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# PLAY METER

Volume 6, Number 9

May 15, 1980

## Annual Arcade Issue



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# PLAY METER

Volume 6, Number 9  
May 15, 1980

## Staff

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*Editorial Director:* David Pierson  
*Managing Editor:* Ray E. Tilley  
*International Editor:* David Snook  
Editor, *Coin Slot*  
*Technical Editors:* Zac Oliver  
Randy Fromm  
Jim Calore  
*Correspondents:* Roger C. Sharpe  
Pat Matthews  
Dick Welu  
Charles C. Ross  
*Art Director:* Katey Schwark  
*Administrative Assistant:* Valerie Cognevich  
*Circulation Manager:* Renee Pierson  
*Classified Advertising:* Valerie Cognevich  
*Staff Illustrator:* Mars Walker  
*Advertising Manager:* David Pierson  
*European Representative:* Esmay Leslie

PLAY METER, May 15, 1980. Volume 6, No. 9. Copyright 1980 by Skybird Publishing Company. PLAY METER (ISSN 0162-1343) is published twice monthly on the 1st and 15th of the month. Publishing offices: 320 Old Hammond Highway, Metairie, La. 70005, P. O. Box 24170, New Orleans 70184. Tel. 504/838-8025. Subscription rates: U. S. and Canada—\$25; Europe and Japan—\$45; elsewhere—\$50. Multiple-subscription orders: 2-9, \$20 each; 10-24, \$17 each; 25 or more, \$15 each. Advertising rates available on request. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without expressed permission. The editors are not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts. Second-class postage paid at Metairie 70009 and additional mailing offices. *Postmaster:* Send Form 3579 to PLAY METER, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, La. 70184.

European office: PLAY METER Promotions, "Harescombe" Watford Road, Northwood Middx. England, Northwood 29244.

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# PLAY METER



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# From the Editor

They came, they saw, and they conquered. They came from all over the United States—from as far away as Hawaii, Japan, Canada, Mexico, South America, and England.

They came to be part of the first annual Amusement Operators Expo. They saw a host of new equipment unveiled for the first time. And they conquered mutual problems and learned the benefits of open communication and the exchange of ideas.

They are the free thinkers of our industry and are indeed the new and upcoming leaders. We thank them because they made the first ever Amusement Operators Expo a resounding success.

(Because of the closeness of the event to our press date, we were unable to provide complete coverage of the event in time for this issue. Complete and exclusive coverage of the show will be in our next issue.)

While the actual attendance figures were still being computed at presstime, the end figure was approaching the 1,500 mark. For a first time effort in this industry, that would have to be a record figure by anyone's standards. We feel the turnout of operators served to prove the real need for an operator-oriented trade show—one that emphasizes education as well as exhibits.

As for the exhibits, there were a total of 140 booths taken up by 55 of the industry's leading manufacturers and suppliers. They too saw spring as an ideal time for such a show. To the delight of many of these exhibitors, the Amusement Operators Expo turned out to be a selling show. Several exhibitors, in fact, did so much business at the show they expressed their intentions to enlarge their exhibit space next year — some even talking about doubling space.

From the operators' viewpoint, the event had much more to offer than just an outstanding lineup of exhibitors. A total of 22 hard-hitting information-packed seminars were held during the three-day show with topics zeroing in on a wide range of operator-oriented problems. There was even a seminar session dedicated exclusively to distributor personnel that was well-received.

Probably the most significant aspect of the event was the extreme interest shown by everyone in the seminar program. Four hundred operators registered for well over 1,000 seminar seats during the course of the show. And many of the seminars which were originally scheduled to hold classes of 30, 40, or 50 operators, ended up instead with registrations of 70 or more — even reaching 100.

The overwhelming success of the seminar program left no doubt that the major reason for the show was well-founded—operators are keenly interested in improving themselves and their operations. And they see the seminar program as a vital avenue to accomplishing that goal.

Plans for next year's show are already underway. The city of New Orleans proved to be such an ideal site for the show that every effort is being made to schedule a return visit for at least one more year. A number of improvements are being implemented to make the show even better and more responsive to the needs of exhibitors and attendees alike. Among them, badge changes and prices will be effected, and seminar sessions will be rescheduled so as not to be in conflict with the exhibit hours.

But we have made a start. Every effort is being made to make this show the most meaningful and important event for the entire industry.



Ralph C. Lally II  
Editor and Publisher

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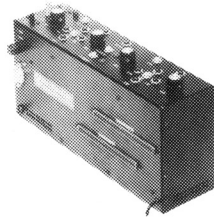
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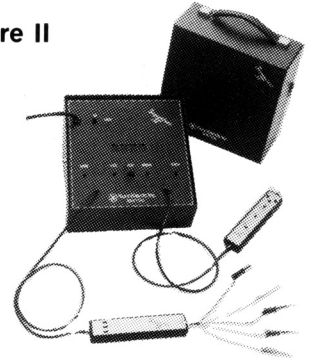


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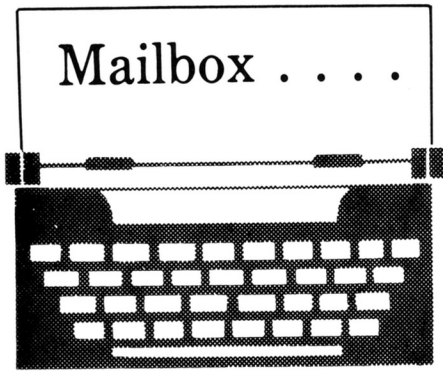
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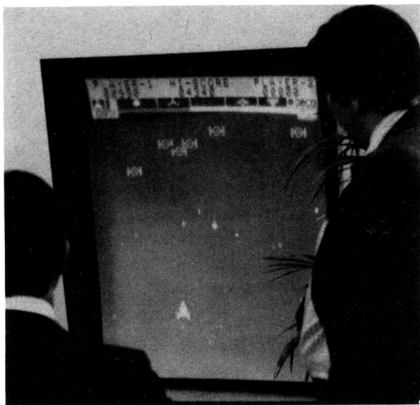
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## Not a 'copy'

On page 61 of your March book you show a picture in the lower right corner (i.e., IMA Show). The picture shows a wide screen



video game of which the caption reads, "There were about fifteen different versions of Namco/Midway's *Galaxians* The copies came in all sizes, colors, and configurations."

The game pictured is *Astro Fighter* [by DECO—ed.] licensed in Germany to Video Games GmbH. This is no way a copy or near copy of *Galaxians*, nor should it be referred to as a copy.

**Hal Watner**  
**Data East Inc.**  
**Palo Alto, California**

## Virginia untaxed

In your March 15th issue on page 20 regarding the status of license/taxes in Virginia, you have listed a \$1,000 operators' fee per year as the current fee for operators having any number of pieces of equipment.

This is in error, since this license/tax was completely abolished through the efforts of AMOV in 1977, and a fairer and simpler gross receipts tax by

localities was imposed.

**Lou Corso**  
**Amusement and Music**  
**Operators of Virginia, Inc.**  
**Richmond**

[Editor—Thanks for the update. Please see our continuing run-down on licenses/taxes in this issue.]

## Hornick, please

In the March 15 issue of PLAY METER Zac Oliver wrote a re-

view on "Electronic Pinball Electronics for Pinball Mechanics" Vol. I and II, by Robert A. Hornick.

It sounds like an interesting set. Who is the publisher and what is the cost?

**C. Kubota**  
**Taito Corporation**  
**Tokyo**

[Editor—Hornick's books are published by Laserscope, Ltd. and are available from WICO Corporation, Niles, Illinois 60648 at \$19.95.]



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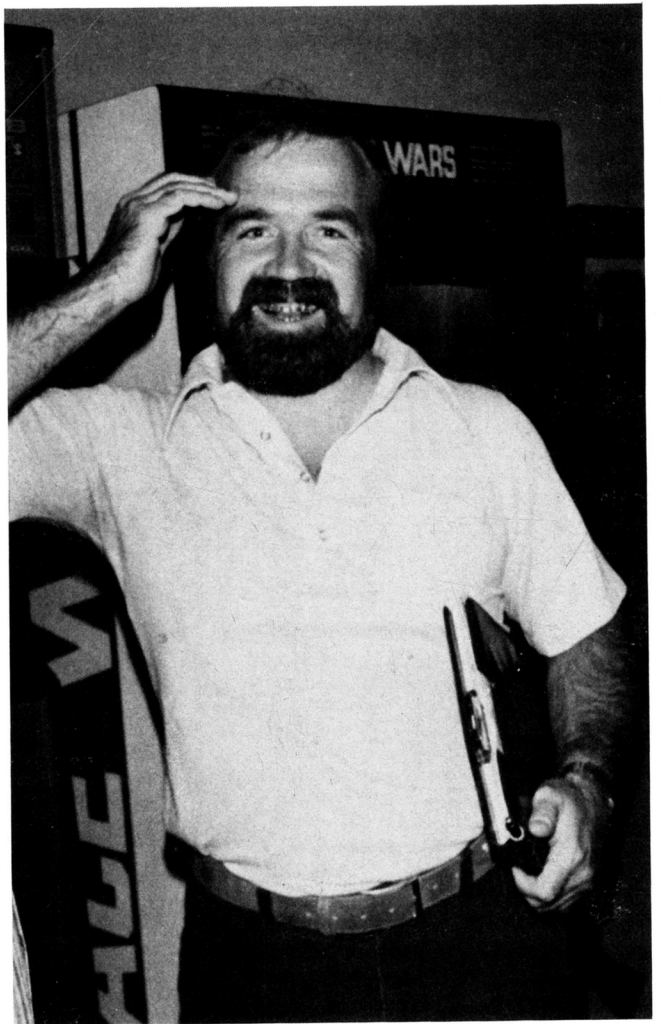
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# Coinman of the Month TED OLSON



Ted Olson, 36, started in the coin-op business in 1972 as an accountant for Atari When Pong was still on the line. Two years later he left the Sunnyvale, California manufacturer and turned his efforts toward operating on a full-time basis. First, it was a street operation, Syzygy, with stops in pizza parlors, bars, etc. Then, after a short time, he opened his first Time Zone amusement center in San Jose, California in November, 1974.

He sold Syzygy in 1976 and, this past November 30, sold all nine of his Time Zone stores to Aladdin's Castle [a wholly owned subsidiary of Bally Manufacturing]. Remaining on as president of Time Zone, he is currently involved with the leasing negotiations for new stores and with new store construction. Time Zone's nine locations are all in the northern California area, from Fresno to the northern California border. Six of them are in enclosed mall environments, which most agree is the premium amusement center location.

Married [his wife's name is Barbara] with two sons [Jeff, 11, and Kevin, 9]—Ted Olson is a graduate of the University of Montana with a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting. Before becoming involved in the coin machine industry, he had worked for United Airlines and a couple of electronics firms, then moved into the industry, via Atari, because he was looking to get into a higher level of finance, preferably either as a controller or vice president of finance.

Most recently, Ted chaired the "Starting and Managing an Arcade" seminar at the Amusement Operators Expo. Our interview with this successful arcade operator was wide ranging touching on various topics from his view of the enclosed mall situation, token operations, game mix and rotation, and several other subjects.



**PLAY METER:** Enclosed malls are, of course, the prized locations. But, outside of that, what do you look for in an amusement center location?

**OLSON:** I can give you an example with one of our locations which I think is ideally located. It's in an entertainment complex—a group of restaurants and six theaters. That was our primary reason for going in there. Now, because of all the entertainment around it, we realized a tremendous amount of runoff from those other businesses into our stores, especially on the weekends.

And it's also located in a neighborhood where there are a lot of apartment houses around. Because of those types of dwellings in that area, there were a lot of young single people and young couples in the area, and most of the apartments didn't have any children. So we had a slightly older age group to draw from. Normally, in a mall, you might be looking at a 13—17 year old group, but at this location we had an 18 and above age group to draw from

**PLAY METER:** This probably means that you have a slightly different game mix in that store?

**OLSON:** Yes, it does. We seem to have quite a few more pinball games, and we're able to put in more sophisticated video games. And we also can go with an Air Hockey in there because the adults enjoy that. But generally you'll find that with older groups you end up going with more videos. But at this location we are still talking about 18 year olds, and pinball is still very high in that age group.

I'll tell you the thing I discovered about this type of clientele, and that is you have to keep the very newest of pinballs in the store. The older players will still play the pinballs, but only if they see that it's the highest technology or the latest thing.

**PLAY METER:** Now, as for those other types of locations, how do you go about breaking the ice with mall developers today?

**OLSON:** I guess most of the ice has already been broken with mall developers. Most developers have been called by dozens of operators, from the very large to the very small. And so the thing that matters to them now is the experience. The thing that works best with a mall developer is being able to show him something. For that reason, I think it's almost impossible for a new operator to break in with a new mall developer today. His best chance for success would appear to be in the already established malls, if an opening comes up.

**PLAY METER:** How many square feet do you need for a decent size arcade today?

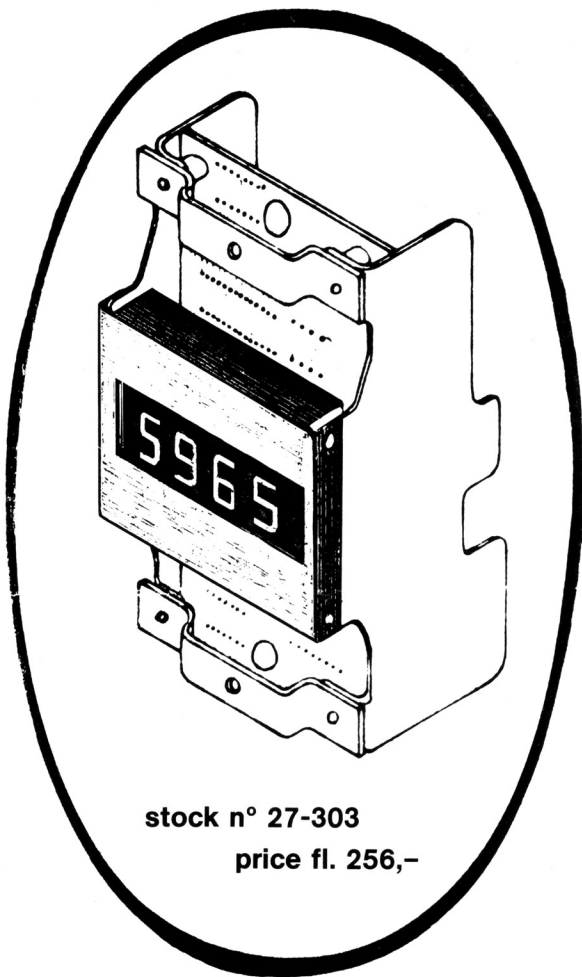
**OLSON:** That seems to be changing somewhat. I felt that 1500 to 2500 square feet was the ideal size for a game center, but because of the increase in the cost of construction and the cost of leasing space, I think we can expect to see that change a little bit. So the ideal size today is probably in the 1500 to 2000 square foot range. You see, the cost is making that come down slightly.

In the past you could sign up for six to nine dollars per square foot rent (annually), and you could commit yourself to 3000 square feet and not feel uncomfortable about it. In fact, there were cases where people who signed up for 4000 to 5000 square feet just blocked off the space they didn't use because the rent was reasonable enough they could afford to do it that way.

But now, when you're paying \$20 a foot and above, you can't afford to have a lot of unused spaces. And that \$20 a square foot doesn't take into consideration your CAM (common area maintenance) charges, taxes, insurance, and the rest.

Then, of course, if your gross is such that ten percent of your revenue exceeds the annual lease, it's pretty

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standard that you pay that instead.

**PLAY METER:** So it appears that, among established arcade operators in enclosed malls, the whole thing boils down to a bidding war of sorts. Is that true?

**OLSON:** There are a small number of game center operators who are now seeking new mall locations, and it has become something of a bidding war with them. But, more important than that, I think these developers are finding they have to be careful about who they put in their malls. So, for that reason, they are looking for operators with the best of reputations. They are looking at the ways they operate their other stores—and, by that, I mean how they manage their stores.

I think that of the top four or five game center operators in the country today, you'll find that they all have pretty much the same approach to decor and store management. Some may be just a little bit better than others in some areas, but what the mall developer is looking for is how the operator is going to operate his store. And, of course, the mall developer is looking for someone who can pay his bills, too.

**PLAY METER:** Do mall developers show much concern about game rotation, since it could mean additional earnings for them too?

**OLSON:** Yes, they all pay attention to that kind of thing. They also have learned through experience which operators are going to do the job as far as rotation and which operators aren't.

**PLAY METER:** What kinds of presentations do operators make before mall developers today?

**OLSON:** Very professional ones. They'll show slide shows, small movies, that sort of thing. This is especially true with new developers who aren't familiar with our type of business. These presentations show them the way things happen—the way it is constructed, the way it is run, the how and why of game rotation, and so on.

**PLAY METER:** Would you say that, in general, arcade revenues are on the increase, on the decrease, or have leveled off?

**OLSON:** Arcade revenues are on the increase, and that's because of two factors. First of all, the technology in the games is just tremendous, and that has opened up a lot of new varieties and has made the games more interesting for customers. And, secondly, I believe we're seeing a wider acceptance of game centers in malls. There are a lot more people coming into them who wouldn't have come in before.

Then, of course, you could say that higher pricing has helped increase revenues also. This is especially true with pinballs. We've gone from two plays for a quarter on five-ball play, to one play for a quarter on three-ball play. So we have seen a fair increase in revenue that way too.

**PLAY METER:** I understand that you use tokens in all your stores. Why is this?

**OLSON:** I had been on quarters for about three years and found that I was doing a great deal of the collections myself, and that was requiring too much of my time. And besides, I was constantly bothered about the threat of burglary or robberies.

I also felt there would be a little more opportunity for me to institute promotions with tokens. And I realized, after switching over to tokens, that tokens probably had a good deal to do with the kinds of income my stores produced.

**PLAY METER:** What was the best promotion you used in connection with tokens?

**The Greenwald four-coin chute is here ...**

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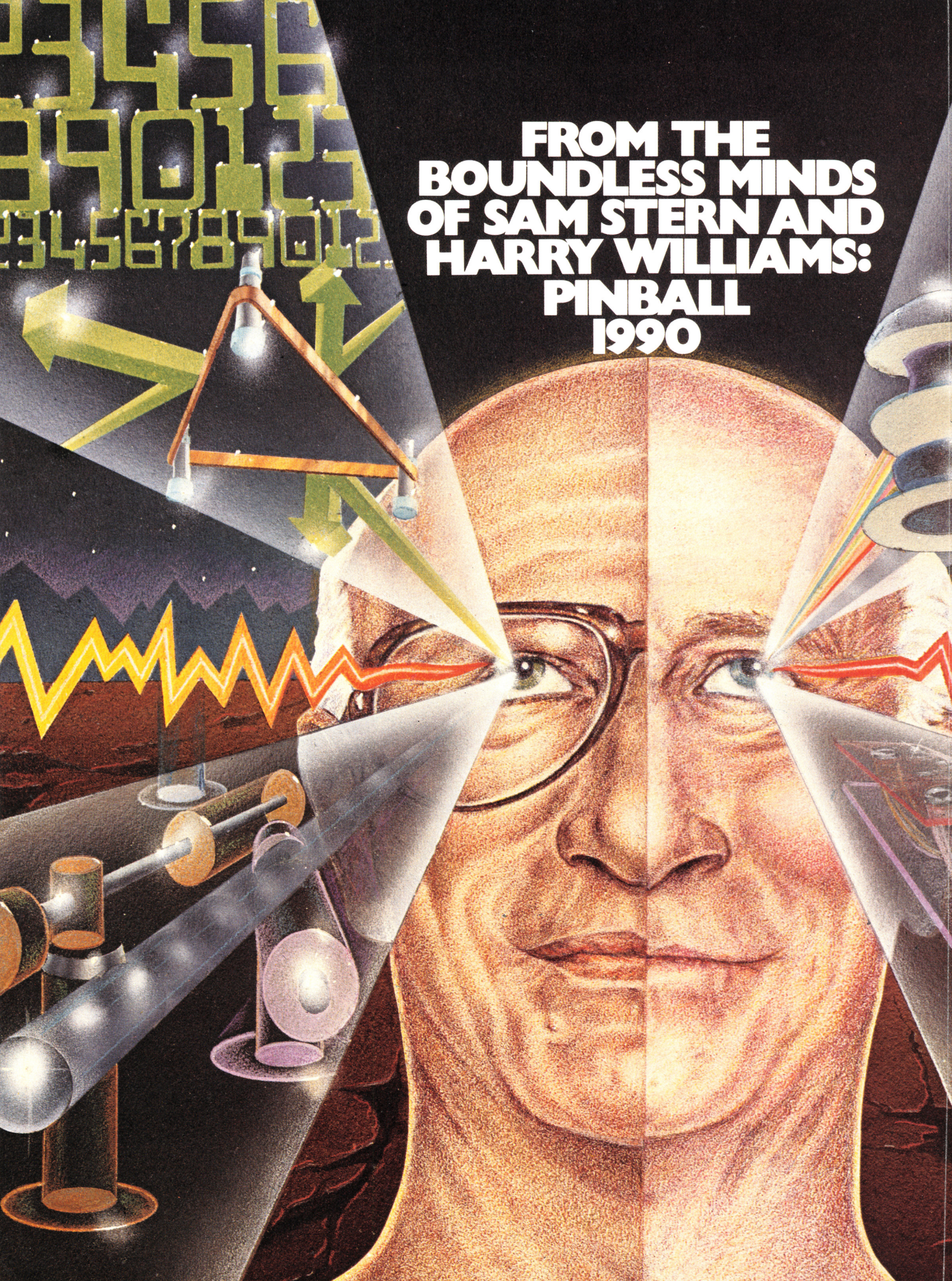
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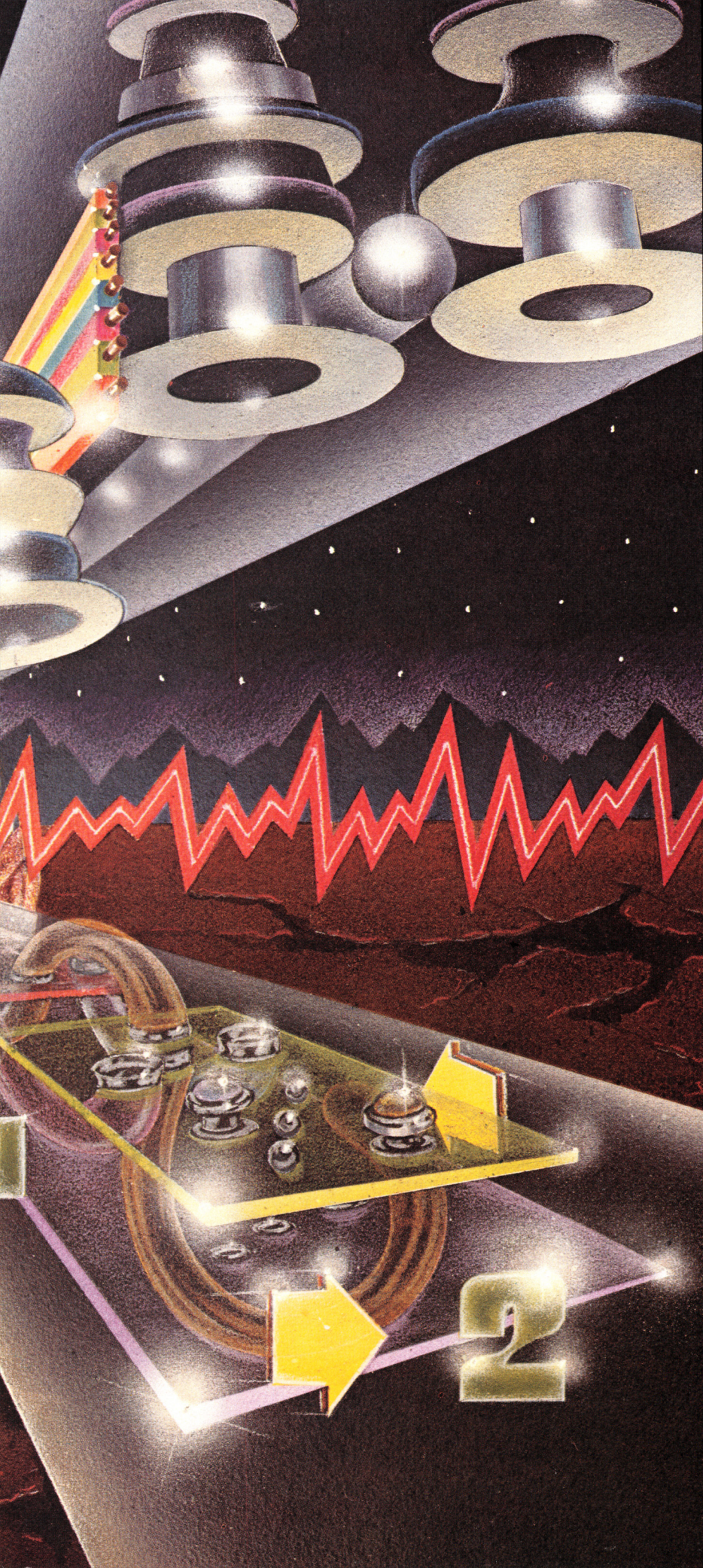
# THE PINBALL PROPHEETS

**Pinball Forecast  
Recovered  
From Past**

(See inside)

**FROM THE  
BOUNDLESS MINDS  
OF SAM STERN AND  
HARRY WILLIAMS:  
PINBALL  
1990**





## A CONFERENCE REPORT

**DATE:** May 15, 2357

**TO:** All Stern Uni-Wide Lastronics Board of Directors

**FROM:** XR Kon Jobby II, VP Product Development

**RE:** The Predictions of Two 20th Century Pinball Pioneers

Recently, I uncovered some startling information. It seems two of our company's early predecessors made predictions about the future of pinball back in 1980.

Gentlemen, if not for Sam Stern and Harry Williams, it appears pinball would not be the game it is today. Evidently, they led us to where we are.

With uncanny accuracy, they forecast the evolution of pinball. How, I ask myself, was it possible? How could Harry Williams possibly have known that Neutroactive Pneumatics would one day revolutionize the industry? Was it just a good guess? Or truly a vision!

Our recent AtoMagno flipper innovation is another case in point. Sam Stern saw it coming almost 350 years ago—long before the discovery of Luranium. Was he genius? Or prophet? One may be led to think both!

I also would like to add that many of their prophecies went beyond pinball and into the socio-eco-political order. No area was left untouched.

Together, they envisioned the formation of the New, New, New, New Chrysler Corporation.

They forewarned us that yogurt would one day be judged a health hazard.

They predicted that beer would eventually fuel our automocruisers. (However, they never foresaw the present shortage of imported brews.)

In closing, let it be known that one of their predictions has yet to come to pass. The creation of Scannerball.

Gentlemen, I have their designs! We shall begin work first thing in the morning

**STERN**

**“You ain’t seen nothing yet!”**

**STERN**



*"We try to keep our pinballs at 35 percent of the total equipment in the store."*

**OLSON:** We did something like a club card type of promotion that allowed anyone to buy this club card for fifty cents for a period of one year, and during that year the club member could come in to our store once a week and have two games. So really it was a \$26 value for about fifty cents. The card was done very simply with fifty numbers around the edge of it, and we marked the week numbers in our store. And when someone came into the store for that week, he punched his card and gave him two free games. And if he missed a week, he lost his two free games for that week.

The reason we did it was because we were wanted to encourage a regular clientele. We had realized beforehand, from a survey we had done, that there was a tremendous amount of return play in our stores. And since we wanted to encourage an even greater amount of return play, we felt this was the way to go without actually costing the company any money. We felt it would also create a lot of good will among our players.

Well, the promotion had tremendous acceptance. We sold literally thousands of those cards, and many, many people renewed them every year. As a matter of fact, we had a lot of adults who bought them because they were business people, and they would come in at lunch time, maybe once a week, maybe more often, and play the games.

**PLAY METER:** Where would you locate the token changers in your store?

**OLSON:** We would locate the changers close to the rear of the store so that it would draw the people into the back of the store so they could see all the games we had to offer. I think if you put them in the front of the store, people are likely to abuse them. Also, a lot of people will walk right past it if it's in the front of the store, but if the changer is located in the back, they'll be looking for it all the way.

**PLAY METER:** And you feel tokens have simplified your cash control methods?

**OLSON:** Yes, it does simplify them. It allows for a lot more security. We were able to make a deposit every day, and so there was never any money in our stores overnight, except for the small change fund we always kept on hand.

Because of this people realized very quickly that by breaking into our machines all they would get would be tokens, which they would have to turn around and spend in our store anyway. So our small theft from people breaking into games dropped almost to zero within a year.

PLAY METER, May, 1980



*"We had realized a tremendous amount of return play in our stores."*

**PLAY METER:** How do you go about setting up your arcade to insure a good traffic flow?

**OLSON:** We try to maintain a balance throughout the store, and we try to change it around as often as we can because people will come into a store if it looks different, even if there aren't that many new games inside. I think you should have some good games located at the front of the store and some more good strong games near the back of the store so that you can draw people all the way through the store to see all of it.

Generally, we keep pinballs toward the rear of the store. Our other consideration is that, especially if you have a lot of young people, you can't put all your good games in the front of the store because it will cause a tremendous amount of congestion, and a lot of adults who might have come in are going to feel threatened and won't come in.

**PLAY METER:** What have you found as far as the maximum allowable machines in a given area?

**OLSON:** That really has a lot to do with the total amount of revenue you're going to do in a store. There are some optimum positions to take for games. But there is a great difference between having a store that does \$125,000 to \$50,000 a year as opposed to a store that does \$300,000 a year.

My own theory about the thing is that people like to be crowded. And any place that ever does well is crowded. People like to be close together. I know a lot of people may complain about it, but they like it. When your store looks full, people like it, and they come in. So, to answer your question, I never really bothered with making a lot of room for people to play because they seem to enjoy being crowded together. And it doesn't scare the adults away—unless the store allows teenagers to loiter. But as long as people are spending money and they're moving, there's no problem. I think what adults feel threatened about is groups of kids loitering and not spending money.

**PLAY METER:** What percentage of your games are pinballs?

**OLSON:** We tried at first to keep our pinballs at 25 to 30 percent, but as the technology in pins improved and we started seeing more variety, we increased that a little bit. But I think there's a point where you can go over the desired amount of pinball games in a location. The pinballs today are very reliable, and it would be nice to have pinballs representing fifty percent of the equipment.

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But after a point I think you start seeing a diminishing return. So we try to keep our pinballs at 35 percent of the total equipment in the store. The reason is that there are only a certain amount of pinball players in an arcade. And, fortunately, we have seen enough good videos that we don't have to push our customers in that direction.

**PLAY METER:** How do you figure if a game is worth buying?

**OLSON:** I always want to look at any game I buy and try to see that game as paying for itself in six to twelve weeks.

**PLAY METER:** What are your feelings about decor for an amusement center?

**OLSON:** I feel a store is going to do better if the initial impact of the store is that it is a first-class, pleasant, and even plush type of operation. There are things in this area that can be done to insure that, and compared to the total amount of cost, they aren't all that expensive. Things that make the store look really nice and plush and expensive looking are not the expensive things in your construction. The expensive things in your construction are the things underneath it—the electrical work, the air conditioning, the walls, the plumbing, etc. But things such as carpet, graphics, and lighting perhaps, are not the most expensive parts of your construction.

The feedback I've gotten over the years is that when people walk into a Time Zone, they feel they've walked into a first class type of store. It's something we've had to do to fight the sleazy arcade image. Now, I know that's improved, but that first impression is really very important, especially when you're trying to draw adults and families.

In fact, I don't think you can overdo it. I've got a store in Sacramento, for instance, that a lot of people have said looks like a plush Las Vegas casino. It's probably one of the most beautiful stores in the country. I think the plusher you make it, the more comfortable you make it for people, and the more they are going to like it.

**PLAY METER:** How do you go about finding and training people for managers?

**OLSON:** That's changed somewhat with Time Zone. When I owned the stores, I looked for the same things that almost any operator would look for. You're looking for a certain type of person—one who is honest and stable, someone who is over 21, has a little education behind him, and is strong when it comes to management. I wasn't looking necessarily for people with electronics backgrounds because I had my own mechanics who toured the stores regularly and did the repair work.

But with the new company coming in, because their stores are spread out all over the country, they have a different system. They look towards their managers and assistant managers to be able to fix the equipment, or about ninety percent of it on site. In that way, they don't have to have mechanics running around.

Still, the average age of a store manager is going up—probably to somewhere between 25 and 30.

**PLAY METER:** And, finally, whatever happened to the arcade operators association?

**OLSON:** Well, we did try to form that association. A major constituent of the game center operators met last February in Miami, and we talked then about forming a national game center association. But we decided to table the whole idea because we weren't sure such an association wouldn't be misconstrued as collusion by mall developers.

In the end, we determined that the most beneficial thing that came out of the attempt was that we were able to share ideas, but that's something that can be done at almost any type of seminar.



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# OMAA expo ready at Columbus

Tommy Thompson, chairman of the Ohio Music & Amusement Association's 1980 Exposition of Music & Games, promises that "this year's May 16-17 exposition will be the best event we've ever had." It will be held at the Columbus Hilton Inn, 3110 Olentangy River Road, Columbus, Ohio.

Thompson reminded all midwest operators to "come on down" to meet their colleagues, share ideas, talk with experts in the electronic field, and see the very latest in games and jukeboxes. Displays by all of Ohio's major distributors plus many other exhibitors from across the United States will be on hand.

Contacted exhibitors as of late March included Cleveland Coin International (Cleveland and Columbus); Monroe Distributing, Inc. (Cleveland and Dayton); Shaffer Distributing (Columbus and Cleveland); Royal Distributing Corp. (Cincinnati); Kurz-Kasch, Inc. (Dayton); Mobile Record Service (Pittsburgh); Priority Cigarette Service (Cleveland); Abloy Security Locks (Niles, Illinois); Great Amusement Emporium (Englewood, Colorado); Amusement Supply, Inc. (Dallas);

J-S Sales, Inc. (Mt. Vernon, New York); Vanguard Accessory & Supply Co. (Overland Park, Kansas); WICO Corp. (Niles, Illinois).

As an extra attraction to develop that friendly Buckeye atmosphere, a golf outing is planned for Thursday, May 15 at the Thorn Apple Country Club (in Calloway, Ohio), a short drive from the Hilton Inn.

The exposition will be open for registration Friday, May 16 at 10 a.m. and will be followed by the annual membership luncheon which will feature the election of directors and a short address by AMOA Executive Vice President Frederick M. Granger.

Registrants and their guests will have the treats of refreshments, Saturday morning continental breakfast, many opportunities to win valuable merchandise prizes and to watch a performance by Opus Zero, a talented group from Otterbein College's Department of Music and Theater who will perform after Friday's dinner and installation of officers.

Among the other speakers lined up are: AMOA President Robert F.

Nims, who will address the Saturday President's Luncheon, and OMAA President Dennis R. Hilligan, who will report on his successful two-year leadership.

A number of educational and vital seminars have been scheduled for Saturday morning, May 17. The topics to be covered include: "Maintaining Your Automotive Fleet at Peak Efficiency" (with a speaker from the American Petroleum Institute), "Commission Structure," and "High Reliability Component Removal for PC Board Rework and Repair."

Exhibit hours will be from 3—6:30 p.m. Friday, May 16 and 1:30—6 p.m. Saturday, May 17. A minimal registration fee is charged operators who attend. For a registration form or additional information, write or call the OMAA office, 41 S. High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215, telephone 614/221-8600.

Operators who register by May 2 will be eligible for the "Early Bird" drawings on May 16.

Thompson urged planning to attend the OMAA Exposition to "learn and be prepared for the 1980s."

## N.D. operators meet, talk coin-op shop



*In Bismarck meeting and show, Kirk and Jody McKennon from Hanson Distributing show Dick Hawkins of D&R Star the latest in video table games.*

The first annual meeting and show of the North Dakota Coin Machine Operators Association was held at Kirkwood Motor Inn in Bismarck, North Dakota on February 22-23. Almost 95 percent of the state's operators were in attendance.

Featured speakers were Robert Nims, AMOA president; Sandy Zeglin of Lieberman Enterprises, speaking to the operators about record programming; and Dick Hawkins of D&R Star, talking about forming pool leagues in North Dakota.

Conducting the meeting was Rolf Severinson, president, along with state officers Cal Baeder, vice president, and Margo Bennett, secretary/treasurer. These persons will be in office for another year.

The show was held at poolside at Kirkwood Motor Inn with the distributors and suppliers present: Lieberman Music, Sandler Vending, Hanson Distributing, D&R Industries, WICO Corporation, Amusement Emporium, and Insport, Inc.



Classroom setting at O'Hare Hilton: They came from near and far, for coin-op schooling.

## Seminar 'graduates' 78

The eighth annual AMOA-Notre Dame Seminar in March, 1980 was termed "the best to date" by many in attendance. Some 75 persons went "back to school" for the two days of sessions.

In all, 78 students received graduation certificates. They had attended classes and discussions on subjects including "Interviewing, Hiring, and Training Employees", "Tax Considerations for Operators", and "Delegation of Authority—Why, How, and When?"

Dr. Gerry Sequin returned as coordinator of the 1980 AMOA-Notre Dame Seminar held at the O'Hare Hilton, Chicago, March 14-15.

The operators panel for the Friday afternoon session was filled by Wesley S. Lawson of Florida, Fred

Collins, Jr. of South Carolina, Pat Storino of New Jersey, and Dock Ringo, moderator, who is seminar committee chairman, from Texas.

AMOA President Bob Nims opened the Chicago meeting with a note on the long distances—from Alaska to the southeast to New England—travelled by attendees to the educational program. He also pointed out that the subject matter this year was selected on the basis of a survey taken at 1979's seminar.

A seminar committee for 1981 was expected to be appointed after the mid-year meeting of the AMOA board in San Antonio. Members with suggestions on locale and subject matter of the next in the series were invited to send comments to the AMOA, 35 E. Wacker Drive, Chicago 60601.

## Would you believe it?

### —A 'per-temple' fee

BMI, the world's largest copyright licensing organization, has entered into a national agreement with the Shriners, entitling the fraternal organization to use the BMI repertory of over one million compositions and songs. It marks BMI's first nationwide accord with a fraternal organization.

The contract, which covers performances held in—or under the auspices of—any of the Shriners' 170 temples is based on a "per-temple" fee. It is retroactive from July of 1979 and extends through June 1981, with automatic renewals thereafter.

The Shriners pay BMI a flat, per-temple fee, which under this new

national contract "represents a considerable savings over individual agreements for each temple," according to a BMI news release.

Alan H. Smith, BMI's vice president in charge of licensing, said: "The agreement with the Shriners is a highly significant first. We at BMI hope it will be followed by similar agreements with other fraternal and patriotic organizations."

Meanwhile, other sectors connected to the music industry are fighting BMI and ASCAP licensing powers. (See PLAY METER, March, 1980: "Anti-ASCAP Organization Formed ....")

# Calendar

### May 16-17

Wisconsin Music Merchants Association spring convention, Holiday Inn, LaCrosse, Wisconsin

### May 16-17

Ohio Music and Amusement Association Exposition of Games and Music, Columbus Hilton Inn, Columbus, Ohio

### May 17-21

International Council of Shopping Centers, New Orleans: Hilton, Marriott, and Fairmont hotels

### June 5-7

Music Operators of Texas, annual convention and trade show, El Paso, Holiday Inn, downtown

### June 13-15

Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association annual convention, Eagle Ridge Inn, Galena Territory

### July 16-20

National Australian AMOA, Queensland, Australia

### September 19-21

North Carolina Coin Operators Association, Radisson Hotel, Charlotte

### October 10-11

Amusement and Music Operators of Virginia annual convention, Howard Johnson's, Richmond

### October 23-26

NAMA National Convention/Exhibition, Bartle Hall, Kansas City, Missouri

### October 31-November 1,2

1980 AMOA Exposition, Conrad Hilton, Chicago

### November 22-24

IAAPA (Parks) Show, Rivergate, New Orleans

### BULLETIN

The scheduled May 16-18 New York convention of the Music and Amusement Association, which had been set for the Host Farm, Pennsylvania, has been postponed. PLAY METER UPDATE will carry any announced revision for the meeting.

# More licenses and taxes

A selection of license and fees levied on coin-operated machines from almost any two points in the country will show the non-uniform nature of taxation on operators. For this month's compilation, we have two states for comparison of several localities—**Colorado**, which our reports tell us has *no license fee and no sales tax* on machines; and **Alabama**, where the state levies *\$12.50 per machine and the state sales tax is 4 percent*.

## ALABAMA

**University, AL**—\$38.50 on each pool table, plus a city charge of \$10 per jukebox, \$25 per pingame, \$40 per pool table, \$25 per video game, and a total of 6 percent sales tax.

**Tuscaloosa, AL**—\$25 license per year, plus 2 percent sales tax.

**Louisville, AL**—1 percent local sales tax, \$5 per amusement machine, \$100 per pool table.

**Eufala, AL**—2 percent local sales tax, \$250 operator license, \$2 decal for amusement machine, \$25 per pool table.

**Clio, AL**—1 percent sales tax added; no license charged for amusement machines, but pool tables are prohibited.

**Clayton, AL**—1 percent sales tax, \$10 per amusement machine, \$25 per pool table.

## COLORADO

**Lakewood, CO**—\$25 per game, up to five games; above five, a \$500 per year license.

**Golden, CO**—no license for jukebox or games other than pool: \$100 operator and \$25 location fees.

**Longmont, CO**—pool, \$25 fee for up to eleven machines; above eleven, \$50 fee and \$25 per table.

**Loveland, CO**—\$25 pool table license.

**Edgewater, CO**—jukeboxes, games and pool: \$100 per year.

**Rifle, CO**—\$15 per jukebox, \$25 per pool table.

## READER'S INPUT

We will continue to run lists of license and tax regulations in local communities and states, as reported by our readers. Changes, in particular, should be reported. Let us know what the license or tax regulation is in your community and state and we, in turn, will communicate with the rest of the industry. The information that you supply may well help operators elsewhere head off problems.

Do you pay Sales Tax?  YES  NO If yes, indicate percent:

State \_\_\_\_\_% City \_\_\_\_\_% Other \_\_\_\_\_%

What other license or tax levies do you have to pay on the following:

Name of City Pins Phonos Pool Videos

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

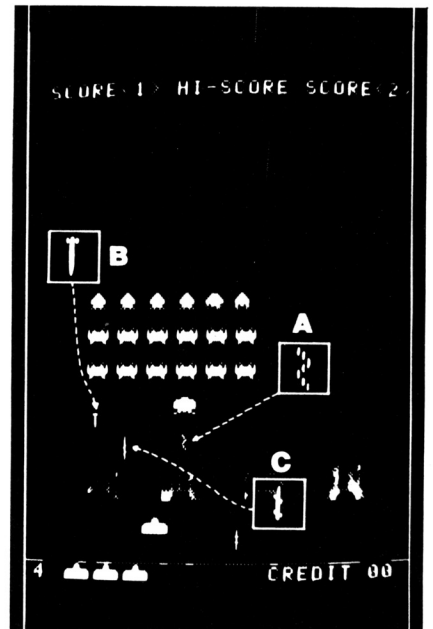
\_\_\_\_\_

Send to PLAY METER, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, LA 70124.

## 'Space Invaders' now a best-selling book

"How to Play *Space Invaders*—Secrets from an Expert," a new book introduced by Taito America Corporation at the Amusement Operators Expo is creating great interest among *Space Invaders* aficionados, the company reports.

The 64-page book provides detailed game strategies with vivid game graphics to instruct the player on methods to master *Space Invaders*.



'How to Play' is lavishly illustrated.

"The beauty of *Space Invaders* is that techniques can be learned and skills perfected," stated Laura Kreter, marketing manager of Taito America. "We believe that 'How to Play *Space Invaders*' — Secrets from an Expert' will sustain and build the current interest in *Space Invaders* by showing proven methods to meet and beat the oncoming Invaders."

She told PLAY METER: "At the operator level, the game is still beginning to make penetration in some areas." The book is expected to be an "excellent promotion device" and is recommended for direct sale in arcades to promote interest in the video game.

"How to Play *Space Invaders*" is available through all Taito America distributors or direct from Taito America Corp., 1256 Estes Avenue, Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007, attention—Marketing Services Department.

The cover price is \$1.95 per copy.

# The case against per-machine taxes

*Editor's Note: The National Automatic Merchandising Association [NAMA] has prepared for its members an effective attack against per-machine taxes. Since vending sales and coin-op amusement operations are closely linked, many of the arguments NAMA used are also useful in this industry. What follows are those applicable excerpts.*

Vending machines are like shelves in a store. Taxing each machine is like taxing each shelf in a grocery.

Courts have ruled that "taxing a method of doing business is discriminatory." Vending is merely another method of retailing.

It is clearly unfair to tax the store specifically for each shelf, counter, or cash register. It's just as unfair to tax the vending retailer based on the device he uses to sell the identical product to the consumer.

It is well established that taxes levied on a retail business, to be equitable, should be based on the volume of goods sold, not on the individual device used to make the sale.

These considerations have been cited in important court decisions voiding "per machine" or coin denomination tax proposals aimed at vending machines. The Supreme Courts of California, Minnesota, and Washington have held that these are taxes on a "method" of doing business and therefore are unfair and discriminatory. A number of lower courts in other states have confirmed this conclusion.

At the state level the trend is definitely away from the "per machine" taxation of merchandise

vending machines.

States which never imposed "per machine" taxes: 32

States which repealed "per-machine" taxes: 12  
(Ten of these have been repealed since World War II.)

Only six states still impose "per-machine" taxes. None of these states has been able to realize appreciable revenue from this source. This is because "per-machine" taxes inevitably reduce the number of machines able to continue operation at a profit.

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[See PLAY METER, September, 1979: "State licenses and taxes" on the coin-op amusement picture by comparison. From PLAY METER's compilation of licenses and fees applying to the amusement games industry, 18 states are shown to have some form of per-machine fees. The range is from \$5 per game machine (Arkansas) to \$100 per machine (Vermont).]

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The trend of the cities throughout the country is to impose per-machine taxes on vending at an ever-increasing rate. Although most states limit the right of cities to impose taxes on businesses and occupations to specific activities, cities are going beyond these limits by using the guise of regulation to justify license fees in lieu of occupational taxes. The general rule throughout the country is that where regulation of industry is adopted to protect the health, safety and welfare of the community, the license fee imposed must be related to the cost of regulation.

This latter concept is difficult to prove and, in most instances, whatever fee is adopted (if not completely arbitrary) will be upheld by the courts. Also, the courts uphold business licensing ordinances containing only the barest hints at regulation. That no regulation takes place in fact is irrelevant to the issue of whether or not the ordinance is a valid consideration.

Consequently, "per-machine" taxation continues as an ever-increasing burden to the industry.

"Per-machine" tax theories not only neglect thin net-profit figures, they also ignore the fact that gross sales figures vary considerably by types of machines and that the cost of equipment is entirely different for each type of device.

People buy from machines on "impulse." Thus, vending machines produce sales which would otherwise be lost. Their convenience in industrial, commercial, and school locations has become an inexpensive round-the-clock consumer service.

A "per-machine" levy on such specialized and marginal services forces curtailment and removal of service of these locations. It means revenue loss to the location owner, economic loss to the community, and reduction in employment of vending servicemen.

The automatic retailer carries his equitable share of the community's tax levy. He pays personal property, sales, gasoline, motor vehicle, real estate, cigarette, and other taxes just like other retail merchants.

A tax aimed specifically at his method of doing business is clearly discriminatory and punitive.

## Mali

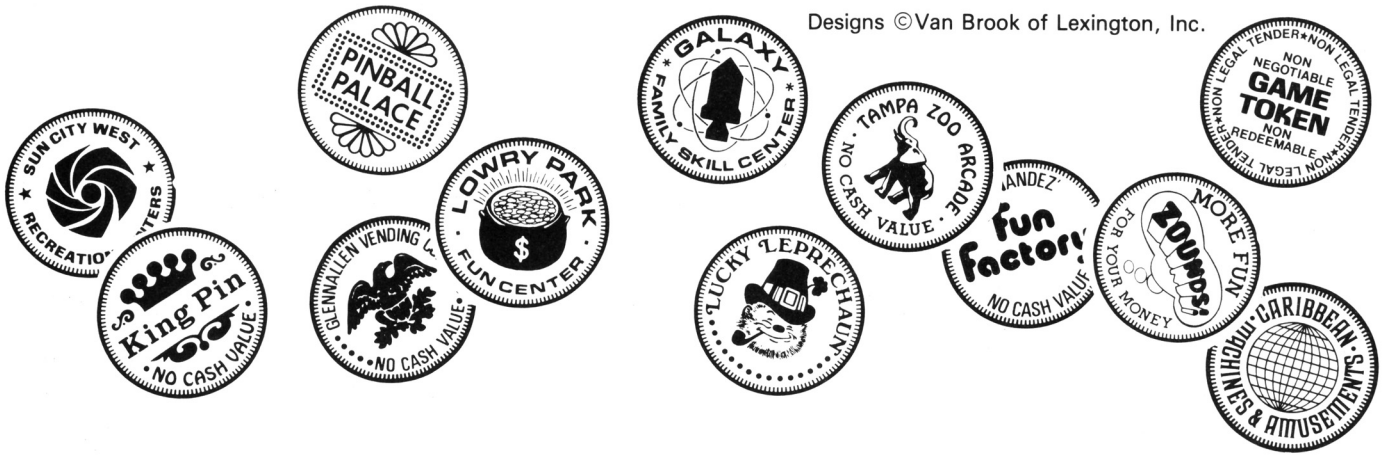
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## Token play:

# Revenues go into the cash register, and you worry less about the coin box

They are used in game rooms owned by the U.S. government in Europe, Newfoundland, and in the United States. They leave a thief empty-handed after he has made his hit. They have been used with the effect of doubling weekly revenue.

They have "no cash value."

Aluminum, brass, or nickel-plated, the stamped-out "play money" has been around in some form as an advertising vehicle since the days of Lincoln. But in roughly the past 12 years, they have proved a boon to many sectors of the coin-op industry.

"Arcade operators usually consider tokens for one of two reasons," writes Virgil Vance, president of Van Brook of Lexington, token marketers. "The first is cash control and security and the second is the promotional value. Whatever the reason, the operator need not feel he is walking on strange ground or exploring the unknown."

Vance's remarks appear in a booklet, "Notes and Quotes," printed expressly for Putt-Putt Golf Courses as a guide to conversion to token operation. The international concern wanted some concrete advice on the value of using tokens.\*

Vance, in a conversation with PLAY METER, cited an example of the arcade Fun Spot in Weir's Beach, New Hampshire, a location normally

closed in the winter. Converting to tokens, year-around operation was opened up with the device of selling 28 tokens for game play for \$5 (a coin slot value of \$7).

Such success stories with tokens seem to run on and on. Aren't there any negative aspects?

Well, yes. One California arcade in a recent month had all tokens on the premises seized by agents of the U.S. Treasury Department. The given reason was that the ersatz coins were thought to have "intended use" that would imitate U.S. currency.

That is, under the law, the qualities of a token may not be in any way mistaken for a counterfeit of U.S. money—such as being able to activate vending machines (in a laundry, for example) where they were not intended for use.

The legal hook, experts in the industry have explained, is that the imitation must have "no cash value." That is, the play money itself must have no acceptance in lieu of cash.

For the operator and the arcade, however, it can be exactly the substitute desired in place of cash in the location.

Eric Ivary, director of operations for Sega Centers' thirteen locations, said the experience of those high-traffic arcades was that only petty cash was needed on the premises after conversion to tokens for game play. Daily deposits of money into the bank are possible when large amounts need not be kept to make change.

Elliott Sklar, president of Green Duck Corp. of Hernando, Missis-

sippi's token minting company, said: "The Las Vegas Syndrome is the biggest advantage. Practiced in casinos around the world, it is the fact that you're using something other than cash to operate the machine, so it seems less valuable to the player than money."

An operator attending a seminar on tokens at the Amusement Operators Expo in New Orleans pointed out that a price hike on game play can be "disguised" through the conversion to tokens, as with six tokens sold for \$1 and two tokens required for a play.

Ivary responded that Sega Centers were about to try a 35 cents price for one token (for one pay) and pricing three tokens for \$1.

But whether the immediate aim of an arcade owner is a play-price hike or not, there are apparent advantages built into the use of tokens.

Back to Virgil Vance and some hints from his booklet of ideas "largely from our customers."

Tokens provide promotions and advertising that are *paid for by the customer*. The results of the investment in this form of advertising can be measured directly—in the cash box.

In a multiple-location operation such as Sega's or Putt-Putt's, the token sold in one location can be carried across the city or across the country—and be used in a game machine in the second place. It has "value" for one thing only: game play. The "sale" is not lost to the first location; cash was collected when the token was sold. To the second

\* (See article, "Putting with Arcades" on the expansion of Putt-Putt into game-room connected locations, elsewhere in this issue.)

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Beneath the flipper is a kicker that sends the ball back into play. The top center lane, or the center hoop, raise the kicker to activate the feature. A special is awarded if kicker special light is lit.

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location, the traveling customer is attracted with a "coin" in his pocket, good for one game at ABC Arcade—not XYZ or any others. Once the token is played, additional token sales may well follow at ABC Number 2, to which the player was drawn.

"Walkaway profits" are another aspect of token use. This refers to the amount of tokens that never come back into the location's "token bank." Whether the customer took them across the state to use in another ABC arcade—or took them away as a memento, or simply lost them—they represent profit to the location. Assuming a 25 cents selling price, the loss on the token itself is a fraction of that.

Some operators who PLAY METER heard, had disagreement with this principle, saying: "We aren't in the token selling business, we're in the arcade business." And the average token is reputedly used 50 times before being lost. If the first-time cost of the token does not have to be repeated with every one of 49 following sales, it is an advantage to the operator to keep the token circulating.

No handy rule of thumb was readily available for the question, "How big does my operation have to be before tokens would mean extra profit for me?"

Some other chief considerations for play money bear study, however.

—Play increases when an arcade goes to token operations, and profits increase. Vance and Sklar agreed on this principle: People think of tokens as non-money, something less valuable than the cash they paid for the tokens. So, at five tokens for \$1 (or whatever formula the location owner decides is worthwhile), the customer has a sense of "getting something for nothing" and plays more than he might have otherwise in inserting silver U.S. legal tender into the slot.

—Price changes are readily possible. On a slow day (or night), manual or machine-dispensed change for each dollar—in tokens—can be varied. Sunday specials of eight plays for \$1 are as easy to set up as turning the calendar from Saturday, when the game play was set at six for \$1.

—Vandals are thwarted. If a change machine is clearly dispensing tokens, it has much less appeal to a burglar. In some cases, operators reportedly have insisted that locations switch to tokens because the risk from theft will then lie with the location. Cash received for tokens will lie deposited in a safe or elsewhere—not in the equipment, which may be rifled by a burglar seeking a hoard of quarters. (The machine will be handily labled, "Tokens Only," and the only theft possible will be a free play or so—providing the thief can, at best, get a token.)

—A chance factor can be built-in, where this is legal, in dispensing tokens. One such method is "a red token gives 20 free." An operator reports, "A guy will buy \$5 in tokens trying to get the red token." Another "freebie" attractor is gearing a \$1/\$5 bill changer to give extra tokens for each \$5 bill.

—Promotion can spin off to and from areas outside your arcade. The operator could give a certain number of his tokens to a fast-food restaurant (this is done between miniature golf courses and a national hamburger restaurant in some markets, with the restaurant paying the operator a fraction of the "free play" amount given away) or a store. And the restaurant or store could have its own promotional device in awarding tokens for buying the premium lunch or purchasing a certain item the store manager wants to push. On the operator's side, he could buy coupons from the restaurant or store, giving a discount to players in the arcade in the form of a free hamburger or merchandise. Check

with any McDonald's or other national/regional chain's manager for the discount price to you of these "free" tickets. The cost to you is often figured on coupons actually redeemed at the restaurant/store.

—"Pilferage" (that nice term for employee theft) is reduced. With no cash value at stake—a policy of not redeeming token for cash being in effect—no employee has an incentive to steal tokens, give them to a buddy and have them cashed in. Also, your manager or mechanic will not steal from the cash box as readily, if it holds tokens. (The value of these, remember, is in the register or the safe. You have made the sale through tokens—you have not left your proceeds in a number of machines' cash boxes.)

Spin-offs and tie-ins can easily fill a book—such as the "Putt Putt Plus" booklet.

Representatives of the various token makers will be happy to talk about the advantages and discuss such matters as the government's legal view on tokens. (The determination of an alleged counterfeit can vary from state to state, as hard as that is to believe. But in practice, a federal magistrate in Jalapino County may not have the same interpretation as the magistrate in Washington City. The token makers' representatives are the experts in touch with the law daily.)

In PLAY METER's February 1980 Directory Issue, at least eight token makers and distributors are listed.

At the beginning, we said the U.S. government used tokens for machines on some military bases instead of cash. Why so? Other than the security factors mentioned above, there is one other reason.

The government does not countenance slot machines paying off in U.S. currency on those locations. The solution to meeting federal law, in the usual level of federal thinking, was to pay off—with tokens.

—by Ray E. Tilley

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# “Mother’s Pinball”

## Testing games on location

By Tony Licata

A marketing vice-president of a major pinball manufacturing concern tells the story. He had a buyer from Europe in his office. The pinball executive was pitching one of his latest machines for what looked like a big potential order. “I’m not interested in that one,” the man said, reaching into his briefcase.

“Why not?”, the manufacturer asked.

“Because it bombed at Mother’s,” the man from overseas said, pulling a neatly typed report from his case. In the upper left hand corner of the report were the words “Mother’s Pinball,” and the manufacturer knew the report very well.

Mother’s Pinball occupies two rooms in a house on a corner in Mount Prospect, Illinois, about 25 miles northwest of Chicago. Although not located in a shopping mall or across from a school, the arcade does a business most operators would give their eye teeth for.

But beginning 18 months ago, Mother’s has grown to mean a lot more to the industry than just another successful operation. At that time, Empire Distributing asked Mother’s owner, Bill Herman, if he would mind testing a prototype pinball game for them and filling in a report.

Herman agreed. He told PLAY METER recently that the idea of being a test operator then appealed to him. He also realized that he could become a better, more important, test operator if he offered more information than the test sheet called for. And, thus was born the Mother’s Pinball Test Report.

The report now runs to two pages issued by Herman once a week. In it he lists the machines in order of collections, like Top Ten records. He compares collections, by percentage of total, against the previous week. He also notes if the machine suffered any downtime. Next, he shows the

percentage each machine contributed for the last calendar month and compares it with the previous month. Then he shows what percent was replay. Last, he indicates how many weeks the machine has been at Mother’s Pinball.

In the lower left hand corner of page one, Herman compares the six manufacturers their percentage of representation and what percent they contributed to total income.

Then he breaks down the coin code credit. Herman has machines with four different pricing variations. First, one play—25 cents, six plays—\$1; second, one play—25 cents, three plays—50 cents, seven plays \$1; third, one play—25 cents, three plays—50 cents; fourth, two plays 25 cents. Despite the different pricing structure, Herman said he never changes the price on a game once it is set up.

The last piece of statistical information he gives on page one is



*Kenneth Fedesna, Williams’ electrical engineering manager, checks the equipment on-site at “Mother’s”*

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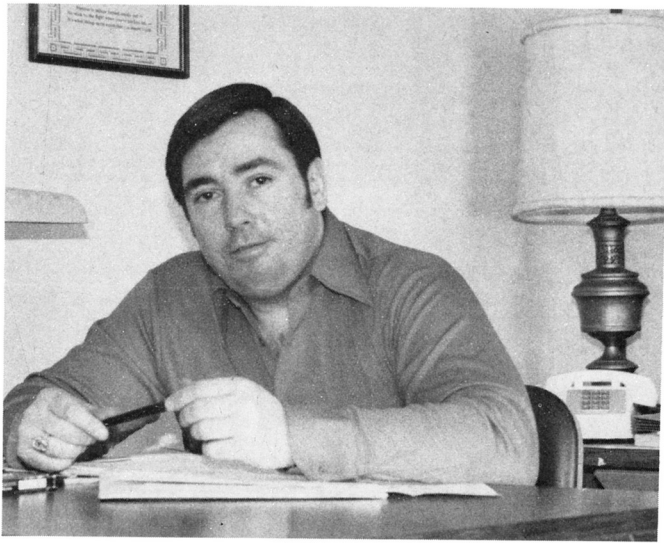
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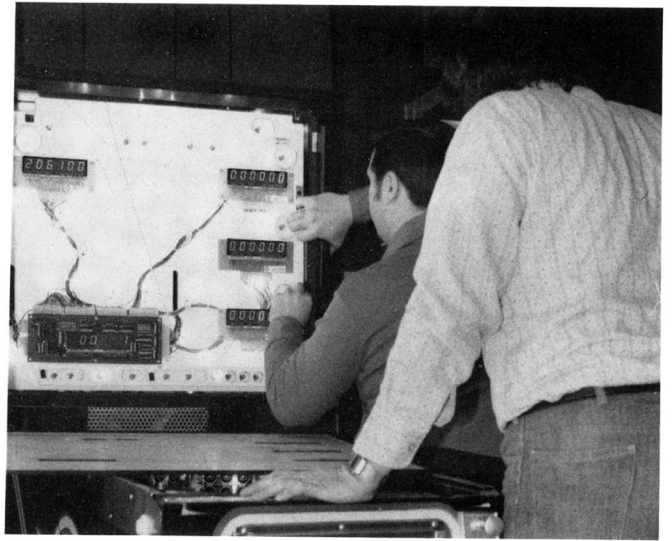
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Bill Herman of Mount Prospect, Illinois: successful as a test market's owner with "Mother's Pinball" arcade.



'The test gives you a chance to get the kinks out of a machine before it's marketed.' — John Neville

the distribution between arcade games (video) and pinball compared with the jukebox/vending machines and foosball.

In the lower right hand corner he draws a small floor plan and shows where each game is situated.

On the second page, Herman gives the same kind of breakdown for his video arcade games. This includes a section comparing manufacturers against each other and a floor plan and layout of his video game room.

At the end of each week, Herman sends one copy of his report to eight firms, Bally, Williams, Stern, Gottlieb, Atari, Midway, Game Plan, and Empire Distributing. That's all. He considers his report to be confidential and does nothing to publicize it. He described it as a channel of information for middle and upper management. When interviewed, he showed his report only on the condition that PLAY METER publish nothing but the format.

In the year and a half he has been testing machines for manufacturers, his room has grown more successful and Herman enjoys the flow of industry people through his doors. He says his experience has been very fruitful in the interchange of ideas he has shared. At any time you might find game designers, engineers, or even top management executives dropping in to Mother's Pinball for a chat and to see how their machines are doing—as well as what the competition is putting out. New machines have high visibility at Mother's.

And what do the manufacturers think of Mother's Pinball?

They told PLAY METER they have mixed feelings.

Stern Electronics' Vice-President for Sales, Larry Siegel says he

considers game tests from Mother's Pinball to be "far from adequate." He added that Stern does not use Mother's for testing, although sometimes Stern distributors test Stern games there. "Nearly 100 percent of the time we let the distributors do whatever they want with a prototype—there is nothing mandatory."

John Neville, marketing executive for Empire Distributing, considers testing games at Mother's to be very positive. "The test games gives you a chance to get the kinks out of a machine before you market it. Bill Herman gives a very comprehensive report." (Amen.)

Bally's Tom Nieman, marketing vice president, was less than enthusiastic. "The environment there is not real. Engineers live there. The guy who designed the machine will be there every night for the whole first week. On the other hand, you can't find better games to test against."

Nieman said he felt that the high exposure at Mother's could prove more negative than positive. He explained that because of the tight money situation and fierce competition between manufacturers, games can be made and broken by word of mouth and reputation. He added that the success of video games also made operators somewhat wary of the tried and true pinball machines. "Everybody wants to know the best game," he said, but he didn't think you could tell the best game just from its test at one location.

Ron Krause, Nieman's counterpart at Williams Electronics, said he was "very, very pleased" with the test results from Mother's Pinball. He said Mother's was one of three test locations Williams used in Chicago, but the others seemed to be more geographically desirable than anything else. He said he used one

downtown Chicago location for customers who were staying in "the loop" to have access to new machines. The third test location was near the Williams factory.

Krause was also impressed with the comprehensiveness of the Mother's report. He said Williams used the reports only internally and kept the information strictly confidential.

Regarding actual test information from Mother's, Krause said Williams had not made any major changes, only "fine tuning." He cited tests on Williams *Laser Ball* that showed the ball stayed in play too long. So the Williams engineers adjusted the outlanes to correct it.

Stern's Siegel said he didn't think some of the Williams games at Mother's were exact replicas of factory production models, but specially setup with amplified sounds and strobes.

Herman disagreed. He said that he had set up a Williams machine with amplified sound and a strobe, but he insisted he learned the technique at the AMOA show and that anyone could have done it. He also noted that he had since removed the special features.

On the question of high visibility and the complaint that tests at Mother's Pinball were unreal or like in a vacuum, Herman only partially agreed. He said, "When manufacturers' games do no good here, then Mother's does no good. But, when they do okay, then we are okay."

He agreed that testing at Mother's was like testing in a vacuum, but he said that makes the test more accurate, not less.

He said none of his machines had so much as a light out. That made it possible for the player to judge the game on its own merits and not be distracted by anything else.

He related that he saw a major manufacturer's game in a bar where it was being tested against three "dumps" that were two or three years old. "What kind of a test is that?" he asked. "Everyone would want to play the brand new shiny machine!"

"Manufacturers need to know that operators can't keep paying higher costs for inferior equipment. They should never release a game that isn't good. How many \$2000 games can an operator buy that don't earn him \$2000, and stay in business?" Commented Bill Herman.

Nonetheless, Tom Nieman said he was testing Bally's new *Space Invader* pinball game elsewhere before he brought it in to Mother's Pinball.

Herman, on the other hand, said he did not like 50 cent play pinball games. *Space Invaders* is being tested at 50 cents a game and three for \$1.

He explained that his business came from a steady flow of players, many of whom were repeaters. He felt it important that players be able to spend some time in his arcade for the money they paid. He said he thought much of his success came from the fact that he didn't try to gouge anyone.

#### HINTS FROM "MOTHER'S"

He had several other tips to offer operators. The most important thing to determine is the percent of replay, according to Herman. Many operators had no idea about this, he said. Most of them don't know that the first replay contributes the most. He said they should set the second one sufficiently high to test the stronger players.

He also makes great use of the Susan B. Anthony dollar. In his pricing structure he gives six and seven plays for the \$1 coin. He said that over the past year he has seen the use of the coin grow sharply in his arcade as a result of his pricing. He thought all operators should try to make use of it and that it could be the salvation of the coin-operated machine industry.

With interest rates continuing to rise and money becoming tighter, Herman said he thought the coin industry was in for a big weeding out. He said his reports were one form of the increased information that operators were going to need to make it. Herman also said he thought operators would have to negotiate more with owners for better terms. They should be able to get 60-40 and even 70-30 deals in some locations. "They are going to have to, to keep alive," he said.

Larry Siegel of Stern agreed that operators had to have more information, but disagreed that the answers on games could come from one room.

He said the only way Stern feels they can get a good reading on a game is to test it all over the country for a three or four week period and then assess the results.

He also stressed that operators shouldn't buy on earnings reports alone. "That is short-sighted," he said. They have to have an idea about the life on the location, he added, and how quickly earnings fall off; how often does the owner have

to move the machine?

Siegel said operators should also know about maintenance on a new game. "The net comes down if the machine is not working."

Also, are spare parts available? On some of the new video games, this can be a problem, Siegel noted.

How long does the machine remain economically viable? He said that some machines look really beat out after a short time and this would also cut their earnings.

Lastly, operators have to be concerned about resale value. If a manufacturer overbuilds, this cuts the resale value, Siegel concluded.



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## Arcades:

# Start out right

By J.W. Sedlak

### The basics to overcome in opening an arcade

Your arcade could be your passport to success. This will be especially true in upcoming years in the United States. Increasing gas prices combined with general inflation will force many people to scuttle their vacation plans. They will be staying close to home and looking for a leisure place to spend their money. Your arcade can provide them with the fun they're seeking for minimum cost.

Arcades are a venture that will give you 100 percent take. Of course, there's a catch (there always is). In exchange for that 100 percent income, you have to take on additional overhead expenses that you don't normally consider. Things like store rent, light and heat bills, plate glass insurance, and compliance with local fire and zoning restrictions are enough to drive you out of business—if they are not handled properly.

Look then at the things you will have to handle correctly when you set up your first arcade, if that venture is going to be the success the 1980s will allow.

The first thing you will want to consider is the location. In this article we will ignore the enclosed mall locations. (See articles elsewhere in this issue on mall sites.) Although these are good, money-making spots, we will not spend time on them here for two reasons: (1) Most mall locations are now sewed up by arcade chains with the capital and management to run numerous stores. (2) Even if you have a mall location available, you will have to have expertise and be a shrewd lease negotiator to avoid giving your "100 percent" profits to the landlord.

You should have several small arcades operating before going after "the big one."

So, let's pick a location for your arcade. In evaluating your location possibilities, you must remember the

number one rule of the arcade business: "Arcades Are An Impulse Business." People go into arcades and play the games because "they are there." No one sets out to travel five miles for the sole purpose of visiting an arcade.

Your arcade *will not* draw people to an area. You *must* locate the arcade where people already are.

Now, go back and re-read the last two paragraphs. Absorb, memorize, understand, believe it. More arcades have failed because their owners have forgotten this simple fact, the "impulse" to patronize game rooms, than for any other single reason.

The second rule of the arcade business is as basic as the first — "Arcades Are For Teenagers."

It will be the teenagers that will provide most of your business. This is so true that, in some states, each new arcade qualifies as a Youth Activity Center and is eligible to receive a state grant for as much as \$10,000. (You should check with your state government on eligibility requirements.)

If you are concerned about starting a business aimed at just the teenage portion of the population, you should refer back to a PLAY METER article in the January, 1980 issue (page 55). That article clearly shows that your customers and potential customers comprise over 50 percent of the U.S. population!

OK. So what locations are good? Certainly a location near a school would be ideal—right? Well... maybe. Locating near a school requires a great deal of care. We know of one operator in New York State who located near a school. One of the schoolchildren's mother objected to the arcade and claimed the operator was "stealing" her youngster's lunch money. She managed to reach the sympathetic ear of a local politician and, before anyone realized what was happening, a new

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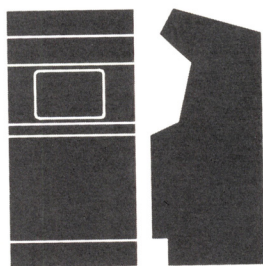
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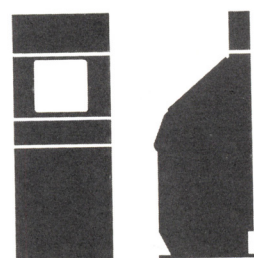
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At the top of the screen is your rocket's fuel gauge. As the play proceeds your fuel consumption is continuously displayed on the gauge. As you cannot refuel until you have destroyed all 5 sets of enemies, you will need to watch your fuel indicator carefully as play proceeds.

After an initial onslaught of meteorites, 11 enemy attack craft appear in formation at the top of the screen.

The enemy will move from side to side in formation and will fire to the front or to both the left or right side.

They will steadily move closer to your rocket. And as you destroy enemy craft, their movement will become faster.

If an enemy does get past your rocket and reaches the bottom line, the original group appears again, no matter how many you have already destroyed. In addition, your rocket moves a step closer to the enemy.

After destroying all of the first formation of the enemy, a new formation of 12 different craft will begin an attack.

After destroying all of this enemy formation, you will now face a further enemy of 12 whose craft appear at random, not in formation.





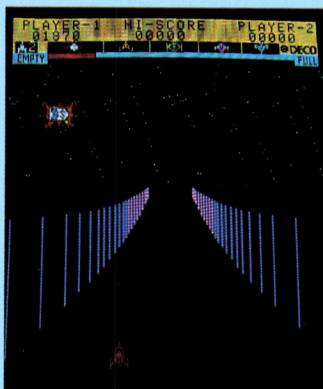
**Open up a  
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# ALL NEW REPLAY PROFITS!



Your next enemy will number 15 craft in formation, as shown.

Now, when you have destroyed all 15 craft in this fifth phase, a space lane is formed along which your rocket is traveling. The lane is lined with Astro-Markers that glow and change color. Suddenly at the far end of this lane the Space Master appears.

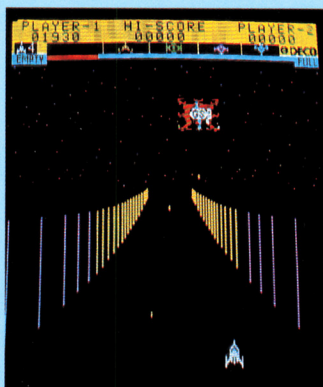


The Master's body expands and contracts as it moves across the screen and back again, firing terrible missiles forward and left or right at random.

During this phase, your rocket does not move ahead from the base line, and you must be sure to hit the Master in the eye, as it cannot be killed by a hit elsewhere.

You will notice that your fuel is becoming dangerously low and in order to refuel, you must destroy the Master.

Once destroyed, a fuel link will appear on the screen and refuel your rocket, preparing you for the next adventure.



After refueling, you will return to the first phase. However, this time you will find the enemy's firepower greatly increased, the meteorites more numerous and the enemy craft considerably more evasive.



state law was proposed.

This law would have prohibited arcades within one-half mile of any school or church. Fortunately, through the efforts of the operator and the state association, this matter was settled and no law was passed.

The moral, of course, is that you should be very careful in locating near a school. Although I know several operators who successfully operate near schools, they have to be specially attentive to avoid public relations problems. One operator, for example, doesn't open until a half hour after the school closes for the day.

It's probably beginning to sound like locating the right site for an arcade is a real problem. That's not so, but it can be time consuming. To find the "right spot" just drive around your area and find out where the teenagers are. You'll usually find them near bowling alleys, movies, fast-food restaurants (we all know how well they love to eat), skating rinks, and the downtown business district. When you find the place they "hang out," you have the spot for your arcade.

You should set up *near* this teenage attraction. If there are no stores available or if there is already an arcade there, it is best to forget this part of town and look for a spot elsewhere, possibly in the next town.

One caution about the word "near". You must critically evaluate every potential location. I know of one Massachusetts operator who located across the street from a large civic center. He reasoned that the rock concerts and other activities would bring thousands of teenagers into the area and he would make a fortune. What he didn't notice was that the parking lot was located in such a manner that it would take people out of the civic center through the opposite side of the building from his location.

He was certainly "near" a large crowd of teenagers, but he might as well have been miles away. He went broke.

In my 1976 handbook of arcade operations ("Quarterly Dividends"), I presented a simplified "Arcade Site Evaluation Form". This form is just as valid four years later and is reproduced for your use and study. (See following page.)

† † †

Once you have found a good site for your arcade, it is time to consider other important items for your success. Although a poor location will almost guarantee failure—it is not true that a good location by itself will assure success.

Most probably, your next step will

be to negotiate a lease with the landlord. If you have never done this before, you are in for a terrific experience. In approaching the landlord, you should keep two things in mind:

(1) *Everything* is open for negotiation.

(2) An unfavorable lease can doom your arcade before your first customer drops a quarter in the coinbox.

#### RENT AND TERMS OF LEASE

Before giving you a written lease to sign, your landlord will want to get agreement on two items: the rent and the term of the lease (its time length). The rent will most probably be quoted to you in terms of dollars per square foot per year. Thus, if you are quoted a price of \$4 per square foot for a 2,000 square-foot store, your rent will be \$8,000 per year, or \$666.67 per month.

The obvious question you want answered is: How much rent can I afford? This question has so many variables to figure that it is hard to answer for a nationwide audience. Obviously, a good location in the cities of Denver or New York will cost considerably more than similar space in a small rural town. As a general rule, a rent of \$3 to \$7 per square foot should be affordable by most medium-sized arcades (20 to 30 machines). If your rent is quoted as considerably more, you should do a detailed analysis of your projected income and expenses to be certain you aren't getting in over your head.

For your income amount, you should figure the same average income per machine that you are now getting on your game route. If you don't operate a route, figure \$5 to \$6 per day per machine.

The second item to agree on is the *length* of the lease. I recommend a one-year lease and never for more than two years. Although teenagers have money and will certainly spend it in your arcade, they are also very fickle, and although they will flock to your arcade when your grand opening is announced—there are no guarantees that their spending will still be there two years later. Avoid long-term (five years or greater) leases. Even if you have to pay a little more rent for the shorter term, it will be worth it.

Once you have agreed on the two basics, the landlord will have his lawyer prepare a lease for your signature. When you get the lease, you can suddenly find out that the rent is nothing compared with the other expenses the landlord wants you to pay!

A normal lease may contain such items as the following (which you

*Continued on page 42*

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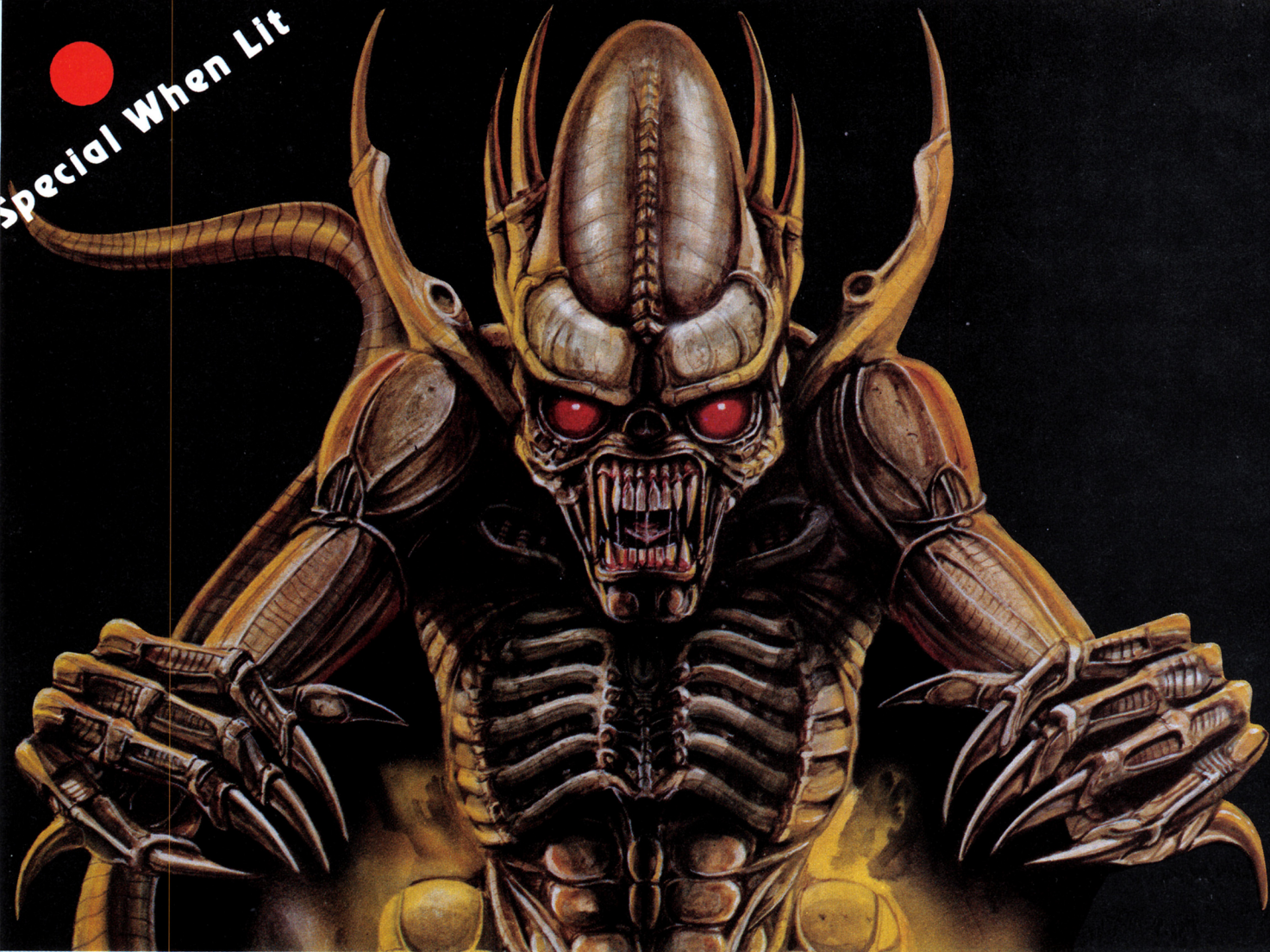


The players drive their yellow cars, picking up points and avoiding the suicide red car.

The selection of the drive course becomes advantageous when the "OTHER ROUTE" gate opens, the driving course becomes better.

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Fifty-cent pinball, will it succeed? At five-ball play, perhaps. But it's still too early to predict. Nevertheless, Bally Manufacturing has designed a game to initiate this bold new step in operator pricing—*Space Invaders*, the pinball.

Artwork, as has often been noted, draws the player's first quarter. And so, when the coin slot bears the forbidding sign, "50c/ 1 play," the artwork has to be damn good.

And in this case it is.

Bally artist Paul Faris has created a backglass which accents exactly the subliminal appeal of pinball (man versus machine). The hellish alien facing the player at the other end of the machine is crouched in the very same posture as the player himself, as if ready to counter every shot with a shot of its own.

And the feel of the game and its effective use of sound carry this illusion even further.

Wide-bodies have always had an uncomfortable feel for many pinball players, but this oversized game leaves the player with the feeling that he is wrestling with a beast slightly larger than himself.

The artwork, of course, is suggestive of the summer's sci-fi thriller movie, "Alien," wherein horrified audiences saw the alien burst out from inside a man.

In *Space Invaders*, the tables are turned somewhat; it

is the player who is trying to burst out from within the alien.

To create this impression, Bally has designed a playfield that is skeletal by nature. This is best detailed by the shoulder-blade curvature at the top of the playfield and the Accelerator Hoop in the heart center of the game. (In fact, the accelerating heartbeat sounds of the game intensify the player's feeling of being within the alien.)

There is also a sense of enclosure on the playfield, as though the player cannot escape from this skeletal maze. The trapped ball "Clone Chamber" and the drop target blocking passage to the free ball gate help give the impression of being locked inside the alien itself.

Bally's bet, obviously, is that it's a sensation worth 50 cents to the player. As we said, it's still too early to predict on the success of that. But one thing is certain: at a quarter per play, it's definitely a bargain for the player.

Regardless, therefore, of the price affixed to the coin slot, *Space Invaders* shows how pinball design and pinball art can come together to create something truly exceptional.

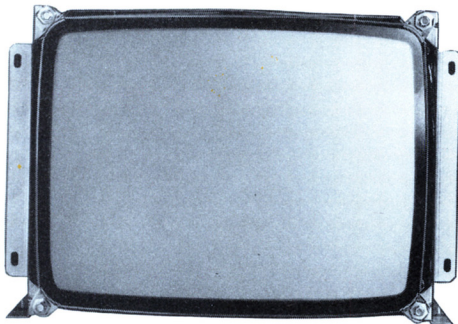
For those who are legally inclined, such a game should go a long way toward showing the true worth of pinball in our society today.

*Editor's Note: Here, PLAY METER inaugurates a new section called "Special When Lit." This department will spotlight from time to time a new piece of equipment which, in the opinion of the editors of PLAY METER magazine, is deserving of special attention. Such pieces are selected on the basis of their originality, innovation, play appeal, and potential profitability; and they are recommended to our readers.*

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For you, the operator, the most important thing to know is that the fun will last. Today, tomorrow and on down the line.

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and that depends, to a large extent, on the monitor.

The proven reliability we build into all Electrohome color and X-Y monitors shines through in their rugged physical construction. In games that not only set the pace, but can take the pace.

Think about it. Better yet, insist on the high standards of Electrohome color and X-Y monitors for the competitive edge.

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have to pay for): heating bills, maintenance costs for parking lots, any escalation in the tax that the landlord is paying, any alterations caused by changes in local or state laws, and sometimes—even a charge

for the landlord's bookkeeping of the money you owe! I haven't made any of these up; they all have appeared in one or more of the leases I've negotiated for my arcades. Now is the time to remember the first rule

of signing a lease: *Everything* is negotiable.

### REVIEW LEASE TERMS WITH YOUR LAWYER

At this point, many operators turn the lease over to their lawyers and let them negotiate it. However, while it is always a good idea to get a legal opinion about the lease, remember *you* are the one who has to pay the bills. You must know every detail of the lease *you* are signing. Your lawyer will often accept something as a "standard clause" that you wouldn't approve of.

Remember also that the lease was drawn up by the landlord's lawyer. His job is to protect the landlord's interests...not yours. You will probably find several pages of what you have to do for the landlord spelled out and, maybe, one or two paragraphs of what the landlord will do for you.

To help you in reviewing the lease, listed below are several common items you should be sure are handled to your satisfaction. It is not an all-inclusive list, but it should give you a good start.

**RENT**—Make sure the square footage stated in the lease is the same as that quoted to you. You may find your 2,000 square-foot store is actually 2,200 square feet of area and your rent has just gone up \$1,000 or so. Also, if your lease includes a percentage of gross income as part of the rent, make sure it is spelled out, in detail, how the gross will be determined.

**SECURITY DEPOSIT**—This is an area to which you should pay particular attention. Every dollar you spend on a security deposit is one less dollar you have to invest in games. Most landlords will usually try to get three to six months rent as security. You should try to negotiate this down. One way is to pledge some of your equipment as security—this way each dollar provides double duty: to buy equipment and to provide the security deposit.

**ENVIRONMENT**—You have selected your location because it is in an area trafficked by teenagers. Frequently this is because some leisure activity (bowling alley, movie, etc.) is in the area. If that attracting business moves away, your business could be hurt. Therefore, in your lease you should place a clause that states if the other business moves away, you have the option of cancelling your lease.

**EXCLUSIVE CLAUSE**—If your arcade is successful, you don't want another arcade opening up next door to you. Get a clause in your lease that prohibits the landlord from renting another store for an arcade.

# Arcade Site Evaluation

1) (If your arcade site has one of the following qualities, closely check *community attitudes* before opening):

- School is one half mile or less from store.
- Church is one half mile or less from store.
- Pornographic book store or other "adult" type facility is located near to store.

**DANGER!**

2) (If your arcade site has one of the following qualities, be careful and make sure there are off setting advantages to the site):

- Bar or night spot is right next to store.
- Little or no parking space.
- Landlord up-tight about loitering problem.
- Another arcade less than one mile away.

**CAUTION!**

3) (If the arcade site has one of the following qualities, then proceed with lease negotiations):

- Centrally located in a business area.
- Near a movie.
- Near a family restaurant.
- Near a fast-food restaurant.
- Near a bowling alley.
- Near a skating rink.
- Near a large housing or apartment development.

**GO!**

4) (If your arcade site has one of the following qualities *what are you waiting for?*):

- Two or more of the qualities in Section 3, above
- In a successful, large shopping mall.
- In a resort town (In this case, several arcades located close to each other can act as a draw and add to *your* business.)

**CHARGE!**

Make sure the term "arcade" is defined in the lease. This may sound like a common sense item, but you would be surprised at how many businesses don't incorporate it.

In one strip shopping center where we operated an arcade (and had such an exclusive clause) a well-known film-developing store opened and did a good business. Within a year, another film chain opened a store in the same shopping center. Obviously, even the national chain didn't have the forethought to get that exclusive clause.

**ELECTRIC WIRING**—Very few retail stores have sufficient outlets installed to operate all the games you will put in your arcade. Try to get a statement in your lease that says your landlord will install the wiring at his expense. If you don't, you may go through the expense to install them and find out when you're ready to leave that the outlets belong to your landlord—since they are many times considered as structural improvements to the store.

One final word on the subject of lease negotiations: Make sure everything is in writing. That is the only way terms are enforceable. Verbal leases and agreements last only as long as human memory—and sometimes that's pretty short!

Now you have found the ideal location and negotiated a super lease. You move in and start business, right? Not quite.

In most localities, you have just one more obstacle to pass—the **zoning board**. In most areas, there are local restrictions on the types of businesses permitted in certain zoning. Even when a business is permitted, there are often operating requirements which the business must meet ("variances").

Before you approach the local zoning enforcement officer to get permission to open, there are a few facts you should keep in mind:

(1) In the past, pinballs could be used for gambling. Therefore, pinball halls, game rooms, and arcades were often considered unseemly places and many localities barred them from setting up business.

(2) The arcade business has made great strides in public acceptance over the last few years. However, we still have a few operators around who open an arcade and run it with very little control. Their stores become scenes of frequent fights, drug dealing, and generally look like the stereotype "hang out". Thus, many local politicians still pre-judge the new arcade as a bad influence.

(3) Taking all of the above into consideration, it might be wise to use a term other than arcade or game room in describing your planned

business to the local zoning officer. More acceptable terms that are often used are "recreation center," "amusement center," "fun house," and "family entertainment center."

In many localities, all that is required to get the necessary permit to open is to fill out an application, wait for the next planning/zoning board meeting, and have your location plans approved. In other locales it is much more difficult. In one village where I wanted to operate, I actually had to get a new zoning law written and passed before I could open the doors. This was a lengthy process that took over five months—even though not one word of concern or protest was ever mentioned in any public meeting.

A zoning officer in another town gave me some "friendly advice" which you may find useful. This particular town had very still laws concerning arcade operations and there was not an available site that passed all the established criteria. I was about to give up when the zoning officer asked if I would sell hot dogs in the arcade. When I asked why, he explained that there would be no trouble issuing a permit for me to open a business to sell hot dogs. Once I opened, there was no law that restricted the number of amusement games that could be installed in a food store. Needless to say, I was in business within weeks. In a pinch, you might explore this approach.

Well, that covers the basics. If you've followed me through all this, you now know how to find the right location, negotiate a reasonable lease, and get approval of local authorities. You can now plan on *opening for business*.

Obviously, you still must purchase the games for the arcade and you have to make a host of operating decisions. But the basics are done.

As a person who has operated a number of arcades, I have just one favor to ask: When you open your doors, please run a quality operation. Make sure you adequately control your patrons, keep the machines in good operating order, and create an environment that will attract families. If you do that, you will find your next arcade very easy to open and you will have an easy time with local politicians.

When I opened my first arcade in 1973, the reaction of one of my neighbors was not pleasant and she stated she would never let her kids go to a place like that. Last month, this same woman invited my eight-year-old daughter to a birthday party for her child at the local "Dream Machine" arcade!

We're making progress. Our future is up to you!

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Nichibutsu



A one- or two-player game where players shoot down **BOMBS** coming from the **MONSTERS** by operating a firing button.

If a player scores over 5,000 points, he can enter his score and name.

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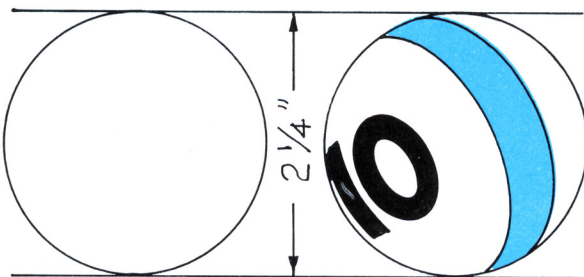
# 65%\*

## of operators prefer a Valley Coin Table over any other make!

**THIS IS 5 TO 1 OVER  
OUR NEAREST COMPETITOR**

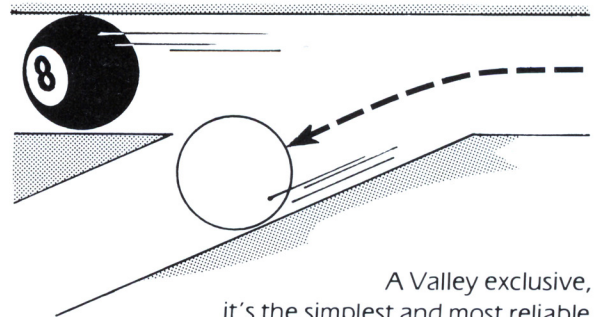
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the right size**



Our all-white magnetic patented Cat's Eye Cue Ball is the same size and the same durable cast phenolic material as our numbered balls, and meets BCA specifications. Valley's improved manufacturing process assures complete roundness, uniformity, balance and precision for true roll. Balls are hit "dead center" and contact cushions at proper height for greater accuracy — performance serious players not only prefer but demand.

**Our Ball Separator  
has no electrical or  
moving parts**

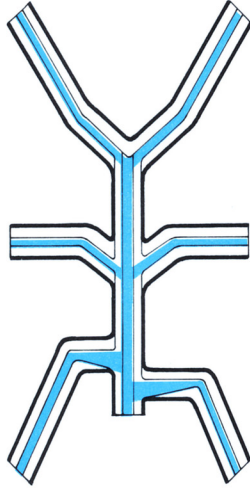


A Valley exclusive, it's the simplest and most reliable of all the cue ball separation devices in use on any coin-operated pool table made today. This patented system, together with our Cat's Eye Cue Ball, is standard equipment on every Valley coin table.

\*From Play Meter Survey — November, 1979

## Our Ball Return System is unitized for longer, trouble-free service

Underneath our all-slate playfields, the balls roll on a smooth, durable, unitized polyethylene track. Another Valley exclusive designed and built for minimum attention and less no-profit downtime. With no warping or spot wear, the track moves the balls quickly for continuous uninterrupted play.



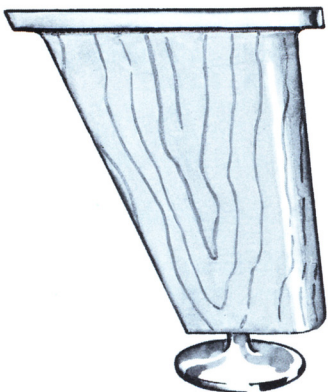
## Our Tables are designed for simplicity, from set-up to service

Clean and uncluttered are the keynotes of Valley table design and construction, inside and out. This makes them easier to look at and easier to set-up and service (occasionally needed, even on a Valley!) Most parts are interchangeable from model to model. Totally functional, dependable, profitable.

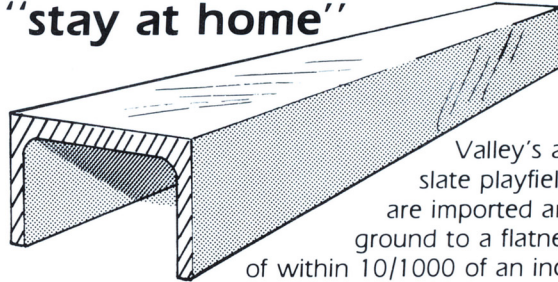


## Our Legs make our tables really stand up

Valley's reputation for dependability and profitability stands securely on four strong points...our molded, one-piece fiberglass legs. Doubly reinforced at critical stress points supporting the leg levellers, these specially-designed legs assure absolute rigidity even with heavy play and excessive abuse.



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# Getting the edge By David Pierson on mall locations

Are the high-volume arcade locations really sewed up? Are those enclosed mall locations now reserved only for a few arcade chain operators?

To a large extent, these premium locations have been snatched up by a handful of companies across the country—partly because these operators have shown they can run clean, well-managed arcades and partly because mall developers, afraid of turning up a bad penny, have shown a tendency to go with the operators they have had good experiences with.

But it's still quite possible there's room enough for the enterprising operator who wants to cut himself in for a share of the action in these high-traffic shopping centers. It's just going to take a little more ingenuity and a lot more planning and hard work to beat the chains at their own game now.

It could be that operators who are reluctant to enter the enclosed mall sweepstakes at this late date are thinking as follows: "Mall developers favor operators with mall experience."

But if that's what you're thinking,

than it could be that you're thinking in abbreviations. What is more likely true is that "*All things being equal*, mall developers favor operators with mall experience."

And therein lies the strategy newcomers should take to beat out the national chains for those prized arcade locations. They can't try to be as good as the national chains; they have to be better.

But how? This is where good old Yankee ingenuity comes into play.

First, though, let's examine what it takes to achieve equality, then we'll examine an approach that might help you compete successfully with the nationals.

## Standards

First off, your proposed amusement center has to meet certain standards. If it cannot incorporate standards to insure a clean, well-managed game center, then forget the whole idea because the leasing directors won't be interested in your proposal.

You see, leasing directors have a pretty clear idea of what they want in an amusement center, and that thinking is reflected in the amuse-

ment centers in enclosed malls today. As Ted Olson, this month's Coinmen, observes: "The top four or five game center operators in the country today...all have pretty much the same approach to decor and store management."

That is not by accident. It is by decree. Remember, before you go into competition against the "McDonald's" of the arcade business, you have to analyze what they are doing right. And here is some of what they are doing—and not doing—to insure their good standing with mall developers. They—

- Don't allow loitering. They establish "No Play, No Stay" rules, and have their attendants follow them strictly.

- Don't allow food inside their establishments.

- Do have uniformed attendants on duty at all times. Attendants are usually at least 25 years of age.

- Do keep their game centers clean. In fact, in many cases, they keep their stores cleaner than the other businesses in the malls.

- Do control the noise levels of their games. With some mall developers, this is a big headache. For that





**THE  
GREATEST!**

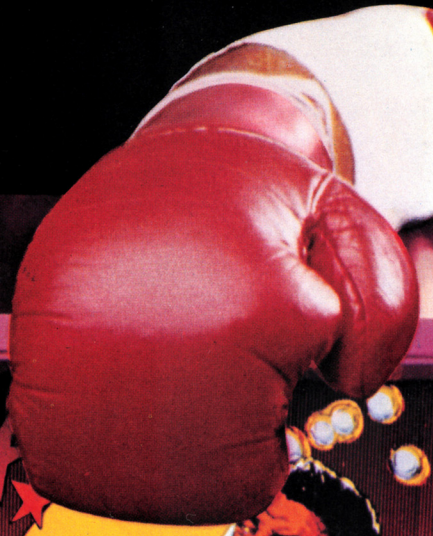


# BLAM!

THE ROAR OF THE CROWD  
THE FLASHING OF LIGHT  
AT THE RING OF THE BELL  
YOU'VE GOT A FIGHT!

AT A SINGLE TIME  
I'LL TAKE ON FOUR.  
'CUZ ALI REMEMBERS  
EVERYONE'S SCORE!

# BONG!



1

5 7 8 1 1 0



2

4 5 4 3 4 0



3

2 6 7 6 1 0

# ALI

BY *Stern*

4

1 4 3



1 to 4 CAN PLAY

2 2 1

BALLINPLAY

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140-1-110

EXP  
HO  
OF



**SMACK!**

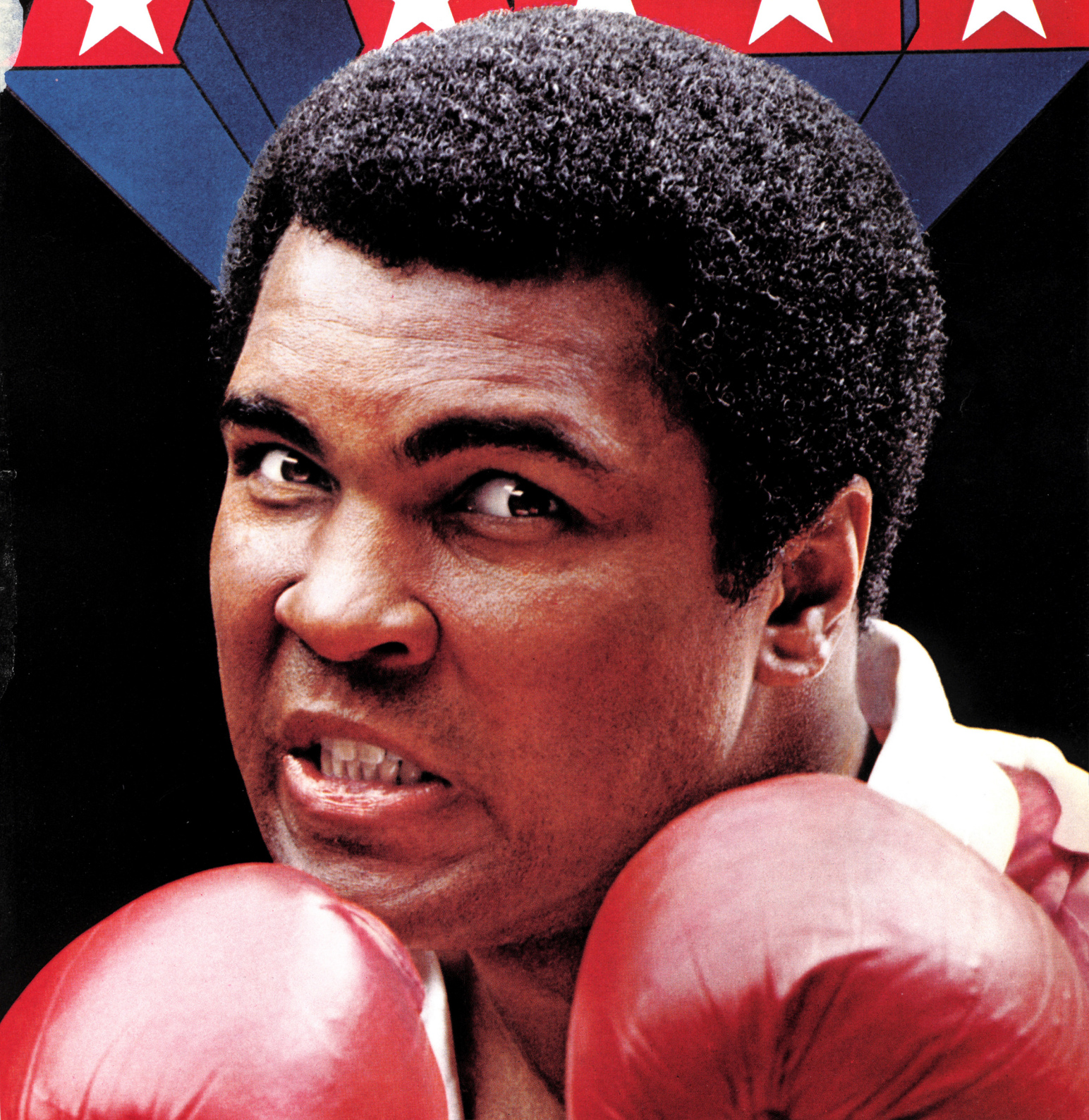
YOU GOTTA BE TOUGH  
TO TAKE ON ME.  
BUT ONLY THE GREATEST  
CAN WHUP ALI!

**THE  
EXPLOSIVE  
HOOK  
FROM  
ALI!**

**POW!**

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO CATCH  
A LEFT HOOK FROM ME,  
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reason, the top game centers usually incorporate some ideas about sound-proofing.

—Do rotate their games frequently.

### Strong cards

After you have established equality with other operators, you have to show that your plan is superior. And the area that seems to offer the most possibilities in this regard can be found in the terms of the leasing agreement.

On the average, as an amusement center operator in an enclosed mall, you can expect to pay \$20 per square foot per year or ten percent of your gross revenue, whichever is greater.\* And most of the time it's the ten percent of the gross that ends up being greater. So it follows that the mall developer will show interest in measures which would insure larger gross revenues—as long as those measures don't create adverse conditions for neighboring businesses.

And one way to approach this may be to show the mall developer that you can offer him certain advantages in this regard.

One obvious advantage which you enjoy, especially if you are a route operator whose geographical spread extends into the mall's location, is that you can probably rotate your games better than a national firm. The mall location within your normal sphere of operations is favorable to you, but game rotation can be a problem area for many national operators.

Mall developers are well aware of the advantages of efficient game rotation. They see how it translates into better gross revenues; so it's to your advantage to stress your clout in this sphere.

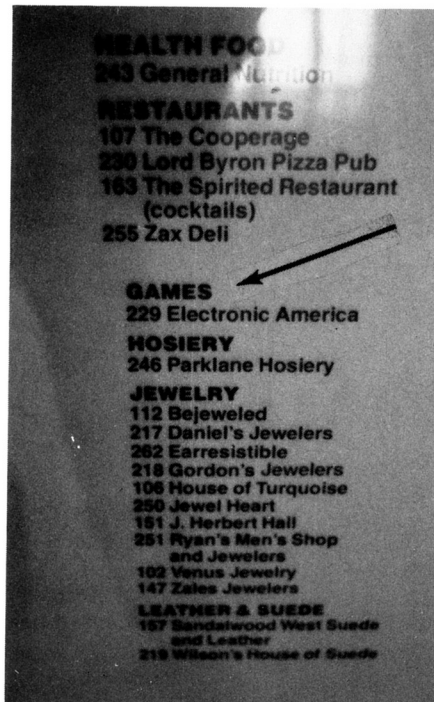
But your real advantage would appear to be in the area of cash control and accountability. You see, one of the biggest handicaps this industry faces when dealing with other industries (such as real estate developers) is that the coin-op industry does not work with receipts, and this creates suspicions (even unfounded ones) for businessmen who are more accustomed to doing business with stores that have receipts to show as evidence of their transactions.

This is one reason why developers show a reluctance to try new operators. Those operators in malls today have already established their credibility with mall developers. They

\*Additionally, you can expect to pay CAM [common area maintenance] charges—which can vary from mall to mall.



Uniforming your employees is a "must" for operating a mall location.



Your arcade's name could be here on the shopping-mall directory.

have delivered on other promises as far as the management of their arcades; their stores are clean and well-managed. So they have established themselves as trustworthy operators. And that is the next best thing if there are no receipts to depend on.

Still, the fact that this is a business without cash receipts leaves an uneasy feeling with leasing directors. One such leasing director told PLAY METER, "There's no way we can tell actually what kind of business an amusement center does because there are no receipts."

So, for the enterprising operator

who is looking to crack the enclosed mall clique, he could very well be raising his chances if he were able to offer a metering system which provided cash receipts.

Such a system was created by International Totalizing Systems (and examined in the September 15, 1979 issue of PLAY METER, pages 37-44), a system that may provide a competitive edge for operators vying to break in with a mall development, because of receipt capability.

According to one arcade operator who is using the ITS system in his four mall locations, the system gives him more reliability with his landlord. "If he questions my gross receipts," he said, "I can just come up with the receipts and show them to him."

"When you tell them (mall developers) what you made in the place," he explained, "they more or less have to take your word for it. But in the other establishments they can check the books. That's probably why a system such as this might be something of an edge over someone who is asking the mall to rely on his word."

The problem with cash receipts isn't just one of landlords suspecting operators of skimming. In most cases, such as with national chains, for instance, it would be physically impossible for the operator to make a false report. The cheating would come from dishonest managers, and this is a theft problem which would hurt not only the mall developer but the operator, too.

A metering and receipt system surely does not provide a foolproof method of stopping employee theft, but it does restrict it considerably. The greatest area for employee theft with such a system installed appears to be where an attendant would blame a discrepancy in actual cash collections and the meter reading on unrecorded test plays.

But Jon Daugherty, president of LeMans Development Corp. and seminar speaker at the Amusement Operators Expo on "Internal Cash Controls and the Absentee Owner," suggested a way around that. His suggestion: rig a test switch which bypasses the metering device. In that way, the meter readings would remain secure.

It's a proposal that deserves further investigation, especially for those operators who want to pave the way with mall developers. Internal cash controls, it appears, may be the way to go. From the mall developer's viewpoint, it would help assure him that he is not being robbed. From the operator's view, it would help guard against employee theft and might even help him land one of those prized locations.



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## Putt-Putt and arcades:

# A golf link can be a bonanza

Once upon a time a certain soft drink was thought of as a remedy for dyspepsia and other maladies. The caramel-colored pop (which shall herein be nameless) did a modest business for an Atlanta doctor for awhile. But then a smart Joe decided that the drink could be connected to a simply refreshing beverage—and the rest is soft drink history.

So it is becoming with game rooms. The alliance of arcades to other forms of amusement is expanding coin-op locations far beyond the beach, bar, and specialized arcade locations.

A case in point is Putt-Putt Golf Courses of America, Inc., based in Fayetteville, North Carolina and franchised from there to Arizona, Australia, and Japan. In Putt-Putt's 24th International Convention for franchisees in Orlando, Florida in January of 1980, two philosophies for broadening its scope of operations to include game centers were presented in a panel discussion.

Pat Gordon, Putt-Putt operator from Albuquerque, argued for buying the games and calling on technicians for service when necessary. And presenting the opposite standpoint for game room operation was Dan Kinlaw, a North Carolina operator with two arcades connected to Putt-Putt, who argued for negotiating with a route operator who can rotate the games.

A third member of the panel said: "I think most of the Putt-Putt people left (Orlando) feeling they should call on the experts (the route operators) for moving the games weekly or whatever."

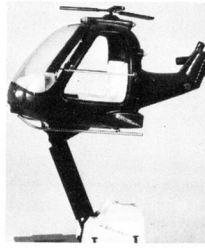
That panelist, Virgil Vance, president of Van Brook of Lexington, Inc., the marketers of tokens, noted that the rain check practice at many miniature golf courses "takes business home," possibly insuring a return visit with the ticket for play another day but ending business on the rainy day. "Now they give out the rain check, and you can come in the arcade, play, and after the rain or that night, come back to the golf course," Vance observed. (An article



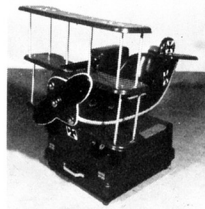
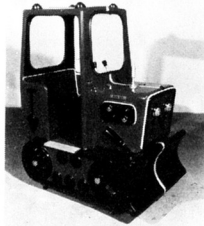
*Rain, shine, or snow, golf fans play the coin-op games: The golf course connection made by Putt-Putt Golf Courses will open new business for experienced amusement machine operators.*

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of the advantages of token usage on location is elsewhere in this issue.) That Putt-Putt of America is broadening its operation opens opportunities for expansion by professional amusement machine operators into these high-traffic locations.

Miniature golf has made Putt-Putt a noted business success since Don Clayton founded that business 27 years ago. But as he says today, that was "another day, another time in the world of games." Seven years ago, Putt-Putt locations began to include machines—"elementary pin-ball and video games" in Australian locations, with three to five units in each putting-course site.

"Then about three years ago we did several pilot models (locations) in Asheville, Houston, and Cleveland areas where we built accommodations for game rooms with the golf courses." Now in a general expansion program with some elaborate facilities in thirty cities, Clayton's organization has "gone more refined, with fountains, landscaping, and larger buildings." He said a Putt-Putt site will typically be having 60, 65, or more games on location.

Chip Linville, a franchisee of Putt-Putt with five locations in five states, made the arcade connection before the Fayetteville firm made its large-scale move last year. He said that in April of 1979 "I came to my senses," opening game rooms at Putt-Putt courses in Rockville, Maryland and Syracuse, New York. "It extended my operation. I'm not a year-around operation except in the arcade."

That is the natural appeal of expansion into coin-operated or token-fed games. Linville talked with PLAY METER on a day when Rockville had three inches of snow on the ground—not the best weather on the golf course. Golf is, of course, seasonal, "but people are in the game room all year round." The operator does not have to count on the six months of cold weather being mild for his business, which can run with the machines, come rain or snow.

An independent source said the general connection of arcades to golf by Putt-Putt is "a bonanza for them." Clayton said his corporation "would be happy" with a realistic—or even conservative—15 to twenty percent increase in gross revenue. The independent source said Putt-Putt will have about ninety percent of its 500 licensed courses connected to arcades on their sites before 1981.

One location in the southwest reports income of \$63,000 from games on a miniature golf location,

**Cleveland**



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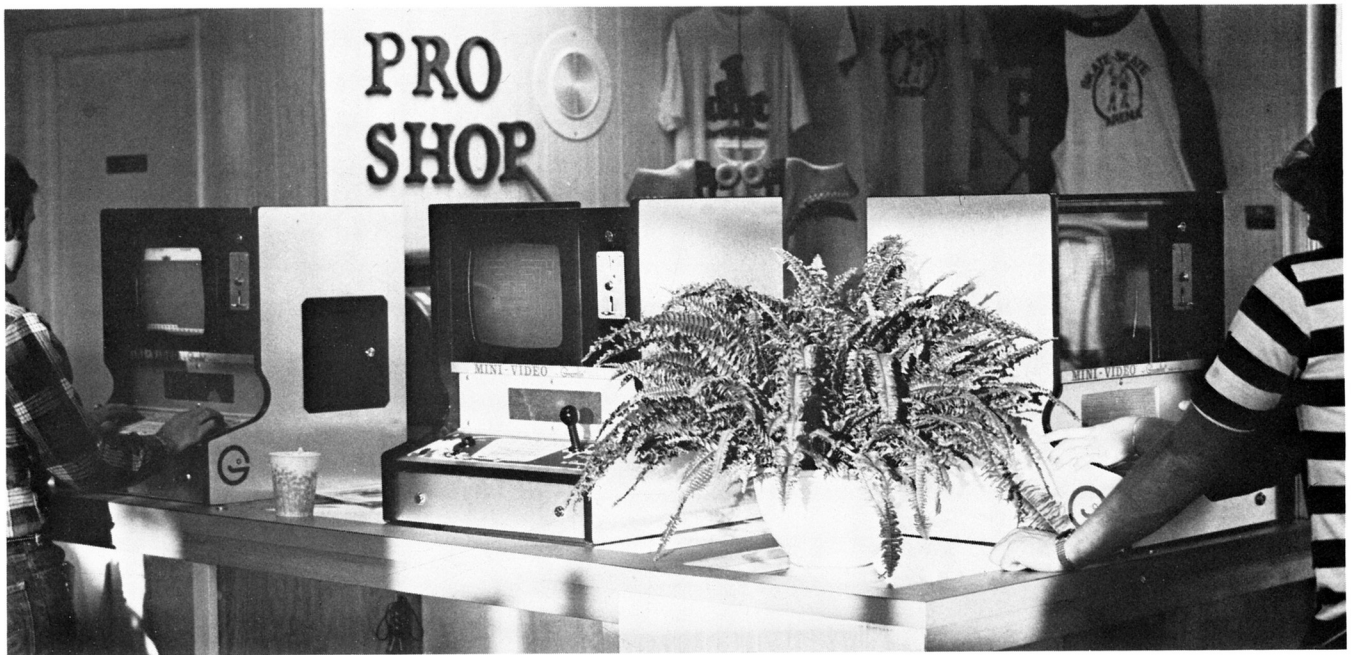
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*T-shirts and other goods are featured in the "Putt-Putt Plus" Pro Shop: Merchandise tied to the joint amusements.*

versus \$48,000 from its golf revenue.

And Linville, with New York, Louisiana, Georgia, Maryland, and Virginia Putt-Putt sites, points out another advantage to the golf course site: It is normally on a highly trafficked route, and that leads to the spin-off of coin-op game players from those habituated to going to or driving by the golf course.

Putt-Putt Golf Courses, Inc. presently takes a dual approach to game machines, owning some of the hardware and leasing from operators for some other sites.

At the Putt-Putt International Convention, said Van Brook's Vance, "the general consensus was to contact a local operator to put in games on a percentage basis rather than to try to become an overnight

expert on arcade games."

In an interview with PLAY METER, Putt-Putt's president explained that the licensee is offered guidance, seminars, and attendance at coin-op trade shows to aid him in familiarity with the added area of amusement games on site.

Clayton said the expanded operation, called Putt-Putt Plus, includes an arcade, sometimes a go-kart track, an ice cream parlor, and other frills. "We're trying to keep a family atmosphere," he said. (This sentiment is echoed by licensee Linville, saying: "Everything done on the course is very family-oriented. It's imperative the amusement game room be a family environment.")

The "family" paying to play at Putt-Putt courses numbered 35,000 last year. Clayton beamed: "We

think the potential in this area is just tremendous." From 40 Putt-Putt courses expanding with arcades this year, 150 are expected to have made the connection with arcades by the end of 1981, according to Clayton.

The facilities at Putt-Putt courses are "moderate, elaborate, or simple, depending on space available to us," he explained. In terms of space, some 2500 feet is considered "moderate size," an arcade of 35-40 machines. One renovation method on existing Putt-Putt sites has been to remodel a clubhouse to make a game room addition onto the present concessions area for the golf course.

"I hope it will be a positive entry into the (amusement games) business, associating pinball with ice cream, mother, and apple pie," said Clayton. —by Ray E. Tilley

## An example of operating the golf tie-in

Chip Linville of Rockville, Maryland provides a profile of a Putt-Putt franchisee in terms of the extent of amusement machine hardware on location, and other statistics.

He has himself been a franchisee of Putt-Putt Golf Courses for 12 years. In 1980 he has golf courses in Rockville; Syracuse, New York; Metairie, Louisiana; Atlanta; and in Virginia.

In Metairie, on a site by a major highway near New Orleans, he plans expansion to 80 units of amusement machines on the Putt-Putt course. At Rockville he employs 55 pieces, 15 are on location in Syracuse, and he will take on a partner to build a game

room with Putt-Putt course in Buffalo, New York, where the arcade facility will have 2200 square feet of space, typical of Linville's several facilities. As an example of the mix of game equipment, Linville has 60 percent videos at the Rockville location.

The golf course licensee offers a helpful hint, too, in dealing with local planning and zoning boards. From his experience he notes that a miniature golf course is "usually in 'commercial' zoning, but a problem lies in antiquated laws and county commissioners because of some 'seedy' locations." The mind of the local public official may well associate

game rooms with an undesirable societal element, unfortunately: the supposed picture of unemployed persons loitering, juvenile delinquency, and other unfavorable points of reference.

But the "image" sought by Putt-Putt Inc. and by licensee Chip Linville is very different: the "family environment." With the golf course already located and potential zoning issues already fought and settled, a zoning argument is short-circuited with the extension of arcade games on a site where a form of game, miniature golf, is presently being played.

"It's a natural land use," in Linville's words.

## A success grows in Brooklyn:

# Urban Park features arcade

Embellishment of arcades and site tie-ins for greater revenue are illustrated by plans for Urban Amusement Park. The park will be located at 835 Pennsylvania Avenue, Brooklyn, New York.

The park itself will occupy approximately 12,000 square feet (properly zoned) and comprise four major rides and seven kiddie rides. In addition, it will have a refreshment stand for items such as popcorn, drinks, and cotton candy.

The Park will be situated around a 2,400 square foot arcade now in operation. That amusement center has in excess of 60 pieces of equipment and is called Fun Factory Arcade. It is a seven day per week, 52 weeks per year operation, with a projected gross income in excess of \$200,000 per year.

Numerous factors bode well for the success of the park and increased volume for the arcade. The Urban Amusement Park's projected gross revenues are between \$200,000 and \$250,000 per year. "It is difficult at present to project any net income since each business is unique," said the developers, Allboro Equipment Company. "However, it can safely be assumed that the industry wide net of 30 to 35 percent can and should be projected for this park."

Directly adjacent at 819 Pennsyl-

vania Avenue is a McDonald's restaurant. This fast food operation reportedly has grossed over \$1 million and at a \$1.59 per capita spending yields over 625,000 patrons per year. The owner of this McDonald's has expressed a desire to participate in promotional activity or programs of the Urban Amusement Park. Also projected is an entrance to the park through the fence that separates it from the McDonald's parking area at present.

In addition, there is a Nathan's Famous Restaurant directly across from the Amusement Park, also on Pennsylvania Avenue. The gross income for this fast food store is between \$500,000 and \$750,000 per year.

A Merit gas station is located across from the park and it pumps over one million gallons a year.

Otherwise located in the area are two more gas stations, a deluxe diner, and two car washes. In addition, Pennsylvania Avenue carries over 8,000 cars per day.

The park site is within two miles of three major interstate roads. Mass transit is also available in the form of two subway lines (LL&J) and a New York City bus route that has a stop directly at the front entrance to the park.

The contingent neighborhood includes residential dwellings and commercial buildings. One high school, two junior high schools, and three elementary schools are within walking distance. The area is densely populated, of course. Some 250,000 people live within walking distance and within a radius of seven miles of the park, the population exceeds one million.

The principal involved in the Urban Amusement Park will have another advantage in his formulation of the site—the fact that the landlord of the park site, Irving Vichinsky, has owned and operated Steeplechase Park, Coney Island, New York for nine years. He and his partner, Norman Kaufman, will be consultants to the principal during the formulation, construction, and operation of the park. Their combined experience in the amusement business is over forty years.

Also, Vichinsky is the owner of the land that the McDonald's is situated on. He is also a principal in the Fun Family Arcade (which is family-owned and -operated) as well as a principal in the Allboro Equipment Company at 839 Pennsylvania Avenue. It is obvious that he has a vested interest in the success of the Urban Amusement Park.

---

## Hanson delivers on triple Shootout

Officials of Hanson Distributing Co. of Bloomington, Minnesota termed player and operator response "staggering" to 1980 Shootout, the first major triple tournament—pinball, foos, and eight-ball competition.

Held April 4-6, Shootout had over 150 locations represented in the finals. According to Kirk W. McKennon, Hanson vice president/sales manager, the tournament was the culmination of some fifteen months of work with games, players, operators, location owners, and manufacturers.

A useful product of the Shootout planning were tournament kits, which can be purchased by opera-

tors, turned over to locations, and put to work boosting game play through tournaments.

The kits (see photo in "Distributing" this issue) contain the ingredients to run a series of weekly tournaments and an in-location playoff. Advertising slicks, banners, and posters to further promote the event are included.

Each weekly winner received a Shootout sweater and qualified for the location playoffs. The winners of the location playoffs in Shootout 1980 received plaques and qualifications to the finals in the Radisson South Hotel's Grand Ballroom, a 20,000 square foot floor, in Bloomington.

Prizes at the Radisson finals included over \$5,000 cash, a Game Plan *Super Nova* pingame, two Tournament Soccer foos tables, and a Tournament 8-Ball table.

Hanson Distributing used ideas of their own and Topurnament Soccer's and U. S. Billiards' input and expertise to put together the tournament kits.

Persons interested in duplicating this event can purchase sample kits for \$25 each from Hanson Distributing Co., 9201 Penn Avenue South, Suite 1, Bloomington, Minnesota 55431—or by phone: 612/884-6604; Minnesota, 800-352-2780, or 800-328-2866 out of state.

# Exporter foresees pingames in People's Republic of China

By RAY E. TILLEY

Mondial exporters of New York hope of developing a pingame market in "The Sleeping Giant" after Mondial President Suran D. Fesjian visited in Shanghai, Peking, and other cities.

In Fesjian's two-week stay in the People's Republic of China last fall, "he never came across anything resembling a pinball game," reported Richard Sarkisian, Mondial Commercial Corp. executive vice president and sales manager.

What Fesjian did find, however, was a rich interest in mechanical games. Existing machines observed in major Chinese cities were "archaic" electro-mechanical games, such as basketball types of several decades ago in America.

In contact with the Department of Tourism and Recreation in Shanghai, the Mondial president was offered a tour of the Children's Palace there. In this facility, which is "not open to the man on the street," Fesjian noticed the aged games—

mechanical and some electric machines. The Children's Palace provides for youths aged 10 to 17 to be trained to repair electro-mechanical devices. (As is common policy in mainland China, visitors' photography was not allowed inside the Palace.)

Although amusement games in China are behind closed doors of non-public places such as the Shanghai facility, Sarkisian commented: "We feel, once they get the taste for them, they will take them into public areas where a demand is created. It may be 10 years away," he told PLAY METER.

The tourism/recreation office of the People's Republic government accepted an offer from Mondial exporters to ship a Gottlieb pinball game to Shanghai. The game was accepted, said Sarkisian, "to acquaint themselves with its electro-mechanical circuitry."

As a market develops in China, solid-state technology machines would be introduced, he added.

"Apparently, they had never heard of or seen this type of amusement device before," Sarkisian reported. "The Gottlieb game is currently afloat on its way to Shanghai, and Mondial, in addition to the game, has sent ahead a service manual, schematics and other items for the children to study.

"Mondial believes this will be the first pinball in the People's Republic of China," said Sarkisian.

In time, the Mondial Organization foresees "a tremendous market" in the People's Republic.

Sarkisian added that Fesjian's visit in October and November of 1979 was spurred by the company's constant search for new markets to develop. "Mondial pioneered the development of games in certain countries of Europe and Africa," said Sarkisian.

Mondial Commercial Corp., based at 350 Fifth Avenue, New York City, represents Allied Leisure, Atari, Ramtek, Exidy, and Gottlieb lines.

## Gottlieb honors 25-year vets

D. Gottlieb and Co. presented silver trophy cups to a dozen distributors in the U.S. who have handled the line for 25 years or more in a January sales meeting at Oak Brook, Illinois.

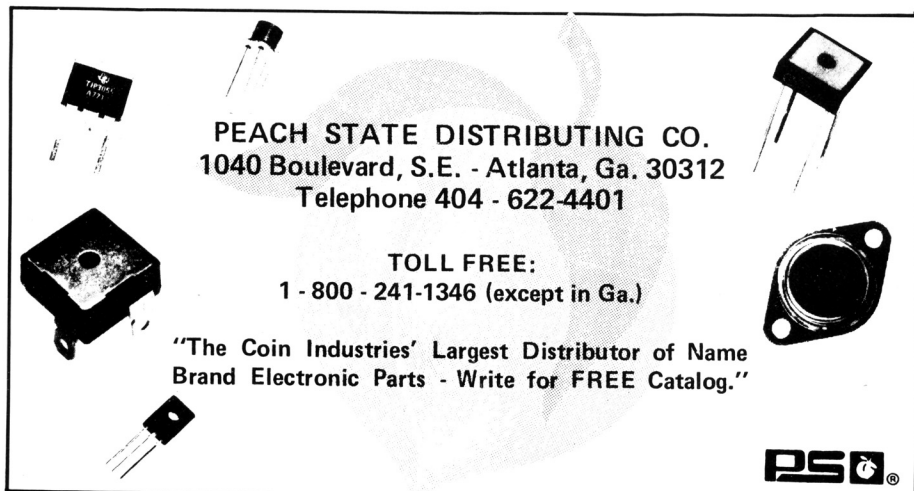
Distributors who received silver

cups at the Gottlieb banquet are: Dan Brown and Chuck Arnold, Rowe International in Dedham; Frank Ash, Active Amusement in Philadelphia; Steve Lieberman, Liberman Music in Minneapolis; Herb Rosenthal and Al

Rodstein, Banner Specialty in Pittsburgh; Jean Coutu, Laniel Automatic in Montreal; Marion Mitchell, Morris Novelty in St. Louis; Leroy Kitch, Culp Distributing in Oklahoma City; and Joel Smeyne and Mort Hyatt, General Vending in Baltimore.

Other silver cup recipients are: Abe Susman, State Music in Dallas; Ron Rood, Southern Music in Orlando; Al Toronto, Birmingham Vending in Birmingham; Ron Gold, Cleveland Coin International in Cleveland; and Hymie Zorinski, H.Z. Vending in Omaha.


A lively feature of the distributors meeting at the Oak Brook Hyatt (where Gottlieb's new intermediate-sized pinball cabinet was introduced) was a pinball championship contest among the Gottlieb line handlers. Winners were: Frank Ash of Active Amusement, John Hill of Empire-Grand Rapids, Bob Nims of A.M.A. Distributors, and Al Rodstein of Banner Specialty.



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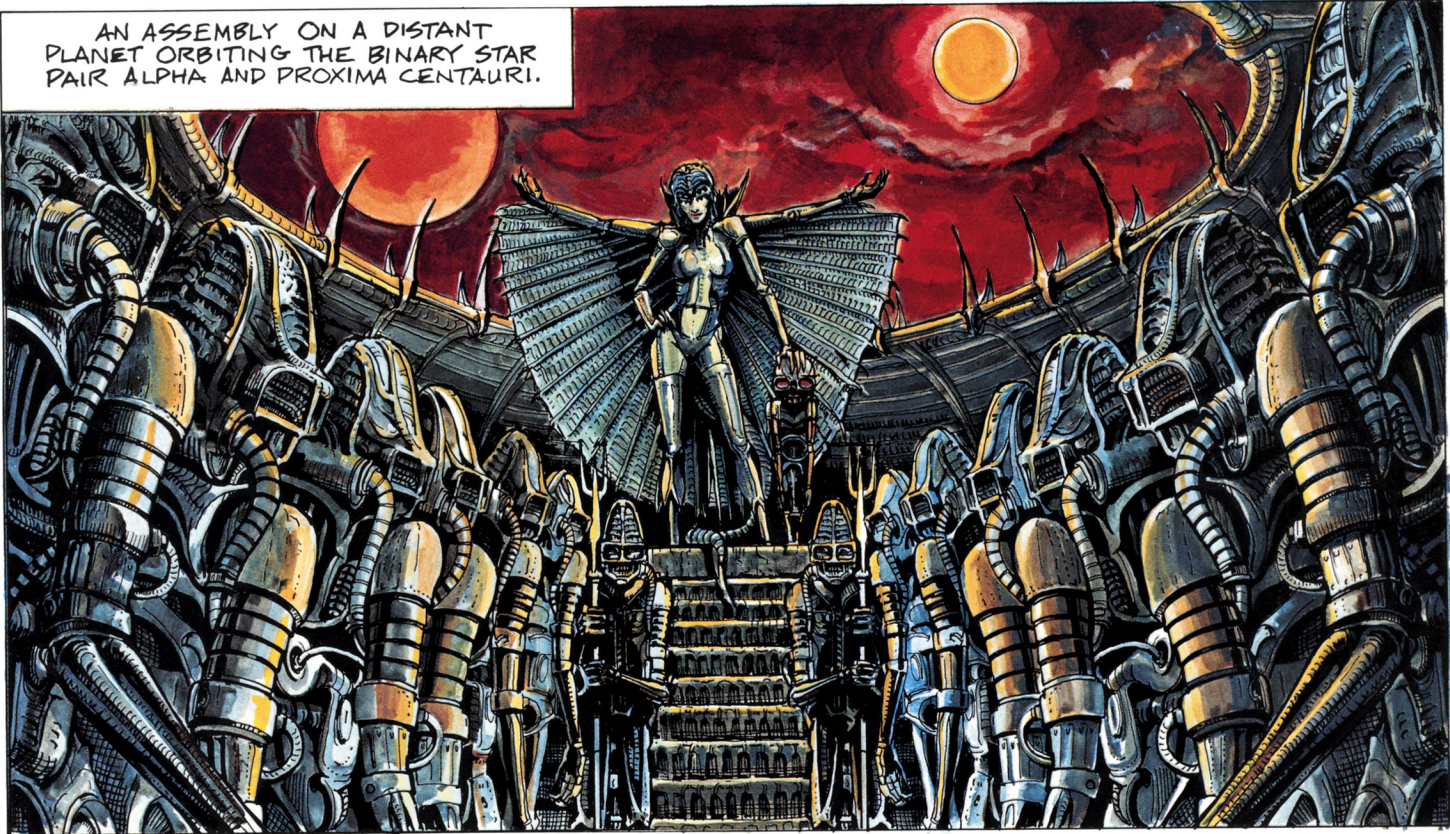


# Bally SPACE INVADERS

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STORY: MARY BETH BUSH & CAROL PORTH  
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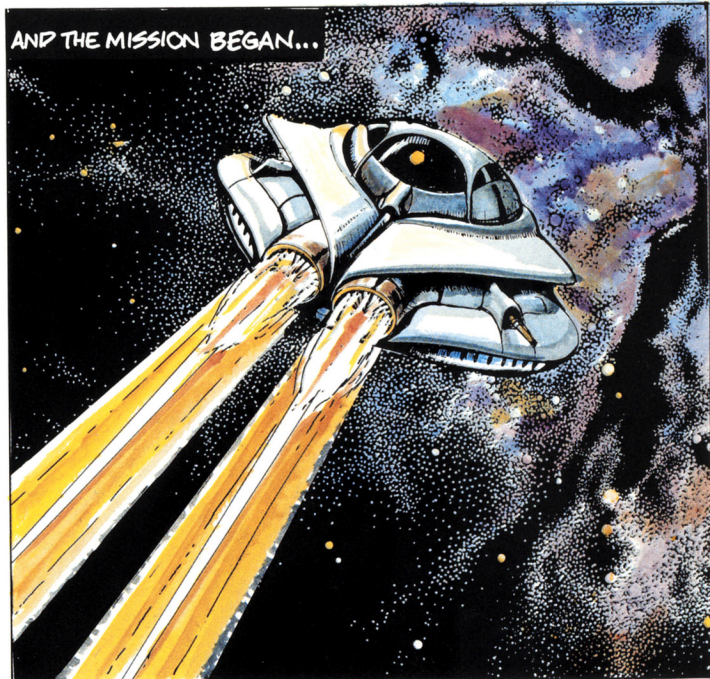
AN ASSEMBLY ON A DISTANT  
PLANET ORBITING THE BINARY STAR  
PAIR ALPHA AND PROXIMA CENTAURI.



SEQUESTORS, YOU HAVE YOUR  
ORDERS!  
REMEMBER THE INVASION OF EARTH  
IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR SURVIVAL!



AND THE MISSION BEGAN...



EARTH: 1980

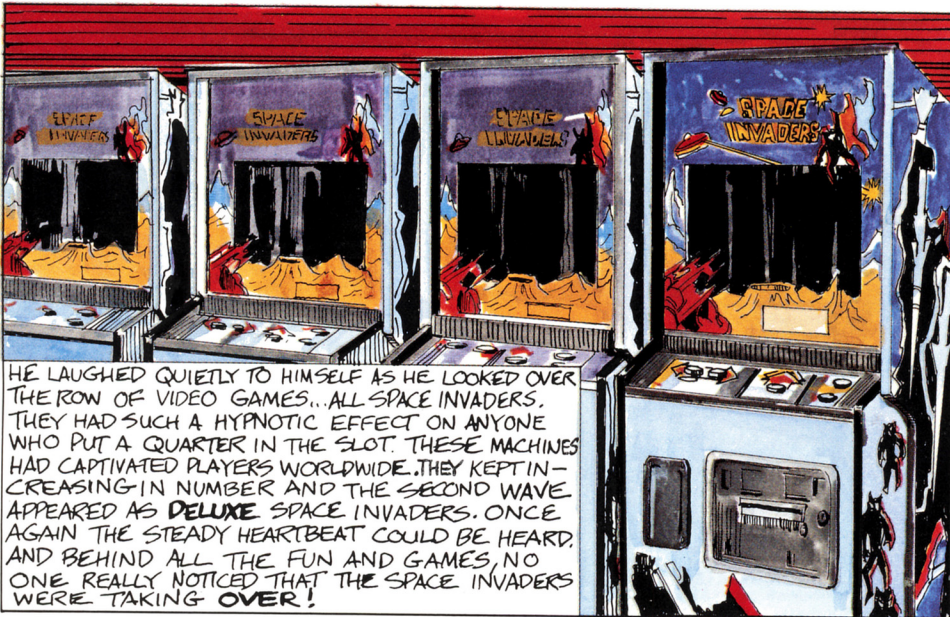


T.J. OWNER LOOKS AROUND THE ARCADE ONE LAST TIME BEFORE LOCKING THE DOOR. IT HAD BEEN A GOOD DAY..THOSE BALLY-MIDWAY GAMES REALLY MAKE MONEY!



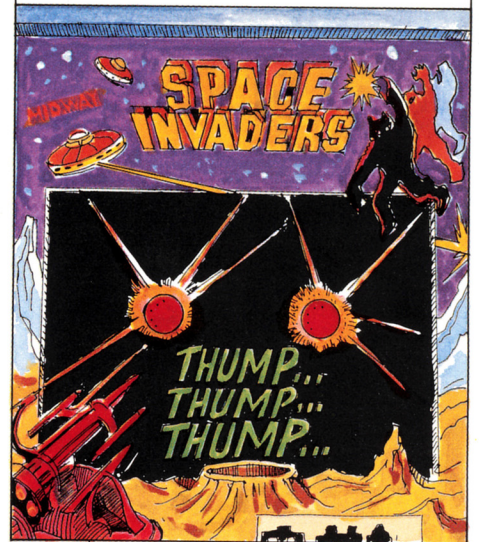
BOY, I'M SURE TIRED. THINK I'LL GO HAVE A COLD ONE.

HIS EYES PASSED OVER THE ROW OF PINBALL MACHINES, ALL DARK AND QUIET NOW.



HE LAUGHED QUIETLY TO HIMSELF AS HE LOOKED OVER THE ROW OF VIDEO GAMES...ALL SPACE INVADERS. THEY HAD SUCH A HYPNOTIC EFFECT ON ANYONE WHO PUT A QUARTER IN THE SLOT. THESE MACHINES HAD CAPTIVATED PLAYERS WORLDWIDE. THEY KEPT INCREASING IN NUMBER AND THE SECOND WAVE APPEARED AS DELUXE SPACE INVADERS. ONCE AGAIN THE STEADY HEARTBEAT COULD BE HEARD. AND BEHIND ALL THE FUN AND GAMES, NO ONE REALLY NOTICED THAT THE SPACE INVADERS WERE TAKING OVER!

UNNOTICED... IN THE FAR CORNER OF THE DARKENED ROOM..



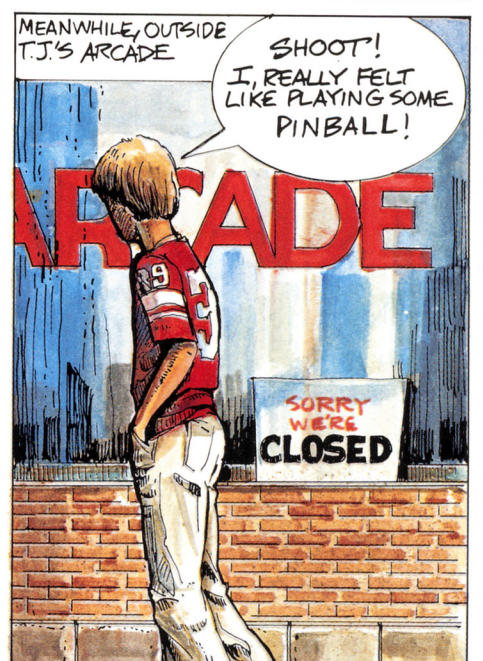
LATER, AT THE CORNER TAVERN.

HI, YA, T.J. HOW'S YOUR GAME ROOM DOIN'?

BETTER THAN EVER, PENNY!

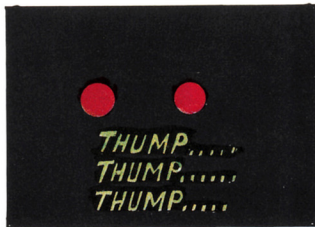


DON'T YOU GET ENOUGH OF THAT THING EVERY DAY, HONEY? YOU'D THINK YOU WERE HYPNOTIZED OR SOMETHIN'!

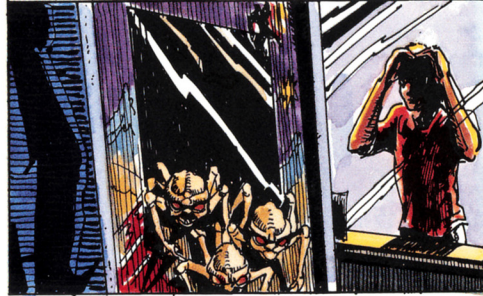


MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE T.J.'S ARCADE

SHOOT! I, REALLY FELT LIKE PLAYING SOME PINBALL!



SUDDENLY, FROM INSIDE THE DORMANT VIDEO GAMES...



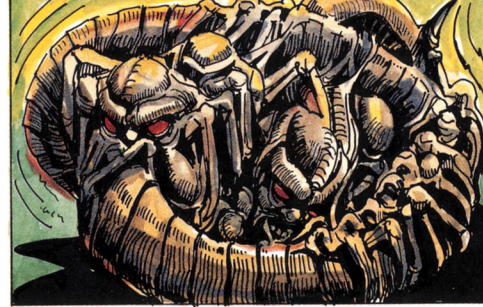
THE ARMIES OF LITTLE INVADERS ON THE VIDEO SCREENS HAD EMERGED FROM THE GAMES AND BEGAN TO ASSEMBLE IN THE CENTER OF THE ROOM.



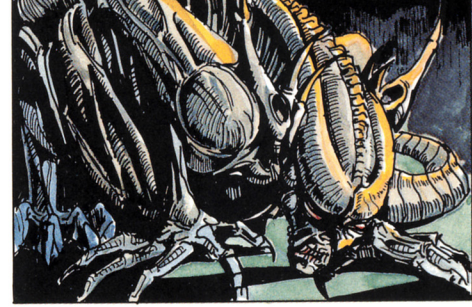
BEFORE HIS EYES, IN THE DARKNESS, THE ASSEMBLED CREATURES BEGAN TO CHANGE FORM.



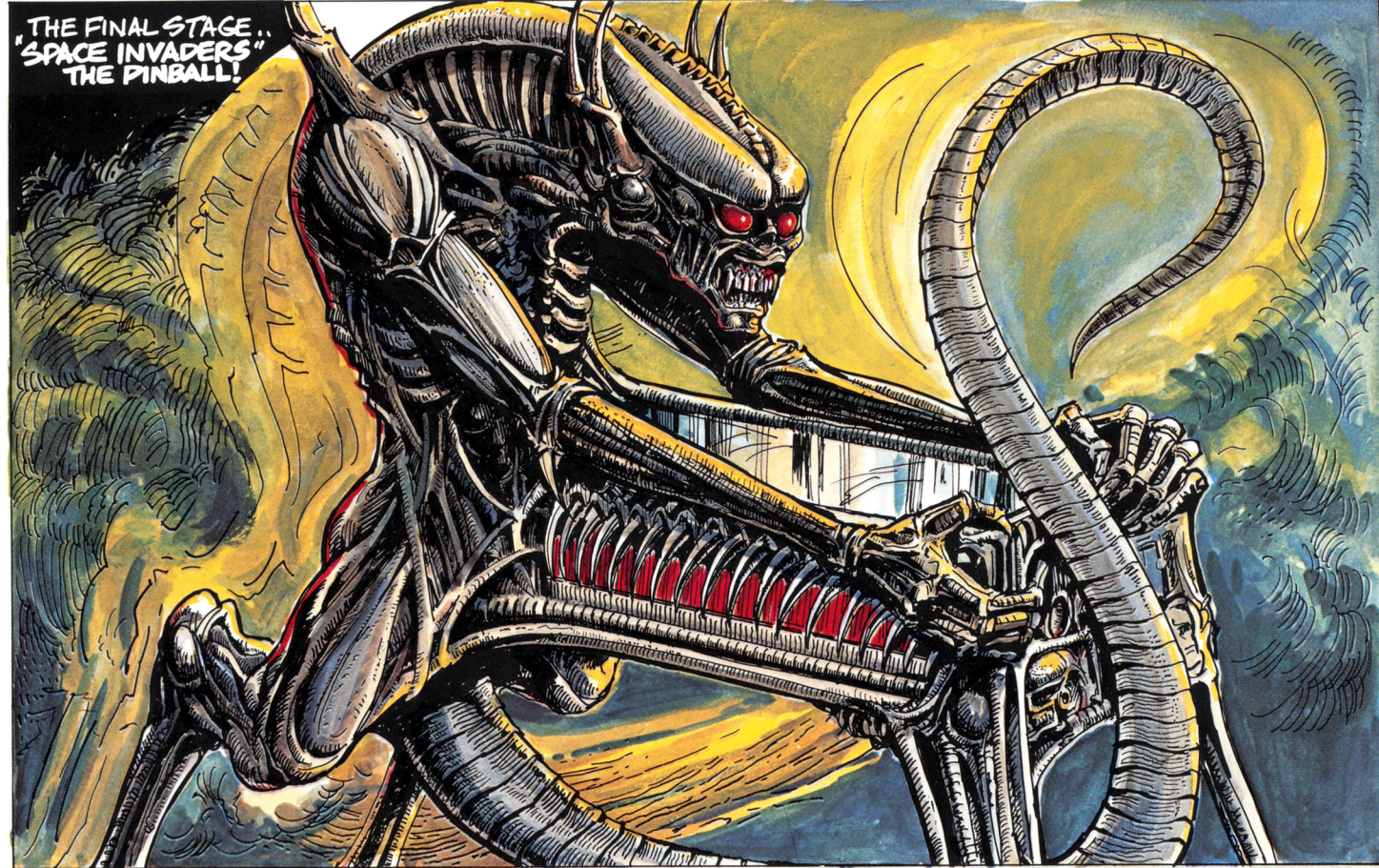
THUMP..THUMP..THUMP..THUMP..

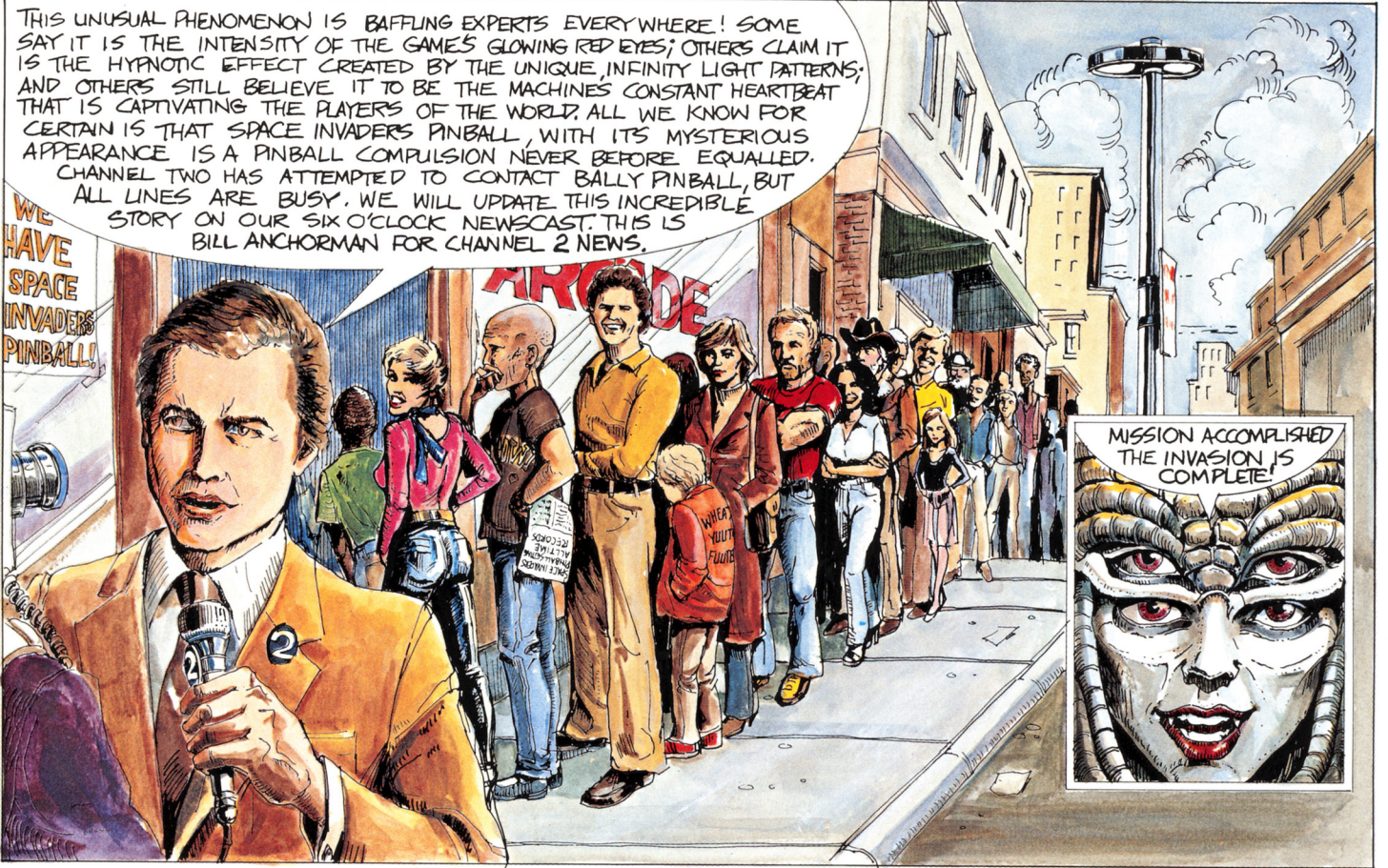
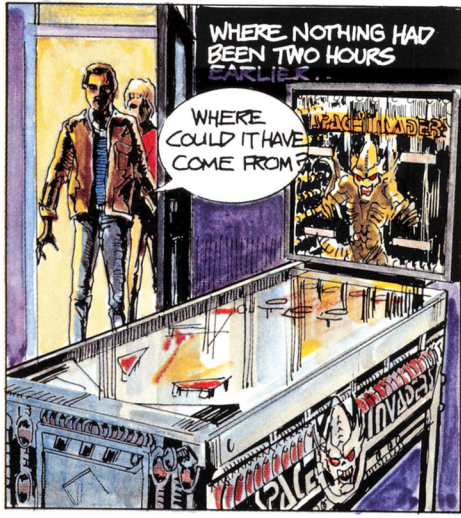
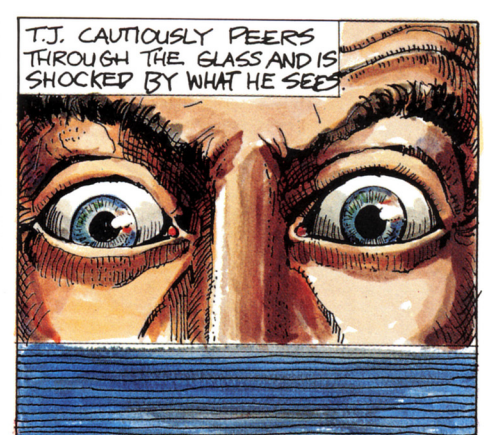


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Additionally, 5 red Invader Targets advance a 20-40-60 thousand bonus upon consecutive completions; the third also giving a Special. This 20-40-60 bonus remains in the memory, relighting with each ball.

## Captivating Clone Chamber Feature With Memory

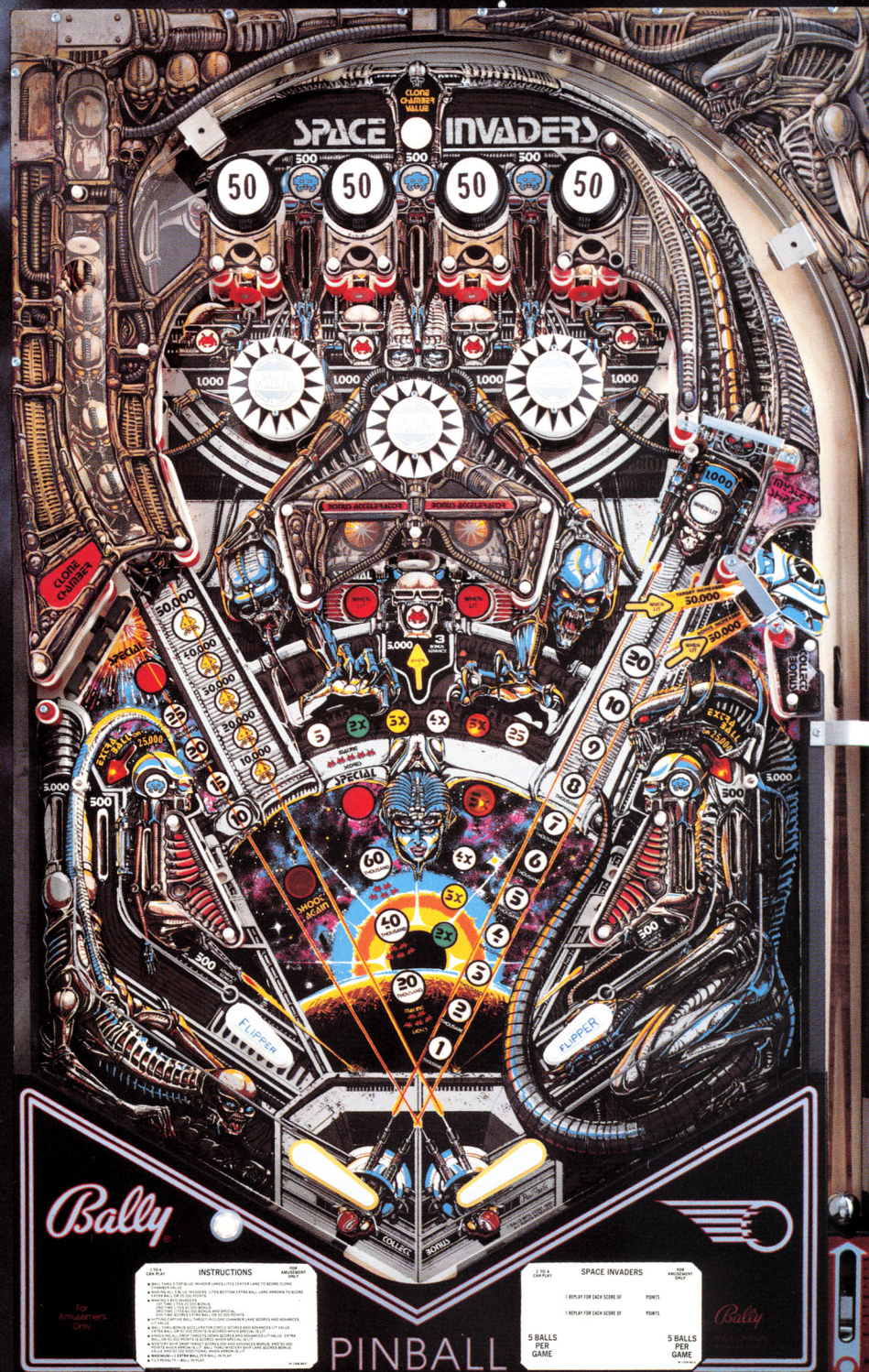
A trapped ball capable of scoring from 10 to 50,000 points lies in the chamber, beginning a new game at 10,000, and increasing with each hit. The Clone Chamber target scores 3 bonus advances.

## Pursue Blue Invaders, For Heroic Rewards

The Blue Invaders consist of 5 rollover lanes. Knocking out the three Blue Invaders at the top of the playfield lights the center rollover to score the Clone Chamber Value. Completing all 5 lights the rollover lanes for extra balls and the center target arrow for 5,000 points and 3 bonus advances.

## Reach Warp Speed Points

Bonus Accelerator Hoop scores 5,000 points and advances bonus, then scores 5,000 points and multiplies the bonus from 2 thru 5x, then scores 25,000 points and/or Special.



## Random Mystery Ship Feature Keeps Players On Stand-By Alert.

A drop target worth 500 points and one bonus advance, a rollover for collecting the bonus, and a 50,000 point light are the three sections of this feature that randomly activate for a limited time, allowing players a chance for full scoring potential. A true challenge for even the most skilled players!

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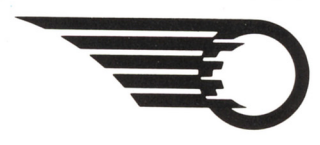
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Employees and management of Montreal distributor Laniel Automatic gather around this Pontiac, the object of a Christmas 1979 drawing which has Laniel folks still talking. Two people "won" the car.

## Coin-op Christmas

It's almost summertime now, but employees of Laniel Automatic in Montreal may be thinking about Christmas.

As part of the Christmas party in 1979 honoring Laniel employees for their service to the distributor, the company used a novel approach to an automobile give-away. Tying handily to the nature of the coin-op industry, a drawing was held by the use of a bulk vending machine.

Capsules were placed in the vending machine with each employee's name in one capsule for each three years of service he had to Laniel Automatic. Thus, every employee had one chance, plus an added cap for each three years—the eldest in term of service having 36 years' tenure, therefore 13 capsules in the draw. Quarters were inserted

in the machine for each step of elimination of names.

Excitement at the Christmas party built up in amusement-game fashion, reports Jean Coutu, vice president of Laniel. Finally, two names remained in capsules to be drawn between for the win of a new Gran LeMans Pontiac.

At that point, the two Laniel employees left in the draw decided to "hold all bets." Forfeiting their chances to win the car, both workers decided to "split the car"—and two "winners" walked away happy from the company's 45th anniversary Christmas banquet for employees.

The element of competition was "a little bit of spice," Coutu commented, adding that the vending-machine draw may be used at another Christmas occasion.

## New appointments at Cle Coin

The Special Products Division of Cleveland Coin International has been joined by Ralph Paukner, formerly owner and manager of the Paukner Vending Company in Avon Lake, Ohio.

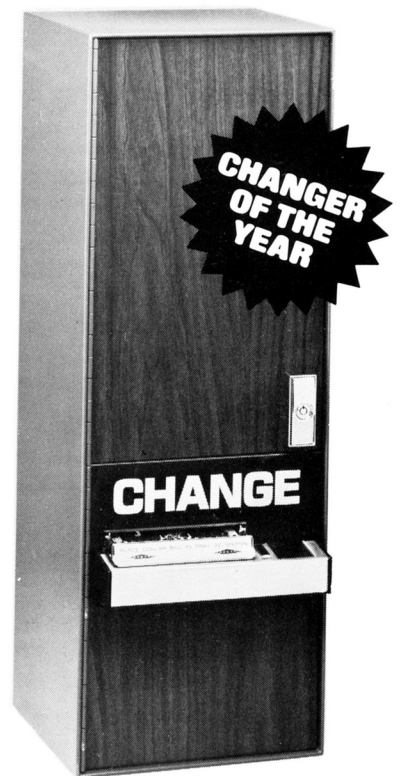
Tom Dietz has joined the Columbus office of Cleveland Coin. Dietz is a well known veteran formerly with the Shaffer Distributing Company. He will be responsible for the sale of music and games in the southern Ohio area.

Cleveland Coin International was recently named Distributor of the

Year for 1979 by the Moyer Diebel Corporation with a gold plaque, presented to President Ronald A. Gold at the Casa De Campo resort in the Dominican Republic on February 11. Gold in accepting the award on behalf of the company indicated that it should be directed to the combined efforts of Marion Berry and Charles Elkins, as outstanding industrial vending salesmen.

Gold also said Cleveland Coin's growth in industrial vending has been "truly gratifying and is a significant achievement in the past number of years."

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# Portale becomes Betson Pacific

Betson Pacific officially opened its doors to the coin-op industry in April, after a year in which Portale Automatic Sales has been going through an evolution leading up to this change.

Betson Pacific scheduled a celebration of its new name with a three-day "Debut" in two California offices. West Coast operators were invited to join the festivities during April 16-18. Many products will be on display including the new Gottlieb pin *Spider-Man* and games from Atari, Exidy, Gremlin, and Vectorbeam. Rock-Ola phonographs will be highlighted, with the new *480 Techna* and the compact *477 Max* featured. Special luncheons were to be served each day for the opening events.

The evolution of Betson Pacific started with the expansion of the electronics department including the acquisition of new test equipment and significant increases in parts

inventories to better service the various product lines handled. Peter Betti, president of Betson Pacific, commented further: "It has taken a strong commitment, especially from our Service Manager Wayne Conner and parts department personnel led by Jack Leonard and Kathy Conner, to reach our present goals. We are still raising our sights and trying to improve our customer support programs."

The expansion of the sales staff was another area of emphasis in the change as described by Betti. "Jerry Monday, San Francisco general manager, assisted by David Price and Tom Campbell and in Los Angeles, Sales Manager Oscar Robbins along with Joe Farney are working to keep up-to-date on equipment and industry developments in order to provide their customers with the best advice and information."

Betson Pacific plans new customer support programs to be initiated in

the near future. An operator newsletter will be sent on a regular basis with service tips, special offers, and new product information. A service school program will also be provided for customers.

Betti explained, "Portale Automatic has always had a fine reputation for good service and parts departments. We have worked to expand this customer support in terms of larger stocks of parts, more test equipment, and skilled technical personnel. This together with our strong commitment to provide the best products for our customers culminates the transition from Portale to Betson Pacific."

Betti also commented that 1980 "is going to be a challenging year in the industry for both the distributor and the operator. An even greater emphasis will be needed on timely delivery of equipment and efficient backup for the operators to meet these challenges."

## Atari names overseas distribs

Three new Atari distributors have been appointed to handle international sales for the company's coin-operated games, according to Sue Elliott, Atari international sales manager.

The Music Hire Group of Leeds, England has been appointed co-distributor (together with Cherry Leisure of London) of Atari games in the United Kingdom.

Bo Billing, S.A. of Stockholm, Sweden has been appointed the exclusive distributor of the coin-operated line in Sweden.

Raha-Automaattiyhdistys of Helsinki, Finland is now the exclusive distributor of Atari equipment for Finland.

"We would like to extend a warm welcome and congratulations to our new distributors," Ms. Elliott said. "We look forward to our new associations and increased mutual success. We are certain that these fine organizations will help us better serve operators throughout Europe and the United Kingdom."

Here's the gear useful to spurring tournament interest that sparks action on "slow nights." See story on how Hanson Distributing did it and how you can tie in for your locations—page 59.



# Play Meter Equipment Poll

Here are the May results of PLAY METER's subscriber survey ranking pinball and video games. Rankings are compared with games' standings in April's poll.

## Top Pins

MAY	APRIL	MAY	APRIL
1. GORGAR/Williams.....	3	11. GENIE/Gottlieb.....	5
2. METEOR/Stem.....	1	12. NITRO GROUNDShAKER/Bally.....	—
3. STELLAR WARS/Williams.....	4	13. HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS/Bally.....	10
4. FLASH/Williams.....	2	14. GALAXY/Stem.....	17
5. BUCK ROGERS/Gottlieb.....	9	15. SILVERBALL MANIA/Bally.....	—
6. TIME WARP/Williams.....	8	16. SUPERMAN/Atari.....	7
7. KISS/Bally.....	6	17. FIREPOWER/Williams.....	—
8. FUTURE SPA/Bally.....	12	18. PLAYBOY/Bally.....	11
9. SHARPSHOOTER/Game Plan.....	15	19. LASER BALL/Williams.....	16
10. PARAGON/Bally.....	13	20. SPIDERMAN/Gottlieb.....	20

## Top Videos

MAY	APRIL	MAY	APRIL
1. SPACE INVADERS/Midway.....	1	6. SPACE WARS/Cinematronics.....	—
2. ASTEROIDS/Atari.....	2	7. LUNARLANDER/Atari.....	8
3. FOOTBALL/Atari.....	3	8. STARFIRE/Exidy.....	7
4. SPRINT II/Atari.....	5	9. HEAD ON/Gremlin.....	6
5. TAILGUNNER/Cinematronics.....	4	10. COSMIC GUERRILLAS/Universal.....	9

---

The PLAY METER subscriber survey of pinball and video games will be a regular feature in subsequent PLAY METER publications. If you would like to join readers currently participating in the survey, simply fill out the coupon below and return it to PLAY METER.

Please print legibly

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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NOTE — Please make sure you print your name legibly on the return address portion of the survey card.

## Stern ties Ali to college drive

The indefatigable Muhammed Ali, probably the best-recognized living person, will serve a two-fisted promotion for Stern Electronics and for the American Heart Association (AHA), it was announced in New Orleans March 21 during Play Meter's Amusement Operators Expo.

Fraternities and sororities were invited to compete for twenty new Stern *Ali* pinball machines, top prizes in a campus fundraiser April 11-13, with the proceeds to benefit AHA programs of heart research and education.

In the New Orleans announcement, Gary Stern, president of Stern Electronics, said his firm's promotional involvement of college youth with a charitable cause is a way of "giving back to people who have supported us all this time."

The most creative college campus fundraising efforts will be judged by the staff of National Lampoon humor magazine, which is also geared to the college crowd.

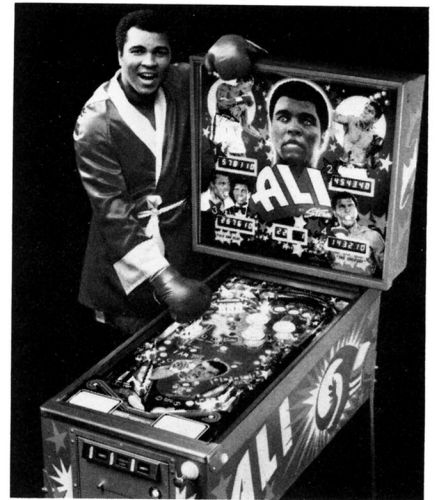
The Lampoon's publisher, Gerald Taylor, was present for the meeting with the press in New Orleans' Fairmont Hotel, and said: "What Stern Electronics is all about is having

fun, having a good time," and National Lampoon's orientation is the same. "We want our audience to last longer so they will re-subscribe," he joked about his magazine's tying in with the promotion. But more seriously, Taylor said: "With the 'Animal House' phenomenon on campus, we expect success with the joint promotion of *Ali* and the National Lampoon."

In seriousness, too, Dr. Alton Ochsner Jr. of New Orleans, past vice president of the AHA, who had lost his own young son to heart disease, expressed gratitude for the two firms' "getting youth more concerned with heart problems."

Phil Philpot of Alabama, National Youth Committee chairman of AHA, said his panel had sought a national project "to spark our growth. Thanks to Stern Electronics, we now have that project." Likewise, Lampoon magazine's support will "motivate youth," he said. "From a local level and a national level, we're excited."

Greek fraternal organizations at more than 700 U.S. colleges and universities have been contacted to join the fight against heart disease by signing up for the *Ali*-Lampoon competition.



*The champ in a two-fisted drive*

Any sorority or fraternity chapter house is eligible to enter by staging a three-day fundraising activity the weekend of April 11. Nineteen Greek houses raising the most money will be awarded Stern's new *Muhammed Ali* pinball game, valued at \$2,000. The next fifty houses will receive complimentary lifetime subscriptions to National Lampoon. In addition, one *Ali* machine will be presented to the fraternity or sorority that raises funds in the "most humorous or creative way."

In May, a representative of the house creating the most original fundraiser event and a delegate of the top fundraising chapter were to be flown to attend an award dinner given in Chicago by Stern Electronics.

The project received local and regional publicity in New Orleans during the Play Meter Show, through newspaper and broadcast media coverage of the Stern pinball/AHA fundraising tie-in.

Gary Stern in the debut announcement said here that the current inflation rate is crimping medical charity funds. The cost of research is going ever-higher with inflation and government funding is becoming insufficient. "It is that much more on private industry to raise money for worthy causes," said Stern.

Public relations agents for the promotion were Margie Korshak Associates, Inc., of Chicago.

—by Ray E. Tilley



*Exidy officials join hands over the initiation of the Exidy II name. Left to right are: Larry Leppert, Exidy II engineering manager; Howell Ivy, Vice president; Pete Kauffman, president; and Ed Anderson, plant manager. The new logo will replace the Vectorbeam sign at the production facility and will be seen on game cartons, product brochures, and ads.*

# Standard springs new lines, looking into the 1980s

Two major new products were introduced to Standard Change-Makers' district sales and service personnel at the company's 25th annual pre-spring sales and service meeting.

*Cashier Central*, a micro-computer controlled, completely automated cashier that can accept up to \$9.95 in bills and coins and vend change, tokens, tickets, plastic, or printed cards, and *MTP* (Money, Time, Power) *Control* were unveiled. *MTP* is an electronic control unit designed to accept bills and coins and vend five minutes to eighteen hours of energy (light for tennis and raquetball courts, heat for sunlamps, electricity for recharging, etc.).

Standard's sales and service representatives from across the U.S. and Canada heard company engineers describe a new generation of sophisticated electronic equipment that can be custom-engineered for the 1980s to sell tickets, tokens, or passes; make change; or control operation of equipment or energy.

John S. Dugan, Standard's national sales manager, noted in his presentation to the group that in the company's first 25 years it was restricted to selling machines that supplied change for coin-operated equipment. "The new equipment that we will be selling in the 1980s will allow us to solve sales and cashier problems for nearly an unlimited number of industries and applications."

He pointed out that some of the new equipment was already in use by mass transit systems, in museums, and in other locations selling a variety of tickets or passes, and that he sees



*John S. Dugan, national sales manager for Standard Change-Makers, right, congratulates Jack Ewald, district manager for Los Angeles, as the firm's second highest rep in sales for the second straight year.*

no end to possible future applications.

Among the other equipment introduced at the meeting included the company's new 25th anniversary *Model 80* hopper-load bill/coin changer. It changes \$1 bills, \$1 coins, 25, 10 and even two five-cent coins and can be equipped with a complete audit system to count bills received and coin dispensed. And a new *Series 6003* hopper-load \$5 bill changer was premiered.

During the meeting, Dugan singled out two of Standard's district managers, Jack McElwaine of Atlan-

ta and Jack Ewald of Los Angeles, who for the second straight year led all fourteen of the company's districts in sales gains. Overall sales for the 1978/79 period for the company as a whole were up some 15 percent, Dugan said.

In closing comments at the meeting, Martin E. Miller, Standard's vice president and general manager, said: "As we begin the 1980s and our second 25 years, we can obviously look forward to a whole new generation of automated selling based largely on the advent of computer technology."

---

## 'Soccer' based on Atari market tests

The release of *Atari Soccer* was timed to coincide with the beginning of the North American Soccer League 1980 season as well as with the spring arcade buying season, according to Frank Ballouz, Atari marketing director.

"We believe from the results we've seen that *Atari Soccer* will continue the winning tradition of our other Sports group games," Ballouz said.

Before introduction in the U.S., *Atari Soccer* was "thoroughly tested

and refined in European markets" as well as in various U.S. markets, said the marketing director.


"Soccer as a U.S. sport is enjoying an incredible surge of popularity both as a spectator sport and as a player sport," he added. "Amateur and professional leagues are growing in every city in the U.S. And that interest extends from young children in AYSO leagues right up to older players. That means *Atari Soccer* is going to be ideal for street or arcade

locations," he continued.

"Atari is planning some exciting promotional support for the game," Ballouz said. "We want to make sure players don't miss the challenge and competitive intensity this game offers. Together with other ideas, Atari is currently negotiating with Pele to develop a promotional program around this outstanding sports attraction."

(For more on *Atari Soccer*, see "New Products" in this issue.)

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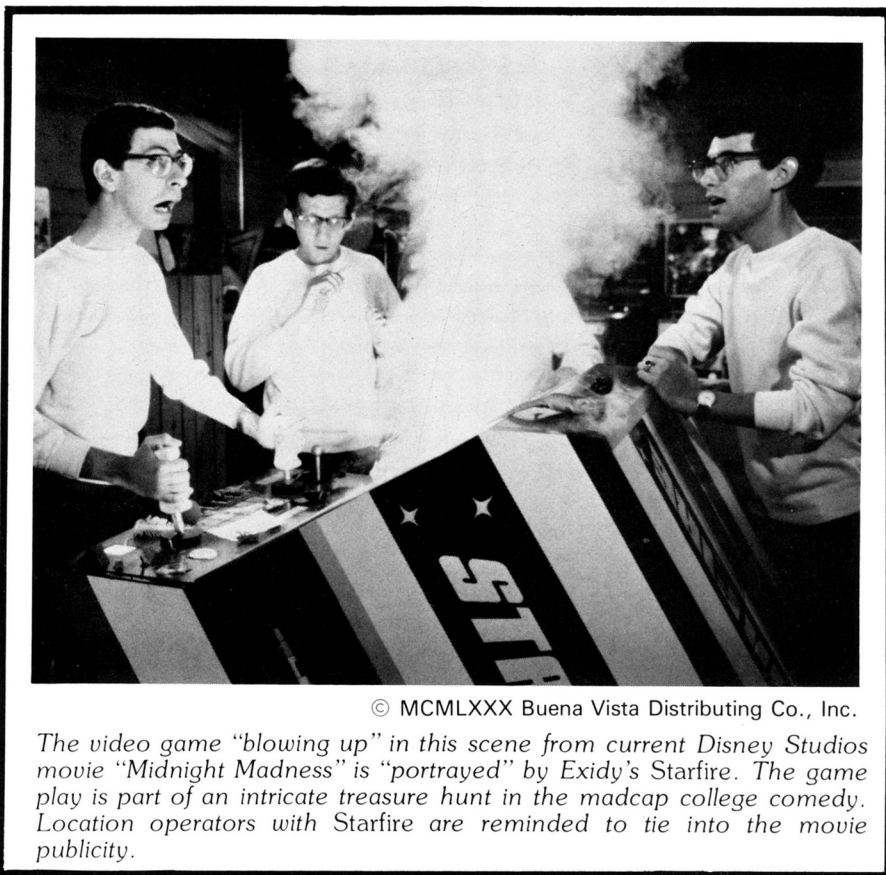
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### The Last Gold Coin

You likely won't find it in your coin boxes: The last U.S. gold coin was struck in 1933. The \$20 and \$10 gold pieces were never circulated. (1932 is the last collectible date for these denominations in gold coins.)



© MCMLXXX Buena Vista Distributing Co., Inc.

*The video game "blowing up" in this scene from current Disney Studios movie "Midnight Madness" is "portrayed" by Exidy's Starfire. The game play is part of an intricate treasure hunt in the madcap college comedy. Location operators with Starfire are reminded to tie into the movie publicity.*

# Bally sets 'hot line' for Space Invaders

Bally Pinball Division's vice president of marketing, Tom Nieman, and Advertising Manager Carol Mart Porth have conceived a pinball promotion for *Space Invaders* that begins with a series of rotating messages on a toll-free 24-hour "hot line." These messages are designed in a humorous, entertaining, and yet informative way to help distributors and operators learn more about the unique characteristics of *Space Invaders*...the pinball game.

"We have written them in a light vein so people will be entertained and stimulated to call back again and again until they have heard all of the messages," said Tom Nieman. "We hope that the operators as well as the distributors will use these to fullest advantages and call the toll-free number for their customers to hear.

"By calling the toll-free number for his location to hear, an operator will be showing them how on top of the industry he is and what he is going to be doing for them. It can only serve to reinforce their relationship. We have sent out flyers with information on these toll-free numbers that we hope will stimulate its usage."

In addition, Bally is producing a full-color comic book telling the story of *Space Invaders*, the pinball. "In it, you will see the incredible, complete transformation of the video game into a pinball game and witness the phenomenon as it takes over locations everywhere," stated Carol Mart Porth.

"The idea is to relate that we have captured the magnetism of the video game in this pinball and that the earnings will follow the same route. We tried to take advantage of the unique qualities and features of the game."

So, the invasion was about to begin. To "reach the outer limits of pinball," dial: 800-323-3377 anywhere in the continental United States and 800-323-9474 in Illinois for the latest reports on *Space Invaders*...the pinball, said the manufacturers.

Other promotional items for the pingame include bags, telephone stickers with the toll-free numbers, "and a few other out-of-this-world pieces," said Ms. Porth.

(See "New Products" in this issue for more on *Space Invaders* by Bally.)

# Power out, slots pay off

When the lights went out in Reno, Nevada, the coins spewed forth for sudden winners standing in the dark in the 24-hour-a-day gaming town February 16.

The neon glitter went out for some three hours during a power failure early that day, according to the Associated Press. An electrical short that interrupted power to most of northern Nevada caused slot machines at the Hyatt Lake Tahoe

Resort Hotel and Casino to unload money.

Police said patrons were asked to leave, but a pit boss at the casino denied this report. He said some machines "dropped some extra dollars" when the lights went out but the casino was not evacuated.

When the slot machines stopped at about 4 a.m., many of the gambling palaces switched quickly to emergency generators.

# 'Punch Ball' used on TV



Zamperla's Punch Ball

Zamperla's coin-operated machines for strength, ability testing, and fun are attracting television media interest.

One of Zamperla's *Punch Ball* units appeared in a segment of "Sunday Games," a 90-minute special which was scheduled to air on Sunday, April 20 on NBC-TV at 9 p.m. EST.

The segment, "America's toughest Bouncer", appeared in three parts throughout the telecast. Six professional bouncers selected from across the United States competed.

The *Punch Ball* was the object of that portion of the telecast in which the competitors faced off.

Similar to a pre-fight weigh-in, the competitors each "punched in" with the machine measuring their strength.

The amusement rides manufacturer is located in New Jersey at 16 Edgeboro Road, East Brunswick 08816; telephone 201/238-6280.

## DIRECTORY UPDATE

Personnel changes at A.D.I., Inc., D. Gottlieb & Co., and Taito America Corp. were not reflected in *PLAY METER's* February, 1980 Directory Issue.

Changes in officials and product lines of the manufacturers—which were not available by the February issue's press time, follow.

At A.D.I., Inc., the president is now Rick Carr and the vice president is Bruce Hosch. The Clearwater, Florida company has a product line of coin-op and home pool tables and games for the vending industry.

At D. Gottlieb & Co., an update of officers and their posts includes: Robert W. Bloom, senior vice president; Gilbert Q. Pollock, vice

president/operations; Jack H. Mittel, vice president/general sales manager; Edward P. Krynski, director of product design; William J. Kwasniewski, controller; and George M. Offshack, field service engineer.

Taito America Corporation officers are Edward Miller, president; Paul Moriarity, vice president; Laura Kreter, marketing manager; and Martin Jasso, customer service manager. The Taito product line includes upright and cocktail-table video games and arcade games.

Also, Taito's Chicago address is no longer valid. The firm, located at 1256 Estes Avenue, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007, has the Telex address: 253290 TAMCO ELGR.

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# There'll always be music!

Kind of an optimistic title, huh? The truth of the matter is—it's true! The key to understanding current negativism is to differentiate between the *music* and the record industry itself.

This isn't meant to suggest the demise of the recording industry; yet, maybe the industry as we know it today is in a basic state of flux.

Remember how it used to be? It was only a few years ago when the top recording artists in the world would bombard the buying public with product. It just doesn't seem that way any more.

The Fleetwood Macs, Bob Dylans, Doobie Brothers, Wings, The Whos, Rolling Stones, etc., have suddenly gotten very lazy, too rich, more selective, or all three! Gone are the days when we could expect at least one, or possibly two lps a year from our favorite artists.

Spiraling inflation has the world by the seat of its pants. With regard to the record business, the initial rumblings were about the upswing in the cost of vinyl (of which records are manufactured) since it is a by-product of petroleum, and we all know the leaps and bounds *that* commodity has taken in price. It's ironic to me that the top oil-producing nations in the Middle East are probably the least musically aware, yet they, indirectly, at best, control the destiny of the record companies world wide.

The music business is apparently thriving. The disco craze is in its very last breaths yet has spawned a revival of what used to be called "Soul" or rhythm-and-blues or black music. Witness the comeback career of The Spinners. Even Donna Summer, the so-called "Queen of Disco," has publicly said she will be turning to other musical avenues to showcase her singing. And from the talent end, she can sing anything she wants and

still be successful. Then, on the other hand, a brief look at her record company adds extra insight.

Several years ago Neil Bogart founded Casablanca Records and Filmworks, using the budding career of Donna Summer as the backbone of the organization with his own genius leading the way. To a lesser extent (at first) Ms. Summer's producer, Giorgio Moroder, was also instrumental (no pun intended) in getting the infant label off the ground. Both, of course, have gone on to superstardom.

But what has become of Neil Bogart? Financially, he's probably the most comfortable he's ever been. He's recently settled with the umbrella company, Polygram, for quite a few bucks and has bowed out gracefully.

Mr. Bogart fathered an enterprise which may still be growing. He took the abuse aimed at the disco industry and its people and made several of those people famous in the process. He was also the driving force behind bringing some good music into our lives. But, what will happen to his stable of talent?

Giorgio Moroder has already branched out into other areas. He's getting into movie scores, producing other musicians besides Donna Summer and performing (on record) his own electronic symphonies. Now there's talk that Donna Summer may be jumping labels. But, back to Giorgio.

The score to "Midnight Express" earned Giorgio Moroder the initial surge of recognition he so justly had deserved for some time. Not only was it a milestone for him, but it was Casablanca's only noteworthy success in its Filmworks division. And now, feeling the prestige he's developed, Giorgio has reached another plateau in what beforehand had been a roller-coaster career.

This one will be tough for Giorgio or anyone, for that matter, to top. The recent release of "American Gigolo" and its soundtrack features the composing, playing, and producing talents of Mr. Moroder. Not since "Saturday Night Fever" has a movie soundtrack album caught the fancy of the masses. In the process, Moroder has latched onto, if only temporarily, a working relationship with one of the hottest bands in the world today—Blondie.

What seemed to me as an unlikely match-up (Giorgio Moroder and Deborah Harry) has spawned one of the fastest chart-climbing singles in recent memory, "Call Me."

## WHERE HAVE ALL THE HEAVYWEIGHTS GONE?

This infusion of new talents during long curtain calls of the "old" may or may not be a good thing. For the artist it's apparently a good deal since it seems the longer the time lapse between albums, the more the new album of the big name act is assured of immediate success.

But, what this has created is a tremendous inflow of new, untested talent. "New" in the sense of unknowns and also new in the sense of singers and/or groups attempting and achieving comeback careers!

Witness Dionne Warwick, The Captain and Tennille, J. Geils, Tommy James, Felix Cavaliere, and the like. This aspect of the state of the music business is probably the best thing to happen.

If you look back through the years you'll see it's always one *small thing* that keeps the music ship afloat. And believe it or not, it's the younger generation, the mid to late teens, who dictate what will be—by showing the initial reaction to music product until it becomes an infection among the rest of us.

**By Pat Matthews**

HOW BIG IS

# BIG GAMES?

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target in Peoria, an  
earthquake warning  
goes out in Peking.

**So big:**  
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wrestlers to pull  
the plunger.

**So big:**  
The giant horse-  
shoe kicker had to  
be broken in before  
we could install it.

**So big:**  
The electronic  
jungle sounds can  
start a stampede in  
the nearest zoo.





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quarters  
all over  
the  
street  
on the  
way  
to the

So big:  
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built it.







# BIG GAME

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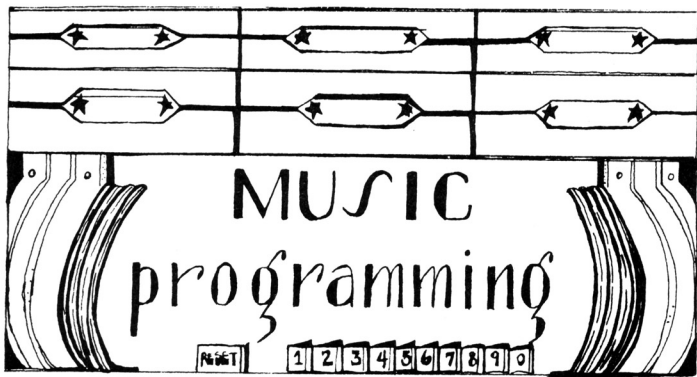
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**By Pat Matthews**

**Program Director  
WQUE New Orleans**

## Some "Used to be's" and "Just coming on's" getting down to it

The mainstream across the board stars are beginning to trickle onto the glossy pages of PLAY METER! This time around we have some "used to be's" and "just coming on's" so let's get down to it.

**INSIDE OF YOU**—Ray, Goodman, & Brown—Polydor PD2077

From an opening that smacks of Beach Boy harmonies to what is becoming a very familiar sound, it's Ray, Goodman & Brown—the Styl-istics of the Eighties with a follow-up to "Special Lady" (picked in PLAY METER two issues ago). So, trust me, this one will prove to be one to get 'em dancin' close together, too. It's more of a song than the now ingratiating "Special Lady". There are nice lyrics, chord changes, finger snaps, and velvet smooth vocals which will insure the hit potential of this record. Eight out of ten or better.

**IT'S A NIGHT FOR BEAUTIFUL GIRLS**—The Fools—EMI American P-8036

Have you ever heard of Ska music? Well, it's a new form of Reggae. It's actually Reggae. It's actually Reggae speeded up. Reggae that anyone can sing. It's sweeping England and is trying to sweep you off your feet. This is a nice song by a good group who opened for The Knack on their U.S. tour. You might like it...there's even a mention of

Betty Grable's legs in the song. Six out of ten.

**A CERTAIN GIRL**—Warren Zevon —Asylum E-46610-A

This one has a leg up on the rest in my eyes. Originally done by New Orleans' own Ernie K. Doe and penned by Allen Toussaint under the pen name Naomi Neville, this number performed by Zevon rocks hard and funky. The repetitive question - and - answer verse adds humor and a nice hook. The lp ("Bad Luck Streak In Dancing School") is doing quite well and may be the impetus to push the single over the hump. Eight out of ten!

**THE GOOD LORD LOVES YOU**—Neil Diamond—Columbia 1-11232

Culled from the very successful "September Morn" lp, it's Neil Diamond addressing the criminals, drunkards, politicians, and unfortunates of the world with the reassuring title refrain. I don't think Neil has been "born again," but the sincerity of what he's singing is evident and comes across. Combine the "message of the lyrics with the texture of Diamond's very familiar voice and I believe we've got a hit here, as mild as it may be. At the very least—seven out of ten.

**DON'T FALL IN LOVE WITH A DREAMER**—Kenny Rogers & Kim Carnes—United Artists UA-X 1345-Y

That's easy for them to say. Easy for Kim Carnes to sing, but not for Kenny. Mr. Rogers sometimes finds it hard to hit the high notes, but he sounds good trying and lately, whatever he does turns to gold. Personally, I like *this* Rogers with female type duet better than his previous outing with Dottie West. It's a beautiful song that both singers interpret extremely well. This one should be the next big triple crossover smash (Pop, MOR, Country) Across the board ten out of ten.

**BREAKDOWN DEAD AHEAD**—Boz Scaggs—Columbia 1-11241

It's been at least four years since this man's ultra-successful "Silk Degrees" lp rode the charts. There was an album since then, but it went pretty much unnoticed. Now we have a new decade, a new lp ("Middle Man", a new hair style for a new, yet old Boz Scaggs. This one follows the success recipe of the "Silk Degrees" style and does it one better. It's "Georgia", "What Can I Say" and "Lowdown" all rolled up in one. Great record and a little more electric than what one might be used to coming from Boz. Ten out of ten.

**FIFTEEN BEERS**—Johnny Paycheck—Epic 9-50863

It's another up-tempo, acoustic, gonna-make-trouble raisin' hell record from Johnny Paycheck. You've heard 'em all before, but you'll love it anyway. Eight out of ten Country.

The records are rated as follows: 10 out of 10 = Top 10 peak; 9 out of 10 = Top 20 peak; 8 out of 10 = Top 30 peak; 7 out of 10 = Top 40 peak; 5 or 6 out of 10 = Somewhere in Top 100; 4 or less = Forget it, loser, break in half.

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## Quoted...

"Arcade revenues are on the increase, and that's because...the technology in the games is just tremendous...And, secondarily, I believe we're seeing a wider acceptance of game centers in malls."  
— Ted Olson, this month's Coinman.

## PLAY METER HOT STUFF

ON THE RADIO—DONNA SUMMER—Casablanca  
ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL—PINK FLOYD—Columbia\*\*  
WORKING MY WAY BACK TO YOU—SPINNERS—Atlantic  
HIM—RUPERT HOLMES—MCA\*\*  
RIDE LIKE THE WIND—CHRISTOPHER CROSS—Warner Brothers\*\*  
CALL ME—BLONDIE—Chrysalis\*\*  
OFF THE WALL—MICHAEL JACKSON—Epic\*\*  
FIRE LAKE—BOB SEGER—Capitol  
BACK ON MY FEET AGAIN—THE BABYS—Chrysalis\*\*  
LOST IN LOVE—AIR SUPPLY—Arista\*\*  
AND THE BEAT GOES ON—THE WHISPERS—Solar  
SEXY EYES—DR. HOOK—Capitol  
TOO HOT—KOOL & THE GANG—DeLite\*\*  
HOW DO I MAKE YOU—LINDA RONSTADT—Asylum\*\*  
SPECIAL LADY—RAY, GOODMAN & BROWN—Polydor\*\*  
CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE—QUEEN—Elektra\*\*  
THREE TIMES IN LOVE—TOMMY JAMES—Millennium\*\*  
HAVEN'T YOU HEARD—PATRICE RUSHEN—Elektra  
WOMAN—FOREIGNER—Atlantic\*\*  
THINK ABOUT ME—FLEETWOOD MAC—Warner Brothers  
DESIRE—ANDY GIBB—RSO  
COME BACK—J. GEILS—EMI America\*\*  
EVEN IT UP—HEART—Epic\*\*  
REFUGEE—TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKS—Backstreet (MCA)  
GIVE IT ALL YOU GOT—CHUCK MANGIONE—A&M  
WITH YOU I'M BORN AGAIN—BILLY PRESTON & STREETA—  
Motown

## PLAY METER PICKIN' & GRINNIN'

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—Columbia\*\*  
I'D LOVE TO LAY YOU DOWN—CONWAY TWITTY—MCA  
MEN—CHARLEY McCLAIN—Epic  
SUGAR DADDY—BELLAMY BROTHERS—Warner/Curb  
LYING TIME AGAIN—MEL TILLIS—Elektra  
ONE OF A KIND—MOE BANDY—Columbia  
A LESSON IN LEAVIN'—DOTTIE WEST—United Artists  
COULDN'T DO NOTHING RIGHT—ROSANNE CASH—Columbia  
HONKY TONK BLUES—CHARLEY PRIDE—RCA  
BENEATH STILL WATERS—EMMY LOU HARRIS—Warner Brothers  
LONGHAIRD COUNTRY BOY—CHARLIE DANIELS BAND—Epic  
PREGNANT AGAIN—LORETTA LYNN—MCA

## PLAY METER FUNKIFIED

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WORKING MY WAY BACK TO YOU—SPINNERS—Atlantic  
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU WANT TO GET UP AND DANCE—The GAP  
BAND—Mercury  
AND THE BEAT GOES ON—THE WHISPERS—Solar  
STOMP—BROTHERS JOHNSON—A&M  
ON THE RADIO—DONNA SUMMER—Casablanca  
WHAT YOU WON'T DO FOR LOVE—NATTALIE COLE & PEABO  
BRYSON—Capitol  
BOUNCE, ROCK, SKATE, ROLL—VAUGHN MASON & CROW—  
Brunswick  
THEME FROM THE BLACK HOLE—PARLIAMENT—Casablanca  
YES I'M READY—TERI DeSARIO—Casablanca  
WHY DO YOU WANNA TREAT ME SO BAD—PRINCE—Wraner  
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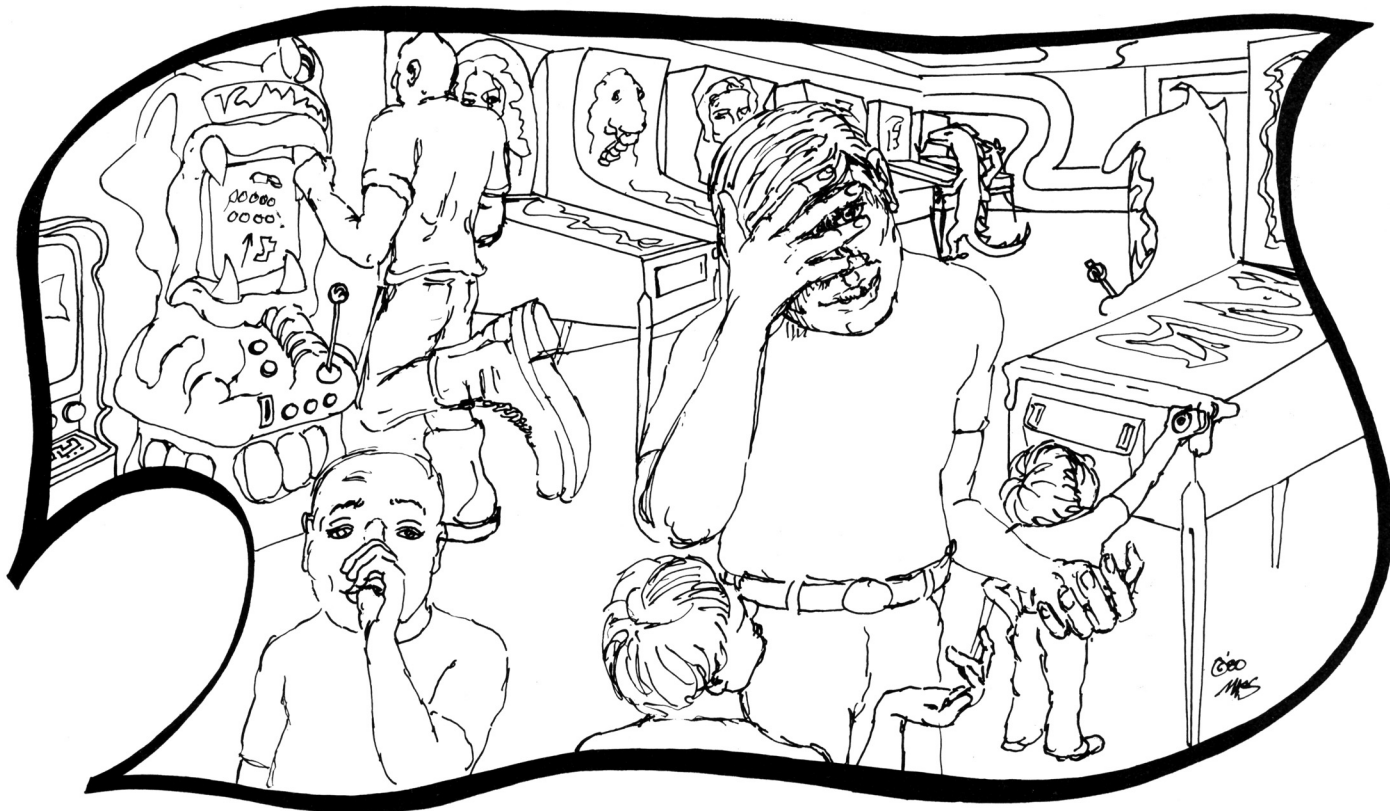
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# Mafia references, kids without quarters, and all the other joys of being an arcade operator

by dick welu



"Why are you kicking my machine?" I asked the earnest young man in the letter jacket and flared nostrils.

"Because it's there," he answered angrily.

"Have you ever considered mountain climbing?" I encouraged as I ushered him to the door and bid him God-speed on his journey back to his mother, whatever genus she might be.

Bartenders get all the good publicity when it comes to conversations with customers, and I would be way out of line to suggest that their reputation is not richly and wetly deserved. However, as the owner/operator of an amusement arcade located within a large regional shopping mall, my education would be grossly stunted if it were not for the on-going dialogue I have engaged in at times with the addicted purveyors of my establishment. (Translation: You wouldn't believe the "bull" I have to put up with.)

In all honesty, most of my

tete-a-tete's are of short duration and resemble a brief encounter of a close kind. How deep a relationship can one develop, after all, when your opening gambit is usually, "Why are you kicking my machine?"

I do sometimes vary this introductory remark by leading with, "Why are you hitting my machine?" Or, "Why are you spitting on my machine?" Or, "Why are you sitting on my machine?" Or, "Why are you tearing pieces off my machine?" And the ever-popular, "Why are you teaching my machine all those dirty words?"

Most of the answers I receive to these questions of narrow range are not half so esoteric as the erstwhile Mt. Everest man mentioned earlier. More common is the omnipresent, street-smart slang cover-all: "I got ripped off." How our language managed to function before the coinage of this trite and tacky expression is beyond my comprehension...but I'd like to find out!

Other frequent rejoinders are:

"The machine ate my quarter." "The quarter's stuck." "We put in two quarters and only got one game." And a simple, "It ain't workin'."

Having lived side by side like a brother with machines, lo, these past six years, I know the odds are better than 4 to 1 that the customer has a legitimate complaint because the weakest, least dependable component yet in most machines is the coin trip switch mechanism which falters more often than an Iranian prime minister. A basic problem remains: coins merrily skip through on their way to the cash box without making the least impression on the circuit board's memory. Two player machines are especially frustrating. You see, without being patronizing, customers are largely ignorant of how a game machine functions, so when they see two coin slots and the instructions requiring two coins, they drop them—both quarters at the same time! (All you arcade operators who can predict the results, raise your right hands. One hundred

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percent. No one will have to stay after to clean erasers.) One credit for two quarters because the coin mech can't record the two impulses simultaneously. Rack up one more, "I got ripped off." The thrill of it all!

Of course, being momentarily suspected of being a thief is preferable to the accusation of making it a profession. A certain old man who cantered around the mall commons every morning as exercise for his heart or something stopped to converse with me as I stood in the entrance to my arcade waiting for the first quarter of the day.

"Quite a place," he said, admiring all the pretty lights and splashes of color.

"Thanks," I said, pride running over my cup.

"Course you're one of them," he said.

"One of what?"

"The Mafia."

"The Mafia!"

"Sure, they run all this stuff."

I thought of my Luxemburg father and my German mother and smiled. "I own this arcade, Sir, and I am definitely not in the Mafia."

"Sure you are," he persisted, "The Mafia owns all these games." And he nodded wisely.

I decided my inquisitor was rowing with one oar and decided to concede his point. I leaned in closely and hissed, "O.K., Gramps, you got me, so you better hit the road before I call my cousin Vito with the garlic breath."

The old fellow blinked, stared bug-eyes, and took off down the mall, probably trying to keep his pacemaker from shorting out.

What's amazing to me is the frequency with which I am asked, "How much money do you make here?" All ages, not just kids but mature adults, who I am sure would greatly resent anyone seeking to know *their* income, feel no inhibition whatsoever to ask, "What do you clear here in a day?" At first surprised, later resentful, I learned to resort to a snappy, witty retort, "That is none of your business." It's not *real* witty, but it is damn effective.

Some customers aren't interested in my money. They like my service—baby sitting type service.

I watched the well-dressed lady sit her two young children—I'd estimate 3 and 4 years old—within the cockpit of my *Starfire* game. I eased over in that direction.

"Now you kids stay here for awhile," she was saying. "I'll be back to get you."

I played it cool. "Can I help you, Ma'am?"

She smiled, "No problem," and prepared to leave.

"You can't leave your kids here," I stopped her.

She was indignant. "Why not?"

"I'm not a babysitter."

She huffed, "This place is full of kids. Mine have just as much right to be here."

"A close look, Ma'am, will reveal to you that with the exception of yours, all these kids have pockets in their pants and are tall enough to reach a coin slot."

She got the point, grabbed her babies, and left. This job wouldn't be bad if it wasn't for the people.

The phone brings some weird conversations too.

Not counting my mother's and



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wife's calls, the real lulus come from the midnight manufacturers. They usually drawl and list some groovy California community as their 10-20.

"Hellooo, Red Baron Amusement?"

"You got it."

"Welllll, this heah is Howard Slickly from All World Games Incorporated in Golden Valley, California. How you all doin' in Iowa?"

"Just great, Howard. What can I do for you?" Beware of Californians with honey in their voice, my mind is saying.

"Well, Red, I'm calling to introduce you to our newest video game, *Space Trash*, that sits on top of a counter or bar, accepts quarters, halves, or Susies, and makes change. You can play any one of three games on it, and it's got a one week guarantee."

"Hard to turn it down. How much?"

"We got a special introductory offer of \$1495 each. As soon as we get our distributor system lined up they're going to sell at \$1695.

"I don't..."

"However, if you buy six or more, you can get them at a quantity price of \$1195.

"I don't think so, Howard."

"Call me, Howie. We're anxious to get a few of these *Space Trash* games in your area so other operators can see them, so if you take one today, \$995."

"No, Howie."

"Got a special deal for you; if you got a brother-in-law with brown hair, \$895...."

I hang up about here. My brother-in law is bald.

Sometimes I call people—on their WATS line, of course.

"Ding Dong Pinball? I'm calling about your new game, *Space Outlaw*."

"What's your problem?"

"Just took it out of the box, set it up, turned it on, and the legs fell off, the lights went out, and the solid-state sound system just keeps groaning."

"Oh..."

"Got any suggestions besides that one?"

"We've been having a little trouble with those. You're gonna have to modify the board a little, clip pin 8 on U10 and solder the blue jumper from U8 to the pink one on U6. Replace the Darlington at E10, check for shorts on the MPU and replace the PROM at G4...and sounds like the sound board is shot."

I usually can't eat for quite awhile after this type of dialogue.

But not all the conversations I suffer are negative. After all, I am in the games business. The young, wide-eyed kids are best:

"Hey, Mister, this place is really neat!"

"This game is decent!"

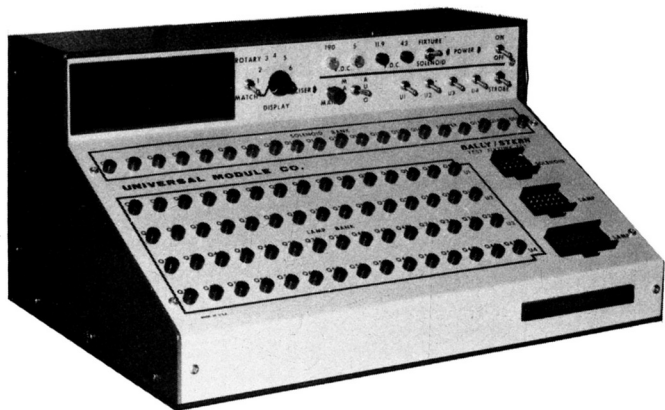
"Give me some more quarters. I'm gonna shoot that sucker if it breaks me."

"I could stay here forever."

"You got the best games in town!"

Which all leads to my favorite conversation of all. The one I have with my banker when I bring bags of quarters through his door on Monday mornings. "Looks like business is good, Dick," he says.

I just smile. It's not a long conversation but it sure is sweet.



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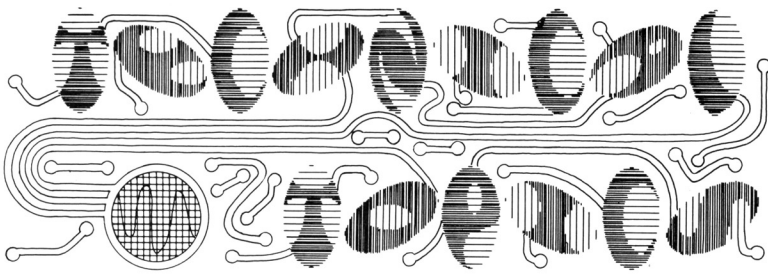
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By Jim Calore

# Ways to root out initial power-up failures

When your Gottlieb game is powered on and the result is no change or something other than what is expected, you have an initial power-up failure.

This problem can be caused by a number of things, and produce any number of symptoms.

To start, power-up problems fall into two categories, game-related and board-related.

The most logical place to begin is the power supply. Using the proper

voltage commons, check for +5 VDC, -12 VDC, and +60 VDC at their pin-outs. (69 VAC used to make the 60 VDC is fused on the bottom board.)

Inspect all connectors for their proper position and a secure connection. Especially important are the control board connectors J1 (power input) and J6 (switch strobes and slam input).

Check the SLAM switches: there are two. One is on the front door and

the other is on the ball-roll assembly. These are *normally closed* switches and must have adequate tension to prevent vibration levels causing them to open.

There are two *normally open* TILT switches on each game. One is on the playboard and the other is the pendulum bob assembly. These switches must be adjusted properly to prevent normal vibration levels causing them to close. Also check that the coin lock-out wireform is not grounded to the coin chute switches.

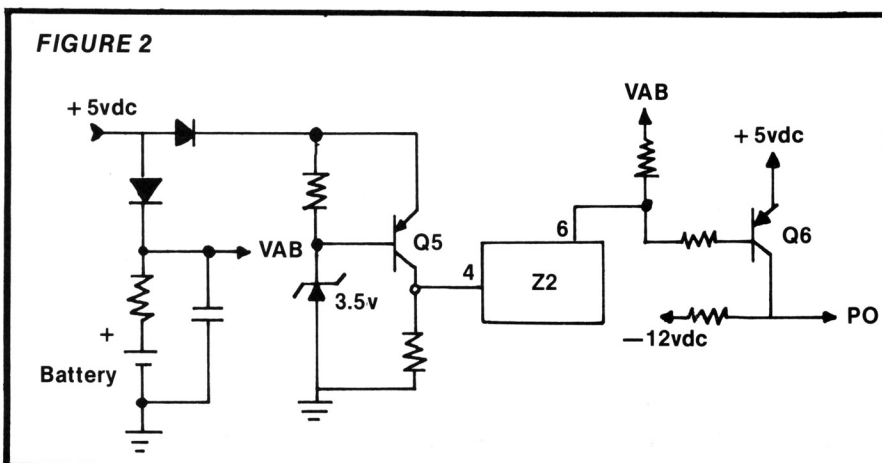
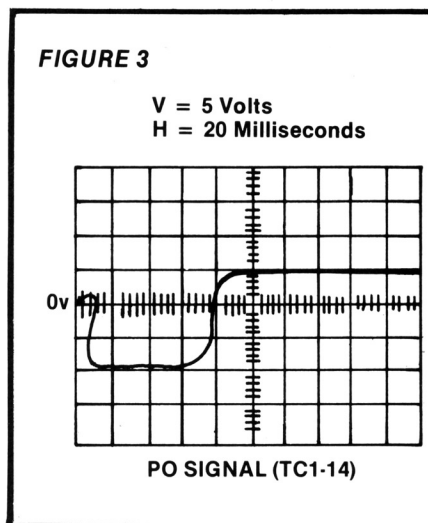
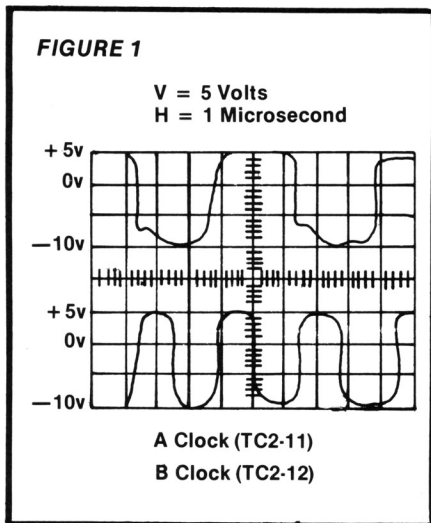
Having made these checks and inspections, we can assume the problem is on the control board. Replacing the suspected control board with a known good control board will confirm this assumption.

With the inoperable control board on a test fixture or ready to be analyzed in the game, turn the power on and verify voltage supply readings  $\pm 5\text{VDC} \pm 5\%$  percent at TC2-14 (\*), -12VDC,  $\pm 5\%$  percent at TC2-15, and also check for 4 VDC  $+0.1\text{ VDC}$  at the positive lead of the NI-CAD battery.

Visually check that test plug TC3 is mounted securely in place. Next check continuity across this plug. (Pin 1 is strapped to pin 14, 2 to 13, 3 to 12, and pin 4 to pin 11. The location on the board is laid out as a 14-pin DIP with the test plug across the first four and last four pins.)

With a scope, look at the lower pin on the crystal: It should be a sine wave 12 volts peak to peak with a period of approximately 0.28 microseconds. U1, the processor, generates the two system clocks, CLK A and CLK B, and these signals can be seen at TC2-11 and TC2-12 respectively. CLOCK A swings from about +5 VDC to -10 VDC for approximately 3 microseconds duration. (Figure 1) CLOCK B, at this time,

(\*) TC1 and TC2 are 15-pin test point strips on the control board.



swings from -10 VDC to +5 VDC for approximately 1 microsecond duration.

Verify 4VDC at pin 4 of Z2 and 0.22 VDC at Z2 pin 6. If these voltages are correct, we can examine the power-on signal (PO) at TC1, pin 14 and the synchronized power-on signal (SPO) at TC2, pin 10.

This PO signal is a product of Z2, a one-shot, triggered by the rise of +5 VDC from the power supply and timed out by the external RC

network. The switching of Q6 is the actual PO signal. (Figure 2)

The power-on signal can be seen at TC1 pin 14, while switching the power from off to on. PO, as seen on a scope, should, at first instant, dip to -10 VDC for a duration of 60 to 80 milliseconds and then rise to +5 VDC. (Figure 3)

The last signal to be checked is the synchronized power-on signal (SPO) generated by the processor, U1. SPO will approximately resemble PO

if the U1 chip is functioning correctly. These checks verify the correct operation of the power-on circuit.

Control board failures past this point will most likely be related to the ADDRESS or DATA busses, or CONTROL lines. The pin-outs for these signals can be found on TC1 and TC2.

—By Jim Calore  
Courtesy of STAR TECH Journal,  
Merchantville, New Jersey

# Troubleshooting Clinic

By Zac Oliver

## Atari Asteroids

*Symptom:* Coin rejector button gets stuck behind acceptor return lever.

*Solution:* Remove "E" washer from reject button and invert it. The wider flat head then will cover sufficient area over the acceptor return lever and it will be quite comfortable for pushing.

*Symptom:* Control push buttons fail to operate.

*Solution:* Replace 10 K ohms resistors R87, R91, R97, and R98 to 480 ohms. Refer to page 22 in the Atari Asteroids manual (TM-143) for PCB resistor location. The resistors are located at coordinates K-11 and M-11 at the main PCB.

This modification provides 10 milliamps to the open blade switches on the control panel. Ten milliamps is required to insure adequate self cleaning on gold-plate switches.

*Note:* On some boards, the resistors mentioned above were replaced by 150 ohms resistors. Atari recommends 470 ohms; however, smaller

values are acceptable. Later production models are already modified.

*Symptom:* Asteroids cash box overflowing with quarters.

*Solution:* Replace cash box with the early Atari pinball cash boxes.

*Subject:* Asteroids monitor picture tube.

To prevent picture tube phosphor burn when switching from self-test to game mode, perform the following modification:

1—Clip and lift Pin 9 of K9

(74LS164).

2—Jumper small gauge wire from lifted Pin 9 to Pin 15 of M10 (74LS259).

*Subject:* Atari back door keys hook. The back door key hook can be repositioned on the door for easier access and to prevent its jamming at door closure. Remove 3/16 inch bottom lock nut from the slam switch assembly and place the hook in that screw. Replace all nuts. Keep one key attached to an inner wall for replacement, in case the other is lost.

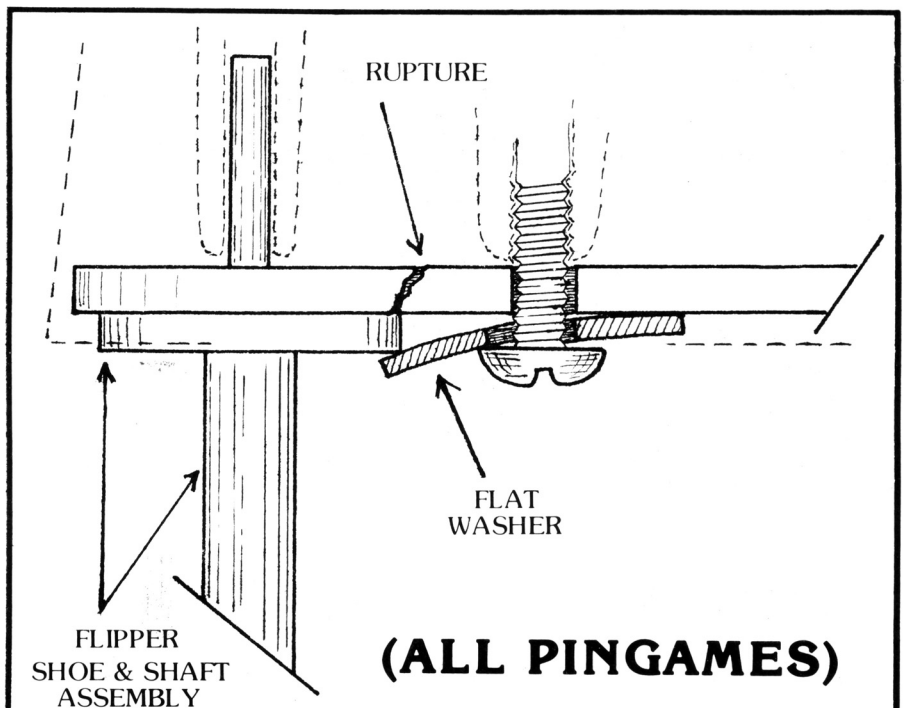
## Stern Meteor

Some Meteor games intermittently will count the bonus down continuously (actually 256 times).

The problem is caused by a defective U1 memory chip. Replace U1 (P21) with the new ROM P21A. If your game has EPROMS at memory locations, a jumper modification is required when replacing U1 with the new PROM or ROM. The EPROM is an IC chip with a transparent window, usually covered by a sticker.

Reconnect jumpers E8 to E9 and E26 to E28.

*Note:* Stern appreciates the return of the Erasable PROM, since they can possibly reuse it. Contact your distributor for parts availability.



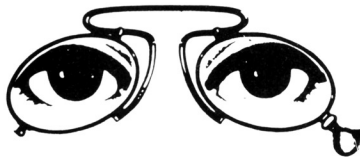
*Symptom:* Broken shoe and shaft on flipper assemblies. *Solution:* Place a flat washer held by the plastic flipper holding screw (Diagram above). The screw, the shaft extension, and the washer will form a bridge supported by the plastic flipper inner protuberances. The flipper bushing extending above the playfield surface will prevent the screw head from binding against the wood. *NOTE:* Such solutions are temporary and are possible depending on the nature of the rupture. Replace part when possible.

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By Roger C. Sharpe

## If the game has a movie tie-in, can you charge movie prices?

The year continues to speed by and with it one can witness the changes being undertaken in the industry. As was noted by this writer some months back, the video surge has taken a great deal of steam out of the sails (and sales) of pinball. But never without hope, the turning point may be rapidly approaching. Not only are this month's batch of machines varied and strong unto themselves, they are also setting the stage for some soon-to-be-released efforts that should set pinball back on the path and once again into the hearts of the players.

Problematically, everyone is waiting for the next breakthroughs. The rumors fly concerning possible takeovers, changing technology and placing greater importance on the unusual and innovative in both design as well as graphic and sound treatments. One of the larger stumbling blocks, however, when viewed in perspective of this election year and the tightening of money, is the effort of some in the industry to raise the price on games to the player.

Coming at a point when amusement centers and game rooms are increasingly having to compete for the entertainment dollar, it is distressing at best to think that pinball games at fifty cents per play for approximately two and a half minutes of fun is up against something like a two hour movie costing only \$3 to \$4. Somewhere the logic is missing and yet the movement seems to be gaining momentum—unfortunately pricing itself out of the reach of the major

market—teens. Admittedly the increase is necessary on some vague level but the repercussions trouble me.

Anyway, whatever the price of games to operators or players, there are some notable machines at hand that might just begin the switch back to the steel ball. And, no matter how you react to these games, they'll be the ones you'll be seeing this spring and summer—so for pinball's sake, let's hope for the best.

### Gottlieb's SPIDERMAN

Well, here it is—the premier game in this company's new "Star Series 80." And with a new system to boot, Gottlieb is sure to snare some players in its web.

PLAYFIELD: An improvement on the "squat body" format, *The Amazing Spiderman* begins the playfield action with two lanes on the top right (A-B), a rollover button and some kicking rubbers and a left side set up of three kick-out holes (1-2-3). Move down, and there's a center target at the middle and two thumper bumpers just below. At the right is a bank of five drop targets and a lane behind. The left offers a spinner lane and a central bank of three drop targets. While moving down this left side one finds a short lane and frontal target plus a flipper. The bottom finishes off the action with a one-flipper left side and a double-flipper right side built around a conventional wire lane and form.

ANALYSIS: The new playfield size has been incorporated extremely

well for shooting angles from any of the four flippers and also utilizes memory and recall for the first time by Gottlieb. Dimensionally, this size as well as Stern's *Big Game* takes pinball design into a different and more realistic realm than was the case with the old Atari size.

The action here is locked into the drop targets on the right for building up bonus multiplier as spotted by the green light in front of the appropriate target. Get the top three kick-out holes and there's a step up in the drop targets for more than one multiplier at a time, up to a possible five-times bonus. Get the whole bank and the three drop target bank increases to a potential extra ball and the play goes from there.

A countdown bonus at 20,000 no matter the multiplier is tied into the number 2 kick-out hole and getting A and B lanes lights values in lanes for multiplier as well as increased bonus values.

The play is smooth with good reverses possible and long shots from any of the flippers as well as decent rebounding capabilities. Scoring and special values can come frequently by maximizing the targets and the kick-out holes with more than enough good shot selections to keep the good players playing.

GRAPHICS: True to Marvel comics, "Amazing Spiderman" is just super and translates well in presentation and technique for the pinball medium. Old G. M. has done himself proud on this one by remaining faithful to the theme and offering up

### Roger's Ratings At-A-Glance

Gottlieb's SPIDERMAN.....	###1/2	Bally's SILVERBALL MANIA.....	##3/4
Stern's BIG GAME.....	###	Game Plan's CONEY ISLAND.....	##1/2

an exciting combination of bright colors that capture the eye.

**PLAY:** *Spiderman* is a good three-ball game, although I have a hunch it would be even better in the old five-ball format, but that's another story. So for three-ball play in extra ball areas, try a 200,000-point start and follow it with 350,000 and 500,000 point limits. On free play you'll probably want to add about 100,000 points to each of those levels, depending on the caliber of play in your location.

**PROS & CONS:** What can I say about *Spiderman*? I like it and yet I've heard some differing opinions about it being too hard, too easy, too slow, not having enough shots or excitement, and various other reactions. For my money it's the best effort from this company since the days of *Sinbad* and the shape of the game is a definite improvement on the old "squat body." There are some problems with power from the tips of the flippers, but for the most part everything is accessible from any of the flippers. Most particularly appealing is the chance to get into the flow of the game and make some good, solid shots, especially for the unskilled player looking for a fair game to play.

The total package is great to look at, including the silver cabinet and it's a shame that the sound doesn't have the volume potential to compete with other games in a noisy location, even with the speaker being above the glass on the head of the machine. My distress is in the rumors that Gottlieb has decided to stop making conventional-size pins, as I write this. (Hold onto your *Torch* machines—they'll be collectibles if this rumor proves correct.) I feel this would be a grave mistake at this juncture of pinball development and far too radical for this conservative manufacturer. I only hope they reconsider this reputed decision, no matter how strong their upcoming pieces appear to be.

Finally, it is reassuring to see Gottlieb forging ahead and trying a new system that offers increased capabilities in the use of memory and recall. Definitely on the way back, *Spiderman* paves the road nicely with a complete package that should get them back into the mainstream.

**RATING:** ###1/2

### **Stern's BIG GAME**

The game that debuted in Chicago at the AMOA and showed what the future of larger sized games should be, is finally at hand and drawing rave reviews from almost everyone out in the real world, and with good reason.

**PLAYFIELD:** The top of *Big*

*Game* starts with three lanes (B-I-G) and leads down to a three-thumper bumper area that's flanked on the left by three drop targets (1-2-3) and another three drop target bank on the right (4-5-6-). Behind the right side targets is a three rollover button passageway and behind the drop target bank on the left is a short loop spinner lane. Move over a bit and a longer spinner lane with an added kick-out hole gets the ball back to the top of the field. At the center of the board on the far right side is yet another three drop target bank (7-8-9) while for balance the left side offers two targets and a short lane flush against the cabinet. The bottom is a wire lane and kicker conventional bottom with a nice touch regarding the double set of flippers—the wire form leads down behind the bottom flipper so that the ball can't go between the flippers and down the outhole.

**ANALYSIS:** There is so much here that it's hard to decide where to start. The scoring is "so big" to coin a phrase from the Stern playbook, with its seven-digit displays. But it's needed on a game that has infinite play possibilities when it comes to gathering points. The whole premise is to fill in the three "bingo" type numbered cards in the middle of the field (X-Y-Z) which light randomly depending upon where the ball hits on the playfield, which of the numbered drop targets are hot down, and whether the appropriate card is lit. But even without the card, there's a whole 'nother game in *Big Game* which has to do with spelling out the name of the machine and sending a ball into the left side spinner at 2,000 points a crack, with a possible 5,000 points for each letter and a potential 35,000 points for the kick-out hole when lit.

Add it up and one good timed shot can mean upwards of 100,000 points—which ain't hay, even for *Big Game*. The shots offered are swift and angular from the flippers to the targets directly with reverses or up through the thumper bumpers, or even around the little alleyways and passages around the backs of the top target banks.

And a nice Harry Williams touch is the last ball in play value with an increase of 5,000 points for each completed line in the cards, which get those point totals into the stratosphere, not discounting the 2X or 3X values that accrue from getting the numbers lit on the cards. A 27,000-point reserve bonus, which when totaled on 3X gets you to 81,000 points, has the cards staying alive even after completed—and utilizes the memory and recall in this game for a good, building continua-

tion of play throughout.

It's all integrated, smooth playing, and topped by some super sounds that tie in nicely with the theme of the big hunt for the big game player.

**GRAPHICS:** Powerful. Pure and simple. Nothing fancy, just the ominous look of a tiger staring out at the passerby from the protection of green foliage. In fact, green in the predominant color on *Big Game* and should help allay any fears that this might be a "jinxed" color for pinball. It works and the playfield picks up the motif and carries it off without taking away from the action.

**PLAY:** Once again, remember that we're talking about seven-digit action here, as well as gonzo points on the last ball in play and some prettv heftv spinner shot possibilities.

On three-ball extra play, try a 300,000-point start and follow it with 650,000 and 990,000 point limits. For free play you'll probably have to branch into seven figures unless you want to limit the number of free plays to two, so try a 100,000 to 150,000-point increase to each limit and see how the players acclimate to it.

**PROS & CONS:** *Big Game* is a gem of a machine that offers some interesting play action, strong graphics, and compatible sounds with more than adequate volume. The size is a saving grace that doesn't make the player's arm weary and also eliminates the need for useless bottoms found on the majority of squat body machines. Also, Stern seems to have solved some of their mechanical problems, particularly in the flippers with power to all areas of the machine well within reach.

The only weak point, if you can call it that, is that left-to-right and right-to-left shots from the flippers are difficult for the top drop target banks due to the placement of the thumper bumpers. But from rebounds off the bumpers reverses from the flippers, everything is accessible. The bottom metal guide rail over the interior and out lanes tends to deaden the ball, but all in all the layout of features makes this an excellent shooter's game that has its own strategies and subtleties.

**RATING** ####

### **Bally's SILVERBALL MANIA**

The new generation of Bally pins begins to come in view with this most recent effort that adds sound and graphic appeal with some interesting design.

**PLAYFIELD:** The action begins with three lanes at top and four pop bumpers. Move down and there are four yellow targets (S-I-L-V) and a triangular spread of three thumper bumpers. This is the top of the game and leads down to a middle

horseshoe with rollovers in mid field that hold out bonus multiplier and also offer a center target (N). At either side are spinners with the right one providing a way to get back to the top of the machine. At the left side of the machine are three more targets (E-R-B) while the right side also has three targets (A-L-L), before one gets down to the bottom with a bit of a difference. The wire form and flipper setup offers targets (A-I) with the exterior lanes offering two more (M-A) and leads down to a lower wire form and center kick-back kicker that shoots the ball back to the playfield when lit and drains when it isn't.

**ANALYSIS:** If one remembers Williams' *Miss-O* or even *Spanish Eyes* you might find some similarities with the center hoop and even the top lane and pop bumper treatment. But discounting this, *Silverball Mania* isn't too bad a game although much of the focus is on that center area with its value for bonus multiplier as well as the spotting of a letter to build up Wizard Bonus, Super Bonus, and the Silverball Mania Special. In fact, all a player has to do on this game is wait on the flipper and shoot for the middle.

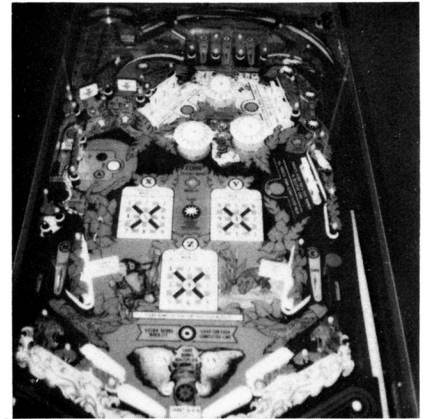
The top has some decent rebounding from thumper bumpers but softens up on the sides and for the roll down through the spinners. With the bottom and middle of the field, side-to-side action either from the flippers or from the kickers offers some fair play. However, the bottom has problems with its narrow pins leading down to the lower wire form to the kicker. It effectively shortens the playfield and the play when the kicker isn't on. Holdover and memory in the letters makes this an adequate interim game for Bally with the saving grace being in the total package.

**GRAPHICS:** This signature game by Kevin is an exceptional pinball fantasy that offers much on the playfield as well as the backglass—where, however, some of the things do get washed out with the heavy predominance of black. But it is a beautiful piece of work that is both striking to the eye and in keeping with the style Bally has successfully championed over the years.

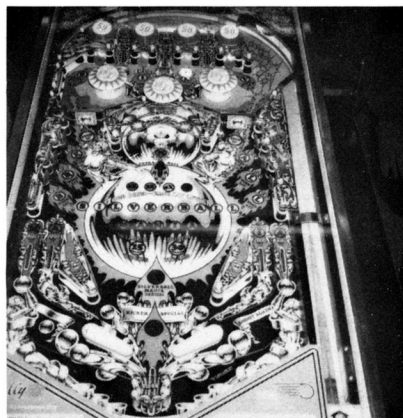
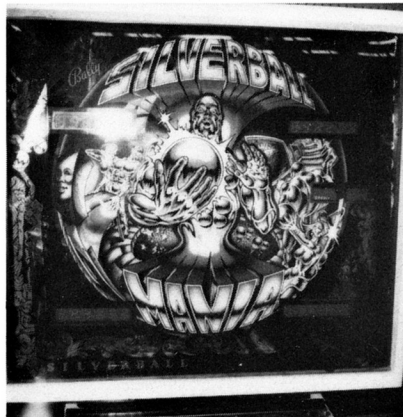
**PLAY:** *Silverball Mania* is a build-up game simply stated. The whole basis for play is in gaining letters and spelling out the name in order to capitalize on any multiple values. On three-ball free play areas try a 300,000 start and follow it with a 600,000 and 900,000 point levels only because the extra ball is so easy to get. On extra ball you'll probably be safe lowering each of these limits by 100,000 points.



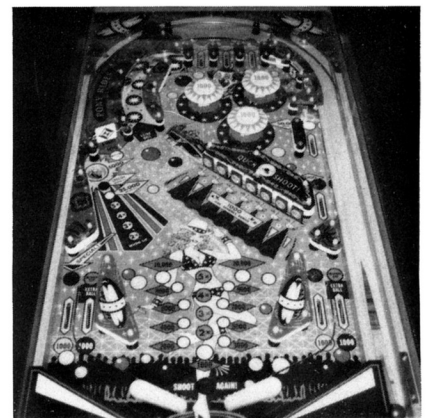
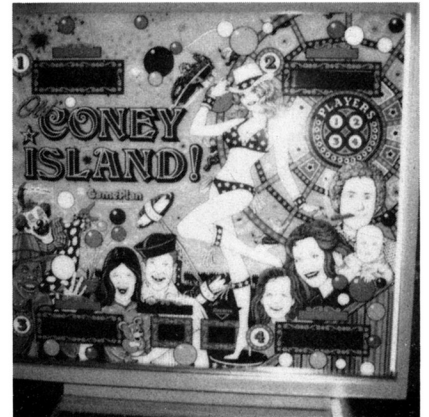
Gottlieb's SPIDERMAN



Stern's BIG GAME



Bally's SILVERBALL MANIA



Game Plan's CONEY ISLAND

**PROS & CONS:** There is a feeling of confinement on the playfield only because everything is so close to the flippers. Cosmetically—in sounds and graphics—the game makes it, but from the sense of play, with the center being what it is, it takes away from the whole effort. Average players should find it gratifying to go for the middle and not get burned, while the skilled player may be at a loss for expanding his shot capabilities.

Admittedly, *Silverball Mania* is an improvement over *Dolly* and *Ground Shaker*, but it should be viewed as a stepping stone for better things to come, rather than a concrete indica-

tion of where Bally has finally settled.

**RATING:** ##3/4

### Game Plan's CONEY ISLAND

The follow-up to *Sharpshooter* comes into view with a throwback in graphics and theme and even some similarities to its predecessor.

**PLAYFIELD:** The action begins with three lanes (C-O-N) and leads down to a three thumper bumper area that's flanked by two targets on the right side and an elongated rollover button lane on the left side that has access from the top or bottom. On the far left is a spinner lane for getting back to the top while the right side offers an angled bank of

seven drop targets (I-S-L-A-N-D-I!), with a setting of a post and two rollover wires on the right side (50,000 points and E). Move back over to the right side and a kick-out hole is placed just below the spinner for bonus multiplier values and specials. The bottom is a conventional wire lane and flipper set up and controls the "Y" and extra ball and special values.

**ANALYSIS:** The plan on *Coney Island* isn't too bad with a balance of shots on both sides. As in *Sharpshooter*, the idea is to spell out the lanes and letters for extra ball possibilities while the drop targets mean increased multiplier values along with the kick-out hole.

The flip flop of features doesn't lose too much in the way of rebounding due to the left side kicking rubbers, although the game is a quick machine to play. The top thumper bumpers are alive for getting the ball back through the top lanes or over to the side for copping the 50,000 and a letter, while the flippers supply most of the work and the appeal of a close-set drop targets for shooters.

**GRAPHICS:** The problem here has to do more with color than theme, although artistically, the style doesn't come across as strongly as it might, compared to what's out in the market. Sound effects help a great deal, with some new ones added, but the visual appeal of *Coney Island* doesn't necessarily translate with today's player.

**PLAY:** Once again a million light shows up and helps for scoring that can reach beyond the six available digits. On three-ball extra play try a 180,000-point first limit and follow it with 360,000 and 600,000 points. On free play you might want to increase this by about 100,000 points each—depending, once again, on the players and the percentage of the machine.

**PROS & CONS:** Most manufacturers borrow from their own games and reuse particular features, whether it's in-line targets, the placement of lanes, targets, spinners, or other playfield components. The problem with a new company is that everyone seems more critical and ready to jump down its throat, as with Game Plan because they tried to utilize some of the same things over again.

Players, on the other hand, don't mind—or don't remember *Sharpshooter* and, in fact, much of the play is different although the build-ups are the same. The weakness has more to do with the graphics and how out-of-synch it is with what's around.

**RATING:** ##1/2

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# Rescuing Neil Armstrong

Taito's new *Lunar Rescue* is space adventure in full color and sound.

You are in space and must rescue six victims and bring them back to the mother ship. But meteors and enemy aliens stand between you and the victims and you must dodge and shoot your way through.

You must make six landings and six rescues. Points are scored when docking/rescue is finished. One ship will be added when 3,000 points are scored. If you make the six landings, rescue and fuel points are added.

The one- or two-player games have the dimensions: Upright—height, 68 inches; depth, 35 in.; and width, 24 in.; Table—height, 24 to 28 inches; depth, 22 in.; and width, 34 in.



# 'Tiger, Tiger burning bright'

Stern Electronics, Inc. scheduled early spring production of *Big Game*, the company's latest solid-state four-player pinball machine and its first entry in the wide-body pinball market.

*Big Game* will feature exciting playfield action synchronized with exotic, electronic sounds of the jungle—creating an audio soundtrack "so big...it can start a stampede at the nearest zoo," the manufacturer boasted.

Measuring 23 7/8 inches by 45 inches, *Big Game* was designed by pinball pioneer Harry Williams. Vivid wild-creature art on backglass and playfield reinforces *Big Game's* colorful jungle theme.

Stern says features of the game include: the first wide-body pinball game to let the score roll into the millions; "the first wide-body game with the feel and comfort of standard-sized games;" and the first wide body that easily fits through a doorway.



# Nostromo under attack

*Moon Alien* is an insidious attack by the devils of outer space, unleashing a deadly barrage of missiles. The defender with the Nostromo ship dodges bombs to intercept the aliens.

In the one- or two-player *Moon Alien* game, one additional Nostromo spacecraft is added whenever a predetermined score is attained (maximum score is 999,990).

Coins can be deposited in bulk, up to a total of nine games. The number of credits remaining is indicated at the bottom left of the screen.

Fueling is crucial to the game, also—when the gauge runs out, the player's Nostromo ship blows up.

*Moon Alien* is a Nichibutsu game imported by I.J.S. of Fort Worth, Texas.





## Surface lock

Abloy Security Locks has introduced the *Super-Stopper*, a jimmy-proof, surface-mounted lock which resists most types of forced entry. Several of the design features on this new lock make it most likely the safest, surface-mounted security lock ever developed.

A hardened steel protective cylinder cover shields the rotating detainer disc-type locking mechanism. The *Super-Stopper*, which fastens to itself through the door, has concealed steel locking screws which hold the unit in place.

Extra protection is added by a steel plate which covers the indoor portion of this unit. The locking bolt interlocks the door and frame.

*Super-Stopper* features Abloy's unique rotating disc-type cylinder, similar to the lock on a safe. There are over 350 million possible combinations. Unlike conventional spring-loaded, pin-type cylinders which easily wear out, the Abloy cylinder lasts through years of use and outdoor exposure. Cold and moisture do not affect the operation of *Super-Stopper*.

*Super-Stopper* is packaged with all necessary assembly hardware, detailed installation instructions, and two hard-to-copy keys. Because the *Super-Stopper* has no latch knob, a key is the only way to activate the locking mechanism.

## Outer space fuel crisis

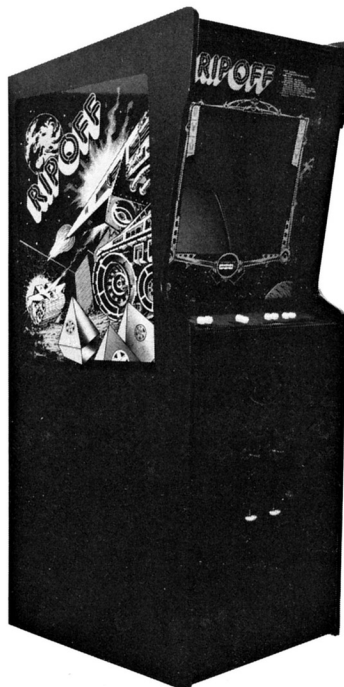
*Rip Off* is a one or two player space action video game from Cinematronics.

Like Cinematronics' *Starhawk* and *Space Wars*, the new *Rip Off* is an outer space shooting game. Players score points by shooting aliens who come from all sides to attack, and then run away from the fray with your precious fuel canisters.

The object is to destroy the aliens before they destroy you and steal your fuel. How long you play depends on skill in shooting aliens—because the more you shoot, the "smarter" and faster they become.

In the two player version, the game play is the same, so that the two players may compete or play as a team. Playing as a team, they can attack from different formations or set up ambushes. When competing, it's every man for himself. Both individual and team scores are displayed.

*Rip Off* is available for the summer season and features Cinematronics' Vectorbeam monitor.



## Everyone loves a circus

"With the arcade season soon to be in full swing and carnivals and circus road shows proliferating all around the country, this is a theme whose time has come," said D. Gottlieb's Executive Vice President Alvin Gottlieb. Gottlieb's *Circus* will be on display in distributor showrooms in time for this season, according to General Sales Manager Jack Mittel.

*Circus* is the first wide body of Gottlieb's new "Decade of Stars" which features System 80, the new versatile solid state system as well as ear-level sound projection, powerful pop-bumper action, sparkling art, expanded fifteen-step bookkeeping and other innovations, continued the firm's exec V.P.

With a personality of its own, *Circus* is also a first cousin of Gottlieb's successful *Genie* with its game-within-a-game concept. The carnival-theme art, circus-like sound and generally festive mode of the game inspire immediate action on location, said product literature.

Hitting the four top rollovers or center roto-target numbers lights corresponding drop targets for additional score. Hitting the center roto target star scores 5,000 points, lights all four drop targets and scores extra ball and/or special features when lit.

Said Alvin Gottlieb: "It's Spring and that's when everybody loves the circus, and so will location owners and operators when they see, hear and play Gottlieb's *Circus*."

# Galaxian defender

Midway's *Galaxian* is a space battle video game that features attacking alien units and flagships that swoop down toward defenders who must fight back without the aid of barricades.

*Galaxian* is a one- or two-player game available in an upright or cocktail table model. The player, controlling the *Galaxian* defenders of the Earth, must destroy a convoy of aliens that are bent on annihilating him. The defender ship moves freely across the bottom of screen, firing missiles at aliens. He must shoot down not only alien army regulars, but also outmaneuver and destroy enemy fighter escort ships that peel off from the main body of the alien squadron at random.

Points are scored for hitting alien flagships and alien army regulars in colors of red, purple, and green. Bonus points are scored for hitting attacking aliens, lone flagships, or flagships with escorts.

*Galaxian* is engineered by Namco Ltd. and licensed for manufacture and distribution by Midway in the United States.



## Interstellar combat

Interstellar warfare has been joined by Data East Corporation with *Astro Fighter*.

The video game's action leads up to confrontation with "the master," a creature in space which has sent squadrons of attacking vehicles and meteorites to destroy you or be destroyed.

This advanced stage of the game—in which the "master" on the screen must be carefully attacked—requires a player's refueling in space in order to return to the beginning of play, dodging meteorites.

At top of the play screen is the player's rocket fuel gauge. Since he needs to destroy five sets of the enemy before he can refuel, the fuel indicator must be carefully watched as the action of play proceeds.

*Astro Fighter* is a current hit in Japan, according to the manufacturer, Deco (Data East). The game is currently under license to Gremlin for U.S. sales and to Video Games for Germany and Zaccaria for Italy.



## Soccer made in Sunnyvale

Atari, Inc., has released Atari Soccer in limited quantities to distributors in the United States.

In an announcement, Frank Ballouz, Atari marketing director, said: "Atari Soccer has been thoroughly tested and refined in European markets, as well as tested very well in various U.S. markets. We feel the game is now ready for introduction in the U.S."

Atari Soccer simulates the realism and play action of an actual game. Exclusive Atari Trak-Ball controls allow instant movement and control of key players in any direction.

The game can be played by either two or four players. In the four-player game, each player controls two men and cooperation between teammates is possible. The two-player version allows each player one controllable man.

There are a variety of options to challenge players, including Kick/Pass and Offsides. And operator options include Add-A-Coin continuous play, adjustable game times, coinage, and languages.





## Another 'Space Invaders' video

"The premier introduction of Midway's *Deluxe Space Invaders* cocktail model with its large 19-inch monitor 'flip-flap' screen for one or two players, was immediately met with unusual and excited demand by operators," reported Stan Jarocki, Midway's vice president of marketing. "They have recognized the expanded market possibilities for added and newer locations with these type of units."

Both the upright and cocktail table *Deluxe* models incorporate the fundamentals of the original *Space Invaders* video game with new colorful screen patterns, new action and new features to test the skill of players.

New variations include increased invader fire power; invaders randomly dropped into action by UFO; and some invaders split into two units when hit. There's a *Deluxe* bonus scoring system and high scorer's name registration feature added. When score reaches 1,500 points (adjustable), a bonus laser base appears with a beep sound.

If the last invader remaining on the screen is in the bottom row, left corner, a hit at this point is worth 1,000 points. If the last invader hit is in the bottom row, middle position, 800 bonus points are scored. If the last invader hit is in any one of the bottom two rows, other than the positions listed above, there is a bonus score of 500 points.

Striking color contrasts have also been added on Midway's *Deluxe Space Invaders* games: Score line and player No. 1 and No. 2 points are featured in glowing red letters. The invaders are brilliant yellow and the fortresses and laser positions are a vivid green. Laser shots change from green to yellow with explosive hits.



## ... And now a 'Space Invaders' pinball

*Space Invaders*...the pinball. It may need a warning label: This pingame can hypnotize the unwary.

Bally Pinball Division calls *Space Invaders* features "one step beyond." The package of mesmerizing effects include marquee-like lighting on the backglass, combined with an accelerating "heartbeat" and laser-like sound.

A Bally spokesman said, "Players will be able to judge another player's ability from across the room as they watch the light pattern change and listen to the sounds and 'heartbeat' as they accelerate."

The playfield presents excitement as much as the special effects do. Four flippers with sound effects provide control over the "supersized" playfield. Five red invader targets advance a 20-40-60,000 bonus and increase the "heartbeat" rate as well as changing the light pattern sequence on the backglass.

Five blue invader rollovers light the center rollover to score the "clone chamber" value and the extra ball rollovers. They also light the center target arrow for 5,000 points and three bonus advances.

The trapped-ball clone chamber has memory and scores 20,000 to 50,000 points with a countdown effect each time the value registers. The bonus can be multiplied from 2X through 5X via the center hoop, along with points and bonus advances.

Other features of *Space Invaders*, the pingame, include a set of drop targets, the value of which increases from 10 to 15, 20-25,000 and special; and a center hoop which multiplies the bonus and then awards 25,000 points and special.

One new feature is a single drop target guarding the free ball gate that, when open, allows the player to shoot over and collect the bonus. This "mystery ship target" has a special siren that randomly signals a quick jump in value from 500 to 50,000 points.

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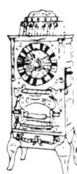
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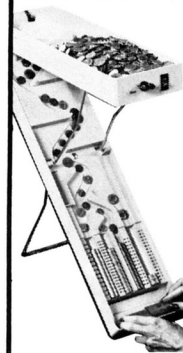
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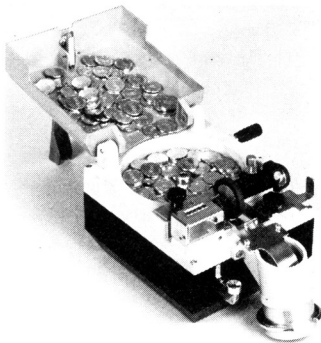
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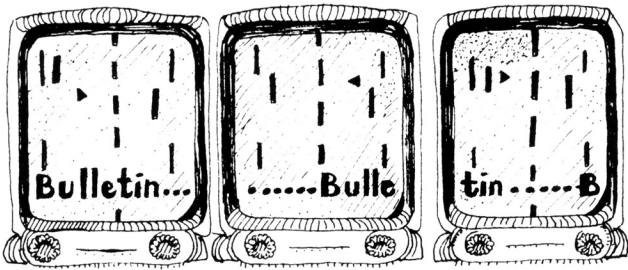
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## NEWS BRIEFS

.....The opening days of spring gave PLAY METER's first ever Amusement Operators Expo a warm reception in New Orleans March 20-22. New games for the year debuted, and some trends for the new decade were indicated. Attendance was marked from a wide area of the United States, Canada, and abroad.

Fifty-five exhibits occupied 140 booths in the Imperial Ballroom of the elegant Fairmont Hotel. Each pinball manufacturer took the wraps off a new game, including Williams with Firepower; Stern with Ali; Gottlieb, Circus; Game Plan, Super Nova; and Bally, Space Invaders.

Top videos at the show were headlined by Rip Off by Cinematronics-- as well as Astro Fighter by Data East (licensed to Gremlin in the upright configuration), Universal's Cosmic Alien, Exidy's Bandido, and Taito's Lunar Rescue.

"It was an operators' show, which was our aim," said PLAY METER Editor and Publisher Ralph C. Lally II. Interest in seminar sessions, he noted, was very high.

A total of 400 operators took advantage of the seminar program that was offered. Topics of high interest included depreciation, negotiating commissions, business forms and record keeping, shopping center leasing, marketing tactics for the arcade operator, technical trouble shooting, token operations, business methods, and promotional ideas.

Lally announced that the AMusement Operators Expo for next year will again be staged in New Orleans because, as he said, "the response of attendees to the show was overwhelmingly in favor of returning to this city for the next show.".....

.....Unconfirmed reports indicate ASCAP has set down en masse on jukebox operators in the Midwest. According to at least source, several operators who are not in compliance with the existing jukebox copyright law have been hit with large lawsuits.....

.....A measure has been introduced in the state of New York to allow cities "having a population of one million or more" the privilege of taxing coin-operated amusement devices \$250 per year per machine.....

.....Maine voters in a statewide referendum March 10 rejected the use of electronic slot machines in bars and clubs to benefit charitable groups. The vote upheld a ban passed in 1979 by the legislature.

.....A three percent price increase on Atari's Asteroids went into effect February 22. The reason for the price increase, according to Atari officials, was because of "price increases at the supplier level.".....

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