VOLUME 17, No. 4 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY MARCH 1991

PLAY METER magazine

Bart Simpson joins Konami's line-up

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NEWS BULLETIN

► **NOVA SCOTIA APPROVES VIDEO LOTTERY...** Nova Scotia is the newest Canadian province to approve video lottery, the announcement coming from the provincial government on Feb. 14. New Brunswick was the first province to approve legalized gaming, installing the first terminal on Dec. 1, 1990. Newfoundland/Labrador quickly followed suit in late December.

All three video lottery programs have some things in common. They are linked to a central computer system (made by VLC) and are all administered by the Atlantic Lottery Corp. (ALC). However, *only* New Brunswick involves the private sector; the other two provinces do not.

According to Bruce Steeves, public relations officer for the ALC, increases in technical staffing will allow the corporation to maintain the terminals. All game manufacturers that have been approved in New Brunswick are considered appropriate manufacturers for the other provinces. No rules or regulations have yet been developed for Nova Scotia.

And what of the remaining province, Prince Edward Island? The PEI Music and Amusement Operators Association has been working on an operator-involved program and has made presentations to that effect. At press time, the provincial government had not ruled on the matter.

► **ACME '91 UPDATE...** There has been a change in the ACME seminar schedule concerning one of the more popular ones. "Video Lottery & Gaming: Outlook for 1991" has been changed from Saturday, March 23 to Friday, March 22 at 9:15-11:15.

As of Feb. 22, there are 182 exhibitors occupying 674 booths. For more information on the show, contact William T. Glascow Inc. at (708) 333-9292.

► **WYOMING BILL EVER CLOSER...** Wyoming is a step closer to seeing its video gaming bill reach fruition. As we went to press, the bill came out of a House committee with a recommendation that video poker machines be legalized on a county-option basis. However, some high-ranking representatives are trying to prevent the measure from going to the House floor for a vote.

"We're in if we can get the bill to the House floor," said Jim Mason of High Country Games, president of the Amusement and Music Operators of Wyoming. "The bill has already passed in the Senate. As for the governor, he's said in the past that he'd veto a gambling bill if it reached his desk, so in that sense I'm not optimistic. He may or may not veto our bill. You can never be sure what a politician will do."

► **SPRING JUKEBOX PROMOTION SET...** AMOA and record companies RCA, MCA, Warner Brothers, and Polygram have joined forces to present the first "Jukebox Spring for a Song" promotion, which will take place April through June at thousands of locations nationwide.

New releases by Paul Simon, Rick Astley, Vince Gill, and The Kentucky Headhunters will be featured. All will be on seven-inch vinyl.

The songs in the promotion are:
- Proof/The Coast (Simon)
- Cry for Help/Behind the Smile (Astley)
- Pocket Full of Gold/A Little Left Over (Gill)
- The Ballad of Davy Crockett/Smooth (Headhunters)

Operators should purchase the featured records from their one-stops, who will then provide them with posters, table tents, and special jukebox title strips at no charge. The promotion replaces the month-long "Jukebox Love Month" promotions of February 1989 and '90, which were also sponsored by AMOA and major record labels.

Sam Atchley, AMOA's record label liaison, is serving as coordinator for this promotion.

► **DARTS ANYONE?...** If you're attending ACME later this month and would like a break from the show floor, you might want to head over to the Imperial Palace Hotel sometime between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. on March 23. That's when Valley Recreation Products is holding its North American Championships for electronic darts.

At the conclusion of this event, which will have both male and female contestants, Team USA will be chosen. Those selected for the squad will be flown to Austria to compete in the World Championships, an event featuring teams from 12 countries.

► **WAREHOUSE OF GAMES BUYS COMPANY...** Warehouse of Games, based in St. Louis, Mo., has purchased Musical Sales Inc. of St. Louis. Warehouse of Games will enlarge its facility on Lackland Street to 17,000 square feet to accommodate the new product lines (Valley, Ardac, Automatic Products, and others).

A new name for the combined companies has not yet been determined.

► **IDAHO ELECTS OFFICERS...** The Amusement and Music Operators of Idaho have elected the following slate of officers: Brett Yagues, president; Tom Overstreet, vice president; and Dick Inglis, secretary/treasurer. Jim Wood, Kevin Mahler, and Tim Eby were elected to the board of directors, where they will serve three-year terms.

► **NEW BROMLEY PIECE...** Lauran Bromley of Bromley Inc. says her company will debut its latest redemption piece, *Ghost Town*, at ACME. It's a unique shooting game that's built in a cabinet slightly larger than a video game. She added that *Ghost Town* should have appeal in the street and bar markets as well as traditional redemption sites.

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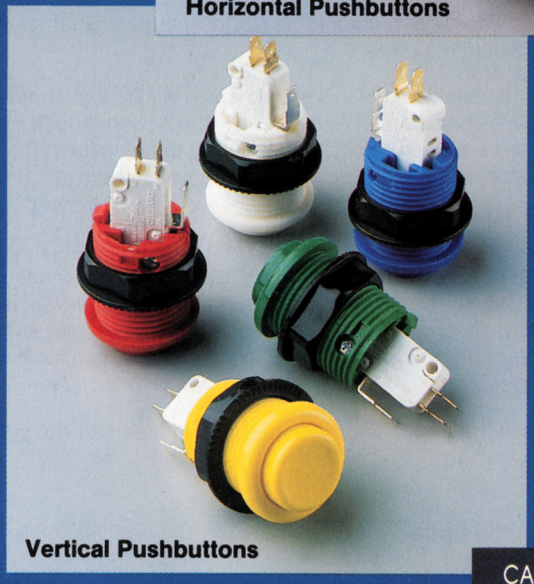

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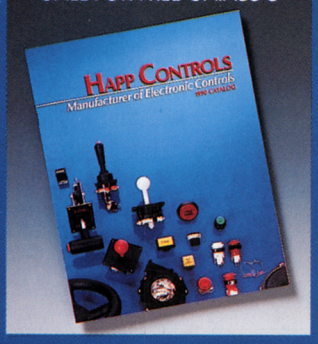

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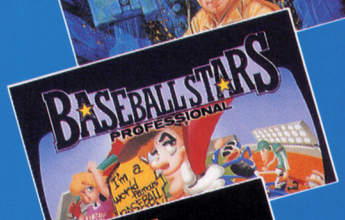

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A former small race car driver, Patzke turned his love for machinery into a career that specialized in motors for the coin-op industry. His company has provided motors for a host of pinball manufacturers, bringing him into contact with some of the great designers in the field.

Hardware Buyer's Guide 59
With all the kits on the market at present, selecting suitable housing for this product could be confusing. Our catalog listing is sure to clear the cobwebs by detailing the features of all the cabinetry currently available. A helpful index gives quick access to addresses, phone and FAX numbers.

From the Laboratory 78
James Maida, president of Gaming Laboratories International, has agreed to pen a monthly column focusing on video lottery machine testing and exploring the realm of regulatory requirements. His experience will provide the deep background needed to understand all sides of legal video gaming.

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COVER

The public's insatiable appetite for all things "Simpson" has led to a "most wanted" video from Konami. Pictured, (l-r): Steve Kaufman, Frank Pellegrini, Bart Simpson, and Michael Kubin. (The Simpsons, Registered Trademark and Copyright, 1991 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All rights reserved.)

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EQUIPMENT POLL

Buying the right game can be a "make-or-break" proposition for the operator. This chart is based on operator evaluations and is designed to provide information needed to make prudent game purchases. The longevity points indicate a game's staying power.

VIDEO & PINBALL COMBINED

GAME	MFG.	POINT VALUE	MONTHS ON CHART	MONTHS IN TOP 10
1. Race Drivin'	(*Atari*)	9.32	5	5
2. Fun House	(*Williams*)	8.90	2	2
3. High Impact Football	(*Williams*)	8.88	2	2
4. Hard Drivin'	(*Atari*)	8.87	23	23
5. Simpsons	(*Data East*)	8.65	4	4
6. Final Fight	(*Capcom*)	8.39	13	13
7. Pit Fighter	(*Atari*)	8.27	5	5
8. TMNT	(*Konami*)	8.22	15	15
9. Final Lap	(*Atari*)	8.00	22	21
10. Final Lap II	(*Namco*)	8.00	1	1
11. Whirlwind	(*Williams*)	7.92	13	13
12. Rai Den	(*Fabtek*)	7.76	7	5
13. Cyberball 2072	(*Atari*)	7.72	16	13
14. Four Trax	(*Atari*)	7.70	11	11
15. Earthshaker	(*Williams*)	7.58	23	23
16. Elvira	(*Bally/Midway*)	7.58	16	16
17. WWF Super Stars	(*American Technos*)	7.56	20	19
18. Dr. Dude	(*Bally/Midway*)	7.56	4	4
19. Turbo Out Run	(*Sega*)	7.50	22	21
20. G-Loc	(*Sega*)	7.47	8	7
21. Magic Sword	(*Capcom*)	7.35	5	5
22. Cyclone	(*Williams*)	7.33	23	23
23. Space Guns	(*Taito*)	7.31	3	2
24. Track-Pac	(*Leland*)	7.19	10	9
25. Super Off Road	(*Leland*)	7.09	23	21

REDEMPTION

	POINT VALUE
ALLEY BOWLERS	
1. Skee-Ball (*Skee-Ball*)	8.67
2. Smartball (*Smart*)	6.00
3. Croaker (*Exidy*)	5.80
4. Twister (*Exidy*)	5.80
SPORTS GAMES	
1. Putting Challenge (*ICE*)	8.33
2. Pro Pitch (*Doyle*)	7.75
3. Shoot To Win (*Smart*)	7.45
4. Tournament Basketball (*National Sports Games*)	6.25
5. Superstar Basketball (*Kramer*)	6.00
6. Pop-A-Shot (*Pop-A-Shot*)	5.56
7. Championship Basketball (*Grayhound*)	5.29
8. Hoops (*Adastra*)	5.00
9. Quik Shot (*Design Plus*)	5.00
10. Batter Up! (*Doyle*)	4.75
JR. BASKETBALL	
1. Dribbles (*Betson/Doyle*)	6.50
2. Bozo Basketball (*Design Plus*)	6.50
3. Shoot To Win Jr. (*Smart*)	6.00
4. Jr. All American (*Coin Concepts*)	4.67
ROLL DOWNS	
1. Poker Roll (*SMS/Coastal*)	6.50
2. Clown Rolldown (*Bay-Tek*)	5.67
3. Roll Down (*Bay-Tek*)	5.60
SINGLE COIN PUSHERS	
1. Klondike (*Betson*)	7.29
2. Wedges/Ledges (*Betson*)	7.17
3. Rock N' Roll (*Betson*)	5.75
4. Starburst (*Coin Concepts*)	5.50
5. Quicksilver (*GaMCO*)	4.33
ROTARIES	
1. Jackpot (*Smart*)	6.20
2. Super Skill Dozer II (*Kramer*)	6.00
SINGLE CRANES	
1. Clean Sweep Jumbo (*Smart*)	8.00
2. Challenger (*Wedges/Ledges*)	7.67
3. Hollywood Crane (*Hollywood Group*)	7.63
4. Clean Sweep (*Smart*)	7.38
5. Big Choice (*Betson*)	7.09
6. Top Choice (*Betson*)	7.00
SINGLE CRANES *(cont.)*	
7. Skill Crane (*Grayhound*)	6.88
8. Big Choice Ltd. Edition (*Betson*)	6.40
9. Kramer Krane (*Kramer*)	6.33
10. Skill Crane (*SMS*)	6.33
11. Action Claw (*Betson*)	6.00
12. Jumbo Skill Crane (*Grayhound*)	5.25
NOVELTY	
1. Can Alley (*Bob's Space Racers*)	8.50
2. Pop-A-Ball (*SMS/Coastal*)	8.20
3. Reel Poker (*Betson*)	7.50
4. Big Mouth (*Meltec*)	7.43
5. Rock-N-Bowl (*Bromley*)	7.38
6. Whac-A-Mole (*Bob's Space Racers*)	7.22
7. Boom Ball (*Meltec*)	7.00
8. Knock Down (*Meltec*)	6.90
9. Wacky Gator (*Data East*)	6.70
10. TMNT Pizza Drop (*Capcom*)	6.57
11. Skee Toss B.C. (*Betson/Skee-Ball*)	6.33

VIDEO KITS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS		GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	High Impact Football (*Williams*)	8.88	94	18.	Golden Axe (*Sega*)	6.31	592
2.	Final Fight (*Capcom*)	8.39	618	19.	Baseball Stars (*SNK*)	6.21	81
3.	Rai Den (*Fabtek*)	7.76	216	20.	All American Football (*Leland*)	6.12	335
4.	Cyberball 2072 (*Atari*)	7.72	475	21.	Cadash (*Taito*)	6.00	80
5.	WWF Super Stars (*American Technos*)	7.56	753	22.	Aliens (*Konami*)	5.97	170
				23.	M.V.P. (*Sega*)	5.94	163
6.	Turbo Out Run (*Sega*)	7.50	775	24.	Champion Wrestler (*Taito*)	5.93	39
7.	Magic Sword (*Capcom*)	7.35	163	25.	Super Spy (*SNK*)	5.92	18
8.	Track-Pak (*Leland*)	7.19	285	26.	Ataxx (*Leland*)	5.91	78
9.	Roadblasters (*Atari*)	6.98	246	27.	Double Dragon 3 (*Am. Sammy*)	5.89	*
10.	Tetris (*Atari*)	6.88	300				
11.	Championship Sprint (*Atari*)	6.73	93	28.	Hydra (*Atari*)	5.89	73
12.	Smash TV (*Williams*)	6.63	267	29.	Crime City (*Taito*)	5.77	*
13.	Arch Rivals (*Bally/Midway*)	6.58	442	30.	Buster Bros. (*Capcom*)	5.71	*
14.	Hit The Ice (*Williams*)	6.57	87	31.	Cal. 50 (*Romstar*)	5.67	*
15.	Capcom Bowling (*Capcom*)	6.53	158	32.	Strata Bowling (*Strata*)	5.67	*
16.	Blood Bros. (*Fabtek*)	6.38	7	33.	U.N. Squadron (*Capcom*)	5.62	94
17.	Combatribes (*American Technos*)	6.35	120	34.	U.S. Classic (*Taito*)	5.47	*
				35.	Bonanza Bros. (*Sega*)	5.36	*

VIDEO DEDICATED

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS		GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Race Drivin' (*Atari*)	9.32	246	9.	Space Guns (*Taito*)	7.31	86
2.	Hard Drivin' (*Atari*)	8.87	1107	10.	Super Off Road (*Leland*)	7.09	905
3.	Pit Fighter (*Atari*)	8.27	229	11.	G.P. Rider (*Sega*)	7.09	62
4.	TMNT (*Konami*)	8.22	709	12.	Out Run (*Sega*)	6.90	663
5.	Final Lap (*Atari*)	8.00	847	13.	Operation Thunderbolt (*Taito*)	6.84	668
6.	Final Lap II (*Namco*)	8.00	41				
7.	Four Trax (*Atari*)	7.70	426	14.	AfterBurner (*Sega*)	6.75	273
8.	G-Loc (*Sega*)	7.47	296	15.	Team Quarterback (*Leland*)	6.73	431

PINBALLS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS		GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Fun House (*Williams*)	8.90	96	10.	Jokerz! (*Williams*)	6.78	480
2.	Simpsons (*Data East*)	8.65	193	11.	Back To The Future (*Data East*)	6.75	431
3.	Whirlwind (*Williams*)	7.92	550				
4.	Earthshaker (*Williams*)	7.58	963	12.	Pinbot (*Williams*)	6.53	309
5.	Elvira (*Bally/Midway*)	7.58	655	13.	Phantom Of The Opera (*Data East*)	6.45	320
6.	Dr. Dude (*Bally/Midway*)	7.56	158				
7.	Cyclone (*Williams*)	7.33	809	14.	Diner (*Williams*)	6.44	77
8.	Taxi (*Williams*)	7.00	536	15.	Rollergames (*Williams*)	6.35	185
9.	Police Force (*Williams*)	6.82	549				

FROM THE EDITOR

An honor well-deserved

Over half a century ago a man named Lou Dunis made a decision that he would happily live with the rest of his life. He made the coin-op industry his career and never regretted that move. His devotion to the industry made him an overwhelming choice to be honored by his peers along with his friend, partner, and protege Ray Galante.

Looking forward to the honor, Lou Dunis died in mid-January, only two months before ACME '91. It's always tragic when the industry loses a member of its family, but in this case the loss was magnified because he didn't live to be a part of the celebration planned by the American Amusement Manufacturers Charitable Foundation in conjunction with ACME.

Although Lou's health had been deteriorating for some time, his devotion to the industry did not. His trips to his office had become fewer and farther between, but his thoughts were there even if he was not. He wasn't on the phone quite as often, but there were still those phone calls from friends that he talked of up to the end.

I have been privileged the last several years to be asked to coordinate the booklet for the banquet. This involves digging into the lives of the honorees and writing their life story. When I made arrangements to meet with Lou Dunis, I was a little in awe of meeting a man that I had heard many stories about. Although he was in the hospital on the day I had arranged to meet him, his daughter Nancy insisted that I go ahead with my plans. After having lunch with Nancy, another daughter Elaine and Lou's nurse, we went to the hospital where I was able to spend some time with Lou and meet his son Stuart, who was by his side.

As I asked him questions about his past, his face would light up as he recalled some of his pals or a special machine that seemed to have etched a spot in his memory. Admittedly, he was hazy over some aspects of the past, but his recollections were crisp on others. He recalled meeting Ray Galante, whom he obviously admired. He chuckled when he thought of friends like Bob Breither and Paul Calamari, who held service schools at his distributorship. "We called them the bedsheet boys," he quipped, recalling the large sheets put up to demonstrate a machine's schematics.

The years he spent active in the industry he loved were all too short, but the stories his friends have to share will live on. Those who knew him remember the good times and the dedication of Lou Dunis. Ray will stand proud for both of them at the dinner, proud that he has carried on the ideals set down by his partner. Ray has a great many friends in the industry and will be an example to the younger generation just as Lou was to Ray's generation.

Lou was looking forward to the banquet; he said over and over that he would have to get better to make it to Las Vegas. He promised to dredge up some stories about his early days in the industry and find some old pictures to put life into the fading past. I had even promised to send him interviews I did with Bob Breither and Paul Calamari. As I left, he told me not to forget to send the articles. His daughter assured me she would read them to him. I'm sorry he never saw them.

Lou won't be in Las Vegas, but those who knew him best will be commemorating the life of a man worthy of the honor and the man following in his footsteps. What could be more fitting than to be remembered by the industry they have devoted their lives to? Maybe this is what it is all about—being honored by those who know how you have felt about your work, and appreciate the highs and lows.

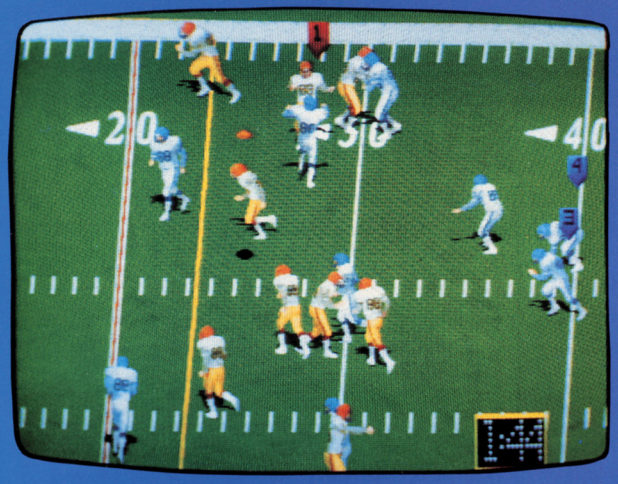
Ray and Lou had agreed to veer from the norm with the designated charity that will benefit from the proceeds of the money raised. Instead of forwarding the total amount (last year and the year before this amounted to about $100,000) they decided to set up the Galante/Dunis Northwest Children's Endowment Fund under the auspices of the AAMCF.

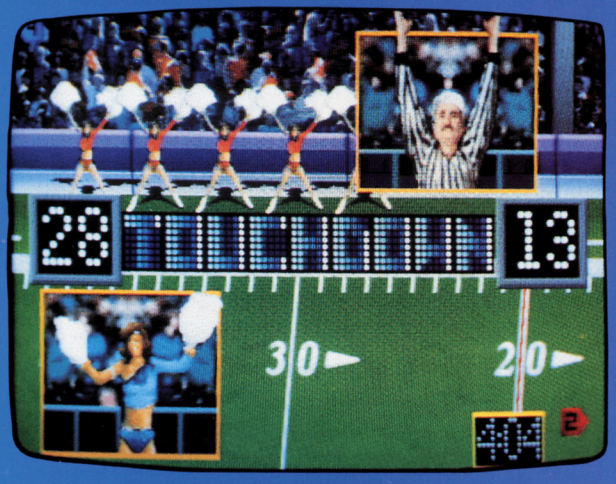
This endowment fund will provide money each year to a variety of charities in the Pacific Northwest. Their generosity will last long past the year in which the industry pays them tribute.

The industry lost a faithful friend, a dedicated hero, and a generous, caring man when Lou left this world, but coin-op generations for years to come will long remember the man we will pay tribute to in March.

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor





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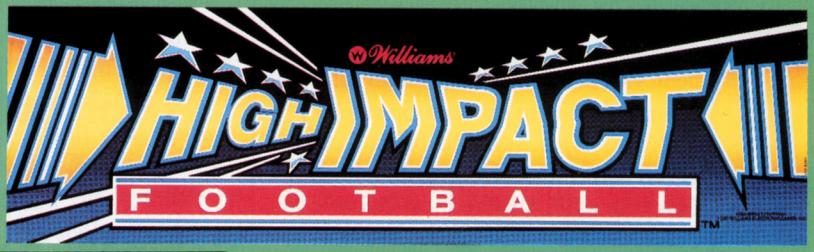
This is the single football game you've been waiting for! Players will test their skills to master long-range *Bombs, Double Reverses, Half-Back Options, Nickel Defense, Zone Coverage, Stunts, Red-Dog Blitz* and so much more.

HIGH IMPACT brings you all the action on and off the field—the cheerleaders, the coaches, the outrageous banter of Manic Max™ the deranged play-by-play commentator, the hot dog antics of the players and the cheers and jeers of the fans led by Joe Six-Pack™.

Williams' HIGH IMPACT...it's for real!



Height:
73⅝" (187 cm)
Width:
26⅝" (67.63 cm)
Depth:
43½" (110.49 cm)
Weight:
347 lbs. (157.73 kg)
uncrated
357 lbs. (162.27 kg)
crated

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AAMA backs off parallel issue

The AAMA board of directors voted on Feb. 1 to accept the action taken by Congress late last year that allows the public performance of parallel video games. The board had considered trying to overturn the new law, which takes effect on Dec. 1, 1991.

"We feel that there are more important national issues, like the dollar coin, that need our attention and the coordinated efforts of the entire industry," said AAMA president Gil Pollock. "I hope that this action will put the gray market issue behind us once and for all."

In response to the board's decision, AMOA president Jim Trucano had this to say: "I'm happy with it, because the parallel issue is water under the bridge. All segments of the industry need to work together on more pressing issues, such as video lottery and potential cigarette machine bans."

Representatives from AMOA and AAMA met on Jan. 31, reviving the recently dormant Joint Leadership Conference. Formed in 1989, it had been used as a forum to review issues that the two sides could tackle jointly. The parallel controversy put the conference into mothballs, but with the matter now resolved, the group expects to meet about four times a year, according to AAMA executive vice president Bob Fay. They plan to meet again in June.

Representing AMOA were Jim Trucano, Wally Bohrer, Gene Urso, R.A. Green III, Craig Johnson, John Schumacher, and April Sojka. On the AAMA side were Fay, Gil Pollock, Bill Rickett, Steve Kaufman, Bill Cravens, Al Stone, and Joyce Weller.

Among the topics discussed were the dollar coin; concerns in Los Angeles County that game conversions aren't being done in accordance with safety standards; industry promotion at the player level; and the location trade show program.

At the aforementioned AAMA board meeting, Fay reported that 11 new members have joined the association, bringing the total to 88. Other news from the meeting includes:

- The 1991 budget will reflect an expanded focus on developing congressional contacts and increasing business opportunities in foreign markets, especially South America and Eastern Europe.
- The 1992 American Coin Machine Exposition (ACME) will take place in San Antonio, followed by Las Vegas, New Orleans (though the site may be moved to the Northeast), Reno, Orlando, Las Vegas, Dallas, Las Vegas, Tampa, and—surprise—Las Vegas in 2001.
- Pitcher Nolan Ryan and his family will be on the 1991 AAMA child abuse prevention poster.
- The freight program for AAMA's distributor members has "a few holes in it," Fay says. He's referring to freight being shipped from Chicago eastward and in the Southeast. To correct this situation, a third or possibly fourth carrier may have to be added to the existing two. Whatever the solution, an improved program should be in place sometime this month.

"Hopefully this will be an incentive for more distributors to join the association," Fay said.

American Technos closes office

American Technos shut down its Beaverton, Ore., office on Feb. 28 and will relocate to Cupertino, Calif., with a smaller staff. The new office will open April 1. It will be manned by president Keiichi Iwamoto and Greg Rice, who had been vice president of consumer sales and is now moving to the coin-op side.

"(This is) a move to bring Technos closer to the inner circle of our industry," Iwamoto said. "Since most of our competition is located in the Bay area, we felt it important to be close to them, keeping abreast of their every move."

"They've decided to re-establish themselves in the Bay area, and neither I nor Glen Kalhar (sales manager) will be joining them," said Aldo Donnaloia, vice president of sales. "I hope to be with another company as soon as possible."

SNK offers card for bookkeeping

SNK Corporation of America has introduced a memory card bookkeeping system for its *Neo-Geo*, a service that allows operators to closely monitor the earnings for particular *Neo-Geo* games.

Each *Neo-Geo* cabinet saves all statistical data for one year, including every game installed; the number of times played and continued; coin drops; and average play times. Operators insert an "IC Memory Card" into the cabinet to retrieve all internal bookkeeping information. The data can be uploaded into an office computer with the "IC Reader."

This bookkeeping system is a convenient way to view the effects of option changes and discover a location's optimum days and hours. The reports it issues can also be organized in chart or graph form on a monthly, weekly, daily, or even hourly basis.

Seninsky named Northeast Regional "Man of the Year"

The Northeast Regional Trade Show has selected Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega Amusements as its "Man of the Year." The honor goes to a person with "a long history of dedication, involvement, and service to the industry."

The show is co-sponsored by AMOA-NY, AMOA-NJ, and the New York State Coin Machine Association. It will take place in Atlantic City on May 3-5.

PAPA stages tournament in The Big Apple

The Professional Amateur Pinball Association (PAPA) held its first major tournament on Feb. 2 in New York City, an event that drew 50 PAPA-sanctioned players. They competed for $1,500 in prize money and a free trip to the Pinball Expo, which takes place Oct. 25-27 in Chicago.

The Broadway Arcade, owned by PAPA president/founder Steve Epstein, served as the site for the tournament's first round eliminations. Eight different pinballs were used to eliminate all but 16 of the best players in the Northeast.

The final rounds were played at The Lone Star Roadhouse, a popular Western nightclub in New York City. Among the 16 finalists were four students from Rutgers University (there were a total of nine students from Rutgers in the tournament). They were brought to the event by Frank "The Crank" Seninsky of Alpha-Omega Amusements.

The finalists competed on Williams' *FunHouse*, Bally's *Harley Davidson*, Premier's *Car Hop*, and Data East's *The Simpsons*. Here are the top six players, in order of finish: Joseph Cartagena, Sam Fields, Harris Pankin, Shimon Iskowitz, Joel Grant, and Ken Karamichael.

"This tournament represents just the beginning for sanctioned league and tournament play," Epstein said. "With the AMOA-International Flipper Pinball Association's championships taking place March 1-3 in Chicago, the idea of pinball being a competitive sport will receive a big push forward."

PAPA's spring league schedule will begin soon. New league locations are about to kick off in New York, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, California, and Canada. For more information on how to participate, contact PAPA, 81 Carrar Drive, Watchung, NJ 07060; or call Epstein at (212) 247-3725.

Tournament winner Joseph Cartagena kneels beside his trophy. Also pictured, (l-r): Shimon Iskowitz (4th place), Harris Pankin (3rd), Sam Fields (2nd), Steve Epstein, Ken Karamichael (6th), Joel Grant (5th), and Frank Seninsky.

Pete Demas of MTV News interviews Joseph Cartagena.

Pioneer Entertainment recalls laser video jukebox

Pioneer Laser Entertainment has recalled its *LJ-V56* laser video jukebox, according to the company's Paul Scribner. He says the jukebox did not meet the necessary market needs to provide an adequate ROI for operators.

"Because our company policy dictates that in the event of a recall we will accept all financial responsibility, our customers will not suffer any losses on this product," Scribner said. "We've had a positive response from our distributors, who had expressed their concerns over the product. We know that we could've fixed it, but it would have been like a shotgun blast, not a clear rifle shot. It is our goal to offer our customers the best product, not something patched up."

The fact that Pioneer is a stable company factored into the decision to bear this significant financial loss, Scribner says.

"If we were a company on the ropes, so to speak, I'm sure our in-house discussions would've taken a different turn," he said. "But since we're a highly stable company, our internal decisions are based solely on our customers' needs."

This recall won't have an effect on Pioneer's other product, namely, its CD jukeboxes. "We are proud of our CD line of jukeboxes," Scribner said. "They have shown a good profit."

For more information, contact your local distributor or Pioneer at (213) 746-6337.

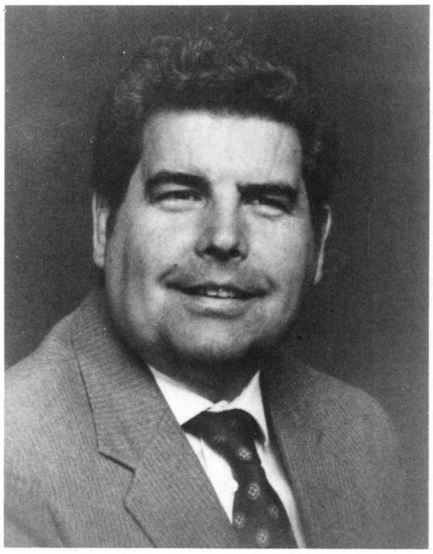
Planning underway for AMOA Expo '91

Information will soon be mailed out (if it hasn't been already) to prospective exhibitors for AMOA Expo '91, slated for Sept. 12-14 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. More than 700 booths are expected to be sold; last year's show featured a record-breaking 705 booths.

In addition to the exhibits, educational seminars will address a host of technical and management issues. Attendee registration, housing, and program information will be mailed to the industry later this spring.

Speaking of AMOA, it reports that the following states had the most number of jukeboxes licensed in 1990: Illinois (8,423), Ohio (8,018), California (7,968), Texas (7,538), and New York (6,862). The two with the least were Vermont (155) and Washington, D.C. (136).

As of mid-December, some 118,000 jukeboxes were licensed with the Jukebox License Office. In order to be licensed for 1991, operators must get their applications to the JLO by March 15. Failure to do so means they won't be allowed to get a license for 1991 *or* 1992. For more information, contact the JLO at (800) 955-5853.



George Haydocy

Haydocy joins NSM

German jukebox giant NSM has appointed George Haydocy to the post of national sales manager for its U.S. operations in Chicago. He brings over 30 years of jukebox experience to Loewen-America, NSM's American company.

"We're absolutely thrilled to have someone as talented and thoroughly experienced as George joining our team," said Loewen-America president Rus Strahan.

Bally's Jones dies

Play Meter extends its deepest sympathies to the family of Herb Jones, longtime publicity director for Bally Manufacturing Co., who passed away on Jan. 25 at the age of 88. He would've been 89 this month.

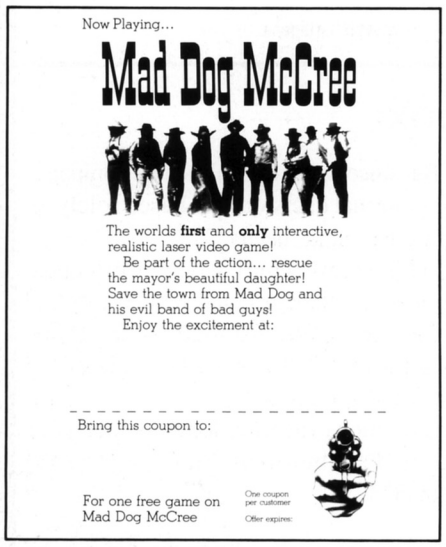
"If anyone deserves plaudits, it's Herb Jones," said fellow Bally pioneer Paul Calamari. "What he did for Bally and the coin machine industry is indescribable. Herb was an absolute genius."

Jones, a Harvard graduate, began with Bally in 1932 and remained there throughout his career. His talents were far-reaching: he served as president of the Coin Machine Industry (CMI) in the mid-1930s, appeared before Congress several times to testify on the industry's behalf, and wrote two books for Bally and a handful of plays during World War II.

In a mid-1960s *Esquire* magazine article titled, "Mother Is A Pinball Machine," Jones had this to say about the purpose of pinball: "The great glory of pinball is that the device is designed for the deliberate waste of time and is, therefore, welcomed by a society ceaselessly flogged by the pundits of the Purposeful Life."

Representing Bally at Jones' funeral, which took place near his home in Lincoln Park, Ill. (near Chicago), were Calamari, Francis Sweet, Don Hooker, and Rita Ryan. His daughter and niece are Jones' lone survivors.

A free *Mad Dog* ad from Betson



Betson Enterprises has developed a camera-ready newspaper advertisement for *Mad Dog McCree*, its interactive laser video game. The ad is available at no cost to all who have purchased the game.

"Since *Mad Dog McCree* is such a unique game, with the ability to draw new players into a location, we thought it would be a nice idea to give our customers a vehicle to reach potential players," said Betson's John Margold.

The ad has an optional free game coupon that may be used at the operator's discretion. Copies of the ad are available from Betson Enterprises in Moonachie, N.J., Betson Pacific in Los Angeles, and their authorized *Mad Dog McCree* distributors.

Churning out Desert Storm plush

Plush and novelty manufacturer Star Track Inc. has been working 15 hours a day since mid-January to keep up with the demand for Operation Desert Storm merchandise, according to president Gregory Cosentino. Among the items are patriotic T-shirts, flag pins, photo buttons, mugs, key chains, bumper stickers, and jewelry.

Proceeds from the profits will be donated to help the troops in the Persian Gulf. For more information, call (800) 733-5013.

Easter '91

Get off to an early start with Easter Plush Paks™ from **LARAMIE.**

We have the finest selection of Easter merchandise available for your crane machines.

Also available this season, Jumbo Easter Plush Paks™. And remember, as quickly as the seasons change, so does the merchandise at* LARAMIE. *But one thing never changes at* LARAMIE, *our commitment to give you the finest crane plush available for your money! So act now, call toll-free and get off to a profitable and exciting Easter season!

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Williams-Bally holds distributor meeting

At the Williams distributor meeting, (l-r): Joe Cirillo (Betson), Ira Bettelman (C.A. Robinson), and Ken Fedesna (Williams).

Williams-Bally/Midway recently hosted its first-ever Distributor Advisory Board Committee meeting, a new program announced at AMOA Expo '90. Besides the company's Ken Fedesna and Joe Dillon, those in attendance were Ira Bettelman of C.A. Robinson, Jon Brady of Brady Distributing, Joe Cirillo of Betson Enterprises, John Gatens of Southgate Amusement & Vending, and Hans Rosenzweig of Nova Apparate.

The agenda included new product previews and scheduling, current business conditions, and forecasts of potential trends in the marketplace.

"Our pledge has always been to increase communications and work very closely with our distributor network—not only in regard to product development," Dillon said. "We also want to be more responsive to the daily concerns of supporting and stimulating the market. This includes, as a major focus, what we can all do for the operator, so that he can be more successful and realize greater revenues.

"At a meeting such as this, we have a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas and spend quality time talking about trends and schedules, evaluating our test program for new equipment, and discussing many of the pressing issues facing our industry."

The committee will be meeting on a regular basis throughout the year, with membership rotated from among the company's distributor network.

In other company news, Bally's latest pinball, *Bugs Bunny's Birthday Ball*, is being shipped with a list of available Bugs Bunny and Looney Tunes licensed products. They are available at specially discounted prices for operators interested in staging on-site tournaments, promotions, and contests. Distributors can use these products as point-of-display items.

Here is a list of the companies participating in this marketing program, along with the products they sell:

Armitron (watches for kids and adults); Creative Innovations ("Laser Touch" T-shirts and artboards); E.M. International Products Ltd. (children's sunglasses); H&L Enterprises (plaque signs, wall-hanging "street signs," and window signs); Koochy Koncepts Inc. (fashion accessories); Nikry Co. (wall hangings and throw pillows); Rarities Mint Inc. (collectible coinage and tokens); United Brands International (T-shirts and boxer shorts); and the Zephyr Group (leather suspenders for kids and adults).

For more information, contact your local authorized distributor or Roger Sharpe at (312) 267-2240.

Viking Vending of Wisconsin (a division of Minneapolis' Lieberman Music Co.) recently hosted a video lottery seminar and open house for some 100 operators and suppliers. Pictured answering questions, (l-r): Steve Lieberman, Mike Anderson, Paul Riffle (all of LMC), David Rubenstein of Merit Industries, and Jim Pietrangelo of SMS Manufacturing.

What lies beneath the SHADOW?

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When it comes down to it, the measure of a game is "the bottom line".

Kaneko, manufacturer of clever video products since 1980, changed one of the rules to successful "Street Games".

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Players will be intrigued by the shadow, breaking through reveals a beautiful girl, breaking through again exposes her.

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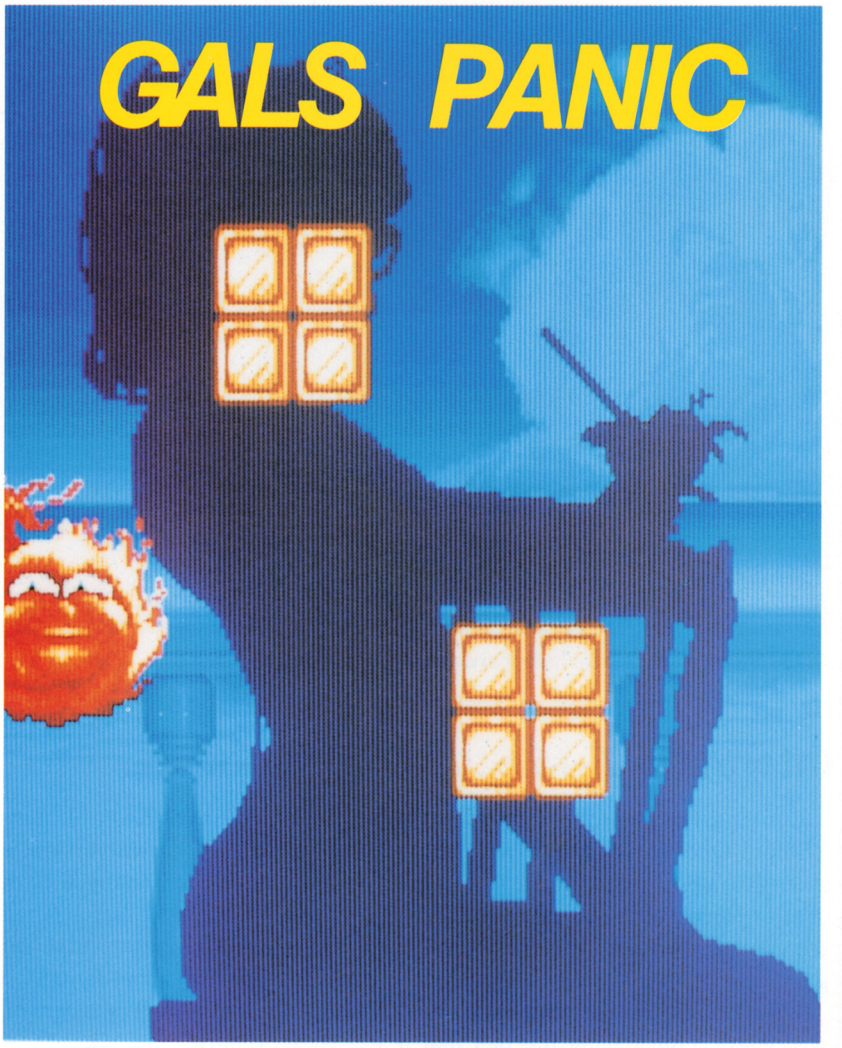

Contact your local distributor and cash in on Gals Panic.

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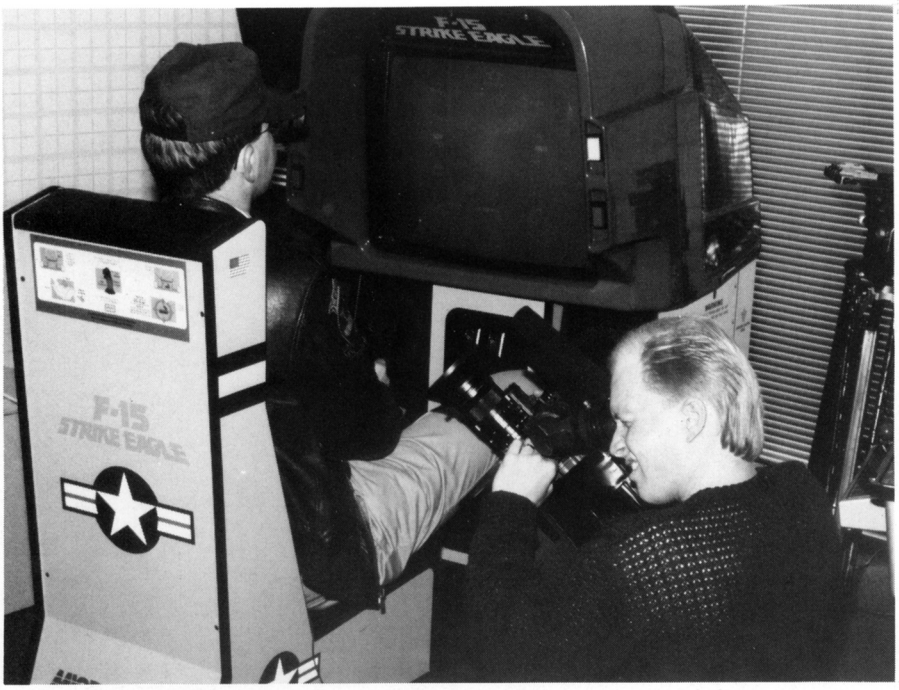

An ABC network affiliate films Bill Stealey playing the sit-down version of *F-15 Strike Eagle*.

Interest in *F-15 Strike Eagle* soars

Looking for an early contender for "Stupid Question of the Year"? How about this one, posed to Bill Stealey, president of MicroProse Games, concerning the company's *F-15 Strike Eagle* video game:

"Bill, has there been a heightened awareness, considering the fact that it features bombing raids in the Persian Gulf?"

The answer, of course, is a resounding **yes**! *F-15 Strike Eagle* has received exposure on CNN, the ABC and NBC Evening News, the *Today* show, and in 30 daily newspapers, including *USA Today*.

"The game is doing extremely well, in terms of media coverage and earnings for operators," said Stealey, a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserve. "People are finding out what flying an F-15 for the military is like. The Time-Out arcade chain reports that dedicated gamers are playing *F-15 Strike Eagle* over and over again."

To take advantage of the interest, Time-Out is running a "World's Best Video Fighter Pilot" contest at its arcades.

MicroProse is in the midst of its second run on *F-15 Strike Eagle*. It's now also available in a sit-down version, and the software has been changed to make it easier for players.

"They can concentrate on shooting and not have to worry about flying," Stealey said. "Uncle Bill will take care of that."

What of charges that MicroProse is trying to profit from Operation Desert Storm?

"Yes, we've heard a little bit of that contention, but it's bogus," Stealey said. "The game has been around for about four years now. We didn't rush it out once war broke out. A lady on *Today* brought this profit thing up to Bryant Gumbel. He looked at her and said, 'Hey, this is a fun game!' That's what everyone who plays it says."

MicroProse will offer a software upgrade for *F-15 Strike Eagle* this fall. With a simple ROM change, operators can put *A-10 Tank Buster* in their *F-15 Strike Eagle* cabinets.

Stealey summed up the recent hoopla this way: "It looks like all those years of developing the game for coin-op have proven worthwhile."

NAMA convention set for April

"POP" (Phocus On Profits) will be the theme of the 30th Annual Western Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, to be held in Anaheim, Calif., on April 19-21. It's sponsored by the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA).

"The event continues NAMA's focus on educational topics to help small business owners and managers deal with specific operating problems and opportunities," said NAMA president James Rost. "The topics will be especially timely, with emphasis on current economic and political circumstances."

Some 170 companies are expected to display the latest in vending equipment, vendible products, support services, and accessories.

For more information, contact the Convention Department, NAMA, 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 3500, Chicago, IL 60606-3102; (312) 346-0370; FAX (312) 704-4140.

Japanese firm shows interest in Seeburg

Seeburg's Joe Pankus confirmed that a Japanese company is negotiating to purchase controlling interest in the jukebox manufacturer. He gave no timetable as to when the deal may be finalized.

Seeburg plans to exhibit at ACME later this month, Pankus added.

Happy 75th, Hank!

We'd like to wish a belated "happy birthday" to Hank Tronick of C.A. Robinson. He celebrated the "50th anniversary of his 25th birthday" on Jan. 16. His three children—Stephen, Michael, and Nancy—traveled from their home states of Colorado and Virginia for the occasion.

Tronick, who recently underwent hip replacement surgery, says he's been feeling great and has returned to the office.

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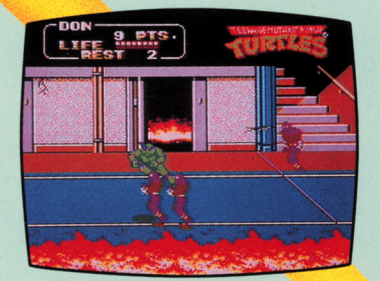
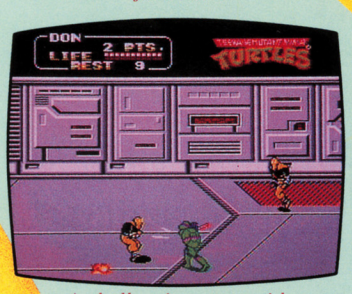


Choose one of four turtles on your way to saving April from the evil foot clan.



A challenging quest with many enemies to conquer.

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CALLING ALL OPERATORS: They're back! And bigger than ever. In Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II, the Arcade Game[1], an exhilarating, action-packed sequel to their record-busting first game.

And this time their arch-enemy, Shredder, isn't pulling any punches. Lethal electro-zappers, laser beams and freezer burners plus nasty scoundrels like Scorpion Robots and Stone Warriors are ready to make turtle soup out of our heros. Worse yet, Tora and Shogun, two alien bounty hunters who have never known defeat, are also itching for a take-no-prisoners showdown. Thousands of players who won their black belts on TMNT have been waiting for this release. Now it's here!

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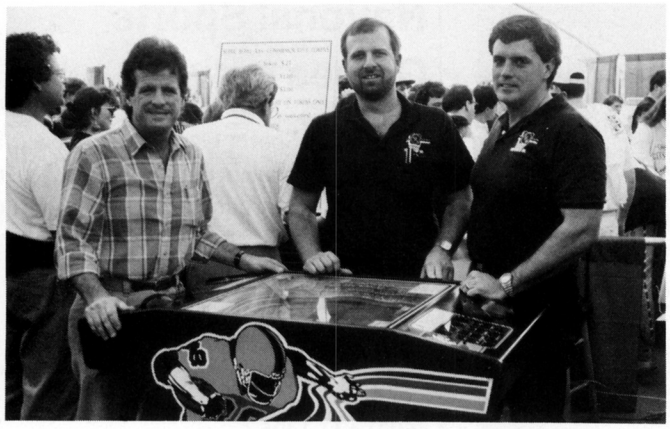
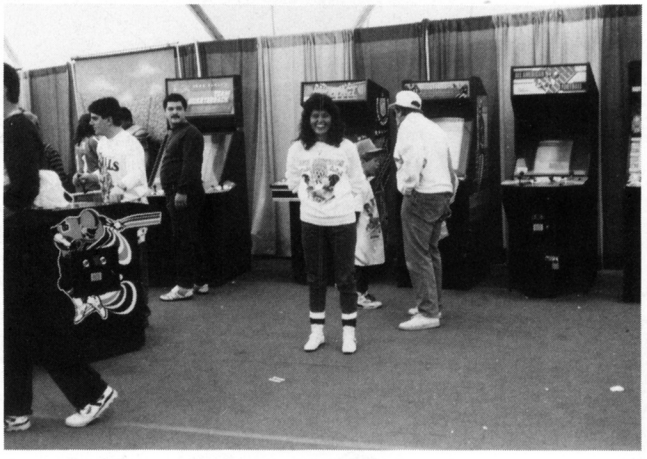


Representing Southeast Game Brokers, (l-r): Rich Holley, Paul Virgadamo, and Ted Bachman.

Ted, Paul, and Rich with the Tampa Bay cheerleaders.

Town Square at the Super Bowl Village drew thousands of football fans.



Southeast Game Brokers' Glenda Knowles.

Playing games at the Super Bowl

Visitors looking to kill time before the Super Bowl were treated to an arcade filled with football-oriented video and pinball games, courtesy of Southeast Game Brokers Inc. The Tampa-based operating company is one of the largest on the west coast of Florida.

The arcade was located in the 250,000-square-foot Town Square, part of the Super Bowl Village created by the NFL to commemorate the game's 25th anniversary. Special Super Bowl tokens were minted by Roger Williams Mint. They were used for such games as *Quarterback, Team Quarterback, All American Football, Pigskin*, and *High Impact*.

This 1968 Corvette Sports Coupe will be the grand prize at the American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation Raffle, in conjunction with ACME '91. The drawing is at noon on March 24. Tickets are $50 each or three for $100.

Changes at Peach State, Atlas

Eddie Cotter is no longer with the amusement sales team at Atlanta's Peach State Distributing, according to company president Brian Winchell. His spot has been filled by Bill Sides.

Also, Atlas Distributing of Chicago has added Karl Keller to its sales staff.

Premier's Gil Pollock (l) and John Buras (c), along with Robert Fesjian of Mondial International, attended the trade show in Paris recently to introduce *Car Hop*. Pollock reports an enthusiastic response from French operators toward Premier's latest pin.

National Sports Games moves

National Sports Games has opened a new office and production facility in Phoenix. Company officials say the 15,000 square feet of space is necessary, what with the demand for NSG's new football game, *UB-QB*.

The address is 3669 E. La Salle St., Phoenix, AZ 85040. The new phone number is (602) 470-1490; the FAX is (602) 470-1495.

Wildcat relocates

Wildcat Chemical Co. has moved to a new address: 5359 Wedgewood Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76133. The new telephone numbers are (817) 294-7600 or (817) 924-8321; the FAX is (817) 294-8333. □

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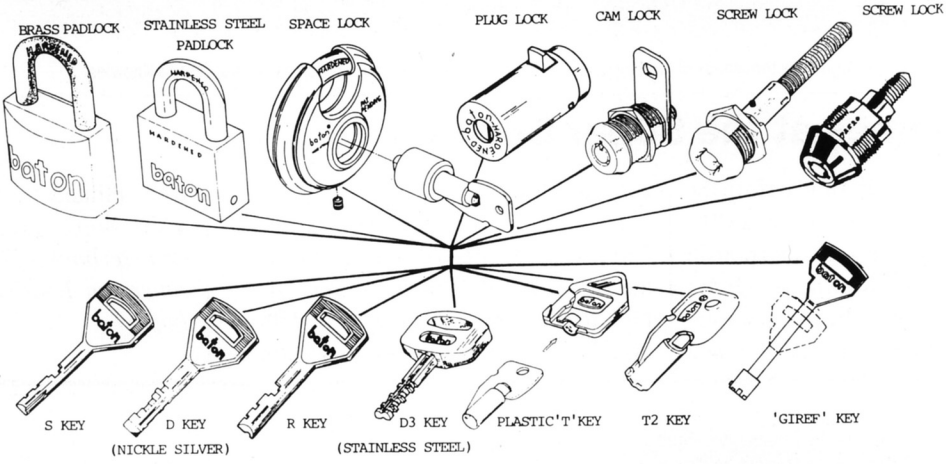

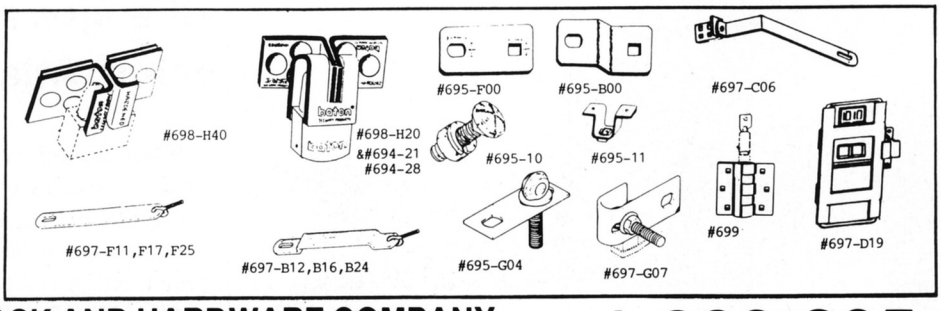

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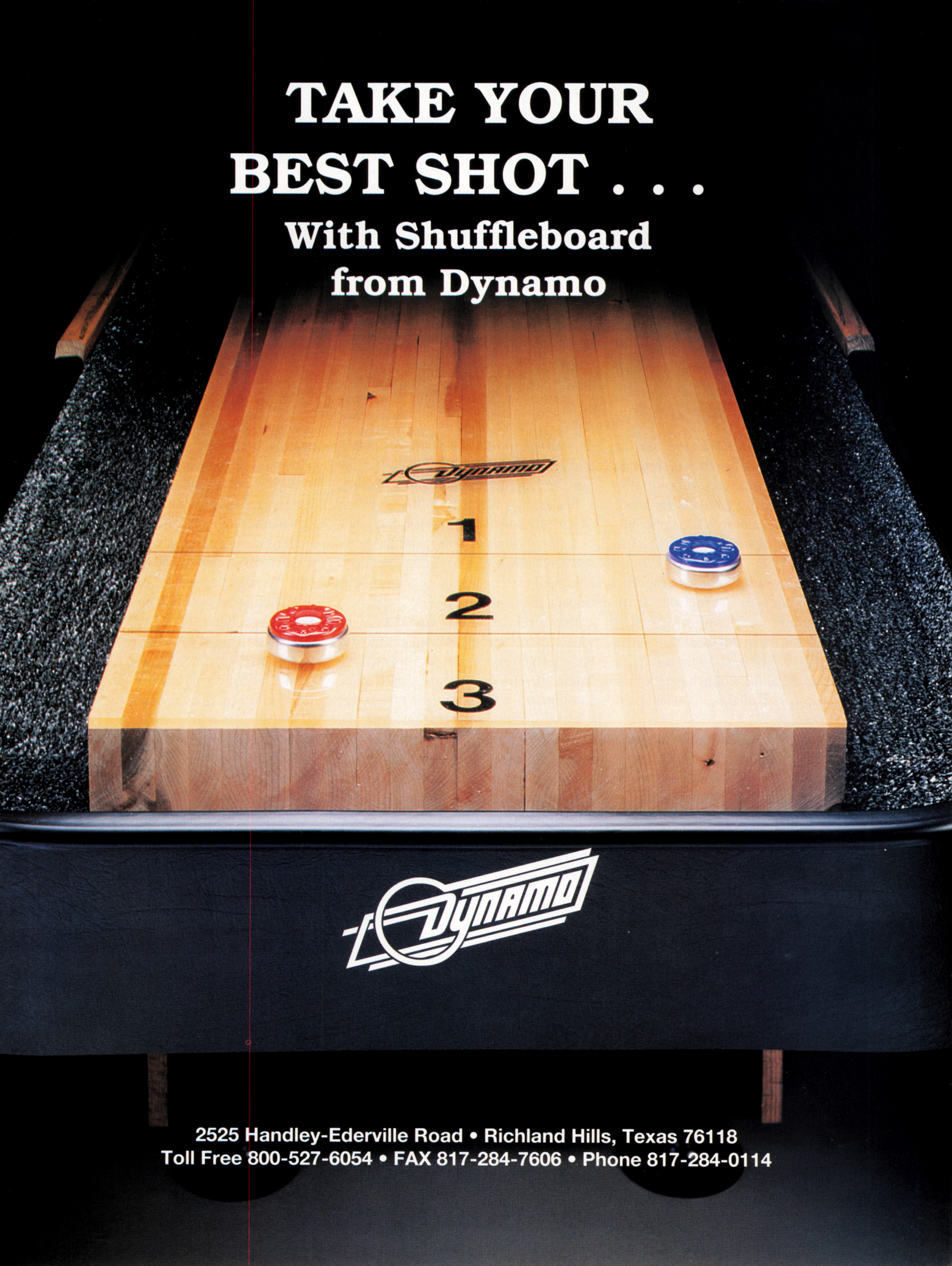
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Other businesses want more 10s

Alas, we thought we'd never see the day. *Playboy* magazine *advertising* for young lovelies to pose "au natural." It's all motivated by the need for more females that rate a number 10. Apparently, there is a severe shortage of lasses in that category.

According to a radio news program, *Playboy* receives referrals from photographers and many unsolicited glossies in the mail, but most rate a 7 on a scale of 1-10. The newscaster was quick to make an aside: he would be more than happy to interview all those 7s at his apartment anytime!

Playboy is interested in the body and not the brain. Perhaps if the intellect were also graded, the 7 body combined with a 9 or 10 brain would produce quite an alluring woman, who would prove interesting on more than one level.

Typically, a centerfold's personal data sheet includes "turn-ons" and "turn-offs" and a brief description of the "perfect night" (spent with the perfect man—a 10 of course). There is so much similarity from month to month that you could easily scrap the personal side and just appreciate the photo for what it is.

The coin-op amusement industry has a shortage of 10s as well. Our equipment poll point value indicates more 6s and 7s than higher numbers. There aren't enough videos like *Hard Drivin'*, *TMNT*, and *Final Fight*—winners all. What are the game suppliers going to do about this?

It's easy to blame it on the economy (decidedly down), the international situation (terrifyingly fragile), and the home market (a longtime thorn in the operator's side). All of these influences have had an impact on our industry.

But the complaints about coin-op videos didn't surface overnight. Trouble has been brewing for several years. There's been a cry for more innovation, lower prices, and greater lead time before a game hits the home market. And yet, with few exceptions, themes are repetitive, kit prices remain high, deluxe sit-down model prices escalate, and games continue to hit the home market with amazing speed.

Most of the boxes housing home game cartridges feature a banner that claims it as a "#1 Arcade Hit!" This is a ludicrous claim, recognized as such only by those in the industry. As operators know, they're not all hits. The value of naming a game as an arcade hit still carries weight. It wouldn't work the other way around. The arcade is considered the birthplace of the hits, or at least it used to be that way.

It's long been said that if operators are healthy, then the industry is healthy. Operators are telling us they can't be healthy with today's offerings. That's why many are holding back on purchases to see if legalized video gaming passes in their area. Many are entering the redemption market in hopes of finding stability.

Here's an operator's personal data sheet: "turn-ons"— better ROI, "turn-offs" — soaring prices, "perfect night" — no late calls for coin jams or malfunctioning machines. Other vital statistics: "favorite mode of travel"—pickup truck or club van full of tools and replacement parts, "hobby"—no time for such frivolity while trying to eke out a living.

And the bottom line: changes are afoot. If the industry doesn't initiate changes itself, game purchases may sink to new lows. Maybe trade shows in '91 will finally reflect a response to common operator concerns. We'd certainly like to give ACME and the AMOA Expo a rating of 9 or 10 on our imaginary scale this year.

Bonnie Theard

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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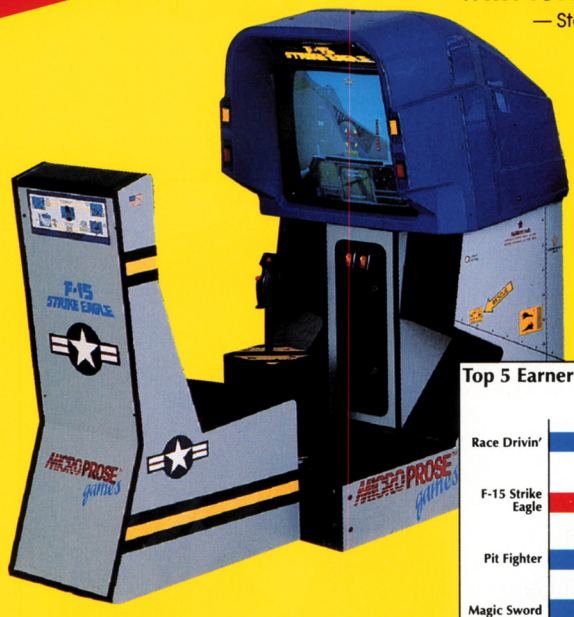
"F-15 Strike Eagle is still the number 1 up-right game after 20 weeks!"

— Ron Mogerman, Mogerman Grand Prix, Ft. Lauderdale.

"F-15 Strike Eagle is a top earning piece with long term staying power!"

— Steve Epstein, Broadway Arcade
New York.



"F-15 Strike Eagle is doing three times more than any other game that I have in my nightclub."

— Russ Ketchum, Doc's Skyroom
Sports Bar and Nightclub
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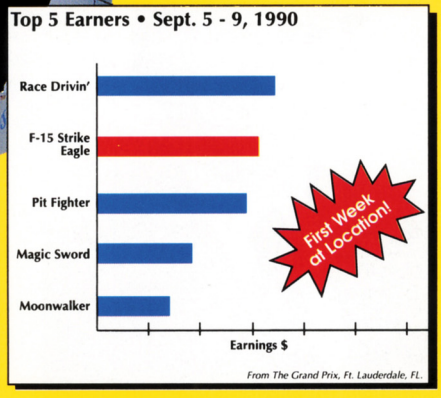

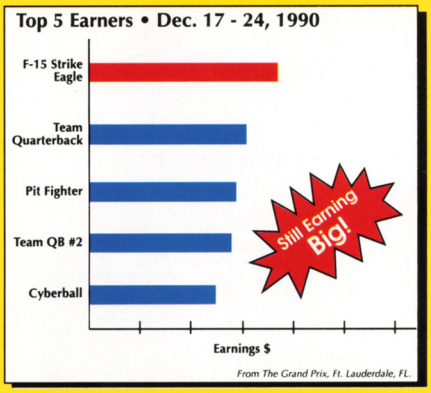

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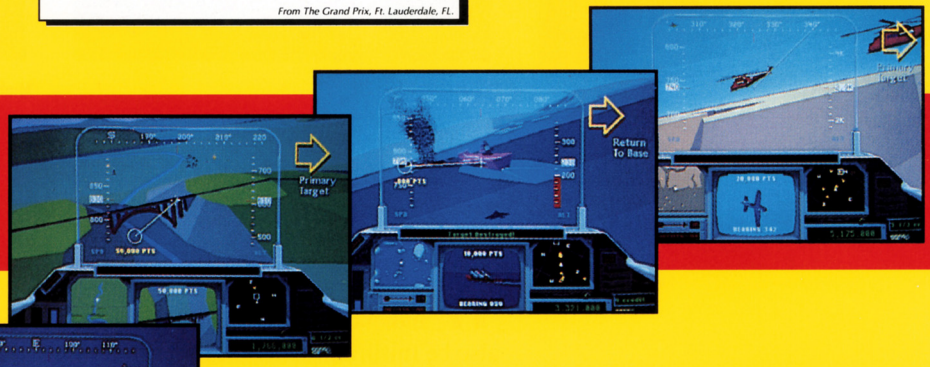

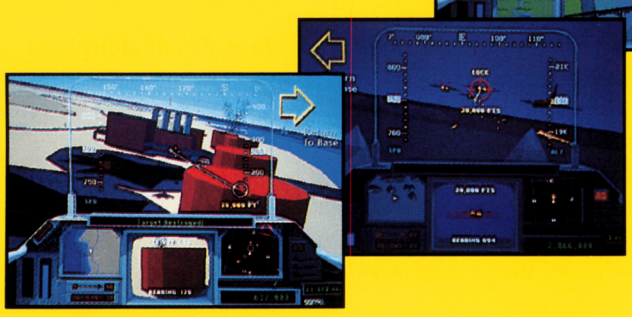

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High risks, high rewards

Steve Kaufman

Frank Pellegrini

Michael Kubin

Wooing a fickle video game-playing audience can be frustrating. It can also be fulfilling.

Konami is aware of this and for 20 years has reaped the rewards of a game well done. The company has been successful in keeping one step ahead of its temperamental audience with timely games geared toward the market. It consistently offers those irresistible bells and whistles that players have come to expect on new games.

Contra and *Main Event* delighted players. But its most recent hit, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, did for the industry what no other game had done for quite a while—got players and operators excited! It's a tough act to follow, but Konami is facing that challenge with *The Simpsons*. And what are the expectations? "I think

operators will be making the kind of money they deserve,'' said Konami sales representative Mike Kubin.

While enjoying success in coin-op, Konami has also found a niche in the consumer market. Can coin-op and consumer complement each other? We asked Konami's senior vice president, Steve Kaufman: ''There's no question that the home video game market has had an impact on coin-op, but so have movies and records. We are all vying for customers' disposable income. Home games have not ruined the coin-op market.''

He added, ''We are in the business of developing software. We have always felt that home and coin-op are primarily the same business. We can introduce a concept to the general public and at the same time allow the coin-op community to make money with it. It winds up in the consumer market some time later.''

Frank Pellegrini, consultant/coin-operated division, explained that Konami's company philosophy is to wait a reasonable length of time between coin-op and consumer. ''We went into production with the coin-op version of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* in November 1989. It wasn't introduced for the home until January 1991.''

Konami is looking ahead with success written into its future. Will licensing be the way to go? ''It depends on the property,'' explained Kaufman. ''From the time we sign the contract until the game is out is about a year. Not all licensed products will automatically be good. We've seen licensed products that fall flat on a video game. There is a lot to consider.''

He added, ''There's an expression that comes to mind: 'High risk, high reward.' We have been successful licensing cartoons—*Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *The Simpsons*—but we didn't know they would be quite as popular as they were. It was a risk, but we were confident enough to take it.''

Confidence in products and the industry is clearly the result of team spirit at Konami. The coin-op staff includes Kaufman, who joined Konami in 1985, having been in the coin-op industry since the age of 10. His experience includes stints at Bally, Williams, and Stern Electronics.

Pellegrini came to Konami in 1984. He had previously held positions at Bally and Atari. His duties include advertising and promotional materials for Konami games.

Kubin joined Konami in 1989, bringing with him 15 year's experience. He had worked for Williams as a technician and Stern Electronics, where he was a game designer under the legendary Harry Williams and Sam Stern.

Rounding out the staff are Laura Torres, who has been the administrative assistant since 1985; Tina Ferguson, sales secretary since December; George Limonez, production technician, who ensures the quality control; Dan Monaghan, purchasing administrator; Mark Porwit, inventory/materials manager; John Malek, traffic/warehouse manager; and Bill Lenkowski, vice president/operations.

''I think operators will be making the kind of money they deserve.''

Jerry Korbecki, technical service/production manager, has been with Konami since 1984. His previous experience includes a position at Bally Midway as an electronic repair technician.

Mary Hermanson, marketing research coordinator, joined the team in 1986 as a marketing assistant and was promoted in 1987. She is responsible for the testing program of new games, press releases, and promotional literature.

Overseeing the activities of the coin-op and consumer divisions are executive vice presidents Hitoshi Omikawa and Shigeo Omi, who keep in close contact with headquarters in Japan.

These experienced people know that a company is only as good as its last game. From the looks of it, the ''last game'' always seems to be the best yet! □

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State association heads converge in Chicago

How can a state association fend off attempts to ban cigarette machines? What's the most effective game plan for successfully passing a video lottery bill? How should an association's dues be structured? And, when you get down to it, why should anyone bother joining a state association?

These and other questions were chewed on by executive directors and/or presidents of 20 state associations (along with New York City) at the Second Annual AMOA State Executives winter meeting, sponsored by AMOA and its State Association Committee. It took place on Jan. 22-23 at the O'Hare Hyatt Hotel in Chicago.

Representing their state associations were: Jim Stansfield, committee chairman (Wisconsin); Bobby Earp (North Carolina); Doug Minter (Nevada; no state association yet exists, but operators are working on creating one); Charles Rowland (Virginia); Hy Sandler (Minnesota); Robert Herman (New York City); Adonna Jerman (Illinois); Robert Hoonakker and Bill Bailey (Utah); Chris Warren (Montana).

Additional attendees included Tony Parina (California); Ralph Ceraldi and Sue Matterson (New York state); Brett Yagues (Idaho); Candace Super (Michigan); Michael Mims (South Carolina); Leoma Ballard (West Virginia); John Knox (Alaska); Norm Posner (Colorado); Tom Riquier (Connecticut); Dock and Betty Ringo (Texas); Jack Classe and Wanda Neupauer (Florida).

Also present were AMOA president Jim Trucano; Wally Bohrer, former AMOA president and current chairman of the Government Relations Committee; AMOA executive vice president John Schumacher; and Doug Young, executive director of the AMOA-International Flipper Pinball Association (IFPA).

Cigarettes

Patrick Donoho, vice president of the Tobacco Institute's State Activities Division, Northern Sector, spoke to the group about how to battle the anti-cigarette vending machine crowd.

The Tobacco Institute, comprised of 13 cigarette manufacturers, lobbies yearly on about 2,000 pieces of legislation that impacts cigarettes in some fashion, Donoho says. The first sector to be attacked by the opposition is vending machines, which represents about three percent of tobacco sales.

Donoho says the TI doesn't have the resources to fight vending machine bans on a local level. Vending machine operators, then, should unite to "put out

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Each game consists of four cycles. The men's squad plays the first and fourth cycles, while the women take on the second and third cycles. Each squad consists of one jetter and three powerguards. The key to victory for any squad—be aggressive! This is not game for the meek and mild. You control your jetter around the concourse, targeting opponents for devastation. The more enemy team skaters you attack and take down, the more you score. Points are also earned for outstanding skating performance on the menacing Wall of Death and the Jet Jump.

The details that make the show so entertaining to watch are not overlooked in game play. The different team managers make appearances between games to shout insults and threats. The players are super competitive and fight to the finish. Everything that made roller derby great is incorporated into **RollerGames,** the most incredible sport on wheels!

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the fires'' in their towns and cities. If that isn't successful, the next option would be state legislation that preempts local authority. The problem with preemption, he says, is that it's a difficult and risky proposition. Litigation is a final—and expensive—avenue.

''You need to approach your councilman or legislator from a business standpoint,'' Donoho said. ''Tell him that taking away your vending machines will adversely affect you, costing you money and jobs. Also, put stickers on your machines that discourage youth from buying cigarettes.''

Those with cigarette machine problems can call TI's headquarters in Washington, D.C., at (202) 457-4800. You will be directed to the appropriate regional office.

Robert Herman, president of AMOA-NY, says cigarette vendors have to save their own businesses. Don't depend on the TI for help, because it may be willing to throw away the three percent of vending machine sales in order to quell the anti-smoking groups, Herman believes.

''We have to realize that the TI and the cigarette vendors don't necessarily have the same goals,'' he said. ''We have to fight our own battles and look out for ourselves.''

John Schumacher says cigarette vendors should recognize the TI's agenda but, at the same time, continue to carry on a dialogue with them.

Video lottery

If there was one issue that had everyone riveted, it was video lottery—the hottest topic in the coin-op industry today. Note, the term is ''video lottery.'' Minnesota's Hy Sandler chided Wally Bohrer when he began his presentation by uttering the no-no words ''video poker.''

Bohrer says states should push their video lottery bills hard in the next 18 to 24 months. After this time, he feels, the opportunity may be lost for a long while. Of late, the states trying have proven unsuccessful, largely due to mistakes that could have been avoided. In Pennsylvania, Bohrer says, the governor simply wasn't apprised of the issue as well as he should've been—a fault that lies with the state association. In North Dakota, the operators were too greedy; trying to eliminate charitable gaming wasn't wise, Bohrer thinks.

Doug Young, executive director of the AMOA-IFPA, discusses the association and its upcoming national tournament. It takes place March 1-3 in Chicago.

Robert Herman of AMOA-NY with Michigan's Candace Super.

Minnesota's Hy Sandler chats with AMOA president Jim Trucano.

He cited a list of recommendations for those pursuing video lottery, according to the successful South Dakota experience:

- Again, use the term ''lottery,'' not ''poker.''
- If you have a lobbyist, make sure he himself believes that the coin-op industry is reputable and upstanding. If he doesn't think it is, he won't be able to convince legislators to the contrary.
- Don't try to ''re-invent the wheel,'' i.e., don't deviate from what's proven successful: the South Dakota video lottery bill.
- The operator base must be unified. You can't have different factions with different ideas on what the bill should contain.
- Get as much exposure with legislators as possible. Take advantage of every possible opportunity to educate him, not only about video lottery's benefits but about your business as well. Make sure he understands that you are a respectable businessman.
- Discuss other pressing issues within the state. Impress upon the legislator that you're well-versed on an array of issues, not just video lottery.
- Do all of the above *before* introducing your video lottery legislation.

Dock Ringo brought up the possibility of AMOA assisting future state lottery commissions in certifying the video lottery terminal owners and their technical staffs, so that they know the ins and outs of servicing the complex machines. As the number of terminals on location (hopefully) begins to grow, it'll be critical for them to have this training, he believes.

The group viewed a videocassette produced by AMOA in mid-1990 that focused on Montana's video lottery operations. Since its inception, the tape has been used by operators as a tool to educate legislators on the issue. However, after closely dissecting it, the group came to the conclusion that a new tape was necessary.

The key criticism was that South Dakota should be the state referred to, not Montana, since South Dakota is regarded as video lottery's ''model state.'' Other observations: the words ''poker'' and

Executive directors Charles Rowland of Virginia and Adonna Jerman of Illinois.

"gambling," which appear frequently, should be purged; use testimonials from South Dakota lottery officials, who should also explain the role of the operator in the equation; show some scenes from good locations, so legislators see that the only sites for the terminals aren't casinos or run-down gin joints; and explain precisely what AMOA is and what it does.

Bohrer says AMOA is working on a new tape; it should be ready in 60 to 90 days. Members of the Government Relations Committee will attend the 1991 National Conference of State Legislators to promote the issue, with the possibility of attending three other similar events this year. Also, Scott Henneman of the South Dakota Lottery Commission is putting together a video lottery "cookbook" for AMOA.

Parallel boards

Despite AAMA's attempts to erect roadblocks that would circumvent AMOA's congressional parallel board "victory," Bohrer says, the spirit of the new law intends for operators to be able to legally operate parallels.

"It wasn't the intent of the copyright law to allow price-fixing, which is what the Japanese video game companies were trying to do," Bohrer said. "The copyrighted music exception and FCC regulations that AAMA is pushing [See January "News" section for details] won't have an effect on the new law, in my opinion.

"The manufacturers need to put this issue behind them and start making better product. Operators have been voicing their disapproval with their dollars; they haven't been buying much new product lately.

"I'm worried that this makes the industry look bad. It gives Congress the perception that fighting between the two sides is still going on."

Despite anyone's concern for poor perceptions, there will be both an AMOA and an AAMA Washington Conference in 1991 (AAMA's is May 5-9, AMOA's is May 18-22). Bohrer says AMOA is attempting to bring in the executive branch, with a dart tournament in the White House complex. It may lead to a "battle of the branches"—legislative vs. executive—in 1992.

The association itself

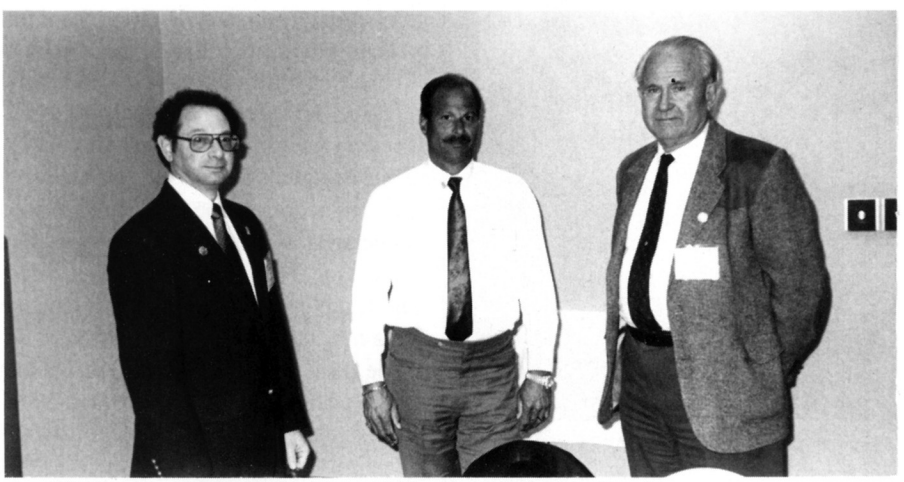
A polling of the state association executives revealed three common dues structures: a flat rate, per machine (with increments), and per employee. Whatever the set-up, all agreed that the associations depend largely on dues to raise necessary funds. Many have had to increase dues to help pay for video lottery undertakings or to fight cigarette machine bans.

Committee chairman Jim Stansfield is flanked by Betty and Dock Ringo of Texas.

What are the benefits of joining a state association? Here are a few of the answers:

- The chance to make money from statewide pool and/or dart tournaments, which require membership to participate.
- The ability to receive the latest important information through meetings or the association newsletter.
- In various states, members can take advantage of insurance programs, college scholarships, free use of technical seminar tapes, and legal counsel.
- The association monitors the legislature for potentially harmful bills to the industry.
- Operators get an outlet for their used equipment, i.e., an equipment auction to raise money for the association.
- Quite simply, as Leoma Ballard pointed out, state associations give operators camaraderie. Who better to share your business problems or greatest successes with than another operator?

Next year's meeting has tentatively been scheduled for January in Chicago. □



From left: Norm Posner (Colorado), Tony Parina (California), and Doug Minter (Nevada).

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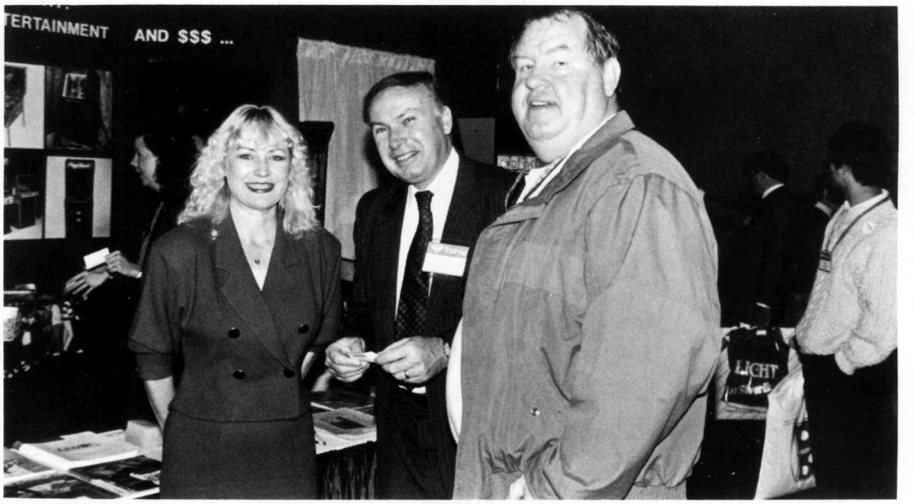
Pizza Expo features edible exhibits

There's only one trade show that offers the aroma of freshly cooked meats, cheeses, vegetables, sauces, and baked bread products, all ready for sampling. It's the fifth annual Pizza Expo, held this year at the Rivergate in New Orleans on Jan. 15-18.

Fifteen aisles of pizza-related products were on display, creating a unique show floor filled with edible exhibits. Among the tasty treats were cheeses from Wisconsin and Italy, salad dressings, alfredo sauce, red and white clam sauces, pesto, olives, sausages, breadsticks, bacon, and much more. Ovens and baking pans were everywhere, as was computer software tailored to pizza restaurant management and T-shirts with giant pizza slices on the front.

The seminar agenda was as interesting as the exhibits and covered such practical subjects as "Healthy Pizza," "Creative Crusts I and II," "Simply Sauces," "Delving Into Dough," "Woodburning Ovens," and "Pizza's New Frontier," among others.

A session titled "Bull & Beer Exchange" was an equivalent of the ACME "Firing Line" session that allows time to talk with industry professionals and ask frank questions. A special "Pizzaaahlympics" featured world-class pizza spinners competing in a dizzying series of dough-toss contests that gave new meaning to the word "skill."



At the AAMA booth, (l-r): Carol Lally of Play Meter, Bob Fay of AAMA, and Mackie Nichols of Mackie's Pizza.

Julie and Bud Johnston of Johnston Products show the *Kick and Catch* to show attendees.

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Pizza is one of the most popular foods of today and pizza restaurants represent a substantial location base for coin-op amusement games. Because of this fact, the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) participates annually and displays a diverse array of equipment.

This year the games were: Taito's *Space Gun*, Atari's *Rampart*, Betson's *Mad Dog McCree*, Premier's *Car Hop*, and Pioneer's CD jukebox, *Laser Juke*.

AAMA has exhibited at the Pizza Expo since its inception. In the last two years, the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) has joined AAMA in promoting our industry at the event.

Manning the booth were: R. A. Green of AMOA and Rosemary Coin Machines in Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Bob Fay, executive vice president of AAMA; Liz Powell, programs coordinator for AAMA; Robert Betti of Betson; and David Drouillard of Pioneer Laser Entertainment.

Other shows on the '91 agenda for AAMA are the Bowling Proprietors Show, Night Club and Bar Expo, Fun Expo, National Restaurant Show, Parks and Recreation Show, IAAPA, and the new Top Shelf, a show especially for tavern locations.

Other industry promotions for '91 will include guest spots on radio programs with an AAMA representative and a distributor member. Markets currently listed include Dallas, Houston, Las Vegas, and Charlotte, N.C. AAMA's promotional programs are on the agenda for the spring board meeting. □

Steve Turner (l) of Coors Brewing Co. and Brian Stubbs of The Brick Oven about to play Arachnid's *English Mark Darts Coors Light Silver Bullet*.

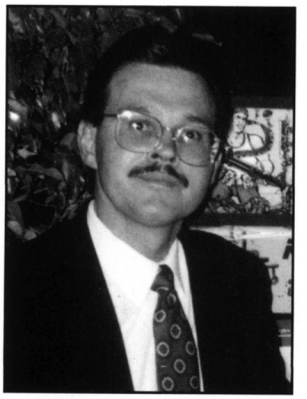
The Old West-themed *Mad Dog McCree* video from Betson was a big draw.

A hot air balloon welcomed visitors to Pizza Expo '91.

From left: R.A. Green of Rosemary Coin Machines, Liz Powell of AAMA, and David Drouillard of Pioneer.

''Rock 'N Bowl week in and week out is at the top of the list in earnings. I highly recommend it to anyone seriously looking at redemption or enhancing their current mix. Seeing is believing . . . we're operating over 50 units now!''

—Ronald Malinowski
Vice President Equipment Services
Aladdin's Castle



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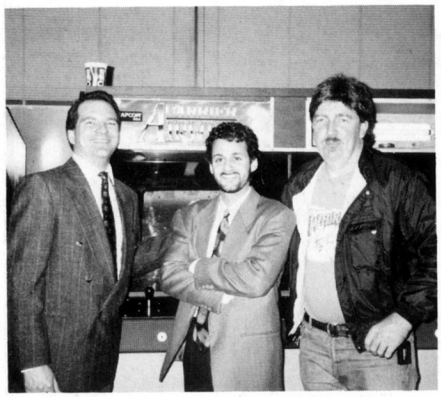
A Music-Vend tradition

Music-Vend/Dunis Distributing held its traditional open houses for customers after the AMOA show in New Orleans.

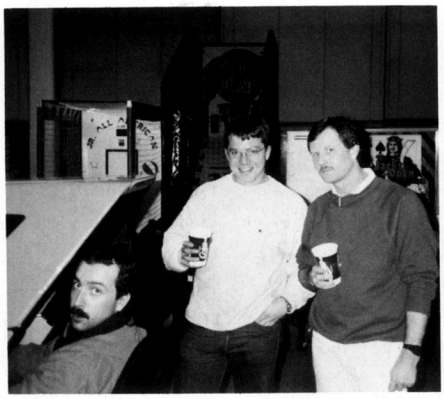
At the Seattle office, operators and manufacturers feasted on chili while listening to entertainment provided by a local comedienne. Harold Siegel of B&G Music was the winner of the coveted door prize, a CD player.

In Spokane the following week, customers were encouraged to come dressed in Western dress as part of a Western theme. While attendees enjoyed barbecued ribs and chicken, they were serenaded by a Western singer. Richard Poston of Arrow Amusements won a Bozo the Clown plush for his "best Western look."

The Portland office featured a New Orleans theme, right down to the authentic Creole cuisine. □



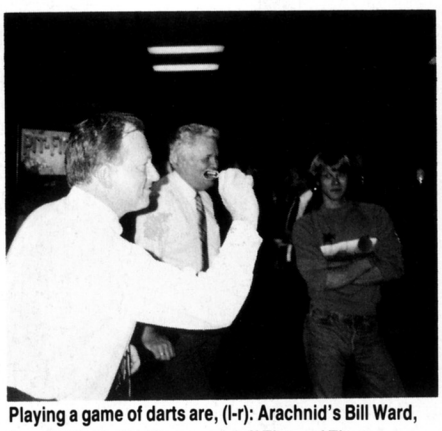
From left: Brian Duke of Capcom, Marv Galante, and Kevin Rudolph of Advanced Amusements.



From Space Age Amusement are Ken Dingler and Rodney and Mark O'Farrell.

Clay Dubofsky (r) of Specialty Entertainment chats with Monica Cooper and Chuck Ryan.

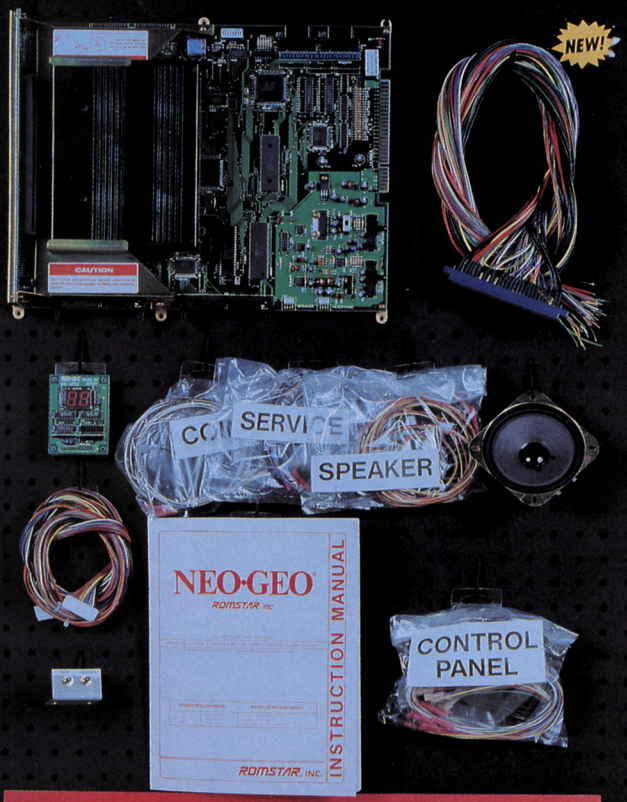
Curt Peterson couldn't resist a ride on *G.P. Rider*.



Playing a game of darts are, (l-r): Arachnid's Bill Ward, Harry O'Neal of LeDarts, and Jeff Timm of Timm Enterprises.

Kris Holly of Nintendo plays a game of *Dr. Mario* with Hien Ngo of Dango Amusements.

Operator: What have your old classic games done for you lately?



Games like Stargate, Joust, Robotron,* and Double Dragon† can be transformed into money-making machines once again with Romstar's NEO•GEO One-Slot Kit.

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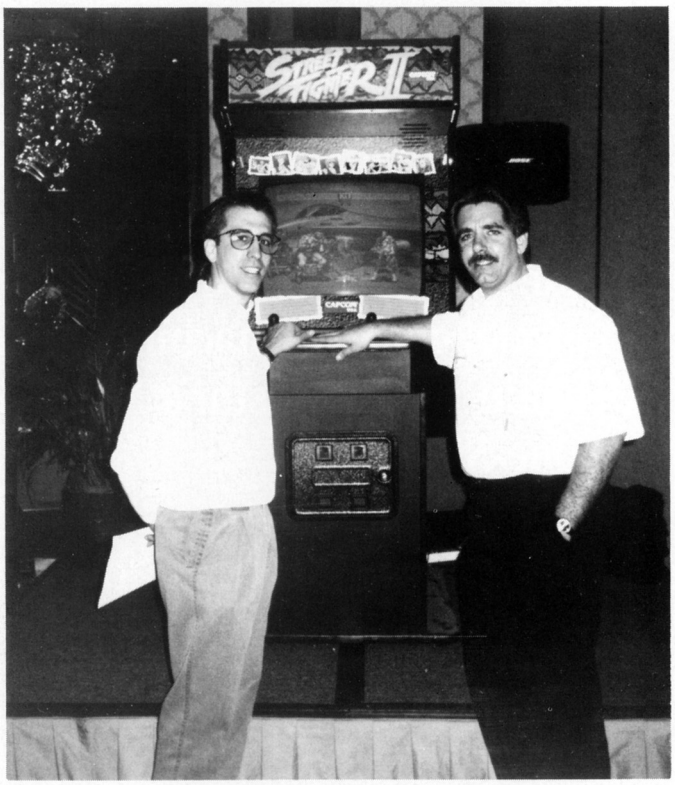
Capcom introduces *Street Fighter II*



T.O.P.'s Matt Tarantelli (l) and Mondial's Tony Yula take a closer look at *Street Fighter II*.

From left: Sam Feder (Pacific Vend), Brian Duke (Capcom), and Rich and Bev Babich (Colorado Game Exchange).

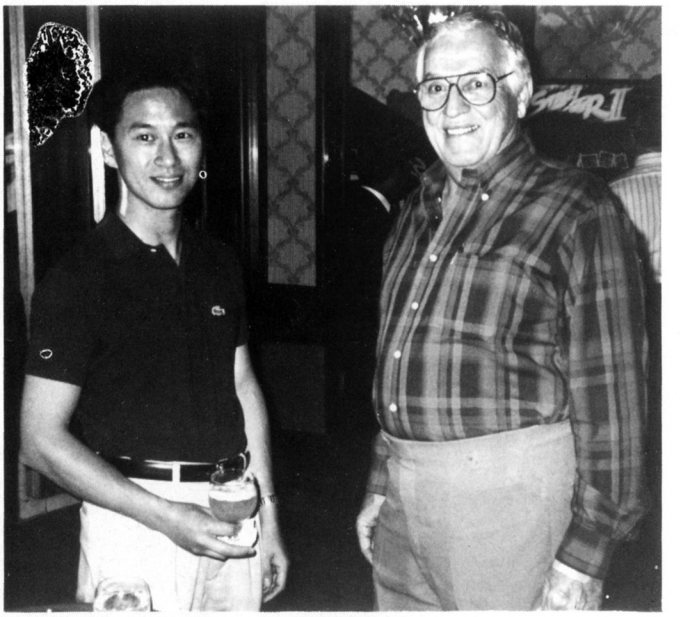
Capcom invited its distributors to join them for a new product preview in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., in early February. *Street Fighter II* was the center of attention at the buffet/cocktail party introduction.

Street Fighter II, a sequel to Capcom's *Street Fighter* from 1987, features eight new characters, each one vying for the title of "Ultimate Warrior." These characters, each from a different country, battle fiercely with unique techniques or special weapons. There are kicks, punches, and body slams to heighten the action. The game will be available as a kit or a dedicated piece.

Capcom's Jolly Backer said the staff was pleased with the response to the new game. "We went to the meeting unsure of how our distributors would react. They far exceeded our expectations."

Capcom also took the opportunity to assure its distributors that efforts were underway to rectify some service shortcomings. "We know we've had a problem but it's being addressed. For example, we have talked with Capcom Japan and they have agreed to supply us with a certain percentage of replacement boards. If we don't have enough boards, we can't send them out to our distributors. We won't have a problem anymore," said Backer. □

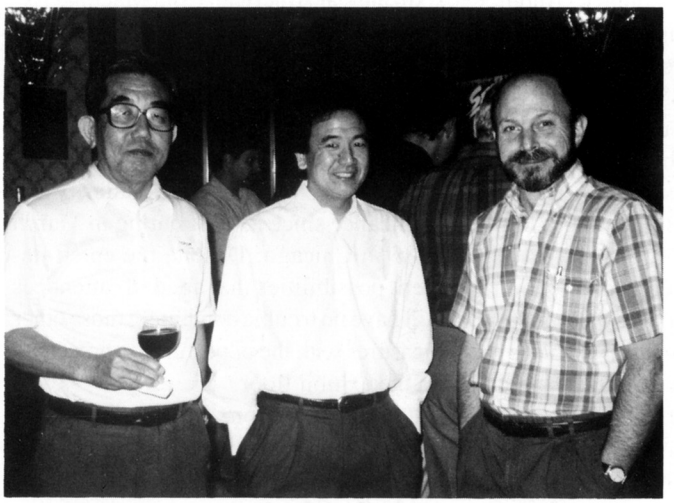
Denise and Jerry Marcus (Atlas Distributing) with Bob Boals (Betson).



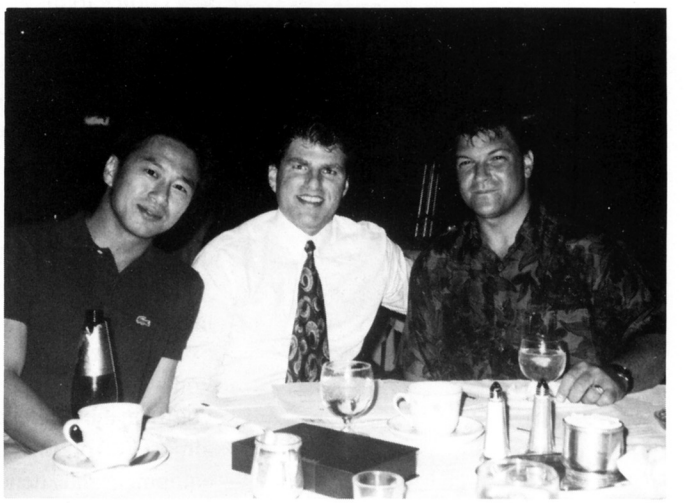
Capcom's Sam Ohta (l) welcomes Bob Nims of Lucky Coin.

Southern gentlemen distributors, (l-r): Dave Patterson (SunBelt), Rubin Franco (Franco Dist.), and John Gatens (Southgate).

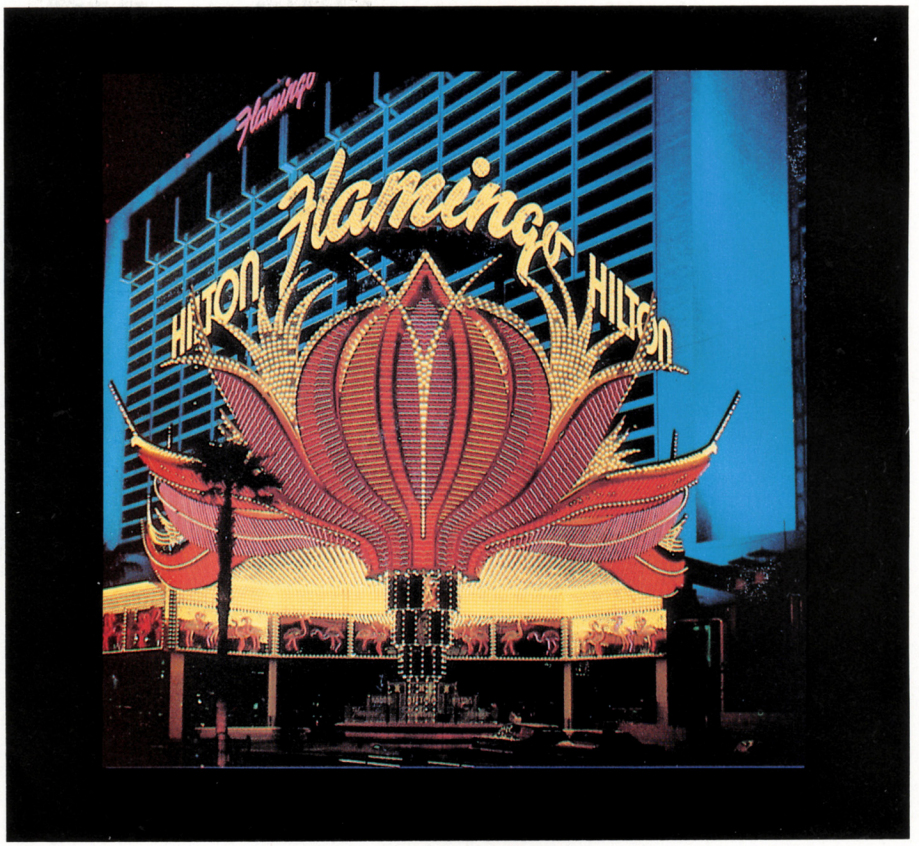
Up bright and early for a golf outing, (l-r): Charles Caplan (Birmingham Vending), Brian Duke (Capcom), Jeff Walker (Capcom), Sam Ohta (Capcom), Jolly Backer (Capcom), Bert Kitade (Capcom), and Jim Wittler (Atlas Distributors).



Mr. Hirata (l) and Mr. Kitade of Capcom with State Sales' Steve Koenigsberg.



Capcom's Sam Ohta (l) and Jolly Backer flank Bay Coin's Mitch Kaufman.



Glitter is the calling card of Las Vegas, as this Flamingo Hilton entrance indicates. Photo by R.A. Young.

ACME beckons with Las Vegas drawing card

Las Vegas is undoubtedly the convention capital of the country. And it's no wonder, considering the star-studded entertainment and nonstop gambling within the walls of its many impressive casinos. Where else could you find the likes of Siegfried & Roy, Frank Sinatra, The Righteous Brothers, Rodney Dangerfield, The Oak Ridge Boys, Louise Mandrell, and The Neville Brothers?

If you want hilarious comedians, you're in the right place. If you want variety show extravaganzas, you're in the right place. If you want nearly nude sequined ladies, you're in the right place. If you want to see almost 700 booths of coin-op amusement equipment and attend a host of informative seminars, you're still in the right place, *as long* as you come March 22-24 for the sixth annual American Coin Machine Expo (ACME) co-hosted by Play Meter and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA).

The theme for ACME 1991 is appropriately "We're On A Roll." The show has been growing in popularity and attendance since its first outing in March 1986 in Chicago. Despite the entertainment possibilities that abound, attendees will have no trouble combining those other pleasures with the opportunities presented on the exhibit floor.

The most recent developments in jukeboxes, pool tables, novelty/redemption games, darts, video card games, foosball, air hockey, cabinetry, pinballs,

cranes, kiddie rides, and videos will all be on display. Suppliers of plush will be well represented, along with coin and bill handling equipment, dart and pool accessories, tickets, and lighting fixtures.

One of biggest drawing cards is the impressive lineup of seminars. This year the list includes business and management session favorites Charles Ross and Richard Priesmeyer, technical expert Randy Fromm, and the operator's operator, Frank Seninsky.

A highlight will be the appearance of Nolan Bushnell as guest speaker on the closing day. This outspoken industry legend will peer into his crystal ball and discuss future coin-op trends.

Management sessions include these topics: Location Profit & ROI Analysis, Performance Management, 50 of the Best Ideas in Management, Ways and Means to Increase Price Per Play, and How to Prepare an Equipment Budget.

General sessions include: Video Lottery & Gaming Outlook for '91, Redemption Trends in the '90s, Bowling Centers and Other Gold Mines, Arcade Security, and Location Planning.

Technical sessions will cover power supplies, monitors, and conversions. The Manufacturer's Firing Line, always a heated session, invites industry members to ask a panel of manufacturers about the burning issues of the hour. A total of 15 seminars round out the agenda.

The Sands Expo & Convention Center is the host facility for exhibits and seminars. Bally's Hotel on The Strip has reserved a block of rooms for attendees. Shuttle bus service (of a frequent nature) will be provided.

The American Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation Annual Appreciation Dinner on March 22 will honor the late Lou Dunis of Dunis Distributing in Portland, Ore., and his partner, Ray Galante of Music-Vend Distributing in Seattle and Spokane, Wash.

Guest programs include an entertainment tour, which will take visitors behind the scenes of the "Folies Bergere" show at the Tropicana Hotel, then travel to the Liberace Museum for a glimpse of the late performer's collections of pianos, costumes, and customized autos.

The late Lou Dunis of Dunis Distributing.

"Las Vegas offers star-studded entertainment, non-stop gambling, championship golf courses, and nearly 700 booths of coin-op equipment at ACME."

Ray Galante of Music-Vend Distributing.

A second tour is scheduled to the Valley of Fire State Park (46,000 desert acres) and the Lost City Museum, where Indian relics are displayed. The park offers wide vistas and striking red and white sandstone formations.

After business has been concluded, take time to savor the local restaurants or even schedule a trip away from the city to tour Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, or Hoover Dam. Las Vegas temperatures should be mild this time of year, another pleasant aspect of winter in the desert climes.

The city usually experiences only four inches of rain annually and 320 days of sunshine. Its many golf courses (both championship and less demanding), and even a water slide, provide a break from indoor activities.

The famous basketball powerhouse of UNLV, the University of Las Vegas, is located here. There's also an antique car collection housed at the Imperial Palace Hotel.

Tours can be arranged by bus, limousine, plane, or helicopter—whichever suits your needs. Every major hotel has a shopping area and there are several malls in the vicinity. Major department stores are represented on The Strip at The Fashion Show Mall.

In the arena of food and entertainment, industry member Laura Rezek, formerly of Midway Manufacturing in Chicago and now marketing manager for Bally Gaming in Las Vegas, recommends Tommy Rocker's, a great rock 'n roll spot on the northwest side of town.

For eats, among her favorites are Carollo's, a ribs and pizza restaurant with nightly live '50s and '60s music; Ferdinands, a blackened *everything* eatery near UNLV; and Mary's Diner at Sam's Town (on the northeast side) for the best cheeseburgers ever. Mary's has a "Hangover Special" that's sure to cure anything: a cold slice of pizza and draft beer of your choice!

With a combination as varied as that offered by ACME and Las Vegas, it's a "must" on the coin-op calendar. For more details on transportation, housing accommodations, and exhibit space, contact William Glasgow Inc. (708) 333-9292; FAX (708) 333-4086. □

Valerie Cognevich

Don Patzke

Don in 1950, his heyday of race driving.

Don may not be the most familiar Half Century Club member, but his roots in the industry run deep. His company, Multi Products, specializes in motors, which were an integral part of coin machines in the early days. He is still active in the business with his son Mark, daughter Lori, and brother Wallace. Although pinball machines have gone electronic, there is still a need for motors in selected games.

While he admits that he was initially apprehensive about working with the coin-operated amusement industry because of its perceived unsavory reputation, he not only came to love the industry but became close friends with many of our heroes.

Why don't you start at the beginning and tell us how you got involved with the coin machine industry.

I was born in Racine, Wis., and have lived here all my life. When I was 15 I began racing midget race cars, which I did for about 20 years. At the same time I finished my schooling and worked with a motor company. I worked for several motor companies before coming to Multi Products in 1959.

Were the other motor companies doing work in the coin machine industry?

I was offered a position at Multi Products to help set up a motor business with the owners, Allen, Jack, and Otto Langner. When I started they were doing special machining for the guided missile program. I eventually bought out the three brothers and now own the company.

What was your first experience with the coin machine industry?

My first job was at Motor Research. There were rejects all over the place because they were having a serious quality control problem. In a matter of two months it was resolved. Going back 40 years, they just had the open-type gear

motor with the thin brass gears and brass pinions. We had to get a little more sophisticated about four or five years later when the bowling craze hit, with big ball bowlers and shuffle alleys. We went to steel pinions and wider gears. That was my first experience in the coin-op industry.

What were some of the companies you worked with?

Genco, Gottlieb, Chicago Coin, United, Williams, Bally, Games Inc., Allied Leisure, E&R Brown, Mills-Jennings, Irving Kaye, Burn, Segasa in Spain, Zaccaria in Italy, Taito, Game Plan, Data East, Grand, ICE, Exhibit Supply, MCI, Premier, and Rowe International.

In the beginning someone would simply call with the information about what they needed and I would build it. Although I didn't have much contact with the people in the coin-op industry, I knew we were making motors for pinballs and shuffle alleys.

That's certainly an impressive list!

We also do work with the parts manufacturers like Wico, Peach State, and Penn Ray. They may be looking for a motor for a game 10 or 15 years old that someone is trying to renovate, so they'll buy replacement motors from us. We are still working with Data East, Grand, and ICE. In each ICE golf game there are six of our motors.

What was your impression of the industry in the early days?

At first I was like most people—a little afraid because of the talk about gangsters and Mafia. The industry had that kind of reputation, but I don't think it does today. I have found over the years that whenever business is slow and there is talk about recession, the game field is still busy. In my 31 years at Multi Products, we have never had a layoff!

What made you change your mind about the industry?

It would have to be the people. The first ones I dealt with were at Williams and Chicago Coin. I can remember Eddie Ricker at Chicago Coin and Bob Porcellino at Williams giving us some orders. We soon picked up Keeney, where Harold Baker was the purchasing agent. We followed Harold when he went to Mills-Jennings and a couple of other companies.

I clearly remember some of the faces at Chicago Coin. Let's see, there was Wendell McAdams in engineering, who moved on to Game Plan. There was an engineer named Stan Heide, who used to come up to Wisconsin almost every morning. He would pick up motors for their line and bring them into work.

We then began working with Norm Clark at Bally, Steve Kordek at Williams, and Frank Murphy at Games Inc. with Clarence Skyler. Two men that I was very impressed with in the early days were Iggy Wolverton and Hank Ross. They were as nice as anyone you could hope to know.

It sounds like you were getting a little more comfortable with the coin machine business.

Once I got to know the people I felt altogether different. I even started going to the shows in Chicago and got to know them even better. I developed a good relationship with the industry that continues today.

The engineers will call and say, "I don't know exactly what I need but I need it right away." I will listen to what they need and have a working model the next day. We have a salesman in Chicago, Charles Kaufman, who is our special representative for the pinball machine industry. Like me, he fell in love with the coin machine industry. Within an hour he can service them and be up here telling us what they need. Usually while he waits we make it, and he'll go deliver it the same day or the next day.

How do you think the games have changed over the years?

They have become more sophisticated. When solid-state pinballs came into existence about 15 years ago, the motor business went down next to nothing. Some thought we would go out of business. But we got into other fields and it picked up from there. For example, we moved into making hopping motors for some manufacturers of slot machines, motors for TV tuners, and 30,000 motors for satellite dishes when they were popular several years ago. We've also made the motors for bed vibrators for the last 20 years.

So pinballs didn't need motors anymore?

They really didn't have any moving parts. Four or five years ago the motor and the electronics combined; some are using both. I always felt some day it would get back to that.

Have you ever been faced with a need that you weren't quite sure how to handle?

Yes, that does happen quite often. For example, a guy wanted a motor for an automatic back scratcher. He sat there about 10 minutes and then asked me when I was going to go make the motor. I told him I was thinking! Inside of an hour and a half we came up with an oscillating

Don says he learned lessons during his racing career that have been valuable.

Don in 1975 after becoming president of Multi Products.

motor. Instead of the shaft going around it moves back and forth like a fan. He tried to sell back scratchers but wasn't successful. Now some other people in the games industry are interested in this motor. It looks like it will be worthwhile in the shooting gallery and display field.

Do any games stand out in your mind?

The shuffle alleys were impressive. They were so durable that you still see them. About 35 years ago United put out a series of bowlers when Lyn Durant was there. We are still making replacement motors for them. The motors have worn out but the machines haven't! That's been one of the most outstanding and impressive pieces of equipment.

I also remember about 30 years ago Exhibit Co. put out a fortune teller machine. You would put in your coin and a fortune teller-looking character inside the machine would slip you a card with your future. You asked if it was similar to one seen in the hit movie "Big," but I don't go to movies very often so I didn't see it. But the way you described it, I think it was like that one.

Do you remember some of the designers you've worked with?

Most of the time it was with the engineers. I remember Odell Kyle, who still calls for motors for something or other: Ed Cebula, who was with Chicago Coin and Game Plan yeas ago and is with Data East now; the men at Grand: Dave Marofske, Terry Sullivan, Hank Ross, and Stan Jarocki. I worked with them originally when it was Midway. I also worked with Marty Bromley, Keith Egging, and Mickey Wichinsky, who bought out games that Clarence Skyler had. I also remember Russ Ramsdell and Lou Wilner.

I worked with Sam Stern for many years. There is no doubt that he was one of the legends of the business. That was when the pinball business was at its peak. At one time, we were making 5,000 scoring motors a week just for the game business between Chicago Coin, Williams, Gottlieb, and Bally.

Although some of the people have changed, the industry hasn't changed that much. And we also see many of the same people still working. Keith Egging every now and then will come up with something that needs our motors. He's the one that dreamed up *Ice Cold Beer*. That was an outstanding game. It was tricky. We must have sold close to 8,000 motors for that game. You had to keep the rod even or tilt it, whichever way you wanted it with the motors.

Motors provide the motion that you can't get with electronics. We are doing some work for redemption games. We have made some motors for the ticket dispensers, but so far it hasn't been a big thing for us. Maybe it will some day. There are others who specialize in ticket dispensers. Of course, they may come to us and we'll make them what they want.

Do you have any interesting stories on making motors for amusement games?

One of the most unusual requests happened about 25 years ago. One of the big companies in Chicago (I wouldn't want to embarrass the company by mentioning their name!) was going to start their line with some baseball games. They found out at 2:00 in the afternoon that they had designed in two motors but needed a third one.

Jack and Otto Langner and I left our plant at 4:30 in the afternoon to drive down to the factory. We picked up one of their boards and a piece of test equipment, came back, designed the motor, and worked all night. At 7:00 in the morning we were sitting outside of their door.

"At first I was like most people—a little afraid because of the talk about gangsters and Mafia."

Everybody thought someone else had taken care of it. Consequently, they found out when the line was set up that they needed the other motor. We get a lot of jobs when they need motors fast. We just did a job for Williams on *Whirlwind*. They were going to order motors from another supplier, who said it would take 12 weeks for delivery. But Williams had to start production within a couple of days. So we got the job because we could deliver that quick. That is what has made us successful—quality work and the delivery that they need.

Do you every wonder why they don't plan farther ahead?

No, I think the business itself is that if something looks good and they decide to sell it, they want to get going right away. They are looking for something in a hurry. Most companies don't deliver like we do. Most are four or five weeks for a sample, then 12 to 14 weeks for delivery. We will do samples in an hour or two and deliver within a day if necessary to get them started.

Being in the auto racing industry helped me. You didn't have tomorrow; you had to do it now. If your car didn't run you had to fix it or you went home with no money. The other point I learned from racing is that if we tell someone we are going to do something, we do it. If we can't, we call and explain why. If we raced someone's car and rolled it over, we owed them an ex-

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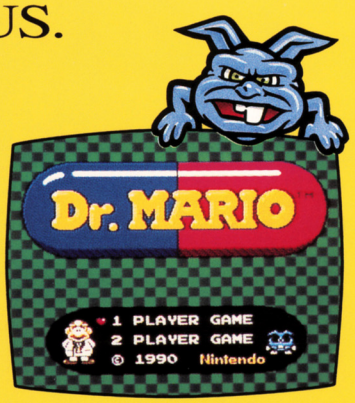

Dr. Mario - with germs that are fun to catch.

When all the viruses are destroyed, Dr. Mario advances to a more challenging round.

Players compete to match colors on the vitamin capsules as they fall.

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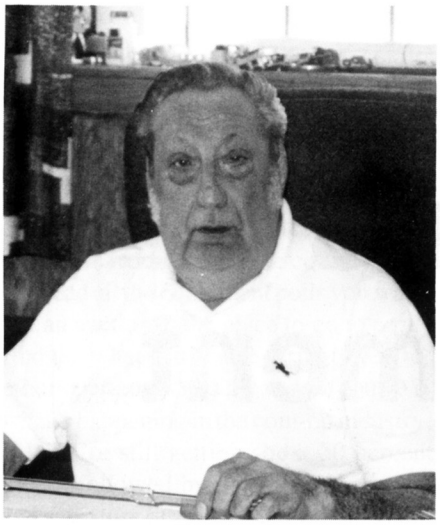


Don Patzke

planation of what happened. Maybe we were running second and thought we could get around the guy in first, but ended up last. You had to walk up to the owner when you came into the pits and tell him that you thought you could do it. I think most people don't want to face up to responsibilities today. They would like to be successful but can't say "I don't know" or "I can't."

You had a lengthy list of coin machine people you have worked with.

That was only a partial list. One thing they seemed to have in common is that they didn't expect miracles. They didn't ask for something they didn't need.

Some of these guys may be out of the industry but they don't quit. They are still thinking up ideas. Chet Gore, who is retired out in California, still calls every now and then to get a motor for an idea he has.

How do the engineers today compare to the ones you worked with over the years?

In the '40s and '50s most of them were mechanical engineers. When the electronics came in, we saw a different breed of electronic engineers. But it's interesting that you still see some of the old timers around from the mechanical end. They are working with the new engineers putting out much better machines. The games today are so sophisticated compared to the plain things we saw years ago.

When you see Ed Cebula at Data East, Gary Stern at Data East, it's quite interesting. You go over to Grand and see Marofske, Jarocki, Sullivan, and Ross. The industry still has leaders who have been around a long time.

If you want to know what the biggest disappointment I've had it's that I didn't get started early enough to meet Lyn Durant and Harry Williams. Harry used to call Sam Stern in Chicago and tell him that he needed some motors. Someone from the company would pass the information on to me. We would either send them to Williams or to Harry Williams out in California. A little while later there would be a game going. I never met David Gottlieb either, but I heard he was a legend.

Mark designed a special hub that goes into the gear with a hole all the way through. We don't have to send the shafts, just the motors. They make their own shaft and put it into the hole that was made for it. That way there is no bending and no problems.

We thought we would be the first in the industry to go to DC motors. We couldn't sell them to anyone, but we did design a line of motors that interchange. We used the same gearboxes and same mounting so that if anyone has an AC motor and they want to go to a reversible or DC motor that will pulse and do different things, we have it. We sell a lot of them because they have the same bolting pattern that the companies have.

"When solid-state pinballs came into existence about 15 years ago, the motor business went down next to nothing."

What are you doing now in the industry?

We just did a job for the Hollywood Group for a crane. This is an interesting story of making the product fit the need. The motors they needed were all the same except the shafts, which were a quarter-inch in diameter and up to 28 inches long. It is almost impossible to ship something like that without bending the shaft. My son Mark designed a special hub that goes into the gear with a hole all the way through. We don't have to send the shafts, just the motors. They make their own shaft and put it into the hole that was made for it. That way there is no bending and no problems.

What are some other fond memories?

One thing that impressed me was when I got an opportunity to go to the show in London. If you are a part of the industry it seems that you are accepted everywhere. You are truly one of the guys! It is a big family. □

From left: daughter Lori, son Mark, brother Wallace, and Don.

March 1991/PLAY METER 51

Christopher Caire

Using auctions to unload equipment

Are you looking for some of these games? An auction is a good place to find them.

Amusement game auctions have proven to be valuable escape valves for operators stuck with unwanted equipment, whether it's stale games in need of rotation or promised messiahs that simply didn't pan out. What have the auctions been like lately? We asked a couple of auctioneers to find out.

Indiana-based U.S. Amusement Auctions is in its eighth year of conducting auctions. The company holds about 17 to 20 auctions a year. Most are in the Midwest, but other sites include Texas, Florida, New Jersey, and California. They're one-day affairs that usually begin late Saturday morning and end later that night. Typically, 500 pieces of equipment are sold in a 10- to 12-hour span.

"1990 was strong for us," said USAA's Ric Stephan. "We went into some new markets, but Indianapolis is still our biggest area. We're there six times a year, about every other month to spread things out."

Operators make up about 75 percent of his attendees; distributors only comprise about one percent. The remainder are homeowners in quest of pinballs and jukeboxes.

USAA auctions draw people from a variety of states, not just the one acting as host. For example, the Indianapolis auctions attract operators from 10 different states.

"They've become mini-conventions; it's a flea market atmosphere," Stephan said. "Operators get the games they're going to sell in on Friday. During the auction on Saturday they get a chance to talk with operators from all over the country. You can read all the equipment polls you want, but an auction is the place to go to *really* find out what games are earning well for other operators. You get a crash course in what's happening in the coin-op industry.

"We're still getting about 50 percent video, followed by pinballs, jukeboxes, and a mixture of stuff—*Skee-Balls*, *Whac-A-Moles*, cranes, basketballs, Valley pool tables, air hockey, and kiddie rides. Of 500 games, 250 would be videos, 100 would be pinballs, 50 would be jukeboxes, and the rest redemption and novelty equipment."

Though he encounters a few CD units, Stephan says most of the jukeboxes at the auction are vinyl.

"The CD jukeboxes we get are from operators who don't like a particular brand and want to switch," he said. "The majority are 45 rpm units. They still bring in good dollars, so operators remain interested in them. The really old boxes are being bought up by homeowners left and right.

"I have two predictions for dinosaur status in the '90s. One of them is going to be the vinyl jukebox. The proliferation of CD units is going to cause vinyl jukeboxes to slowly disappear. The other dinosaur is the cigarette machine. Vendors can lobby all they want, but they're beating a dead horse. Cigarette machines are going to die."

Conversely, what's going to be "hot" for 1991 and the remainder of the decade? Stephan says "anything that spits out a ticket," i.e., redemption.

"Operators, I think, are going to have to consider putting ticket dispensers on video games to get the kids to play them," he said. "There needs to be more interaction and a greater incentive to play videos. Competition for that coin is high.

"Also popular right now are driving games, pinballs, and air hockey."

What's the market like for cabinets?

"*Pac-Man, Ms. Pac-Man,* and *Centipede* have been bringing in between $100 and $200 for the last five years," Stephan said. "Guys will still buy them for the cabinets, but I find that most are going with the system cabinets now. They'll buy the newer cabinets, but the ones 10 years old or older don't get grabbed too much anymore."

Stephan says video games and pinball machines make up the bulk of auctioned equipment, due to the sheer number of videos and pins released to the market. They need to be rotated to keep a location fresh.

"Imagine setting a bowling center," he said. "You can only set one jukebox or one basketball game, but not five. On the other hand, you can set several videos and several pins. Manufacturers simply produce more different videos and pins than jukeboxes. The games get old and need to be rotated, which is usually why an operator will bring them to auction. Even *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* needs rotation. A popular game can't stay popular forever."

While there is a large faction of pro-auction operators, another camp dislikes them for fear of direct sales to location owners, Stephan says.

"Honestly, I can't remember that ever happening—even once," he said. "Location owners don't know how to get the equipment serviced, maintained, or rotated. They have their hands full just running their businesses. What they're interested in is sharing revenue with operators. I'll argue until I'm blue in the face that locations owners don't come to auctions to buy their own games.

"The other misconception I find is that people associate auctions with someone going out of business. But as I said before, you have to rotate equipment to keep it fresh. Game rooms only have so much space; when the next *Turtles*-type hit comes out, the operator has to get rid of some games to make room. That's where auctions fit in."

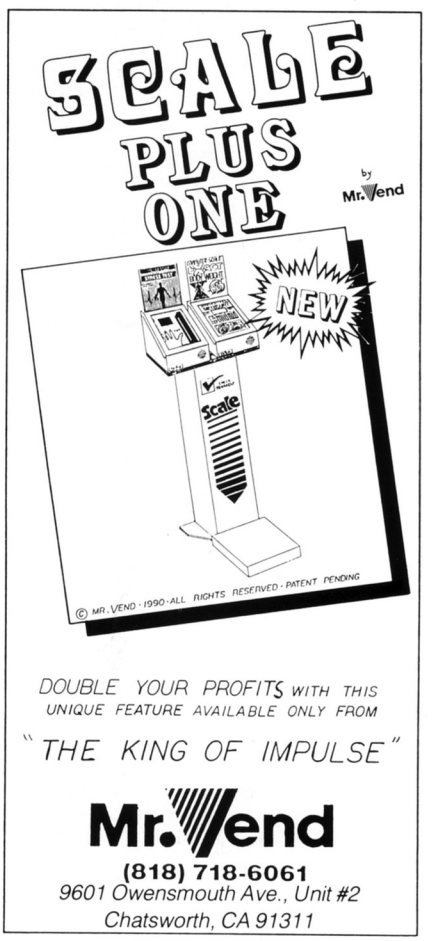
As was noted before, USAA auctions bring out a small number of distributors. Stephan explains why.

"A lot of distributors recommend us to operators, because they want the operators to sell their old stuff, get some cash in their hands, and go into the distributorship to buy new equipment," he said. "The distributors we get at an auction are there to place equipment, not buy it. They may have gotten caught with some extra equipment that they can't get rid of. We liquidate the games for them."

Those with games to sell get treated as if they've brought their car to a full-service gas station, Stephan says.

"We unload the games from your truck, sign them in, clean them up, and put them in line," he said. "There's nothing for you to do but stand around and watch the action. If you buy a couple of games, we'll load them in your truck at the end of the day. We have our own staff to handle the money and registration."

There are two upcoming USAA auctions of special note. The April 13 auction in New Jersey is being held, in part, to raise funds for the AMOA-NJ. The money will be used to pay for the association's video lottery lobbying. Also, the company will hold an October auction in conjunc-



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tion with the Pinball Expo, a show devoted to those interested in classic pinball machines.

Gilbert Wilkins Jr.

The "Wilkins" surname is synonymous with amusement games in Galena, Kan., and points nearby. Gilbert Wilkins Sr. was one of—if not the—first operators in the state of Kansas, starting Wilkins Amusement Co. in 1929. Sons Gilbert Jr. and Jerry work with their father in the family-run business, with Gilbert Jr. serving as auctioneer for a daughter company, Wilkins Auction Service.

"I've been doing auction work since about 1972," Wilkins said. "I worked car auctions until 1981, when I went back into the game business. Auctions and the coin-op industry, I found, went well together. They provided us with a way to get rid of our older equipment, which is still the main reason for holding them. But after a few auctions I realized there was a big need for auctions for other operators, whether they're buying or selling equipment."

Based in Galena, in the southeastern corner of Kansas, Wilkins Auction Service draws auction attendees from the neighboring states of Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Most auctions take place in Joplin or Springfield, Mo.; one is scheduled for Wichita, Kan., this spring.

"The auction method of selling games is always going to be popular," Wilkins said. "It's a good way for people to sell excess equipment. Maybe they bought too heavily on a certain game and would like to thin down. They can consign a few to the auction and get rid of them. On the other hand, operators may have missed ordering a game that's become a hit. They can pick it up at the auction."

Wilkins says auctioning games is like auctioning cars in this sense: what's ugly and useless to one buyer is a diamond in the rough to another.

"People would bring in stale cars that had been on the lot for three or six months," he explained. "A new-car dealer would sell trade-ins that weren't considered good enough for their used-car lot. But another dealer would consider those same cars high-line, front-row pieces.

"It's the same in the game business. *Turtles* is already old for a lot of operators; they're looking for the *High Impacts* or the fancy driving games. But for someone else, *Turtles* might not have made it to his area before. Getting it would be like getting a hot new game. A lot of small operators might not be able to spend $2,800 for a *Turtles*, but they can buy one for $1,500 on the used market and find a location that would justify the investment.

"Auctions give operators the opportunity to go to one place and see a wide variety of games. A good auction will offer 300 or 400 different games. Maybe operators have gotten calls requesting *720 Degrees* or *Paperboy*, games they never bought before. Auctions offer these older games at low prices."

The equipment mix at his auctions breaks down this way: 70 percent video games, 20 percent pinballs, and 10 percent vinyl jukeboxes, pool tables, and assorted bar pieces. Most attendees are operators, with a smattering of homeowners looking for jukeboxes, pinballs, and pool tables. Of the thousands of games sold last year, Wilkins says, only a few went to location owners.

"Other than that equipment, we've had *Skee-Ball*s selling very well at the last two or three auctions," he said. "We could have sold a lot more than we had consigned. Video poker games have also been terrific.

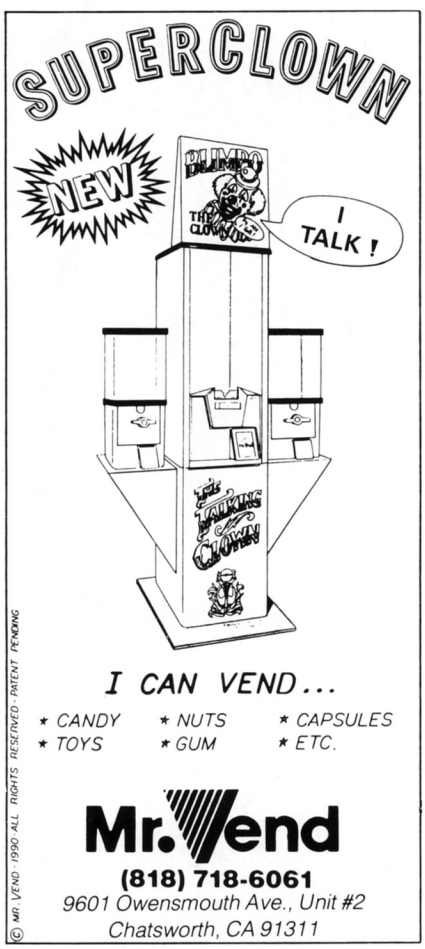
"The only soft market is for really old video games like *Karate Champ* and *Track and Field*. We always have a lot more games consigned than we have buyers for. At a 400-game auction, we might have 275 video games. That mix is wrong; there are far too many videos. I don't force the seller to sell his video game if he doesn't like the price it brings. He can just load it up and haul it back home."

Wilkins says sometimes operators can't sell their games because they seek prices that, given the market, are unrealistic.

"One guy brought five or six games to the last three auctions and couldn't sell any of them," he said. "After the last auction I told him to seek another source for selling the games, because I wasn't able to do him any good. But he's set too high a price. It's hard to find a buyer who's willing to pay $1,200 for a *Galaga*, when he can probably get one for about $400 from his distributor."

What makes an auction top-notch? Wilkins believes it's the ability to give buyers a broad cross-section of equipment and prices.

"A well-conducted auction has $50 games and $2,500 games," he said. "Anybody should be able to buy and sell somewhere in that price range. A home buyer or small operator should be able to find stuff between $150 and $200. A bigger operator wishing he'd bought four more *Turtles* can get them at the auction. Or if his distributor has sold out his allotment of *Final Fight*s, an operator would go to an auction to get what he needs." □



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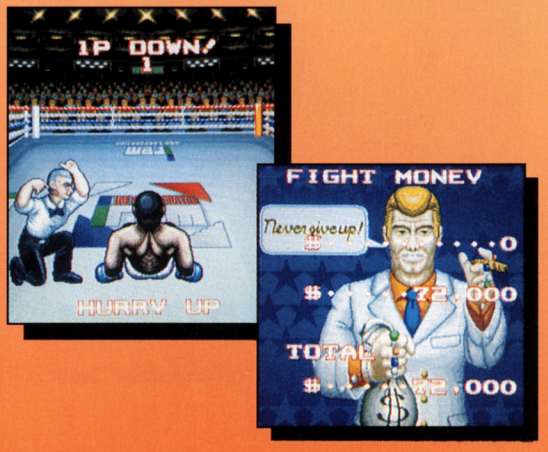

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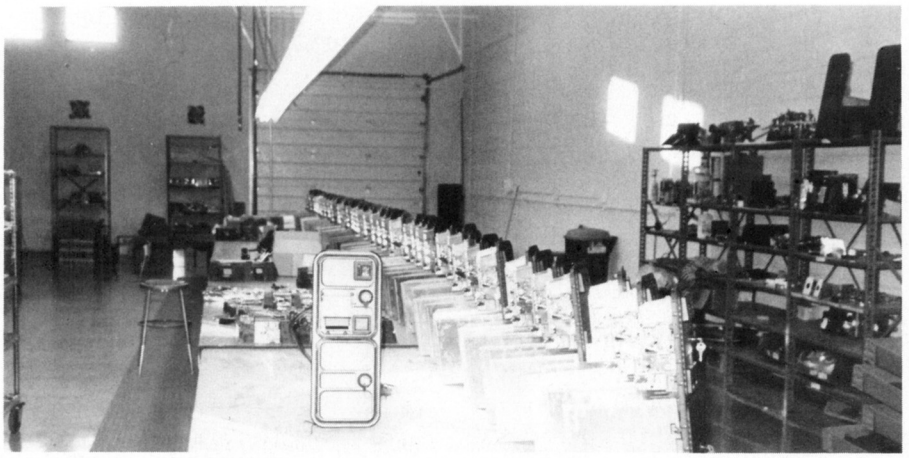
Covering all the bases at Happ Controls

Beside a slew of trackball controls, (l-r): Dave Swanson, Sue Happ, Frank Happ, Bernice Sklodowski, and Jim Happ.



This new coin door with built-in bill validator (l) is proving to be an operator favorite. On the right is a row of standard coin doors.

Let's begin with a multiple-choice question.

Which of the following does Happ Controls Inc. make product for?

A) Coin-op and consumer video games, pinball machines, video lottery terminals, electronic dart machines, and redemption pieces.

B) Museums.

C) Industrial/commercial applications.

D) All of the above.

Those who answered "D" get a gold star.

Happ Controls, based in Elk Grove, Ill., has been manufacturing electronic controls since 1986. Among the numerous products in the company's line are joysticks, trackballs, pushbuttons, driving controls, coin doors, monitors, power supplies, switches, grip assemblies, coin counters—and that's only scratching the surface.

The "mover and shaker" in all of this is founder/president Frank Happ, a 23-year veteran of the coin-op industry. He began on the vending side of the business and ended up at Wico in 1975, where he worked in several capacities before eventually becoming director of marketing.

In 1981, England's Coin Controls Ltd. asked Happ if he would be interested in establishing a subsidiary in the United States. He agreed and became president and part owner of Coin Controls Inc. Happ stayed there for five years, developing a U.S. market for coin-op joysticks, home joysticks, and pushbuttons to complement

the parent company's focus on coin doors and acceptors.

Then, in the summer of 1986, Happ Controls was born. In its first fiscal year, the company had a little over $1 million in sales. Last month, at the end of its fifth fiscal year, Happ Controls experienced sales of $10.5 million. This rapid growth has landed Happ Controls a spot on *Inc.* magazine's "500 Fastest-Growing Small Companies" (they rank around number 300).

Sales isn't the only area of growth. Happ Controls began with six employees; now there are 60. The company has also outgrown two previous sites. Its present facility is in the neighborhood of 40,000 square feet.

"Though we make product for a variety of markets, our emphasis is in coin-op," said vice president and brother Jim Happ, who's in charge of engineering and production. "We're faced with extremely short lead times for games, and our customers know that we respond well to the demand.

"The quality of the product is always there and always improving, so that even customers in the industrial market find them suitable for day-to-day use. They know the product lasts for years and years, not just for the life of a hot game."

Though a big chunk of Happ Controls' sales are to manufacturers for OEM applications, there remains a strong market for direct sales to distributors and operators—both in the United States and abroad.

"We're fortunate that even though the industry may be quiet on the manufacturing side—there are a lot of kits at the moment and not as many dedicated games—we still supply joysticks and buttons for the kits," Frank said. "It doesn't affect us too much if the distributors and operators decide not to buy from the factories, because we can sell product to those who are keeping their machines a little longer. Parts do wear out.

"The consumer side of our business is actually gaining ground on the coin-op end. We're doing more this year than in previous years, partially because my oldest son Mike is now in charge of it full time as sales manager. Before, it used to be a stepchild that I would only give occasional attention to."

Gary Ballantine (l) of the accounting department does a data download from one of the warehouse computers. Also pictured are Frank Happ (c) and Dave Swanson.

Among the consumer products he's referring to are joysticks and the *Competition Pro* control pad for both Nintendo's *NES* and Sega's *Genesis*.

Several years ago, it was common to have long runs on many different games. That isn't the case now, Jim says, a fact that Happ Controls has adjusted to.

"Diversification is certainly necessary now," he said. "By responding to customers and developing products to correspond to their needs, we've managed to stay reasonably strong, even when business is otherwise slack. Because of the broad spectrum of customers we have, we manage to do alright."

Said Frank, "There's strength in selling a lot of different products to a lot of different people. No one product or no one customer accounts for any more than 10 percent of our business. We've got several business segments, with some larger than others. Home joysticks, coin-op joysticks, pushbuttons, doors, and driving controls are all big segments of our business."

Frank and Jim say Happ Controls makes product that's durable and a good value for the dollar. They obviously aren't the only ones who feel that way, as Happ Controls now ships to over 40 countries, including Canada, England, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, Paraguay, and especially Mexico. The brothers take great pride in having their controls requested by some of the large Japanese video game companies for the Japanese market.

As Jim mentioned earlier, it's common for a coin-op customer to request something and expect it immediately. The ability to grant that request is another factor in the company's success, he believes.

"Service is critical," Jim said. "If somebody calls us at 7 p.m. and says they need something early tomorrow, we know that Federal Express is open until 10:30. We may have to stay that late to get it done, but we feel it's important."

Frank says Happ Controls would basically be categorized as "a manufacturer and distributor of original and replacement parts for the amusement game, vending, and gambling machine markets." But as was noted before, the company's other clientele is a disparate hodgepodge.

"We sell controls to the government and

to industrial companies like Kodak,'' he said. ''Our buttons are in the Smithsonian and about six other museums, and some ice and water vending machine companies use them as well. A fair amount of people who buy our products manufacture peep show photo booths! I'm one of the few guys who can go to the Consumer Electronics Show and do some selling in the blue movie section.''

Speaking of blue, does Happ Controls select joystick or pushbutton colors at random, or does the manufacturer specify what it wants?

''Sometimes it gets quite specific,'' Frank explained. ''For example, Konami's new *Simpsons* video had to have orange. I think part of the original artwork has sort of a trademark orange associated with it, just like *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* had purple. We have the molds here. We mix the plastic and tell the mold guy to match a piece of artwork. Sometimes it can be done quickly, but other times it takes many months of going back and forth with the manufacturer.''

Jim is part of a five-member staff involved in engineering/product development, a team that includes Dave Pallotto (engineering manager), John Yattone (development engineer), Mark Savoia (engineering technician), and Rich DeGuzman (assistant technician).

''Our business requires a fair amount of R&D,'' Frank said. ''Every year, as much as 10 percent of our sales comes from items that we didn't have the previous year. Sometimes it's more than 10 percent. Not only do you have to develop new product, but you also have to continually upgrade product that you're making now.''

Believing that a dollar coin is some time away, Frank says his company is the only one that makes a dollar bill validator within a standard double door. These doors are available for video games, pins, and video poker machines. Operators wishing to move away from 25-cent play have nothing but compliments for the doors, he adds.

Other key employees include Sue Happ, vice president/assistant to her husband Frank; Betty Happ, vice president/assistant to her husband Jim; Dave Swanson, materials manager; Bernice Sklodowski, production manager; and Cary Hedrick, vice president/controller. The sales leaders in their respective divisions are James Perales, OEM sales; Carol Hanschman, domestic sales to distributors and operators; and Peter Chlopek, export sales.

Also, Dennis Sitcler is in charge of Happ Controls' West Coast office in San Jose, Calif. It's known as Control Marketing Inc.

Frank summed it up this way: ''We're the Wal-Mart of the amusement machine industry. If it weren't for companies like us and Wico, the operator would have a hell of a time buying this stuff. In deference to Max Wiczer, who owned Wico for 40 years and built the company, he's taught me everything I know about this business.'' □

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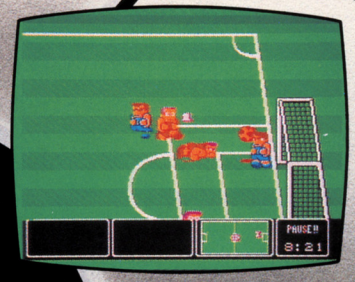

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1991 SYSTEMS/ HARDWARE BUYER'S GUIDE

This is the time of year to evaluate locations and inventory and start thinking about the spring season. ACME is around the corner and will showcase the newest product available. Shortly after, a series of post-show open houses will provide another opportunity to consider equipment.

In these stressful economic times, prudent usage of space means that video game systems, supported by a variety of quality games, may be just what you need.

Video games make up an average of 60 percent of the product mix for most operators. While emphasis is usually placed on the games themselves, the hardware that surrounds them merits more thought. Sleek, modern cabinets help games look and play better.

Since video kits far outweigh the number of dedicated games at present, hardware such as game cabinets are high on the list of product to review. A wide array are on the market, from the standard upright to the deluxe sit-down. Older cabinets that have "seen their day" and been "converted" many times do not offer the advantages of the '90s cabinets with rotating monitors and other special features. Cabinets with giant screen monitors will certainly make patrons take a second look in your game room.

The following pages contain complete listings of currently produced systems and cabinets with photos and descriptions. A handy index of addresses, phone numbers, and FAX numbers makes the shopping easy. There's also a list of companies that produce custom cabinets to your specifications.

Systems

Mega-Tech
R. H. Belam

A system cabinet with a list of Sega software choices that include *Super Thunder Blade* and *Space Harrier II*, among others. Features include dual monitor display, full front access, 16-bit graphics and animation, four-way coin separation, ear-level stereo sound, and more.

Neo-Geo
SNK

A multi-video system in three cabinet styles to hold 2-6 games. Features include plywood construction, lexan-covered control panel, and hinged marquee for access to game title cards. Choose from 10 games, such as *Ninja Combat*. New Memory Cards let players continue anytime, anywhere.

PlayChoice
Nintendo

A full-spectrum system with 5- or 10-game capacity and a library of over 40 titles, from *Castlevania* to *Dr. Mario*. Available in upright, countertop, and kit for VS. Dual, Unisystem, or Table System. Kits come with 5 games; holds up to 10 games. *VS. Dr. Mario* is now available for all VS. Systems.

Play-4
Higbee Enterprises

An all JAMMA-compatible harness system with adaptor cards for non-original JAMMA games. Four games can be connected in one cabinet using old or new PCBs. Games can range from two joysticks and three buttons to one joystick and one button, etc.

Quick-Kit System
MH Associates

A system that trims kit installation time, fits into any video game cabinet, and works with all video games. A wiring harness system that, once in place, allows the operator to plug and unplug any board quickly without rewiring. Game changes can be accomplished on location.

Slant Top
Altec Mfg.

A unique sit-down cabinet of plywood construction with oak finish and brass foot rail. All metal surfaces (such as control panel) are stain and burn-resistant powder-coated steel. It is wheelchair accessible; seat and armrest are optional. Dimensions: 62-1/2'' x 24-3/8'' x 24''.

Upright Cabinet
Altec Mfg.

Standard upright that accommodates regular videos, card games, and 8-liners. A slide-out drawer gives easy access to coin mechs and electronics. Other features: particle board construction with formica covering, canvas coin bags, and double coin entries. Dimensions: 62-1/2'' x 24-3/8'' x 24''.

KIS Kit System Cabinets
Amazing Games

All plywood cabinets with removable front door panel (to simplify service and access components), replaceable plywood base, high-pressure laminated plastic finish, and Wells-Gardner color monitor. Choose from two models: 19'' and 25'' monitor. Also available: optional three-player control panel.

Belam Standard Grand 19" and 25"
R.H. Belam

Standard upright cabinet in two monitor sizes. Monitor rotates for horizontal or vertical play; the inclination can be increased or decreased to suit the game. Plywood cabinet comes with JAMMA harness. Belam standard cabinets have Wells Gardner monitors. Also available: Compact 33'' one-piece cabinet.

When Performance Is The Only Game In Town, The Odds Are It's Played On A Wells-Gardner Monitor.

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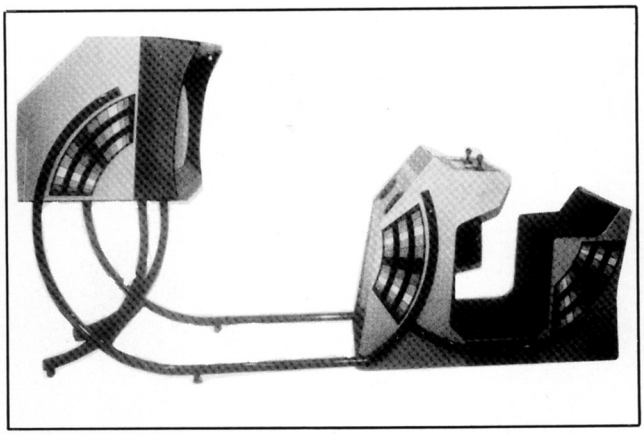
Wells-Gardner game chassis meet AMOA Standards, are U.L. Recognized and C.S.A. Certified.

Cabinets

Belita Testa Rossa
19" or 25"
R. H. Belam

Sit-down driving cabinets that feature all plywood construction and a choice of two monitor sizes. Cabinets come with all necessary parts for operating driving games. Also available: Ferrari 33" sit-down fiberglass cabinet. All Belita cabinets use 33" Intervideo monitors.



Santa 33"
R.H. Belam

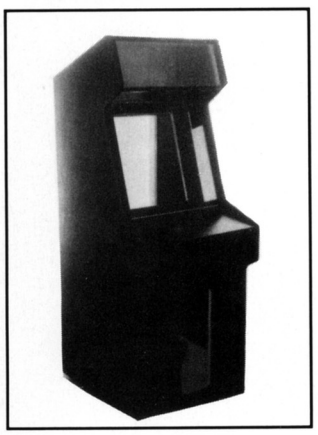
A sit-down, two-piece cabinet that accommodates two players and comes with Belam's special 33" monitor and JAMMA harness. Included are steering control, gearshift assembly, and pedal assembly. All Santa cabinets are ready to accept standard joystick and button controls.

CM-1 13" and 19"
Continental Mfg.

Standard upright with either 13" or 19" monitor. Other features: pull-out drawer, metal front, particle board construction with melamine finish, control panel of wood or stainless steel, and kit-ready with power supply and JAMMA harnesses. Suits all videos, poker game kits, and 8-liners.

CF-1 13" and 19"
Continental Mfg.

Standard upright cabinet of plywood construction with formica finish and choice of 13" or 19" monitor. Features include pull-out drawer and metal front. It comes kit-ready with power supply and JAMMA harness. Suitable for all video kits, poker kits, and 8-liners.



19" Universal
Video Cabinet
D & D Cabinets

Standard upright video game cabinet with 19" color monitor. All components are wood laminated. Features include a pop-off control panel and easy change system for reaching all electronics. The monitor can be rotated to accommodate a vertical or horizontal configuration.

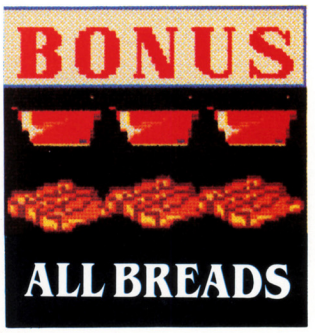
19" Card
Game Cabinet
D & D Cabinets

All wood construction card game cabinet with 19" color monitor. The control panel has a pop-off feature that allows easy access to all components and electronics. There's a separate locking coin box and coin acceptor. The cabinet accommodates Mars dollar bill validators.

Universal Cocktail
D & D Cabinets

A cocktail table with all wood construction, pop-off top for easy accessibility, and a monitor that will adjust to either a vertical or horizontal configuration. The top is a made of tempered glass, there are dual coin mechs, and the finish is woodgrain.

HOTTER THAN WHAT YOU HAVE ON HAND.....



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COINTEK (USA) CORPORATION

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Tel: (908) 281-0616 Fax: (908) 281-0316

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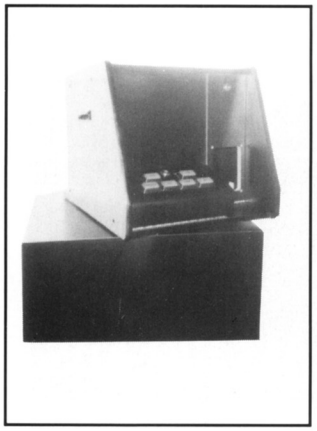
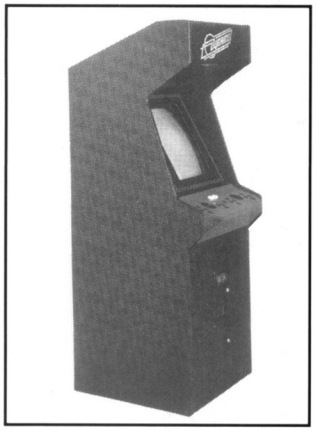
Cabinets



Countertop Cabinet
D&D Cabinets

This universal countertop game cabinet is available in both 13" and 19" monitors. Features include all-wood construction, button controls, and a lazy susan mounting that allows the cabinet to rotate. The cabinet accommodates a Mars dollar bill validator.



HS-2
Dynamo Corp.

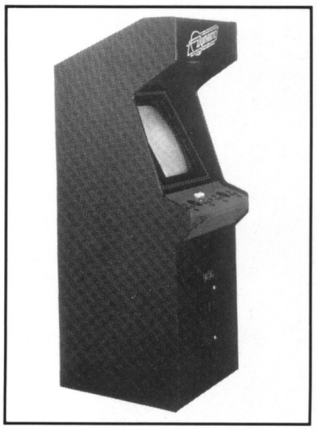
A cabinet with 19" monitor, roll-out drawer system, rotating Wells-Gardner monitor, JAMMA wire harness, dowel construction, melamine surface, and plywood pedestal base. The drawer is compatible with HS-8 and HS-9 models. Also available: an optional four-player control panel.

HS-4
Dynamo Corp.

"The Big Boy" 25" monitor pedestal style cabinet with stainless steel marquee header and large three-player control panel. This model shares the solid construction and roll-out drawer system common to all Dynamo cabinets. Also available: HS-5 with optional three and four-player control panels.

HS-6
Dynamo Corp.

Cocktail cabinet with a choice of square or rectangular top, joystick or trackball control panels. Features include JAMMA harness, dowel construction, test service and volume controls, and Dynamo "power-plus" power supply.

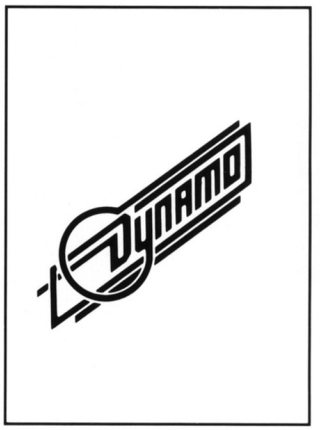


HS-8, 8A
Dynamo Corp.

New-look cabinet with 19" monitor. Model 8 has plywood pedestal with particle board roof and sidewalls, in blue and gray. Model 8A has plywood pedestal with plywood roof and sidewalls, in blue and red. An optional four-player control panel is available.

HS-9, 9A
Dynamo Corp.

Generally the same cabinets as HS-8, 8A, except the monitor is the deluxe 25" size. Model 9 has plywood pedestal with particle board roof and sidewalls, in blue and gray. Model 9A has plywood pedestal with plywood roof and sidewalls, in blue and red. An optional four-player control panel is available.



HS-23
Dynamo Corp.

Bold new design featuring 33" monitor or 27" monitor. The cabinet is designed with a four-player control panel and is blue and gray in color. This model has solid cabinet construction with all the features common to Dynamo cabinets.

Two-Piece Cabinet System
Dynamo Corp.

Striking design with control panel and monitor connected but spaced four feet apart. Available in three monitor sizes (27", 33", 45"); perfect for showcasing new kits. It features a rear projection Mitsubishi color TV modified to use RGB signals as inputs. Look for a futuristic Tube Cabinet from Dynamo soon.

What's small in height, but big on features?

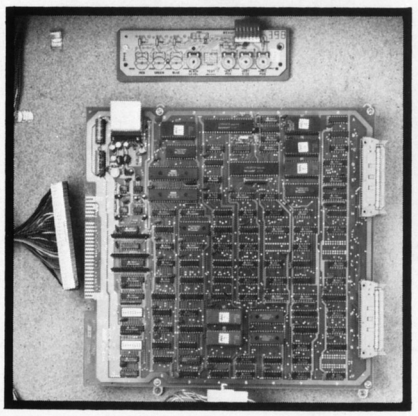
Introducing the Lo-Pro™ from Jaleco.™ It stands only four feet tall, but it's packed with fantastic features for you and your players.

Players will be dazzled by the visual impact of the 19″ Wells-Gardner universal monitor. It's quickly converted to either horizontal or vertical play by unscrewing only four easily accessible bolts.

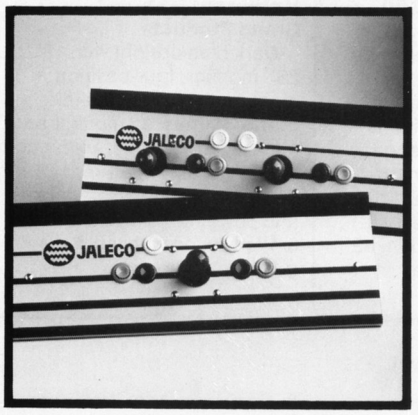
Standard JAMMA cables and connectors make conversion to a new kit simple. A universal control harness fits any 1, 2 or 3 button game that uses 1 or 2 joysticks. Unlike other cabinets, Lo-Pro lets you complete all conversions in front, with no need to remove back panels. Dual speakers offer players stereo sound and excitement.

Custom designed and assembled using screws and hardwood cleats, the Lo-Pro offers years of dependable and durable service. For more information, contact Larry Berke.

- 19″ Wells-Gardner Universal Monitor.
- Horizontal and vertical overlays.
- Converts quickly by removing 4 bolts.



- Standard JAMMA cable and connectors fit any compatible PCB and universal control panel.
- Monitor adjustment board mounted in drawer for easy accessibility and adjustment.



- Two blank panels included for 1 or 2 joystick controls. Joysticks and buttons not included.
- Panels slide in or out by removing 2 bolts.

JALECO™

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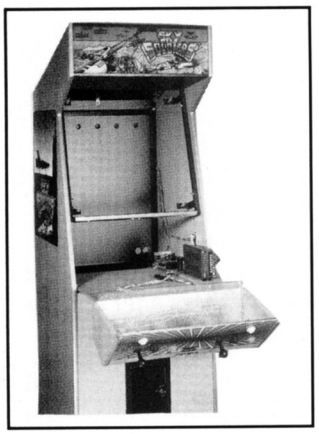
Cabinets

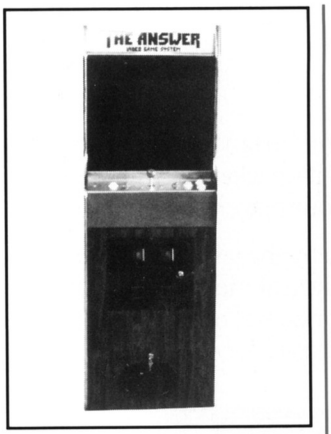


UV-19
East Coast Design

A universal video game cabinet with either 19" or 26" color monitor, all-steel infrastructure, laminated wooden components, carriage bolt construction, "lift and lock" control panel in galvanized steel, and slide-out drawer.

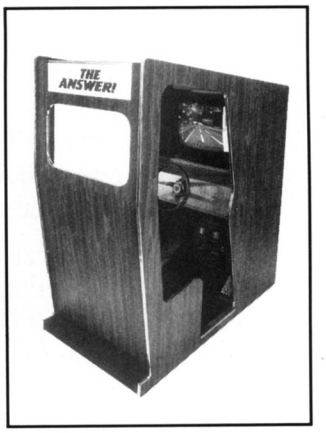
ECD Card Game Cabinets
East Coast Design

Universal card game cabinets with all the same features as the UV-19 cabinet; choose from 13" or 19" monitor. In addition, there's the ECD Mini, a smaller model with a 13" monitor. Also available: a countertop cabinet with 13" monitor.



The Answer Model 100
Game Operators Corp.

A mid-size upright cabinet that maximizes floor space. Features include 19" monitor that changes from vertical to horizontal, easy access headers, rosewood formica finish, and tempered glass monitor. Dimensions: 61" high, 29" deep, and 21-1/2" wide. Also available: Model 400, a large upright.



The Answer Model 500
Game Operators Corp.

Enclosed cockpit-style cabinet with the same features as the Model 100. All models have complete static ground system, formica covering inside and out, and interface connection to take the guesswork out of changing PC boards. Dimensions: 57" high, 60" deep, and 30" wide.

The Answer Model 300
Game Operators Corp.

A cocktail style cabinet that makes kit changes simple. There's a tempered glass table cover and the 19" monitor is mounted on a quick change board that requires no hardware removal. This board means easier monitor servicing. Dimensions: 29" high, 32" deep, and 25-1/2" wide.

Universal Cabinet
Grand Products

Dark blue upright with 19" or 25" monitor, four-position monitor display, works-in-a-drawer, tempered monitor and marquee glass, over/under coin door and cash vault, rear wheels, steel leg leveler plates, and power cord. The cabinet is 3/4" plywood with tongue and groove construction.

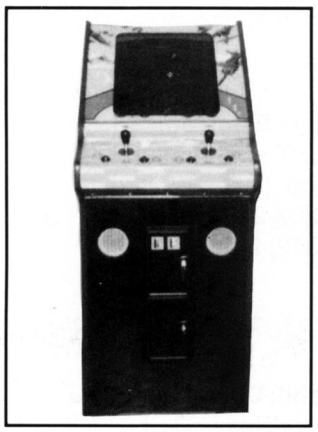
Lo Pro
Jaleco

Low-profile cabinet 48" wide. Features include 19" Wells-Gardner universal monitor that rotates from horizontal to vertical display, JAMMA cable and connectors, easy-access monitor adjustment board, and control harness that fits any one-, two-, or three-button game with one or two joysticks.

MH C1025
MH Associates

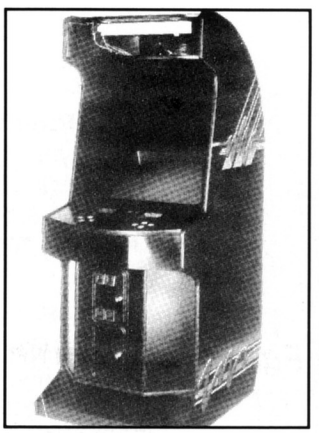
Standard upright with 19" Hantarex monitor and control panel drawer system that allows quick access to components. Construction of plywood and high-quality particle board covered with thermofused melamine finish. The monitor can be interchanged with the C1030.

Cabinets

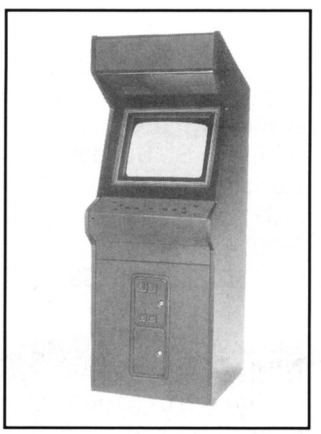


MH C1030
MH Associates
Standard upright with 24'' Hantarex monitor and the same control panel features as the C1025. Dimensions: 73'' high, 32-5/8'' deep, and 24-7/16'' wide. The slightly narrower cabinet means more games can be transported together in common truck configurations.

MH Low Boy
MH Associates
A cabinet that shares the same features as its bigger brothers, with the exception being no marquee or header. Dimensions: 57'' high, 32-5/8'' deep, and 24-7/16'' wide. MH will introduce a cocktail table this spring with a choice of either 19'' or 24'' color monitor.



Variflex
Midway Mfg.
Upright cabinet with these features: control panel for two-player stations; adjustable-viewing, angled 25'' monitor; front access slide-out; vertical-mounted electronics tray; chip-resistant, vinyl-coated plywood cabinet construction; lexan control panel overlay, and contoured marquee.



Model MV-19
Video Systems
Upright video cabinet with the ''works-in-a-drawer'', 19'' color monitor, and 6-1/2'' control panel. Construction is of Decolam over particle board (Decolam is a scratch-resistant, hard vinyl covering). The monitor is from Sharp Image.

VIDEO SYSTEMS

Model MV-19A
Video Systems
An upright video cabinet to accommodate multi-player games, it offers a 19'' monitor and 8'' control panel. Other features are the same as the MV-19. Also available: Model MV-27, an upright with 27'' monitor and 8'' control panel.

OmniFlex
Williams Electronics
A cabinet that offers four-player/two-player optional control panel design with lexan overlay, vertical and horizontal 25'' monitor mounting, and bass-reflex tuned port speaker system. Other features include standard over/under coin door and vinyl-coated plywood cabinet construction.

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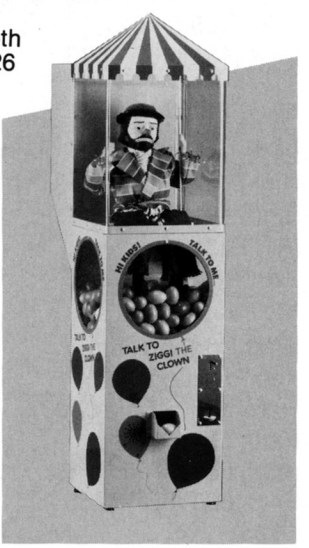

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(CHUCKLES THE CLOWN)

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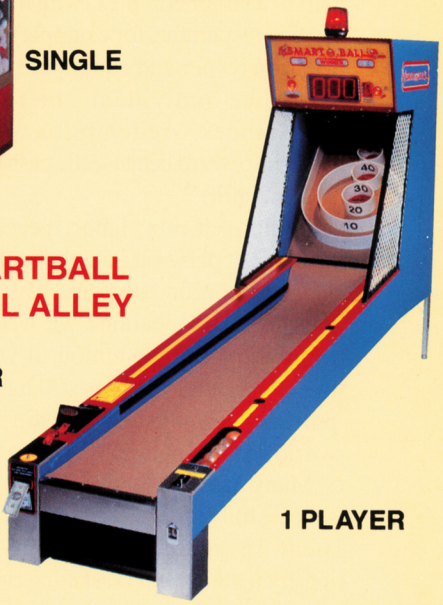
4 PLAYER



1 PLAYER

4 PLAYER

1 PLAYER

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WORLDWIDE EXPORT SPECIALISTS

John Margold

Answering some vital questions

When we think of a redemption center, we usually conjure up thoughts of a self-contained family amusement center—a basic 2,500-square-foot arcade incorporating up to 10 redemption games and a small display case in addition to the mix of video games and pinballs.

We also associate redemption centers as part of a larger complex (with mini-golf or a pizza restaurant, for example) where the location owner and equipment owner are the same individual. In these circumstances, redemption is fairly straightforward because the cash box is not being "split."

Equipment mix, labor, percentaging, and cost of prizes are all controlled by the same person or company. Even though these are the locations we traditionally associate with redemption, if you do not own an arcade, you may still have the opportunity to get involved in the profitable world of redemption.

Many street operators have begun to successfully operate redemption equipment in selected locations. Bowling/recreation centers, skating rinks, truck stops, birthday party rooms, sports bars, and go-kart tracks are all possible redemption locations. Since these are not operator-controlled locations, additional planning is necessary. Many questions need to be answered before embarking on this type of venture.

Obviously, the first question that comes to mind is the split. The industry standard with an amusement game seems to be affixed at a 50/50 split between location and operator. Happily, many progressive and aggressive operators have convinced their locations that a 60/40 split in favor of the operator is more realistic considering escalating prices and their services offered.

"There is a great deal to think about when you get involved in street location redemption."

With redemption equipment there is a product cost that must be considered. Other concerns that exist when you bring redemption into a street location include the cost of the tickets, additional labor (who is to pay the employee manning the redemption counter?), security responsibilities for the tickets and prizes, and purchasing responsibilities for the prizes.

At first glance these considerations may look overwhelming. However, if you believe the location traffic warrants the investment in redemption equipment, then overcoming these obstacles will be worth the effort.

It will be more important than ever to develop a good rapport with the location. You can't limit your involvement to sending a route man in once a week to collect the quarters. Redemption is merchandising; successful redemption requires a knowledge of the customers, and the location management is the expert.

Are your players mostly adults or children? Are they white or blue collar workers? Are they sports fans or rock n' roll animals? He will be able to give you the answers to these vital questions. Sit down and talk with him. You must also be prepared to be open and frank. Tell him you believe that the location's revenues may significantly increase by introducing redemption, but many questions need to be addressed before you are willing to make the investment. He should understand and be willing to help you answer your questions. At the same time he can confront you with any concerns he may have.

One thing you will have to agree on is percentaging. There are several ways to address it; the simplest way is to modify the 50/50 split into a one-third/one-third/one-third proposition. One-third will be earmarked for the prizes, tickets, and related costs, while the other two-thirds is split between the operator and the location. Although this may be the simplest, it may not always be the most equitable.

Another option would be a monthly accounting of the actual prize and ticket costs. This money could come off the top, with the balance of the collection being split between operator and location. In

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order for any system to work, it must be fair to both companies.

While trying to balance the new costs associated with redemption, the operator should keep in mind that he must be fair. If the operator gives up too much, he can't stay in business. If the location gives up too much, he will be looking to get rid of the operator. You must settle on a percentage that offers a "win/win" situation.

Another consideration concerns storage. While most street locations will provide a secure area for merchandise stock and extra tickets, this should be agreed upon.

Where and when tickets can be redeemed is another thing to discuss. In a small location, a sign on the merchandise display counter announcing the hours when tickets may be redeemed is often sufficient (i.e., tickets may be redeemed for prizes between 4 and 7 p.m. nightly and from noon to 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday).

The operator would send an employee to work the location during these hours. In other locations an employee of the location may have a key to the prize counter. Whatever system you use, the redeemed tickets should be saved until the location owner and the operator can confirm the count. This should be done weekly.

"Many street operators have begun to successfully operate redemption equipment in selected locations."

Prize inventory should also be a joint venture and should be taken monthly. Which company will be responsible for inventory shortages should be agreed upon from the beginning. Also, if either company's cost of labor is to be applied against the redemption revenue, this should be decided up front. A written agreement detailing these items should be signed before you order your first game or buy your first snap bracelet.

There is a great deal to think about when you get involved in street location redemption. However, the rewards can be great. Redemption opens up a new player base. Young players and adult players will increase your revenues. A well-stocked redemption prize counter will encourage customer loyalty.

If you have a location on your route that is prime for redemption, but you have been hesitant to get involved, give it some serious thought. Be well-prepared when you make an appointment to talk with the location owner. If you plan well and make a good deal with the location owner, this location may become one of your best. □

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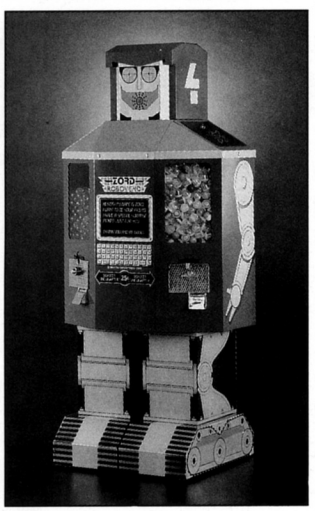

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Bonnie Theard

Maine takes giant steps toward gaming legislation

In a short period of time the operators of Maine have organized into a cohesive unit with the primary purpose of obtaining legislation favorable to one of their major interests: legal video gaming. Other issues that impact on the music, games, and vending industry are of concern to these operators, who recently formed the Maine Gaming Association (MGA).

Difficult economic times have been a factor in the number of states considering legal video gaming. Maine is one of many looking for solutions to economic woes.

Back in December 1990, this column reported that Maine had begun a "grass roots" effort to bring people together to work toward a video lottery. Early meetings in October and November 1990 blossomed into a well-organized association that grows daily.

According to MGA's new executive director, David Kerry, "Response to our membership drive has been excellent. Over 50 members joined the first week alone; there are seven original charter members. We expect to have several hundred members in the association soon."

Kerry detailed MGA's plans for the year, starting with the engagement of several lobbyists: Dick Davies, former legislative director for former Gov. Joseph Brennan; John Turner, a specialist in background development; and Greg Nadeau, a veteran of 10 years in the Maine Legislature who served his last two terms on the Appropriations and Economic Development Committee.

Kerry himself served one term in the state Senate and was a former district director for Brennan when he served as a congressman.

Stated Kerry, "We are currently working to enact legislation to allow electronic video credit games. There are other issues out there as well; operators are interested in any legislative action affecting their businesses."

Sen. Jerad Conley (D) of Portland is sponsoring the MGA bill. Co-sponsors include Rep. Dan Gwadosky (D), house majority leader; Rep. Albert Stevens (R); and Rep. Beverly Daggett (D). Both Stevens and Daggett are on the Legal Affairs Committee.

The bill, which must go through this committee and then to the full legislature, would be an amendment to the present state gambling statutes. Current gaming activities in Maine include harness racing, Lotto America, Mega Bucks, and charity bingo. The legislative session started Jan. 3 and continues through June 15.

MGA is generally following the South Dakota video lottery structure, with some modifications. The Maine proposal includes these points:

1. Machine placement limited to establishments with a license to sell liquor for consumption on the premises. (The legal drinking age is 21.)

2. Three machines per location.

3. Maximum wager, $2.

4. Maximum prize, no less than $800 and no more than $1,000.

5. Random payout, 80 percent minimum.

6. Proceeds after player payouts to be divided in this fashion: for the first and second year—operator and location receive 37.5 percent each, the state receives 25 percent; third and fourth year—operator and location receive 36.5 percent, the state receives 27 percent; fifth and sixth year—operator and location receive 35 percent, the state receives 30 percent. In subsequent years (from the seventh year on) proceeds after player payouts would be divided into equal thirds.

The above structure is a nod to operators, who must factor in the start-up costs for equipment and technical staffing once a new law is passed.

7. No vertical integration. (Operators cannot distribute, manufacturers cannot operate, etc.)

8. Accountability through a central computer system.

9. Program administered by the licensing division of the Maine State Police, which now oversees all gaming activities in the state. This governing body would approve every licensed machine.

"All the people working on this bill have impeccable reputations."

10. Games not connected to the central computer system would not be tolerated.

"The major selling point of our proposed bill is the state-of-the-art computer system that would be housed in the State Police barracks," said Kerry. "The State Police could batch poll at any given time and know exactly what's happening on every machine in the state. There would never be any question of proper accountability. The computer system lends the program great integrity.

"All of the legislators we've spoken with have been open," said Kerry. "We're following all the correct procedures. All the people working on this bill have impeccable reputations."

Newly elected Gov. Jock McKernan has given no indication as to his disposition on this proposed legislation.

Other states involved in similar efforts are continuing to press for legal video gaming as the 1991 legislative sessions continue. Industry members are anxiously awaiting positive news this year on this important topic. □

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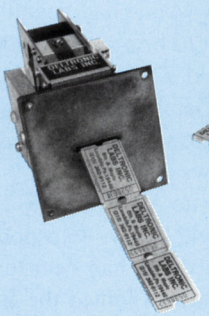

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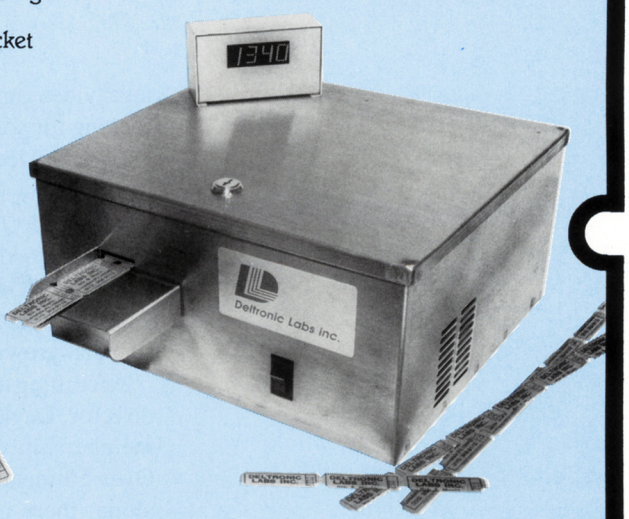

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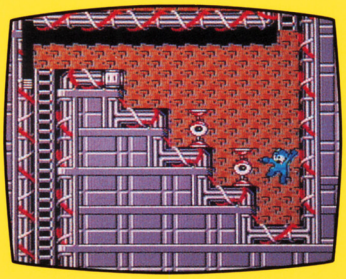

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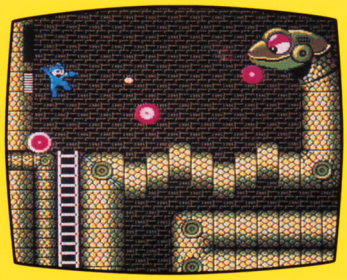

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Cocktail tables and seized copycat games

Play Meter's March 1981 issue was devoted to cocktail table games, which were becoming quite popular. We featured Sol Tabb, a big operator of cocktail tables, as the "Coinman of the Month." He said that even location owners who were down on games often liked the idea of a game that could double as a table. He said, "Cocktail tables open up so many different types of locations now that it's hard to count them all."

Another article, "Packaging Games with Locations in Mind," stressed the importance of packaging the product to attract locations. It stated, "The cocktail table is another form of packaging coin-op amusement equipment. The cocktail table is designed to open the door to locations that previously turned thumbs-down on the idea of games."

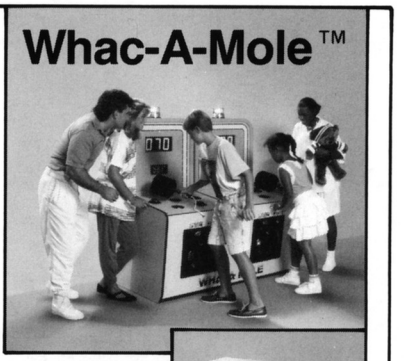
Midway Manufacturing Co. won a major battle in protecting rights to video game products with an administrative law judge's ruling that producers' trademarks were valid for *Galaxian* and that it was a copyrightable game. The ramifications of this ruling would set a legal precedent for future copyright problems.

Midway's complaint sought to obtain an order to exclude the entry of certain imported video games and game kits into the United States, and sought cease and desist orders against a number of individual companies infringing on these rights.

The Ohio Music and Amusement Association was preparing for an appeals court challenge of a lower court ruling that was in favor of video poker games. The association said in a lengthy legal brief that the lower court had erred and that, in fact, "electronic draw poker machines are schemes of chance and fall within the Ohio statute as gambling devices."

In other industry news, 10 years ago Jim Newlander joined D. Gottlieb & Co. as a regional sales manager, Fred Skor was named president and chief operating officer of World Wide Distributing, Bally was granted licenses to sell gaming equipment in Atlantic City and to operate its hotel/casino on the boardwalk, and Williams Electronics became the first manufacturer to successfully oust from a trade show an alleged copycat game. The show was the ATE; the game was *Defender*.

In his Critic's Corner column, Roger Sharpe rated Bally's *Frontier* and Gottlieb's *Force II*. New products included *Zero Hour* by Universal U.S.A., *New York, New York* by Gottlieb, *Space Firebird* by Gremlin, *The End* by Gremlin, *Rally-X* by Midway, and the *Space Invaders* trimline version by Midway. □



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James R. Maida

Machine testing: the necessary evil

My first exposure to Play Meter magazine was through its capable news editor, Chris Caire. I enjoy reading his infamous "Last Word" column on a monthly basis.

After reading quite a few issues, it appears to me that this publication is endeavoring to cover all areas of the amusement field, including video lottery, and doing it quite well. Having answered the request of managing editor Bonnie Theard to write a monthly column on electronic video devices from a regulatory testing standpoint, I have put together my initial column on the electronic testing of video gaming devices.

Each month, I hope to provide some insight into methods of testing video lottery machines, along with exploring the pros and cons of regulatory schemes concerning legalized video machine specifications. In this inaugural column, I will try to lay the foundation for the necessity of machine testing and our "clearing house" approach at Gaming Laboratories International.

Game testing not new

Electronic gaming device testing, whether it be casino games or video lottery devices, is as old as the legalized market itself. While machine testing was largely impossible when devices were mechanical, the dawn of microprocessor-controlled systems lent a new complexity to the ongoing problem of quality assurance and prevention against tampering.

In the mid-1980s, the Nevada and New Jersey Gaming Commissions instituted electronic testing laboratories to test the onslaught of new devices. In 1987, Gaming Laboratories International Inc. was formed to act as a "clearing house" for all electronic device testing in states that had not, to date, established testing criteria.

Since 1987, the gaming test laboratory has been certifying programs and attempting to implement standardized machine specifications, so that all programs approved by the laboratory can be used nationwide, instead of being approved for certain localities based on local law.

"Today, all legalized gaming jurisdictions require machine testing prior to licensing machines for use."

Initially, a cursory view was taken of testing. Machines were reviewed simply on whether or not *outside* forces could tamper with the devices during play to achieve a desired result. These included moving the reels during play with wires and other instruments and static discharge shocking devices to "disorient" the machines from performing correctly. Potential cheats have tried everything from magnets (thinking they had effect, I guess) to drenching machines in water.

The onslaught of video gaming brought new problems. Computer boards and programs were not only controlling the video display but the manner in which cards were being shuffled, dealt, and displayed on the screen. Many players wondered: "If I need one card for a royal flush, will the machine know this and not allow me to get it?" In some cases, the answer was a resounding YES!

As machine testing became more computerized, we determined that a critical review of all software that drives the game was needed to determine if the machine was playing according to the laws enacted in that particular jurisdiction.

Questions of machine randomness, calculations of pay-back percentages, and identification of devices which cannot properly distinguish between a straight flush and royal flush became forefront in the minds of regulators around the country. High-tech computerized devices called "emulators" became a common way to evaluate, on a line by line basis, the logic of the video game software.

Today, all legalized gaming jurisdictions require machine testing prior to licensing machines for use. This requirement fosters two results: first, state governments must be completely assured that electronic video devices are certified not to malfunction on a regular basis, which will maintain the overall integrity of the gaming in that jurisdiction. Meter readings must be accurate to correctly calculate the state's share of the revenue.

Secondly, most manufacturers actually

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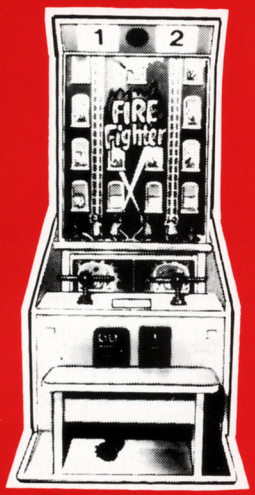

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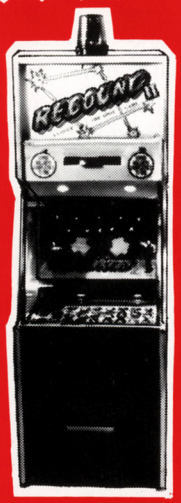

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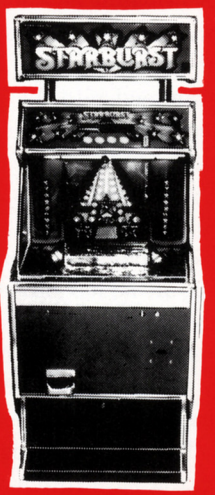

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favor machine testing in order to keep the "playing field" level. Nationally licensed manufacturers shy away from states without organized testing, for good reason. While they must abide by rules to keep licenses in other states from being questioned, unlicensed manufacturers will have an unfair advantage. If all devices work in a legally documented way, the sales orders will be based on machine characteristics, not some illegal "hidden agenda" within the machine.

I consider the machine testing phase to be "the required proving ground." While testing requires a slightly longer time frame between sales agreement and delivery, the Gaming Laboratory tries to make the process as non-antagonistic as is possible. We get no pleasure from failing devices. Rather, it is our sincere goal that they pass the first round of testing. Then manufacturers can develop more software, and warehousing costs associated with delayed delivery can be greatly diminished.

The sad fact is that 40 percent of all devices submitted for testing fail. While most failures can be corrected by minor adjustments that challenge engineering departments for 24 hours or less, some errors go directly to the integrity of the gaming device. Pay-out errors are rampant.

We see joker poker games which cannot differentiate between flushes, royal flushes, and straight flushes; electronic meters that fail to increment; and mechanical metering failures before the tests are even an hour old. Some devices will accidentally (?) zero the credits tally when the credit meter on the screen exceeds a certain amount. Some others decrement beyond zero and cause a complete machine malfunction. The list of documented problems goes on and on. We never know what to expect when we hook the device to the testing apparatus.

Protecting operators and manufacturers

Protecting operators is also critical to our function. Most operators buy equipment based on show reviews or other private sales meetings. An operator has no way of knowing exactly what is programmed into the poker device he is receiving, nor should he care. He does know, and certainly cares, when a patron is screaming that his 2,500 credits vanished into thin air while playing the device.

Although the operator may pay the player, he has probably lost a customer and word will circulate that a certain model of machine is not operating correctly (or more accurately, the story will be that it stole the player's money).

The operator needs to be assured that once he buys a machine after it is tested and approved, the state will recognize it as being legal and his profits may begin to flow with little state intervention.

Lastly, the operator will be called on to remit tax payments based on play. Those machines that continuously overstate net profits will cost the operator profits.

Protecting manufacturers is another goal of the testing laboratory. Much state legislation is introduced each year with an ominous section called "machine specifications." This section, usually drafted by a lobbyist that represents one manufacturer or another, can define a "video lottery device" such that it is impossible for competitors (or even the represented party) to play or build.

In a specification reviewed recently for a Western state, I read that "a ticket printer must be locked in a separate compartment within the machine with no access to the outside." My obvious question: how can the ticket be printed and given to the player? It's an example of legislation going too far. The ultimate risk and potential disaster await those that place minimum and maximum percentage limits in state legislation. If the set limits are not pleasing to the public, time marches on until it can be rectified during the next legislative session.

Another important goal of the testing laboratory is to protect the future of legalized video gaming from adverse public perception. We constantly assure legislators that cheating on *approved* video lottery devices is almost impossible. We tell them that our actions are closely monitored by the industry and we do not play any electronic devices in any state in which we do business. We are not paid by manufacturers, operators, or distributors—not even a "free" dinner.

We must stay committed to being independent and impartial. The testing laboratory must "call it like we see it" no matter what the economic adversity to the particular manufacturer. As one Nebraska senator asked me last October, "Who watches you?" I responded, " The industry."

All eyes are clearly focused on the expansion of video lottery as well as other forms of gambling in 1991. In this age of budget shortfalls and large debts on a state level, the video lottery finally has a chance to promote tax revenue. Scandals, especially when electronic machines are manipulated, give the entire industry a "black eye." Our objective is to avert such detractions, or the future for public gaming will be destroyed. □

James R. Maida is the president and founder of Gaming Laboratories International Inc. The firm serves as the independent gaming test laboratory for some 12 state and provincial governments as well as 13 Indian communities in Minnesota, South Dakota, and Iowa.

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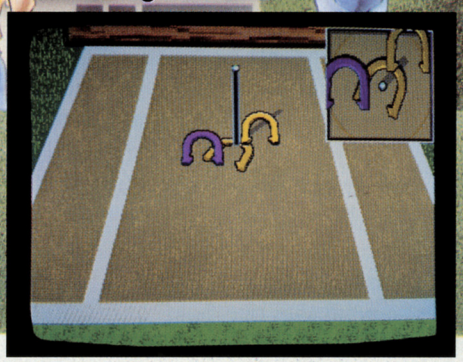

Optional "Beer Round" for bar and tavern locations.

Tom Yager

Car Hop: Premier's latest pinball

Sometimes looks can be deceiving. When you first walk up to a *Car Hop* machine, you are struck by some rather bland artwork and what appears to be a ho-hum playfield. I had been told to expect this game to be one of Premier's best recent efforts, but when I saw the game, I was disappointed. Is *this* what all the fuss was about? It wasn't until I pushed the "start" button that I saw the light!

This is a single-ball game, and Premier designers were obviously shooting for a pinball that brings back memories of the simpler games of the '50s and '60s. *Car Hop*'s playfield is, without a doubt, based on the "wide open spaces" school of design.

There's virtually nothing for the ball to knock into until you're in the top one-third of the playing surface. Even then, things don't seem very busy. But while *Car Hop* displays the trademark Premier economy of design, its software and features make the best use of limited resources that I've seen in ages.

The game's primary targets are two banks of five drop targets, angled in an inverted "V." When you start knocking them down, you get a surprise: each target you hit takes down the corresponding target on the opposite side. This is a simple effect, but fascinating to watch. What's more, during certain feature modes the targets rise and drop in software-controlled patterns. Again, I applaud the creative use of a simple device. By putting up patterns of targets, the software creates challenging and varying skill shots.

"A good location for this game is one that has room for only a single pinball. The sleepy artwork might not attract players away from other popular games."

In feature modes, the target banks are not linked, but the angle of the targets create opportunities for bank shots. These shots knock down the raised targets on one side, then bounce and drop (if your aim is true) the targets on the other side.

In a few cases, the game puts up a "split" pattern—the first and fifth targets in both banks. This is a particularly challenging shot, and the game makes the rewards sufficient to encourage players to keep trying until they get it right.

There is a third flipper mounted in an odd position, about halfway up on the right side. This flipper's best attributes are its perfect position for hitting the left bank of drop targets and its ability to trap a ball. Trapping can't be done consistently; the angle doesn't appear to be quite what it is for the main flippers. The upper flipper is also in the perfect spot to nail the machine's only spinner, which sits at one of the entrances to a left-side alley.

The game advertises one launch skill shot, but there are actually two. A full-power launch sends the ball up and around a tight loop. A more moderate pull stops short of the top of the loop and catches the ball on a wire fence, which guides it through a rollover lane. The second skill shot is the flashing spinner. Since both launch routes send the ball over the upper flipper, a perfect shot can send the spinner whirling for 100K or 200K points per revolution.

At the top-center of the game is a bullseye target, and again, Premier made the most of a simple invention. The bullseye is actually two targets: a thick center pin surrounded by a rectangular metal plate. An off-center hit will push the plate back, scoring an outer-bullseye value. Direct center hits depress the pin for

an inner bullseye. In feature modes, the bullseye target sounds a bell—a real *loud* bell—inside the cabinet. The bell can be disabled, but don't. Hitting that bullseye and clanging the bell is one of the game's most endearing features, but *Car Hop* has much more going for it than that.

There are two eject holes—deep ones similar to the one in *Vegas*—which are worthwhile targets. The slingshots rotate these among three award values: Mystery, Select-a-Feature, and Heat Wave. Select-a-Feature is one of those things Premier did right. It lets the player choose his own reward from a rolling menu by using the flipper buttons.

"The fabulous programming kept me in front of the game until I had to be thrown out."

Car Hop's Heat Wave feature mode is also hot stuff. For a timed period, playfield targets hand out either a fixed score or a number of degrees. The objective is to raise the thermometer lights on the backglass to the top—faster than the current record-holder. This is one of those times when the cabinet bell is active. Each bullseye hit awards two degrees and clangs the bell three times. It's a gas, and a voice repeatedly counsels you to "shoot the bullseye."

There are other feature modes, many keyed off completing patterns of drop targets, and the depth and ingenuity of the game's software keeps things jumping in general. I am happy to report that *Car Hop* is Premier's best in a long time—even among the best games from anyone in recent memory—but that's not to say it doesn't have a few things wrong with it.

The artwork, as I mentioned, is a disappointment. There are some games (like *Bugs Bunny*) whose art can draw that all-important first credit out of any passer-by. *Car Hop*, unfortunately, is saddled with lackluster backglass and playfield art that almost failed to draw me in—and I'll play anything once. This is an area that needs serious attention; had Premier done a better art design on the game, it might have been a leader.

Another problem is with the game's voices. They are scratchy and barely intelligible, and except for the occasional "shoot the bullseye," they lend nothing to the game. The music is very good, evoking the classic rock and roll feel of the '50s (in keeping with the game's motif), but the sound effects are a little dry. Except, that is, for the bell.

Drier still is the sound effect selection during *Car Hop*'s nostalgia mode. This sounds like a knock-out idea. The operator or player (the game can be programmed to let the player select) can play the game in a mode that divides all scores by 1,000 and sounds like what's supposed to be

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simulated electromechanical chimes, instead of the usual spacey fare.

The programming is right—chime pitches go from high to low as point values increase, and the number of chimes reflects the value of the target—but the sounds could hardly be mistaken by anyone as mechanical chimes. It can be done; I've heard the Yamaha sound chip put out realistic chime and bell sounds before. Premier's nostalgia mode should have been just the thing for disenchanted older players, but the sounds bring it down. Maybe it will appear again, done properly, in a later game.

If I had a talent for it, I'd re-do the game's artwork and sound effects (maybe even spring for a trio of *real* chimes) and put the game out under a different name. I'd wager it would fare better, but I still think it will do very well as it is.

Car Hop's programming is fabulous, if a bit confusing at first, and that's what kept me in front of the game until I had to be thrown out. Even having *Whirlwind*, among my all-time favorites, standing next to it couldn't lure me away. I played for a long time and still didn't manage to activate all the game's features. It's a good challenge for experienced players and great fun for infrequent or new players, who can just marvel at knocking down drop targets and ringing the bell.

Like most Premier games, the design delivers longer-than-average play time to all but the lowest tier of players. The game I played had a center post installed, and I'd say it added considerably to my game duration. I think play times will be more manageable without it. The average location should not install the post but instead set the game up with "medium" play difficulty. Be sure to let the player choose between nostalgia and modern modes. Even with its flaws, the choice (presented at the start of the first player's first ball) will almost certainly draw additional plays to satisfy player curiosity.

A good location for this game is one that has room for only a single pinball. If you have other current pins, *Car Hop*'s sleepy artwork may not attract players away from the likes of *FunHouse* or *The Simpsons*. However, I have made one observation: if a player watches *Car Hop* being played, he will play it and stay with it. If you put the game in a multi-pin location that has an attendant, you might encourage him to play it periodically when a suitable crowd gathers near the pinball corner.

"The game's software and features make the best use of limited resources that I've seen in ages."

Another approach might be to have the attendant occasionally "accidentally" leave a credit or two on the game. Savvy players will see that on the display and jump at the chance to get something for nothing—then pay their own way. You won't have to resort to measures like this for long if you have a regular crowd, but be imaginative; there are lots of ways to get people past that critical first play. After a short time, the machine will develop loyal fans. They'll do the rest of the work for you.

In a one-pin location, *Car Hop* will fend for itself. Its '50s music, mesmerizing playfield behavior, and knock-out programming offer proof that Premier can innovate—perhaps not on as grand a scale—with the best of them. I'll paraphrase the voice from the movie "Field of Dreams": "If you buy it, it will earn."

I would like to thank the patient and understanding folks at Commercial Music, a Premier distributor in Dallas. □

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HOT SINGLES

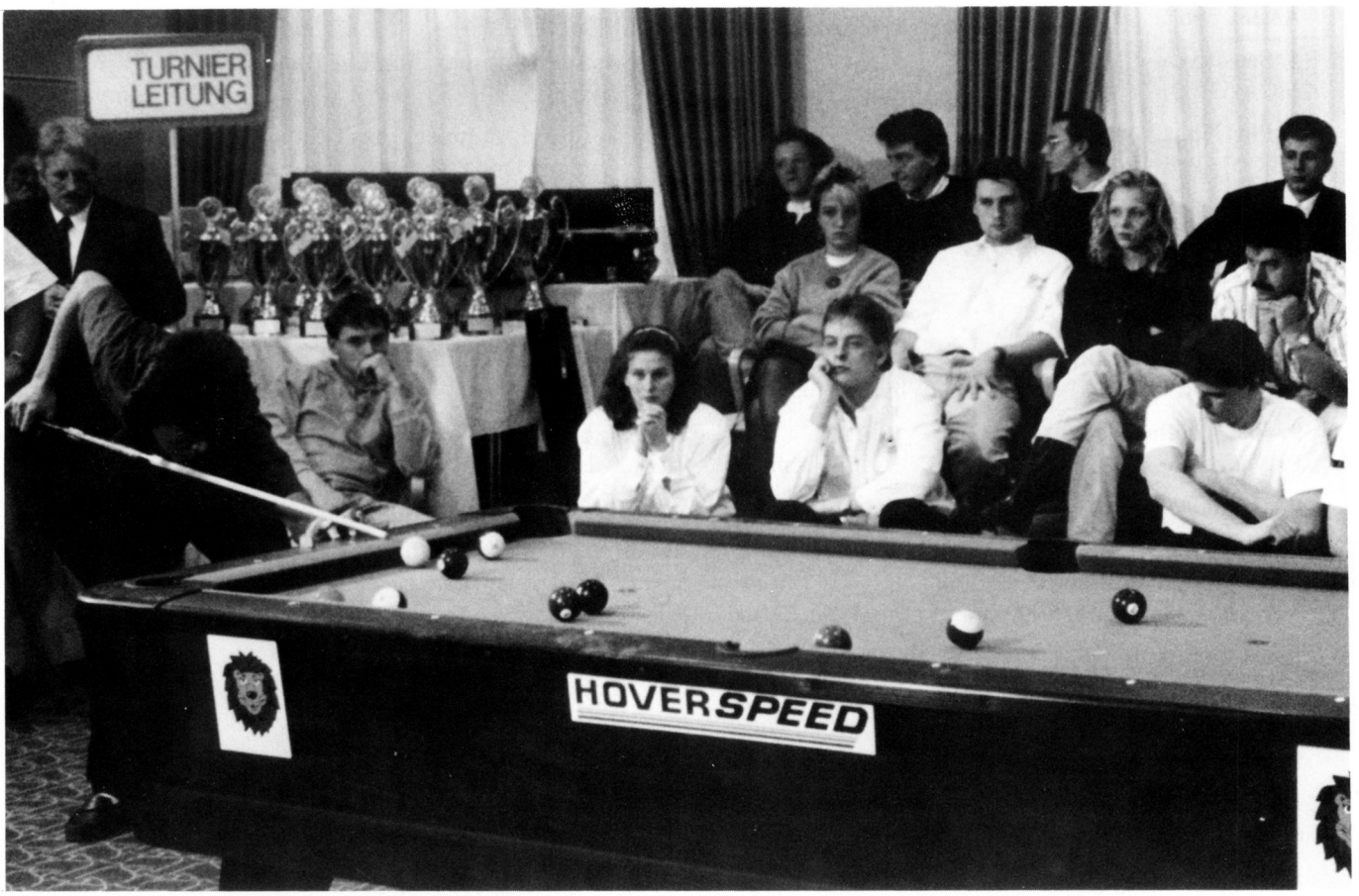
TITLE Label & Number/Distributing Label	ARTIST
1. The First Time Columbia 38-73502	Surface*
2. Gonna Make You Sweat Columbia 38-73604	C&C Music Factory
3. Love Will Never Do Without You A&M 1538	Janet Jackson*
4. Sensitivity MCA 53932	Ralph Tresvant*
5. Play That Funky Music SBK 07339	Vanilla Ice
6. After The Rain DGC 4-19667	Nelson*
7. I'm Not In Love Epic 34-73636	Will To Power*
8. All The Man That I Need Arista 2156	Whitney Houston*
9. Just Another Dream Polydor 877 962-4/PLG	Cathy Dennis*
10. High Enough Warner Bros. 4-19595	Damn Yankees*
11. I'll Give All My Love To You Vintertainment 4-64915/Elektra	Keith Sweat
12. Disappear Atlantic 4-87784	INXS*
13. Where Does My Heart Beat Now? Epic 34-73536	Celine Dion
14. One More Try Quality 15114	Timmy T.
15. Justify My Love Sire 4-19485/Warner Bros.	Madonna*
16. I Saw Red Columbia 38-73597	Warrant*
17. Someday Columbia 38-73561	Mariah Carey*
18. Love Makes Things Happen MCA 53973	Pebbles
19. Around The Way Girl Def Jam 38-73609/Columbia	L.L. Cool J
20. Wicked Game Reprise 4-19704	Chris Isaak*

* available on vinyl

COMPACT DISCS

TITLE Label & Number/Distributing Label	ARTIST
1. To The Extreme SBK 95325	Vanilla Ice
2. The Immaculate Collection Sire 26440/Warner Bros.	Madonna
3. Mariah Carey Columbia 45202	Mariah Carey
4. The Simpsons Sing The Blues Geffen 24308	The Simpsons
5. Please Hammer, Don't Hurt 'Em Capitol C2-92857	M.C. Hammer
6. I'm Your Baby Tonight Arista 8616	Whitney Houston
7. The Razor's Edge ATCO 91413	AC/DC
8. Wilson Phillips SBK 93745	Wilson Phillips
9. Some People's Lives Atlantic 82129	Bette Midler
10. Rhythm Of The Saints Warner Bros. 26098	Paul Simon
11. Serious Hits...Live! Atlantic 82157	Phil Collins
12. Listen Without Prejudice Columbia 46896	George Michael
13. Shake Your Money Maker Def American 24278	The Black Crowes
14. Rhythm Nation 1814 A&M 3920	Janet Jackson
15. Damn Yankees Warner Bros. 26159	Damn Yankees
16. The Future Uptown 10115/MCA	Guy
17. Ralph Tresvant MCA 10116	Ralph Tresvant
18. After The Rain DGC 24290/Geffen	Nelson
19. Recycler Warner Bros. 26265	ZZ Top
20. Five Man Acoustical Jam Geffen 24311	Tesla

Valley stages pool finals in Germany



A capacity crowd turned out to watch Germany's best pool players compete in the German VNEA finals.

Germany's VNEA pool league program for 1990 culminated with the recent finals in Dortmund, an old Westphalin city located in northeast Germany.

Officials from Valley Recreation Products say 1990 was the most successful year ever for the German VNEA, in terms of the number of teams competing and the media attention it generated. The finals were hosted by NSM, the German charter holder and Valley's distributor in that country.

The favored team throughout the tournament was Team Copacabana, which hails from the northern city of Kiel. They were unbeaten heading into the final matches, only to be upset in the first match of the finals by Team La Mirage of Hagen, Germany.

Team La Mirage went on to win the tournament, earning themselves a trip to Las Vegas for the 11th VNEA World Championships in late May. Accompanying the team to the United States will be NSM's Ulli Kunnecke and Gunter Schmidt. □

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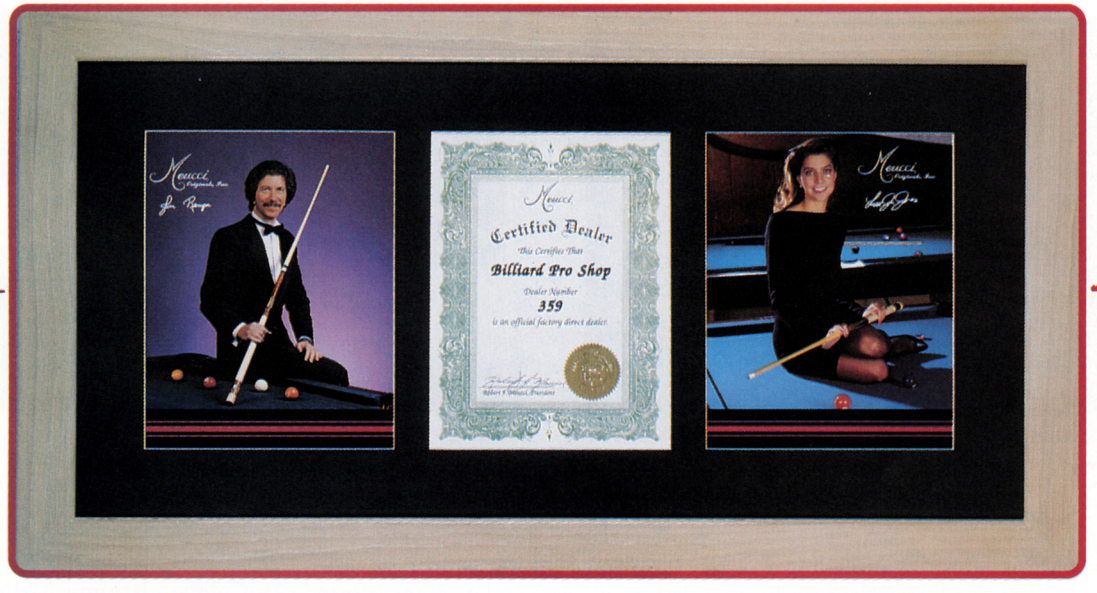

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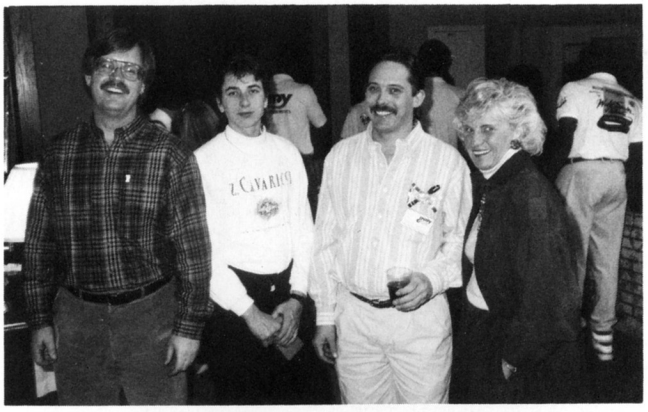
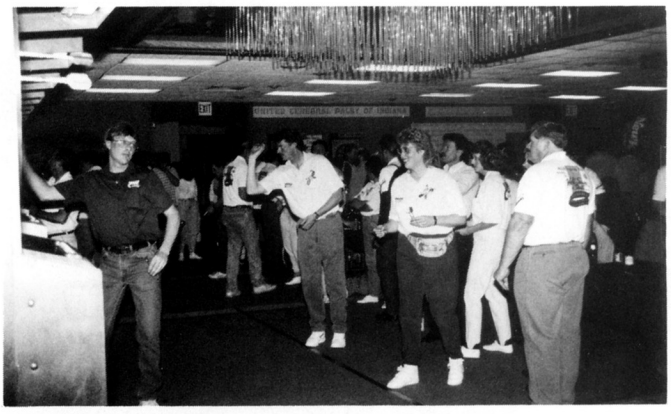
Merit stops in Indy

At the Player Congress, Mike Smythe (far left) and JoAnne Essex (c) of Indy Amusements join players.

Youth shoot participants display winner trophies.



From left: Dave Sheehan (J&J Dist.), Adam Guzman (Geno's Vending), Mike Smythe, and JoAnne Essex.



A celebrity shoot in progress.

Officials at Merit Industries are calling the 4th Annual Indy Darts Classic the most successful stop on the 1990-91 World Series of Darts tour—and it's little wonder why. The $10,000 event, held Jan. 25-27, drew 1,265 entries. It was co-sponsored by Indy Amusements, with J & J Distributors serving as cooperating sponsor.

Three thousand dollars was raised in the tournament's charity event, with the proceeds going to United Cerebral Palsy. A celebrity event featuring local radio and TV personalities was held on the tournament's first night. WTHR-TV's Ronnie Duncan was so impressed with the dart competition that he returned the next day with a film crew. The tournament footage was shown on the Sunday night sports segment.

The winners in the various categories include the following:

Men's Singles: 1st place: Roy Terronez; 2nd place: Terry Allen; 3rd place: Joe Beecroft.

Women's Singles: 1st place: Mary Margaret McGrath; 2nd place: Anne Fisher; 3rd place: Laurie ''Philly'' Philippi.

Men's Doubles: 1st place: Terry Mutton and Bruce Holmes; 2nd place: Gary Mawson and Thom Johnson; 3rd place: Patrick Faul and Joe Schmidz.

Women's Doubles: 1st place: Laurie ''Philly'' Philippi and Michelle Rueckl; 2nd place: Brenda Miller and Vicki Richards; 3rd place: Carol Merriman and Ginny Wehrman.

Four-Person Team: 1st place: Bruce Homes, Terry Mutton, Pat Faul, and Joe Schmidz; 2nd place: Todd Kurtz, Tom Gantner, Keith Lau, and Russ Nelson; 3rd place; Joe Beecroft, Bill Cantrell, Jimmy Damore, and Tom Tanberg Jr.

Mixed Triples: 1st place: Mary Margaret McGrath, Terry Mutton, and Bruce Holmes; 2nd place: Terry Pierce, George Ordel, and Steve Ruff; 3rd place: Angela Harper, Bill Gay, and Ray Terronez. □

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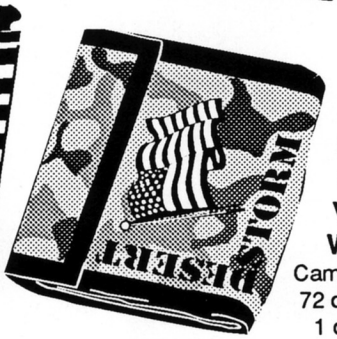

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Weissman defends national air hockey title

For the fourth consecutive year, Houston's Tim Weissman captured the U.S. Air Hockey Championships, held Dec. 8-9, 1990, at the Keystone Family Entertainment Center in Mountain View, Calif. Over $8,500 in cash and prizes was provided by co-sponsors Dynamo, Keystone, Aladdin's Castle, Golfland, and other local companies.

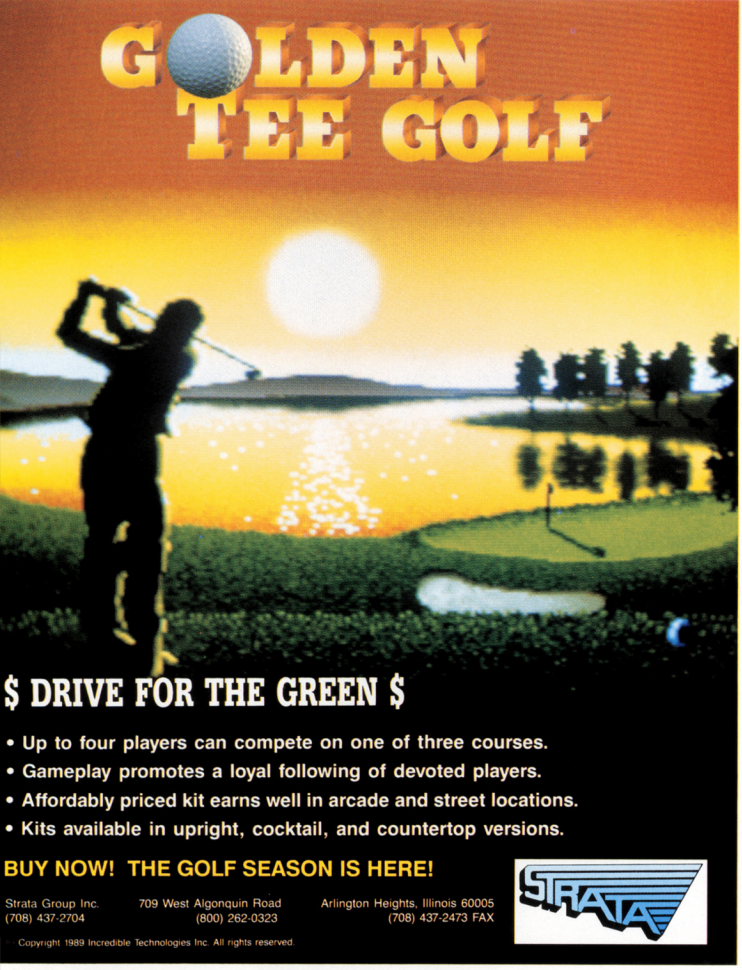
In the finals with Weissman was fellow Houstonian Phil Arnold, a long-time player and founder of the U.S. Air Hockey Association. In a hard-fought match, he defeated Mark Robbins of Boulder, Colo., who finished third. Fourth place went to Paul Marshall of Dallas; Vince Schappell of Houston took fifth.

Here are the other division winners: **Pro B Division:** Ahmad Chehab; **Expert Division:** George Anderson; **Novice Division:** Dustin Wood; **Women's Division:** Kara Klyn; **Junior Division:** Andy Lazaro.

The next Air Hockey Nationals will be in Houston in April. For a complete schedule of 1991 Dynamo-sponsored events, contact Mark Robbins at Dynamo, (800) 527-6054. □

Tim Weissman won the U.S. Air Hockey Championships for the fourth consecutive year.

The various division winners huddled together for this photo.



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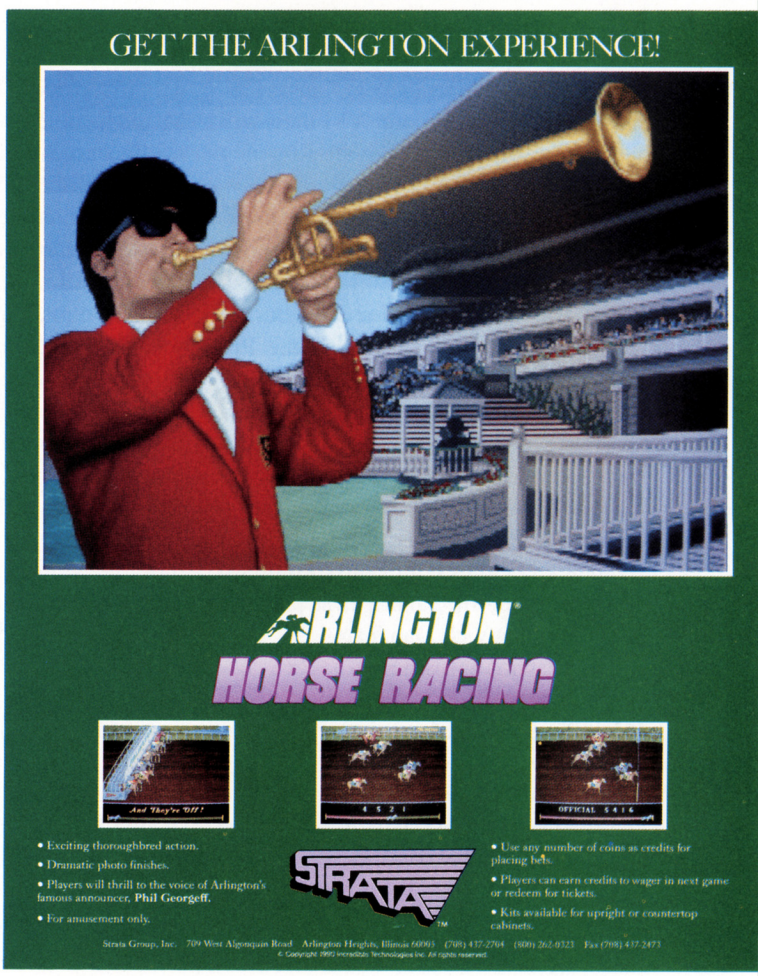

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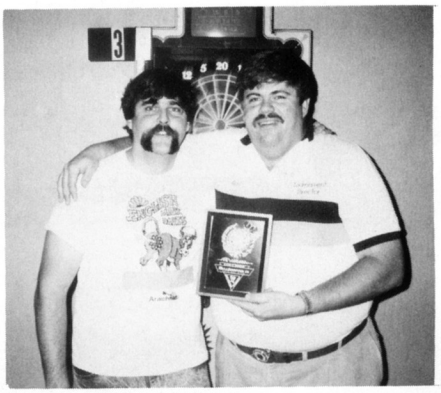
BullShooter VI travels to Kansas City and Houston



Wisconsin's Brian Burr with Arachnid tournament director Dave Schultz.

Nebraska's Pat Lanford with Arachnid official Tom Pace.

Houston winners Wade McDonald (r) and Barbie Woytasik with Arachnid's Tom Pace.

Texan Art Bouldin (r) and Arachnid official Steve Johnson.

Regional tournaments that precede Arachnid's BullShooter VI Championship were held recently in Kansas City and Houston. BullShooter VI Finals will be held in May at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare.

Over 600 players from Kansas, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, and Missouri attended the Kansas City $5,000 qualifier held Dec. 14-16. Top winners included Brian Burr of Onalaska, Wis., who captured the Pro Singles title. Pat Lanford of Omaha, Neb., won first place in Women's Singles and first place in Mixed Doubles with partner Dave Hunt of Runnells, Iowa.

Mary McGrath took second place in Women's Singles, second place in Women's Doubles with Emily Poulliard of Springfield, Ill., and a first place in Mixed Cricket with Dan Yates.

Bird Distributing of Lenexa, Kan., co-sponsored the event, which used *English Mark Darts* machines as the official dart game.

Competitors from all over the Lone Star State and neighboring states converged on Houston for a regional tournament held on Jan. 4-6. It was co-sponsored by H.A. Franz & Co.

Texans claimed most of the awards in this $5,000 event. Wade McDonald and Barbie Woytasik of Houston teamed to gain first place in both Mixed Cricket and Mixed Doubles. McDonald also took first in the Pro Singles category; Woytasik paired with Carol Stelter of Houston to win Women's Doubles.

Doug Martin and Tammy Legan of Pueblo, Colo., took second place in both Mixed Doubles and Mixed Cricket. Martin also took fourth place in Pro Singles and second place in Open Doubles with Allen Salazar of Pueblo. Legan won third place in Women's Singles and second place in Women's Doubles with partner Diana Woods of Pueblo.

Art Bouldin of LaPorte, Texas, was a multiple winner. He took first in Cricket Singles, second in Pro Singles, first in Open Doubles with partner Mike Hansen of LaPorte, and third in Mixed Cricket with partner Dee Olivares of Houston.

All first, second, and third place winners in the main events of all the tournaments received qualifying certificates to the BullShooter VI Finals. The schedule of regional competitions includes stops in Minnesota, Alabama, and Canada in March, Nevada and California in April. □

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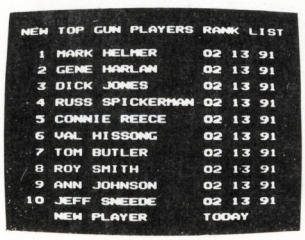

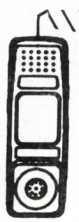

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Tornado championship draws 450 players

A record number of foosball players packed the Texas billiard hall Clicks for the Tornado $10,000 Texas State Championship, held Jan. 18-20 in Arlington.

Seventeen foosball tables were used for the occasion as 450 players crowded the location. Clicks has been hosting weekly tournaments for over 18 months; they are directed by local pro Steve Murray. Clicks manager Tom Barto reports that revenues have taken a giant leap as a result of the tournaments.

Said Barto, "Since the championship, I've noticed some of our dedicated pool players starting to play an occasional game of foosball. They really enjoyed the level of competition." A positive side effect has been return visits by out-of-state players who didn't know about Clicks before.

Added Barto, "I really like my location being known as the premier foos hall of Texas. And with championship weekend revenues up 63 percent, I can't wait to do it again."

Titles were won by local players and those from several Midwestern states. Minnesota player Steve Mohs captured the Forward Shoot-Out title, while Cajun foosers John Short and David Corcoran won Novice Doubles.

Tommy Addkission took singles in Novice and also won the 3500 Ltd. event with partner Bob Menn. Ted Nix and Rick Joiner of Oklahoma won Amateur Doubles, while another Oklahoma player, Casey Griffith, won Amateur Singles.

Colorado players took a number of top slots: Johnny Horton won Open Singles, while Tom Spears and Texan Tracy Sutton paired for Mixed Doubles.

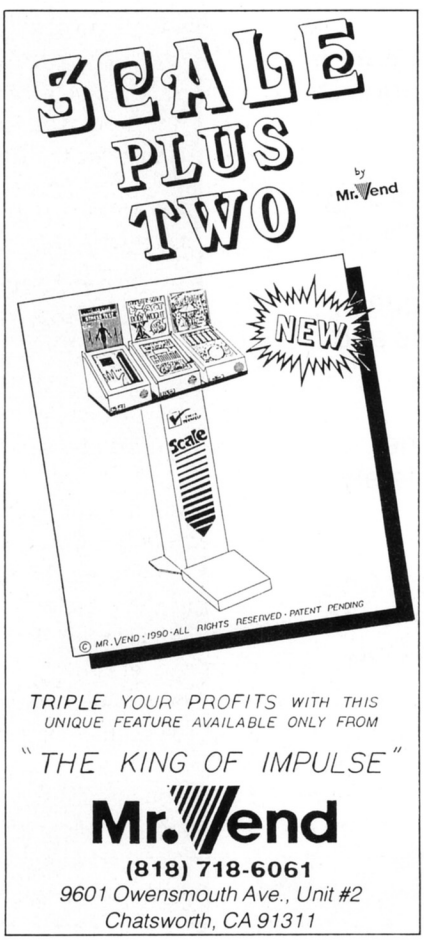
Women's events were dominated by Lone Star ladies, among them Rene Walls and Tracy Sutton who won Doubles. Gina Stacio captured the Singles title.

Texas pro Steve Murray paired with Tony Bacon of Illinois to win the Doubles title. They defeated current world champions Todd Loffredo and Gus Triveno. Daniel Smith of Texas won the Goalie War title.

Tornado has a full schedule of foosball activities set for the year. March is a record month, with events in Minneapolis (March 8-10), Mableton, Ga. (March 15-17), Littleton, Colo. (March 15-17), and Mountain View, Calif. (March 22-24).

There will also be a $25,000 U.S. Open in San Bernardino, Calif. (March 29-31), a $35,000 Masters Open in Minneapolis (May 24-27), a $30,000 National Championship in St. Louis (July 4-7), and a $75,000 World Championship in Dallas/Ft. Worth (Aug. 29-Sept. 3).

The first stop on the tour, the $30,000 Kickoff Classic, took place in Houston (Feb. 15-17). For more details on the 1991 tour, contact Dave Courington, (817) 572-3708. □



Mark Battersby

Cars and taxes: a potential deduction nightmare

Tax-deductible car expenses. That one phrase is usually enough to send the average coin-operated amusement machine manufacturers and operators rushing out to find an accountant. Even the most adventuresome usually limit themselves to a standard mileage rate rather than face the Internal Revenue Service—even though it may mean cheating themselves of legitimate tax savings.

All of those timid souls using the standard mileage rate received a welcome break when the IRS increased the standard mileage rate to 26 cents per business mile and, more recently, when the IRS allowed that 26 cents to be used for all business mileage driven—not just the first 15,000 miles. Plus, the IRS now permits a car expense deduction for driving to temporary work locations—a branch office, a local show, etc.

Everyone is already aware that the computation of the deduction for allowable car expenses can be very complex, due to the many rule changes over the past few years. Factor in the age and price of the car, whether the car is used by a self-employed individual or employee, and the type of driving done in that car. The rules then become almost incomprehensible—but not quite, fortunately.

First, every manufacturer and operator can deduct the expense of owning and operating any vehicle used in the coin-operated machine business—subject to some limitations. Any individual employee, self-employed or employee of his or her own coin-operated amusement machine business, is entitled to deduct the expenses of any car used for business purposes or in the production of income. This includes the cost of a leased car as well.

There are two options for the average operator or manufacturer. First, today the operator or manufacturer can claim a tax deduction of 26 cents for every mile driven for business purposes. Naturally, this deduction encompasses all of the routine expenses of car ownership and operation, including depreciation.

Complicating a fairly simple (although inadequate) deduction, that 26-cent figure includes 11 cents of depreciation. Thus, every business mile driven each year may be claimed at 26 cents per mile. The basis or book value of that car must, however, be reduced by 11 cents, the portion of that 26 cents the IRS figures as depreciation.

Furthermore, the IRS has decreed that a car is fully depreciated after 60,000 miles. Thus, when the operator has deducted 26 cents per mile for the first 60,000 miles, each mile then warrants a tax deduction of only 15 cents per mile.

Reducing the basis or book value by the 11 cents per mile depreciation figure means that more of the amount received from the eventual disposition of that vehicle will be taxable profit. This is unless, of course, the vehicle is swapped for another with the additional payment of cash, or "boot."

An alternative to the relatively simple standard mileage deduction is the actual expense method of computing the tax deduction for operating the vehicle. This other IRS-approved method of calculating business car expenses permits coin-operated machine operators and manufacturers to claim the actual expenses that pertain to business use.

Therefore, if a car is used exclusively in a trade or business, all of its operating costs may be claimed. If the car is used for both business and personal purposes, an operator must allocate the actual car ex-

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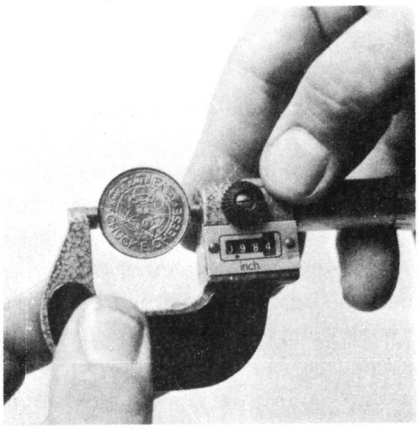

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TAX TIPS

penses between the business and personal use.

The cost of operating a car includes expenses for the following: gas and oil, lubrication and washing, repairs, insurance, and tires and supplies. It does not include the cost of the car itself. Like any business asset, the cost of the car must be depreciated.

year's depreciation is taken in the first year, regardless of when the vehicle is acquired. The other half is made up in the sixth year.

Annual limits are placed on the amount of MACRS deduction allowed. For instance, the MACRS deduction for cars used 50 percent or less for business purposes is calculated under the dreaded alternative

"The book value of the car must be reduced by 11 cents per mile, the portion of the 26 cents that the IRS figures as depreciation."

A coin-operated machine operator or manufacturer using the actual cost method of computing the car business expense is able to claim depreciation on the car's cost. For employees—even those of their own businesses—the allowable depreciation deduction is reported on Section D, Form 2106, as an employee business expense. Other operators and manufacturers use Form 4562 to compute their depreciation deductions.

The business use of a car is based on its purchase price. The purchase price, in turn, is the full price charged by a car dealer to the operator. It ordinarily includes any carrying charges that are not identifiable as either interest or insurance. Sales taxes paid on the business portion of depreciable property is included as part of the operator's depreciable basis in the property.

As already mentioned, if a car is acquired at least in part by the exchange of another vehicle previously used in business, special computations must be made to determine the business basis of the new car.

For all tax years beginning after 1980, the so-called "Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System" (MACRS) applies for determining depreciation. Under MACRS, a car is classified as five-year property. Its cost is recovered using the 200 percent declining-balance method, with a switch to the straight-line method at a time that maximizes the deduction.

In most cases, the half-year convention applies for purposes of computing depreciation on cars. Hence, one-half of a

MACRS (straight-line depreciation over the ADR class life of five years for cars).

Also, operators are barred from taking any Code Section 179 (first-year expensing) allowance or accelerated MACRS in the year a car is placed in service, unless the car is used more than 50 percent of the time for business. When MACRS deductions have been claimed for a car, and the car later fails to satisfy the "business use" test, recognition (or payback) of the tax deductions may be required.

Speaking of Code Section 179, special rules apply. It permits coin-operated machine operators and manufacturers to make a special election to expense or immediately write-off part of the cost of their depreciable business property. As a general rule, an operator is allowed to claim an annual maximum deduction of $10,000 as a Section 179 expense. The $10,000 amount is subject to reduction if over $200,000 in assets are placed in service in a given year.

Cars, unfortunately, are an exception to this general rule. Because there are limits imposed on the maximum amount that may be claimed in car depreciation—and the Section 179 expense is considered to be depreciation—the current $10,000 maximum amount does not apply. For cars placed in service after 1988, the maximum combined Section 179 expense deduction and depreciation deduction cannot exceed $2,660.

Although our tax rules refer to these depreciation limits as applying to "luxury automobiles," this term is somewhat misleading, because it gives the impression

that these limits apply only to very expensive cars. This is not the case. For example, for a car purchased after 1986, the luxury car limits will apply if the cost basis exceeds $12,800.

What's more, the luxury car limits apply to more than just passenger cars. The term "luxury car" refers to any four-wheeled vehicle that is manufactured primarily for use on public streets, roads, and highways, with an unloaded gross vehicle weight of 6,000 pounds or less. In the case of a van or truck, the definition is changed to delete the word "unloaded." Thus, a van or truck is considered a luxury car if it has a gross vehicle weight of 6,000 pounds or less.

"The cost of operating a car includes expenses for gas and oil, lubrication and washing, repairs, insurance, and tires and supplies. It does not include the cost of the car itself."

Operators or manufacturers who drive leased cars in their businesses are generally entitled to deduct current rental payments rather than depreciation. To prevent avoidance of the luxury car limitations that apply to owned cars, a parallel system of limitations has been put into effect for leased cars.

Under this system, the rental deduction is offset by an inclusion amount that depends on the fair market value of the car. As with the depreciation limits, a ceiling is imposed for cars first leased in 1989 or 1990 that have a fair market value of $12,800 to $13,400.

Finally, if an employer provides an employee with a car that can be used for personal purposes, the value of the car must be included in the employee's income as a fringe benefit. Fortunately, one of the methods used for valuing this fringe benefit is the cents-per-mile method.

Thus, the employer treats the car as a business expense, crediting the employee with a fringe benefit that must be included in his income. The employee files a Form 2106 (Employee Business Expenses) to claim a deduction for the business use of that fringe-benefit car. Again, this rule applies only to non-luxury cars.

Naturally, there are many more potential pitfalls in the area of automobile expense deductions. But, for the most part, the coin-operated machine operator or manufacturer who ignores the car expense tax deduction—or limits himself to only the standard mileage deduction—is cheating himself out of a tax deduction he's entitled to. □

A MESSAGE TO OPERATORS OF ATARI FINAL LAP VIDEO GAMES FROM NAMCO AND ATARI

The Atari Final Lap Video Game includes trademarks belonging to Philip Morris Incorporated. Upon learning of our use of their trademarks, Philip Morris raised objections. They do not want children to smoke. They have stated it is against their policy for any of their cigarette trademarks to be used on or in connection with children's games or other items intended for children.

Although our use of the trademarks was inadvertent, Namco Limited, as creator and manufacturer, Namco-America, Inc., and Atari Games Corporation, as manufacturer and distributor of the game, take responsibility for the use. Accordingly, we have made up conversion kits consisting of 10 Eproms with instructions for you to convert existing games into non-infringing games. The kits are free and will be shipped to you pre-paid.

We have placed advertisements for the past three months notifying you of the need to convert your Atari Final Lap games. We advised you to work through your distributor to get the necessary conversion kits. To assist you we offered you a $100.00 credit for each game converted valid against purchase of the new Final Lap 2 dedicated video game. Up to five $100 credits can be added together and applied to the purchase of each new Namco Final Lap 2 dedicated game.

At this point, if any of you are having any difficulties whatsoever in making the conversion please contact Namco-America, Inc. directly at (408) 496-6371, Extension 29, and you will be provided with a means for having the conversion made.

Namco, Namco-America and Atari join Philip Morris in urging you to cooperate with us in making the conversions. This will guarantee your ability to continue using the Atari Final Lap video game and the $100 credit will enable you to obtain new Namco Final Lap 2 dedicated video games at substantial savings.

Irving Blackman

Do you know what your business is worth?

On TV's "The Wheel of Fortune," contestants are often given only five seconds to give the right answer. OK, try this quick quiz: What's the most valuable asset you own? Hands down, almost every business owner answers, "My business."

Next question: what's your business worth? Silence. Yes, hands down, the most common answer is no answer—given five seconds or five months.

So what happens in real life when those same business owners or their families *must* value the business? It becomes necessary when gifts of the family business stock are given to the kids; upon death, when the business must be valued for estate tax purposes; or upon divorce, when valuation becomes an expensive legal battle.

Also, when buying or selling a business, the wrong valuation can rob you of hard-earned dollars. It can even cause your business to be sold to pay taxes.

There are three business valuation myths that I hear from business owners and their families when I consult with them. First, the business is worth book value (this value is usually too low). Second, the value is eight to 10 times after-tax earnings (this value is usually too high). Third, an S corporation is worth more than a C corporation (a corporation that pays income tax) because it doesn't pay federal income tax (this is just plain wrong; there's no difference in value).

Now watch this. There are two piles of stock in front of you. One is made up of the likes of Amoco, Beatrice Foods, and Ford, with a total value of $3 million. The second pile is the stock of your company, also worth $3 million by the "right" (even the IRS would agree) valuation method.

Which pile is worth more? It's the first pile. Just call your broker; in a few days, you can have $3 million in your hands, less the broker's commission. What about the value of the second pile, your company stock? Well, the fact is that the courts give you a *discount for general lack of marketability* of about 35 percent, or nearly $1 million. That will save your estate about $500,000 in estate taxes.

What's the lesson to be learned? If your business is one of your most valuable assets, get a professional valuation—now! Why? Even the smartest business owner will have a tough time getting the right value of his business. But that's no different than a professional business appraiser not knowing how to run the business you built from the ground up.

Here are two questions you should ask and answer at the beginning of every new year: "Should I be an S corporation?" and "What's my business worth?"

Social Security costs soaring

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Social Security costs. Employers and employees alike are weighed down by the burden of paying a tax that's gone out of sight.

Here are the facts for 1991. Read slowly; it's complicated. The Social Security wage base (used to compute the FICA tax) moves to $53,400—up from $51,300 in 1990. But here's something most people don't know: the Medicare tax is a component of the FICA tax. And that wage base is truly on its way to Mars.

How much for 1991? Try $125,000—again, up from the $51,300 in 1990. There is, however, one slight blessing: the rates are the same for 1991 as they were in 1990—7.65 percent for FICA and 1.45 percent for Medicare.

What's the exact damage to the employer for each employee earning $125,000 or more?

$53,400 x 7.65% =	$4,085.10
$71,600 x 1.45% =	$1,038.20
$125,000	$5,123.30

And don't forget, the employee gets hit for the same amount. Let's see, that's $5,123.30 each for the employer and the employee, or a total of $10,246.60 for such employee per year. Compare that to the total top cost of $2,808 in 1979, and you begin to realize how out of control Social Security/Medicare tax costs are. It's like a science fiction story—unbelievable.

Are you self-employed? The results are a tax tragedy. You must pay both ends of the tax—the employer's *and* employee's share. Simply put, just compute the employer's share (as illustrated above) and multiply by two. For example, the tax for

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a self-employed business owner (not incorporated) earning $125,000 or more is $10,246.60.

Like I said, it's out of sight! But there is one ray of sunshine in all this: you can deduct one-half of the self-employment tax. Tell your professional to see Section 164(f) of the Internal Revenue Code.

IRS boosts allowance for auto mileage

Are you tired of keeping records of the actual expenses you pay for the business use of your car? Take heart, because there is an easier way to do it. You can use the optional mileage allowance method when calculating auto expenses. If you use the optional method, keeping records of each expense is no longer necessary. Instead, just keep track of the business miles driven and use the IRS's mileage allowance.

There's more good news: the IRS recently announced an increase in the allowance to 27-1/2 cents per mile for 1991 (up from 26 cents in 1990). Under the old law (pre-1990), for some strange reason, the IRS only allowed 11 cents per mile in excess of 15,000 business miles. Now, the new rates for 1990 and 1991 can be used for *all* business miles driven.

Here's an example. Joe travels by car to sell his wares. He is tired of keeping records of gas receipts, repairs, and maintenance. Joe stopped keeping records of his actual expenses in June 1990. He only kept track of business miles—27,000 for all of 1990.

How does Joe figure his auto expense deduction for 1990? It's simple: multiply the 27,000 miles by 26 cents. Joe's deduction is $7,020. The same business miles in 1991 will produce a deduction of $7,425. Wait, there's more. In addition to the mileage deduction, Joe can deduct 100 percent of his business tolls and business parking.

The mileage allowance may or may not be your best tax bet. Take advantage of it only if you have neither the time nor the inclination to keep those expense receipts, or if past practice has proved that your actual expenses (including depreciation) are not more than the allowance. If your actual expenses are more than the allowance, you must decide if the reduced record-keeping (mileage only) is worth the lost tax dollars caused by the smaller deduction.

As usual, the IRS falls short when giving a tax break. The rate for a car operated in connection with charitable activities remains unchanged at 12 cents per mile. It's even worse for medical expense deductions, where the rate remains unchanged at nine cents per mile.

The tax story on zero coupon bonds

How do zero coupon bonds work? Though there are many types, the two most basic are taxable and non-taxable.

Let's use a Treasury zero coupon bond as an example of how all of them work. A Treasury zero coupon bond pays no interest to you directly. The interest you would normally receive is credited to your account every six months and continues to earn the interest rate in effect when you made the purchase.

However, since this is a taxable bond, you pay income tax on the interest—just as if it had been paid directly to you. If the bond had been a non-taxable bond (for example, a municipal zero coupon bond), no tax would have been due as interest was earned.

What's the advantage of a zero coupon bond? The answer is that you know in advance what the interest rate will be for the life of the bond. That rate is used to credit the next amount of interest earned on the original cost of the bond, plus all prior interest credited to you.

For example, say a Treasury zero coupon bond now pays eight-and-a-half percent interest and you buy a bond maturing in 2005, when your daughter will be 20. You can be sure the amount you invest today (about $28) will be worth $100 at maturity. If you want $100,000 for your daughter's college education in the year 2005, you can ensure that outcome by investing around $28,000 today.

What's the disadvantage? You must pay taxes on the interest that's credited to your account out of your own pocket.

And finally, what happens if you sell the bond before its maturity date? If interest rates go down, your bond will enjoy a capital gain, in addition to the normal increase due to reinvested interest. If interest rates rise, you will suffer a capital loss. Your tax basis for determining gain or loss at any point in time is the amount you paid, plus interest reinvested to the date of sale. □

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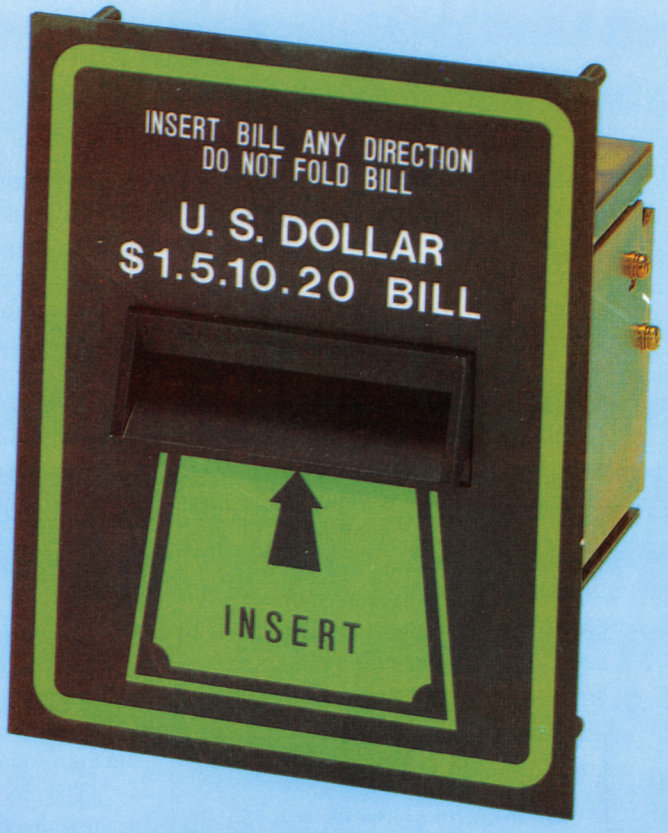

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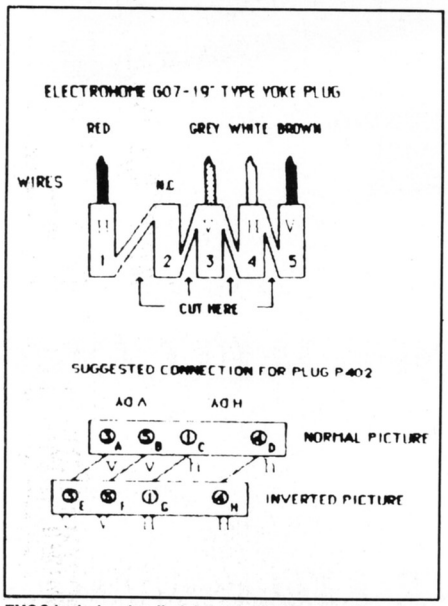
Randy Fromm

Replacement monitor chassis

It can be a real challenge to keep all your video game monitors working properly. Route sizes vary considerably, of course, but it is not unlikely that you are operating several hundred monitors or more at this very moment.

Some of them might be located in truck stops or convenience stores where the games are always on—24 hours a day, seven days a week. This all but guarantees a steady trickle of monitor repairs flowing through the shop. For some operators the steady flow of bad monitors can seem more like a flood.

Most operators have a "monitor guy" back at the shop that can repair most of them. But what about the monitors he cannot repair? One alternative is to send the really tough cases off for what is often an expensive and time-consuming repair.



EYGO includes detailed drawings that make yoke connections easier.

On the other hand, you might choose to junk the monitor board, saving it for its valuable spare parts. You will be left with what is essentially one-half of a monitor. The board is gone, but you still have a perfectly good picture tube, along with its attached yoke and convergence ring assembly. Instead of buying an entire replacement monitor, a new replacement chassis might be all you need!

I can think of at least a half-dozen other reasons for using a replacement monitor chassis:

1. Business is so good that you bought your competitor's route (including a shop full of late-model video games). On closer inspection, half of them seem to be missing their monitor boards.

2. The mechanic you just fired skipped town with a monitor board or two still in the trunk of his car.

3. A monitor board was somehow damaged beyond repair (dropped, broken during transportation, damaged during a video game break-in, vandalized, etc.).

4. Your existing monitor chassis has a bad high voltage unit and a replacement is unobtainable, or the cost of a replacement is nearly equal to the cost of a new chassis.

5. You want to equip each of your field service vehicles with spare chassis for immediate replacement in the field.

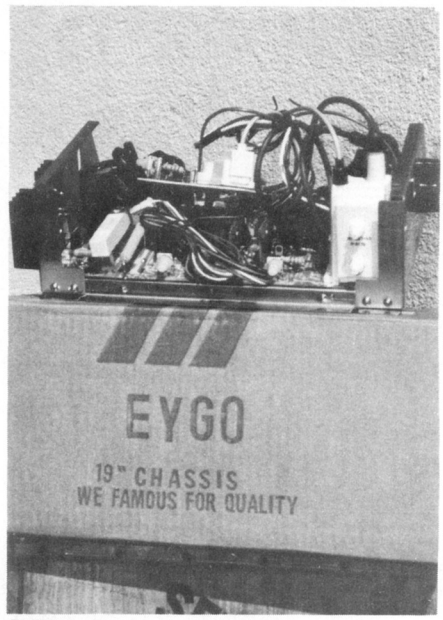
6. You cannot obtain a schematic diagram for an "oddball" monitor and/or are unable to repair it.

EYGO Company Ltd. manufacturers a line of monitor replacement chassis that can be used to replace most of the monitors that are in current use by operators. This includes older monitors like the Electrohome GO7 and newer models like Hantarex's MTC 9000.

At my request, EYGO sent five different monitor chassis to me for testing. There were two versions of the model 1520 chassis (for Electrohome 13" and 19") and three of the newer 1620 chassis (for Wells-Gardner 4600 and 4900 series chassis and MTC 9000). Differences in picture tubes and deflection yokes dictate the various versions of the chassis.

Connecting the chassis

The outputs of the monitor connect to the picture tube (the CRT). These outputs include the degaussing coil, the deflection



EYGO monitor chassis are relatively inexpensive.

signals to the yoke, the high voltage connection to the second anode, and installation of the "neck board" on the CRT. There is also a CRT ground that connects to the neck board. The only other connections are the inputs: the video (color) inputs, the sync input, and the 115 volt AC power.

Let's start by taking a look at the yoke connections. It's very important that you do not miswire the yoke connections. The yoke consists of two separate coils. One is called the horizontal deflection coil, which controls the left to right deflection of the electron rays in the CRT. The other, the vertical deflection coil, controls the up and down movement.

Although both coils in the yoke perform the same function, they are not the same from an electronic standpoint. The horizontal deflection coil has a much lower resistance than the vertical deflection coil. The horizontal deflection coil might have a resistance of only two to three ohms, while the vertical deflection coil may have anywhere from eight to 40 ohms depending on the monitor type.

The replacement chassis may come with a new yoke connector and harness, or you may have to cut apart your existing yoke connector to accommodate the new chassis. Use your meter to determine the resistance of each coil in the yoke. This will identify the vertical and horizontal deflection coils. If you cross-connect the yoke, you may damage the monitor.

The video and sync connector is not the same standard as in the United States. To use the new chassis, you must splice in the new connector and harness that is supplied by EYGO. I suggest that you leave the existing video connector in place and "Y-splice" the new harness. This way, you can retrofit an original chassis if necessary. The same should be done with the yoke connector if possible.

The 115 volt AC input is a two-blade, normal AC plug. You may want to install a standard two-pin AC input here to facilitate future monitor replacement if necessary.

Mounting the new chassis is not just a matter of sliding it in where the original monitor chassis came out. You will have to drill some new holes in the frame to accommodate the new chassis. In some cases, you may have to fashion a small bracket or otherwise "Mickey Mouse" it.

Performance

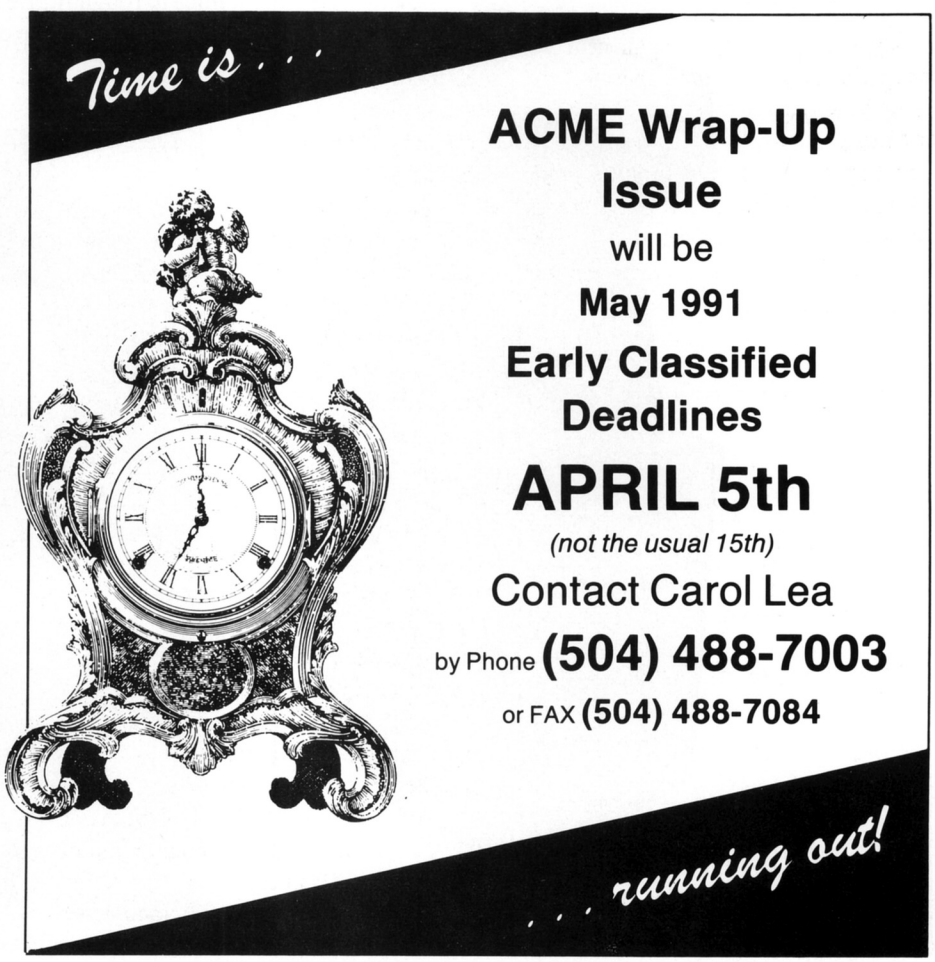
The model 1620 chassis worked just fine (all versions). I was able to connect it in just a few minutes and it fired right up. The picture looked perfect, but I played with the color adjustments just to see what they did. You have a huge range of adjustment with the controls. If anything, there may be too much range, as it is adjustable from completely off to extreme overdrive!

The picture was stable and synchronized perfectly. It should be noted that all the EYGO replacement chassis use composite negative sync only. Of course, virtually all modern games use this type of sync signal. EYGO provides complete instructions for sync inversion if you are replacing a monitor chassis in an older, positive sync game.

Synchronization with the model 1520 chassis is a different story, however. While the model 1520 worked fine during test when connected to good video and sync signals, it depends on getting a good sync signal in order to display a good raster. If the sync is not getting to the monitor from the computer in the game, you may get a collapsing sweep from the monitor. The picture will collapse on the screen. This may fool you into thinking that you have a monitor failure when perhaps the problem is simply a broken wire or bad sync. The Wells-Gardner K7000 series monitor is the same way. Without horizontal sync, the monitor will not even fire up!

Is a replacement chassis going to work for you? Perhaps, if you realize that there are certain limitations. It does take a bit of work to properly connect and install the new chassis, but they're cheap ($120 each and as little as $100 each if you buy a dozen).

For further information contact William Rivero at Bestco International Inc., 3649 Conflans, Suite 122, Irving, TX 75016; (214) 986-9008; FAX (214) 255-4007. □

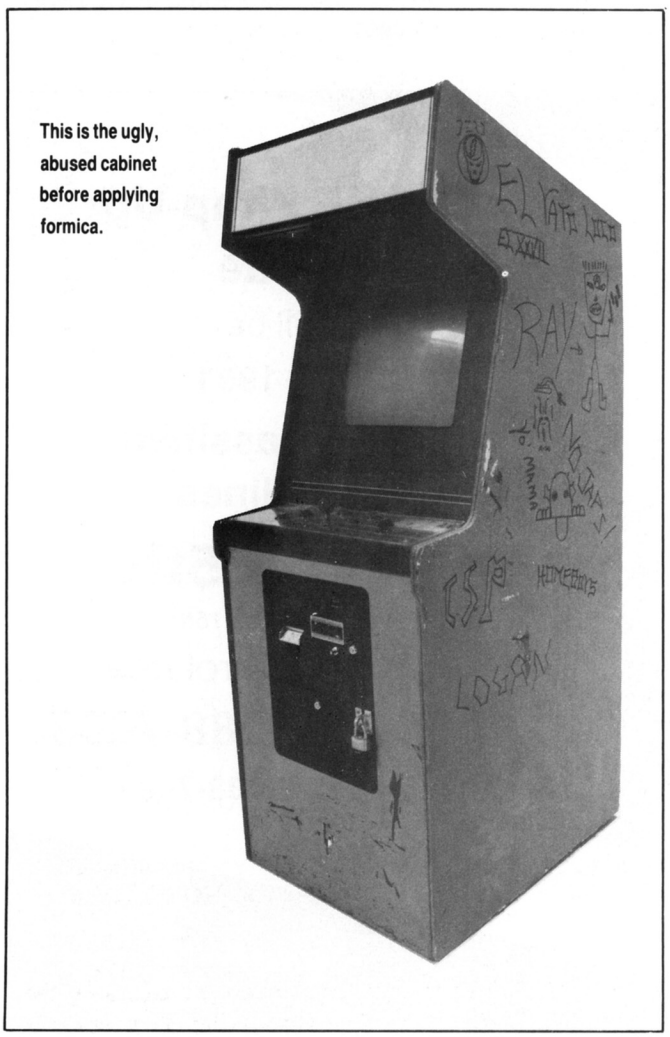


Randy Fromm

Formica magic

Video game cabinets are subjected to a lot of abuse. Gouges and graffiti can make even the newest games look old before their time.

A new paint job can go a long way toward sprucing up a damaged cabinet, but you won't believe how fantastic an old cabinet can look with brand new sides of formica! The whole process takes just a couple of hours (even for a first-timer!) and costs only $40 or $50 in materials.



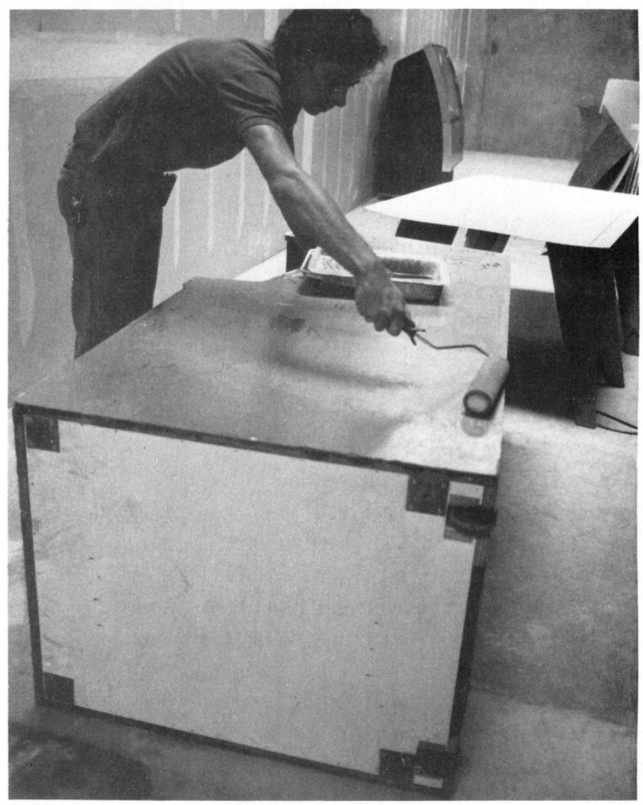
This is the ugly, abused cabinet before applying formica.

Strip the cabinet

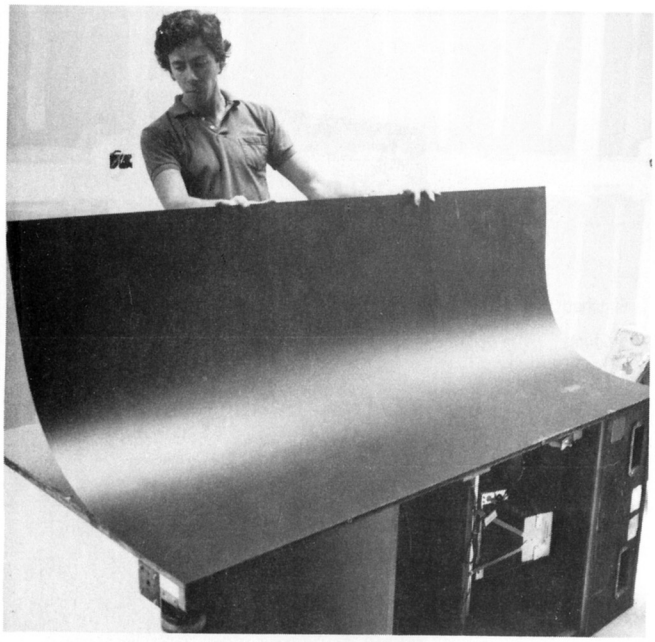
The first step is to strip the cabinet of the control panel, marquis, coin door, locks, hasps, etc. If there are bolts that protrude through the sides of the cabinet (such as those that might support a monitor bracket), these must also be removed.

The exterior of the game should be washed with detergent and rinsed. It is not necessary to sand the sides of the cabinet nor is it essential that all old decals be removed. Of course, flaking paint or easily peeled decals should be removed if it is easily possible. The T-molding should also be removed from the edges of the cabinet at this time.

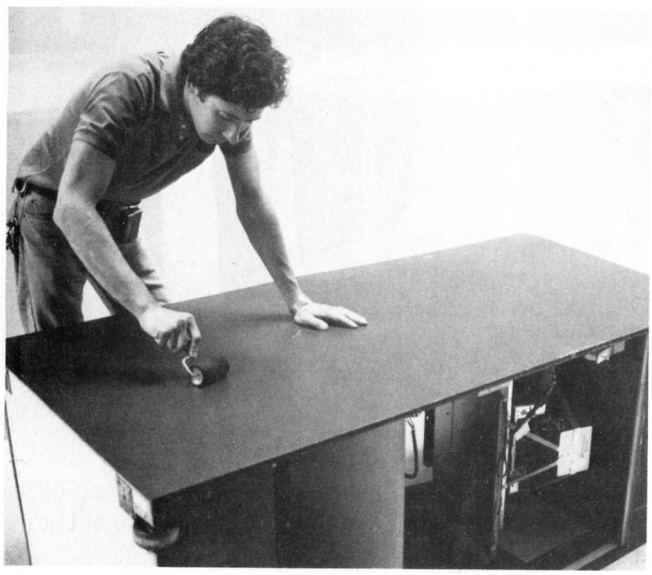
Place a couple of two-by-fours on the floor and lay the cabinet down on one side. Measure the side of the cabinet and cut the formica to rough fit. Be sure to leave at least three inches of extra material around the edges for "slop."



Apply contact cement to side of cabinet and formica sheet (on saw horses).



Carefully place formica sheet on cabinet.



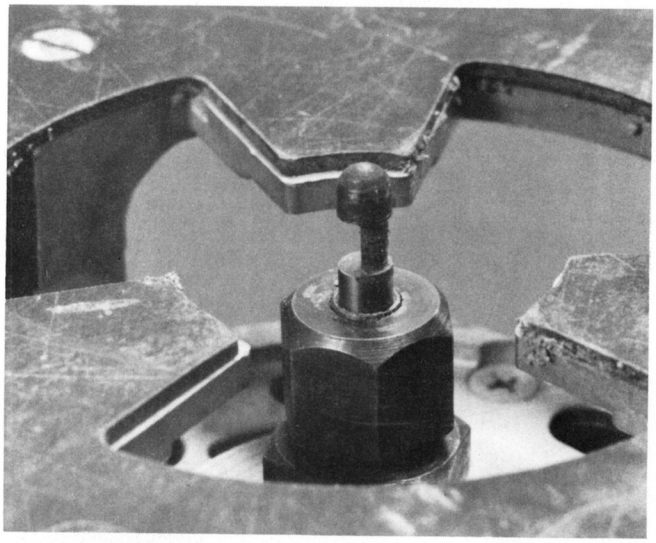
Use roller to press out any air bubbles.

Formica sheets can be cut with a table saw, scroll saw (jig saw), or similar tool. It is also possible to cut formica by scoring it heavily with a razor knife and "snapping" it as you would plexiglas.

Apply the glue

Use a roller or brush to apply a thin film of contact cement to both the formica sheet and the side of the cabinet. If you use a roller (as shown here), use an inexpensive one with short fibers. If you use a brush, you can keep it in a can of lacquer thinner between jobs and use it for many applications.

Use a router to cut away excess formica.



Close-up of "flush trimming" router bit.

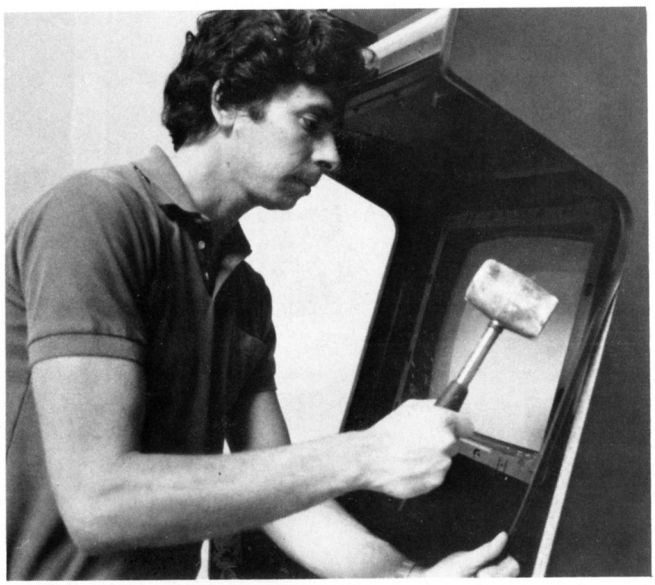
Do not use too much cement; a thin coat is best. Wait about 10 minutes for the cement to dry before you attempt to proceed with the installation. That's right! The cement must be tacky-dry before applying the formica sheet to the side of the cabinet.

Now comes the tricky part. Carefully apply the formica sheet to the side of the cabinet. Remember, you have just one shot at this. Once you touch the two glued pieces together, they are going to be stuck for good! Hold the formica in a bowed manner so that it can be applied from one edge toward the other, pressing out any air bubble as you go.

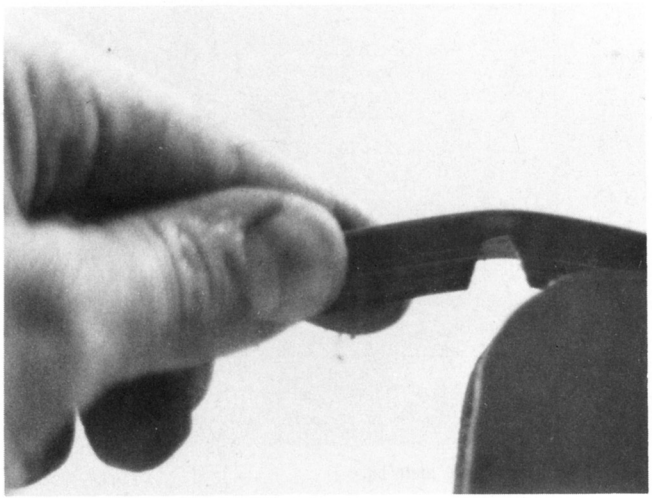
Take your time with this stage. Use a roller to brush out any remaining air and to firmly press the two glued pieces together.

Route to fit

Use a router fitted with a "flush trimming" bit to cut away the excess formica flush with the edge of the cabinet. If you've never



Installing T-molding using a rubber mallet.



Cut a "V" notch in molding to go around corners.

Finished product!

used a router before, don't worry. It takes virtually no skill whatsoever to operate the router for this application.

You just push it right up to the edge of the cabinet and it automatically cuts the formica right to the edge. If you do not own a router, you should get one. You will find many uses for it in the shop. Repeat the process on the other side of the cabinet.

Fitting the front

Applying formica to the front is a little more difficult because you cannot cut it after it has been applied. To install formica on the front of the game, you must measure carefully and cut it to fit before you glue it in place.

There is virtually no room for error here so be careful! After applying the cement to both the formica and front of the cabinet (and letting it dry), line up the formica with the top of the cabinet's front area and roll it down toward the bottom. Use the router to cut out the hole for the coin door.

T-molding

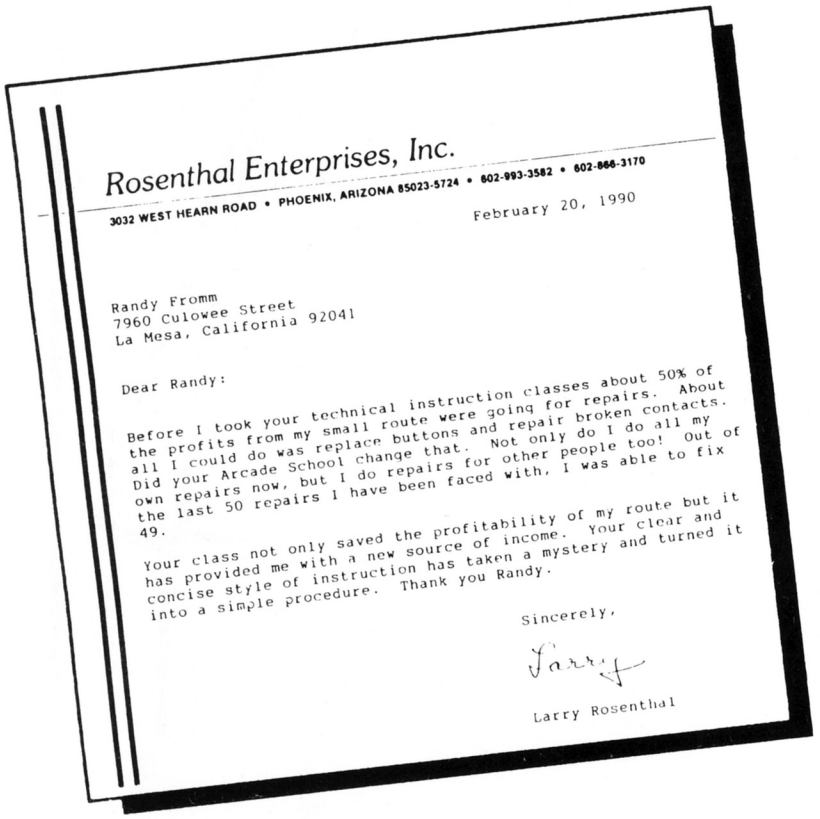
As a final touch, install new T-molding on the sides of the cabinet. New T-molding really makes the whole thing look great and is well worth the investment. T-molding is available from: Out Water Plastic Industries, Passaic St., Wood Ridge, NJ 07075; (800) 631-8375.

That's all there is to it! It's really pretty darned easy, and for a small investment in time and money, you end up with a video game cabinet that looks just like new (better than new in some cases) with formica sides that are all but impervious to graffiti and vandalism.

My thanks to Mark Rizzo of Area Amusements (San Diego) for his help in this project. □

This article was originally printed in July '88.

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES?



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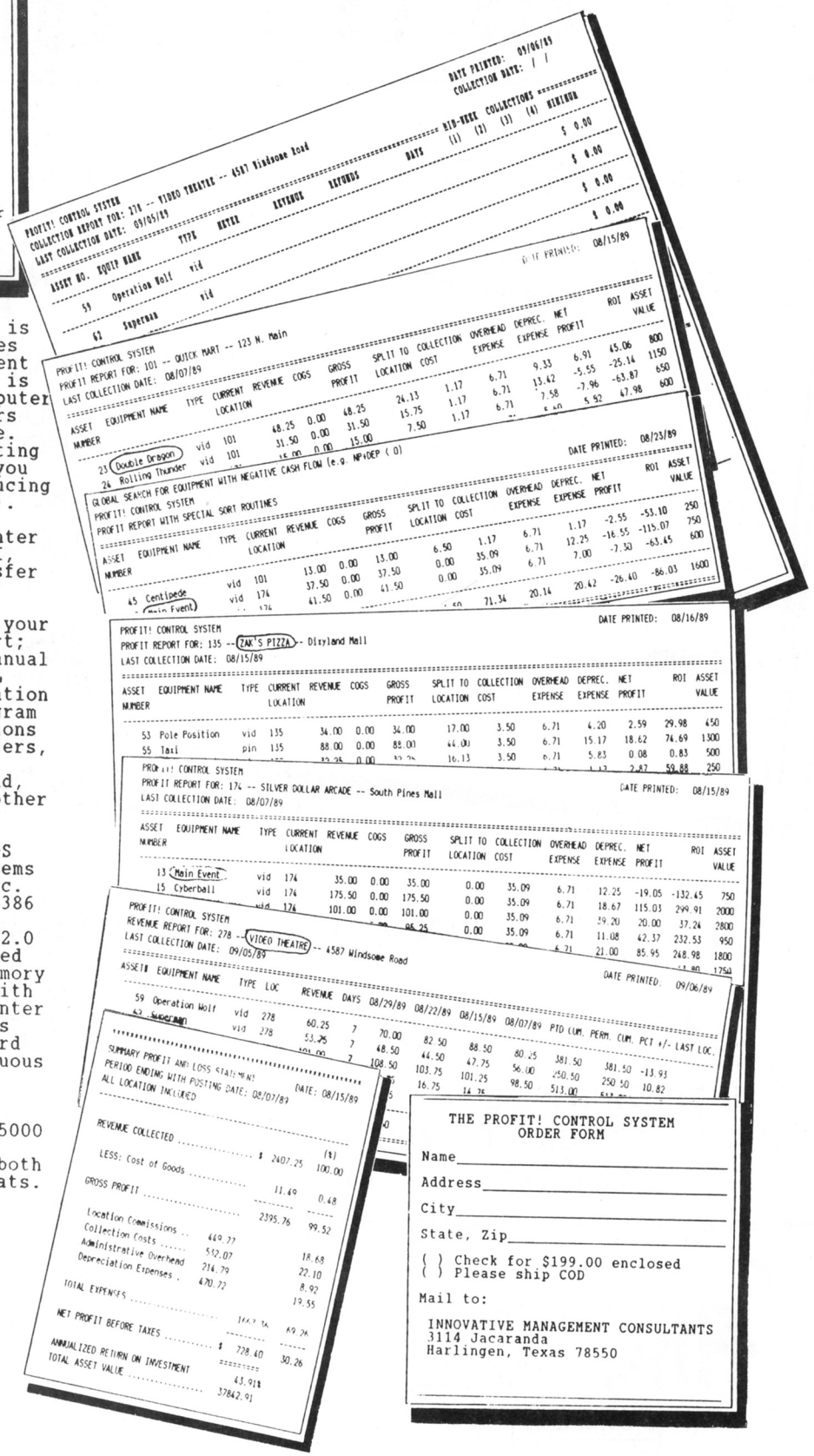

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Randy Fromm

Working with plexiglas: it's easier than you think!

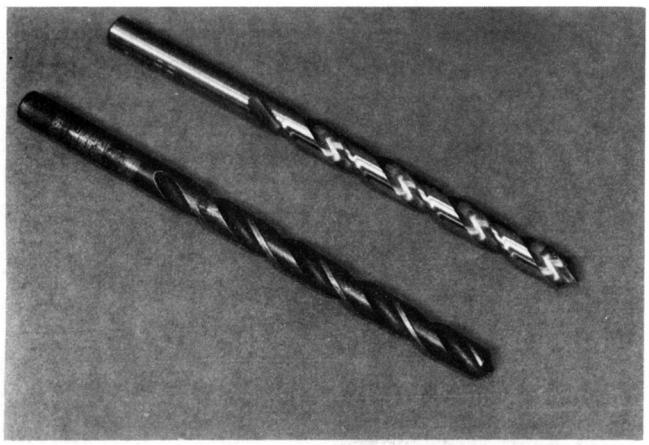

Figure 1: Compare plexiglas drill bit (top) to conventional drill bit. Notice the plexiglas bit has a sharper point.

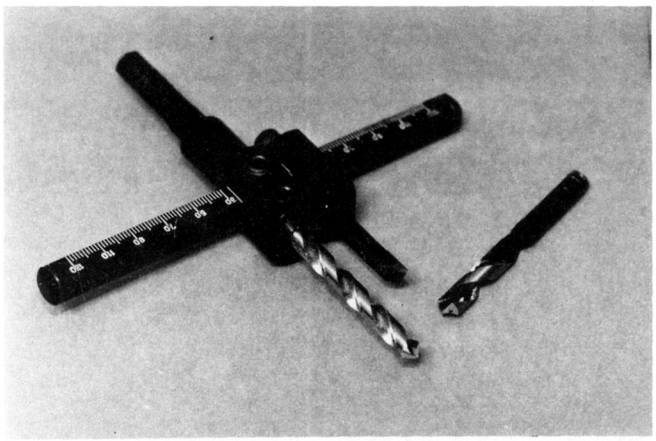

Figure 2: Circle cutter with plexiglas drill bit installed as pilot. Conventional pilot bit is at right.

All operators know how important it is to rotate equipment through the route. Players become bored when a game is left on location for extended periods of time. A regular schedule of game replacement will keep players interested and maintain the location's income at its maximum.

When placing a game in a location it's important that it be as clean and new-looking as possible. A location owner will not be happy when his old game is replaced with one that appears to be just as old and used as the one that just left!

Nothing makes a game look old and used as much as a worn, torn, and dirty control panel. The control panel gets more abuse than any other part of the game. Throw in a few cigarette burns and you really have a big mess—a mess that sticks out like a sore thumb.

Enter plexiglas to the rescue! A plexiglas overlay will protect the control panel from the use (and abuse) of players and vandals. When the plexiglas overlay is damaged and/or burned, it's a simple matter to replace just the overlay. When the game is placed at another location it will look shiny and new.

The right tools

The first step in working with plexiglas is to obtain the proper tools. Conventional drill bits *will not work* with plexiglas. Plexiglas will "ride up" a conventional drill bit and crack. A plexiglas drill bit has a sharper point and less pitch than a conventional drill. A plexiglas drill will make a smooth hole without riding up the drill bit. Slow to medium speeds work best when working with plexiglas (Figure 1).

You need to purchase two plexiglas drill bits. The 5/16-inch drill bit is large enough to accommodate the square head of a carriage bolt (plus a little slop) and yet be cosmetically covered by the bolt head itself. (Plexiglas drill bits, and a host of other interesting tools, are available from Craftics, 2701 N. Pulaski, Chicago, IL 60639; (312) 235-3307.)

Of course, you can't drill a hole large enough for the buttons or the joystick; these are 1-1/8-inch in diameter. For holes this large, you can use a couple of methods.

It is possible to cut holes in plexiglas using a conventional hole saw. The hole saw is probably most familiar as a popular tool for cutting button and joystick holes in wooden control panels. It mounts on a drill motor and cuts a nice round hole in the wood. Remember, however, that the hole saw uses a conventional drill bit to drill a pilot hole, and as such, will cause the plexiglas sheet to ride up the bit with the possibility of damage.

Although I have had quite a bit of success using a hole saw on plexiglas, I have damaged a few panels. To completely avoid the possibility of damage, you might want to use your plexiglas drill to create a pilot hole before proceeding with the use of the hole saw to complete the 1-1/8-inch hole. Alternatively, you can replace the pilot drill with a permanently installed plexiglas drill.

A second method is to use a circle cutter (Figure 2). The circle cutter uses a rotating blade to score the plexiglas material in much the same way as a hole saw, but it creates a much more precise and cleaner cut.

The circle cutter is so precise that it is often possible to cut through the plexiglas sheet without cutting through the protective paper backing. This will save time, since the disk of plastic that is cut out to form the hole will stick to the adhesive back of the protective paper and not become caught in the cutting tool itself.

When a hole saw is used, the disk of waste plastic must be laboriously removed from the tool after each hole is cut. As with the hole saw, the pilot drill may be replaced with the special plexiglas drill. (Circle cutters are available from General Hardware Mfg. Co. Inc., 80 White St., New York, NY 11013; (212) 431-6100.)

The #4 model cuts holes from 7/8-inch to 4 inches in diameter. The model 5B is a heavy duty version and cuts holes from one inch to six inches in diameter. Either is suitable for our use.

In general, it's best to use a drill press when working with plexiglas. This is especially true when using the circle cutter. The drill press lets you make precise, straight cuts in the material. However, a hand drill is perfectly acceptable if some type of jig is used to hold the drill perpendicular to the work surface.

Constructing the panel

Plexiglas may be cut with a table saw, or by scoring the sheet heavily with a razor knife and snapping it across the edge of a table. A carbide-tipped saw is preferable for clean, safe cuts.

Mark the plexiglas with a center line by using a square (Figure 3). Measure to the center and mark it for the joystick. I place a button (when required) three inches on center from the joystick and a second button (when required) two inches from the first button. Of course, your layout may vary considerably. Avoid ''eyeballing'' your button placement; it will result in a sloppy, unprofessional looking control panel.

I made a plexiglas template to mark the joystick bolt holes (Figure 4). By scoring the template with center lines, you can line up the joystick template and mark the holes accurately. It only took five minutes to make the template and it has saved me a lot of time.

Use the circle cutter to make the large holes. Use a slow to medium speed and feed the cutter slowly into the material. If you stop cutting just as the cutter breaks through the bottom of the plexiglas, the disk of waste plastic will remain glued to the pro-

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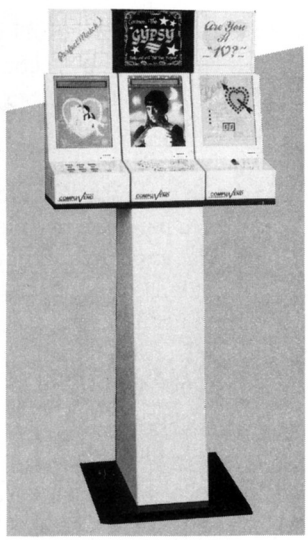

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tective backing paper and will not be caught up in the cutting tool (Figure 5). Finish the procedure by drilling the holes for the joystick bolts with the 5/16-inch plexiglas drill bit (Figure 6).

The completed plexiglas overlay (Figure 7) now can be used as a template for marking and cutting any necessary holes in the actual control panel of the game. In addition to protecting the control panel, the use of a plexiglas overlay also makes it possible to leave any unused holes in the control panel (holes from the old game that used to reside in the cabinet). Without the plexiglas overlay, these holes would have to be filled with Bondo or a similar substance.

Working with plexiglas used to be a very frustrating experience for me. I'd get to the last hole, crack the panel, and have to start all over again. With the circle cutter and plexiglas drill, working with plexiglas has become a joy, especially when a nice-looking control panel leaves the shop for a new home on location. Try it and see; it's worth doing when you know how to do it right. □

This article was originally printed in August '87.

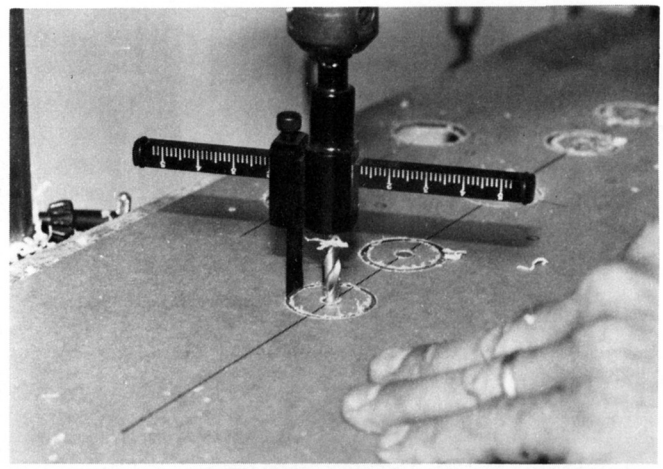


Figure 5: **Cutting the button holes with the circle cutter. Notice how the waste plugs remain stuck to the adhesive backing of the protective paper on the bottom of the panel.**

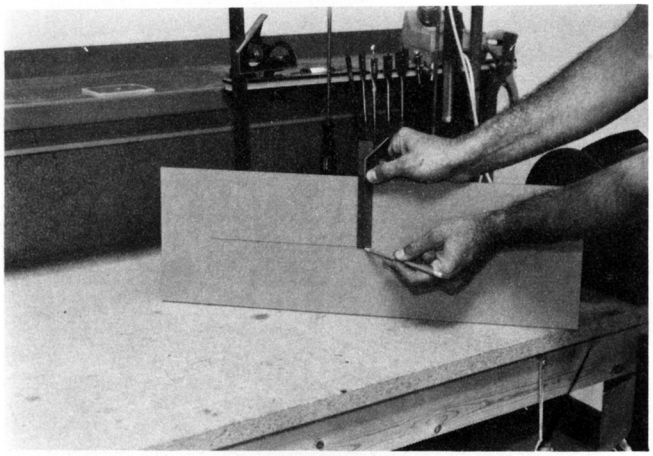


Figure 3: **Marking the plexiglas panel prior to tooling.**

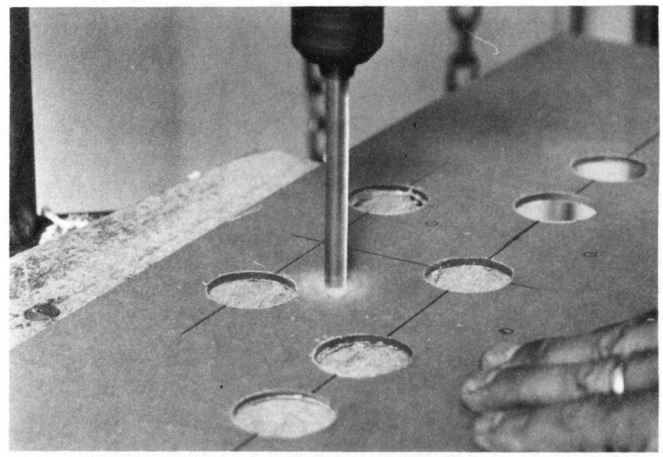


Figure 6: **Joystick bolt holes are drilled last with the 5/16-inch plexiglas drill bit.**

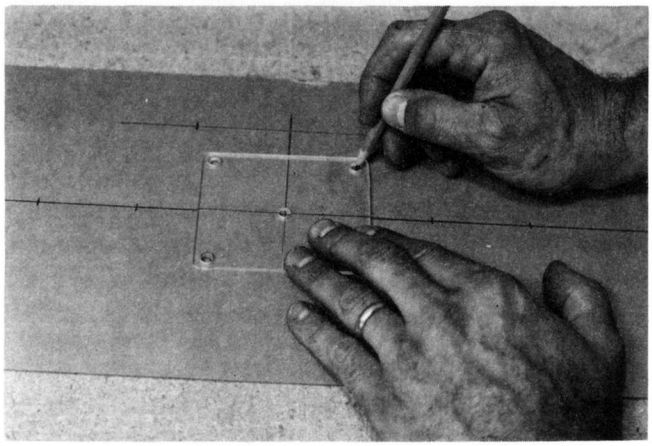


Figure 4: **A clear plexiglas template makes it easy to mark accurate holes for the joystick bolts.**

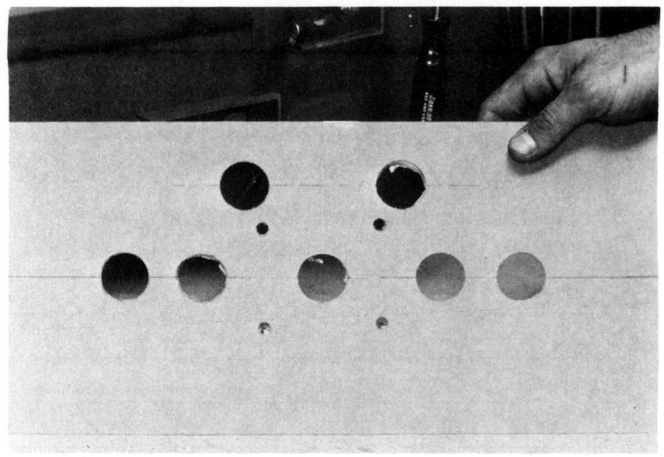


Figure 7: **Finished panel ready for mounting.**

Frank Seninsky

Troubleshooting pinball switch matrix failures

Pinball machines have a large number of switches and must utilize a scheme to keep track of the many openings and closings. This switching scheme is called a "switch matrix."

A Williams *Black Knight 2000*, for example, has 56 switches. A typical video game has only 10 to 18 switches, so each can be wired directly to the PC board.

The switch matrix method requires a lot less input hardware. Imagine if all 56 switches in a pinball were wired the same way as a video game. You would need 56 input cables, 56 connector pins to the MPU board, and a lot more ICs to handle each individual switch. In comparison, an eight-by-eight pinball matrix (which can handle up to 64 switches) uses only 16 wires, with only 16 input ports to the MPU board.

How does a switch matrix work? The switches are arranged in a matrix where one end of each switch is connected to form "columns" and the other ends of each switch are grouped together to form "rows." Rows and columns are the terms used by Williams, Bally, and Data East, while Premier uses the names "strobes" and "returns," respectively.

Once you understand these matrix terms, the rest is easy! We will use Williams and Premier terms to keep things simple. Remember, though, that Bally and Data East terms are very similar to Williams'.

Diagram #1 shows how four switches are wired individually in a video game. One side of each switch is connected to ground ("logic low"), while the other end of each switch is at +5 volts ("logic high"). If switch #1 is closed, input port #1 to the logic board becomes connected to ground. The logic board will recognize the switch closure because input port #1 has changed state from "high" to "low." Since it is the only switch connected to that line, the logic board knows instantly that switch #1 was closed.

How does the logic board know which switch is closed in a matrix? Diagram #2 shows a simplified two-by-two matrix serving the same four switches. The diode shown in series with each switch is necessary to electronically isolate each strobe line in the event that more than one switch is closed simultaneously. This is a very important concept.

Strobe lines #1 and #2 are switched to ground (logic low) alternately by turning transistors Q1 and Q2 on and off, one at a time. Return lines one and two serve as the switch inputs to the logic board. When any switch in the matrix is closed, the strobe and return lines that intersect will be electrically connected.

For example, if switch #1 is closed, the computer can identify its closure in two ways: a) return line #1 has been switched to "low," and b) it did so via strobe line #1, which the logic board knows as being switched through Q1 at that particular instant.

The on-off cycle of Q1 and Q2 (or "strobing" to be more technical) happens so fast that even if switch #2 is closed simultaneously, the two transistors would have changed states even before the contacts of switch #2 are lifted. So the computer can still identify switch #2's closure through the same return line, but knowing that it did so while Q2 was on and Q1 was off.

Determining switch matrix problems

There are basically three categories of symptoms that you should be aware of:

1.) A whole group of switches are not sensing at all. This one is easy to spot. Just consult the switch matrix table in the manual and you can identify that the non-sensing group of switches belongs either to a single strobe line or a single return line. This should lead you to the bad component

on your board or a loose wire connection.

On a Premier pin, where game options are set through dip switches, the symptoms may only affect those options selected through the dip switches. Otherwise, the game appears to work fine. With this symptom you should look for an open transistor (on a Williams) or IC gate (on a Premier) on your strobe line or an open gate on the return line.

2.) One return line is stuck to ground. This will cause all the switches connected to that particular line to be sensed as closed, even if none of them are. For example, if the tilt switch happens to be included in that line, then the game will go to tilt mode as soon as the game is turned on. There are a lot of other possibilities, depending on which switches are lumped together. I leave them to your imagination. Most likely you are looking for an IC gate on your return line that is shorted to ground.

3.) As soon as one particular switch is closed, all the other switches connected with it through the same return line are sensed as closed, even if they are not. For example, you hit a drop target and the game goes to tilt or a kicker is pulsed. Again, the possibilities are numerous. Here you are looking for a strobe line that is shorted to ground, not a bad return line, even if all the switches involved belong to a single return line. This will be further explained later on.

Causes of problems

About 90 percent of the time, switch matrix failures are caused by service people who adjust playfield switches with the power turned on. No matter how careful you are, there is a great chance that the metal adjusting tool will connect with a solenoid terminal. This happens especially if you try to adjust the "lane change" switch, which is located very close to the flipper end-of-stroke switch. Upon contact, the 50 volt solenoid voltage goes directly into the logic board, which can handle only 5 volts. Always turn the power off when adjusting switches or working on assemblies.

Sometimes broken metal pieces hanging from pop bumpers or kicker assemblies short the solenoid voltage to the switch matrix when they "kick." If you have a board that regularly blows a transistor or an IC in the switch matrix, look for a problem like this.

Locating the bad component

The two important tools that you need to pinpoint the bad component in your board are the game's service manual and a logic probe.

In a Williams pin, the most probable components to go bad are:

— Any of the eight transistors Q42 to Q49

— The sip resistor-capacitor network package SRC6

— The CMOS chips U30 to U39

— Sip resistor packages SR11, SR9, and SR10

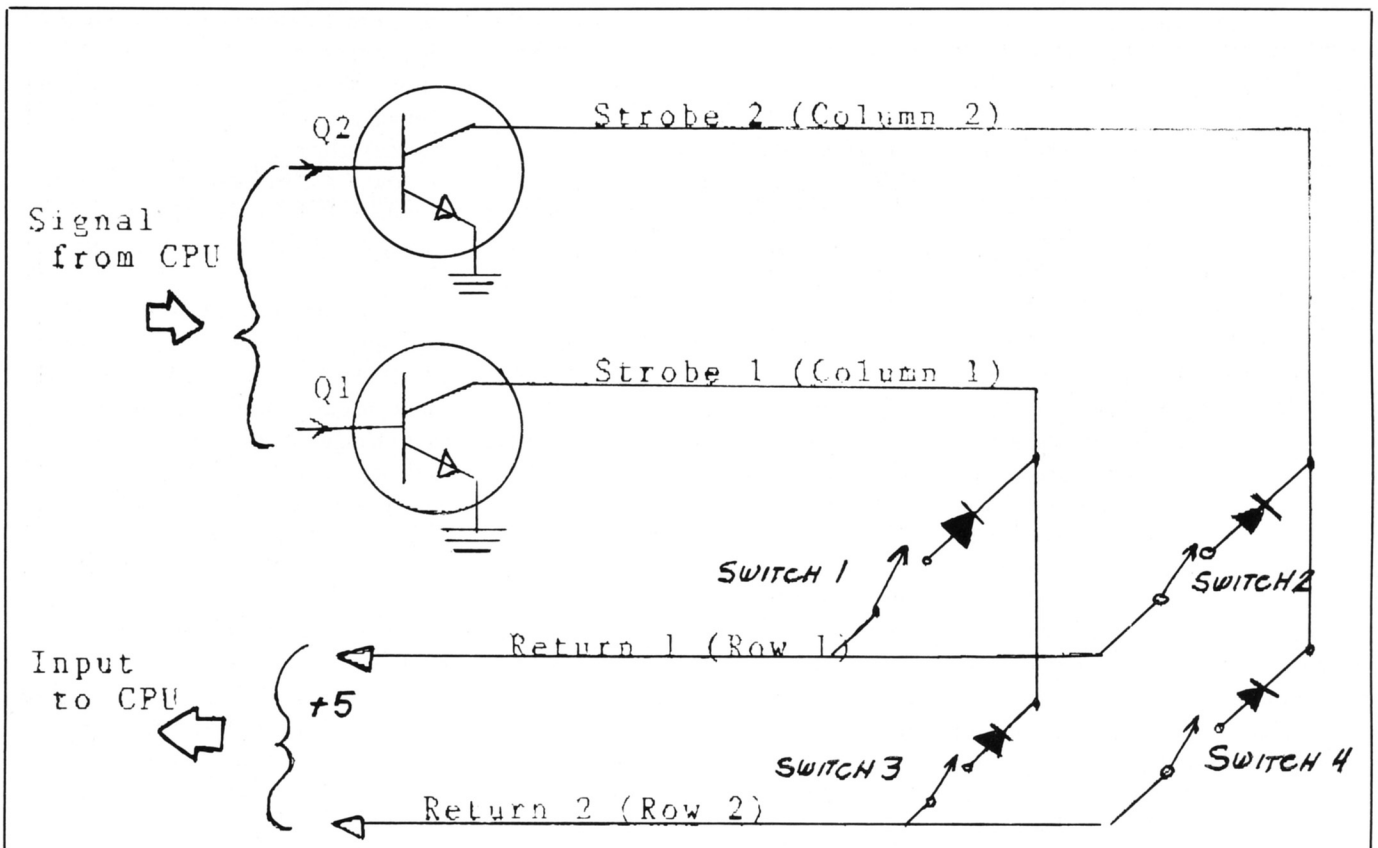


Diagram 2 — A simple 2 x 2 Switch Matrix

In a Premier pin, the most probable components to go bad are:

— ICs Z11 and Z12 (both 7404 on the strobe lines)

— ICs Z13 and Z14 (both 7400 on the return lines)

— IC Z15, a 7432 that sometimes blows when either Z13 or Z14 short out

Checking the strobe lines with a logic probe

First put the game on "switch test" or start the game, if you can do either. With your logic probe set at "pulse mode," check each of the eight strobe lines. On Williams pins, you are checking the collectors of transistors Q42 to Q49. On a Premier pin, you are testing pins #2 and #4 of Z12 and pins #2, #4, #6, #8, #10, and #12 of Z11. Each of the eight lines should be pulsing.

Here is a tip for a Premier game: unplug the connector to the little reset board (A24) located beside the MPU. This board generates continuous reset pulses to the CPU when it "sees" certain error conditions. Your probe will pick up these reset pulses and you could mistake them for strobe signals.

If you discover any of the lines are not pulsing and stuck at "low," this means that the driver transistor connected to that line is shorted to ground (Williams). If you have a Premier, the gate of the 7404 IC connected to that line is shorted to ground. This is a case where a stuck or grounded strobe or column line will cause a whole row of switches to be sensed as "closed" when only one particular switch in that row is closed.

A "shotgun" troubleshooter will quickly jump to the obvious conclusion and start replacing the IC where the row in question terminates. This will not solve the problem.

Another possibility (less likely) is to find a strobe line that is either stuck "high" or just "floating" (neither high nor low). In this case, the transistor (if a Williams) or the gate in the strobe IC (if a Premier) is "open."

Locating a grounded strobe or column line is something that could be done on the bench, simply by powering up the board with a +5 volt switching supply, if you don't have the actual game. Our chief technician, Ramon, has done it on a number of Premier boards.

Checking the return or row lines

After determining that all eight column or strobe lines are good, next check the return or row lines that go back to the board from the switches on the playfield. All eight return lines should be "high" when none of the playfield switches are closed. If any one of them is stuck "low," replace the IC that is connected to that particular line.

On a Williams game, it is either U30 or U39; on a Premier, it is either Z13 and maybe Z14 or Z15. Z15 is an "or" gate whose four output pins are connected to one side of the inputs to Z13 and Z14 through the 32 dip switches. As mentioned earlier, this IC sometimes goes out when either Z13 or Z14 shorts.

Every time you replace either Z13 or Z14, make sure that you check Z15, too. You can easily do this by putting the game to "dip switch setting" in diagnostics and seeing if the CPU is reading the dip switches properly. Turn all the dip switches "ON" and the display should show "FF FF FF FF." Then turn them all "OFF" and the display should read "OO OO OO OO." Make sure you put the dip switches back to their original settings after you do this. (Write down the original settings before attempting this test.)

If all the return lines are "high," next determine if the strobe pulses are returning to the MPU by having someone activate the switches you are having problems with, while your probe tip is at that row or return line on the board. If you don't get the pulses, you either have a bad switch diode or a bad connection from the switch back to the board.

If you see the pulse at the IC input, check the output side of the IC to see if the IC is passing the signal through. If you have a Williams pin and you are at input pin #12 of U39, for example, check the output pin #11. If it's a Premier game and you are on input pin #12 of Z13, check output pin #11. In either case, if the signal is not getting through, replace the chip.

A grounded column causing a row problem?

Refer to Diagram #1. If transistor Q1 is shorted to ground, column line #1 would be "low" all the time. For example, say switch #1 is the "ball trough" sensor and the ball is sitting on this switch, so it is always "closed." Row #1 will, therefore, be "low" or connected to ground all the time. This would create the same condition as if the row or return line is grounded. When the CPU tries to read the other switches on that row, it will see them as being closed, too, even if they are not.

I hope that after going through these exercises you have become quite familiar with troubleshooting any switch matrix problem. Pass these tips along to a few others in your company. Who knows, maybe there will be thousands of pinballs that will now operate the way they were intended to; they will earn more money each week; and their lives may even be prolonged! □

This is a reprint of "Frank's Cranks" November 1990, which appeared without the proper illustrations.

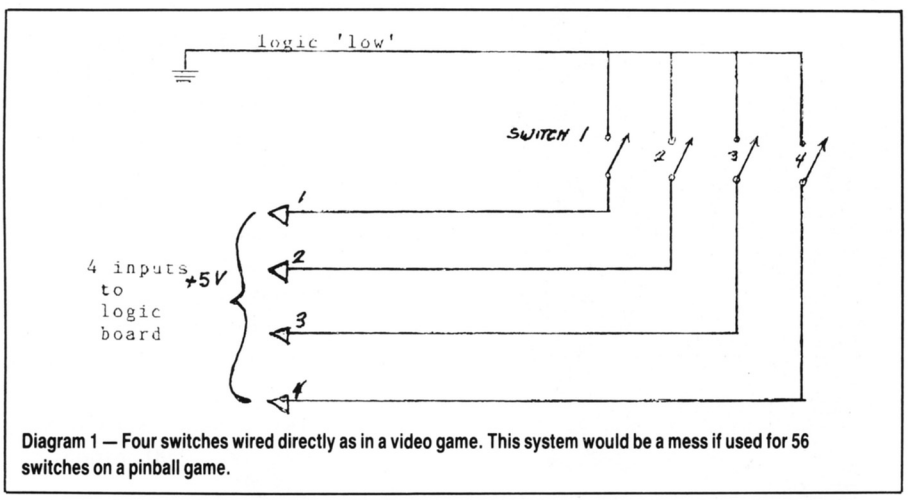


Diagram 1 — Four switches wired directly as in a video game. This system would be a mess if used for 56 switches on a pinball game.

Bugs Bunny

The world's best known and most loved rabbit comes to the pinball playfield in Midway Manufacturing's new Bally pinball, *Bugs Bunny*.

Original musical scores and voices from Looney Tunes characters highlight the game. All the favorites are there: Wile E. Coyote, Roadrunner, Foghorn Leghorn, Henry Hawk, Tweety and Sylvester, Daffy Duck, Speedy Gonzales, Tasmanian Devil, Yosemite Sam, Elmer Fudd, Porky Pig, and Pepe LePew.

Game features include an inverted lower playfield and the challenge of shooting the watchdog targets to light the "Big Score" on the first-ever two-sided Daffy Duck captive ball for 500,000 points. The Tweety Cake Slide bonus ramp is only a slip away to score up to one million points.

There's also an operator-adjustable 50 million point shot when Bugs blows out all the candles on his 50th birthday cake. At the end of every game, players have a chance to get a surprise present.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Midway Mfg. Co., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240; FAX (312) 267-8435.

Breath Analyzer

Communidyne has developed the most advanced computerized breath tester with its newest model, the *2000 Turbo Breath Analyzer*.

This coin-op unit is self-diagnostic and self-calibrating. Many new features are included, among them: automatic coin credit, unbreakable front panels, and automatic legal intoxication level status. The new machine succeeds the *2000B*.

A note of interest: a 15 percent liquor liability insurance discount is now available to bar owners who install the *2000C Trubo Breath Analyzer*. It offers instructions in English, German, Spanish, and French, and is sold in 13 countries.

The machine comes complete with straws needed for testing and a fact-filled booklet about alcohol breath analyzers. The analysis registers in one of five categories: no alcohol present, low, moderate, borderline, and over the legal limit.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Communidyne Inc., 638 Anthony Trail, Northbrook, IL 60062; (708) 498-2444; FAX (708) 498-6369.

Bigfoot

Exhibit Manufacturing introduces a new coin-op unit that offers customers a chance to view physical evidence that substantiates the existence of the legendary creature Bigfoot. Patrons also are treated to a history of the creature and notable sightings of the past.

Bigfoot is a low-priced machine ideal for a diverse set of locations: malls, truck stops, convenience stores, airports, campgrounds, and restaurants. Both men and women, children and adults, are potential customers.

The cabinet is bright metallic red vinyl with gold trim and a back-lighted sign. Dimensions are 48" high, 22" wide, and 22" deep; weight is 110 lbs.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Exhibit Mfg. Co., P.O. Box 481; Yankton, SD 57078; (605) 665-7590 or (605) 665-2062.

Zord-Robovend

Mayoni Enterprises adds another novelty unit to its product line with the *Zord-Robovend* robot, a machine designed to attract youngsters to purchase a variety of possible items.

Zord is an all-steel vendor that's elaborately fabricated and decorated; it features silver, blue, and black accents. The eyes light up and the robot talks with kids via a solid-state, battery-operated sound board.

A choice of two products can be housed within *Zord* since there's plenty of storage space.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Mayoni Enterprises, 10340 Glenoaks Blvd., Pacoima, CA 91331; (800) 345-1183 or (818) 899-2488; FAX (818) 899-0152.

Jackpot Single

Smart Industries has developed a single-player model of its popular *Jackpot* four-player rotary merchandiser that features an automatic prize dispenser located behind the mirrored playfield.

Additionally, the prize dispenser is totally adjustable for control of stock percentage payout. Prizes are dispensed onto the playfield by the number of plays or number of coins put into the coin mechanism. The dispenser holds 34 2-1/2'' diameter containers and 16 3-1/2'' diameter containers.

Jackpot Single includes an action sound system, double coin mechs, separate locked cash box, rotating mirrored playfield, two rotating carousels for merchandise display, attractive cabinet design, and illuminated push-button control. Dimensions are 30'' wide, 40'' deep, and 70'' high.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Smart Industries Corp. Mfg., 1626 Delaware Ave., Des Moines, IA 50317; (800) 553-2442 or (515) 265-9900; FAX (515) 265-3148.

Car Hop

Premier Technology introduces a Gottlieb pinball, *Car Hop*, that's evocative of the cruisin' '50s. The backglass is particularly attractive with the bobby-soxer car hop serving patrons in a '57 Chevy and a ''flaming'' roadster.

Car Hop gives the operator the choice of modern game play or nostalgic game play with scoring and sounds from the past, complete with the bells and chimes of the present. This feature can also be set to give the player the choice of game mode.

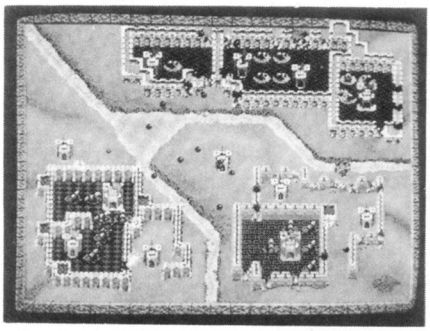
Music from the era is a special feature; it changes with each feature round. When players knock down all the popsicle drop targets, they enter either the extra ball, special, or points round. By completing ''Heat Wave,'' the player can shoot for three million points or double the score.

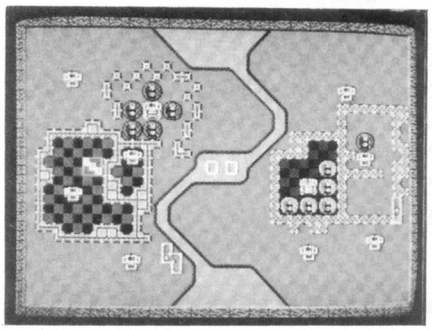
For more information, or distributor referral, contact Premier Technology, 759 Industrial Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106; (800) 444-0761; FAX (708) 350-1097.

Rampart

Players can travel back in time to the Middle Ages in Atari's newest video, *Rampart*, which combines the challenge of a strategy puzzle game with the action of Medieval Age combat.

There are two game phases: castle construction and battle.





First, players must build fortifications and position their cannons; second, they battle opposing forces trying to penetrate the fortress.

Projectiles are hurled over the walls of the enemies as in days of old. Cannon fire is the main mode of attack. When a battle is over, players must rebuild and extend the walls of their castle before the next onslaught.

Up to three players can participate in *Rampart*. In the one-player game, the computer directs an invading armada against the player's castles. Two players can construct castles and battle each other for supremacy. In the three-player mode, all the players can battle it out to establish a Medieval overlord.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Atari Games, 675 Sycamore Drive, Milpitas, CA 95035; (408) 434-3700; FAX (408) 434-3776.

RollerGames

Konami debuts a fast-paced roller derby-themed video in *RollerGames*, a one- or two-player interactive kit for horizontal monitors. Buy-in and game continuation are standard features.

The game, based on the TV show of the same name, gives players a chance to choose their favorite teams from these colorful competitors: T-Birds, Violators, Rockers, Hot Flash, Maniacs, and Bad Attitude.

The wacky characters from the teams are shown at the start of each cycle. Team managers appear between games to shout insults and threats. The game begins in Los Angeles and progresses to Las Vegas, Dallas, Chicago, and then New York for the championship.

There are four cycles; the men's squad plays the first and fourth while the women take on the second and third. Each squad has one jetter and three powerguards.

Points are scored for the number of enemy teams skaters attack and take down, plus outstanding skating performance on the menacing Wall of Death and the Jet Jump.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Konami Inc., 900 Deerfield Pkwy., Buffalo Grove, IL 60089; (708) 215-5100; FAX (708) 215-5122.

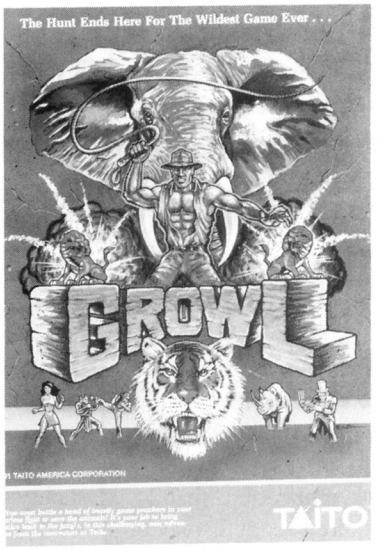
Tabletop Phone

Pay Phone Industries, which recently debuted its Model 101-A tabletop phone, has added to its product line with the long distance Model 300.

The Model 101-A, designed for local calls, installs in less than one minute and is completely line-powered (no electricity). The coin mech has no moving parts; coinage is read by an electric eye that allows 1-800 calls.

The Model 300 is also line-powered and handles long distance calls; it has an LCD readout for the user. This unit allows 1-800 calls, long distance 1+ calls, and both operator-assisted and credit card calls.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Pay Phone Industries, 2415 W. Amherst, Bloomington, IN 47404; (800) 284-2555 or (812) 333-9939.



Growl

A fighting game set in the heart of the jungle is the theme of *Growl*, Taito's newest kit for two to four players.

In *Growl*, players must save native animals from a gang of evil poachers who lurk in every scene of the seven-round game. An eight-way joystick and two action buttons aid the player in combatting the enemy and freeing the jungle beasts. Freed animals return to help the player defeat the poachers.

Players have several methods to repel the poachers: kicks, punches, throwing crates and barrels, and using the firepower of an assault rocket.

Features include buy-in and game continuation; installation can be in any standard two- or four-player cabinet. A special kit allows two standard two-player cabinets to be linked together to make a four-player game. Only one PC board is needed. There's also a dip switch setting to adjust to any coin door configuration.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Taito America Corp., 390 Holbrook Drive, Wheeling, IL 60090; (708) 520-9280; FAX (708) 520-1309.

Mad Dog McCree

Betson introduces the first and only interactive laser video game, *Mad Dog McCree*. It challenges the "quick-draw" talents of players, who take six-shooter in hand and aim at specially marked spots on the video screen as an Old West story unfolds.

Some of the action involves rescuing the mayor's beautiful daughter and saving the town from the dastardly Mad Dog and his band of outlaws.

The game is housed in a two-part cabinet available with either a 33" monitor or a super size 50" monitor that makes the screen action even more realistic.

To assist in operator promotion of the game, Betson has produced a newspaper ad that explains the game and carries an optional coupon for one free game.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Betson Enterprises, 6 Empire Blvd., Moonachie, NJ 07074; (800) 524-2343 or (201) 440-2200; FAX (201) 440-4463.

Variety

Betson debuts a three-player novelty/redemption game that suits its name perfectly—*Variety*.

The game offers *Magic Circle*, a cover-the-spot game as the center attraction, bordered by two coin pushers. Locations can draw a mix of players with a choice of amusements in one cabinet.

Dimensions are 86" high, 74" wide, and 31" deep. The game is designed by Crompton (Betson is the company's exclusive North American distributor for *Magic Circle* and *Variety*).

Magic Circle is also available in a one-player cabinet configuration that measures 63" high, 26" wide, and 31" deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Betson Enterprises, 6 Empire Blvd., Moonachie, NJ 07074; (800) 524-2343 or (201) 440-2200; FAX (201) 440-4463.

WHAT'S NEW

Rate indicator/totalizer

The Veeder-Root Co. debuts the Series 7963, a combined high-speed electronic totalizer and rate indicator. This highly versatile, compact instrument is ideally suited for a wide variety of counting applications that also require instant display of speed or rate.

As an eight-digit totalizer and five-digit count and time-averaging rate indicator, the Series 7963 features an LED display, undirectional and bidirectional count modes, and memory retention during an absence of power. It provides a built-in, +12 VDC sensor power supply and remote reset and stop-count control inputs for the totalizer.

Independent calibrators for total and rate, as well as programmable decimal points, allow display scaling in a variety of engineering units, such as feet, inches, or gallons—with resolution to fractional units. The rate mode uses an averaging technique with programmable set-points for both minimum counts between samples and minimum time for a sample.

The press of a button instantly switches between totals and rate display. Counting proceeds without disruption during rate display.

For more information, contact Steve Rosenthal, Electronic Product Manager, Veeder-Root Co., 125 Powder Forest Drive, P.O. Box 2003, Simsbury, CT 06070-2003; (203) 651-2700 or (800) 243-4458 for application assistance; FAX (203) 651-2750.

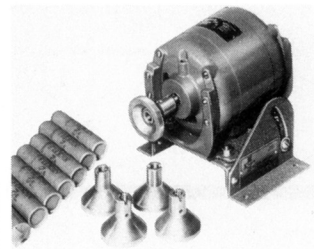
Telemarketing mailing list

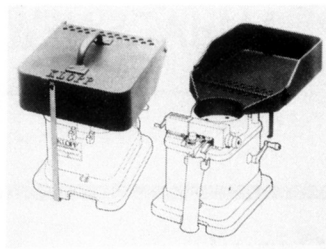
Nortech Marketing has compiled a national telemarketing mailing list with over 4,300 names of operators and distributors in the coin-op amusement industry. It comes complete with each company's name, a contact person, the address, and telephone number.

All names are current and accurately tested to avoid costly mistakes. Address additions, deletions, and corrections are updated yearly. The list is available on an IBM-compatible disk or hard-copy. It costs 14 cents per name, or a total of $599, including shipping and handling.

Orders are processed on the day of receipt. They will be shipped within three to four weeks.

For more information, contact Nortech Marketing, P.O. Box 338, Virginia, MN 55792; (800) 542-6372.





Wrapper crimper

Klopp International introduces a product to combat the problem of coin wrapper security: the Model C heavy-duty crimper. It's designed for use with only cartridge or gun shell-type wrappers.

The unit crimps the open end of the wrapper, creating a tamper-proof, rolled edge. This prevents coins from being removed without evidence of wrapper mutilation. The crimper is ideal for situations where extra wrapper security is required. It features interchangeable, snap-on crimping heads for each coin denomination.

Model C is covered by a full one-year factory warranty on both parts and labor.

In other company news, the folding, cast aluminum "Klopp Top" used on current Klopp Models CM and CE is available to replace the sheet metal tops used on older Klopp Models D, D-2, DE, and DE-2. The cast aluminum Klopp Top is larger in size, allowing it to hold more coins. Its rugged construction provides greater protection for the controls while the counter is in transit.

For more information, contact Jack Lanagan, Klopp International Inc., 225 Dunbar Court, Oldsmar, FL 34677; (813) 855-6789.

Epoxy adhesive

Master Bond Inc. introduces polymer system EP77MHT, a two-component, silver-conductive epoxy adhesive that features cost-effective performance with stability over the temperature range of -60 to +400 degrees Fahrenheit.

This high-purity epoxy system is 100 percent reactive, does not contain any solvents or diluents, and can be cured overnight at room temperature. It's based on a silver-filled epoxy resin compound that's been modified for exceptional toughness and high thermal shock resistance. Also, it offers superior bond strength to metal, glass, ceramics, fiber-reinforced plastics, and vulcanized rubbers.

For more information, contact James Brenner, Master Bond Inc., 154 Hobart St., Hackensack, NJ 07601; (201) 343-8983; FAX (201) 343-2132.

Correction

In the January "What's New" section, we gave the wrong telephone number for the A.P.E. Corp. Those interested in the company's extensive line of repair kits should call (516) 654-1197. □

CLASSIFIED

PLAY METER'S classified ads are sold by the column inch ($30 per column inch with a 1 inch minimum). Prepayment must accompany ad. You may pay by check, money order, Visa or Master Card. The deadline is one month before you want the ad to appear (example: August ad must be in by July 1). Send ad orders and payment to: PLAY METER Magazine, P.O. Box 24970, New Orleans, LA 70184; FAX 504-488-7083. For more information, contact Carol Lea LeBell (504) 488-7003.

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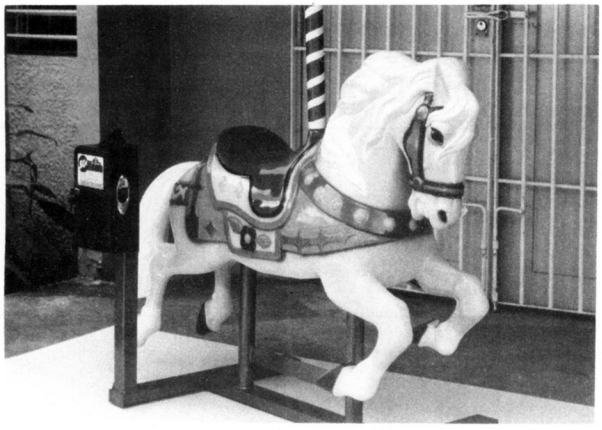

Kiddie's Manufacturing
809-897-3180
FAX 809-897-3377

PLEASE NOTE:

In February on page 124, we ran the wrong picture in the Kiddie Amusements advertisement.

The horse pictured is manufactured, copyrighted and available **only** through **Kiddie's Manufacturing** and their authorized distributors. Call **809-897-3180** for more information.

Kiddie Amusements manufactures a carousel horse ride that includes 3 small horses and a canopy.

We apologize to all parties concerned for the confusion.

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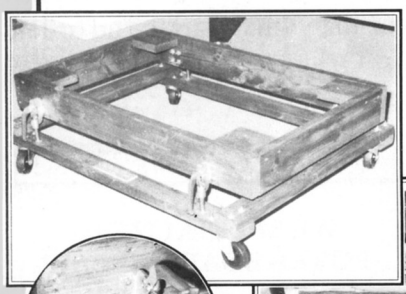

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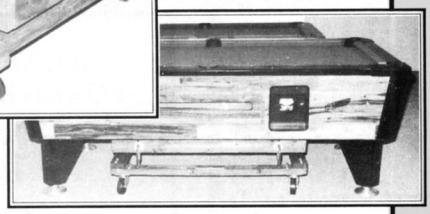

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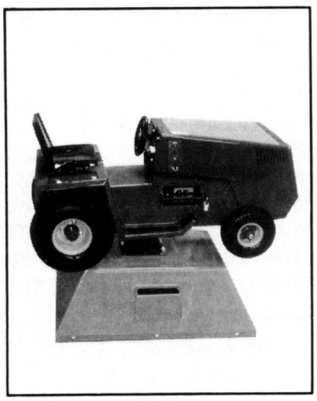
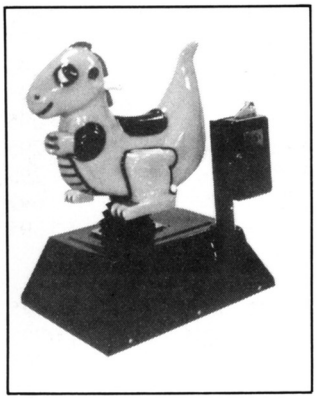

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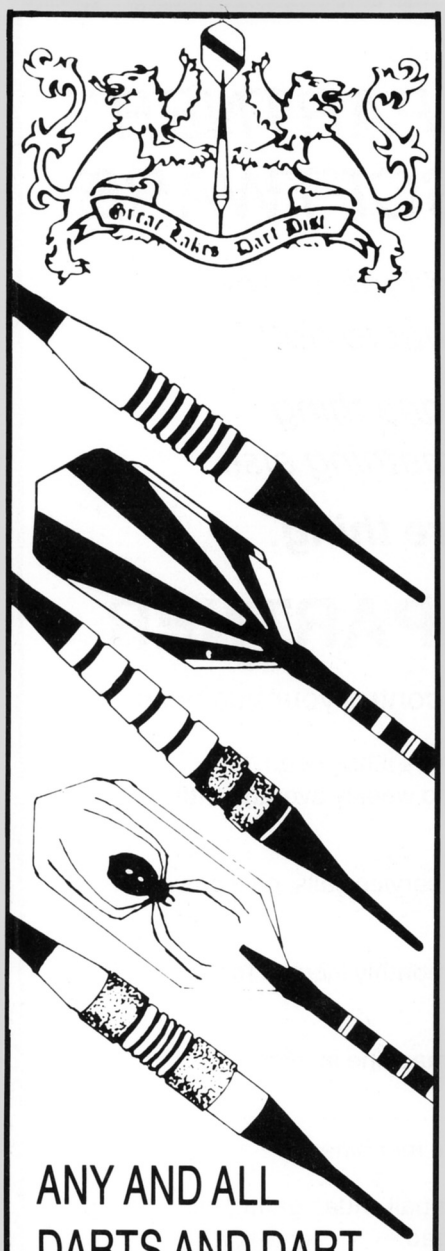

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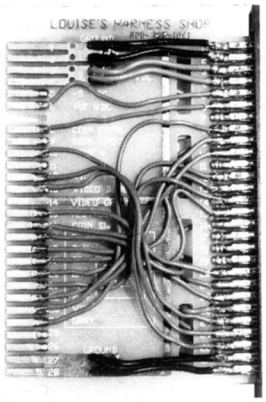

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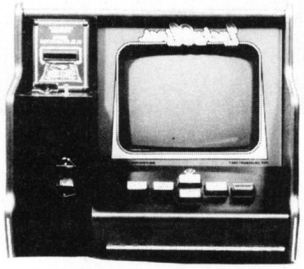

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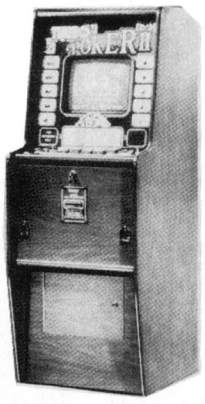

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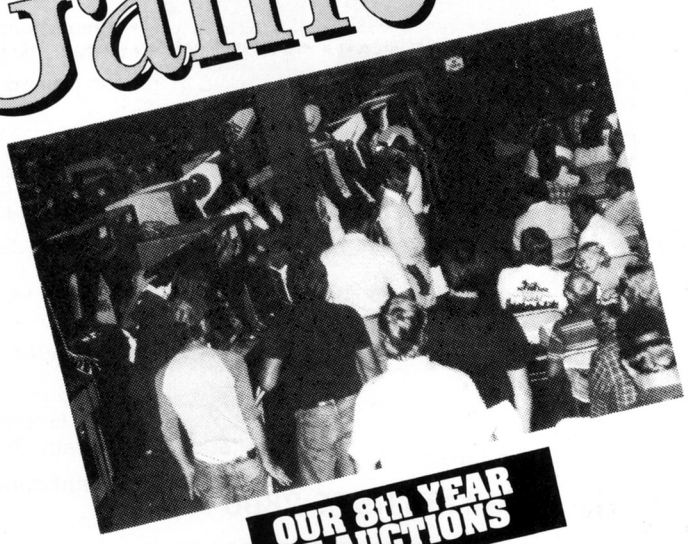

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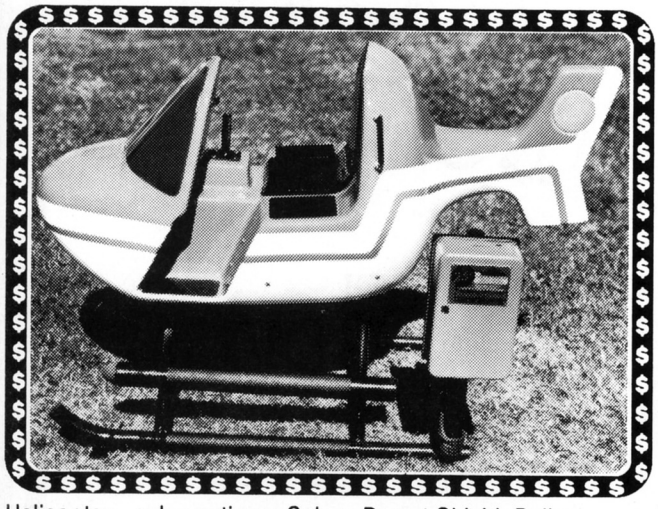

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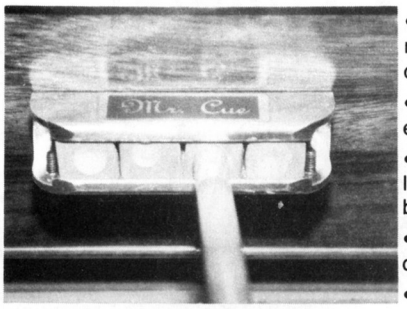

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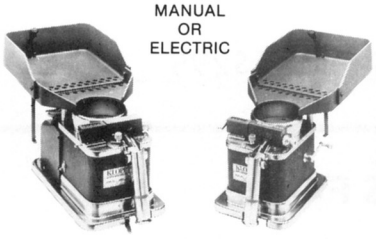

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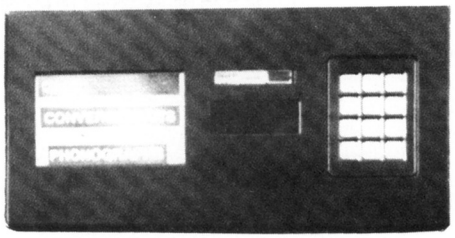

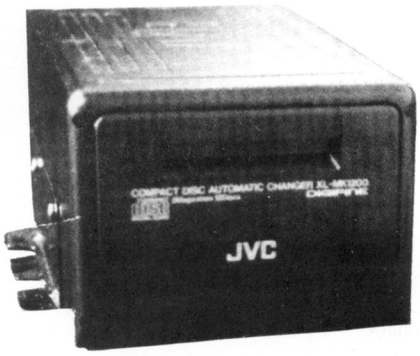

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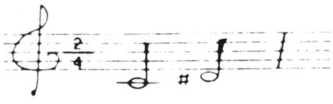

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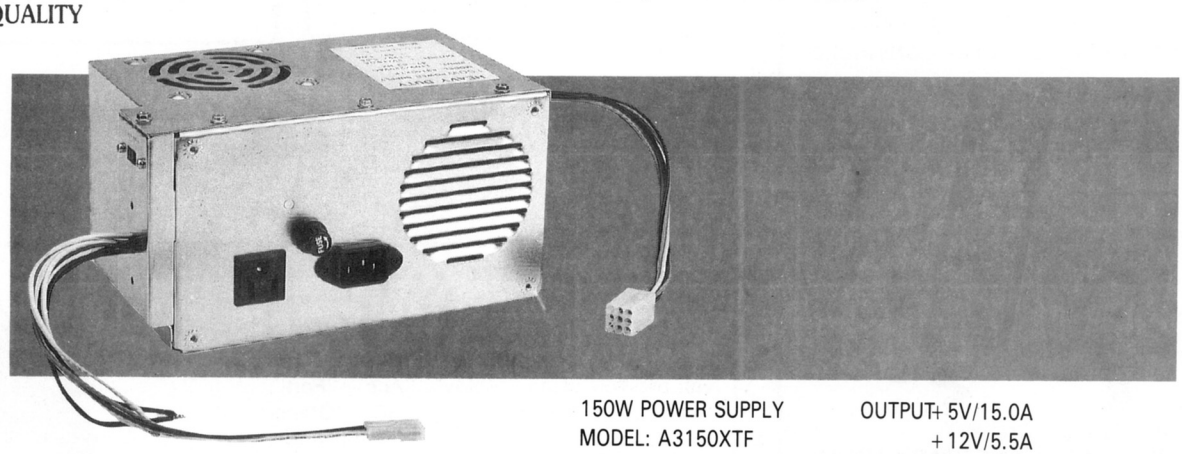

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47-63HZ

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-5V/1.0A
FCC CLASS A

MODEL	AC IN	DC OUTPUT
A3080AL3	95~125V OR 195~250V	5V12A/12V1A/-5V1A
A3100AL3		5V15A/12V2A/-5V1A
A3120AL3		5V18A/12V2A/-5V1A

SIZE: 52(W) × 124(H) × 177(D)MM
2.05 × 4.88 × 6.97 INCH
N.W.: 0.68KG 1.5LB

MODEL	AC IN	DC OUTPUT
A3089AS3	95~125V OR 195~250V	5V12A/12V2A/-5V1A
A3095AS3		5V12A/12V2.5A/-5V1A
A3100AS3		5V15A/12V2A/-5V1A
A3120AS3		5V20A/12V2A/-5V1A

SIZE: 50(W) × 125(H) × 156(D)MM
2 × 4.90 × 6.15 INCH
N.W.: 0.67KG 1.5LB

PWM
ALUMINUM

12A

15A

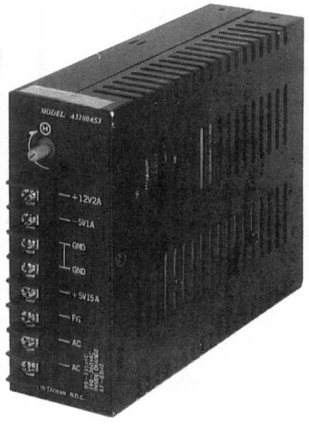
18A

PWM
ALUMINUM

12A

15A

20A



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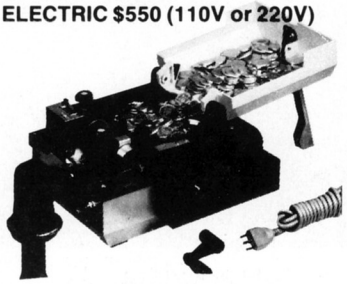

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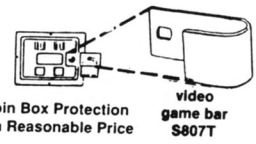

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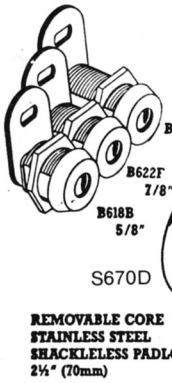

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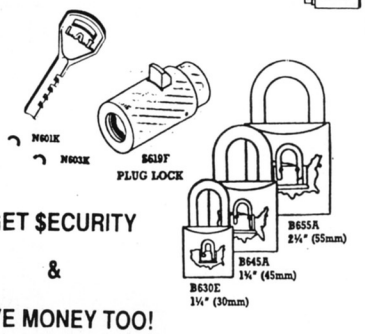

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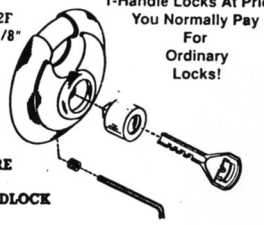

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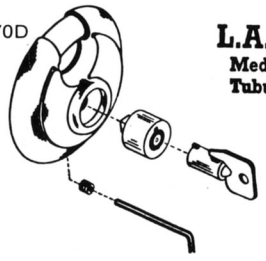

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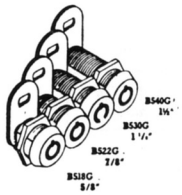

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A3070AM3		5V10A/12V1A/-5V1A
A3059AM3		5V7A/12V1A/-12V1A
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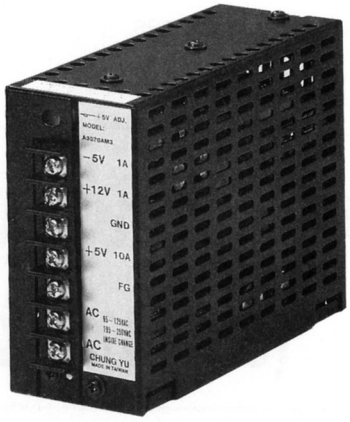
10A



MODEL	AC IN	DC OUTPUT
A3055AJ3	95~125V or 195~250V	5V7A/12V1A/-5V1A
A3070AJ3		5V10A/12V1A/-5V1A
A3059AJ3		5V7A/12V1A/-12V1A
A3074AJ3		5V10A/12V1A/-12V1A

SIZE: 55(W)×106(H)×162(D) mm N.W.: 0.72 KG
2.17 ×4.17 ×6.38 inch 16LB

FLYBACK
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7A

10A

MODEL	AC IN	DC OUTPUT
A3080AL3	95~125V or 195~250V	5V12A/12V1A/-5V1A
A3100AL3		5V15A/12V2A/-5V1A
A3120AL3		5V18A/12V2A/-5V1A

SIZE: 52(W)×124(H)×177(D) mm N.W.: 0.68 KG
2.05 ×4.88 ×6.97 inch 1.5LB

PWM
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12A

15A

18A

MODEL	AC IN	DC OUTPUT
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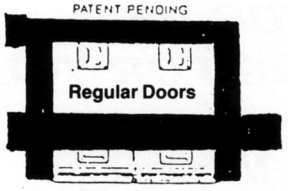

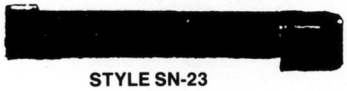

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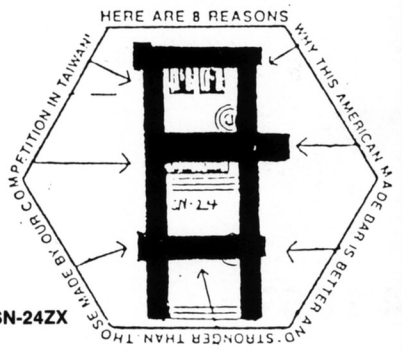

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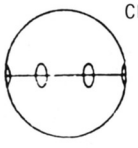

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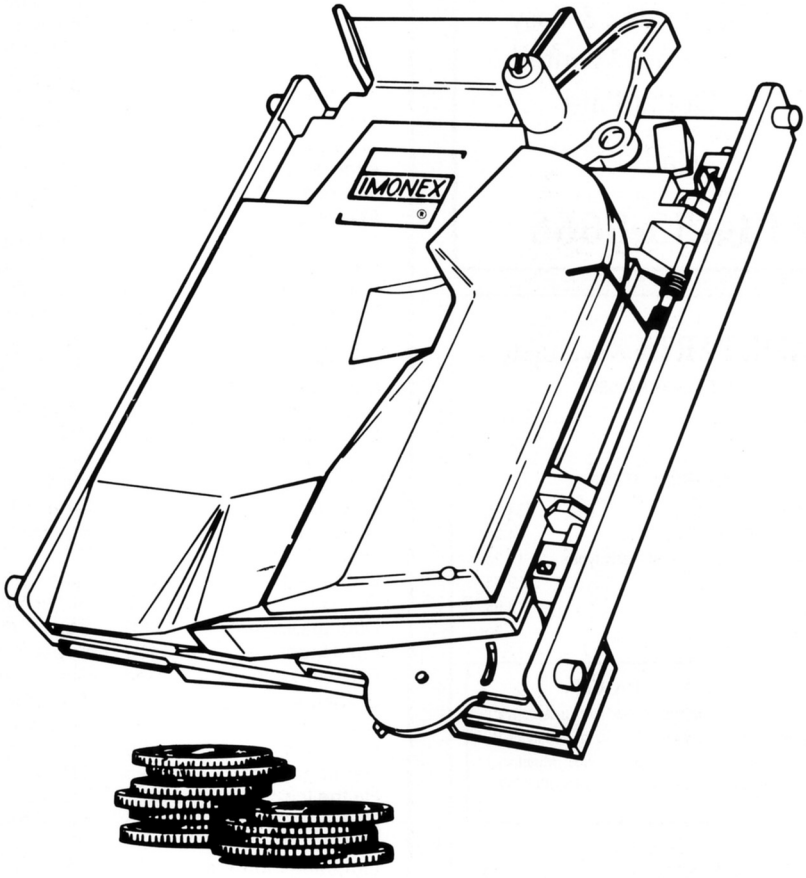

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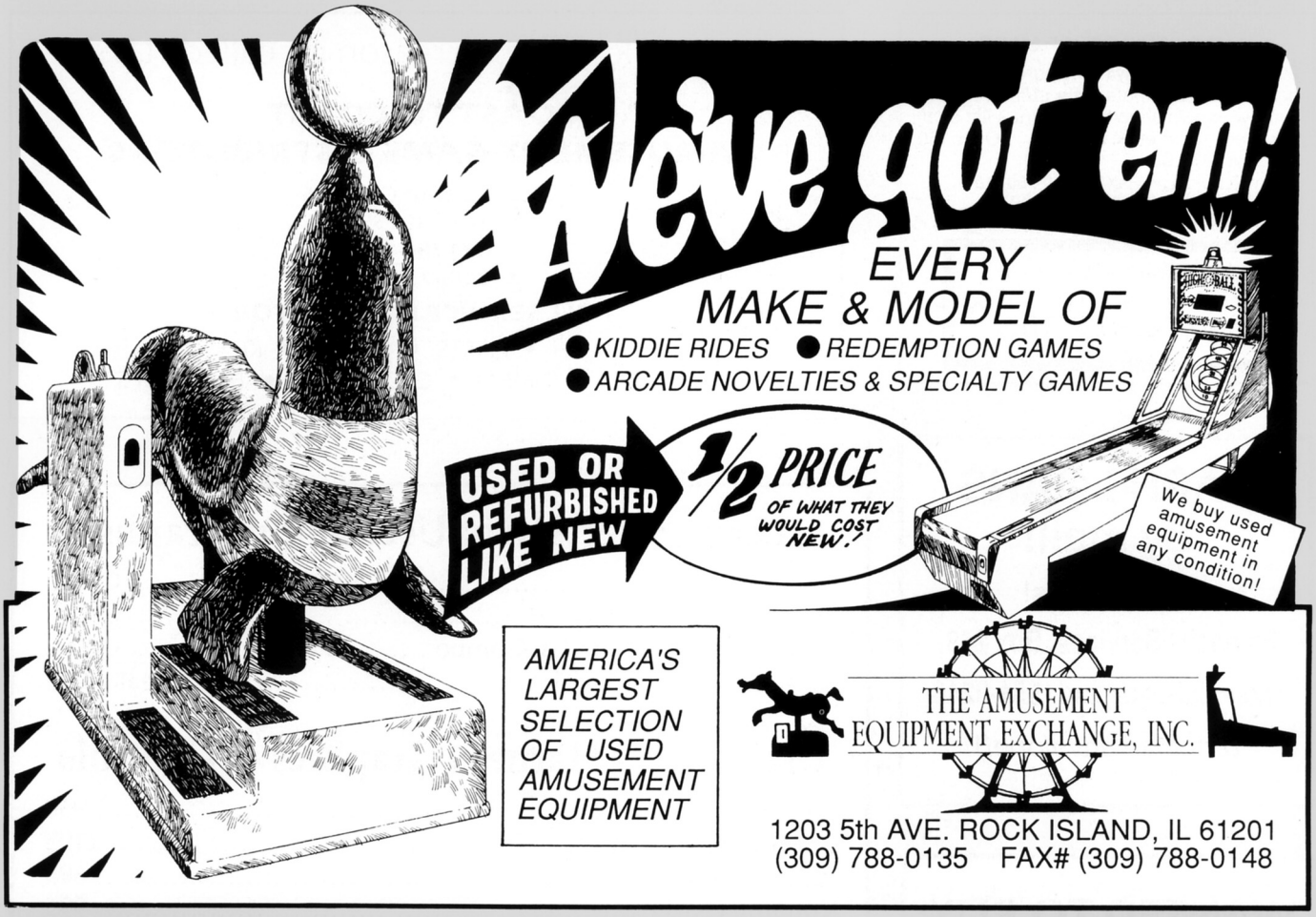

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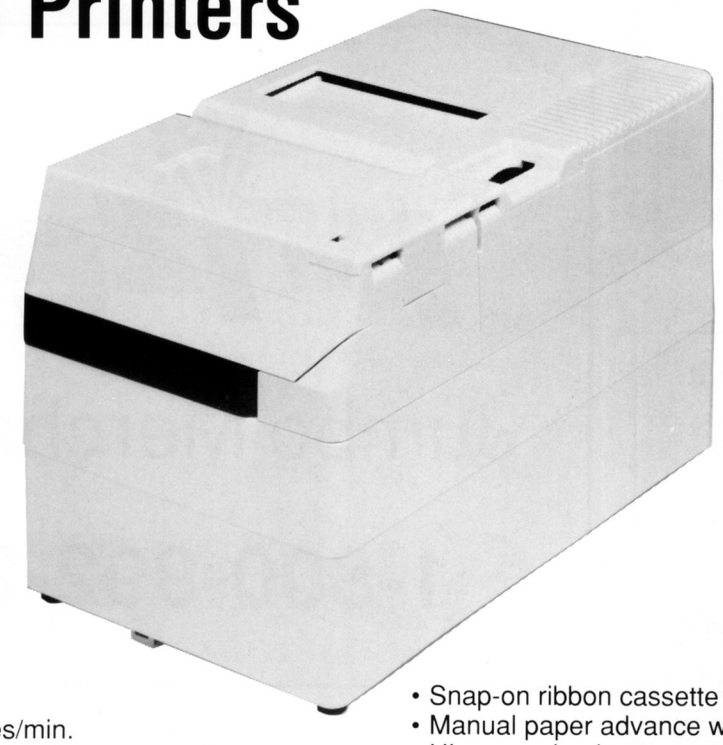

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The April '91 Issue will be at the ACME Show on March 22, 23, 24

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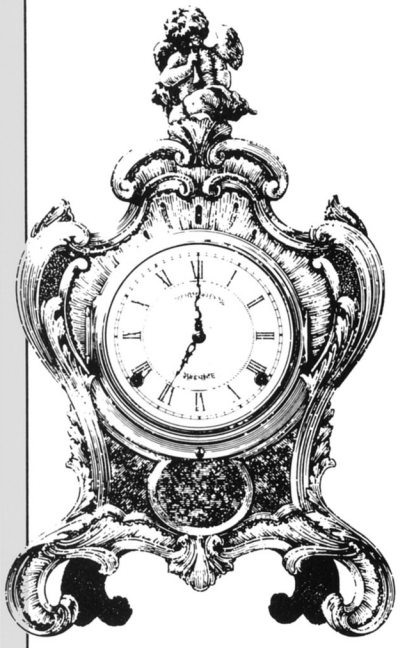

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March 21-23
BullShooter VI Montreal Regional Dart Tournament, Hotel Ramada, Montreal, Canada. Contact Arachnid (815) 654-0212.

March 22-24
American Coin Machine Expo (ACME), Sands Expo and Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact Bill Glasgow Inc. (708) 333-9292.

April 12-13
Minnesota Operators of Music and Amusements (MOMA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, St. Paul Hotel, St. Paul, Minn. Contact Hy Sandler (612) 927-6662.

April 19-21
Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association (GAMOA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Evergreen Conference Center in Stone Mountain Park, Atlanta. Contact GAMOA (404) 972-7445.

April 19-21
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) Western Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. Contact NAMA headquarters (312) 346-0370; FAX (312) 704-4140.

April 25-28
Mid-South Regional Amusement and Music Operators Convention and Trade Show, Omni Memphis Hotel, Memphis, Tenn. Contact LaVerle Franzen or Jan Green (901) 353-1000; FAX (901) 353-1155.

April 25-28
Florida Amusement and Vending Association (FAVA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Orlando Centroplex, Orlando, Fla. Music and games in one exhibit hall, vending in another. Contact FAVA (407) 898-3451; FAX (407) 894-7673.

April 30-May 3
Amusement and Music Operators Association-National Dart Association (AMOA-NDA) Team Dart VI International Team Championship, Sahara Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas. Contact Joe Conway (414) 263-2444.

May 5-9
American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) 1991 Legislative Conference, Hyatt on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. Contact AAMA (703) 494-2758; FAX (703) 494-0616.

May 16-18
Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators (WAMO) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Country Inn Resort, Pewaukee, Wis. (near Milwaukee). Contact WAMO (414) 529-4704.

May 18-22
Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Government Affairs Conference, Hyatt Regency, Washington, D.C. Contact AMOA (312) 644-6610 or (312) 565-4602.

May 25-June 1
11th Annual Valley National 8-Ball League Association (VNEA) International Singles and Team Championship, Riviera Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas. Contact Gregg Elliott (517) 893-1800.

May 28-June 1
INTER-GAM '91, first annual consortium of conferences and exhibits related to gaming, Atlantic City, the tri-hotel complex of Taj Mahal, Resorts International, and Showboat. Contact the Public Gaming Research Institute (301) 330-7600; FAX (301) 330-7608.

May 31-June 1
Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA) Annual Trade Show and Convention, Radisson Airport Hotel and Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio. Contact OCMA (614) 486-8677.

July 11-13
8th Annual Billiard Congress of America International Trade Expo, Downtown Nashville Convention Center, Nashville, Tenn. Contact Frank Zdy, Continental Productions (619) 278-3877; FAX (619) 268-9372.

September 12-14
Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Expo, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact AMOA (312) 644-6610 or (312) 565-4602.

October 3-6
National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) National Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, McCormick Place, Chicago, Ill. Contact NAMA headquarters (312) 346-0370; FAX (312) 704-4140.

International

April 3-6
International Vending, Music, and Games Show, Palace of Culture and Science, Warsaw, Poland. Contact George Herman, ABP of Calabasas, Calif., (800) 735-4ABP or (818) 713-0166; FAX (818) 713-0518.

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Keep a lid on it

May 1990 marked the 10th anniversary of my graduation from high school. In keeping with this landmark occasion, some of my former classmates and I decided to plan a party that would make the St. Charles Avenue *bon vivants* envious.

Let me clarify that. *One* of my classmates and I did the planning, with the help of our former English and Spanish teacher, Paul Mancuso. Jill, a friend and often-times thorn in my side since kindergarten, suggested we get together to implement a two-person "phone-a-thon." We called as many classmates as possible, asking them to join our Central Planning Caucus.

Their promises to help carried as much weight as George Bush's "no new taxes" pledge. In the end, not a single one showed up for our meetings at the high school. It was left to Jill, Paul, and I to choose the date, time, place, food, booze, cost per person, and every other minor detail involved with such an endeavor.

Paul used one of his many connections to get us a good price for the Victorian Mansion on St. Charles Avenue, a gorgeous place that, in retrospect, was probably unworthy of the many hooligans in our class (some of them probably snuck out with silverware in their coat pockets). We arranged for an open bar with premium liquor, beer, and so-so white wine. It wasn't top-flight chardonnay, but at least they didn't serve rot-gut Gallo— you know, the wine those yuppies drink with salmon on the TV commercials. (I bet they retched and spit it out after the director yelled, "Cut!")

We selected an array of food items, most of them popular on the New Orleans party circuit: oyster patties (they're better than they sound), little muffalettas, seafood gumbo, boiled and fried shrimp, crabmeat dip, and crawfish etouffee. For the unadventurous, there were the obligatory cocktail meatballs, chicken drumettes, and cheese and vegetable boards. Jill lobbied hard for rumaki, which I think amounts to bacon and chicken livers on a skewer. I filibustered long and hard on the evils of this dish. No longer able to withstand my demagoguery, she relented and scratched it from the list of hopefuls.

Finally, after much planning, the big night arrived. About three-fourths of the class came, suddenly free of the burdens that had kept them from helping before. It was nice renewing old friendships—and seeing who had gotten fat (I lost five pounds in advance to avoid being the subject of whispers). Everyone was having a ball. Jill, Paul, and I patted each other on the back, reveling in our organizational genius. Talk of moonlighting as party-planning consultants was suddenly interrupted by two unruly classmates.

"I don't know why ya'll picked *this* place," said one, a life-long pain in the butt. "It's too fancy; I can't unwind. The muffalettas are too oily, and they're not using Absolute in my vodka and tonics."

When her whining finally ceased, the other dissatisfied classmate spoke up. "I can't believe I paid $18 for this party. I hear last year's reunion class only paid $14. And I hate oyster patties! Ya'll should've gotten rumaki instead." (My steely stare muted any remarks ready to leap from Jill's tongue.)

There you have it. These two idiots couldn't find the time to participate in the planning of this reunion, yet had no problem unloading their petty complaints on us. They and their classmates, who in effect told us to plan the party ourselves by not providing input, waived any right to utter *a single* disparaging word.

This all came to mind as I sat in on the recent meeting of state association heads in Chicago. They took two days away from their busy schedules to be there, with many having to travel great distances. And don't think they went to Chicago to socialize. It was hour after hour of meetings.

The topics included video lottery, cigarette vending machines, the parallel game controversy, association officer and dues structures, and things of that nature. Someone would bring up a problem that existed in his or her state, and there was always a suggestion floating around the room. One problem, however, seemed to be universal: the lack of support from operators.

Nevada's Doug Minter said his state has been working for some time to get an association off the ground. Utah's Bill Bailey said his tiny association is desperately trying to increase membership. Tony Parina was embarrassed to report that his association, the California Coin Machine Association, only has about 100 members! How many operators do you think there are in California?

The group brought up the "80-20" rule—20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work—with many saying that, as far as their association is concerned, it was closer to a "90-10" breakdown. That's shameful. I'll bet, though, that they have no shortage of people calling the association headquarters with critiques on job performance.

These state association heads are sincerely interested in bettering things for everybody involved with the industry. How about lending them a much-needed hand. You'll be doing them—and yourself—a favor. □

Christopher Caire

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News Editor

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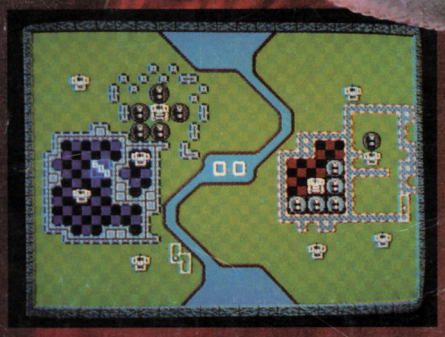

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