to be the family entertainment phenomenon of the 1980s.

"Our decision to expand the P.J. Pizzazz concept nationally comes after a very thorough analysis and refinement of our existing operation and the very favorable response we have received from customers," Rosen continued. "We are confident that the product we are offering is of the highest quality in terms of substance and presentation, and should prove as successful and well received in other parts of California and the country as it has in West Covina."

Sega plans to open P.J. Pizzazz family fun restaurants either on a company owned and operated basis, through franchise arrangements or possibly, in the form of joint ventures.

P.J. Pizzazz, located in a 12,000 square-foot free-standing building adjacent to a major shopping center complex, provides an assortment of entertainment attractions. There are more than 80 computer video and

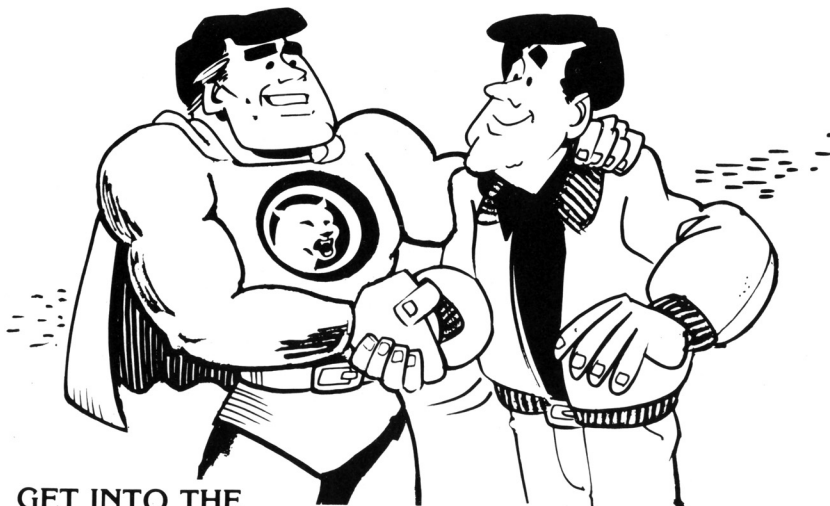
electronic pinball amusement games to challenge parents and young adults; Lunar Bounce and styro-foamfilled Space Crawl activities for young children; and a private lounge area for adults featuring cocktail-table computer video games.

Live entertainment, such as Dixieland bands, cartoonists, and magicians perform regularly, as well as at birthday parties and other special events held at P.J. Pizzazz. Movie theater-size video screens provide cartoons, coverage of sporting events, Sega-produced short subjects, and listing of general announcements.

"P.J.," an electronically-controlled robot, serves as mascot of P.J. Pizzazz—mingling with guests, delivering personalized messages, emceeding birthday parties and serving as a representative at special mall events and community activities.

VALLEY'S HERE TO HELP!

... with a sure way for you to hold on to your tables!



GET INTO THE VALLEY 8-BALL LEAGUE ASSOCIATION

You'll keep your tables...
get new locations... make
more money. Ask your
Distributor for details Today!



Toll-free to Coinco

A new toll-free 800 telephone number has been placed into service by Coin Acceptors, Inc. (COINCO) to improve the flow of communication between Coinco customers and Coinco management. The new Coinco 800 number is 1 (800) 325-2646.

"We feel this is extremely important," said Jim Douglass, vice president of marketing for Coinco, in announcing the new 800 number.

"Customers should continue to contact their local Coinco branch office representative first. However, we realized that with the rapid changes, the arrival, in force, of the computer into both the vending and amusement & games industries, there are going to be a few questions that the branch can't answer. Therefore, it's imperative that a direct informational link be established to answer those questions. We want our customers to know that we are here to help them, whatever the problem may be."

of Wor



"Welcome to my Dungeons of Wor"



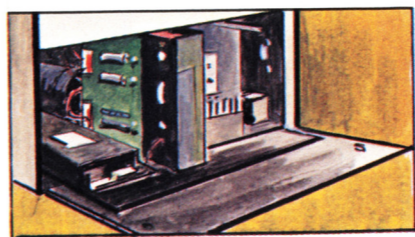
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Wizard of Wor

Three MIDWAY Models:

- Standard Arcade - Height: 68" (170cm), Width: 25" (63cm), Depth: 28" (70cm)
- Mini-Myte™ - Height: 59" (148cm), Width: 20" (50cm), Depth: 24" (60cm)
- Cocktail Table - Height: 29" (73cm), Width: 32" (80cm), Depth: 22" (55cm)



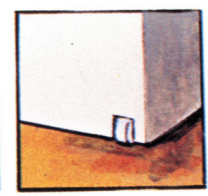
Pull-Out Service Drawer

Service the entire electronic system (with the exception of the monitor) from the front of the arcade model.

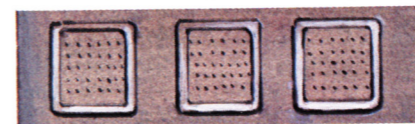


25¢

Lighted Coin Slots
Featured on all models.



Easy Moving
Arcade model equipped with wheels.



Tri-Phonic Sound System

A talking video game that uses three speakers for improved sound.

Increase Price of Play Option

Midway's positive approach to increase price of play at the player's option.

Copyright and Trade Mark

Wizard of Wor is copyrighted and trademarked in accordance with the U.S. copyright laws. Midway will protect its proprietary rights against any infringers of Wizard of Wor.

MIDWAY MFG. CO.

A BALLY COMPANY
10750 West Grand Avenue
Franklin Park, Illinois 60131
Phone: (312) 451-1360

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call toll free 800-323-7182

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MIDWAY Wizard

Printed in U.S.A.

MIDWAY Wizard of Wor^{T.M.}

Simultaneous 1 or 2 Player Full Color Video Game ...that TALKS!

Players control a separate squadron of warriors and compete for score at the same time. Warriors descend into various dungeon mazes, battling visible and invisible monster Worlings, and maybe the Wizard himself. Teamwork in the two player mode is important—but not necessary to play. If one player mode is selected, the computer becomes the second player.

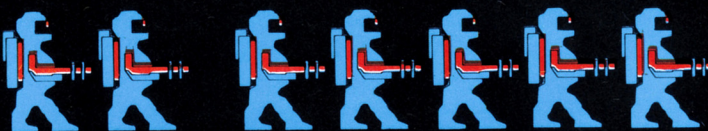
Warriors are easy to operate for movement in the dungeons with a four direction joystick and fire button for their unified-field-disturbance rifle.



The object of WIZARD OF WOR is to descend into the many dungeons of Wor, killing monsters, beating the Wizard and earning a high score.

Dungeon maze patterns appear at random and have Escape Doors at either end. These are used for strategic exit and entry by Warriors to outwit the monster Worlings. They are also a means of escape for Worluk. If this monster is hit by either player, the score of subsequent play is doubled. The Radar Screen reveals the general location of invisible monsters in the maze to alert the Warriors.

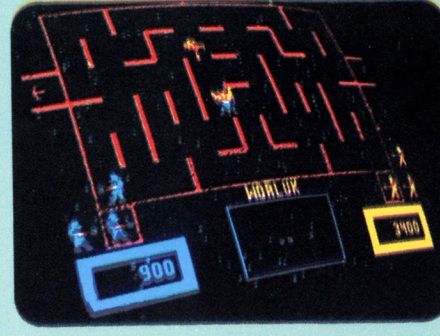
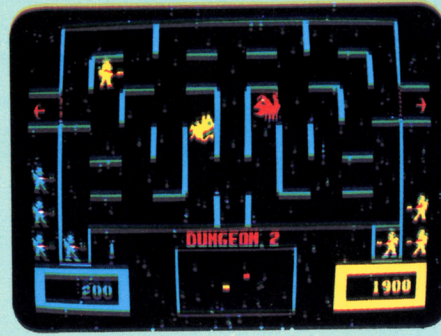
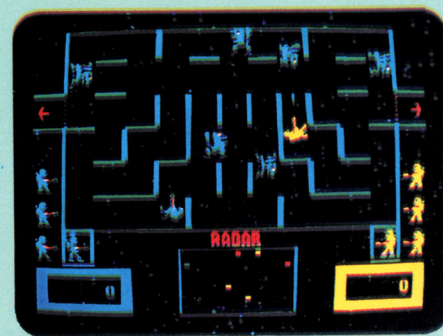
Throughout the game, the Wizard talks to players with 71 challenging phrases to incite continued play. Full color video screen is accented by action sounds and haunting mood music.



- 1 Player Game
- 1 coin - 2 Warriors
- 2 coins - 5 Warriors
- 2 Player Game
- 2 coins - 2 Warriors each
- 4 coins - 5 Warriors each
- (Operator Adjustable)



THE DUNGEONS OF WOR



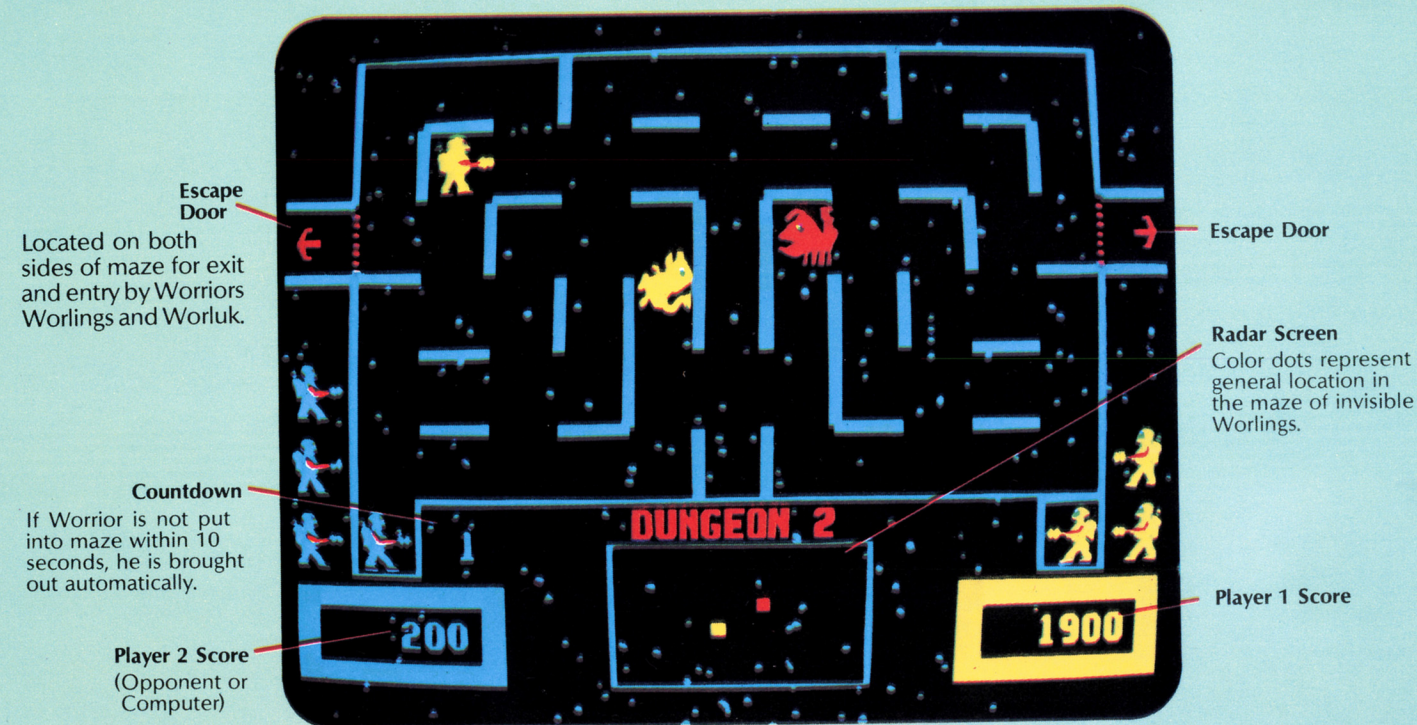
BASIC DUNGEONS — Consist of short passages and some long corridors.

At the start, the maze contains six blue Burwors. When the last Burwor is shot, yellow Garwors and red Thorwors join the battle.

When all monsters are destroyed, the next maze randomly appears. It contains six Burwors but more Garwors and Thorwors to shoot or eat the Warriors.

WORLUK

When the last Thorwor is shot, Worluk—the Wizard's favorite—will enter and try to escape out of the side doors. If he is shot before he escapes, all points are doubled in the next dungeon.



Escape Door
Located on both sides of maze for exit and entry by Warriors Worlings and Worluk.

Escape Door

Radar Screen
Color dots represent general location in the maze of invisible Worlings.

Countdown
If Warrior is not put into maze within 10 seconds, he is brought out automatically.

Player 2 Score
(Opponent or Computer)

Player 1 Score



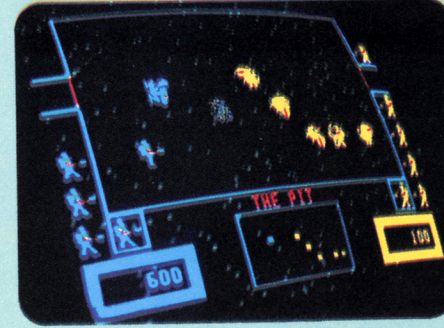
THE ARENA

Appears after 1st Bonus Warrior is awarded (4th or 5th dungeon-operator adjustable). The most difficult of the basic dungeons with an open area in the middle of the maze. A preview of the Worlord dungeons.



WORLORD DUNGEONS

Dungeons '8' (and following dungeons), are still more difficult where the player is more likely to engage the Wizard. In these dungeons the player is addressed as "Worlord".



THE PIT

Appears as the 13th dungeon after the 2nd Bonus Warrior is awarded. It is an entirely open area, with no place to hide and requires the greatest skill for survival. Shooting all of the Worlings, Worluk and Wizard earns continued play.

THE COMBATANTS



BURWORS

100 Points

Blue in color. Always visible.



GARWORS

200 Points

Yellow in color. Often invisible.



THORWORS

500 Points

Red in color. Moves with greater speed.



WORLUK

1000 Points
Double Score

Winged monster that flies through the maze.



WIZARD OF WOR

2500 Points

Often appears when Worluk is shot. Teleports with magical speed from one position to another hurtling lightning bolts.



BLUE WARRIOR

1000 Points

Points awarded for shooting opponent Warrior. However, for teamwork play, either Warrior can bump or pass through the other without being destroyed.



YELLOW WARRIOR

1000 Points

Bally division chief

Charles Farmer, Jr. has been appointed president of Bally Manufacturing's Domestic Distribution Division.

In his newly created post at Bally, Farmer will assume an executive role in the coordination of the company's three domestic wholly-owned distributors of coin-operated amusement games and equipment. Bally's domestic distributors accounted for more than \$100 million in revenues in 1980.

Farmer was president of Central Ohio Sales & Marketing, Inc., a distributor of coin-operated amusement equipment in Ohio, West Virginia, and Northern Kentucky, since 1979. He was vice president in charge of sales for Shaffer Distributing Company, a distributor of amusement and vending equipment in Columbus, Ohio, from 1962 to 1979.

Farmer graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in business administration. He has been married to the former Jeanne Ann Shaffer for nearly 25 years and they have three children.

Joins Business Builders

Patti Williams has joined Business Builders as an associate with Carol Kantor. She will be working as an account executive for this promotion and marketing firm specializing in the coin-op amusement industry.

Carol Kantor, Business Builders' president, noted, "Patti's marketing know-how and creativity together with her knowledge of the coin-op industry gives her excellent credentials to develop promotion for our clients."

Patti Williams has previous experience in sales and marketing with Sharp Electronics Corp. She accompanied her husband, Gil Williams, when he initiated the operation of Atari's manufacturing facility in Ireland in 1978-79. She has contacted many industry people through her participation in the AMOA and ATE trade shows over the past three years.

"I have enjoyed my association with the game industry and look forward to being more involved with promotions and advertising for associated businesses. It is a good opportunity and a challenge to develop creative effective marketing programs for our clients," she said.

Air Hockey champs: Rocky Mountain high

The Dark Horse in Boulder, Colorado hosted the 1981 U.S. Air-Hockey Championships on June 6 and 7. Prizes of \$1200 in cash and over \$800 in merchandise were awarded to 16 finalists in each of two divisions, professional and amateur. Sponsors of the event were Tournament Games, Wano-Coors, Bevco, Western Smelting and Refining, and the Dark Horse.

Jesse Douty of Philadelphia succeeded in capturing his fifth straight national championship. Douty's powerful forehands and new quick-release shots proved overwhelming as he lost only four games the entire tournament.

These losses were to Boulder's Bob DuBuisson, the second place finisher. Before losing to Douty in the finals, DuBuisson destroyed opponent after opponent, including third-place finisher Paul Marshall, a quick-shooter from Dallas. Fourth place went to John Stucky of Longmont, Colorado, who combined a fast "moving the puck" offense with tough defense.

Fifth and sixth places, respectively, went to long-time air-hockey players and organizers Mark Robbins of Boulder and Phil Arnold of Houston. Completing the top ten were: 7—Paul Burger, Los Angeles; 8—Mike Barry, Philadelphia; 9—Robert Hernandez, Houston; 10—Joe Campbell, Philadelphia.

The amateur championship was won by John Chambers of Denver, a specialist in the fast volley game. John Gunn of Los Angeles was second.

News coverage of the tournament was provided by local media, including the Boulder Daily Camera, Denver's Rocky Mountain News, TV station KMGH, and KBOL radio.

The U.S. Air-Table-Hockey Association is sanctioning the air-hockey portion of Tournament Games' upcoming World Championships in Chicago, October 29-November 1, featuring the \$25,000 Tournament Hockey event. For more information call 1-800-426-8897 or write: USAA, P.O. Box 25338, Houston Texas, 77005.


Attorney goes to Bally board

Lawrence B. Brody, senior partner, London office of Coudert Brothers, an international law firm, has been elected a member of the board of directors of Bally Manufacturing Corporation.

Brody, who graduated from Yale University in 1942 and from Yale Law School in 1947, was admitted to

the Connecticut bar in 1947. He was a partner in Brody and Brody in Bridgeport, Connecticut from 1947 to 1956 and a partner of Brody and Brody in London, England from 1956 to 1965 when he joined Coudert Brothers. He served in the United States Marine Corp. as a first lieutenant from 1942 to 1945.

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The Keg South Pinball Adventure:

Building play receipts through a tournament

By Stephen R. Craig

"Arnold, why don't you sponsor a pinball tournament?" I asked a local tavern operator.

"Why should I?" he replied.

Good question! But I was ready

with an impassioned plea as to why such an event should be held. Basically, my reasons were these:

—Pinball players would enter, some coming to his bar for the first

time. Hopefully they would like the place and return as regular customers.

—Few entrants would come alone, but would bring dates or friends with them.

—In a bar, people drink—even while playing pinball. Revenues for that night and that time period should increase.

—He could build a name by promoting his place in a way that no one else had tried.

Well, for whatever reason, Arnold agreed, and Thursday evening, May 14, 1981, the first ever pinball tournament in our area was held in the Keg South Bar, Ft. Myers, Florida.

We had many options as to how we should conduct the event. The most successful formats appeared to be one of the following: single elimination, double elimination, or total score for a set number of games shot by each competitor.

We chose single elimination for several reasons. Double-elim takes a great deal of time if there are many competitors, and much more paperwork (scorekeeping) is involved. Total score has worked many places, but it tends to keep novices from entering and we wanted everyone, regardless of skill level, to be able to enter.

Basically, though, it was the thought of head-to-head combat that appealed to us most about single elimination. Our guess was right, for all the competitors liked the idea of an opponent being a person instead of just the machine.

We put up posters advertising our event: "\$1 entry fee, men's and women's division, prizes to top four places and high and low score, once you lose you are done." Prizes offered were pinball credits, T-shirts with the logo of the bar on them, six-packs of beer, and a permanent plaque to be kept in the bar with the names of the winners.

The entry fee covered the cost of



Single-elimination play was chosen as less complicated to score, and providing 'head-to-head combat.'



Women were enthusiastic to participate in the first-ever pin tournament in Ft. Myers, Florida locations.

the prizes and the pinball games, for all machines used were rigged for free play (this through the cooperation of the operator).

At 7p.m. the 27 contestants (18 men and 9 women) drew numbers to determine their position on the schedule and their first opponent. Play then began with two contests being waged simultaneously on each machine—one machine for men *Star Trek*, and one for women *Firepower*. Each score was recorded on a master chart and winners were advanced into the next bracket.

The roar of the crowd

The cheering and rooting was loud and added to the fun, and the competition was intense yet amicable. Prizes were awarded after the completion of each division and the bar owner was bombarded with questions about when the next "battle" would be, couldn't they have a pinball league, and how about mixed couples? To a person, everyone had fun.

In any pinball contest, it seems to me from the Keg South experience, that certain elements are essential to success:

—Free play on the machines covered by the cost of an entry fee.

Otherwise, winners are in effect paying for the opportunity to win. The simple aspect of free play is an enticement, and thus no one squawks at being eliminated early.

—Someone must keep the tourney results, the scores, and keep things moving. Don't leave the conduct of the tournament to the players themselves.

—Give as many different inexpensive prizes are possible, rather than a few expensive ones.

—All competition in each division should be on the same machine for maximum fairness.

—Machines used should be in perfect working order.

Location benefits

Had I been right in my claims to the bar owner about the potential benefits of hosting such an event? There were 27 entrants, none of whom would have been at the Keg South that evening, or at least not for that long period of time.

The event took one hour and 45 minutes, and the contestants brought an additional 21 customers with them. At the event's conclusion, many remained rather than instantly vacating the premises.

What did Arnold, the owner, feel

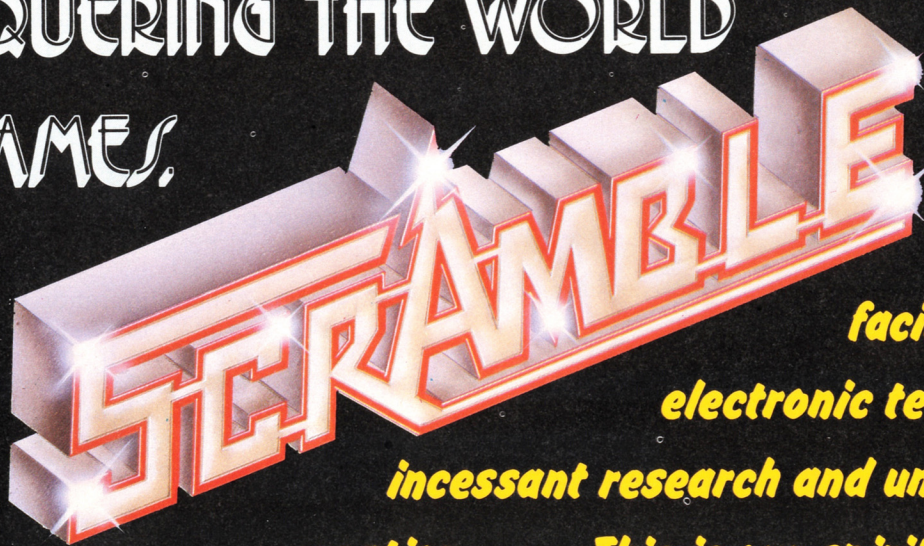
about the event? "For that time period on a Thursday, we did a bigger business than any other Thursday since we opened."

What was his total cash expenditure? "We spent probably \$5 to cover the cost of the prizes that the entry fees didn't cover. It was worth it. The plaques can be used again just by adding plates, and the revenue more than compensated for the few dollars expenditure. We will definitely do this again," said the location manager.

I've seen pinball tourneys used in bars to build business, in amusement centers as part of a grand opening or as a regular feature, and as entertainment events in a large resort complex. Think about it—couldn't a pinball tournament work for you?

[Footnote: Contributor Craig incidentally won high score in the Keg South tourney and took second place in the men's division. ("Amazing how well you can do when you are in charge of keeping the scores," he comments.) Craig adds, "All of us were amazed at the intensity and the scores of the female players. They, more than any others, found the event to be exciting and different."]

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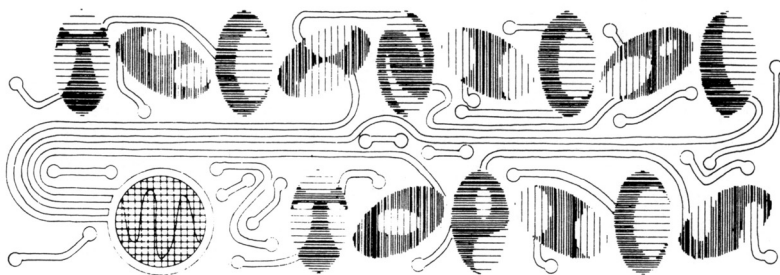
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I.C. LOGIC DESIGN COURSE

Lesson Two: I.C. Logic Families

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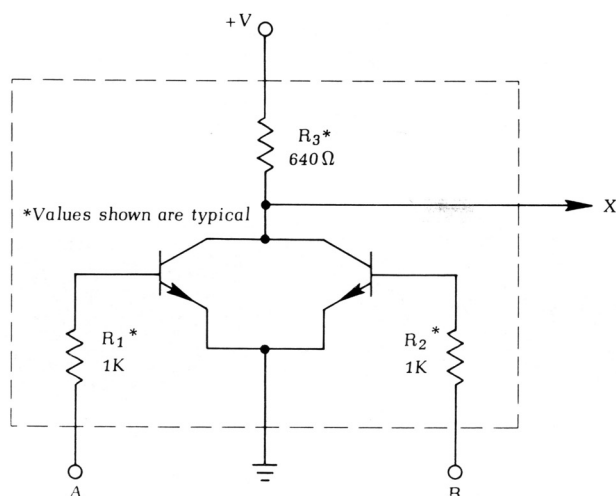


Fig. 2-1. A typical two-input resistor-transistor logic gate. This configuration performs the NOR function.

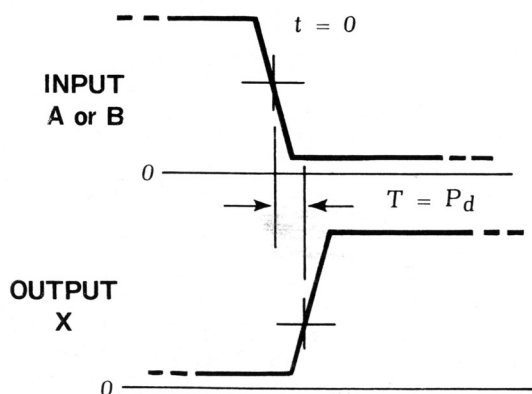


Fig. 2-2. The propagation delay of an RTL gate. The time T shown in the diagram is the time required for the gate to change logic levels.

This lesson explains the various types of I.C. logic available. It is imperative that the designer be familiar with these families to permit proper application in the logic circuit.

I.C. Logic Families:

Integrated circuits have been with us on a commercial basis for over ten years, and during this time a great many modifications and improvements have taken place. Although there are thousands of I.C.s on the market today, they may be grouped into a relatively small number of families.

Within a particular family the methods of fabrication, supply voltage requirements, susceptibility to noise, etc. are fairly uniform. However, the differences between families are considerable, and it is well worth the time to discuss the more popular.

RTL:

A typical gate configuration in resistor-transistor logic is shown in figure 2-1. If one or more of the inputs is at a high level, then the output will be zero. The logic function performed by this gate is called a NOR function and will be discussed in a later lesson.

Although we have shown a two-input gate, the circuit can easily be extended to any number of inputs.

The *fan-out* of an I.C. gate is the measure of the numbers of inputs that can be driven by a single output. The fan-out of an RTL gate is limited to about five, since the output impedance in the conducting or 1 state is $R_3 = 640 \text{ ohms}$. This type of information is supplied by the data sheets.

The propagation delay [P_d] is the time required for a gate to change logic level. [figure 2-2]. In RTL this time is on the order of 30 nano-seconds, $1 \text{ nsec} = 10 \text{ to the minus nine power sec}$. However, as we shall see, this is relatively slow in the computer world.

RTL is also rather sensitive to noise or spurious electrical signals. This characteristic is called noise

immunity. The supply voltage for RTL is +3.6 volts plus or minus 10%. The typical zero logic level is 0.2V, and the 1 logic level is typically 1.6V, provided the designer stays within the loading [fan-out] requirements. Indeed, the primary advantages of RTL are its low cost and simple operations.

DTL:

Figure 2-3 shows a three-input gate in diode transistor logic [DTL]. The only time we can obtain a zero level output is when all of the inputs are at a high logic level or all inputs are floating. The logic function performed by this gate is called a NAND function and will be discussed in a later lesson.

Since DTL has a lower output impedance than RTL, it also has a greater fan-out. We can expect a fan-out of about 8 from a typical gate. Although the propagation delay in DTL is about equal to RTL, it is about three times more immune to noise. The supply voltage for DTL is +5.0 volts. The zero logic level is 0.2V, and the 1 logic level is 3.0V.

The primary advantages of DTL are moderate cost and diversity in the types of available functions.

TTL:

Transistor-transistor logic makes use of an unique device called the multiple-emitter transistor [figure 2-4]. Each emitter is provided with input clamping diodes for increased noise immunity. If one or more of the emitter inputs is at a low logic level, Q2 will be turned off. This results in Q4 turning on and Q3 going off. The output then is at a high logic level. The operation of the TTL follows the same pattern as the DTL gate in [figure 2-3], but the propagation delay is about one-half that of DTL, and the noise immunity is also superior.

Another advantage of TTL is its typically high fan-out of about ten. The supply voltage for TTL is +5.0 volts. The zero logic level is 0.2V and the 1 logic level is 3.3V.

ECL:

Emitter coupled logic resulted from the need for an extremely fast switching speed. The propagation delay in ECL is on the order of 3 nano-seconds and the fan-out is a high 25. Unfortunately, the noise immunity of ECL gates is about equal to that of RTL.

A three-input ECL gate is shown in figure 2-5.

Typically, the circuit inputs to a different amplifier and outputs from a low impedance emitter follower. The high fan-out results from the combination of low output impedance and high input impedance. The high speed of ECL is insured by keeping the transistors from saturating. An unique feature of ECL is that two different outputs are available. The designer has a choice of OR or NOR in the same package.

The ECL supply voltage is +5.2 volts. The 1 logic level is +1.6V, and the zero logic level is +0.75V.

MOS:

The MOS FET [metal oxide silicon field-effect transistor] is rapidly gaining popularity in applications requiring complex logic functions.

LSI [large scale integration] using MOS gates can result in a single I.C. package containing hundreds of individual gates. Unfortunately, this is coupled with a large propagation delay and, therefore, restricts the application of MOS devices in high

speed circuits.

Fabrication:

If one were to open up a standard fourteen pin dual-in-line I.C. package [D.I.P.], he would find no familiar transistors, resistors, or diodes. Unless he looked very carefully, he might find nothing at all.

The heart of an I.C. is a small crystalline chip of silicon which has been precisely etches and doped

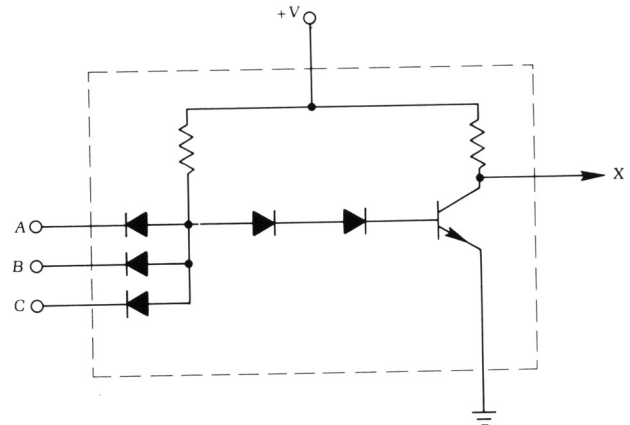


Fig. 2-3. A three-input diode-transistor logic gate. This type of logic performs the NAND function.

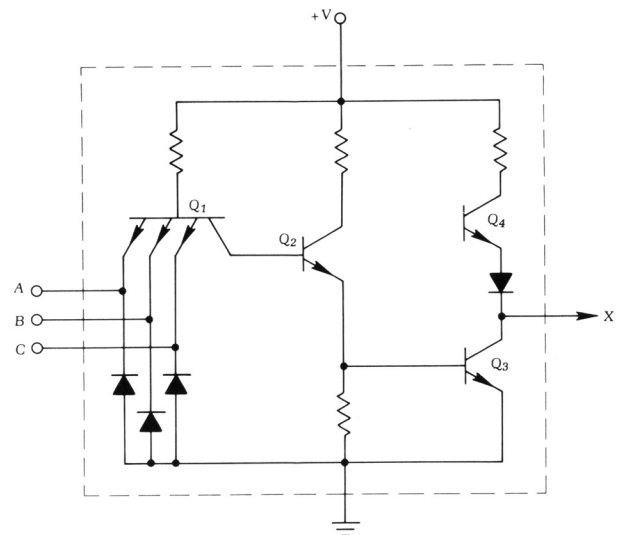


Fig. 2-4. A three-input transistor-transistor logic gate. The TTL logic family also performs the NAND functions. It is sometimes referred to as "T squared L."

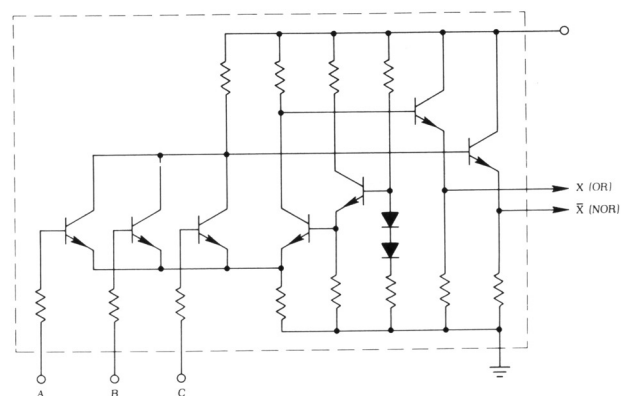


Fig. 2-5. A three-input emitter-coupled logic gate. With this ECL gate, the OR and NOR function are available in the same package.

with metal impurities. Proper chemical etching determines the configuration of the circuit.

Resistors are formed by doping a certain area of the crystal to a particular depth, depending on the resistance desired. Finally, an oxide insulating barrier is deposited. Connections to the circuit are

made by etching through this insulation at specific points.

The student may wonder why capacitors are not included within the I.C. Although some small stray capacitance is present, there is presently no method available to form large capacitors [.1 mfd] on a chip.

PROGRAMMED TEST/2

Instructions: *The purpose of this test is to guide you step-by-step through actual circuit design problems. Also, many of these tests will provide you with additional design technique. Most important, these tests will provide you with a gauge to establish your degree of understanding of the material covered in the text. The test is programmed. Start at block 1 and then follow the numbered instruction associated with your answer.*

1

Which logic family is preferred for low noise and high speed?

- a. TTL
GO TO BLOCK 6
- b. RTL
GO TO BLOCK 23

2 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 15.

3 YOU ARE CORRECT!

The fanout of a logic gate is:

- a. Related to the propagation delay
GO TO BLOCK 16
- b. Equal to the number of inputs it can drive
GO TO BLOCK 15

4 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 19

5 YOU ARE CORRECT!

The MOS FET family is desired when the preference is for:

- a. High speed
GO TO BLOCK 11
- b. Complex logic functions
GO TO BLOCK 21

6 YOU ARE CORRECT!

The RTL family performs:

- a. The NOR functions
GO TO BLOCK 12
- b. The AND functions
GO TO BLOCK 13

7 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 20

8 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 9.

9 YOU ARE CORRECT!

The TTL family performs the same logic functions as:

- a. The RTL family
GO TO BLOCK 8
- b. The DTL family
GO TO BLOCK 20

10 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to text and return to BLOCK 17

11 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 5

12 YOU ARE CORRECT!

The RTL family is desired when there is a preference for:

- a. Low cost
GO TO BLOCK 3
- b. High speed
GO TO BLOCK 18

13 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 6.

14 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 21.

15 YOU ARE CORRECT!

The fan-out of the RTL family is about:

- a. 5
GO TO BLOCK 19
- b. 15
GO TO BLOCK 2

16 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 3.

17 YOU ARE CORRECT!

The TTL family requires which of the following supply voltages?

- a. +5 volts
GO TO BLOCK 5
- b. -5.2 volts
GO TO BLOCK 10

18 YOU ARE CORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to BLOCK 12.

19 YOU ARE CORRECT!

Which logic function does the DTL family perform?

- a. NAND
GO TO BLOCK 9
- b. NOR
GO TO BLOCK 4

20 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Which logic family has both an OR and a NOR output capability?

- a. TTL
GO TO BLOCK 7
- b. ECL
GO TO BLOCK 17

21 YOU ARE CORRECT!

The ECL family is used where there is a preference for:

- a. Low noise
GO TO BLOCK 14
- b. High Speed
GO TO BLOCK 22

22 YOU ARE CORRECT!

You have completed the test for Lesson Two. However, before going on you should review any areas in this lesson you do not fully understand.

23 YOU ARE INCORRECT!

Refer to the text and return to Block 1.

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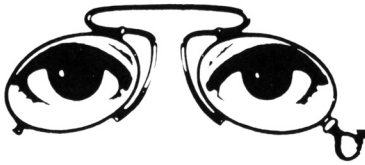
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Is EMBRYON a pinball clone?

The handwriting

With the appearance of this issue's game for review, I feel the need to amplify a point I have previously been making only in the context of Gottlieb games, but something that really holds true across the board. It has to do with scoring.

In the past I have been taken to task rather strongly by some residents of Northlake who have felt that I have put too much importance on a seventh digit and that I have harped on this fact far too long. But maybe now is truly the time to further explore this factor and open up the discussion for any views any of you might have and want to mail in to this magazine.

Let me say at the outset that pinball has always gone through stages of how high the scores should be. We have witnessed (some of us were actually there and can attest to this) a day when scores could be added up in one's head—all the way to millions of points brightly colored on backglasses before the advent of the scoring drum.

With this last feature we became comfortable with the notion of games in the thousands, and I for one can still savor when I *turned* a machine and broke the 10,000 point barrier.

Then things changed as did the games and we accepted the notion of a game being turned at 100,000 points. This was considered such an accomplishment that Bally even added an "over the top" feature on some machines which sounded a bell and let the surrounding world know what the player had achieved.

From this, most were satisfied, although the inevitable happened with companies adding a 100,000 point light next to the drums (*Jungle Queen*.) But even this didn't prove to be enough as the prove to be enough as the

technology began to form itself and offer more options on the playfield and also more scoring possibilities. Six-digit scoring seemed to be the ultimate level with a million points being a threshold that none considered seriously enough at the time.

Solid state then presented itself and we all grew accustomed to the notion of six digit displays and scoring that seemed to justify this industry standard. But then a curious thing happened: the programming capabilities caught up with the game designers and, suddenly, wonderful things were possible and before anyone could say "over the top," Stern brought us *Big Game* with seven digit scoring.

It seemed, at one time, a natural extension of the game, especially in light of playfield features that were offering multiple values and all sorts of other extras. *Sharpshooter* offered a compromise measure between the old and what was soon to be the new, with a million light separate from the digital display, but handwriting was on the wall, or at least the blackglass, and soon almost everyone joined the ranks of the seven digits—except one: Gottlieb. And now, with Bally's release of *Embryon*, it too has joined the ranks, if only for one game.

The important thing at this point isn't singling out one company or even putting a value judgement on what the scoring should be and shouldn't be, but rather to explore what it all means to the player and ultimately the cash box.

For my money, I would be happy if the games went back to six digits or even five, if the scoring potential of the machines reflected this maximum level. But they don't and we're faced with whether it's a positive or negative to not have the

extra digit.

What one must understand and accept is that all coin-op players, whether they be video or pinball fans, are a special breed of animal who do what they do—play—for a variety of reasons. It is my contention and always has been that players play for score: if they're playing alone they want to better what they've gotten in the past and also win free games in the process, and if they're playing against someone else (or *with* someone else), they want to get a higher score and show they're the better player.

Everything in a game design even demands this with the building up a specific features in order to get more points or reach some level for a reward of an extra ball or a special. But I've always felt that for pinball, a player would find more satisfaction in winning free games along with getting a high score, rather than just winning free games with a low score. There is an inherent sense of accomplishment that is amplified when the two compliment each other.

And so we get to six-digit scoring and the impact it has. One of the greatest things solid state was able to offer was the "high score to date" feature. Suddenly, the lone player had a ready opponent to compete against—some phantom wizard whose score flashed and showed what the threshold was. We even rewarded the player with extra free games if he could somehow reach and surpass these heights of pinball skill.

It was the ultimate Pavlovian reinforcement: a challenge that players tried to meet time and time again. It became integral to pinball, even if there were those who just accepted it as a sign of the times.

There must have been some

By Roger C. Sharpe

on the backglass

validity to it since Gottlieb, too many years ago for most to remember, even had a place on the backglass of its games for players to write in the high score. And then video came and began offering not only the single score but the top ten and twenty.

The point at this juncture is that if a game is going to supply the potential points for scores in excess of a million, even if it happens less than ten percent of the time, the player achieving the score should have the satisfaction of seeing it flashing up there in lights. The Gottlieb games of recent vintage have held out this possibility but even the last two, which have provided lower scoring on the average as well as an automatic reset, still hasn't solved the problems. Nor has this review's game, although it too is far from easy to "turn."

What we all have to be willing to accept is the fact that the addition of some recognition of high scores is an enhancement for the machine and something that may have a greater impact than we are willing to imagine for those locations where regulars gather to ply their skills.

This isn't to suggest that things need to get out of hand. When Stern brought out *Cheetah*, I was disappointed that it had only added extra digits around the playfield in order to guarantee that players would get seven digit scores. This wasn't the answer and I wrote about it then and was glad to see that it hasn't happened since.

In fact, I've felt that if we are to have this increased scoring, let the games max out with high scores anywhere between 2 million to 4 million points, not greater, in order for the machine to remain competitive and offer a realistic challenge.

What Gottlieb or any of the other

manufacturers decide to do is anyone's guess, but for now we need some parity with scoring that doesn't get out of hand nor reflect what players have achieved. Those machines that can't accomplish this are going to suffer while not meeting all the needs of the pinball player.

Now, with these few points out of the way and the hope that it might stir some discussion, let's go to the game at hand, which is the first wide-body we've seen in quite a long time, although Williams' *Algar* has had some limited exposure.

Bally's EMBRYON

Following *Eight Ball Deluxe* and *Fireball II*, this game seems less a continuation of the direction the company seems to be taking, and more an interim measure that was undertaken because there were some extra wide-body cabinets laying around. However, there are some nice touches that tend to save the machine.

PLAYFIELD: The action begins at the top right with a short entry point for the ball that curves around an upper kick-out hole and over three star roll-overs to a top right flipper. Just above this and to the left is a three bank of drop targets that offer a variety of different values including extra ball and special. Move farther over to left and there's a gate opening leading to three lanes which can also be entered via a left side spinner.

Move down and there's an array of four thumper bumpers before one reaches the middle of the field and the game's main attraction. At the center is an interesting configuration of a single captive ball fronting two other captive balls that can be propelled to roll up their short lane to targets, both left and right.

Meanwhile at the left is another



Bally's EMBRYON

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three bank of drop targets which also features a captive ball and target behind, for separate point build-ups, while on the right balancing off the action is a single standing target and another captive ball.

The bottom features a left side outer lane (A) that leads through a gate to the flipper and an inside roll-over that sometimes doesn't. The right side takes a conventional lane down to the flipper (B) and also offers an outside roll-over, gate and post that supplies some nudging possibilities to save a lost ball in addition to another flipper that's activated when both A & B are gotten.

ANALYSIS: After I played *Embryon* a few times my reaction was that many of the angles of the shots reminded me of one of Atari's last efforts called, if memory serves me, *Space Riders*. There was the long shot to the spinner and the set up of the left side tharget bank as well as the right side captive ball. The action here, however, centers around the center and getting that captive ball to hit the other two in order to get the flashing light effect and activate a chance for spelling out, what else but E-M-B-R-Y-O-N, which then lights that top right kick-out hole for locking up the ball and getting two-ball multi-ball play.

Other than this, although the other features offer their own values and build-ups, the main theme and rationale is for that middle with points leading up to 40,000 and 5X bonus that, thankfully, doesn't have to be in memory for this six-digit machine. There are some decent reverses and good left to right accessibility, but the quickest action is off that top right flipper that is slightly reminiscent of Gottlieb's *Star Race*.

GRAPHICS: The move away from outer space continues (look for some thoughts about this in an upcoming *Play Meter* analysis) with something that might be too frightening and real for those who have set ideas about where the artwork should be headed. There are embryos sprinkled on the backglass and even the center playfield chamber serves up a feeling that is definitely fetal. Could it be future clones? Who knows, but the effect is startling and very different from the norm, which should help set it apart along with its size.

PLAY: Although the reason may be that they had some six-digit displays lying around and a game that didn't seem to offer high scores, with *Embryon* you're going to have to be

careful and also probably limit yourself to two levels for either extra ball or free play. On extra ball you should be okay with a 300,000 point start followed by 600,000 points, while for free play you'll probably want to try an increase of about 200,000 points to each depending upon your percentaging and the calibre of play at your location.

PROS & CONS: From the start I've never been a fan of what I've dubbed "sqatbody" games, and *Embryon* doesn't do much to change that attitude. The action is slow for long shots which, in part, is due to the constraints of dealing with playfield feature placement on a wider board. It is a problem that has always hounded this size game when the field hasn't been broken up into mini-fields.

In addition, the placement of the thumper bumpers here tends to further slow play since they are only offering a part area for the ball to impact from and not much space for the resulting rebound. As a result the action can be boring and almost totally dependent upon speed from flipper hits and a few kickers.

All in all, *Embryon* is just adequate at a time when the pinball market needs something more to keep current players and attract new ones.

RATING: ##

Rather than have this be a down note for the coming of the fall season, be assured that Bally, for one, has a dynamite game coming up as well as a solid effort, *Fathom* that's probably already hitting the streets as you read this.

In addition, the total picture looks pretty solid now that Gottlieb has followed up its successful *Mars* with a game that should be just as strong, *Volcano*. Williams has hit with the next double level, *Pharoah*, while Stern has come back with *Split Second* and more is on the way as the AMOA looms closer.

What seems to be the case is that pinball is weathing the video boom and solidifying its existing market with games that, for the main part, are innovative and evolutionary as the manufacturers continue to broaden their understanding of what they can and can't offer in terms of pinball play that can appeal to players of all types.

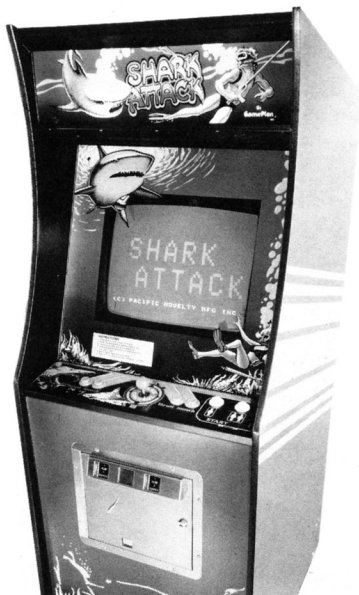
What is certain is that upcoming developments should prove interesting and might indicate more fully what the future holds. Until next time, and a look at the newest game, as always, be well and prosper.



Stern's *SPLIT SECOND*



Williams' *PHARAOH*



Game Plan's *SHARK ATTACK*



Taito's *COLONY 7*



'Physical Fitness Computer'

Extra ball in a jiffy

Stern Electronics, Inc. announced plans to begin production in late July of a new multiple ball, split-second pinball game, *Split Second*. The four-player, solid state "talking" game was designed by Harry Williams to challenge the player with play/action features and skill shots that require the split-second timing of a high-wire trapeze artist, said the manufacturer.

Split Second introduces to the industry its "bonus ball" play/feature. When ball three is in play, players who complete a skill shot through a lighted playfield loop are awarded an extra ball.

Other innovative game and scoring features include:

- "Captive ball lane" on top-level releases one or two balls into play upon completion of target and light sequences.

- To achieve Superbounds, player must light S-P-L-I-T S-E-C-O-N-D.

- Player who hits all of the right or middle drop targets increases the Bonus Multiplier up to 15X.

Designed to simulate all the sights, sounds, and excitement of a three-ring circus, *Split Second* boasts an audio system that announces which ball is in play:

It encourages the player to earn extra points by quickly completing skill shots and rates player performance on timed "loop" feature from "fair" to "good" to "excellent" to "perfect!"

Split Second features a completely redesigned outthole mechanism.

Pingame from the crypt

Williams Electronics calls upon the omnipotence and glamour of the ancient Egyptians to entice players with the introduction of *Pharaoh*, a new multi-level, Multi-Ball pingame.

To obtain the highest score and thereby challenge the age-old secrets of the *Pharaoh*, players shoot for the new "Stop and Score" feature. Start by making the two sets of drop targets on the upper level; hitting any target will light that target for 1,000 points and start the color-coordinated light on the opposite bank flashing. Hitting that flashing light will advance a letter in P-H-A-R-

A-O-H value.

For even higher point scoring, making the difficult Slaves Tomb shot activates the countdown for 5X lit P-H-A-R-A-O-H value. A shot to the top or bottom level eject hole collects the backglass score which decreases in value in 100 point increments with time used.

In addition to activating the countdown timer, the valuable Slaves Tomb shot will also light the “?” lanes. Rolling over the “?” lane will award randomly either mystery points, bonus advances, bonus multipliers, or special.

Players can beat Pharaoh at his own game by hitting the captive ball, situated on the top playfield, during Stop and Score play. This shot will collect the entire initial Stop and Score value (either 3X or 5X lit P-H-A-R-A-O-H value) without deductions for time.

Pharaoh's playfield allows two-ball action. When a player lights the “R” in P-H-A-R-A-O-H, making either eject hole when lit will lock up a ball.

Completely lighting P-H-A-R-A-O-H activates the Slaves Tomb and Hidden Tomb alternately for extra ball.

Another opportunity for high scoring against Pharaoh is Williams' bonus ball feature. A bonus ball is offered to the player with the highest score when two or more players take up the challenge.

In order to delay finally draining a ball, hitting the lower level drop targets builds up the timer lights for Magna-Save.

Pharaoh's backglass recaptures the era of the great rulers of Egypt, and speech on Pharaoh portrays a spectre that haunts one crypt.

The shark stands upright

Following the successful launch of *Shark Attack* in a cocktail version, Game Plan, Inc., of Addison, Illinois has introduced a new version in an upright monitor and a larger size.

In the game's action, the player becomes a killer shark attacking waves of divers as they seek to destroy him. Divers appear in waves of four squadrons as they are heard talking to each other in tune with racing heartbeats as the tension mounts. As the shark feeds on the divers, activated by the Munch Button, screams of pain are heard as the divers are devoured by the

shark. Bonus is awarded after a shark has eaten seven squadrons of divers.

The game features an unusual personal involvement whereby in one mode, the high scoring player initials his score. It remains on the screen until 10 players beat it.

The game features straight-up visibility, realistic audio effects, and a variety of adjustable features such as player challenge; one or two coins; 3, 4, or 5 sharks per game; plus easy service door access to all electrical components.

The game is produced by Game Plan, Inc. under license from Pacific Novelty Manufacturing, Inc.

More coins, more destruction

The power of “Extended Weaponry” fires up both the scores and profits of Taito America's newest action video, *Colony 7*.

“For an additional coin, a player can increase his score by increasing his power of destruction,” said Jack Mittel, president of Taito America. “Extended Weaponry is a built-in incentive for the novice and pro alike to achieve a higher score. With Extended Weaponry the player increases his score and the operator increases his profits.”

The player's mission is to defend *Colony 7* from the evil “Jarvians” by sending converging pulse rays to destroy the enemy before either his cannons or the entire Colony is destroyed.

The enemy's fighter ships make intelligent strafing runs to penetrate the protective shields and the “Bomber” tries to wipe out the cannons with its sure-fire aims. The player will earn a high point value if he destroys the enemy's “Advisor” and will be attacked by fewer replacement fighter ships the sooner he destroys the “Scout”.

When the situation seems desperate, the player can hit his “Mega-Blaster” button to destroy everything in the range of its radiating explosion or can activate the “Eradicator” to wipe out everything on the entire screen.

Play becomes progressively more challenging and difficult and bonus points increase in value as the enemy becomes smarter and moves faster.

Colony 7 with Extended Weaponry is available from Taito America in both upright and Trimline cabinets.

It wants to hold your hand

New coin-operated Model 7719CCO *Physical Fitness Computer* enables anyone to check what kind of physical shape they are in, by a test that takes less than half a minute, according to the manufacturer, Computer Instruments Corp. of Hempstead, L.I., New York.

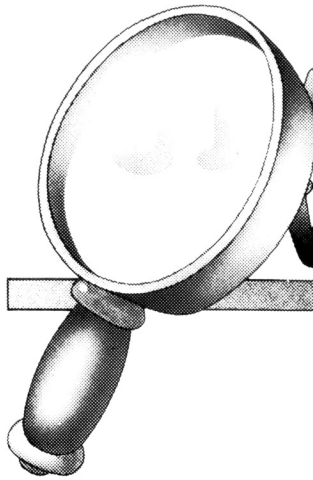
Based on pulse standards for fitness established by a leading medical institution, Model 7719CCO electronically measures the user's fitness when a finger is slipped into a small sensor and a quarter coin inserted. A bright light then flashes with each pulse beat and the meter pointer starts moving across the dial as the computer inside the machine calculates the user's fitness.

After about 15 seconds the light stops flashing and the pointer “locks in” on the user's fitness level for an additional 10 seconds. The customer can see whether his fitness is Above Average (pointer in the bright green-colored dial zone) which corresponds to being a conditioned athlete, or Average (pointer in the pale green dial zone) corresponding to being a jogger, or Below Average (pointer in the yellow dial zone) corresponding to a mainly inactive person—or Low (pointer in the bright red dial zone) corresponding to a sedentary person.

With Americans more interested in their health than ever before, the manufacturer suggested that this coin-operated device is “the perfect impulse coin grabber for thousands of locations like airports, bus and train stations, restaurants and bars, hotels and motels, and all tourist attractions. Every family member will want a turn at the machine.”

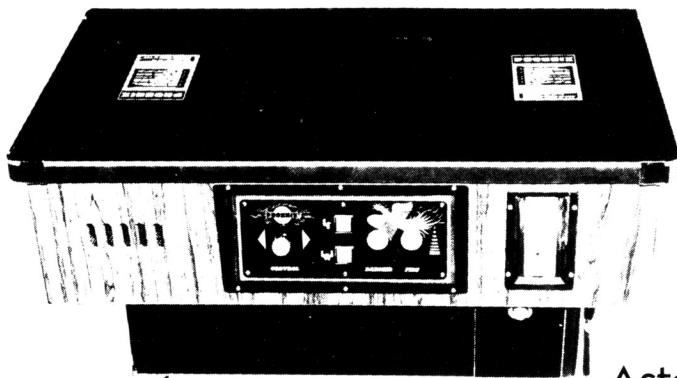
Utilizing solid state circuitry and powered by two standard 9 volt transistor radio batteries, good for more than 2000 plays, the Model 7719CCO *Fitness Computer* operates independently of any outside power source and can be mounted on a counter top, floor stand, or wall. Two built-in security bolts are provided. The steel locked standard coin box has a \$300 capacity and houses a coin counter and batteries, for total operator control. A play promotion package is supplied with each machine.

The unit measures 13 inches wide by 8 inches deep by 17 inches high and weighs 16 pounds.



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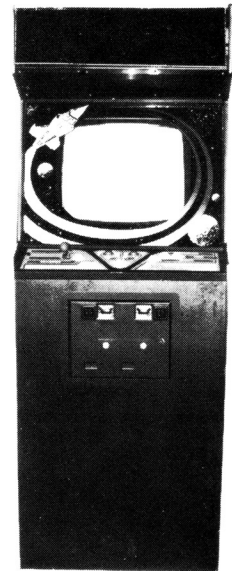
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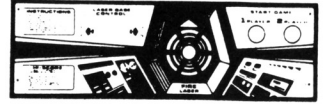
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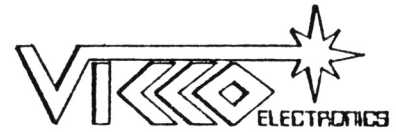
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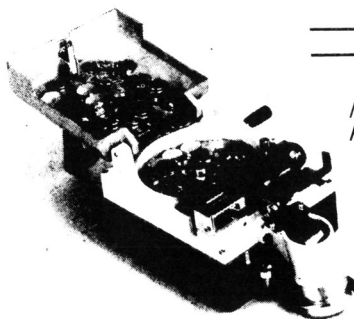
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..News briefs....news briefs....news briefs....ne

.....A federal appellate court in Washington in early July upheld the Copyright Royalty Tribunal's establishing a new mechanical royalty rate of four cents per song, effective on July 1. However, the court sent back to the CRT for study the ruling of last December that would establish an annual proceeding to adjust the rate to take inflation into account. The federal three-judge court said the procedure set by CRT for this inflation indexing was outside the CRT's authority. (However, such an inflation index in the per-jukebox royalty rates presently stands to go into effect for higher per-box fees than \$50 after 1984.).....

.....Game-A-Tron Corporation announced that Irv Jeffries and Lawrence Dunn are no longer affiliated with Game-A-Tron and that Bob Magistri and Tom Chadwick have been added to the selling and marketing staff at New Britain, Connecticut. Also, Lance Albrecht became Game-A-Tron's senior engineer, with Bill McLaughlin as software manager. John Wasik was appointed production manager.....

.....Melvin W. LaForce was recently appointed sales manager at Kiddie-Rides-U.S.A. LaForce had been involved in management of two radio stations in the Quad Cities, Iowa, and in public relations for the broadcasting industry. He has also worked in kiddie rides installation in shopping malls.

.....Jack's Amusement Co. of El Dorado, Arkansas has been appointed a distributor of Stern Electronics' Seeburg phonograph line, according to Tom Campbell, marketing director at Stern.....

.....Martin Kallsen of Worthington, Minnesota, has been appointed executive director for the Music Operators of Minnesota. MOM's board of directors selected Kallsen in a June 30 meeting and announced that Marge Halverson has left the post of executive director.....

.....Greater Southern Distributing Co. of Atlanta recently held an open house gala for operators to view the newly remodeled and enlarged plant of Greater Southern at 2164 Marietta Boulevard NW. From B & S Music, the Roy Echols family won the grand door prize at the event.....

.....Recel of Madrid, Spain, has started up production of video games, and its first model--Coco Loco--was scheduled for release in Irish and United Kingdom markets in July.....

.....Contribution of an Intruder video game by Game Plan, Inc. was recognized by the Young Men's Jewish Council, Skokie, Illinois, as an effective money-raiser in the Council's recent drive for \$35,000 to support its Center for Enriched Living. The Intruder game was auctioned in the Council's effort to support the social center for retarded children and youths.....

.....Exidy, Inc. was again saluted by the Northern California Van Council for Exidy's support for the civic group's "Vannin' for Tots" charity drive to raise over 4,000 toys for underprivileged children. Exidy donated the use of a Targ video game for the club's charity Christmas program, and a trophy was recently presented to the manufacturer for its second year of participation.....

.....The Game Room in Biloxi, Mississippi announced the high score on Nichibutsu's Crazy Climber was set at 231,000 by 12-year-old Steve Kimo Rodolfich on June 26. (Steve made it to the top of the fourth building in the game and nearly halfway up the next building.) Steve is the son of Steve Rodolfich, owner of Dixie Amusement Co. and The Game Room in Biloxi.....

.....Mark Manzo, 14, of East Eddington, Maine played an Asteroids video for 29 hours, 35 minutes before calling it quits, said newspaper accounts. He knocked off at 14,232,200. Play location was at Murphy's General Store, beginning at 9:45 a.m. on a Sunday.....

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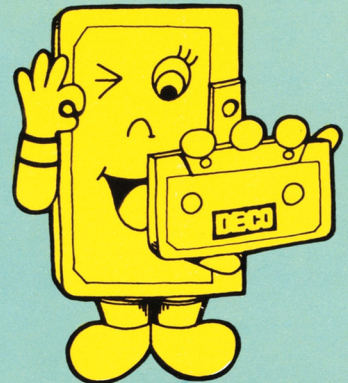
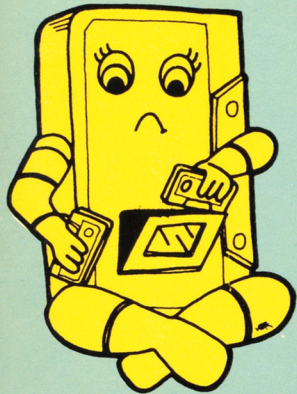
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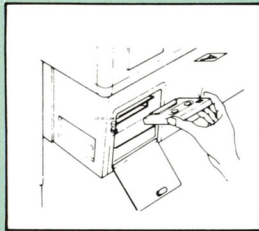
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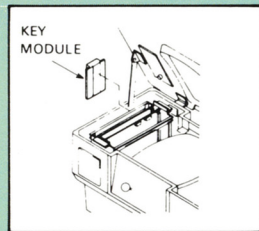
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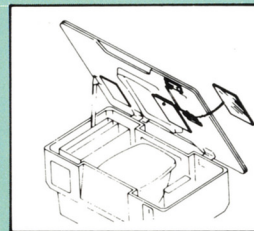
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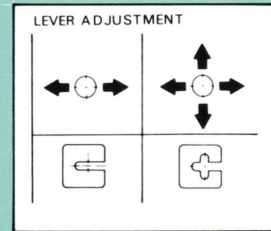
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set key module.



replace explanation panel.



fit the joy stick movement stopper, suitable for the game.

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Lock'n Chase

PUSH RED SHUTTER BUTTON!

PUSH RED BUTTON TO CLOSE SHUTTER BEHIND LUPIN

1 DODGE SUPER Ds

①

● WATCH OUT / PUSH SHUTTER BUTTON NOW LOCK UP SUPER Ds

②

● WHEW / THAT WAS CLOSE

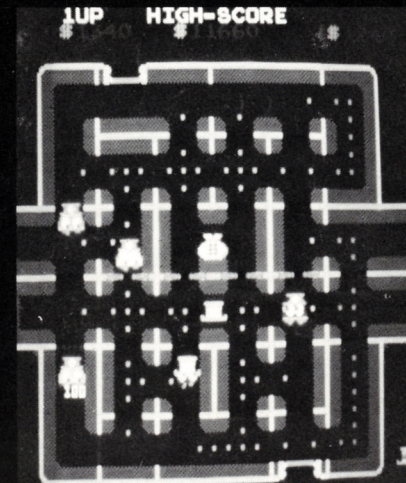
2. LOCK UP SUPER Ds

①

● QUICK, CLOSE SHUTTER BEHIND LUPIN

②

● HAHA / GOT YOU TWO!



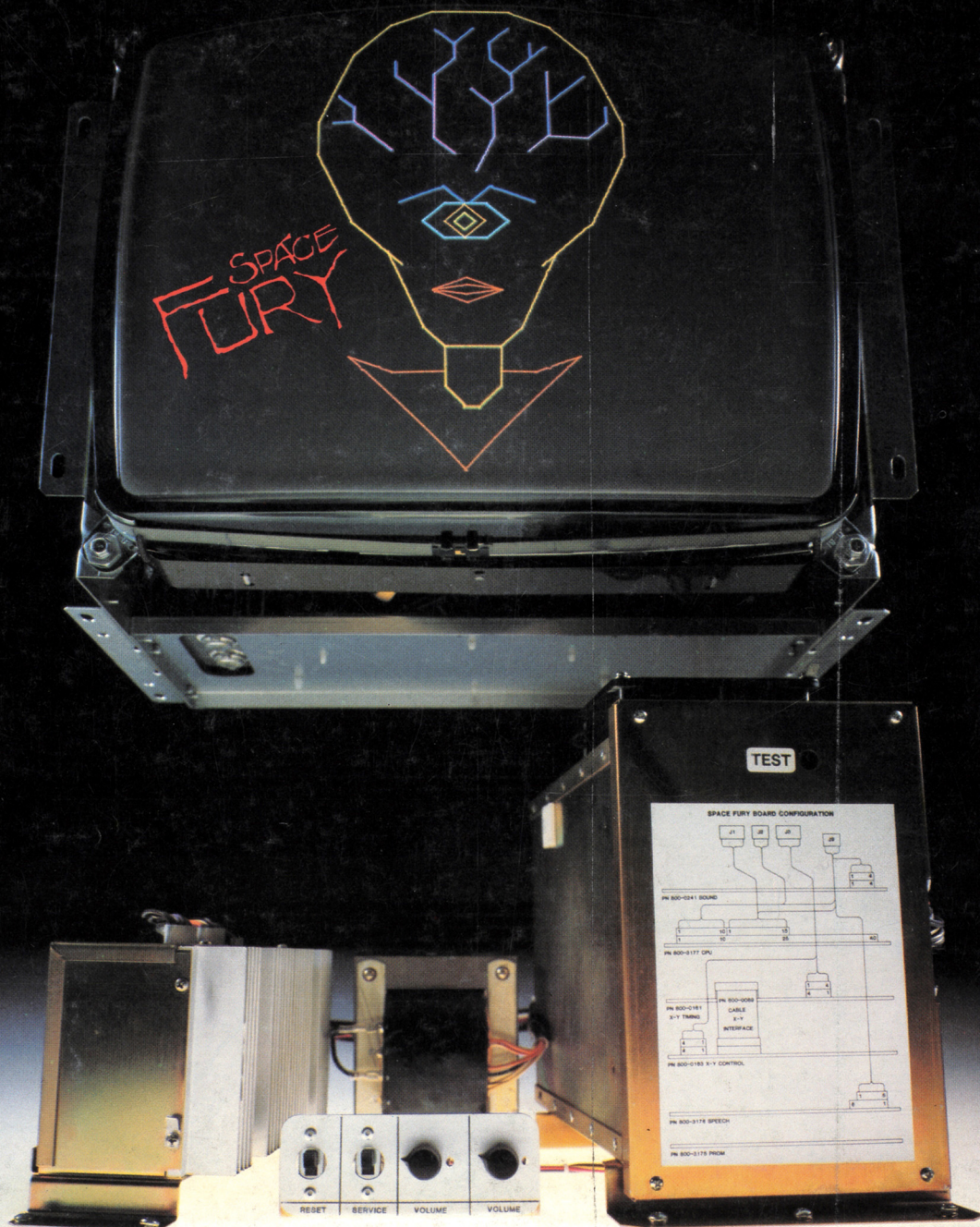
- ★ You can use two shutters at one time
- ★ Bonus points awarded when super Ds are locked-up. 1 Super D...100, 2...300, 3...1,000, 4...2,000.
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