

ACE

MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

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- CPC ■ SPECTRUM ■ PC
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game technology...

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

A PC ENGINE FOR BRITAIN

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



RED *hot* TAPE

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

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

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





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THE SECRET'S OUT27

While NEC offers, Kasei offers, Tapes still, and Nintendo still, a small British company has produced a proper 3D version of the classic NEC PC Engine. It's unaffiliated, unofficial, but available -- and it works a lot better than any other and we're keen to date. Back to some careful re-voicing...



RED HOT TAPE35

Who is taking the Grand? And why is so much attention being lavished by games technologists on the humble VCR? John Cook reveals the secrets of System II interactive video and explains how new developments could get Walt Disney and Conventions faced up.

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Confidential Circuit leading the pack!

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David Braden, author of *Elite* and *Zorch*, and Britain's most respected programmer, grants a rare interview to Eugene Leung. New technology, new directors...and *Elite Two*.

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Have you ever wondered which game really tops the reviewers' charts?

THE FINAL VERDICT

This month ACE introduces a brand-new section that gives readers the ultimate information about the games we play and the companies who produce them. Every month, you can turn to The Final Score section in the Plus Pages and discover:

- how every title reviewed that month by any reputable game magazine has scored overall;
- which software houses are currently at the top of the games league; and which games are No. 1 for each machine;
- PLUS-how you can win some great prizes!



Which magazine's Game of the month?

PSYGNOSIS

Psygnosis are offering five lucky AmigaST owners the chance

to

GAMEPLAY 2000

Right at this very moment in the City, huge fortunes are changing place not over oil, or transport, or gold, but over the rights (they're called 'intellectual property rights') to the great names in entertainment. If you have the right, for example, to exploit Michael Jackson's music, you're a very rich man indeed. But by the year 2000 all the conversion outlets for these rights will have been exhausted. You'll have seen the film, read the book, scratched the LP, lost the musical-cassette, bought the CD, and borrowed the video. There's only one other outlet left for the big boys to make money out of: computer games. And believe us, there are some very powerful people getting very excited right now about about computer entertainment. Watch this space...for the next twenty years.



RAINBOW WARRIOR – the most important launch of 1989?

GAMEPLAY

SCREEN TEST.....41

Find out what happens when the team that programmed *Falcon* power up a Corvette and team across San Francisco in full vector-graphic glory; the result is *Wings* and a 525 ACE Rating. And don't miss *Day of the River*, *Batman*, and the *Populous* / *Promised Lands* duk either...

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

SPECIAL!

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

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

ACE NEWS

SAM COMES OUT AT LAST!



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

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

SAM is proud to bring an 8-bit machine, while most of the machines introduced (excepted) launched over recent years have been based around 16-bit micro-processors. SAM also has the ever-popular Z80 processor which runs at a tidy 4 megahertz. The choice of processor is not really surprising since one of SAM's main assets is its Spectrum compatibility.

Because the SAM should quite happily run most existing 45k Spectrum software, there is already a huge range of ready to run games available for the machine, making it a good approach path for existing Spectrum owners.

SAM also boasts a superior BASIC, written by Dr. Andy Wright, author of Beta BASIC, as well as 250k RAM (upgradable to 512k), and 4 channels, stereo sound, in addition to the standard Spectrum screen mode, SAM has three other modes, going up to 417 x 152 pixel resolution in four colours from a palette of 128. There is also a

lower resolution 256 x 152 pixel mode which allows 16 colours on screen at once.

The machine also supports a mouse, lightpen, and lightgun, parallel or serial printer, MBI, and one or two 2.5 inch disk drives, in addition to a standard cassette deck.

Staying by the specification we have laid, SAM is undoubtedly a very nice machine. It sounds better than the ST (not hard to achieve admittedly), and faster disk drives than both the ST or Amiga. But despite this the question still remains as to whether an 8-bit machine can compete in a market that is now dominated by more powerful 16-bit machines.

It is entirely possible that SAM will attract Spectrum owners who have yet to upgrade, but, in the long term, MGI will have to aim the support of most of the major software developers if its smart new machine is to survive. Further details from Miles/Gordon Technology on 0292 726120.



SAM the cartoon character

RIDE OF THE FUTURE



Artist's Impression

Innovative US company that Disney is utilizing cutting edge computer graphics and simulator technologies in Body Wars, the latest attraction at the Walt Disney World

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

AMIGA IS TV STAR IN DENMARK

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

So, I hear you say, what is so amazing about that? Well, what makes Oswald a little different from the average Amiga game is that it is played on Saturday nights on National TV and viewed by thousands of people. Unlike most game shows, the players do not even have to be at the studio; the highest on an ordinary push-button phone is used in place of the joystick. The computer at the television station interprets the tones sent by the players phone and converts them into movements. Obviously this won't work if you have a dialtone but any rate you'll have to be pretty quick with the wds to keep up with me!

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

course the real focus for Danish Game addicts is the opportunity to have their skills admired by television viewers nationwide. But there's for joyous waltzes though...

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

Television games like Oswald The Polar Bear and Multi-User Games like RUD and Shades are pointing the way towards more social computer entertainment than the present dominant mode.

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



Oswald - Denmark's latest TV Star!

LOGOTRON WRIGHT OFF

Michael Heyward, the former Managing Director of Logotron, has bought the recreation division of the company. The new operation will go under the name Logotron Entertainment Limited but will be totally independent. The new company also has rights to the entire range of existing Logotron games. These include *Star*, (one of the first games to receive an ACE 900+ rating), *Starway*, and most recently, *Archivage*.

Eight new titles are planned for the coming year, together with specific titles for the anticipated 16-bit computer market.

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

Herbert is currently promoting the programming and responsible for *Starway*, but he is keeping his long term plans closely guarded for the moment.

The education and business divisions of

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

THE CHALLENGE

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

Unfortunately there's no doubt that Italy's games are demanding more and more cash to get from the shrinking board to the market. When CGA and other latest-generation media become more popular, the costs could put the small publishers out of business altogether.

DELUXE PAINT II ENHANCED FOR PC OWNERS



Takanakuman having a ball...

PC owners who use DPaint II from Electronic Arts can now upgrade to an enhanced version for £30. If you do not yet own a version of *Paint*, the enhanced version can be purchased for £79.95.

The enhanced features include Postscript printing,

sculpted colour fonts, picture preview, a slide show routine, and new brush modes. All of the additions, team Harry Compton, so it might be better to try before you buy. Details from Electronic Arts on 0753 46482.

HELP AT LAST FOR NINTENDO ADDICTS

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

A Nintendo helpline has been set up by Club Nintendo. A 'friendly and helpful Game Counsellor' will be on hand to help you with all your genuine Nintendo problems. So if you're a little depressed because your player sprites all seem vertical, why not give the helpline a call on 082 440500 for a technique or cheat to inject a little life into your game.

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

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

MUTE PC OWNERS GET SOUND FOR A PRICE

PC owners who are disappointed at the continuing lack of decent sound generation on even the latest PCs can achieve relief with the Games Blaster from Data Liberation Limited. This entry level add-on boasts no less than 12 stereo polygonal notes, a 2.5 watt amplifier, and volume control. It will connect to headphones, it stores samples in directly to speakers.

The unit is already supported by games from Sierra Online, Electronic Arts, Maelstrom, Cinemasoft and Origin. As a bonus, it comes supplied with a copy of *Splatoon* from Sierra Online.

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

The module comes at a half-price replacement level for the priority sum of £179 exclusive of VAT, and will be launched at the forthcoming PC Show. Further details from Data Liberation Limited on 0282 804874.

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

SPEAKEASY

Good news for software developers comes in the form of the AMT Speech Development System from Applied Microsystems Technology. The IBM user 2000/500- any software technicians to achieve a high rate of data compression without sacrificing the quality of the reproduction. The unit achieves a compression rate of 1% and a data rate of just 2 blocks per second.

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

TOO LATE FOR GAZZA?

Empire have come up with the most instantly original game also event. A soccer simulation endorsed by one of the leading lights of the game: Paul Gascoigne. Only trouble is it's been done so often before.

Empire have rather kindly said that they don't mind if you

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



Paul Gascoigne celebrating in a 1986 post-goal playfulness!

The implications of a technique like this being applied to games software are intriguing. Until now, when speech has appeared in entertainment software, it has been either ridiculously minimal or of appalling quality. The SRS could very well be the first practical solution, the only disadvantage is that the unit will set you back £5,000. If a company can contact AMT on 01 490 0322.

DRAGON USERS LEFT OUT IN THE COLD AGAIN

The 51st World show will be held at the Tarnworth Arts Centre on the 26th November. The show caters for owners of the Commodore 64, 16, and +4, the Atari

INTERPHASE OUT SOON FROM MIRRORSOFT

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

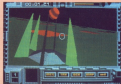
As a one-time professional drummer you must enter the mainframe computer of The Corporation in an attempt to stop them analyzing the minds of the populace.

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

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

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

Details from Mirrorsoft on 01-928 1414.



XL/50, the BBC Micro and Electron, Spectrum, GPC, Amstrad CPC, MSX, and Orinon. As usual Dragon owners have been forgotten about, not to mention fiberoptic owners. But that's enough moaning from us, we're pleased to hear that 8-bit owners are still being supported at all.

There are still some spaces available at £25 for a 4 foot stand (but £5 if you need a power pack). Contact Deirdre Wells at 8 Healds, Lakeridge, Tarnworth, Staffs, S77 2NF.

AMIGA ANIMATIONS

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

Jack Garrow of In Video Broadcast Ltd, and Nick Masters of TV Production Magazine.

The winners were Mark Witt for Maggie Goes Green, Jonathan Grant (aged 16) for J's Position, Eileen Smeetha for Royal Bank of Scotland Logo, and John Armstrong for Sligden.

In addition there were three second category winners, and 11 other prize winners. The prizes were donated by ten companies associated with computers or animation.

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

For further details concerning the festival contact Martin Lowe on 031 567 4332.

THE ACE CHALLENGE

The PC Engine, reported on this month's issue, the home Mac-System, the Amiga - even the Commodore led in its day - have all proved that imaginative hardware design can generate some truly great software.

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

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

Hence the ACE Challenge. A staggering £20,000 to be divided between the manufacturer of the ACE Challenge Machine (subject to certain conditions as outlined in the ACE Challenge Charter - see below) and the programmer of the best ACE rated "800" game to run on the new machine.

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

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

We'll also keep you informed about any developments related

to the ACE Challenge.

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

IT'S NO MYTH

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

real and re-released products, selling for a meagre £4.99 each. The 21 titles scheduled for immediate release include Road Wars (ST/Amiga - the Amiga version is a specially enhanced version not previously released), Speedball (Amiga/ST/Amiga), California Golf (PC only), Rally R (ST/Amiga) and World Darts (ST, Amiga and PC). With the average high cost of 16-bit games, let's hope other software companies follow Virgin/Mastertronic's historic lead...



System Three's Myth - not to be confused with the Wapnapi, Socoche adventures of the same name.

to the ACE Challenge, whether they be in hardware or software. Not only will we be printing more in the magazine, but we're offering readers a chance to receive a personal update - all you have to do is send us a stamped, self-addressed envelope (A4 size) with Challenge Update and we'll send you an information sheet as soon as we have something to report. That way, you'll be kept in touch with some of the most exciting developments in entertainment technology today.

You can also receive full details of the ACE Challenge itself in the Challenge Charter, a document that includes the full conditions under which the £20,000 becomes payable. These are outlined on the back page of the ACE Challenge booklet (on the back cover of this issue - or write to us for a copy if yours is missing) but the Charter contains the full spec. The Charter is available on request and receipt of a stamped,

signed £64 cheque (advance, cash). Taking the role of a time travelling hero, you visit places like Hell and Medusa's Caverns battling skeletons and four-headed Hydras. Myth is a public oriented arcade game with the style and quality associated with System Three's other releases such as Last Ninja. Myth is available now for ST and Amiga, and PC owners can also look forward to a version for their machine, no release date as yet.

THE CHEAPEST 16-BIT GAMES EVER!

Leading budget software company MegaMastertronic has launched a startling new low cost £5.00 budget label. 35 800 games are a combination of imp-

GET YOURSELF A WALKING, TALKING PC ROBOT

What will those crazy folks think we need? The latest perk for your trusty old PC is Newton, the intelligent robot that can walk, talk, work, play, learn, teach and even make the best T10. 32' high robot uses a sophisticated speech synthesis and recognition system (allowing it to understand and act on personal human instructions). Newton's internal control mechanics are controlled by an onboard microcomputer, with a VPC providing the application programs. Newton also includes a built-in 800 baud modem for communication to the outside world. Further details can be obtained from US developer SynPM on 001 208 576-5303.



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A TRULY MASSIVE GAME FOR THE AMIGA 500, 1000 & 2000

PSYGNOSIS - GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Screen Shots from the Amiga version

AMIGA COVER ART BY COLIN BROWN

ACE LETTERS

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

FLY ME

I must confess that I bought my Atari ST for the sole purpose of flying Aircraft Simulators. There are plenty of them around at the moment, and no-end of them waiting in the wings, so you might think that I would be a happy aviator pilot. Sadly I'm not, and it's all to do with the variation in keyboard controls.

Why can't the programmers standardise on a keyboard control system that is common to all simulators? If I press the "J" key on Combat Pilot, the F18 underwing riggs comes up; on Falcon, I get yanked out of the cockpit for a satellite view of the aircraft. To get the undercarriage up on Falcon, I have to press "O" for "Gear"; if I do that on Combat Pilot, I'm requesting a full-down landing from the control tower (which is a bit embarrassing when you've only just taken off). It's all very confusing, and leads me to the conclusion that it's better to decide on one simulator and stick with it, rather than keep buying the new ones that come out and have to go through the paces of learning a totally new set of commands.

The one I'm sticking with is Combat Pilot, its graphics aren't as good as Falcon, but it has an extra feature that wins hands down for Headup as the Flight Jocks would say: an option for joystick control. You just click on the computer graphic on the menu-screen, and select the option. Then, when you arrive at the cockpit screen, you simply adjust the mouse, and plug in a second joystick, and suddenly you have the throttle control in your left hand, where it should be, just like a real airplane. My joystick has left and right rubber control on this stick, what on the right-hand stick you have the normal yoke and pitch directional controls.

The ability to change speed with a flick of the left joystick is exceptionally useful in dogfighting and ground attack, and saves fumbling for the "gear" and "brake" keys like you have to do when flying Falcon, and as the Mig 21 is about to blow you away.

So take note, you brave Flight Simulation Programmers, hey yo-

PUMP UP THAT VOLUME!

Why don't most reviewers comment on the brilliant music included in some games for the computers with good soundchips? The Amiga has a custom chip and facilities for an amplifier to be connected and the results of certain groups' efforts to include modern music in games is sometimes quite stunning. So let's have a mention in the future if you can. To show you what I mean, I have compiled a top 10 list of the best tunes that my Amiga/C64 computer and I pump up the volume for.

Game	Computer	Composer/Company
BLOOD MONEY: main theme	Amiga	Ray Hornsby/Piggsworld
BANSHEE: main theme	C64 (original)	Bob Hubbard/Plutonium
RENEGADE: loading music	C64	Unknown/Imagine
WIND OF SCAND: main theme	Amiga	Juan Lynch/Dreamery
LEO STORM: all themes	Amiga	T & M Polley/US Gold
SARAGE: stages 1 and 2	Amiga	Ravin Collier/Finland
HYPER: main theme	Amiga	P Van Der Valk/Dreamery
BALL: main theme	Amiga	Ray Hornsby/Piggsworld
B.U.T.Y.E: loading theme	Amiga	Chris Humberick/E Dream
BATASTORM: main theme	Amiga	Tim Sappala/Visionary Design Technologists

B.Jeffs, Brighton

Buy more music stands out there...or graphics charts, or gameplay charts...!



sticks really is the only way to fly. And it's the only way you're going to get the customer to climb into any new-fangled cockpit.

M.G.Dutton, Cokeridge

UNHAPPY

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

Frustrated enough, though, all of these people have said to me that games programming is far too simple and unrewarding - if this is the case how is it more of them could help me?

As I live in Birmingham I wish

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

Nigel Smith, Birmingham

We have two suggestions:
(1) Change your address.
(2) Change your footlocker.

DESPERATE

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

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

the instruction book and no help when asked for.

I don't think I can stand much more of it. An Amiga, a Commodore and an Amiga could be for sale very shortly.

Robert Lamb, Cottingham

PRIZE QUESTION

I am writing to ask why you haven't yet printed the results of a couple of recent competitions, i.e. Dreamware/PC, Radio Ace competitions. I am aware of the recent take-over by EMS* but please could you print the results soon?

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

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

Edwin Birch, Dullington

All the price winners are named in this issue - check the Price Pages for details. ACE On the Road will continue to appear on an irregular basis, whenever we will commission interesting enough to write about (based on reports from more British software houses, as well as America and Japan. As for the ACE Cart, we will be replacing this with a new competition, to be run monthly. It's called the Final Verdict, and you can find out more about it on page 120 - The Final Verdict starts next month - don't miss it!

AN APPLE A DAY...

As an Apple II owner (more specifically the 800) I find it disappointing that magazines in the UK more often than not simply ignore the computer's existence. There are over 500 Apple II games currently available (many of which have been released in ACE), with over 100 Apple II-specific entertainment programs including the popular War in Middle Earth and Dungeon Master. Your lack of reference to these computers when compiling a release list is surprising.

The Apple II has been around in various forms since the late 70s, and despite Apple II's apparent lack of interest, the line, introduced in 1985, is still available from authorized dealers. The 8500-based 16-bit line is a capable computer. Features include 4096 colours, 640x400 resolution RGB output, standard Apple Desktop Interface II-style WPMU, 8MB external RAM expansion, 180K ROM expansion, 7 expansion slots, and peripherals (keyboard, disk drives, mod etc.) freely interchangeable with those from the Mac.

As for music/sound (with reference to your MUSIC series) the 800 has a built-in Ensoniq 'Digital Outliner Chip' (as used in the Mega Music Synthesizer) with 30 paired oscillators producing 15 sound channels. An Analog-to-Digital converter is also available on the Ensoniq device, not to mention 5MB of dedicated sound ROM. Surely qualifies worthy of mention in your Music articles (issue no. 8, dated...)

The 800 may not be as popular in the UK as it is in the United States, but a home computer with these features should not be ignored or forgotten by a magazine dedicated to Advanced Computer Entertainment.

Dr. K. Kishimoto, Wiltshire

CONSOLES MATTER

When I opened Ace issue 26 I was surprised to read a letter from a fellow Sega user. (Thanks Oliver)

Sega's are criticised by the Amiga and ST users because they think they are cheap and ready, but people like me have spent £100s on our rigs, buying games like *Metal Blade*, and *Shinobi*, which Amiga and ST users can't get on like OS/2 with. Score now

Sega 1 Amiga STs etc 0

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

Sega 1 Amiga STs 1

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

Sega 2 Amiga 1

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

Final Score Sega 2 Amiga STs 3

So who wins? Well look at Sega...

Chris Blowers, Enfield

If only the whole subject was as simple as football, we could all tot up the scores, make our buying decisions, and live happily ever after. But in reality it isn't like that at all. Consoles offer some of the computing applications versatility of computers, but on the other hand the new range of consoles (Amiga, Engine, 16-bit Segal) are likely to make most current home consoles look a little wobbly on the arcade floor. There's only one realistic decision: get both a computer AND a console!

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

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

Stephen O'Brien, London

There is no official launch date yet, but distributors Virgin reckon it will be in the 'first quarter' next year, but probably not before March. They would seem to indicate around May 1989. The price of the games may yet to be fixed but the hope is that they will not be more than current Sega titles. The converter does exist, at least so Virgin tell us, but none in the UK has yet seen a sample. The 16-bit games will run in their 32-bit versions and big sellers like *OutRun* and *Asterix* may well be converted to Megadrive versions.

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

ACE is currently reviewing its copy of other reaction formats. See next month's issue for the result. We think you'll be pleased...

GLOWING TRIBUTE TO RISING SUN

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

I have played the game for weeks and at one time for 8 hours, and the following day 7 hours. I lost. But I was completely held by this great game. What other game can keep your interest for hours? And you still want to play it afterwards...

I say, well done to Chris

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

B. Hayward, Bournemouth

How much did they pay you?

8-BIT BEANO

Am not going to talk about software pricing: ST vs Amiga, Commodore etc...

What if I told you that on November 26th the '8-bit Micro Show' is to be held in Tamworth. Yes, that's right. No 16 bit machines allowed. The following can attend:

- CGA, c16/e-8, 860, CPC, Spectrum, BBC/Electron etc...
- Entrance is 75p per person

which includes 'beetles', a free draw to win an Atari 600K, and don't forget all those stands with bargain priced games, postcards, new software up and running, etc. Maps are available with leaflets to the address below:

D. Berts, 8, Hooley, Lakeside, Tamworth, Staffs, B77 2NF.

BBS BABY

I have started a new BBS naming on a 1040 ST specifically aimed at the ST. I would appreciate it if any Modem users out there would log on and leave some feedback mail about discussion areas they would like to see, help lines they think may be useful etc.

The name of the BBS is, The Tavern, it runs on VCI/CI3 modes,

CRACKED?

I live in Holland, and, as you may or may not know, almost every computer hobbyist in my country gets all his (loaded) software for free. When I bought my first computer (C84) I thought this was a normal situation, but as I began to read English magazines I discovered that the foreign attitude towards this behaviour was completely different. Listen to the anecdotes.

A friend of mine who also owned a C84 at that time, used to holiday in the English coast. He brought his computer with him (including about 2000 cracked software titles). His cousin, who was a C84 owner also, was very pleased to see this enormous amount of software. My friend offered to copy all the software he wanted. His cousin was even more happy - until he discovered that everything was cracked. From that point he didn't even want to play the games anymore. And the disks that already contained some copied stuff? Guess what he did with them. Yes, he cleared them all!

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

Sometimes I really feel pity for all these gamers who can only buy about five or three titles a month with cash in their wallets. You see, nowadays I use an Amiga 500, and I'm undeniably happy with it (it's a computer science student but I ask myself if I would have purchased it if I wasn't able to get all my software for free) and so thank my teachers - believe me everybody in Holland does. Between the lines, did you know that three of my friends bought an Amiga 500 just because they were allowed to copy my software for free if needed.

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

Eddy Boreman, Holland

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

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

Having been on the games "scene" since those early "Domino TV Games" were around, I have played many games for many hours. However, recently games do not seem to be holding my attention for more than a few hours. As you will have noticed there is no address on this letter, this is because I am a so-called "craze" of games. After three years of owning my ST, I am totally fed up with the trash that appears. I mean, the games on the ST are so bad that I now play on my old Atari 540 more than the ST - which is fairly a good advertisement for new technology. I shall remain a pirate until the software houses back their ideas up and release games which live up to their Megabytes, and keep their prices. Games should be "playable". Kick Off proves that gameplay can be a substitute for Megabytes of graphics, and games should be based on gameplay, not graphics and sound, and these two should only be added up after the gameplay cannot be improved any more.

The 8-bit prophet

and uses the 8-bit format. The number is 01881 9399 and is available from 9pm to 6am Mondays to Saturdays.

Paul Baker, Wood Green, London

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

Whatever happened to Superior's Computer, which was being advertised in the Amiga and ST from the Archonades in June 1987?

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

A. Jeffs, Braintree

Superlayers has been "delayed" but is on its way. As for computers... we were unable to contact Superior at the time going to press, but we'll keep you informed.

ARCHIE BARGIE

I've found a company who are producing a whole range of software for the Archie, including games resembling Outlaw and Asterix. The company is named Cambridge International Software, tel. 01-278 4412. The company plans about 75 products by December. These also include conversions of Dungen Master and other popular games. The software will surely help bring the Archie into the limelight. Luckily, thanks for a paper mag - the Archie seems to be creeping slowly into ACE more and more the quality...

K. Parke, London

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

AMIGA MYSTERY

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

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

We (no address supplied)

PS I write to you because you're the only intelligent mag around.

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

We believe that the solution may be to... or... get it... fixed... or... Contact your dealer or access...

ACE PRINTER

After playing Popcorn on my Amiga 1000 times I gladly send you all the codes for all the levels. I have printed them out on my colour printer and stuck them on a card especially for you.

Zalar Shatt, Hoveborne

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

VIOLENCE

I have recently discovered that if a game really annoys you then a simple solution is to take it out of the disk drive and make some weird growling noises at it. If doing this seems probable to you then you are probably a bit of a wussy person. If anyone out there is stupid and thinks I'm daft, then they should come and see me so I can let punch their stupid faces and let give them a good stiff kick up the rear.

Jason Carlone, Coventry

The weird growling noises make perfect sense to us, though we feel that about, about yapping sounds work better. However, our postmaster was disturbed by the level of violence depicted in the latter half of your letter. Seek assistance.

KICK OFF

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

We thought it would be a nice precedent, however, if - instead of simply going ahead and producing the game to our own specifications - we asked current players of Kick Off to send us their suggestions for features that could be included in the new edition.

If you've played Kick Off and have some ideas for gameplay or presentation that you'd like to see included in the new game, drop us a line at Amco, Unit 10, (Southam) Trading Estate, Loxton Road, Garford Park, OX1 5BH.

And Gapps, Amco Software Ltd

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

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

MANAGERIAL SKILLS

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

TACTICS

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

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COMING SOON...

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

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

US Gold have been very busy recently grabbing stars from the big screen and putting them into your monitor. If you thought the hype surrounding the latest Indiana Jones game was a bit overdone then you ain't seen nothing yet. US Gold's describe their latest personally chosen as having the biggest selling album of all time, selling 6 platinum, 7 American Music awards, 4 American Video awards, and the BRIT award for best international artist.

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



Top: You have (that's him in the nearest gear) better to get the key to success in Moonwalker or the game, coming over from US Gold.



Left: Shimmering out of a spot of light. Michael strikes his stuff in the original Moonwalker film.

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

With the passing of a shooting star Michael gets 'raising powers of transformation' (much cheaper than using a plastic support) Michael uses his powers to defeat the evil Mr. Big and his henchmen and rescue his friends,

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

The chaplain and chapters down at USG are also making good use of their T&E talents. Over one year after its launch on the DS4 and PC, the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons game, Pool of Radiance is to be released for the ST, Amiga, and Mac. USG are convinced that the new releases will take worldwide sales of the game through the quarter million barrier. Well done US Gold, that's two achievements with one product. The biggest selling Computer RPG, with the longest release schedule! The Pool of Radiance Mac in October's release is to be closely followed by Hitlar (November). Fortunately MS-DOS fans will not have to wait as long for the next game in the series, Dragons of Flame. This game, set in the Dragonbane universe, gives you the chance to take part in the quest of the 'Companions of the Lament' as they

ADVENTURE FOR MANIACS

From Lucasfilm Games, who recently brought us Indy The Graphic Adventure, is a rather more macabre romp involving the evil Dr. Fred. Unlike conventional adventure games, Maniac Mansion is a complete, mouse-driven, no filler in no tedious typing. There are seven different character fans for the player to control, each with their own distinctive talents and personalities. Lucasfilm

promise that the game will be equally appealing to both seasoned adventurers and novices. Since it is spread over 30 rooms containing 450 different objects it should certainly keep even the quickest adventurer happy. US Gold are distributing the MS-DOS version of the game, which will be available in late September. Also due soon from Lucasfilm is Battle of Britain, the game which seeks to recreate the RAF's final hour. It should be available in November.



Wouldn't you be the next victim in Maniac Mansion?



Battle of Britain from US Gold.



& Dragons of Flame adventure. Moonwalker there's a sting in this tale!

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

FIVE TO DRIVE

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



The *Duke*! Force of software? Digital Magic Software get inside the game!

corner or garden via, and a floppy. There is even a prize bonus level! Amiga owners will be pleased to learn that the game has been developed on that machine. DMG tell us that this results in better versions for both the Amiga and the ST. The game will retail for £24.95 on the Amiga and £19.95 on the ST. Above is a nice piccy of the driving force behind *Duke's* Force, although I'm sure you would much rather look at the game instead.

BITS 'N' PIECES



Duke's Force from *The Edge*. It sure isn't as cute as *Sanford*, which should please exactly about one up outside.

OUTLAW SHOTS 'EM UP

Outlaw Productions' *Shoot'em Up* Centurion K01 is coming for the ST soon. The ST25 hardware is already out for the Amiga and C64. It shows the construction of stand alone shoot'em-ups which can be freely distributed

to friends for software houses, although don't expect to see too many SHUCK products in the top tens. SHUCK should be available in October/November priced £19.99



Virgin Mastertronic continues its support of the Sega system with the release of two more games, *Golden Games* £24.95, November, and *Wanted* £19.95, December. Also due soon from Virgin is *Double Dragon II*, due on November 11th for the PC £24.95, ST and Amiga £19.95, Spectrum +3, C64 disk, and CPC £19.95 £14.95, and Spectrums, C64, and CPC £14 £9.95

The *Edge* are currently hard at work on *Pearls* featuring double old *Smiley* and the conversion of the arcade sensation *Darius*. The latter features the support sprites never seen in a computer game. In fact some of them are so large they won't fit on the screen! Make of that what you will. Both programs will be shown at the PC Show. Speaking of which... see you at there!

ACTIVISION IN POLE POSITION?

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



Warming up for the start of a mean race in *Power Drift*, due soon from Activision.



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

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

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



PLUG 'EM IN...

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

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

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

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

This is particularly useful for Capcom, as CP Boards are not cheap - hardly surprising in the company three million dollars and a bit

of time into the whole project.

Like many of the newer high-end boards, the CP has got 2 68000's (slugging away inside, but the real mystery of the thing is how custom-designed, very tight integrated chips, that make it really fit. Capcom is, understandably, reluctant to reveal more.

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

CP SYSTEM TITLES TO WATCH OUT FOR...



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

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

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

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

Wings - Licensed from the movie and no relation to the title known Wingscape home format product. Another combat jump-jump with high graphic content.

G.N. Squadron - Latest release on the system, a full-right scrolling shooter, in the mould of *Blitzkrieg*. Overly conventional gameplay, but it isn't like you get some depth in these scenarios. One of three start pieces (Jag, Rank and Gun-late).

▲ CP System Board - Operating with memory, processor, and sophisticated custom chips.



▲ Strider's Strider - Follow up to the smash hit Strider of Sega, this, itself a major hit both on home formats by Sega and in the arcades. The sequel has lovely graphics but shows little enhancement to the original gameplay.





Cue Brick

CUE BRICK

Confused? It was. Inventive brought out a like variant game on home format about 3 years ago and now a similar thing has turned up on console from Namco.

Cue Brick's another attempt to the coin-op business to come up with a successor to Tetris - still arcade-ids going strong in the streets of Asia. It's well implemented and a pleasant change to the "average tactical ideas" job, but it's not intuitive enough to make the same impact as Tetris.



Violence Fighter

VIOLENCE FIGHT

What else can they do to beat Tetris? Make the sprites more leggy, that's what. Current word for huge sprites goes to Tatsuki Violence Fight - which also boasts a complex array of moves, choice of character at the

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

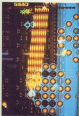
When the patchy version of Street Fighter first appeared in Japan, there were stories of elderly gentlemen sparing with heart failure as the aggressive instincts of a lifetime suddenly poured out and were attached upon the joystick machine. You have been warned...

OMEGA FIGHTER

There will always be games around like Omega Fighter - from minor league IPL, 'vertical scroll, auto fire and billions of sprites - take me to the fancy farms, Daddy.

Auto fire on with lasers, auto off with light or brain functions, you shift focus just in front of the screen so you can take the wide of the area in at one time and get on with the programming required to plot the likely path of enemy sprites and bullets, taking the appropriate evasive action.

Total synthesis with the machine - the old junkies' formula, like this one!



Omega Fighter

GAMP AT AWPS

Like any other area of the biz, video has their own trade jargon that can seem very confusing to the outsider. In that game you're playing JAMMA compatible? It's a PCBT from now on, we'll put a regular column telling you in on some of the trade terms and acronyms. This month - how to tell your AMP's from your GWP's.

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

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

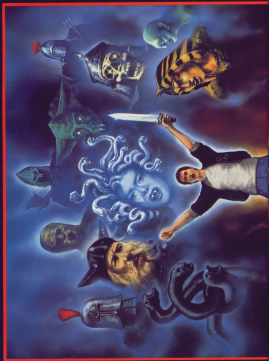
One funny thing about an UK AMP's breaks. Prizes can quite easily be programmed to work on a normal TV screen - and many are in the UK; in the UK, however, video fruit machines are not popular. It seems that UK punters think that so long as there are mechanical bits inside the AMP's there's a chance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

GWP - now this is more up the street - but with Prizes - that category of machine being presently dominated by trivia GWP's of various types. For your money is and - assuming that you have a brain the size of a planet - you can walk away with a pension. And because it's all still, the operator doesn't need a gaming licence to run it - real, eh?

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

One particular non-trivia GWP that's hit recently is a trivia version of the old card sharp's trick - Pin the Lady. Four electronic 'hands' are laid out before you and flipped over very quickly. When they stop you have to select which one was the last to be turned over.

Theoretically this is a skill-based game, but when the flipping gets to be sufficiently fast, the game becomes a straight-forward lucky shoot. This is because 'vision persistence' (the tendency of the eye - which allows image animation possible - to retain an image for 1/16th second) starts to set in and for most mortals it is simply not possible to tell which card was flipped when. Nice idea - and to gaming licence needed here, your honour.





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SCORE

THE SECRET'S OUT!



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



The PC Engine has been driving up the adrenaline levels of committed gameplayers for almost two years. Now, at last, you can get your fix on a real live UK console that really delivers the goods.

News of the Engine didn't filter through to Britain from Japan until just over a year ago, and since then there have been a number of sensational reports of varying degrees of quality. People have snapped them up, however — the system's tech specs were pretty impressive when the machine appeared, although the unit faces tough opposition from the Sega Megaforce (see here and later) and the yet-to-appear Atari, both of which are technically superior.

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

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



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

James Decker

doesn't have the official blessing of NEC, the Plus gives you everything you'd expect from an authorized UK Engine. Meridian have, aided by Network Electronics' Mike Phillips, provided a quality power supply and — most importantly — re-engineered the TV output and made alterations to the case that ensure the Engine heats away to its full potential. The result is a neat little unit that will accept all the official peripherals (many other UK versions can't, because you have to plug in a PAL border) and — most importantly — delivers a really sharp display. And it costs £199.99, cheaper than many less impressive offerings...

ARCADE MANIA

James Decker of Meridian Technical Services is nothing if not an arcade freak. Not on the heels

of Atari, that's what the dragons are meant to do. The trouble is that all too often they are of inferior quality and degrade the performance of the machine.

The resulting problems of all but the machine right where it belongs are on the gameplaying front here for Engine Trouble panel in this paper.

Enter Meridian and Active Sales & Marketing. James Decker of Meridian recognized the PC Engine deserved a better showing in the UK, and together with Active's Robert Stalham: they set about producing a machine that would give UK gameplayers the true Engine experience. Importing units from Japan, they've re-engineered them and turned out something they call the PC Engine Plus.

Although it

SYSTEM SUPPORT

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

The deciding factors have to be support and software. The Megaforce is likely to be launched officially by Virgin in this country around Easter 1989. Virgin have already given a great deal of support to the Sega MasterSystem and will doubtless continue the tradition with the Megaforce. You can expect a steady release of software and perhaps even a regular magazine to back up your purchase.

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

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

ENGINE TROUBLE

Typical problems experienced with unauthorized PC Engines in the UK are generally caused by either an unreliable power supply or a poor quality modulator.

The basic system requires an input from the power supply of around 8 to 10 volts. However, many suppliers listed by Meridian were actually outputting as much as 12 or 13 volts. This isn't going to stop the machine from working, but it has a whole host of knock-on effects.

The first thing that happens is that the Engine's regulator, which receives the current and outputs it at a steady 5 volts, begins to overheat and draw too much current. This in turn affects the modulator, which then begins to overheat and send more current to the display — and at this point you really begin to notice it. For example, the PC Engine can display 16 colours at once and change those colours very rapidly, giving the effect in a game of having a very large colour capability. This is often used on, say, large and/or level areas where the programmer might draw upon several different shades "from the red area of the palette to produce a delicately shaded forest.

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

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

of the PC Engine Plus will be an extraordinary find called the Personal Arcade Plus. This little number (big number, actually) gives you a complete console-equivalent arcade machine in your own home — all you do is plug in your Sega, Nintendo, PC Engine, or Atari console and the built-in credits takes care of giving you a nice little blinding game in the sitting room. Doubtless, the enterprising vendor will let their own coin slots and call the neighbours' round.

Meridian also distribute imported Sega Megaforce, claiming them to be the only model fully compatible with the Genesis software range and with future UK software (to be released when Virgin launch their version next year).

PC ENGINE VS MEGADRIVE

Gamepower is what it's all about, so, you'll probably ignore the question of speed altogether (use panel controls) and make your decision entirely on the basis of the game movements in Alex Chen's *Champion*. A run to a victory after our last hour.

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

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

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

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

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



Space Harrier 2 follows in the same vein as the original so far as game play is concerned, but that is where the similarity ends. The graphics and speed would put the coin op original to shame. Even really huge sprites glide around the screen without slowing down, leaving nothing to discern from the basic atmosphere induced while playing. The sound complements the quality of the game with some excellent tones and the best digitized speech to date. Although *Space Harrier 2* is the most impressive game of its kind, it hardly stretches the Megadrive to its limits and as good as it may be, it is only likely to attract fans of the original.

You can't buy a Konix (yet), you want something beefier than a Nintendo, and you're a games connoisseur. In fact, you're a fussy, alien-bashing so-and-so.

Which games powerhouse should you go for?

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

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



Ghosts and Goblins on the Megadrive.

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

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

← *Space Harrier* on the PC Engine.

SOFTWARE FOR THE ENGINE: WAS IT WORTH THE WAIT?

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

R-TYPE

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

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

POWER LEAGUE II

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

LEGENDARY AXE

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

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

CYBER CROSS

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

PACLAND

The original Pacland arcade game from Namco is getting on a bit in years now, but to mention the PC characters who inhabit it. Nevertheless it is still quite a good game, and should appeal to younger players as well as old timers. It is nice to see that a few old favorites are being launched for the Engine as well as the very latest releases. Let's hope even more are forthcoming.

GUNHEAD

As a vertically scrolling, collect the spheres, shoot-'em-up (gunhead) holds no surprises. It's very fast, and very colorful, but other than that there's not really a lot here to hold the interest. There are already some far superior shoot-'em-ups available for the Engine (both on R-Type), so it is difficult to see the having much appeal for Engine owners.

FINAL LAP

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



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

a quard of some sort involved. We don't actually get to play all of this one because of a slight complication. None of us can read Japanese characters, this is one of the pitfalls of buying PC Engine software at present, although unfortunately this was the first game that presented complications.

SIDEARMS

Sidearms is a conversion of an ancient but enjoyable sideways-scrolling shoot-'em-up, which once again involves running yourself with more and more powerful weapons. The action is certainly fast and very, very hard. But the game also has an addictive (and one more time appeal).

THE NINJA WARRIORS

A good conversion of a rather more recent martial arts game from Irem. There is a slight hint to this one is that the ninjas in question are robots, and as you get damaged sections of glowing metal are rather annoyingly revealed. It certainly rewards a look if you like combat games.

IN CONCLUSION

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

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

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



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

WATCH YOUR SCREEN – SEPTEMBER



ocean

TM & © 1994 DC Comics Inc.

POWER DRIFT



IN POLE POSITION...

SEGA  **ACTIVISION**

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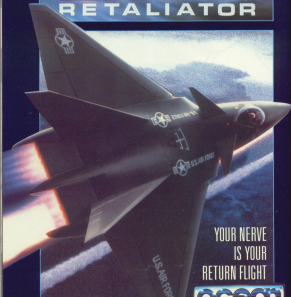


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RED hot TAPE



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

In the land of consumer electronics, the success story of the decade, on both sides of the Atlantic, has to be the Video Tape Recorder. Probably the most sophisticated piece of electronic equipment ever to enter the home, the VCR has revolutionized our personal market penetration in the twenties to the present, almost saturation levels. How many people do you know with a TV without a VCR?

Of course, the dream of the marketing entrepreneur — once a piece of equipment is installed into the home — is to get an associated piece of software installed next to it as fast as possible, to enhance the utility of the original machine and proving its useful life. But after head crashers, acid crashes and semantic tapes, where the hell do you go with a VCR?

The problem is that in its unadorned form, watching a video is a completely passive experience and the medium itself totally unipolar — you sit there and watch a pre-recorded tape from the beginning right through to the end. What the VCR lacks, barring the odd intervention with the remote control, is that magical attribute, interactivity.

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

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

THE GOAL

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

Priced at under \$300 retail, the Videomaster can overlay computer graphics onto a video image, letting you play simple games side by side with cartoon or TV images. The code for the games is encoded on the Video tape, interlocked with the video signal, so the units "know" what part the tape is at in the run — and so when to end the game and start loading the code of another.

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

IVT VS CDI

Both Interactive Video Tape and Compact Disc Interactive are still in their infancy — but it would be a foolish proposal to write either of them off, or mark one far superior than the other. On the face of it, CDI has to win hands down. 680 Meg of random access data, a powerful 68000 based machine and the might of big electronics companies behind it. But look what happened between LaserVision and VCR in the past.

Price is a powerful factor, and it's well known that if CDI comes to market in the next year, you are going to have to look out in excess of £1000 to grab it, initially. That's a lot. And CDI, in its present configuration, still finds it difficult to animate a whole screen of video still-frames.

Tape has no problem with this, but its sequential access is more likely to handle and certainly more limited — interactive VCR would need a 4 track system to truly compete. The technology is there, and a high-end interactive VCR system would retail at less than £260 — if only the will was there. Interesting, isn't it?

HYPER-INTERACTIVE

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

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

HOW VIEWMASTER WORKS

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

Figure 1. The blank space on a video track.



The electron beam scans the glass screen from top to bottom, stimulating the phosphor to produce light. By altering the intensity of the beam as it travels, areas of light and dark are built up, creating the visual image. When the beam reaches the STBC point, it has to travel back to the STBC.

This is the area of the screen beyond the usual scan of the beam that makes up the TV picture every 30th of a second. In fact, it's the area where, on a UK TV picture, the fastest information is displayed, namely, of course, a decoder to display the

information as actual screens of text.

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

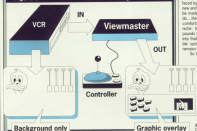
Figure 2. Gaps between screens of information allow us to



The tiny time gap as the electron beam flies from the bottom of the screen back to the top is the space for information from video technologies, providing a 'side door' for data to be transmitted and processed by the Viewmaster unit. On tape, it is represented by the Vertical Blank Interval (VBI).

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

Figure 3. The Viewmaster system



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



Looking for Duke in your local TV Store? Software Available... This message on the blackboard could be generated by the Viewmaster if generating demanded...

This technology has already been developed by an "American company" (no name), to speak still and could hit the market right now at a price point of about \$200. Interested? Who wouldn't be! The trouble with this baby, however, is that the system has outgrown the original "toy" expectations...and now they don't know what to do with it. Finally, before Duke can be finally loaded to send right figure changes into the Age editorial office, and we'll do our best to get you in touch with the relevant group!

Using audio, this level of technology, the level of interactivity, does seem (temporarily) to show normally semi-conscious marketing executives into conceptions of catatonic silence. The problem is, there has never been the kind of interactivity we are talking about here in a consumer electronic product. And few have the confidence in the intelligence of the general public and the vision in design and exploitation terms, to realize the full potential such a system could have. In the eyes of the media at large, it's video users have "spare" eyes, jaded brains, and are only able to understand words beginning with "haphazard" or "Merrivon".

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

By that in the state of play with interactive VCR at present. One simple — but effective for its target audience — system on the market now. At least one technically advanced system waiting for someone to do something with it. And millions of coin-owners with VCRs waiting for something that will change their video tape machine into a game machine. Or a powerful educational tool. Or an exciting information provider. Or anything that anyone with enough imagination can program it to. If only the Cosmic Remote Controlled a Fast Forward...

THE CINEMASCOPE CONNECTION

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

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

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

Experience and expertise gained through producing classic games like Defender of the Crown and Rocket Ranger proved useful for the company, who headed over the project to its interactive Dept. headed up by stretch star movie maker David Koehn. Design and production was done in-house, with the actual programming of the Viewmaster unit done by ideal technicians. After "using a bunch of ideas" and six months of hard work, the Disney Cartoon Movie was born.

The tape is a series of 5 simple arcade games (levels overlaid on video) linked together by cartoon footage introduced by Disney character Ludwig von Drake.

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

GETTING FIRED UP

Ludwig introduces a segment of cartoon play-act — back as Disney trying to shoot coal into a furnace — and then goes on to explain how the game works. Coal and furnace graphics are now overlaid onto the bottom half of the screen and the user has to try and fire the coal into the furnace, while the furnace door is open — using the controller. After a set period of time (if the game activity must be ended at exactly the right time or the overlay effect would be spoiled) the game ends. Ludwig goes into two more routines and the unit remembers your score.

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

Ideal must have liked the final result too — the Commodore-designed Disney tape is loaded with the moxie, with extra tapes (see others in all featuring Steam Street and Muppet characters waiting in at around £25).

WHEN WILL WE GET IT??

The Viewmaster concept was developed as far back as 1985 with the Belgian firm of Syber originally planning a four track system. This was scaled down to the single track that now needs to keep it in the price bracket suitable for the top market — below £100.



David Koehn and Eric Schmitt

SYSTEM X

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

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

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

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

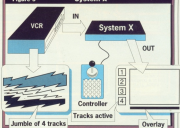
Figure 4 System X Video tape



1 is found on frames 1, 8, 9, 13, etc. That for Track 2 on frames 2, 5, 10, 14, and so on. Of course, the VCR is still used to carry code to program the System X unit, which selects which tracks to display, and how to process them. An essential, all or any of the tracks can be played at once, or repeated over and over if you wanted, each in its

owning the frames in this fashion is a reduced frame rate on screen, but the lowest that System X goes to, even when displaying all four tracks at once is 12 frames per second — only marginally worse than NTSC quality and still pretty good by standard video game standards when you consider the image quality of the VCR.

Figure 5 System X



Major development of the system went from 1985 to 1988, with the unit now coming to market in Fall 1988. The principle concept of Audio Switching was developed by Michael Freeman of ACTV in New York, along with Eric Schmitt of Syber. Other key engineers working on the project included Eric Beck, Tim Egan and Henri Joyeux, along with Gary Evans who was responsible for the inclusion of the colour graphics chip — the unit was originally designed with a black and white overlay display in mind.

Gary himself is confident in the future of both the product and the underlying concept — "It seems to us that interactive television is

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

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

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A LONG HARD ROAD...



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

When co-author of *Elite* David Braben gets into an inspiration for only two, he is still in the balcony of his lovely Cambridge flat and gaze out across the Cam to Magdalene College. Just a few feet below his window students and tourists just go and stare early within ear shot, though the conversations are usually just one way. 'It's amusing', he remarks, '...the number of drunks who start singing "and One Computer".'

The porthouse flat and hotel Quatro parked in the garage are the souls of *Elite* and *Virtu* – first offers all over the world, but it's typical of the calm, unassuming personality of Braben that he should reward his proceeds from the enormously successful games in a place to work. Not a Ferrari or Paul Smith suit in sight, and a very nice place to live and work – which is precisely what David Braben has been doing for the last eighteen months – cooking away on *Elite II*.

HING THE BELL

Although the entrepreneur card reads 'Braben and Bell – Braben's former flat mate, and co-

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

The frenzied Braben/Bell partnership thus reached an amicable conclusion and *Elite Two* showed until Spring '87 when David Braben decided to resurrect it after completing *Virtu*. But don't get too excited – there's still at least another year's work to do on the game before it hits the shops in Christmas 1988.

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

all the planets will be modelled correctly and you will be able to fly down to the surface... There will be cities on the surfaces of planets and it will be going on for the player to do.'

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

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

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

ON FUTURE COMPUTERS AND THE AGE CHALLENGE

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

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

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



put in just one very powerful custom chip because the circuit board gets vastly shrunk and the cost of external links comes down - and if you imagine that a future machine will need very fast access to the RAM - and possibly a very wide bus - say 64bit, or at least 32bit, then you've got all these links on the circuit board which takes the cost of the machine enormously.

Straben's dream machine is likely to be based on some of the latest chip designs. The 58600 processor or Intel's i 586; they are two very interesting processors. They both do an awful lot within the chip - floating point is the instruction set - rather than having an external floating point processor.

These chips are set to be incorporated into new computers but they are certain to be used in the near future with IBM announcing an intention to use the i 586 - a development we covered by Straben. Claims are made for the i 586 that up to 120 MFPS can be used of peak execution speed. With that sort of power it seems totally unnecessary to have a separate chip to do things like 3D maths as you suggest in the ACS Challenge design.

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

Straben believes that many future hardware designs are making the wrong assumptions about what the software will be like. Although the use of customised chips - such as the 586 in the ACS Challenge design, for example - are useful for fulfilling certain contemporary design requirements, they are limited to that function. Straben would prefer a more flexible computer that can adapt to changes in software design. He illustrates his point by referring to 3D designs, adding that our ACS Challenge computer would be a pain in the neck to use. All the time the Amiga came out, the few 3D games that there were were line drawn - they put a line drawer in the 68000 and everyone did line drawn games. They was thought to be the future of 3D programming, but if you look at 3D games now very few of them are line drawn. Filled polygons are what you've got now, but even they are certainly not going to be flavour of the month for very much longer.

ON FASTER PROCESSORS AND MORE MEMORY...

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

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

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

Once you start talking about machines in three or four years time you've then got sufficient power to start doing things like real reflections. The current set of machines can only just manage to polygon draw, shading, or reflections. Polygons are systems for doing things like reflections, because it's not polygons you're shading - you are actually drawing images of what a reflective scene would look like.

INTERACTIVE MOVIE TYPE

Despite claims by various companies that they already provide interactive movies, Straben is far from convinced. We are watching now it... I mean something where it would be like having a video and interacting with the world portrayed by the images you see, that kind of things is years and years and years away - you can't even do it on Cray's now!

Straben sees a long hard road to the interactive movie world but is confident he will get there. He believes the necessary steps are a lot of effort in software and the new breed of hardware along the lines of the i 586 type. From its sheer speed and generality of its instruction set, that is approaching the sort of speed we'll need", if Straben could have taken

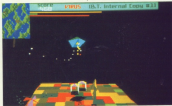
an 1980 back in a time slip to around about 1984 (this would have been a very different game).

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

ON 32 BIT COMPUTERS AND SWIRLING CLOUDS

On 32 bit computers Straben is a firm fan of the Amiga and follows the Future FM team as 'very interesting' but believes for the game is the street that... it is not so big a leap as from 8 to 16 bit because the main thing people have noticed from 8 to 16 bit has been the increase of colours and the resolution of the screens. The improvement from 16 bit to 32 bit will be noticed. It will be more of a subtle thing. The graphics are doing more, they are more sophisticated.

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



"to know the game was designed to run on a machine that is not truly capable of doing it proper 3D but would view - it is capable of doing it, but it took the time of writing a program on the Amiga and there is a fair bit of detail in it. With an i 586 computer... it does it would have been possible to have a feature going off into infinity. One of the main problems of the game is that you can't see very far, a third person view would also have been possible. The game design from the point of view of when the player is doing it very simple."

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- Scores alternative computer opponents.
- Ask for advice from our computer opponent.

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MINDSCAPE



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

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

"With something like the IBM Turbo machine relatively few games will fully exploit the screen, anything that involves a two dimensional or display – the *RTT* and *Defenders* of this world – will only see a limited improvement with increased computing power; once it comes to the point where the computer can repeat the entire display 30 times a second, with no problem, further increases are redundant."

"However, there are game designs coming through that will exploit more sophisticated graphics and I believe people will eventually be weaned off the employment variation as *RTT*. The only type of game that needs greater power is the 3D game or the scenario with very, very intricate game play – certain simulations, for example."

ON CD SOFTWARE

Shaban believes the vast amounts of memory made accessible by CD

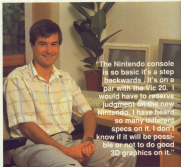
"...is more likely to be used than the extra power of processors. It would be very useful to have access to text databases. You could provide real maps of areas in which you could adventure. You could have adventures taking place in real towns. That sort of thing is not yet possible at the moment. People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

ON CONSOLES AND VIC OPS

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

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

Many thanks to David Shaban for granting us the exclusive interview. We look forward to getting our hands on *Elite II*, and *Elite III*, and...



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

ON COSMIC OSMO AND HYPER-DRIVE GAMES

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

"Things like *Cosmic Osmo* are an amazing achievement. They've just put an enormous number of pictures on a disk of limited hypercard-style. It's very easy to make a lot of data – even compressed pictures occupy quite a lot of memory. It's an interesting idea to say that exploration is the sole point of the game. Exploration is fun – but it does need an awful lot to support it. That can't be the only thing to the game. There has to be other things going on if it's just a slide show – however beautifully done there is ultimately no point. It's a pre-designed tree, a sort of *Dragon's Lair*."

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



Cosmic Osmo – just a cosmetic achievement?

STRYX



- Ultra smooth 3 way scrolling
- Designed with small fully animated characters from Garvon Corbett, the artist who brought you the classic hit Barbarian
- Multi-directional free format weapon usage
- Large playfield for even more action.

You're really up against it this time. Those revolting robots have finally upped and turned their handy powerful weapons on their kind, human masters.

Someone's got to stop it before it all gets out of hand. I mean, you just can't have somebody Cyborg Assassins, scouring the streets of Condo City and expect the citizens to put up with it. Who on earth is going to sort out the mess? You guessed - you get the job.

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

You'll have to work hard, though, blasting hordes of the revolting creatures (such a wasteful use of scrap metal), and rescuing the kids to the Lifeforce.

So, Stryx, you'd better get your arse out on the top-notch level robot stomping through the intensely complex underground world of the Condo cities. It's a tough assignment, and time is running out.

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SCREEN TEST

PIC CURVE POWER

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

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

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

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

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

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



The **Amiga** glow with certain pride on the horizon of **Continental Circus** from **Virgin/Mastertronic** - see the 16-bit racer feature starting on page 78.

DON'T FORGET THE UPDATES!

We don't just review the latest releases. We also check out conversions of old games onto new formats. So there could well be a recent conversion for YOUR machine...ST, PC, and Amiga owners get lucky this month on pages 87 and 98.

THE ACE REVIEWING SYSTEM

ICE BURNS

The unique feature to the ACE reviewing system checks the international that a game demands over a period of time. Because a computer is by its nature a finite resource, it's not always possible to play a game for a long time. The ICE Power system on the page...

Iceburns also comes with a unique feature that gives you a list of the game's requirements on a specific machine. These have been tested for you.

GRAPHICS

Graphics is one of the game's most important features. It's not just the graphics that matter, but also the sound. The graphics and sound are tested for you on a specific machine.

AUDIO

Audio is one of the game's most important features. It's not just the audio that matters, but also the graphics. The audio and graphics are tested for you on a specific machine.

AVG RATING

This is the average rating of the game. It's calculated from the average of the game's ratings. To get a really high rating a game will not only have to be very good, but also to be very popular.

ICE BURNS

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

BAT

OCEAN relicensed to clean up - again.

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

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

This is the best of the mid-80s film blockbusters to be converted to the home computer screen. We've had James Bond, Indiana Jones, and now the Caped Crusader from Gotham City enters the fray in what is by far the best of 'em all in terms of computer entertainment.

Right from the opening screens you can see and hear the quality of the conversion and get to grips with the language you have always hoped to have a go at. There is the famous Batcave with its Bat-anchor that latches onto window ledges and enables our hero.

To swing into action. As well as the Bat shutters that the super hero can take at the will from his "Rapunzel" theme out of the action.

The game commences in the warehouse of Ace Chemicals where all sorts of toxic substances are leaking from pipes and dangerous gasses being exhaled into the air. The Joker's men are everywhere.

and Batman needs to be nimble to avoid them. His default has been made impenetrable to bullets - up to a certain number. He is, however, helpless against the bombs being lobbed at him by the green suited villain. These will knock him off his rope or fall him should they make contact enough times.

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

Another real practical touch is the way the Batrap flies up when you jump to a platform below. The game has quality written all over it.

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

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

It plays like a sort of Detective Chase HQ come-up which - considering Ocean have the rights to that come-up - looks well for more thrills to come from the Massachussetts game house. The aim of the game here is to get out the Joker's van which is speeding through the streets of Gotham City.

Taking the controls of the Batwing launches another 3D game which has been superbly executed. Reminiscent of *Manhattan* as you zoom through the carnival taking out the balloons filled with nerve gas that the Joker is using to hold Gotham City to ransom.



The Joker's battle you enter by swinging.



Batmobile enters the 1988 Grand Prix.

MAN

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

Cosien here captured all of the atmosphere of the film but hasn't sensibly concentrated on a few of the action sequences. This makes for fun, entertaining and challenging arcade games at the end of which (if you're successful) you'll triumph over the Joker, without having to go through a complex arcade-adventure style challenge as you do for example, in the recent Indy action game. Maybe other Kosien's will learn a lesson here.

Cosien are to be congratulated for putting so much effort into an excellent arcade game – especially when, given the budgets, even first-class Space Invaders would have been their number one shot on all fronts. Proves that cynical commercialism does not always triumph over high personal and professional standards.

■ Eugene Lacey



Amiga Batman - Commissioner's Joker in the park to sell Amiga's *The Man*.

SPECTRUM VERSION

Only two colours on colour levels, but retaining the same game play as the other versions. The Spectrum level is slightly different on the location in that it is a horizontally scrolling one – as opposed to the 3D version described above. Very bit as much fun to play as the other versions.

GRAPHICS T **IQ FACTOR** B
AUDIO T **FUN FACTOR** B
AGE RATING 911

AMIGA VERSION

Full of sound and graphics bells. There is a delightful screen when you first launch *Joker* which is a laughing, and then asks if you have ever danced in the past midnight. For superior sound and speed to all other versions as the things flow on its screen and shows its superiority in the *Copied* Division game.

GRAPHICS B **IQ FACTOR** B
AUDIO B **FUN FACTOR** B
AGE RATING 922

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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It'll take you a while to sort out the Joker, it is good fun doing so, but ultimately *Man* may well pass as well the appeal of this game.

The *Singaporeans* is almost this option for race games, but don't expect it to turn out a Singapore.

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



VETTE

AND now the latest in a long line of 16-bit racing games, but is it good enough to knock *Start Car* (see our top 100?) flat on and discover for yourself...

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

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

First of all, you have to choose which of the four Corvettes to race, from a 1980 Stock, the safest and slowest, through to a custom Singaporean, with auto handling but capable of some immense speed. Then you can choose which of the opponents to challenge, from a nice easy Porsche through to a Ferrari F10. Finally, you choose the race itself.

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



PC VERSION

Vette supports all video graphics modes and looks good from 2700 pixels. The system is demanding but not smooth and the car is slow to get on. The sound is limited (engine, horn), but the gameplay remains excellent. Stay close to your software dealer today!

GRAPHICS HD FACTOR
 SOUND FUEL FACTOR
ACE RATING 92%

RELEASE BOX

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

The city itself, and therefore the whole game, is laid out with filled vectors, and very impressive they are too. Sky-scrapers are real skyscrapers, you can almost hear the sounds of screaming baby on the school buses and you can practically feel the bumps as you run over little holes scattered with shopping.

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

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

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

— Tony Gillon

SOCCER MATCH

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IMPRESSIONS



Bridge ahead! but where do we head to next?



...Andrew check out the neighbourhood on the map.



Is that someone from RVT on that bike? Just one of the better keywords available...

TINTIN ON THE MOON

INFOGRAMES grow a little tuft of hair.

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

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

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

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

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

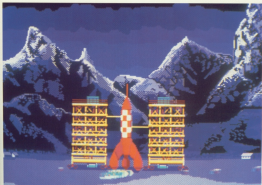
PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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



Asteroids in 201 Tintin's ship attempts to avoid the passing asteroids, and usually fails!



Flint and pals undertake to rescue, actually make it into space in the 80s

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

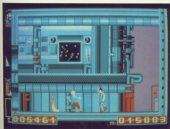
fires out. The first light that flashes is the bomb light. This is your main priority. Find the bomb, no matter where it is, and defuse it by touching it. Once you've turned off all the lights, and captured the real items by jumping as far as falling fans with the fire extinguisher. Once you've done that, it's back to another bit of flying. And that's the game, aside from a small section at the end where you have to land the rocket on the moon. Not much to it, is there?

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

Playability is awful. On the flying section, it's almost impossible to judge when the rocks and pods are going, let alone catch or avoid them, whatever the case may be. On the second section, Flint walks very fast and is very big steps, which makes accurate control a little difficult. Also, just while you're looking for a fire extinguisher, Boris will start a whole horde of land-shooters on the ship. Boris himself is far too much of a problem. In the way that you can't hurt him, yet he can shoot you, stomp on you, or yell damn thing he wants to.

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

• Toy Sites



On the ship, a fire has been started on board, and Flint has forgotten to collect the fire extinguisher



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You are one such Fanatic, a magical warrior in search of Victory in the battle scared land of Gargore.

ATARI ST
COMMODORE AMIGA

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As you can see, the graphics don't do justice to the machines the nunchucks are equally poor.

SHINOBI

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

AS a coin-op, *Shinobi* was no great shakes. It didn't do much to further the beat-'em-up genre, and it didn't boast brilliant graphics, sound or action. Even so, it was good fun, and it didn't seem that difficult a task to convert it. What the 16-bit versions got to offer?

The scenario runs like this. On your graduation day from a secret oriental ninja school, *Black Fox* - a former pupil gone to the bad - turns up. With a batch of dark ninja magic he forces you and ignites away the entire junior class.

But someone you'd call a complete loon is his face, he issues you a challenge: give him all the school's gold or it's lights out for the holidays. Unlucky, the school has recently used up all the gold it had, so it's up to you to do three ninja stunts, finally grab hold of your shinkies and set off.

As the deadline for the ransom is arriving, you find *Black Fox's* hideout. The hideout divided up into five missions, each containing three

or four multi-leveled stages, packed with *Black's* henchmen - gas-teasing orphans, ninjas, people who look like Spiderman, and the shield-carrying guards. You'll also find several captives: the number you've got to release on a particular stage is shown in the bottom left hand corner. Once you've freed them all, you can move onto the next.

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

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

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

If you like the concept, you won't leave these conversions mark. They're visually and aurally very poor, and the control method is a bit awkward. The nunchukkas are going to fly if we get any more like this!

AMIGA VERSION

The first thing you notice is a dosing tune, followed by some horrible graphics. The badly animated and stinky sound seems to vibrate along the ground; the backgrounds are very poorly coloured and the scrolling is jerky. You can get some fun for a while, but not much.

GRAPHICS: 2 IQ FACTOR: 2
 AMIGO: 2 FUN FACTOR: 4
 AGE RATING: 3DS

ST VERSION

Like the Amiga, except that the character jumps a little more slowly, which makes avoidance-control difficult. A very poor program which requires lots of the coin-op's addition. I can't see, generally.

GRAPHICS: 2 IQ FACTOR: 2
 AMIGO: 2 FUN FACTOR: 4
 AGE RATING: 3DS

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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A bit depressing, isn't that really much we can say, apart from that...

TM



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UNTOUCHABLES

EASY TOUCH FOR OCEAN

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

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

The Untouchables casts you as Eliot Ness, leader of the crack team sent to a warehouse where you have to find five pieces of evidence

concerning the illegal bootlegging of booze. Succeed in this level and you soon get down to some serious shoot 'em up eggs with heavy Capone boys as the game reproduces the famous bridge shoot out scene from the film. The screen scrolls horizontally from left to right in this section, as you attempt to pick off the criminals hiding behind cars with your tele-scopic gun sights.

If you survive this one then it's time to get up a street. A railway station is chosen but of course it's a double cross. Ness reaches for his '38, or rather you do it all for him through the medium of your joystick.

If your joystick and Ness do make it to the station then you get to play a starring role in yet another famous shoot out - one of cinema's greatest moments of combat that most any score you'd care to mention from recent releases - including Old Man. Capone's men have a hostage in this scene - so only a crack shot can win the game with 'dead eye' precision on that famous '38. The game concludes with Ness shooting it out with a bunch of hoodlums on city rooftops.

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

Meanwhile, Ocean have a certain offer



the bonus' with which they intend to entice a few that fall out of you before they launch The Untouchables. If the latter is as good as the Holy Grail of Gotham, then it's in worth waiting for.

Unfortunately earned their name because they couldn't be bought off by the Mob. When it comes to this licence for games a certain Manchester software house are pretty untouchable themselves.



The illegal booze factory scene on the Spectrom. Even Ness and his men are afraid to break up the party. At Capone he's going to like it.

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DAY OF THE VIPER

ACCOLADE attempt to revitalise 3D maze games.

WAY back in the days of the good old ZX81, when the computer entertainment industry was still in its infancy, a software designer by the name of Malcolm Evans wrote the first game ever to appear for that machine. It was called 3D Monster Maze, and was set, not surprisingly, inside a large maze with two inhabitants: You, and a rather hungry T-Rexosaurus Rex.

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

Now, eight years later, on a machine many times more sophisticated than the ZX81, Accolade have produced another 3D maze game.

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

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


Now GRR and his metal minions (rather cutey called GRRigadees (grawds), have taken over the Sun League Defense Force Base Complex in situation somewhat akin to Colonel Goddard overrunning the Portuguese!

Obviously something has to be done. The Sun League realise in the typical fashion of governments that their space fleet can't really go to the task of rooting the galaxy of this latest Frankenstein's monster so they cast around for an alternative solution.


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

Your job is to remotely control a Viper unit

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


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to infiltrate the base and reactivate the defense computer. It's amazing what you can do with a humble ST (not 8!) This is the only way to destroy GAI and his buddies and prevent him from razing our humanity.

The upper-left displays show two monitors and a number of icons. The right-hand monitor is the most important as this shows a 3D view of the maze in front of you, as well as the pointer for manipulating objects, and gauges when your weapon systems are activated. The left-hand monitor toggles between various other displays.

The third window of your status displays is a pointer which makes a map for you as you explore. A very welcome feature is a music genre! There are also other navigators such as floor coordinates (which can be recorded at strategic points for later retrieval), and a loading indicator. All these items are quite essential since the corridors on all the floors are exactly the same shade of dull, identical in almost every respect.

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

Damage is incurred by stepping on mines or encountering GAI's evil buddies. These misanthropic contraptions have a nasty habit of sneaking up on you from behind and firing away while you are still in the process of firing away. Getting rid of them can also be a bit tricky since most of your adversary's must be hit in specific places if they are to be destroyed.

Before you can enter any of the rooms on a level you have to find the appropriate access cards. These are colour coded (as of course are all self-respecting 19th century access cards). Many of the rooms are secret, but others have specific purposes, such as repair rooms, communication rooms, power rooms, security rooms, and so on.

Before you can make use of the facilities

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

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

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

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

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

While Day of the Piper is a brave attempt to revitalize a hackneyed idea, it doesn't really add enough to the tedious process of exploring the maze to make it enjoyable. Once you have been wandering around for a while you will begin to get bored with the same old unchanging maze of the complex through your monitor. Even the collectable objects don't inject much variety.

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

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

The game reminds me a great deal of *Secret Circuit 2* which was another potentially good piece of software, spoiled by unimaginative and unvaried graphics. For my money Piper is too much like those old 3D maze games to have any real appeal.

■ Laurence Stafford

GAME DESIGN

Neither the graphics or sound in this game really impress the ST, and the gameplay is only 'meh'. Being said that, there is a game in the sense where if you are generally a beginner. Definitely 5/10!

GRAPHICS 6 80 PERCENT 7

AUDIO 6 70 PERCENT 6

ACE RATING 6.55

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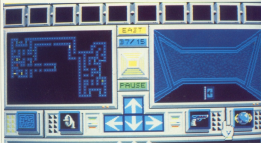
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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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COMPETITIVE

John Lowe's Dartboard Darts is a new game that offers a unique challenge to players. It's a fast-paced, competitive game that's perfect for parties and family fun. Features a new level called 'DARTS'.

OZONE FRIENDLY SOFTWARE



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Stronigan faces the first incarnation of the evil Lord of the Underworld, Neff, abettor of the Goddess Athena.

ALTERED BEAST

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

This is where you come in. You are quietly sitting away in your grave when Zeus comes along, rouses you, and commands you to save his daughter. You begin as Stronigan, and have a fairly limited repertoire of attacking moves. These are executed in the time-honored tradition of beat-'em-ups, by using various combinations of joystick movements and the fire button to achieve punches, kicks and jumps.

Your opponents, the minions of Neff, have

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

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

Most of Neff's creatures can be destroyed fairly easily once you have learned the best technique for dealing with them. For instance, the majority of your opponents on the first level can be put out of action safely by delivering punches or sweeping kicks from a crouched position.

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

transformed into a type of beast with greater powers than Stronigan. The extra powers you gain in your transformed state are pretty well moribund when you come to the end of a level. Here you meet an incarnation of the evil Neff himself, which differs at every stage. He takes quite a bit of battering before he disappears off to the next stage, and while you are trying to dispatch him you are harassed by a barrage of noodies, most on your distraction.

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

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

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

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

■ Laurence Corbett

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A good conversion that you will probably get bored of a quite quickly.

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AMIGA VERSION

There is nothing here that really attracts the Amiga, but it is a good game nonetheless. It seems of generally it has the edge over the original thanks to the beast from Transpico, although the same two weapon adjustments definitely a good thing if you like the cut of thing.

GRAPHICS 7 10 FACTOR 8

SOUND 6 10 FACTOR 8

AGE RATING EES

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BLACK HOLE

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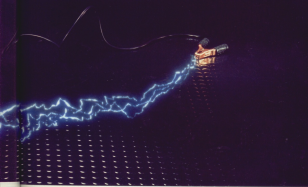
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RAINBOW WARRIOR

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

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

Campaign #1 (*Defensive Waste*) simulates the prevention of the discharge of radioactive waste at sea. You control a dolphin and must guide a diver down to four pipelines which he then locks. The tools to each of the pipelines is obtained by a number of means, including web and mutated sea creatures, which have

Microprose leave tanks and planes behind and get Environment Friendly



various detrimental effects if the dolphin or diver comes into contact with them. The general appearance of the game is very similar to the recent *Scuba Dive* from Durel Software. Unfortunately, it lacks the latter program's playability, and the resulting game is broken up by tedium.

Campaign #2 (*Coastal Dumping of Nuclear Waste*) requires you to climb aboard the dumping ship 'Geel' and climb to the top of the three dumping cranes thus disabling them. The crane of the dumping ship attempt to prevent you doing this by spraying you with a hose, or throwing things at you. They also control the deck and will throw you overboard if they catch you. The game is so slow that it is hardly worth playing. Instead I would recommend to look at anybody talking to convince it, or their last efforts.

Campaign #3 (*Save the Whale*) is surely the best of the bunch. You control a killer whale

Breakout contributed by a killer whale

Wishes of Beanie Olive but with none of the playability.

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

Campaign II: Stop Acid Rain is based upon a Greenpeace demonstration in 1994 in which climbers successfully hung "Stop Acid Rain" banners on several offending chimneys across Europe. In this simulator you must collect the individual letters of the phrase "Stop Acid Rain" from passing airplanes, and hang them from the correct chimney. A weatherman, policeman, and occasional trucks are all hazards which must be avoided if you are to succeed. The collection and deposit of banners in the correct places is a miserably tedious affair, and you soon begin to look forward to being run over by the trucks rather than have to endure seeing the game through to the end.

Campaign III: Stop Ozone Depletion would be Marquis if it weren't so pathetically simple. Your task is to prevent the depletion of the ozone layer by throwing snowballs at attacking aerosol cans. If the cans manage to destroy all the ozone in one particular spot a radioactive ray appears which you must then avoid. This ray also affects the normally docile penguins who develop a sudden lust for blood. The sight of the red killer penguin bouncing with murderous intent towards the campaigner had me in stitches, especially when it discovered that they could be deterred by a landing a cold virusball on the bear.

Campaign IV: Save the Seals from Colling has you teetering between on floes armed with a can of spray-on-de ICE (the one topical, in an attempt to save the baby seals from the hunters. Despite frequent attempts, I repeatedly failed to spray the seals. Either I was missing the point of the game or it is completely unplayable given the violence of the previous games. I respect the latter.

The final game **Campaign V: Free the Spot of the Rainbow Warrior** will not, I feel, be played by many. The serious task of battling through the six boring and unplayable mini-games in order to qualify in itself is a poor excuse for at least the hardest games played.

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

The only intriguing aspect of the product is the manual. This contains fascinating accounts of the Greenpeace campaigns. But the game is based on, and even less most of this info-



PIPES OF AIR ENERGY SCORE 0 CHEW 10 TIME 09:44



Watch out for the killer penguin!

action has been lifted from *The Greenpeace Story* by John Gray and Michael Brown.

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

— Laurence Scoble

ATARI ST VERSION

The graphics and general presentation are very nice, and the game plays rather pleasant (difficult which changes with each sub-game, but the whole thing is extremely unplayable). Definitely not recommended. So and so on Greenpeace instead!

GRAPHICS 2 25 FACTOR 4
SOUND 2 FUN FACTOR 1

AGE RATING 435

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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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Greg Norman
The Great White Shark

You've got plenty of choice among the best-selling video game formats. If you don't like the mouse-heads or the joystick crowd, you can always pick up a plain, bouncing, bouncin' bumper or marionette machine.

DUCKS — who can resist these? Lucy certainly couldn't, before she got kidnapped by the evil Achaeba The Great, but so. There she was, gaily gambling and looting with her feathered friends, Bin and Pin (the duck) when suddenly a great black shadow appeared, trapped her in a miracle ball and whisked her off to Achaeba. Now, no self-respecting web-footed creature would refuse the chance to rescue her, would it?

This is where you take over, guiding her with a friend able to play Pin through the so very cute but dangerous scrolling lands of Achaeba. These are not places filled with all manner of wondrous creatures, moonbeams, lightning, bouncing bursters, rising, lower missiles, coars on clouds, some pop floating around on balloons — and that's just for starters! At the middle and end of each level



DYNAMITE DUX

you've got to do battle with some heavyweight fighters. For example, in the jungle you'll fight a huge snake, and in Japan a dragon and an angry weather formation.

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

We can fire and fight in eight directions — useful because some enemies turn round and try to hit you, or sneak up from behind. All weapons, however, have a limited lifespan, as shown at the bottom of the screen. The ducks lose a similar power meter for each of their two feet; when these feet run out, you're in danger of continuing for three more credits; otherwise it's all over. Come back for our web-footed friends.

A conversion of an obscure coin-op, *Dynamite Dux* is excellent fun to play. It can be two-fisted when you're on your own and you keep getting hassled by an end-of-level opponent because you haven't got the firepower, but that's the only niggle. If you like your action side and feathery, this is the game for you.

● Gordon Hughes

ACTIVISION'S cute

coin-op conversion

involves a very silly

mix of beat-em-up

and shoot-em-up

action — but does it fit

the bill?



There are two big machines on each level. The first one, built into the wall, is tough to reach, so it's best to use the second, all the way, even only be controlled by real hard ducks.

AMIGA VERSION

With colorful, cartoon graphics and a series of brilliant sound-effects to accompany each level, all you need is a pressing and challenging gameplan to keep you hooked. The Amiga version has all these qualities — so does a ball!

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	3
VIDEO	5	FUN FACTOR	5
AGE RATING 6-12			

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PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A typical addition curve, with high initial interest falling away to lower, but more long-term additions.

INFESTATION



INFESTATION

Are you ready for a new level of realism in computer games? Are you prepared for an atmosphere to experience you will never forget? Can you cope with super-fast solid 3D vector graphics? Will you venture into the unknown, alone, and armed only with a single pulse rifle? Can you overcome the INFESTATION?

INFESTATION takes computer games to a new level of realism. It creates a complete environment stunningly rendered in super-fast solid 3D vector graphics. You are completely free to move within the game world, examining and manipulating objects just as you would in a real world. And, as in reality, you are not alone. Only, unlike those on Earth, the other occupants of Infestation's world are not very friendly at all ...

Your task as Kid Solar, Agent of the Interplanetary Federation, is to travel to Alpha 1, investigate and stop the alien threat. Your mission will not be an easy one. As well as the matter alien and its eggs, you will have to deal with hostile druids and computer systems, radioactive areas, and things unknown.

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

Screen Shots from the Atari ST version. AMIGA/ATARI ST CD-ROM

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LAPTOP CHESS

ALL you businessmen or the more are really sick and tired of playing with your spreadsheet on a train or plane or in the car. What you really want to do is have a game of chess on that wretched portable PC that the bosses have handed to you. At least, that's the theory behind Laptop Chess.

You might wonder why it's called Laptop Chess since, as far as I can see, it is actually the Conus Chess program for the PC from back in 1985-86. What makes it Laptop is, of course, the support for portable displays. You can, of course, use it on any PC compatible as well.

The display is reasonable enough with clear, if not elegantly designed, pieces. You can toggle between 3D and 2D views simply by pressing F, but you'll doubtless prefer - as with any chess program on any computer - to play with the overhead view.

As far as the portable displays the machine is specifically aimed at are concerned, we're only been able to find it on an Amstrad CPC400 - a screen that is not the classiest in the world by a very long shot. In 3D mode Laptop was virtually unplayable, and even in 2D it was hard to spot the marker indicating the piece you wanted to move. Otherwise it was fine, with no problems (and no recursion) in distinguishing black and white pieces. On screen superior to the Amstrad's, the game should

MINDSCAPE's
mind game on the
move

look pretty good to matter what dimension you choose to play.

Most of the features you would want are available in the program, although there are several points that baffle its age. There is no option for the computer to suggest a move to the player, and there is no information in the program or in the simple Laptop? manual as to the strength or response time of the game's 15 playing levels.

Strength is difficult to assess, but it's fairly safe to say that at levels up to 3 or 4, Laptop does not play a debilitating game. Therefore it gets stronger, but the response times grow. As a fairly busy businessman or woman you'll have to decide whether you prefer strength or speed.

• Peter Connor



THE MASTER'S VOICE

We'll be introducing a special chess rating system in ACE in the very near future. In the meantime, should you get Laptop Chess?

It's certainly not the best version of chess around, nor is it the most attractive. But it should keep you happy on the train - and it may well be the only one you can use on certain portable displays.

If you're after a chess program for your portable, why not join it around to the shop and test the software out before buying?

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

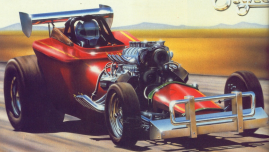
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Micro
Style





A typical end-of-level enemy, *Woe Man!* for the *Bad Guy* as well as the good guy - two heads are better than one!

As the title suggests, there is a structure-two twoplayer option. This gives you the opportunity to either compete or cooperate with a friend. There are stages of *Woe!* *Woe!* *Woe!* here, and like *Peggle* you gain the pace of Gemini Wing class seems to be pitched for simultaneous play. If you're battling on your own you are going to have to work and a little bit harder to make much progress. But from the extra challenge will prevent the game being relegated to the back shelf too quickly.

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

GEMINI WING

DIE Madcat Alien Sound! Finally sums up the philosophy behind Virgin Mastertronic's latest contender in the shoot-'em-up class. The alien forces are a little more intense than the *StarDay* Sport (which sounds suspiciously like a certain real Sunday rag) got a little carried away and published a galaxy wide editor carrying the aforementioned headless.

In consequence the proverbial little-green-men have decided to gang up on the invader bats of the magnificent green and blue planet where all the trouble is coming from (and who can blame them?).

On any other day of the month this would have been... well, a lot of a disaster really, but fortunately for us Earth's good of weapon scientists have just out the finishing touches to the Gemini Wing project. This awesome system sports one or two fighters with an array of destructive weaponry ranging from the modest throw-away fire ball to the overpowering wind screen wiper of death, frightening airt of

What this all adds up to is it's another occasion for a virtually scrolling, pulp-the-nuclei, collect-the-rifly-aliens, and give-the-occasional end-of-level-quest: a rarely head-to-toe after. Sound familiar? Yes, you've seen it all before, so how does Gemini Wing compare to the rest of the shoot-'em-up field?

RELEASE DEX

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alien blaster...

AMIGA VERSION

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

GRAPHICS 3 IQ FACTOR 4
SOUND 5 FUN FACTOR 5

AGE RATING PG

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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

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

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

The first *Gambit* in the tail is activated by holding down and then releasing fire. It is quite gratifying to release a fire ball just as a whole horde of unsuspecting aliens are shooting over the screen towards you. It can be very frustrating though when you have a juicy opening circle of death about 100 in line, and four bonus point *Gambits* to get rid of before you can use it.

The graphics are quite nice, and the sprites varied and well-animated, but don't expect any *Xenon* or *StarDay* parallel scrolling here. What really makes the game is the sound-track which is neither as bland or as repetitive as standard shoot-'em-up tonics. If you already have a reasonable collection of shoot-'em-up in your collection then *Gemini* might not be going to give you anything you haven't already got. But having said that if you want something with a simultaneous two-player option and you find *Woe!* *Woe!* *Woe!* and *StarDay* *Peggle* *Woe!* a little too tricky, then you should certainly take a look at *Gemini* Wing.

■ Laurence Stafford

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- CHAOS

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Screen Shots taken from the Amiga and PC Versions

ATARI ST £19.95 AMIGA £19.95 PC £34.95 031-729 5755

PSYGNOSIS
GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

WHEN the original game of *Populous* was released earlier this year it scooped 4 major ACE titles of 1983 as well as numerous other accolades. What made *Populous* the most important game of 1983 was its strong combination of ingenuity, intuitive graphics and sound, and superb playability.

The game casts you as a god whose objective is to aid your own people's development and render them being obliterated by a rival deity. This is achieved by raising and lowering the landscape and inflicting various disasters on your enemies like floods, earthquakes and volcanoes.

By now there must be thousands of budding gods out there steadily conquering the hundreds of lands incorporated in the original game. But sooner or later even the cleverest computerized beings are going to run out of new worlds to conquer. It's almost likely to have many *Populous* addicts suffering from severe withdrawal symptoms. But never fear, help is at hand in the form of *The Promised Lands*.

This latest release from Electronic Arts contains five new landscapes to substitute those appetizing Olympus' delectables for



Billy Land is an excuse for some 'crazy' graphics, even 3D's. Mountains are replaced by spinning red and green mountains who build extremely weird houses.

The *3D Plains* resemble a programmer's nightmare. The land is crumpled, jagged, paper, strewn with cigarette butts, coffee mugs, and pencils. The buildings begin as small computers like Windows Systemware and grow up into huge Cray supercomputers. Take a good look at the flags...

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

THE PROMISED LANDS

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

another fit of quakes, volcanoes, and floods. Its original game is loaded as normal, and then the new disks are inserted once the game has begun. The landscapes that are played are the same as those in the original game, beginning with *3D/NO/3D* and working through to *3D*. (That would be today's) But the scenarios *Good World*, *Evil World*, *The World*, and *Secret World* have been replaced by the completely new world types to play on or should that be pray on? These are *Remedial Paradise*, *Billy Land*, *Wild West*, *Clock Land*, and the *3D Plains*.

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

The Promised Lands delivers more than 40 new graphics though. "You will follow that" all

of the lands are a lot harder to conquer, and even on *3D/NO/3D* the opposition seem to multiply at an alarming rate. So don't expect to find that just because you've already played the game you can easily overcome lands you are familiar with, it's a whole new challenge.

The Promised Lands is a little expensive for what amounts to a five \$9 for the original game, but it is still worth a look if you have exhausted the possibilities of the first set of landscapes but still enjoy playing *Populous*.

■ Laurence Corbett

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£9.99	CUT NOW
AMIGA	£9.99	CUT NOW
Dual Format disk - works on both machines.		



The Wild West is a battle between Cowboy 'N' Indians. They compete for horses and trade silver in this scenario through an ironic slide (again the game is ingenious and end up in detail).

ALL FIRE

RUN THE GAUNTLET

"... apart from technical excellence, it's the sheer range of playable sections that makes Run the Gauntlet one of the best multi-event games..." CRASH.



CREATIVE ACTION

RAMBO III

"the graphics are of a high quality throughout... equally impressive is the music... Rambo III delivers fast action entertainment." COMPUTER GAMES WEEK.



HELL ON WHEELS
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ALL ABOUT
RAMBO III

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"Dragon Ninja is fun to play... well implemented and extremely addictive." ACT MAGAZINE.



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RED HEAT

"Furious addictive action-Red Heat is well worth spending some time on." CRASH.



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ROBOCOP

This is definitely the best film tie-in to date, and is an utterly superb game in its own right - don't miss it." C+VG GAME OF THE MONTH - C+VG.



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TO LOAD

RUN THE GAUNTLET
THE NEW ZEALAND STORY
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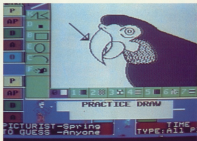
COMM

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

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

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

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



Pictionary - not just a pretty Pappy!

is just how imaginative it is. The computer drawings are both recognisable and varied, and sitting down and watching it draw is like having your very own episode of Catchphrase, minus the annoying host voice.

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

● Tony Dillon

DOMARK

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

PICTIONARY

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

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

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

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

AMIGA VERSION

Loads of colour. Lots of varied pictures make the game visually interesting. Fun for two, but could get very old playing solo. Nine three channel fonts in the standard mould type throughout.

GRAPHICS **B** IO FACTOR **T**
 AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **T**

AGE RATING **750**

RELEASE BOX

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could challenge

Trivial Pursuit

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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COMPETITION

GAMES UP FOR GRABS

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

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

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

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

particularly renowned for their quality graphics and sound.

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

The first five correct entries out of the editorial hat will receive copies of *Trial*, *Blood Money*, *Never Mind*, *Infestation*, *Matrix Mergaders*, and *Stryx*. In addition Psygnosis are throwing in a Psygnosis T-shirt and a *Shade of the Beast* featuring the brilliant Roger Dean artwork.



ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS...

...read the six game descriptions below and decide which game matches which description. For instance, if you think that description 1 matches game A, your answer would be 1.A.

Mark your answers on the back of a postcard together with your name, address, and telephone number, and whether you would prefer to receive ST or Amiga versions of the games. Send your completed postcard to:

ACE PSYGNOSIS COM,
30-32 PARADISE ROW,
LONDON, EC1R 3AA.

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

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3. The aim of the game is to capture target beams as you move above a hazy grid in your fighter. But watch out for the marauding Hunters, Raiders, and Buzz Blasts.

4. These for the price of one is the mega-value games compilation.

5. If cash is short, why not go on an Alan Selar and earn some extra dough for bagging the bidders?

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

- A. TRIAD
- B. INFESTATION
- C. BLOOD MONEY
- D. STRYX
- E. MATRIX MERGADERS
- F. NEVER MIND

Rules

1. The closing date for entries is Monday 2nd 1989.
2. Employees of IBM or Psygnosis are not eligible for entry.
3. The editors decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

20 QUESTIONS

YOUR CHANCE TO CHANGE THE WORLD AND WIN FREE SOFTWARE

We're looking for vital information about ACE readers. Your answers could win you 250 worth of free software for your machine and help us to bring you a better magazine...

ACE is growing bigger every day, but without you we wouldn't be going anywhere. Our main commitment is to provide our readers with exactly the magazine they're looking for and you can help us by listing the boxes below and pointing the form to photostudy what we find to 20 Questions, ACE, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AG.

And by way of saying thank you, we've got 250 worth of free software to hand out to each of the readers whose forms we pick at random from those received prior to November 30th 1988. So get your form in pronto!

1) Are you: Male Female

2) How old are you?

Under 12 21-25
12-18 26-30
17-18 Over 30
19-20

3) Are you:

A student Is full-time employed?
Is part-time employment
None of the above

4) Is your annual income:

Below £3K £7.5K-10K
£10.5-15K £15K-19K
Over £19K

5) Which of the following computers, if any, do you own or are likely to buy within the next 12 months.

	Yes (circle box)	Yes, not likely	Probably not
Amiga	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C 64	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apple Mac	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spectrum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amstrad CPC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Atari 800	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Atari 1025	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amstrad PCW	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PC Compatible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intimidis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sega	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Atari ST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6) Which of the following items do you own or are planning to buy?

	Own	Planning to buy
Modem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Printer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MSB interface	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video camera	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Audio CD player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video recorder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second disk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30mm SLD camera	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Car	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motorcycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7) How many of these types of programs do you own?

	None	1-5	6-10	More than 10
Simulation games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arcade games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adventure games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
War games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role playing games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Puzzle programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8) Do you usually buy your software from:

WH Smith Books Newsagents
Local Computer Shop Mail Order
Newsagents Mail Order

9) How much money do you spend on software each month?

Under £15 £15-25 £25-50
More than £50 More than £50

10) How many other people have read or looked at this copy of ACE?

None 1 2 3 4
More than 4

11) Which of these other magazines do you read?

	None	Occasionally	Often
Computer and Video Games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zip 64	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Popular Computing Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commodore User	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your Sinclair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The One	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amstrad Action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New-Computer Express	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Games Machine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Scientist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amiga Format	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ST Format	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ST Action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12) Rate the following articles/features in this issue between 1 (not at all interesting) and 10 (very interesting)

News

Letters

Reviews pp 18/19

Arcade pp 22/23

PC Engine feature pp 27/30

David Braben feature pp 35/37

Home feature pp 41/44

Screen Test pp 47/50

Competition pp 63

1048 Racing game feature pp 69/74

Updates pp 91/100

Music pp 103/104

Tricks and Tutorials pp 105/108

Dear Money Budget Software

pp 113/115

Adventures pp 117/119

13) With regard to game reviews, would you like to see:

	Yes	No
More game reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less game reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More game reviews, concentrating on more important releases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Longer game reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More console game reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14) With regard to the following subjects, would you like to see:

	Yes (circle box)	No (circle box)	No answer at all
Hardware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graphics software	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music and MIDI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advertisements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New technology (not directly computer related, e.g. interactive video)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
News features	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ACE on the Road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15) Which TV region are you in (e.g. HFV, Anglia, Thames...)?

16) Do you own a 16-bit compatible personal computer?

17) How often do you visit the arcade?
Never Occasionally Often

18) Apart from computer games, how much do you indulge in:

	None	Occasionally	Often
Sport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drama	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overseas travel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Performance



THE MANIAC'S GUIDE TO BURNING 16-BIT RUBBER

The scream of tortured rubber, the sweat pouring down your brow, the roar of the crowd... Can a racing sim give you all this? Can it give you more?

Tony Dillon grits his teeth and presents the maniac's guide to 16-bit tarmac torture...



Driving games have always been popular, ever since the days when Atari's *Pole Position* first hit the streets, and gave the average man in the street a chance to try out every last bit of fantasy. One or two enhancements have been made in the years since, however, and in comparison to today's arcade hits (*Powerplay*, for example), *Pole Position* looks almost primitive. Even so, a landmark it was, one which led the way to one of the most popular forms of computer entertainment, but which one of its successors should also go for?

This month sees the appearance of two new additions to the computer racing family—*Inter* and *Continental Circus*. While aimed at ACE just too late to make it into this article, but you can check it out in *Screen Test* (see the *Screen Test* notes on page 4 for its location). Before you check out the new contenders, why not drive off steam memory lane and see if there are any second-hand models you could go for...



Stunt Car Racer Microprose

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

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

it's more than a little easy to fall off. The game is first-person perspective, with the outside world made up of really fast smooth filed sections, and the impression of realism is unbelievable. Your chassis actually chatters as you shoot off the edge of a jump into the air, before plummeting earthward, hopefully onto another piece of track.

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



R.V.P.

Microprose

More Microprose racing, only this time it's on a lake. The *Champion in the Best Sports Based Racing Game* states, and a superb simulation, *RVP* put you, as a fearless little motor racer, into the world of performance lake racing on more often than the Honda RRV750, a limited build custom racer based around the best selling RRV750.

Strong was always one of Microprose's selling points, and there's no lack of it in *RVP*. Everything has been finely calculated, right down to the animation of the rider who turns his head to look over his shoulder at passing bikers, and after a crash onto the side along the track before shouting and filing off into the sunset.

Brilliant graphics, brilliant sound, brilliant game.



Ferrari Formula One Electronic Arts

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

FP1 is noted for its unusual steering mech-

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



Super Hang On

Activision

Not so much a simulation as a perfect arcade conversion, *Super Hang On* was essentially Hang On with a few extra FRMs. For a start you could race one of four courses, each set in a different continent and ranging from lakes (Italy) to North America (Bery Hard). Another great gameplay feature was the Nitro button when your bike reached 280 MPH, you could input Nitro into the engine to give the bike a little more kick, boosting it up to around 340 MPH, which is a stupid speed to try and take a corner at and usually results in people flying out of road and flying 4 over 7 into the nearby grass.

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



Lombard RAC Rally Milestone

Slip into the laziest surroundings of a Fort Sany RS Cosworth, and take part in what has not to be a major racing event, but it still has some the best.

Race through many types of terrain, with

in mountain or forest, and through many types of weather conditions, such as fog or night. As you race the qualifying races, you can earn yourself money to improve your car, through either not finishing the course quickly or by making a TV appearance, where you are placed on the history of racing, as supplied with the game.

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



The Duel - Test Drive II Arcade

Arcade tried to right all the Test Drive wrongs with The Duel, and to an extent they succeeded. Still keeping with the theme of illegal high speed performance car driving, either a Porsche 911 or a Ferrari F40, this time they added a bit more of a game to it rather than just pure A to B as fast as possible. This time you're in a race, either against the clock or a computer controlled driver, and you have to see how you handle the road, then zip up into the treacherous mountain roads and then down again on the other side, all the time avoiding the general public and trying to stay ahead of the computer driver.

There's nothing serious about the game, it's got a lot of fun. It doesn't claim to be particularly or usually accurate, but why should it? Its light touch realism shines with the Super-car expansion disk, which gives you another five cars to play around with, and the California Challenge disk, which gives you a fun racing race from the suburbs of California to the tip of Mexico.



Grand Prix Circuit Arcade

Very similar to the Test Drive series both in look and feel, GPC is you compete in a Formula 1 One Championship with a car of your choice. Though not as technically brilliant as Ferrari Formula One, it is, as with Test Drive, great fun to play.

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



Highway Hawks Arcade

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

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

The road is incredibly smooth, as is all the engine noises. Control response is fast and the action is well played. This is how Road Masters should have been.



Test Drive Arcade

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

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

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



Roadblasters US Gold

The logical follow up to Out Run is the arcade, and sponsored by toy giant Matchbox, Roadblasters has the same behind-the-car view as Out Run, only this time gave you a gun, so instead of avoiding the bad guys, you can get to take them out in a really satisfying way.

Sadly, US Gold Roadblasters almost totally fails to capture the spirit of the comic. It's slow, unplayable and generally a terrible conversion. A turkey.



Out Run US Gold

New this is a major turkey. The original arcade racing game, and also one of the biggest selling games of all time. Also one of the most disappointing conversions of all time. Almost unrecognisable from the coin op, the graphics are of garish colour and disappointingly blocky. The road update is so terrible there are times where you can't tell if the road is bending left or right and the sound is terrible.

One of the biggest failures of all time.

Late starters.

And that's only the start. Soon to come are the conversions of Chase HQ and R.C.L. Le Mans from Ocean, Mid-arcade classic Hard Drive! from Namco, Outrun Europa from US Gold and Powerbit from Activision. Watch the space.

BALLISTIX



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BALLISTIX It's a whole new ball game!

Sick of silly old soccer? Tired of pathetic pitball? Then you need a dose of Ballistix - the fastest, wilkiest, toughest ball game yet to appear on a computer. Ballistix just explodes with excitement, put fire and lightning into 130 different scenarios of fantastic action, on the PC, Amiga BT and Amiga. On the C64 version there are 64 screens.

The aim of the game is simple: score more goals than your opponent to win the match. Doing it is a different matter as opponents fill the screen with bobbing of balls, tunnels hide them from view, bumpy, boulder balls roll over the show, fireball and arrows speed them up to almost impossible velocity, magnets pull them away from your control, and much, much more.

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

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

AMIGA/ATARI BT £16.95 PC £24.95 C64/MSX £12.99/£4.95, £9.99

Screenshots taken from the Amiga version.

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UNCOOL CONTROL?

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

Remember the first time you sat in an original Deluxe machine? Remember the maddening way the car responded to the slightest turn of the wheel? Remember pulling the wheel hard over to skid round one level and then gamely slipping round the next? To do the same thing with any of the computer conversions... you can't! And why not? Because compared to the sophisticated controls on the arcade machine, your computer's joystick looks like a Robin Hood seat to a Porsche.

Over since Atari established the standard protocol for paddles on its consoles, you're back in the 80s, computer gamers have had to put up with a control that is about as sophisticated as a light switch. The problem is that the majority of computer joysticks are digital. They only allow you to fire switches — one for the directions, up, down, left, and right, and one for the fire button. The advantage of this system is that, not only are the joysticks cheap



Kona — Jim Kim's Kona game, to be bundled with the machine, makes great use of analogue control — the best in any game into the 80s in far more realistic than it could be with a simple small digital joystick.

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

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



Jim Kim keeping an eye on one of his conversions' progress, running on the Kona at the launch of the console. The game **Kona** (see assessment elsewhere) was one of the few games to make good use of the analogue control potential of the Kona.

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

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

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

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

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

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



This is no yoke, it's serious. The Kona uses analogue controls, giving precise control over speed and steering. This, combined with other features on shown in this illustration, lets give racing games a whole new feel. Come on everyone! Let's have another weekend!



CONTINENTAL CIRCUS

VIRGIN/MASTERTRONIC'S lap of honour...

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

The 3D effect has, not surprisingly, been dropped from this conversion, but in all other respects the game is identical to the original. Apparently the sprites and background graphics have been ported directly from the arcade machine, and they do indeed look very nice. Perhaps more importantly, none of the speed or playability of the original machine seems to have been lost in this conversion. The more that makes up for the loss of the three-dimensional element and really proves that the glass is on the original machine was more of a gimmick than an essential accessory.

Continental Circus puts you in the seat of a high performance racing car, competing against 100 other drivers in a series of Grand Prix set in Brazil, America, France, Mexico, Germany, Spain, Mexico, and Japan. Each course is progressively harder and you must have attained a specific ranking before you can compete on each track. You begin with a rank-

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

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

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

Should you have a double collision or take too long to re-ent the pits then your car explodes in a spectacular ball of flame. Presumably you have time left on the clock you can continue with a new car but you will have lost valuable records.

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

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

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AMIGA VERSION

An excellent conversion that has checked all the features of its arcade parent but the crucial 3D glasses. It may not be the most spectacular release this year, but it is very playable and enjoyable - and that's what counts in the end.

GRAPHICS	4	16 FACTOR	4
AUDIO	4	16M FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 8/75			

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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

yourself making a real effort to achieve self-set targets) to qualify for the next course in the series, especially as you get to the later locations. It's intensely annoying when you repeatedly come off the track at the late curve and end up losing valuable seconds or minutes completely, but extremely rewarding when you finally get it right.

Continental Circus offers fairly simple gameplay, and while the graphics, and even the sound they are not as complex as those found in many recent third games. Many said that the game scores on its playability, which is, of course the most important aspect of any racing game. It also has that additional 'One more time' quality that keeps you coming back for more. Definitely one of the most successful arcade conversions of the year.

■ Lawrence Quilliam

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Commodore Amiga screenshot



Commodore Amiga screenshot



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RELEASE DATE:
29th NOV. '89

FORPLAY RELEASE DATE
12th NOV. '89



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

Control units of the highly maneuverable 'Mechs and Commando. All over 200,000 sq. kilometers of the battlefield covered in green, 'Dogs of War' and 'Mechs'. A total of 10 enemy units to eliminate. Only one to complete the 'Dogs of War' mission. The game is a real-time strategy game. You can see the enemy units on the map. You can see the enemy units on the map. You can see the enemy units on the map.

- 1. Control units of the highly maneuverable 'Mechs and Commando.
- 2. All over 200,000 sq. kilometers of the battlefield covered in green, 'Dogs of War' and 'Mechs'.
- 3. A total of 10 enemy units to eliminate.
- 4. Only one to complete the 'Dogs of War' mission.
- 5. The game is a real-time strategy game.
- 6. You can see the enemy units on the map.
- 7. You can see the enemy units on the map.



Steve Bak's 'Dogs of War' is available on Amiga, Atari ST and PC.

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UPDATES

THE LATEST CONVERSIONS GET THE ACE TREATMENT...

AMIGA



3D POOL

Microprose Amiga (24.95)

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

Most of the aspects of pool are here: you can apply spin, play breakouts and carams, vary the power and angle — in fact, just about everything apart from seeing one ball around another. It's a nice trick to get into, because you haven't got a cue to be anything up with (you have to be in the 'center' of the screen) or a relation to the cueball, but it's ultimately rewarding because of the freedom it offers. It'll be a long time before you beat your first opponent, though — so be patient.

The one big question mark is why it's a first class experience for the ST: some additional custom sound files don't affect the gameplay to a great degree, and apart from that the action is much the same. A good simulation with no many hills, it should please pool fans, but then pool fans have been getting computer pool since 1983 and there aren't seem to have been any major advances in graphics — the rules of the game remain of all that.

ACE RATING: 7/10

F16 COMBAT PILOT

Digital Integrations Amiga (24.95) PC version reviewed Issue 20 Ace Rating 8/10

Amiga owning flight simulators should all now breathe a deep sigh of relief. Those masters of simulation, Digital Integrations, have finally released the Amiga

version of F-16 Combat Pilot, and it's the best of the bunch.

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

roles of the F16. These are fixable (air to air interception), Hammerbox (offensive counterair operations), Deepstrike (anti-air strike), Tankbuster (anti-airfield close air support), and Watchtower (reconnaissance). Once all five missions have been successfully flown you are allowed to take part in operation conquest, which is a full-blown campaign.

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

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

The one thing that becomes quickly apparent as soon as you get the falcon in the air is the realism of achieved by the program. As with other Digital Integrations flight simulators, the ground detail is minimal for speed, but the response and feel of the aircraft is superb. The attention to detail that has also been a hallmark of DIG productions is certainly not lacking here. You want to take a quick top view to see what's banking you, or look over your shoulder to locate that mig that has entered your radar's blind spot? No problem with this simula-



tor, although views can be obtained with one key press.

As if the existence of the flight sim wasn't enough you can also save your pilot's log for future use, create your own weapon configurations (which can also be saved), and set specific weather conditions. If that still isn't enough then why not hook up to a friend's machine and engage in a one-on-one dogfight as a modern or aerial test.

F-16 Combat Pilot has taken nine man years to develop, and playing it you can feel the quality

of the work that has gone into this production. Considering that F-16 retails at the same price as many other inferior games it also represents very good value for money. If you are a connoisseur of Flight Simulators then this is an essential addition to your collection. If you are only looking for a single flight simulator to buy, then without question this has to be the one.

ACE RATING: 9/10

ST

BLOOD MONEY

Pygmysoft ST (4.95)
Amiga version reviewed
July Issue ACE Rating
7/10



After tackling the bodacious in Menzies, you thought you'd take a little extra fun and what better way

to spend your fobs than on an alien-killing safari? Well, that's what Pygmysoft have got in mind for you: four worlds of death, destruction and utter fun. The situation is this: it's a jungle out there, and nature comes out in both and class, so what you need is handy weaponry. Scattered throughout each world are a number of equipment shops, where you can purchase such handy gadgets as three-way fire, bombs, extra lives — all at a cost, however. How do you get the money? By killing aliens. Simple.

In fact, ST Blood Money is a little simpler than the joyride-butting Amiga version, and averages better for it. The music and sound effects are a little weedy and the scrolling slightly jerky, but the graphics, though tough, is at least compelling. Worth a look.

ACE RATING: 7/10

PC



MENACE

Psychapse PC CD-ROM Amiga version reviewed issue 19 Ace Rating 8/10

As we have come to expect from Psychapse (also, the graphics in Menace are superior to the average PC game. But at every other count there is nothing here that you haven't seen in other shoot-em-ups. The game sets you as a lone fighter attempting to defeat the six evil rulers of the planet Dnarcos. Each one is encased in a different scenario and each has to be killed in sequence.

Your fighter begins with a full shield and relatively unopprobriated weapons. As you collide with the myriad alien life forms (killing you your shields are gradually depleted, if they should be completely run down your ship will be destroyed). Fortunately your firepower can be upgraded in the time you spend 'collect the add-ons' manner. This is done by destroying all of the alien in a single win.

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

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

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

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

ACE RATING: 8/10



MICROPROSE SOCCER

Microprose PC CD-ROM OS4 version reviewed issue 17 Ace Rating 8/10

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

When the first version of the game for the OS4 was launched, back in February this year, it was awarded an impressive Ace Rating of 8/10, and rightly so. At the time it was easily the best soccer game available, although now Acorn's kick off provided strong competition.

This conversion to the IBM PC has lost none of the superb playability of the original game. An overhead view of the pitch is used to good effect, and enables you to see exactly who is in control of the ball at all times. It also allows a wide variety of tactics to be implemented ranging from a simple chip shot to precise passes and banana shots. The game is accompanied by a rather strident sounding sfx from the PC's speakers. There are some very nice facilities too. Goals, for instance are shown again in TV style action replays, complete with a video reviewing effect.

The game implements two sets of rules: good old Association Soccer and Indian (American) rules. There are four competitors that can be played: Microprose International, Chi-

another club across the pitch need look no further. Microprose Soccer is a definite winner. **ACE RATING: 9/10**



BAAL

Psychapse PC CD-ROM ST version reviewed issue 19 Ace Rating 7/10

In the tradition of good old Hammer Horror an unsuspecting archaeological excavator an evil that has lain hidden for thousands of years. The removal of an ancient tablet releases the demon that who takes possession of a top secret war machine with which it stands to rule the world. A crack squad of Time Warriors is quickly set up — their objective is to kill and destroy Baal and return with the Time Machine.

Baal is basically a very attractive looking platform game. You have to guide each of the time warriors through Baal's lair, which is of course populated by a number of obvious traps and monsters. There are some obstacles which have to be thought about if you are to get past them, which saves this from being a run-of-the-mill jump and shoot affair. There are also auto weapons to be collected to ease your progress through the game. You'll need them — the lair is a fair size and certainly not easy.

As with all Psychapse games, the animation is excellent and completed by nicely drawn multi-layered backgrounds. The PC version looks as good and plays just as well as the Amiga version, and although this is by no means the world's most original game it does promise more leading entertainment than most efforts in a similar vein. A worthwhile buy.

ACE RATING: 7/10

lango, World Cup Tournament, Soccer League, and Two Player Friendly.

The game can be played with either keyboard or joystick, although I wouldn't recommend the latter option unless you have very dexterous fingers! Gameplay tends to be fast paced and events with many goals even though the maximum length of play for a single match is twelve minutes.

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AMIGA / ST



GAMES: SUMMER EDITION

US GOLD '92: US, C64 version reviewed issue 78, Amiga Rating 7/10

More joystick wiggling than the number of sports simulations, Ego. This time the scene is the 1992 Olympics in Seoul. The game is apparently officially endorsed by the American Olympic team, which of course has absolutely no bearing on its quality. There are eight different events to compete in: Sprint Cycling, 400m Hurdles, Mixed Paralle Bars, Rings, Pole Vaulting, Fencing, Hammer Throwing, and Diving.

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

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

Some of the events, like fencing, are easily mastered, but Diving, Rings, and Paralle Bars all

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

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

AGE RATING: 8/10

SPECTRUM +3

APB

COMPAQ CD-ROM, CD-ROM ST version reviewed issue 85, Amiga Rating 7/10

APB was one of those arcade games that, while it was far from advanced on the graphics and sound front, scored highly in the playability stakes. Colourful, cartoon style graphics and easily mastered gameplay made it an appeal lacking in many home sports-themed machines. It could be an official DOB, a handwringing highway construction firm to keep up with its daily quota of arrests, while scooching round the streets in your car entering more offences. You may also have to follow up an Al Porto Bulletin for the arrest of a major criminal. Once you have hit, it's back to the vie-

low to squeeze out a confession.

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

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

AGE RATING: 6/10

HILLSFAR

US GOLD '92: US, C64 Version reviewed issue 77, Amiga Rating 7/10

While it's another SCOTTIE game in the Adventure Dungeon and Dragons series, Hillsfar suffered the unfortunate fate that all such games the title screen you are presented with a set of "Camp Options" that allow you to load and save characters, or create new ones.

Once you have chosen the character you wish to play with then the game begins with a ride to the town of Hillsfar. This involves an arcade style sequence in which you control the speed of your horse and its jumping. To get to the town in one go you must leap over the obstacle in your path.

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

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

Enter a building and the view changes from 2D to map to a large 3D-style perspective. Inside the building you can explore further, opening chests, and avoiding guards and floor traps.

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

AGE RATING: 7/10



ST

TV SPORTS: FOOTBALL

Comcastware, CD-ROM, Amiga version reviewed issue 18, Amiga Rating 8/10

The ST has certainly had its fair share of sports simulations, and numbering among those are plenty of attempts at capturing the essence of Soccer. American Football fans are a lot harder to come by, but gridiron fanatics need look no further. Comcastware have truly released the ST version of the ultimate American Football game.

If you are already familiar with Comcastware's attractive movie software then you will not be surprised to learn that graphically the game is excellent. During normal play the grid is shown in a high 3D perspective from the offence, but when a field goal is attempted an impressive "kicker's eye" perspective is adopted. Additionally there are some attractive TV style sequences at half-time and before the game.

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

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

For each down you have a short amount of time to call a play before the view of the grid appears. During the actual play the computer controls all the players, but the one or two auto-burst control. This leaves a slight light in its track as the computer gradually learns your style of play and tries to emulate it.

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

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

AGE RATING: 8/10

Blood Money



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IN SEQUENCE

ON BATES CHECKS OUT TWO VERY IMPRESSIVE PACKAGES...

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

VIRTUOSO

Virtuoso is a MIDI sequencer designed to rival the best that the foreign software houses can put out. In short a package with top professional specifications but at a price that is completely enough to appeal to the average home user.

The first thing to note about Virtuoso is that it has done away with the 37 GEM extensions. The claim is that GEM is slow in operation and meant that operations took a longer time than was acceptable for studio work. Digital Music, the developing company for the package, have therefore written a completely new multi-tasking operating system designed especially for Virtuoso. This has given the software several advantages over any rivals.

The first thing is that the resolution per quarter note (that's a crocheted in traditional terms) is 480 clicks. To put this in perspective this actually means that every note worth a quarter of a four beat bar is split into 480 distinct parts. If any obvious serves me well this is a total of 2600 clicks per bar, which subdivides it of 1/32nds by notes.

Other advantages are that all disk operations are carried out as a background operation leaving the program to run. Recording and playback are carried out as work is done to disk which saves quite a bit of time. The same goes for print outs. It has very generous text handling capabilities so that instead of having to write about 16 bits of paper to note down various relevant information it can be used as part of the program and printed out



Music II - multi-option, multi-tracking and more besides!

as you work. Finally the screen re-draws itself much faster than the ordinary GEM program.

All this super speed and feature generosity wouldn't count for a jot unless the program was easy to use and its intricacies very to follow. Thankfully this is pretty well true of Virtuoso all mouse actions are duplicated on the pretty keyboard and there are no drop-down menus.

Virtuoso is divided into several main pages. The main area of activity is the Block page. Up to 99 tracks make up a block (a section of a piece, and each track is separate and named) and these run from the top of the screen and can be scrolled through. The screen design is not unfamiliar with the controlling users set to the right along with the counters and service markers. Since there are no menus, all the functions you want are onscreen all the time.

All active tracks have a bar meter and can be set to on or off. However in the Block page it isn't even possible to 'solo' any one track although you could do this from the edit page. Re-voicing is subject to options. Apart from the usual straightforward recording you can also have automatic drag in and out at specified bars, and cycle record. With the latter you can either layer a track up part by part or do a multi-take, which lets you try out different ideas for say a solo and each pass is taken on a separate live track. You can then pick the best or edit two or three takes together.

After recording your first track the options

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

Many other options are available onscreen as well - program change, pan position, looping, track delay, transpose, note levels, velocity and compression plus individual MIDI filters. Tracks can be cleaned, copied and removed completely.

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

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

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

DO CLICKS MATTER?

How can you divide a four-beat bar into 1920 time slices or 'clicks'? So what?

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



Versions for the ST - fully specified, professional, and easy to use.

mechanical tracks.

If this is not enough, another page, called the Zone page, lets you define areas of tracks and get to work to reset any of the note parameters recorded: the note numbers themselves, the velocity, the length, the start time, a re-voicing the velocity over pre-defined points either up or down, although volume doesn't appear to be an option. Other processes controlled by the Zone page are the merging, and general cut and past facilities.

Drums are sorted into a full-blown piece in the Arrange page. There are eight streams that can run simultaneously and so therefore up to eight tracks can be run at any one time. Tempo shifts can also be inserted here although these positions don't seem to be an option.

Whistles will save in its own format or MIDI file format and there are options within the program left for future developments such as using bit tracks of MIDI, assigning notes or MIDI events to control parts of the program and synchronization from SMPTE format. Altogether a superb and very well thought through program.

Version: ST 0225.00

Contact **The Digital Muse** on 01-686-3445

MUSIC-X

Music X is not only a sequencer but also a voice programmer, a sampler, and a MIDI controller. It takes full advantage of the multitasking capabilities of Amiga and is the first package specifically designed for it. Although it will run on an Am500, it is recommended that you have at least 1 megabyte of RAM. As a sequencer it doesn't need any external MIDI devices. Since it can play back four sampling/internal sounds simultaneously it makes an ideal starting point for anybody who hasn't got any MIDI equipped instruments. The program does not come with a MIDI interface; it will work with any Amiga MIDI interface to take your pick.

These disks make up the total package: the program disk plus examples and utilities. There is also a very comprehensive 100 page

SAMPLING

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

manual.

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

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

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

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

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

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

bars refer to the velocity and aftertouch. These are inserted on a grid and the changes switch from left to right. On the far left is a vertical piano keyboard which provides a pitch guide, although notes are not actually highlighted on it.

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

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

Temporizing sequences is via the File Sequences, the method of using amounts used. It also seemed to be the only way of temporizing entire sequences, which I found not to be the most satisfactory of methods. Perhaps a window that would have allowed visual assembly of sequences would have been better. Data is saved in three formats and there is an additional utility program to tie the conversions MusicX file, MIDI file, which enables it to be loaded into other MIDI sequencers, and Amiga SMU file.

The filter page maps out the MIDI information coming in and routes it to whether it is wanted. This is a most comprehensive page which will also modify MIDI messages at will as dividing any keyboard up into a split MIDI keyboard. It will also magnify or mute the filter has pitchbend so that they don't have to be affected when swapped from one instrument to another. Any setup you make is stored as the one of four layouts.

MusicX is unique in that it is a complete set of programs under one umbrella and its departments are very well catered for. If Amiga owners should start saving now - even without MIDI you can still use the internal voices. There were one or two things that I felt were missing, but overall the best package I have graded the parts of my Amiga.

Music-X Amiga 0199.00
Contact **SDS**, 01 502 5399

VOICING IT

If you are working with MIDI instruments, the Librarian page will collect the voice information from all the synths in the set up. To do this it will need access to all MIDI hardware in use. Some are already provided, but it is not too much trouble to create your own. In the section are three excellent graphic voice editing programs for the DR21/100, T8812 and 1230. These on their own are worth quite a bit, one of the advantages of Music X is that voicing modules will be available to update that part of the program. But for the ability to replace a synth without re-loading I would gladly give more than five program copies.

TUSKER



C64



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ATARI ST



ATARI ST



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TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

A HELPING HAND, COURTESY OF OTHER ACE READERS



New Zealand Story

C64 POKES GALORE

Courtesy of Casey Gallardo, leading here are a few helpful in-site tips, tricks to give C64 games players a helping hand. For all of these pokes you should load the game as normal then reset and enter the poke followed by the SYS-call to restart the game.

HERO COMBO

POKE 0048,113
SYS 1848 or SYS 1850 for the top score

BOMB

POKE 1140,113
SYS 387

PHOENIX

POKE 0390,189
SYS 2170

COMPARATOR

POKE 0290,358
SYS 2113, then reset and enter SYS call again.



LEEDS TO KILL

POKE 0448,113
POKE 14750,170
POKE 00054,170
POKE 11565,170
POKE 15485,170
POKE 01042,170

also POKE 13981,170 for unlimited ammo.

SYS 5245 for SYS 32768 for a life message!

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY

How is it that the programmer's of the latest game of 1989 also turn out to be the most fool-proofed. Simply "r" then of course hit us how to get inside level.

While playing press the DEL key and the game will reset to the title screen. Now type "R" and the laser gun sound will be heard. Now type in sequence BROTHER, FLECKMORRIS7480 and a fancy title tone will be played. When you reset start the game your character will show a small hole and a 9-volt.

They also sent us the following useful tips:

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

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

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

Let the fire logs duplicate and shoot them to get a selection of

useful goodies like Potions, these make you invincible for about 20 seconds, or Shields which kill everything on the screen.

If you are a double-ported C64 owner try another tribute item cheat for New Zealand Story from Brian Docherty, Glasgow.

Place the side of your hand over the keys W,E,S,T,Y. Now bring the palm of your hand over S, D, F, G, H and press the spacebar. The border will turn grey indicating that the cheat mode has been activated. This cheat will also work on level one of Dominate.

DUNGEON MASTER

Nathan Powell from Devonshire provides a little help to those still poking over this superb game from Microsoft.

"What is undertaken is still over-land". Place shields from skeletons on the pressure pads and step out of the way to dodge the fireballs. Now walk into them.

"The fountain takes one walk" it also takes one coin.

"Time is of the essence" 0-88 and 0-80. Drop items not needed to fight and press the gem in, then

7-110



Dungeon Master

LEVEL	ITEM	ABILITIES
10	Armor of Dam	Makes you hard, see
10,11,12	Armor of Life	Wields less
1	Ball Blade	shoots lightning *
1	Crown of Helms	+10 wisdom
11	Diamond Edge	Extra damage
7	Dragon Spit	+1 Mana
14	Eye of Time	Access life*
7	Feet Pendant	+1 Wizard Level
14	Fire Staff & Power Gem	+2 Power
7	Flameball	+12 And/or
11	Flamet	Moves fireballs
11	Fury	Shoots fireballs *
10	Hardihood	Extra damage
7	Humint	Creates little light
7	Invisibility	+1 Mana & extra dam.
12	Mastelkey	Door with-in back.
11	Moonstone	+3 Mana
12,7,9,10	Ro Keys	Doors with-in back
11	Ruby Ploy	A1 above
7	Sapphire of Lyl	+3 Mana, heals & light
12	Spike Staff	+8 Mana, heals
7	Staff of Clouds	+4 Mana
10	Staff of Mana	+10 Mana, Chapel
9	Storm Ring	Shoots lightning *
3	Tec Wand	+6 Mana, Calm spell
6	Voyal Staff	+4 Mana, Clouse spell
7	Winged Key	Access to level

BATMAN

THE PENGUIN'S MANSION

GROUND FLOOR

MAP TO THE PENGUIN'S MANSION



LOFT



SECOND FLOOR

MAP TO THE PENGUIN'S MANSION



If the Penguin and Joker are making life just a little too difficult for you, look for advice from Mark Lawrence of *Maniacs* should come in handy.

18 DM CODES205

20 FOR N-2 TO 131

30 READ 42,4-44,15H-45

40 CODES205-A

50 PLOT N

60 CHAR-EMPTICCODES205

70 CALL 24247

70-80M TYPE IN THIS LISTING

AND SAVE FOR FUTURE USE

80-90M INPUT SOFTWARE CODE

AND RUN THE PROGRAM

90-99M GAME SHOULD LOAD AS

USUAL WITH INFINITE LIVES

00 0474 4174, 0214, 4374,

0001, 1E00, 2708, 707F, 2208

110 0474 5108, 777C, 4C7F,

707F, 2C7E, 8004, 4E4E, 7109

120 0474 2203, 5280, 8780,

0280, 408A, 014C, 347C, 0400

130 0474 4050, 38C1, 3078,

4E4E, FE2A, 24C0, 2480, 2540

140 0474 3038, 5490, 4265,

4874, 207C, 148C, 0005, 367C

150 0474 3038, 028A, 41E0,

0008, 2848, 0008, 4174, 0002

160 0474 7100, 7280, 439A,

000A, 404E, FE44, 4450, 4600

170 0474 026C, 790C, 597C,

4156, 3002, 4674, 0087, 0080

180 0474 4026, 450C, 217E,

4774, 0206, 418A, 403C, 800C

190 0474 5474, 00C1, 226C,

0000, 0400, 230C, 4274, 7220

200 0474 930C, 3440, 047C,

3041, 0002, 4074, F134, 2057

210 0474 217C, 6374, 4152,

080C, 307C, 5400, 0400, 4568

220 0474 810C, 4774, 028A,

347C, 4E7F, 2458, 4E7F, 4374

230 0474 0580, 2708, 227C,

3008, 1281, 308C, 4E7F, 4574

240 0474 00E7, 8004, 4774,

0004, 600C, 4C7E, 000C, 227C

250 0474 00E7, 024C, 203C,

217C, 0000, 607C, 4026, 6780

260 0474 223C, 0214, 0580,

2180, 1000, 3380, 304C, 1808

270 0474 4841, 2180, 0000,

318C, 4171, 3008, 400C,

7E7F,

280 0474 0360, 606A,

0873, 600C, 6448, 7664,

6265, 0080

While still on the subject of Batman — The Caped Crusader, J.Pink of *Maniacs* has compiled the following maps for the Penguin Game. He tells us that a map for the Joker game is not necessary since there is only ever one route to follow.

Here is a very useful list of objects in the games, also compiled by McPak:

THE PENGUIN — A BIRD IN THE HAND?

Item	Usage
Spinner	Insert it in
Game Disc	Insert the disc
Police Badge	Don't make me use this
Key (Yellow)	It's a key!
Grenade	No! No! Ooof!
Rope	Getting you down!
Touch	Black Room
Left Key	Getting back up again
Cart	Throw it overboard!
Flash Card	It glows — that's it or
Video Tape	Play on the
Key (Maroon)	Locked door
Kids	Stay where
Trumpet	On the right track

Video Disc
Tweezer/L
Magnet
On the right track
Useless items
Spins

The following items exchange full strength: Bread, Canned Drink, Dotted Sweet, Fried Egg, and Cheese.

THE JOKER — 'A FETE WORTH TEAR DROPS'

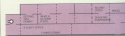
Item	Usage
Ball	Black Room
Crusher	Men at work
Book	Second Black Room
Sawtooth	It's getting smaller
Fake Teeth	To allow eating
Wax Cullens	To diffuse bombs
Money	Fee for penny dropped
Ammo	Use with gun to load it
Gun	Open season!
Sunglasses	White Room
Handcuffs	Arrest the real Joker
Joker Card	To go through Joker door
Knife	To free Robin
Play Cards	Simply use once
Camera	Gain 500
Harmonica	As above
White Elephant	Useless item, ignore it

The following items exchange strength fully: Candy, Fish, Canned Drink, Carton of Milk, Flash Duffin, and House Mouse!



THE PENGUIN'S WAREHOUSE

MAP TO 205



MAP TO 205



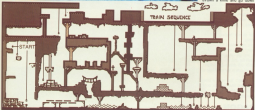
INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE



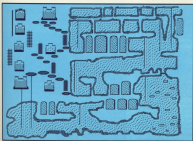
Level 2

The map of US Gold's latest jaunt with old Indy was made up from those supplied by P.J.Dragg of Chipstead and Richard Davis, London. P.J.Dragg also provides a few tips for completing the first level.

Go down the rope slowly. At the end of it, jump to the other rope quickly. Wait until the man has thrown a knife and go down the



Level 1



Level 2

rope quickly. When you are at the bottom, go right. Wait for a piece of rock to fall and then jump up the rope. Walk along the platform and get the knife. Now go back and drop down into the whip. Kneel down until the gun man has stopped firing and then whip him quickly. Go right until you reach the two gunmen. Kneel down until they turn around and then jump over the barrels. Now follow them and when they turn around, whip them. When jumping onto ropes, go to the bottom of the rope before you jump or you will die. Jump off at the end and whip the man. Wait before climbing the rope because of rock falls. Take one knife and climb the rope. Stay on the rope until the nearest man has got gone up. Jump across and wait. Jump onto the second rope and follow the man up until you see the first man go down. Jump across, climb up the first rope and jump into the siding.

run into the passage at the other end of the corridor.

"Don't let a closed door stop you! Drop it down in other words.

"How shall pass? Unless you have a feather, chop this door low.

"Cast thy influence, cast thy might!" Use the 3D spell to open the door, then throw an item across the pit.

"When it rock not rock? When it is an illusion a pore to the left? The wall.

"The wall was nothing! Not much anyway.

"This is my prisoner, let him suffer! Don't take orders. Throw something you don't need at him, or it'll be!

"You will regret that! Not if you want to go on to the next level.

"Start Cut! Put a gold key in the lock and a transporter will appear. Make across leads you to 4. Go in and wait a few seconds, then go in again. You should land on them. If not, try again. On the second level there is a floor you need to open with a gold key. Don't. Just chop it down and leap the key.

"Lighter than a feather! Aid His Commands.

"Weave my twisted furrows, the decelerate, the water! Become a snake and go left until the end, right until the end, and so on.

"To death still think for better! Put a gold coin in the small hole in the wall.

"Hole room! You need a few, gold coin and blue gem to open gate. But with Mirror of Breen as well, you get a prize.

DRAGON NINJA

Mark Russell from Southport explains how to dispatch your opponents:

Samurai Warriors:

Run under them as they are in motion. As they land, perform a back kick.

Overwing Ninjas:

Aimed — weapon downright, left. Downward — Kick downright, left.

Guard Dog:

As for "Crawling Ninja"

Grey Ninja:

Drop to lower level or water jump to higher level (just before he starts to throw the starburst).

Big Fire-breather:

Aimed — Just keep striking him. Downward — Super punch and spinning kick.

Second Level Guardians:

Super Punch. Keep standing on top of the rock.

Green Whizzing Ninja:

The spinning, kick and Super



Message on the Sega

CONSOLE CORNER

DOUBLE DRAGON — SEGA

For infinite fun on a one player game, play through to level four, then move directly up to a door-way. Move to the centre of the door and its leading numeral lock and PUSH START appears for Player 2. You will now have infinite lives. If you are playing a two player game then all player 2 off at the end of level 3 and then follow the same procedure. Both players will now have infinite lives. (David Cook, London)

RAMPAGE — SEGA

When the GAME OVER sign appears push both buttons and you can continue. This will work up to three times. (Paul Tates, Reading)

ALTERED BEAST — SEGA

If you think three energy squares is not much to start with then push diagonally up-left simultaneously with button 1. You will now begin with five

energy squares. (Paul Tates)

GEORGE — RENTERO

Pause the game and press up twice, down twice, left, right, left, right, and unpauses the game for ready of the weapons. (Elizabeth Lee, London)

DRUNKEN MASTER — PC ENGINE

Turn the machine on, then off, then on again. Hold down the RUN and SELECT buttons. Next release the RUN button and push UP once. Now release the SELECT button and push UP three times, RIGHT six times,

DOWN twice, and LEFT three times. Choose the stage and make yourself invincible. You will be returned to the title screen. (Gaston Lee)

GHOST HOUSE — SEGA

To gain points for extra time quickly, jump on about 15 arrows on a screen, then every thing will turn yellow. You can now walk through everything, getting 1000 points for arrows, coppers, and mummies. On screen 2, always try to jump on a dagger before tackling Dhruu in (Steven Lewis, Doncaster)



Altered Beast on the Sega

Punch are the quickest way to get rid of him. When he tries to jump over you, give him a midkick.

Armored Giant Ninja:

Aimed — Keep hitting him. Downward — Super Punch. Position yourself right in front of him. When he starts to super kick, jump into the air.

CARRIER COMMAND

If you're having trouble taking over enemy islands or occupying neutral islands then try this. When in range of an island tap on the map. Zoom in on the present island. Now, simply press F8 and the island is yours!

(Duncan Harris, Redhead)

YOUR NAME IN LIGHTS?

Do you often buy supposedly difficult games, finish them within hours, and then wonder what all the fuss is about? Can you crack and hack even the most secure new releases quickly? Are you capable of mapping games clearly and producing sound tips for novice players? If the answer to any or all of these questions is yes, then you may well be the sort of person we're looking for. We plan to set up a team of hot games

cracksters to produce the best tricks, tips, and cheats available anywhere. If you are prepared to contribute regularly, for a tidy reward of course, and think that you can come up with the goods, then send samples of your work to:

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London,
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HOT
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THIS IS REALITY



With the price of beer rocketing our First Ball a Classic Game to budget golf games has never been more realistic. You can now buy a budget \$60 cassette for the same price as two titles of Tennents Extra at the ACU team favourite watering hole (City Place, Farnspop Lane). What's more, six titles of Tennents Extra will set you a £60 disk now that the new wave of budget Ariga and ST titles are beginning to appear.

Of particular interest this month are Crystal Castles, World Class Leader Board, Football Manager, Paperboy, and 'Yo Yo' King 5+ - all for the price of a pint or less...

SOLDIER OF LIGHT

Rev £29.99
Spectrum, Amstrad, C64

Handing shoot 'em up in the Farnspop World, Crosscape would like to power up, the odd lot of platform leaping, and particularly some end of level mad-as-snake 500, or 60 - but for from exceptional - shoot 'em up.

All 8 bit versions received a competent level in both graphics and sound.

It will be seen, it slightly over rated console conversion in its day. Good buy for those determined to have every concept that ever merged in their collection.



JACK THE NIPPER

Rev £29.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Jack the Nipper game is computer gaming one of its most featured gameplay devices - the 'Naughty-nipper'. Every time Jack got up to a piece of mischief like lighting the cat, smashing pipes, or firing out shots at people with his air shooter so his 'Naughty-nip-

BLASTS FROM THE PAST

BLASTS FROM THE PAST BREAK OUT ON BUDGET...

If you've missed out on some of the great all-time hits of yesteryear, now's your chance to pick them up at knock-down prices as software houses continue to release chortling games on budget labels. Here's this month's guide to unmissable bargains... plus the addresses to order from if you have difficulty finding them in your local corner shop...

per' would go up. The niggardly Jack makes for an amusing, multi-level challenge. Piles of medium difficulty level and lots of laughs.



WORLD CLASS LEADER BOARD

Classic £29.99
ST

The classic golf game from Access has undergone an almost constant process of upgrading, tweaking, and development of new courses. World Class Leaderboard was one of the later versions and has therefore been

free from these improvements. It offers a 3D view of the course with excellent graphical representation of trees, bunkers, water and the green. The player can select from a range of clubs, make adjustments to allow for wind conditions and set the power of the shot by using the controller to the right of the play window. Among a range of machines the Leader Board files have the edge on the competition. At a price that is lower this is an excellent purchase for your ST.



RAMBO

Rev Square £29.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad



Rambo looks mighty in Spectrum graphics.

This was Ozark's badge for Christmas '86. A four directional scrolling shoot 'em up pressed on the face of the Stallone command do movie hero. Just using a major debt to the Capcom console - Commands.

Many footings to be rescued (instead enemy lines - but this time the player needs eyes in the back of his head as the enemy foots come at you from all directions. A variety of weapons are at your disposal including grenades, bazookas, and an army tank. Later in the game you have to find the chopper and ferry your more footings. Graphics based on a television scenario as per the film are coded to a high standard on all 8bit machines. Tough though 'em up with a fair degree of planning and strategy required to be successful.



720

Rev £29.99
Spectrum, Amstrad, C64

This Atari console really turned heads when it showed up in the archives in the Summer of '87. It looked like the freshest thing you ever saw with its skate boarding hero clad in multi coloured Bermuda, guffed hair cut, and loud surf-rock music pumping out of the cabinet. US 8bit were straight in for the home rights and it turned up at Christmas of the same year.

Unfortunately, the gameplay never really lived up to its splendid graphics and laser game idea. This was not US's fault. They made a good job of most of the 8-bit conversions C64 was the best. Spectrum and Amstrad just completed.

The aim is to successfully negotiate the four skateparks - winning points and prizes. Skating between challenges can be hazardous as the Bucks, Bears, and body builders that also inhabit the streets are out at all times on skate board wheels.



FOOTBALL MANAGER

Price £3.99
ST, Ariga

From could well cause a storm in the games business by pricing their classic football management game at £3.99. This could be good news if other companies follow suit. FM is the standard management soccer game. Pick your team, study form, check the league position, - its all there as you become Couplie for an afternoon. Highly recommended.



Jack's 'Naughty-nipper' setting will show if he can do something bad with that toy.



ROAD RUNNER

Encore £27.99
C64, Spec, Amstrad

This Atari coin-op gobbled stacks of coins when it appeared in the arcades early in 1983. It made the strange decision to cast the games player as the Road Runner rather than Wile E. Coyote — the hapless hero of the cartoons who never quite manages to catch that darned bird. The aim is to get as much distance between you (Wile E. Coyote) and Wile E. Coyote as possible.

All at the hills of the coin-op are here — the puff of smoke of Road Runner's foot as he hops on the jet-powered skis board, for example. There is also the pop! which enrage Wile E. and the various bits of green to be grabbed on by the bird as he moves. A simple but amusing conversion of the Atari classic. Good fun — even if you only get a few days challenge out of it.



BATTY

Encore £22.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Batty is an Arkonoid clone. Bounce your balls off the tiles to take them out one by one. Furious counter-ops can be caught to enable you to do this faster. Scores of this type of game were launched about three years ago as the software industry discovered its traditional lack of originality. Still — the games are hugely addictive and Batty is as good a rendition of the genre as you are likely to see.



GREEN BERET

Hit Squad £27.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

One of the best military shoot 'em ups and a wonder hit in the

mandos sent in to rescue them. Dash left to right taking out the Russians on impressive back drops of a naval base, aircraft base, missile base, and giant army robot launchers and tanks swirl past.

Surprisingly thought out, shoot 'em-ups with excellent graphics and implemented on all 1984 systems.



YIE AR KUNG FU

Hit Squad £27.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad



Cute platform vapors in the Bubble Bubble tradition.

arcades when launched by Taito way back in 1982. Ocean cleaned up with the home conversions in summer '86 and now they offer you a second attempt to rescue the hostages at £2.99.

Beep behind enemy lines, six hostages are roped to stakes about to face the firing squad. You are one of the great best coin-

A classic Konami best 'em up that earned Ocean a chart tooting position in the Spring of '86. You are the brave contender Solong who must kick the 47 7i out of ten opponents in your quest to become the Kung Fu Master. Two impressive backdrops — an oriental temple and a water fall provide the setting for the scraps. The

opponents have differing abilities and weapons such a Stars and Munchaus so it is essential to master the variety of different kicks, punches, legs available to you in 'Ye Ar. There are sixteen possible moves in two modes which puts 'Ye Ar Kung Fu a notch or two above the multitude of best 'em ups that have been launched over the years. Again, as if it bit tiles were converted to a good standard.



BOMBJACK II

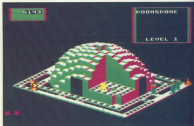
Encore £27.99
C64, Spec, Amstrad

Elite had high hopes for the sequel to the Taito platform classic in Spring '87. Although the game play never really matched that of its stable mate Bubble Bubble, it was a good, addictive, platform challenge nonetheless. The cute character from the original game is not quite so cute in this version as he comes armed with a knife to deal with his adversaries. The display has a semi-3D effect as 3D maps onto the screen as he explores his platform. There are scattered with treasure which (if) must collect — being careful to avoid the mutated dinosaurs who would prefer to keep the treasure themselves, for in the first division with Bubble Bubble but in the same league.



CRYSTAL CASTLES

Hit Squad £27.99
Amstrad, C64, Spectrum



Crystal Castles — a classic 3D style Pacman with several passages and a wicked witch to watch.



A happy pile of newspapers are up for grabs if our delivery boy can avoid the Runaway OB.

Another out-of-control classic is about to break out on budget, and luckily for you if you missed it the first time — highly likely as its launch at full price three years ago was a strangely low-key affair. Storage when you consider that this 3D Runaway-style game was one of the most addictive cabinets ever to stand in an arcade. You play the part of Sam by the floor who must gather all of the gems dotted around the face of eight-bit ice structures. Each level must be completely clear before progressing to the next and Sam'sy must make use of the lifts, pulleys, ramps and ladder passages if he is to succeed. The obstacles, seen, Gem Eaters and Bertha's the witch are being on to the game. Ultimate's porting job totally upstaged the arcade entertainment.



MONTY ON THE RUN

Score 82/89
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Up there with the best of platform games produced for the home systems. Monty has two main strengths — funsize in abundance and a brilliant 'Loopy Lane' style level track. The aim of the game is to get the recently equipped from Snodgrass prison Monty safely out of the County on a chained tunnel before the cops catch up with him. Various items have to be collected and used if Monty is to succeed. The puzzles are intricate yet the game plays with great speed. A fine platform classic.



PAPERBOY

Score 82/89
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

This Atari classic became Citi's biggest ever hit in the Winter of '86 and is well over proof of the fact that a paperboy's job is a tough one. He or your chopper take time with a basket and get those papers delivered. If this sounds lame, bear in mind that in the States it is acceptable for newspapers to sling the papers into the porches without announcing. This speeds things up a bit but it's still no pushover with hazards that include cars, motorbikes, trucks, and hair-raising lawnmowers out to clippe you. Bonus points can be earned by taking the papers through the windows of non-subscribers. Maybe ACE should try this. Several features and extremely well executed graphics on 8-bit formats make for a top get classic worth two pints of any one's money.



ARCADE FLIGHT SIMULATOR

Commodore 62/69
C64

Arcade Flight Simulator from Commodore is a bit heavier on the arcade than on the simulator. Don't expect anything akin to Falcon in this one. Having said that it does have a bit more in it than simply flying around the screen blasting the enemy. You have to refuel, check your ammo, and drop bombs on enemy targets. As you progress through the levels there are more targets to be taken out. Some real aerial combat scenes

make for a moderately amusing game.



GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Score 82/89
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad



Arms outstretched, Sam brings down one everywhere after the Ghosts and Goblins' knight — in his speed to rescue his princess.

Ghosts and Goblins was one of the first really huge arcade adventures to appear in the arcades. It was so big, and so tough that you had to pump packets full of change into it to get anywhere. For this reason most people believed the Capcom title would convert well to home use.

Which indeed it did. You play a knight in shining armor sent on a mission to rescue a princess. Sounding heroic since you have to evade the various ghosts, goblins, and evil bad who emerge from their graves to thwart your quest. Well decorated with Magazine accolades when it was launched in Winter '86 and, in 1987, a solid budget purchase.



MIG 29 - SOVIET FIGHTER

Commodore 62/69
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Commodore's choice of aircraft for the arcade game is very clever. NATO into the Russian jet as the best fighter to emerge from their designers' pens. Although the USAF will not admit it, informed sources think it is a match for the F16 Falcon.

Unfortunately you cannot get much of an idea of what the plane is like as it appears very small on screen, and there is no manual at all. Gameplay makes up for it though, being Defender-like as you pick up parameters for bonus points. Not a real simulator — but it still has lots of data to be mastered — fuel, distance, weapons, to name but three. Best of all though, this is your turn to be the enemy.



ALIEN SYNDROME

Score 82/89
Atari ST, Amiga

This Sega coin-op gathered a cult following in the arcades in 1987. It's up to you to level sixteen mazes up of what looked like a mass of giant hair' eyes could really make you chuck if you happened to wander into your local arcade after a grumpy lull. It's a four-directional scroller with an overhead perspective — in the style of Gauntlet.

The aim of the game is to re-

cut your colleagues whom the alien have lapped in by cells along the walls of each level. As you cut about doing this you will also have to waste the alien rats are determined to hang on to their captives.

By comparison with the latest releases for 16-bit machines Alien Syndrome now looks very basic. Graphically the 16-bit versions compare favourably to the coin-op original. Fine for a while but lacking in long term appeal.



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NINTENDO UPDATE

Whatever the attractions of the new 16-bit consoles, Nintendo owners can still take comfort from some of the best gameplay on offer.

Nintendo are emerging as the still of computer games. With a virtual monopoly of the games scene in America and Japan and a rapidly growing empire in Europe, their power is awesome. In recent years this power has been used to lure exclusive rights to almost every major computer console. Big name Japanese companies like Sega, Taito, Capcom, and Jaleco have all signed deals with Nintendo. This is good news for Nintendo owners - but bad news if you own anything else, as Nintendo will be able to use their muscle to block the launch of these games on any other system.

Here are four of the latest offerings, including a real gem: Tetris, running on the Gameboy handheld. Playing Tetris on the train with head phones on is an experience worth paying a lot of cash for.

IKARI WARRIORS

Two player warriors in the jungle

Don't let Ikari Warriors be typical of the new wave of titles. You won't see it on the PC Engine, Sega, or any other console. It's a two player deal that lets you and a chum as Paul and Vince with secret orders to invade an enemy nation.

The game scrolls in four directions - Command-style as hordes of enemy troops come at you. Stacks of power-ups are up for grabs to help the dynamic duo in their manoeuvres. There are grenades which you will need to take out the pillboxes, tanks, gators and choppers.

Team work is the key to success in Ikari Warriors. You need to advance in planned stages - interfering each other as you advance at screen. Tricky situations can be avoided by picking up 'K' power-ups. These act as smart bombs, wiping out everything on screen.

Graphics are convincing - particularly the

opening screen which shows Paul and Vince's plane trailing into thick jungle foliage. The over head view of the game itself is characterised by desert, jungle and rivers - with the enemy emerging from native huts, and fortresses.

As a shoot 'em up, Ikari Warriors isn't going to win any awards. The game play seems a bit dated - particularly in the way the power-ups work. You don't have any control over them as you die - say in 87 seconds. The conversion has the speed of the arcade original but is slightly let down by vast differences in graphics.

If you find the rain-so go for it. But make sure you have Gradius in your collection before you buy Ikari or any other Nintendo shoot 'em up.

\$29.99 on cartridge.

Verdict: Simple shoot 'em up with little lasting appeal.



Ghosts 'n' Goblins was again liberally a superior hit in the arcade. Now a haunting experience on the Wii console.



GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Severely going on in Nintendo land

The classic Capcom classic provided a tough challenge for gamers when it hit the arcades in the Summer of '86. You had to pump pounds worth of coins into it to explore its seemingly endless fairy tale world. Thankfully, its conversion to play at home gives you a more realistic chance of cracking it.

You set out as a Knight in shining armour. Well eventually - when you find the armour that all info has to receive the beautiful princess locked (yaes) in a castle (yaes) by the devil - Zuzus.

Take up! It may be a costly job but its safe, addictive and good fun.

There are seven levels to be explored before you come face to face with the Devil - beyond the seventh gate. Various weapons need to be picked up and used if your knight is to defeat the various ghosts, goblins, being dead and Zombies that the devil brings into combat against your knight.

Your weapons are Bombs, Swords, Axes, Crosses, and Javelins. Feeling up is essential when you've reached the end of level eleven. You always have to win a key to the next level.

The success of the coin-up was largely due to the fairy tale appeal of the graphics. The castles, churches and graveyards were so convincing that it was easy to lose yourself in the atmosphere of the game. The Nintendo

struggled to emulate this world with very gritty graphics. The game play still manages to provide a tough challenge that is going to take some time to complete.

Lots of hidden characters and pitfalls will be discovered as you play the game - like a Magician who has an amazing habit of turning you into a frog, and the Red Devil who seems invincible.

The trouble with the Nintendo is that, despite it having a library of colour conversions far larger than any other console or

The arcade hit continues for Nintendo, but will it prove as popular?

computer, the machine lacks the graphical power to emulate them effectively. This is not a problem in some of the excellent original Nintendo titles like the Mario series - where the games have been designed within the framework of the NES's capabilities. But in games like *Ghost* and *Golden* it is really stretched. Having said that - it is still recommended to fans of the coin-op. All of the game play is there.

£29.99 on cartridge

Maniac! Arcade adventures that you won't want to put down until you have rescued the princess.

RUSH 'N ATTACK

All flashiness and pure yer owin's

Rush 'N Attack will be more familiar to most gamers as *Green Beret* - which was what the game was called in the UK. The final's actual title was the American name for the game. For reasons best known to Nintendo they have decided to market the game under its American name in the UK.

If you are now totally confused let me remind you of the scintillating shoot-up with the impressive military backdrops of a naval base, a missile base, army barracks, and air force base.

The aim of the game is to rescue the hostages that are locked in a jail awaiting the firing squad. As you dash from left to right the enemy soldiers come at you in waves. Armed with a commando knife you will also need to pick up a shoulder mounted bazooka if you are to progress to the next level.

The secret of the game is timing. Load, aim, and fire at just the right moment to kill the enemy and get on to the next strategic point in the game.

Green Beret/Rush'n Attack is everything you could ask for in a "lugging it" shoot 'em up. It's nice the way you can go up a lot - climbing only ten or twenty, without degenerating into a total platform exercise.



Green Beret, an oldie but new on Nintendo. Same game - different title!

Best thing of all about it though is its end-game sequence - assuring that you are heroic enough to get there. And no, *RCA* is not going to describe it for you lest so you can brag that you did it all on yer tool.

£29.99 on cartridge

Verdict: Good, tough arcade conversion that doesn't suffer at all from NES's bad graphics.

TETRIS

the hand-held standard

OK, so the Atari Lynx hand-held may have a full colour LCD display. It may have a processor that moves faster than an Amiga. It may also have software like *California Games* and stacks of other 'quality' American games waiting in the wings-but I would trade all of those for just one go on Game Boy Tetris.

If ever there was a computer game stu-

pid for Gameboy Tetris has to be it. Designed by a team of Moscow University students the game takes *Score Invaders*, turns it inside out, adds a geometrical jigsaw puzzle challenge with a few factor element thrown in.

You get just one go. The aim is to place the squares, oblongs, 'L' shapes, rods, and single cubes, together in such a way that they form a solid horizontal line. Using your game controller (the same as a Sega or Nintendo four directional pad) you can rotate the shapes to find the best position for them to fit the picture.

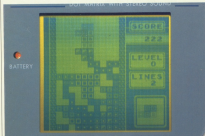
If you can keep it the second they appear on screen then you can enjoy them into position with your controller by keeping your finger pressed in the direction you think it will fit.

It's simple to learn, yet extremely difficult to master. For this very reason it is the best game you could think of to convert to a hand-held. It doesn't need flash graphics or sound - although in the sound department it performs pretty well on the Game Boy in full stereo through Walkman-style head phones.

The beauty of Tetris is it gives a hand-held game is it gives a purpose to the seemingly pointless pursuit of computer game high scores. Everyone wants to kill time occasionally - on a train, a bus, or even in a Cornish hotel without having water to make a fresh break from a heavy weekend of transcendental meditation. Tetris is so totally absorbing, addictive, and easy to get into that it achieves this far better than anything else that currently exists in the growing library of portable computer entertainment. It is, in fact, a meditation in itself.

£29.99 on cartridge

Verdict: A game to test a lifetime. It is to silicon-what Chess is to cardboard and wood.



Tetris - a deceptively simple idea makes a superb brain game. The blockbuster serial computer game is now available for the Gameboy!

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ADVENTURE

INDIANA JONES GETS HIS OWN GRAPHIC ADVENTURE

For those of you who saw any of the Indiana Jones movies, and came out of the cinema wondering what it would be like to actually live a hero, your chance has now arrived in the graphic adventure version of the US Gold arcade game.

The first thing you notice about Indy is its impressive packaging. Aside from the six-locust-themed box (that the ST version comes in, there is a code translation table with its transparent film decoder, and a soft-cover page copy of the Dr Henry Jones's Goal Diary, containing various clues and background information for the game. Already you are



Realistic, but the animation is a bit lacking.

ready, Indy can generally outpace them by vast speed.

The graphics are mostly of a high standard, as you would expect for the type of game. The backgrounds are all well drawn and in many cases animated. Simple effects, such as lightning, combined with some story effects really enhance the atmosphere. Although small, each character is well defined and detailed but their animation is simple and unconvincing. In the movies, the characters become smaller still, and only the small section of screen directly in front of our hero, is visible.

Sound is reasonably well implemented,

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US GOLD/LUCASFILMS follow arcade action with graphic adventure

beginning to feel the pain and you haven't even switched on your computer!

The game itself is an arcade-adventure in similar style to previous Lucasfilm/Us Gold releases Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders. The main action takes place in the centre of the screen, any game messages or dialogue appear above it, and below in your inventory and a list of verbs, the game is controlled almost entirely by the mouse, sentences can be constructed by clicking on the appropriate words, and Indy himself is moved around by using the 'walk' verb and pointing the cursor in the action window. The addition of a 'What is...' verb allows you to identify any object that may be of significance.

Your first task is to locate the computerised version of the Goal Diary, which can be opened up at key moments to give additional clues to those in the written version. Having found that, it's off to Venice to search for the entrance to the first of the maze sections, the catacombs, and a clue to the location of the Holy Grail. All subsequent locations are taken straight from the film, but your current course of action is not necessarily the same as Henry Ford's.

The puzzles are not particularly difficult but at times you may wish to smell to know over time and light, rather than enter your way out of trouble. Although shortcuts can be rewarding, gaining holy icons items, losing a fight has a very strong tendency to end the game. Combat is the weakest aspect of the game - as one would expect from an adventure-orientated release - and as there are only three punches and three blocking moves, fighting is easily mastered, and although encounters vary in dif-

LANDSCAPE

Background graphics are all rendered and well defined, but the character animation could have been better.

PROBLEMS/ERRORS

The striking elements of this game ultimately require attention in the normal adventure way, but the system seems to work.

QUALITY INDEX

Indy is fun, but don't expect to walk your brains out.

SYSTEM

For the most part everything I otherwise mentioned from Zak McKracken, but whether they were from an official announcement, it didn't impact anything!

AGE ADVENTURE RATING 8/10

Strong atmosphere makes the game interesting to complete, but as though you would never be returned to it once it has been completed.

fers is the obligatory missing reaction of the film's theme tune and some well-timed spot effects, but the cinematics that accompany the first stage is interesting rather than atmospheric.

The main problem with this game is the constant disk annoying, every new location has to be loaded in. This is not helped by having the game spread over six disks, as there is a fair amount of disk swapping to be done as well. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the picture clues below each load, leaving you staring at a blank screen until the next is ready to be done. Worse still is that the consequences of many of Indy's actions also have to be loaded in, which is fairly irritating when many of them are only simple animations (losing a couple of seconds, in occasion, certain actions, not used when loading a saved game, require several disk swaps, often using the same disk twice) surely the programmers could have arranged their code so that actions that follow one another are on the same disk!

This aside, there is much to recommend about the game. It is very well presented and has tremendous depth. The majority of the problems are not too hard, particularly for people who have seen the film, and being unable to solve one puzzle does not immediately lead to a dead-end, as not all need to be solved to complete the game. Even so, it is not a game that will be finished overnight, as each of the main locations is a game in itself.

Fans of the Indiana Jones movies will get a lot from the program, but be warned: progress can be very slow.

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IT'S HORRIBLE!

Horrorsoft are launching a game endorsed by the American vamp Elvira, a gal with a great...er...future...er...in front of her...

Elira Mistress of the Dark cuts a homely figure as she enters into the deep padded bath in the lounge bar of the Drexlerford Hotel Mayfair. A jet of tea is ordered and duly appears with a side plate of buns, honey, and fresh Top biscuits. AGC's reporter is beginning to feel nervous. Where's the wamp with the huge boobs, clinging black dress with plunging neckline, full back, baby feet and long black wig?

All in her full race, less, as Dora is all packed to jet off to Las Vegas in the morning where she is about to carry out another censorship endorsement for a new orbital table.

Wearing trousers and a brown cardigan she couldn't have looked less like the tiny star of America's hit Show Masters home show. Dora is the little girl of Avenue Address Cassandra Petrusus. Her character introduces the cast to coast TV show from a haunted house garage set.

The show consists of scenes of old horror classics. Dora introduces the films, points seductively before the commercial breaks, and struts every so often to make a satirical comment on the action or the plot. Her quips are picked up by her army of fans and she has come up with some outstanding put downs in the eight years the show has been running. (See the caption to her 'why they put her in' 'leaps or propped' another was so tall that 'most the audience who like it do a plain walked out).

Maria Macaire started out as a local show in the Los Angeles area in 1982. Since then Dora's popularity has spread to almost every TV station in America. The most recent lever shot in Los Angeles in 1992 when Dora's report rating was transmitted in 30. Shows reported rates of 7.7 million pairs of 30 gloves in LA alone.

TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ELVIRA

- (1) The famous Elvira body measures 34D, 24-26 and is 5'04 inches tall.
- (2) Elvira's favourite horror film is "Planet Of The Awful Space".
- (3) Most easy horror video sold from Elvira: "There isn't one".
- (4) Favourite male actor - Nicholas Cage.
- (5) Most horrific thing about London "You guys drive on the wrong side of the road".
- (6) Favourite Elvira endorsed product "The most expensive one".
- (7) Favourite brand of female hairbrush "The health shop one without additives - paraben lately Health Valley".
- (8) Elvira has never been to Texas/Texas but her brother is in law.
- (9) Elvira was the last recipient of one of the original Oracula Society Awards.
- (10) Elvira has an Apple Macintosh at home but never uses it play games.

Dora has become a super star of home. Every kitchenaid of her 'Dora is outstanding...and tea lots of her anyway'. The popularity has spawned dozens of fan clubs and - in true American fashion - warehouses full of Dora endorsed products. You can get records, posters, greeting cards, make up, perfumes, books, vinyls, bags, a Petal Table from Williams, and, shortly, a computer game course of horrorsoft.

Elvira hasn't been to played the computer game but she knows all about it.

"Dora sets up these horror weekends in a cafe which has been taken over by a real force. You have to find the Soul of Spiritual Dexterity to stop the wicked Elvira from using the world".

Despite being well teased about the computer game Dora's eyes really light up with genuine enthusiasm when asked about the orbital table...

"That's my thing. It's got me actually speaking in it. It's great fun". Her enthusiasm for the portable is easy to understand when you learn she gets her feet over on part of the deal. What are you going to do with ten orbital tables?

"I'll have one at home, give one to my Mom and Dad (they collect all my stuff) and probably use the others for charity donations".

The Dora video and computer game will be in the shops at the end of the month.

GREAT NEWS!

The adventure column has been severely limited in recent months, but we are now pleased to announce that from next issue, the section will be better, expanded, and filled with a host of fun by Phil Whistling.

ACE readers should already be familiar with Phil - she used to contribute a regular column (Pia's Points) on adventure titles and she currently runs the BRAC User Group.

Phil will be guiding this column through the coming months, at a time when the adventure market is changing as never before. As well as reviews, go-tips, and tips, the column will also feature regular analysis of new developments in computer fantasy. Stay tuned!



TIME TO TRAVEL ON...

Cinematic have been winning new players in their native France for their *Future Wars - Time Travelers* adventures. The game is the work of Paul Cuisinier who has spent the last three years developing the player interface.

It'll come as no surprise to regular ACE adventurous readers that there are similarities

with Sierra's *Leisure Suit Larry* and *Police Quest* games in the animation and large number of graphical locations. We're already paid off in just issues how popular the SierraOnLine range is in the States...and even traditional companies like *Magnetic Scrolls* are casting envious glances at the system and talking about "using more animation."

Despite first impressions, however, the interface itself on *Time Travelers* is surprisingly similar to a traditional adventure. A window offers a number of choices on each location. Apart from the standard direction options, there are

PALACE are launching a new French graphic adventure.

also examine, search and talk options.

The commands are implemented very quickly - giving all of the pulling fun of an absorbing adventure without the tedium of typing in lengthy commands and waiting your turn to wait the computer considers its response.

The storyline is a string one. Earth is under attack in the 23rd century from an alien race. The advanced 3D defense system has been undermined by the aliens traveling back in time and planting bombs at strategic points before the defenses were built. Your quest starts in the present and brings you to the Middle Ages. Prehistoric times and the distant future.

Throughout the game the French flair for graphics is very much in evidence. Look out for a full review of the ST, Amiga, and PC title in next month's ACE.



Out and about in *Future Wars*...

NO PROBLEM!

Jean Penicot telephoned me last month to complain about my printing her solution of *Souls of Darkness*, which she had seen when I was writing the *Pilgrim* column. Jean tells me she doesn't believe in solutions being printed - particularly since it means she gets less calls on her helpline!

Well, Jean, I have to agree about complete solutions, but I made an exception with *Souls of Darkness* because it is one of the most infuriating games I have ever come across, and I can well understand why publishers' taskmen went bust shortly after releasing it.

And as far as calls are concerned, by now I **EVERYONE** ought to know about Jean's helpline service, which has been going for several years and has checked up kindly thousands of calls. You can contact her on 0205 7847 95, and she can give help on most games.

Meanwhile, here's a brief selection of tips from the files of *The Pilgrim* and *The White Wizard*, and thanks to Mark Penicot, Jason Piley, and 'anon' for sending them in! Robert Morgan of Glasgow should be pleased - we've got the solution to the first part of *Mindlighter* that he so urgently requested.

SORCERER OF CLAMBOURG CASTLE

The kitchen needs examining more carefully!

KENTILLA

To prevent a good old try up with Zeds, give her a human present at Timands. This allows you to get the scroll!

MORGON'S QUEST

Don't spell that Cordor moment while in the arena. Don't refer to the Tele-sport shop; they're out of stock.

STATIONFALL

Look at your watch and the chart before launching. Getting into the village is a pressing problem.

BUREAUCRACY

Mail order print! Read vertically. For cab ride to airport the dough must be authentic.

For ID and password include hyphen!

LURING MORGON

A trap is the key - by the fridge and then the microwave. Actually (reminds the *White Wizard*) some of the responses regarding the master key are a bit misleading; suffice it to say that you will be able to borrow it even you've lost it even.

ZZZZ

To enter mansion, try door. When window opens climb wire. Then climb door.

KAYLETH

Spin bar by Mole-ray. The rabbit trap takes you to a dime. The coin is in the sun of the clock.

TASK TIMES

Stamps is in the tower on the island. To see use captives.

KENTILLA

Tie the rope to the staircase then pull. Then pull again.

MINDLIGHTER

Help with part one...

Examine the rubber at the civic centre ruins.

Give the microsystems to Dany.

Break the cabinet in the building to find the hidden object.

Don't drink the water. It is contaminated.

Use the wrench and the stool to break the stairs in the ruined building.

Wear the gas mask in the industrial wasteland.

A ship will arrive in the docks at 0pm on Wednesday.

Give the dead dog to the rabbit trap.

To get into a house - INHALE, HOLD EXHALE.

To metamorphose you need to be in a trance, then METAMORPHOSE.

PHOCC

To destroy the ship, empty the petrol, burn the rag with the lighter, and set off the ship.

After finishing your tasks in Part One, go to the fence and

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1

Vigilante from U.S. Gold

2004 New York... the police dare not patrol the streets. The wire cannot control the city and law and order no longer exists.

- 3 levels of play: Main Street, The Subways, Brooklyn Bridge, Back Street and the Builders' construction sites.
 - Different street gangs led by a gang of gung buster.
 - The vigilante is attacked by gangs using a variety of weapons, chains, guns and even dynamite in an effort to finish him off.
 - Motor bike chase attempt to run him over with out fatalities.
- Vigilante runs an astonishing performance in its smooth game play.

Check IBM,
C & V 8875



Vigilante

	PRICE	CODE
Commodore 64	Cass. \$ 9.95	BF0012
Commodore 64	Disc. \$14.95	BF0022
Spectrum 486	Cass. \$ 9.95	BF0032
Spectrum 4.5	Disc. \$12.95	BF0042
Amstrad CPC	Cass. \$ 9.95	BF0052
Amstrad CPC	Disc. \$14.95	BF0062
Ami 317	Disc. \$14.95	BF0072
Amiga	Disc. \$14.95	BF0082

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3

The New Zealand Story from Ocean

Fun from then until that still leaves you standing on your head!

Wally Walrus has captured you too... 20 of your favourite friends from the New Zealand coast, and it also doesn't mean that all the real-time may be stuffed, smelt and seaweeded at Wally's table.

New Zealand Story is incredibly cute. This is an amazingly addictive game, and the difficulty being just about perfect right.

Amiga Format IBM



New Zealand Story

	PRICE	CODE
Spectrum 486	Cass. \$ 9.95	BF1002
Spectrum 4.5	Disc. \$14.95	BF1012
Commodore 64	Cass. \$ 9.95	BF1022
Commodore 128	Disc. \$14.95	BF1032
Amstrad CPC	Cass. \$ 9.95	BF1042
Amstrad CPC	Disc. \$14.95	BF1052
Ami 317	Disc. \$14.95	BF1062
Amiga	Disc. \$24.95	BF1072





2

Indiana Jones The Last Crusade from US Gold

Relive the greatest action scenes from the greatest movie of all...

The game is played on four action-packed levels and will feature all the classic two-dimensional arcade games.

You have the opportunity to examine your score at every level, with even featured dialog, and variable object travel and enemy disposition.

■ A copy of the "Berserker Crusader" will be given the storyline and Story 4. This is included with the software.

■ An added feature of a 3000 object map to capture artwork or to edit objects.

"The graphics are superb, the fun is out of the best US Gold games to date!"

97 Form 900.

Indiana Jones - The Last Crusade

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Amstrad CPC	Cass 2 9.99	97 02002
Commodore 64	Cass 2 9.99	97 02002
Commodore 128	Cass 2 9.99	97 02002
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Amiga	Cass 2 9.99	97 01980
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4

Robocop from Ocean

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Amstrad CPC	Cass 2 9.99	97 02002
Commodore 64	Cass 2 9.99	97 02002
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ALTERED BEAST WIN THE COIN OP



SHADOW OF THE BEAST



IN THE PINK

This month's Pink Pages give important notice of a **whole new section** – **The ACE Stockmarket**, in which up to date market research will be giving the **definitive Final Verdict** on the games we play every month. There's also good news for compilers – we've really taken the **puzzle and crossword sections** in hand for the first time since the transfer of the ownership of the magazine. We'd like to apologise for the delay in printing **prize winners**, but now you can turn to the section beginning on page 51 and find out whether you've **struck lucky**. We're delighted to announce that the teething period is now over, and from now the Pinks will be **bursting with health**.

The **ACE Guide To The Games You Have To Have** adds in a whole new section as well this month – on **console games**. Even if you don't have a console this section gives **important information** that could affect your buying decision, especially since buying a console is all about **software choice** rather than hardware specifications.

However, if you're looking for a new computer and **concerned about specs**, you'll be pleased to hear that next month will see the return of the **ACE Upgrade Guide**. We're currently working on this section to make it better than ever before – and it will include a **far greater range of machines**, complete with up-to-date sales information – **just in time for Christmas!**

Finally, we haven't forgotten those **greedy so-and-so's** who like to get **something for nothing**. There are the infamous **Pink Pages compoa**, in which software houses fall over each other to shower **lucky readers** with gifts.

The Pinks...Britain's only **blushing guide** to computer entertainment...

THE ACE STOCK MARKET

NEXT MONTH ACE WILL BE LAUNCHING A WHOLE NEW SECTION: THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO GAMES REVIEWS IN THE UK. YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIND OUT - AT A GLANCE - WHICH GAMES ARE WINNING THE REVIEWERS, AND NOT ONLY THAT, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WALK AWAY WITH SOME GREAT PRIZES EACH MONTH!

Buying software is still something of a gamble. Even when you've sorted through the reviews, examined the screenshots, and peered over someone's shoulder to see the cheap demos, you still can't be 100% sure you'll be playing the game avidly in six months time - never mind six weeks or even six days time. And with full-price titles still usually over a fiver and 16-bit games near £10-£25, buying software is an investment. An investment in which you can't be at all sure of your return.

Here at ACE we hope to make investing in games with a little less fraught with pitfalls - and give you some help in the bargain. Welcome to the ACE Stock Market - and as an ACE reader you automatically qualify for a place on the ACE Stock Exchange floor.

Here is where you can check up on a computer's track records and see performance over the months, not in financial, profit-and-loss terms - well, even that's in the Economist, thank you - but based directly on the quality of the current releases.

So the able-to-read publishers and their publishing labels, which then forwards our and fall through the - but worried in the pre-Christmas season on games titles but necessary software found under the cut, to the fair market of the summer months, when sales and output often dwindle to a trickle.

We'll be tracking the performance of every game in every major publication in the UK. We'll monitor how highly each title rates (per bit), and how well its graphics and sound capabilities fare. And when we've compiled this mountain of statistical data, we'll have you in an instant in the field.

We've enlisted the aid of a qualified data processing and market research professional, Geoffrey Douglas, to develop a set of statistical systems that will sort of these numbers to give a meaningful set of figures at the end-games quality "share price" for each month's set of releases for each publisher. It will take into account release strategies, weighted against the number of games produced. There will be statistical figures and separate scores for graphics and sound.

The system will make allowances for individual mag size (so future titles regularly rates games higher than other magazines), for example, and will also take into account the different reviewing systems used. We hope to be able to cover graphics and sound ratings as well as overall quality of a title's play.

In computer futures markets throughout the year, you'll be able to keep your own portfolio of the programs. Then, when it comes to buying games, you'll be better informed about the track record of the best-in-demand, and the amount of risk involved.

THE TRADING COUNTERS

The ACE Stockmarket will be divided into "Trading Counters". Each of these counters will cover a specific area of the market place (the counters are described below) and will quote "prices" and market positions. Prizes will be awarded to ACE readers who can pinpoint these prices and positions in advance. A full explanation of the system will be printed in next month's ACE together with the first entry form. Alternatively, you can get details by sending an A4 stamped addressed envelope to The ACE Stockmarket, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

THE 8-BIT COUNTER

A difficult one this, since you can't always be sure which title will convert best. This is an opportunity for some brainstorming, with Commodore/Cross really not the most popular on the smaller machines? One thing for certain - this counter is going to get a lot of play back into the 8-bit debate...

THE 16-BIT COUNTER

Here you can find out which is the most highly rated 16-bit game of the month. Can you predict which title design and ST owners will be using about in the future. Will Memorex's telephone rise to the top of the market? Is it PlayStation one to watch? If you've got your finger on the pulse, you could get your hands on some big, big prizes.

THE MACHINE COUNTER

This counter will be for various bits of MACHINE POWER. It will enable you to see instantly which game the reviewers are really looking for your news. For only will it help you to decide which games to invest in, it will also give you a chance to examine your knowledge of your market's capabilities for certain types of software. Pick the right games in the right positions, and you could be sitting pretty.

THE COMPANY COUNTER

Here's where the big really starts! Buy! Most companies are taking the freight in the market states. Can a company rise to step up the market on the back of a single tremendous title, or will the giant hold sway at the top of the heap? As the American software houses taking the US road, or is Britain holding its own? Get it right, and get rich... well, almost.

TITLE FIGHT...

Here's a selection of recent titles together with average ratings to give you some basic data that will help you take over the ACE Stockmarket floor when trading opens next month. Start your stockbook now - you're going to have to track the performance of games AND software houses - the list is based on actual reviews published in recent weeks under INCLUSIVE GAMES, so don't waste the opportunity!

GAME	SOFTWARE HOUSE	SCORE
Rick Dangerous	Firebird/Microprose	85
Sinder	US Gold	88
Simon II	Image Works	93
Tank Attack	CDS	78
Fast Break	Accolade	49
Oil Imperium	Balsa	78
Castle Warrior	Delphine/Palace	60
Shufflepuck Cafe	Domark	71
48 Points Bulletin	Domark	75
Tarbo	MicroIllusions	85
Shadow of the Beast	Psygnosis	87
Battle Valley	Heurleon	81
Serious Wing	Virgin Mastertronic	63
New Zealand Story	Ocean	88
Rainbow Islands	Firebird/Microprose	87
Passing Shot	Image Works	65
Paperboy	Elite	79
Populous: The Promised Lands	Electronic Arts	86
Bl'nd	Firebird/Microprose	58
Thunderbirds	GrandSlam	86
Conflict Europe	Image Works	71
Fendish Freddy	Mindscape	83
Lionardo	Starbyte	71
Jack Nicklaus Golf	Accolade	64
80'	Microstyle	66
King Arthur	Infocom	82
F16 Combat Pilot	Digital Integration	89
Robocop	Ocean	49
Great Courts	Ubi Soft	76
Sleeping Gods Lie	Empire	76
Barbarian II	Palace	76
The Champ	Line	45
Clairvoy of Whinn	Impressions	71
State of the Art	Line	38
Indiana and the Last Crusade	US Gold	61
Journey	Infocom	78
Nightswan	Magic Bytes	63
Men Legion	Guinpter	36
Sam	Magic Bytes	72
Grand Prix Circuit	Accolade	51
Kut	Exxon	85
SD	Activision	57
Tom and Jerry	Magic Bytes	47
Kyoto	Targem/Domark	81
Buffalo Bill	Tynesoft	80
Bay Moves	Domark	34
Sim-Play Basketball	Mindscape	75
Shinobi	Virgin	77
Advent	Heurleon	71
Justice to Kill	Domark	71
RFT	Granite	69
High Steel	Screens 7	39
Potia	Image Works	72

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Are you an ACE Stockmarket wizard? If so, you could take a slice of the cake each month as we dish out prizes to enterprising readers...

Different people like different games - and that goes for reviewers as well, and even for magazines. Here on ACE, for example, we favour games that demonstrate originality and can be seen to further the cause of computer entertainment. But just how good is your own instinctive feeling about a game? Or about the fortunes of a software house? We're going to give you the chance to walk away with big prizes each month if you can predict the way the 'shares' are moving in the ACE Stockmarket...

HOUSEY HOUSEY

We'll also be printing each month the names of the software houses whose products feature in Stock Exchange ratings, and their order of ranking according to the reviews they've received in the current survey period. If you fancy your knowledge of the games scene, you can join in by sending us your predictions for future months: if you can name the top five software houses you'll pick up a valuable prize (details in the Stockmarket Launch issue next month). Beats the stockmarket any day...

HIGH PERFORMANCE

You can also win prizes by naming the top five games for any of the top machines in correct order. There are further prizes going each month for the man who hits the nail on the head.

BONUS PRIZES!

If either prize goes unclaimed, it's added to the jackpot for the following month. Market conditions are pretty tough out there, so expect to see some pretty hefty prizes building up during the months ahead...

Finally, we'll be offering regular bonus prizes, so keep tuned to The Final Verdict and sharpen both your wits and your pencil!



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THE GAMES YOU HAVE TO HAVE...

SOMETIMES YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO FACE UP TO THE TRUTH. YOUR SOFTWARE COLLECTION IS GETTING YOU DOWN, YOUR DOG'S SICK, YOUR FRIENDS ARE CONVINCED IT WAS YOU THAT LOST THE WINNING POOLS COUPON, YOUR MOTHER HAS DECIDED YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR IMAGE, AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND (OR BOYFRIEND) HAS JUST BEEN EATEN BY A ROTTWEILER...THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT...GO OUT AND GET A NEW GAME. AND TO MAKE SURE YOU REALLY SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE, HERE'S A LIST OF GAMES YOU'RE JUST GOT TO ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION.

ARCADE STYLE

Including coin-op conversions, games with a high fan factor and plenty of addictive action features in this category.

ARKANOID

Imagine ■ Spectrum
 £7.95 ■ £24.95 (US)
 £2.95 (UK) ■ Amstrad
 £6.95 ■ £14.95 (US)
 £14.95 (UK) ■ £9.95 (US)
 £11.95 (UK) ■ £4.95 (US)
 £5.95 (US) ■ £4.95 (US)
 £3.95 (US)

Conversion from Atari's classic coin-op, it is the best hand version of the classic breakout. Simple to control, the player controls a ball at the base of the screen, aiming it left and right. The object is to knock a small ball making, bouncing off the top to destroy formations of bricks in the top half of the screen. Eliminate all the bricks and more on to the next of 23 screens. Other video features include hi-res, a digital random generator, Advanced screens and has for a clever start on the same theme and some nice music. By AGS's report, which also points to the difficulty levels, more products.

• ACE RATED 900

BOUNDER

Grande Graphics ■ Spectrum
 £7.95 ■ £24.95 (US)
 £2.95 (UK) ■ £12.95 (US)
 Amstrad £8.95 ■ £12.95 (US)

A great arcade bouncer, simple, and very addictive too. You guide a ball as it bounces from one platform to another, high above the vertiginous, swirling landscape. Land on marked squares and you can either shift target or gain a mystery bonus. Hit in a gap or hit one of the game's many castles, however, and you'll lose a life. Bonus bouncing ball tops at the end of each level, and you'll see a little graphic every the game, and those high-gain really keep you coming back for more. Bright, witty graphics, great music...and it's so playable.

• ACE CLASSIC

BUBBLE BOBBLE

Frederic ■ Spectrum
 £7.95 ■ £24.95 (US)
 £2.95 (UK) ■ Amstrad
 £6.95 ■ £14.95 (US)
 £4.95 (US) ■ £2.95 (US)

Playability is the essence of this two-player coin-op conversion. You and a friend play bubble-blowing dragons, travelling through 120 levels and platform games, fighting off the bullets by manipulating them in your bubbles to turn them into jets that blow firepower and various bonuses past as you reach the more difficult later screens. Extremely good fun, it's a title on the coin-op side. Can also be played as one player against the computer.

• ACE RATED 900

CONQUEROR

Superior ■ Amstrad
 £24.95 (US) ■ £17.95 (US) (single development)

Drawn around your very own hand (and the enemy in close combat) and plan your strategy for the campaign. This is a tricky game to get to grips with, but if you persevere you'll find you soon become mesmerised by the thing. If you don't quite get it, Amstrad though...happy if

• ACE RATED 900

ELIMINATOR

Recon ■ Spectrum
 £7.95 ■ £12.95 (US)
 £4.95 (UK) ■ £14.95 (US)
 Amstrad £9.95
 £14.95 (US) ■ £4.95 (US)
 £19.95 (US) ■ Amstrad
 £19.95 (US)

Graphically wonderful roadway shoot-em-up by John Philips, which will give your joystick loads of work. It'll soon have you driving on the ceiling. Though it's tough to get to grips with at first, the action levels are great and it's well worth coming back for more.

• ACE RATED 900

EXOLON

Recon ■ Spectrum
 £7.95 ■ £24.95 (US)
 £12.95 (UK) ■ Amstrad
 £8.95 ■ £14.95 (US)

Graphically superb non-casualty expert shoot-em-up in which you run, duck and jump your way along a planet's surface dodging enemy alien detritus. A gun and a rocket launcher are used to beat the boss, but if things are still too tough then you can grab an assistator for extra protection and power.

• ACE CLASSIC

NEW ZEALAND STORY

Orion ■ Spectrum
 £8.95 ■ £24.95 (US)
 Amstrad £9.95, £1
 £19.95, Amstrad £14.95

Although played at the pace of a fast-food restaurant with New Zealand's New Zealand Story is not a game to be ruled out. It is a massive fan to play, provides lots of varied action across many levels. Definitely worth checking out.

• ACE RATED 900

ODES

Recon ■ Amstrad
 £14.95 (US)

A magnificent Oceanic stand. The Odes are riding on you to save them, but the Odes aren't going to let them go without throwing missiles, rockets and a number of other weapons at you. Included with the program is an edit facility that allows you to design your own planets... great stuff.

• ACE RATED 900

PITSTOP 3

Eye-All-Color ■ Available only on Eye-All-Color computer
 £24.95 (US) ■ £14.95 (US)
 £14.95 (US) ■ £4.95 (US)
 £19.95 (US)

In competition with the Ben Clares and Summer Games 20 Thrilling racing game where the screen is split into five and you can race the computer or a friend. Lots of different Grand Prix circuits, five laps-outs and of course the all-important pitstop factor to give you fuel, water and your brain a well-earned rest.

• ACE CLASSIC

POWER-DROME

Electronic Arts ■ Amstrad
 £24.95 (US)

This superb arcade-style futuristic driving simulation will have you exhilarated for months to come. It may not be the best but it's well worth persevering with. It'll be playing this for months.

• ACE RATED 900

PURPLE SATURN DAY

Evans ■ Amstrad
 £24.95 (US) ■ Amstrad
 £24.95 (US)

A terrific mix of games that delivers punch both audio and visual. The very addictive great gameplay ensures you'll enjoy playing each sub-game time and again. It's a little tricky to get the hang of, but master it and you'll be pleased you persevered.

• ACE RATED 900

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Frederic ■ Spectrum
 £9.95 ■ £14.95 (US)
 £9.95 (US) ■ £14.95 (US)
 Amstrad £9.95
 £14.95 (US) ■ £14.95 (US)
 Amstrad £24.95

The sequel to Bubble Bobble is nothing short of fantastic. The graphics and sound are superb, as is the gameplay. One of the best hand-drawn arcade games.

stone of the year that should not be missed.
ACE RATED 100

RVF

Merrimack, VT 424-89, Amiga 424-99

RVF offers a near endless supply of fast-paced line art-fun as you race your Honda RVF. Attention to detail is paid out all along the ride with your view going the like a coach out after a crash. An excellent mix of arcade and simulation.
ACE RATED 100

SPIDERTRON-IC

On International 4 Atari 4 113-9500

Guide your spiderlike character around the game area, collecting colored panels in the correct order. The built-in combination lock means you'll be knocking out your own levels as the ones come forth.
ACE RATED 100

SUMMER GAMES

Epoch/Gold 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 4 IBM PC 424-5500

Four sporting simulations are of high quality but none have quite captured the playability and style of the original Summer Games and its immediate successors. Summer Games 2: One for an elite or a cute take-out in high jumps, gymnastics, spring board diving, clay target shooting, swimming, golf walk - and others - with lovely large graphics and smooth animation throughout. Control of your athlete can be customized to perfection to recommended.
ACE CLASSIC

SUPER SPRINT

Electric Dreams 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 4 Amiga 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 4 Atari 45-45 vs 41 & 50k

One of the better 100-cc conversions currently available, with up to three players all competing at once. The action is fast

and furious, and it will take a half-toned car to complete some of the more torturous circuits that appear later in the game.
ACE RATED 90

THRUST

Frontier 4 Spectrum 41-95 vs 404 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

Sortingly convoluted controls and a large field of 27 health objects make this budget title an absolute must. Flying through the screens of an enemy-filled planet, you have to pick up fuel and destroy hostile gun barrels without crashing into the named walls. Tough enough as it is, but then you've got to make the return journey with a heavy load (hang under your coat). Very nice, very addictive.
ACE CLASSIC

URIDIUM

Frontier 4 Spectrum 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

The pace is reminiscent of exciting shoot-em-ups. Blast the destructible and attacking enemy while dodging around any large structures. Great metallic-looking backgrounds and the smoothest scrolling - you'll never see all this head and shoulders above the operation. A game not to be missed, especially now that Commodore comes complete with the excellent Paradise!
ACE CLASSIC

ZARCH / VIRUS

Supercy Software 4 Antares 11-8-95k 4 Frontend 100 and 8-bit version Amiga 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

A solid three-dimensional shoot-em-up with such graphic perfection and timeless addictive gameplay that it may cause an instant classic. Now the 100-cc version has arrived and they're just as good as the 32-bit version.
ACE RATED 90

ADVENTURES

After a brief surge of RPG-related popularity, the traditional text-entry adventure is rapidly disappearing. But for those of you who savour the powers of the imagination, the verbal twist, and the thrill of encountering other characters, this game genre still has much to recommend it. Here are some of the all-time great computer fantasies...

BEYOND ZORK

Infocom/Infocom 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

Infocom's attempt to stretch its on the wifefighting marks in a great success. Locate the fabulous. Cursed of Zorker in a game that combines the wit and originality of one of the world's most original software companies with dozens of their greatest and gemlike. Textual, but with on-screen moving facility.
ACE RATED 100

CORRUPTION

Frontend 4 Atari 47 424-55k 4 Amiga 424-55k 4 PC 424-55k 4 Spectrum 424-55k 4 Commodore 424-55k 4 Amiga 424-55k 4 Amiga 424-55k

The tale-of-two-kind deal, it's a reality and coded business deal - a reality to appeal to businessmen who prefer to wander through vast, dangerous, wacky, wacky business. But for those who are fed up with traditional adventuring, it's the best of both worlds. Super graphics, great atmosphere and a top-notch plot makes this a terrific game that goes from the start.
ACE RATED 100

FISH

Magnetic Scrolls 4 PC 424-55k 4 Amiga 424-55k

More graphics than Corruption, better game design than Zorker, and not as quirky as The

Pixel. This is definitely the best version since Gold of Zorker. Good stuff indeed.
ACE RATED

GUILD OF THIEVES

Frontend 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

One of Britain's most adventure software houses - Magnetic Scrolls - managed to produce a traditional treasure hunt with superb graphics and some very tricky puzzles. Powerful game help to create a convincing game world with humour and imagination.
ACE CLASSIC

INGRID'S BACK

Level 9/Amiga 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

A great follow-up to Dorian Dagger. Level 9 have really got to grips with the art of characterisation in their games and how to bring it all their very effectively.
ACE RATED 90

JEWELS OF DARKNESS

Frontend 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

Level 9 have got together five of their classic releases. Classic Adventures, Dangerous Adventures

and Adventure Quest in one bundle. The games have been updated with graphics and larger word-counts and are all close to the original spirit of adventuring as you may wish to find.
ACE CLASSIC

LURKING HORROR

Infocom/Infocom 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

Infocom's tribute to H.P. Lovecraft and the horror-fantasy genre with you as a 100-cc wizard to discover something very nasty lurking beneath your college laboratory. Superb fantasy game that defies you to play it after dark.
ACE CLASSIC

TIME AND MAGIC

Merrimack 4 Spectrum 424-55k 4 Amiga 424-55k 4 Commodore 424-55k 4 Amiga 424-55k

4 Amiga 424-55k 4 Atari 47 424-55k 4 Amiga 424-55k 4 PC 424-55k

The completion of the 100-cc game. Look of Time, Red Moon and The Pit of Magic have been re-written with better drawing, bigger word-counts and job done indeed. Superb value if you don't already own them.
ACE RATED 90

ZORK ZERO

Infocom/Infocom 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

PUZZLES

If you're after a game that will provide you with a real challenge, without necessarily requiring large doses of strategic thinking, then it's a puzzle game you want.

BONE CRUNCHER

Supercy Software 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

It had right this recent release may appear to be nothing more than a four levels effort. However there are a number of innovative gameplay features which give Bonecruncher a feel all its own. Highly recommended for those who prefer to solve problems rather than shoot them.
ACE RATED 100 - AMIGA

BOULDERDASH

Frontend 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

A game that has every thing - instant collection,

long-term challenge, friendly environment for the child like them and extremely enjoyable. You need collect your boulder in various, adding extra work and boulders to get past them. Boulder Dash can give you and your game various other skills by means of some damage while the puzzle are often hidden by strange, impossible walls. Complex but great fun. BoulderDash is the one you can't afford to miss in its budget market line.
ACE CLASSIC

DEFLECTOR

Frontend 4 Commodore 45-45 vs 41 & 50k 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs 41-95 vs

Optics are the order of the day here but the graphics presented in the player view is somewhat a far from a realism and it has some nice-looking

Official Secrets

for people who want more £23.00

Confidential 10 pages of monthly glossy magazine VALUE £12.00

Confidential is written for people who like their fun seriously. It's not one of those tabloids. Grouping 17000, MUGS, PLAGS, DASH, so if you would rather like to see more just behind the scenes than Confidential is essential reading. Regular features include Personal File, Great Letters, The Man in Black, Fusion Articles, Brain Teasers, Trivia News, Competitions and The Book Review. (No participation in promotional)

Gnome Ranger or a surprise alternative VALUE £19.95

Gnome Ranger is an award winning 4-part adventure by Carol R. Tap out and buy Gnome Ranger center each 27 days. Or for the best for Surprise Alternative.

Myth A non-advertorial by Magzette Saville, authors of The River VALUE £15.00

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number of calls that are on screen as well. You'll need to make full use of the minicam, the cyclic controls and painting and editing tools! You're to achieve your aim. Clear the first screen and you'll only have 50 more to go. Featuring staff from the video world too. **ACE RATED 900 - 93**

MEBULUS

Amstrad • C64 £12.95 • Spectrum £14.95 • Atari ST £24.95

Quite easy to be the top of your league using the top six attributes, bits and bobs, but from the inside it's a highly original game that strikes a fine balance between frustration and addiction, added to which is the video world, thus making it a groundbreaking, exciting winner of a game. **ACE RATED 943 - 954**

SENTINEL

Amstrad • Spectrum £8.95 • C64 £9.95 • £12.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £11.95 • Atari ST £19.95 • Amiga £25.95

Game and computer strategy game played over the dispersed surface of a planet dominated by a planet. Fundamentally intended to absorb energy while trying to stop the Sentinel from absorbing yours. A clear brain and fast finger finger are both necessary in this very original and exciting 1,000 possible landscapes game. **ACE RATED 900 - 954**

SKULL DUGGERY

Amstrad • Atari ST £19.95

Backlash show that completely outdoors the original on this particular market. Light line foot-darted above your rigging for diamonds in cavities over a hundred different screens - with a film reel for each screen. Multigame screen compatibility better screens is lighter with and a choice of starting point used in maintaining landscape scene. **ACE RATED 910 - 97**

SPORE

Amstrad • C64 £12.95 • Amstrad £12.95 • Spectrum £12.95

The winning combination of strategy, freedom, ideas and great graphics make Spore a worthy full priced release - what a fun game that is to play to play it up to £1.99 **ACE RATED 910 - 954**

TETRIS

Amstrad • Spectrum £6.95 • C64 £6.95 • £11.95 • Amstrad £6.95 • £11.95 • Atari ST £19.95 • Amiga £19.95 • £19.95

A fascinating geometrically the classic puzzle game, the classic puzzle game of stacking into a suit game. One at a time, shapes fall down onto into a rectangular playing area. Left to their own devices they'll pile up until they reach the top of the screen, your task is to guide them down and stop them from falling. Different versions have proved to be rather variable in their arcade aspects, but the recently revised ones helped this means they've well worth a look whenever you available. **ACE RATED 900 - 974**

THINK!

Amstrad • C64 £12.95 • Amstrad £12.95 • Spectrum £12.95

Originally released by the late at all ages, but now available for a fraction of that from Think! it's a highly addictive game depicting a fish, get either one of two chips - which you attempt to connect two corners, horizontally, vertically or diagonally. **ACE CLASSIC**

XOR

Amstrad • BBC £8.95 • £12.95 • Amstrad £8.95 • £12.95 • Spectrum £8.95

Extremely tricky maze game involving the player controlling two objects, and collecting marks through 15 mazes, which

include in complexity as you progress. Also a later stages, but not obvious. In a maze, after finishing the marks and/or walking to full screen and bring your quest to a conclusion.

SPECIALS

Original works that are simply unclassifiable features in this section.

ATP

Digital Integration • C64 £6.95 • £11.95 • Amstrad £6.95 • £11.95 • Spectrum £6.95 • £11.95

Excellent combat/fight simulator that's a lot of a change for Digital Integration, the simulation special. The emphasis is on real-time, the most being a simple hit. **ACE RATED 900 - 974**

DARK SIDE

Amstrad • C64 £9.95 • £11.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £11.95 • Spectrum £9.95 • £11.95

The second game using the Foxconn programing system, which sets most of an arcade challenge. The 16 graphics are again superb as are the tanks and puzzles. **ACE RATED 910 - 974**

BLITE

Amstrad • C64 £14.95 • £17.95 • Amstrad £12.95 • £14.95 • Spectrum £14.95 • £17.95 • £14.95 • £17.95 • Amstrad £14.95 • £17.95 • Spectrum £14.95 • £17.95

One of the best space trading games, Blite set a standard for other companies to follow. One of the first space games to use vector graphics, it's a shooting and trading effort on across several galaxies, with plenty of variety to the game play. You can trade legal goods in industrial suit systems, or run the pirates' danger spots with your field full of various laws. Either way there's a nice line in some daylighting, and a big a look at

and. Later on, things for an air combat, transportation and data compare against you. Smooth sailing, simple graphics, this one requires planning to complete successfully.

you'll find ourselves. **ACE CLASSIC**

INCREDIBLE SHRINKING SPHERE

Electronic Systems • C64 £8.95 • £14.95 • Amstrad £8.95 • £14.95 • Spectrum £8.95 • £14.95 • Atari ST £19.95 • Amiga £24.95

A music maze world where music, use and music combine to provide wicked gameplay. Sticky pellets and endless noise making it's all your only exciting musical delight. **ACE RATED 900 - 974**

MAGNETRON

Amstrad • C64 £8.95 • £12.95 • Spectrum £8.95 • £12.95

Physics and action shoot three style. Use the work by dismantling eight satellites. Good party from many details to upgrade your own ship and little help make your own little corner. The ideal game for Christmas from looking for a similar new challenge. **ACE RATED 900 - 974**

QUEDX

Amstrad • C64 £9.95 • £14.95

In the impressively challenging game you must steer a metallic ball through ten different screens of mazes, bonuses and obstacles, all with a set time limit. This simple game conceals but a host of added features to make it particularly pleasing you can carry over several levels to the next screen, for example, and locate the different screens at

places in any order you wish. Excellent graphics and utterly absorbing play. **ACE RATED 900 - 954**

SPINDICEY

Amstrad • C64 £9.95 • £14.95 • Spectrum £9.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 • C64

Tommy's staff, their your spinning top over tough obstacles and collect points, against a frenzied time limit. The game landscape is a world system of obstacles, jumps, lasers and from patterns surrounded by lethal traps - and 100 safe levels. After centuries of trials and tribulations, but trapping them in the right order can be harder than it looks. A few bad guys and a bit of time trouble, but the excitement the thing. **ACE CLASSIC**

STARSLIDER II

Amstrad • Atari ST £24.95 • Amiga £24.95

One of the finest examples of a game using vector graphics to their full advantage, gets the best 3D looking and comes out looking very well a while. You'll get a large task to complete and there's plenty of options to develop, making the combination of building and exploration that stands head above the competition. **ACE RATED 900 - 974**

TAU CETU ACADEMY

C64 • C64 £9.95 • £14.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 • Spectrum £9.95 • £14.95 • Atari ST £19.95 • Amiga £24.95

Right simulation/shoot 'em up and its sequel which are both extremely smooth and well put together. The attention to detail is impressive as you get off on a learning mission on a space cable. **ACE CLASSIC**

WARNING!

Games can damage your health. ACE recently received a copy of letters in from the local paper to a number of existing city that label our 'new' planet games 'the performance, unfortunately, health PC at home. When we attempted to contact the man that had sent us some help to see if we could be removed on the list for his name. At the end of the week, ACE received a complete game to return to.

Academy you get to design your own custom character with as well. **ACE CLASSIC**

TOTAL COLLAPSE

Amstrad • C64 £9.95 • £12.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £12.95 • Spectrum £9.95 • £12.95

The first game using the Foxconn system is a bit of a departure from the first two, but it's still an excellent game. A good editor you're building against time back in the 1980's trying to prevent the most modelling. For arcade adventures after four parties, the Foxconn system is a good one. **ACE RATED 900 - 974**

WIZBALL

Amstrad • C64 £9.95 • £11.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £11.95 • Spectrum £9.95 • £11.95

Beamer Wizard and co-operate the color characters which are used in identifying the spectrum and rendering the landscape very colorful. One of the most playable games around, despite the simple controls. **ACE CLASSIC**

'Ere, You!!

Did you fill in the questionnaire on page 107? XXX of software can be used by those who sell on their designs, shared secrets...

RPG

Role-playing games have exerted an enormous influence on modern game-styles. They combine the atmosphere of text adventures with the action of arcade games and the brain exercises of strategy — but their graphical presentation tends to be weaker than other game genres. Gameplay centres around developing characters by raising their experience and skill levels in conflict with other, computer-controlled entities. All that — and a quest too...

THE BARD'S TALE II

Electronic Arts, C64
£19.95, Amiga £24.95

The highly successful predecessor to *Bard's Tale II* is still in the ascendant of being rightly rated as a classic. This Amiga version features some very nice scripted music (which often plays when you enter a temple and similarly coloured graphics). And of course, you can update your favourite characters, their attributes, and equipment for use on BT II.
+ ACE RATED 90

THE BARD'S TALE III

Electronic Arts, C64
£14.95

The latest *Bard's Tale* game offers a number of refinements over its predecessor's lot of which are all well worth noting a good look at. First, the graphics are better and more varied. Second, there are ranged combat routines which take careful account of the distance between you and your opponents. Finally, the game's logs and reports contain excellent value for money.
+ ACE RATED 90

BATTLEBOB

Maxxon, PC, £29.95, BT

Battlebob features some incredible cartoon sequences, an air style action, role play and strategy in about a score

and epic, travel round the map tracking the opposition and learning the magical, herbal, and geographical secrets that will enable you to defeat the forces of evil in underground, Super

emp, great acting talent, and tough challenges.
+ ACE RATED 90

WASTELAND

Electronic Arts, C64
£24.95

BRAIN GAMES

Fed up with mindless blasting? Want a game that offers you an opponent who's worthy of your skills? Then this is your section...

CHESS MASTER 2000

Electronic Arts, C64
£9.95, £14.95
Amiga £24.95, £34.95
ST £24.95, £34.95
£24.95

Strongest chess game on the Amiga, with excellent graphics, 20 or 32 view point, 11 levels of difficulty and all the playing options you could wish for. Plus some really nice search options.
+ ACE CLASSIC

COLOSSUS CHESS 4

CCS, C64 £9.95
£14.95, Amiga
£9.95, £14.95
£14.95
£14.95

Best bet for 64-bit machine owners, with a choice of 20 or 32 sets, complex levels of difficulty, and a

logical option which enable you to play, watch, with and chess problems, etc against a live computer opponent.
+ ACE CLASSIC

COLOSSUS MAH JONG

CCS, C64 £9.95
£14.95, Amiga
£9.95, £14.95

Assembly-like mental game of strategy and chance. A later program and a short manual make this an easy to use and highly entertaining piece of software for veterans and novices alike.
+ ACE RATED 80 / 90

INFOGRAVES' BRIDGE

Infogrames, Amiga
£12.95, £15.95
£19.95

Change around immediate USA whopping market has not taken account of the outplaying app. The atmosphere may not be as good as the *Bard's Tale* series of games, but

the extra dimension of strategy from the text, cards and spell variants of the BT games are worth
+ ACE RATED 90

plus, full game, 4 full-time RPG purchase even though it missed out on an Ace rating.
+ ACE RATED 80

DUNGEON MASTER

Electronic Arts, C64
£14.95

Quoted as being a "reference to Advanced Computer Entertainment", *Dungeon Master* offers 14 levels, loads of spells, atmospheric graphics and sound. All going to make *Dungeon Master* one of the best role-playing adventures to have appeared on any machine.
+ ACE RATED 90

POOL OF RADIANCE

BT, C64, £9.95
+ C64 £14.95

BT were very brave to attempt to capture the complex concept of the *AD&D* system on a computer, but they managed superbly. An RPG-influenced game that will appeal to not only *AD&D* fans but to anyone looking for an intellectual game that will keep them playing for months.
+ ACE RATED 90

ULTIMA V

Origin Systems/Maxxon
+ C64 £24.95 + PC
£29.95 + BT Amiga to be announced

Amazing level of detail in this role-playing effort

Crucially the best of all weekend bridge simulations, with large playing cards, detailed against a suitably grandiose background. Plays a good game for a computer, which often allows a bit about in the imagination and fair department, and features a wide range of colours and betting conventions which you can toggle according to your wish.
+ ACE CLASSIC

POWERPLAY

Amiga, C64 £9.95
£14.95, Amiga
£9.95, £14.95
Amiga £19.95, £24.95
BT £19.95

If you wish to try out your game of knowledge, we reckon you'll be better off with the original and challenging combination of

strategy game and skill test with the absolutely incredible setting of the *Final Fantasy*. Probably a good deal very pretty it's not long on *Ultima* Olympus, home of the Gods.
+ ACE RATED 90 - Amiga

SCRABBLE

Leisure Games, C64
£12.95, £14.95
Amiga £9.95, £14.95
+ BT PC £24.95

The highly popular word game translated very well onto the screen. Fast, excellent display, and a whopping large word list from 115,000 words some strange looking words or some obscure words. Good enough to give even strong human opponents a headache at the higher levels.
+ ACE CLASSIC

WAR GAMES

Fancy yourself as a master of grand strategy, marshalling hordes of troops and sending them off to do battle on your behalf? Look no further than the ACE war games section...

ARMHEM

CCS, Spectrum £9.95,
Micro, £12.95, C64
£9.95

One of the oldest quality wargames featured in the section, *Armhem* was rated by the best in the field. It has of the expanded atmosphere, the separate war maps and-on of the toughest computer opponents you could wish to meet. A thoroughly pleasing strategic which can be claimed as one of the all-time.
+ ACE RATED 90

CONFLICT EUROPE

Micro, BT £9.95,
Amiga £24.95, PC £9.95

The 10th progression of *Theatre Europe*. Lots of well-graphics and sound effects. The computer intelligence was marginally sophisticated but still enough to give a challenging game. The computer features between strategy and excitement throughout. Great for beginners and intermediate players.
+ ACE RATED 90

THEATRE EUROPE

PC, Spectrum £9.95,
C64 £9.95, £14.95,
Amiga £9.95
£14.95

The perfect game for BT owners who go great with any what they look at. *Theatre Europe*. *Theatre Europe* is the new game to be featured in the section. The graphics and overall play are not as sophisticated as, but on the whole it still is one heck of a game.
+ ACE RATED 90

EMS

Amiga, BT £24.95, PC
£24.95, Maxxon
£24.95, Amiga £24.95

Probably the greatest war game to date, EMS war games enables the creation of almost any set of a history. It will be a very sophisticated and an opponent set. On top of this are all in some and a very real simulation it is keep you going for months. An excellent purchase.
+ ACE RATED 90

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AMIGA/ATARI GAMES SOFTWARE

	BT	AMIGA		BT	AMIGA		BT	AMIGA
Advanced Flight Simulator	13.95	13.95	Flyer	18.95	13.95	Question Of Sport	11.95	13.95
Advanced	13.95	13.95	Flight Simulator 2	27.95	27.95	Quest For Quax	11.95	11.95
Advent	13.95	13.95	Football Manager 1	13.95	13.95	R-Flyer	13.95	13.95
Alien Syndrome	9.95	9.95	Football Manager 2 Exp Kit	19.49	13.95	Raffles	-	19.95
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CONSOLE WARS

Console war is about to break out in the high seas with the Mega, Nintendo and Sega all jockeying for the spot as the new up to Christmas. The PC Engine Plus - see pages 27-30 will also be available in certain specialist shops. Next year will feature the arrival of the Mega Mega Drive and portable consoles like the Game Boy and Hand Lays. All machines sport a library of impressive games. Here is ACE's Top Five for each system.

NINTENDO

SUPER MARIO BROS

The undisputed king of video adventures. Every game fan bought their Nintendo just to be able to play Super Mario Bros - which is packed here with the console. It looks dead simple as Princess Toadstool pleads "Save me Mario, save me!" at the beginning. But simple it certainly is not - with eight levels, each containing five sub-levels worth to be explored. The game is controlled with sound levels, "jump" and hidden walls that you never see at playing it.

ACE Rating 9/10

SUPER MARIO BROS II

Takes the same story line as the first game - Princess Daisy is in trouble again and it's Mario to the rescue. The game play is entirely different, you have to collect coins, you travel - "air" will enable you to open the doors to the secret levels and coins are useful at the end of the game as you can use them to play the slot

machines. This time Mario can protect himself by picking up objects and kicking them at his enemies. Excellent too, particularly when Mario continues the game from the end of the game.

ACE Rating 8/10

MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH OUT

Buies the potential will win of any other boxing game on any other console or computer. First that says it'll be the best hardware may be technologically soft, they can still operate previous best game into a cartridge. The fact is, opponents before coming at against Tyson. All of the punches, kicking and biting are extremely realistic. There are also bits of funniest touches.

ACE Rating 10/10

GRADIUS

The best shoot 'em-up out there available on PC. There are others going through this one is by far the best of the current range. Based on the 1987 coin-operated game, it's a great and engaging difficulty level. They will be targets require accurate shooting and precise fire control. Extremely great download about "jump".

ACE Rating 10/10

LEGEND OF ZELDA

Golden cartridge and a massive manual set of make up for the hefty £40 price tag of the game. The control pad enables you to travel the extensive field and make connections to take part in the interesting plot. First Nintendo console can be used as good at roleplaying games as they are for arcade entertainment.

ACE Rating 10/10

PC ENGINE

R-TYPE III

Rightly assuming that you have to pay for two cents to get at eight levels. They do (which is not an overstatement) and you get them up and running on your Engine, stand up to the hero comes in every detail. Some R-Type aficionados actually prefer the R-Engine version to the arcade. Do battle with the evil R-Type Empire. Some of the best thought out scenarios and level makes over to support on this type of game. Arguably the best console conversion ever seen on a home system.

ACE Rating 10/10

WORLD TENNIS

World Tennis is the PC Engine's all time sporting best. It got maximum enjoyment out of the game you need only a four player joystick adapter. Get this, and four of you can enjoy it game of doubles. The game has everything - superb graphics, fast play, three shots, volleys and finally combining 3D screen operation. As if that were not enough, an arcade adventure is also known as good reason.

ACE Rating 10/10

MR HELI

The 1988 best top-up is another near perfect conversion of the PC Engine. First your cartoonish character through the dark into complex terrain - destroying enemy bases and collecting fuel capsules. A cooperative conversion.

ACE Rating 10/10

GUNNED

For preference, named and often playing entertainment. Gunned is probably

the best shoot 'em-up for the Engine. The algorithm is a developer right space features in a simple scrolling landscape. The mainstays, after four hit and power up on a shoot night.

ACE Rating 10/10

FINAL LAP

A superior formula racing game. A full screen presentation is suitable for a five player Grand Prix events, set for 170-mph from a line of their famous tracks, and there are plenty of other cars to be tapped as you attempt to get into pole position.

ACE Rating 10/10

SEGA MASTER

WORLD SOCCER

Let's face it, none along for the IT and things this was the ACE best soccer game. It has superb play, fully the to the accuracy of the player control of the ball, passing and shooting. It isn't for a quality shot but better for clean-up hits.

ACE Rating 10/10

YE

A huge scrolling world has to be explored, characters can be controlled, goods can be purchased in medieval villages, and a great deal of roleplaying depth is packed into the game.

ACE Rating 10/10

WONDER BOY III

The Wonder Boy series, now begins moves to collect. Take control of the Bubble Bubble and New Zealand Story. It has been turned into a

Dragon and modified Salamander (found to turn itself back into a Wonder Boy. Perhaps, that's not up to the highest order.

ACE Rating 10/10

R-TYPE

An excellent stab at converting this classic from shoot 'em up. All of the best are here, now the past game space play on level three - about a bit glitchy. Highly recommended.

ACE Rating 10/10

CALIFORNIA GAMES

The classic, huge technical sports simulation. Surfing, drifting, skate sailing, scale boarding and water skiing. Superb graphics on the Mega - and lots of fun. Our best in the surfing level, but they are all excellent.

ACE Rating 10/10

SEGA MEGADRIVE

THUNDER FORCE

Of the best Mega Drive games to turn up in the recent shops, Thunder Force is the one that

proves that the PC Engine will have some serious competition from the machine in 1991. It is one of eight decisions on car level - well equipped controls that vary that like a few screen display of over the screen. You have 10-day if you - like a Megadrive's follow - on the road. This is the Mega Drive has to be heard to be believed.

ACE Rating 10/10

ALTERED BEAST

The Sega console with the famous rolling eyes on the

title screen has never played better on any home system. The spaces are so huge, colorful and so detailed that you can almost feel every punch and kick as you battle through the levels.

ACE Rating 10/10

SPACE HARRIER II

There are 12 levels of action to shoot your way through the Mega Drive conversion of the classic Sega shoot 'em up. You have battle to the end with a precision to be both unforgiving and forgiving. The 3D scrolling terrain, with a character that appears dead that appears alive in the screen made for a 3D sensation rarely achieved in a home game.

ACE Rating 10/10

CHOLENFOR OST

The sequel to Shoot 'em ups has not long been in the arcades but already the Mega Drive conversion is ready. It looks indistinguishable from the arcade original in the way you fight your way through its five levels, in a quest to rescue the princess.

ACE Rating 10/10

SUPER THUNDERBLADE

Captures for the first time all of the speed and excitement of the arcade original as you take to the stars in your attack ship gun. Once again - play it fast.

ACE Rating 10/10

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BUGGY BONANZA

To help celebrate the launch of its *Drivin' Force* racing-sim, unpretentious games developer Digital Magic Software is generously giving away TEN Buggy Kit cars to ACE readers.

Drivin' Force is one of the many racing-sims vying for pole-position in the Christmas games race, so to make it stand out from the crowd Digital Magic Software has some unique features, including the ability to drive a track, format a car, bike, car,

buggy and even a jet-ski. *Drivin' Force* uses a new graphic animation technique to give it an arcade feel - in terms of both appearance and speed - which DMS hopes to utilize in its future releases. *Drivin' Force* will be on sale next month for ST (£19.95) and Amiga (£24.95). In the meantime, here's your chance to play around with a nifty little piece of buggy kit, courtesy of the guys at DMS.

To win a Dandy

Dash buggy kit, see from Nikko, all you have to do is find 50K special words (three relate to Digital Magic Software, the other three are vehicles found in *Drivin' Force*) hidden in the acid grid below.

Write down the six words on the back of a postcard (including your full name and address) and send it to: MEGAN SCHWARTZ, ACE, Prory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1M 3AU. Entries must be with us by 2nd November.

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TAKE IT IN 'YER STRIDE

Good old US Gold is bushed with the success of its latest (and best-selling) Capcom coin-op conversion, *Strider*. In fact, USG is so pleased with the favourable response to *Strider* that it is giving away TEN free

Strider T-shirts and TEN free *Strider* posters.

Available across all major formats, the £10-rated *Strider* (see review in last month's ACE, page 47) is the latest, and possibly the best, Capcom coin-op conversion ever - and that's quite a feat considering some of Capcom's previous gaming blockbusters like *Commando*, *Ghosts'n'Goblins* and *Forgotten Worlds*.

So what could be better than being seen around town wearing your very own *Strider* T-shirt, or what about inviting a few friends round for drink, chat and a glimpse of your new *Strider* poster decorating the wall (and hiding the clamp catch)? Here's all you have to do to make your dreams come true...

THE COMPETITION

Just answer the three easy questions below, and include a gameplaying tip on your favourite US Gold game (for instance, what's the easiest way to complete *California Games*, or have you found a hidden cheat mode in *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusader*?)

Which of the following games is not a Capcom coin-op?

- (a) *Commando* (b) *Ghosts'n'Goblins*
(c) *Terminator*

2. Who produced the *Forgotten Worlds* coin-op?

- (a) *Capcom* (b) *Capcom* (c) *US Comp*

3. Where does Capcom come from?

- (a) Japan (b) Southend-on-Sea (c) Florida

Send your answers on a postcard to:

TAKE IT IN 'YER STRIDE, ACE, Prory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1M 3AU. Don't forget to include your full name, address, and that US Gold gameplaying tip. Entries must reach us by 2nd November.

ABSOLUTELY FOOTBALL CRAZY!

If the football season just isn't exciting enough for you (how would we make Super-League Soccer if you're not able to fill your soccer blazers with the latest release from fledgling software games company, Impressions, Super-League Soccer) it's a "totally new generation" of football management simulations combining the very best features of old generation football management sims with a wealth of stunning new fea-

tures, including full player control and a vast array of player details. Super-League Soccer is available now for Spectrum (£24.99), Amiga (£24.99) and ST/Amiga (£24.99) only.

But enough of this free impressions publicity, what's in it for you? Well, just to get you in the soccer mood, Impressions is giving away TEN free Subbuteo kits (complete with green table cloth and goalies) and

PC Engine a Plus 1 or SEGA1
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of course).
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you win such a
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sonality to be
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CHAMPY, ACE, Pri-
ory Court, 30-32
Partridge Lane,
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-3AU. Entries to
reach us by 2nd
November.**

instance: what's the
hidden cheat mode
in Cybernetic or
how do you get
past the end of
level 3 guardian in
Aztecob?...

**INFO THE VAL-
LEY... ACE, Priory
Court, 30-32 Par-
tridge Lane.**

**LONDON EC1R
3AU. Closing date
for the competition
is 2nd November**

INTO THE VALLEY...

handles attached to their feet) and
TEN how pairs of
foote socks (add
Newson's
Battie Valley is a
tasty treat for any
Amiga owner want-
ing to get a little bit
more from a
shoot-em-up. And
how thanks to ACE
and Newson here's
your chance to
lock into TEN how
copies of Battie
Valley on the

Amiga
Reviewed in
last month's ACE
Gauge 72, 85-
rated Battie Valley
is a strategic
shoot-em-up plac-
ing you in control of
a speedy attack
helicopter and a
mobile armoured
vehicle in a hectic
attempt to thwart a
crazy terrorist
attack. Featuring an
impressive three
level parallel scroll,

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depth of gameplay
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fun for their money.
Fancy taking
Battie Valley out
to yourself? Then just
answer the three
easy-to-answer
questions below -
plus, include a
gameplaying tip on
your favourite New-
son game (for

1. In the movie
Battie Beyond the
Stars, which actor
from the TV show
The Billings
played the lead
role (note: you can
use higher charac-
ter names from The
Billings)?
2. How many peo-
ple rode into the
Valley of Death?
3. What Newson
game features an
armoured vehicle,
an attack heli-
copter and a multi-
task of terrorists?

**FIVE PHONE
MESSAGES
RECEIVED BY
US TODAY**

Send your entries
on the back of a
postcard (including
your full name,
address and that
Newson gameplay-
ing tip) to:

LISTS

Another batch of
informative, inter-
esting, intelligent
and completely
useless ACE lists,
compiled by the
ACE staff on their
way to work this
morning.

4 Whar's Jane
Smith's telephone
number?
5 Er, um, it's the
again... what does
Old Cooper look
like?

**FIVE PHONE
MESSAGES
RECEIVED BY
US TODAY**

1 Er, er, oh just
forget it.
2 Willy Haven't you
reviewed Slagkiller
yet?
3 One chicken
chow-main, spe-
cial fried rice and
some prawn crack-
ers.

**OUR THREE
FAVOURITE
CHARACTERS
FROM A TV
CARTOON
SERIES**

1 Slimy from The
Real Ghostbusters.
2 Muzzy from
Wacky Races.
3 Shaggy from
Scooby Doo.

**OUR THREE
LEAST
FAVOURITE PC**

CHARACTERS FROM A TV CARTOON SERIES

1 Penelope Pitsoop from *Wacky Races*, 2 Al Sbrufis

3 Fantro from *Thundercats*.

Do you think you can do better? Of course you can! So get writing to **LEADS, ACE, PRONY**

Count, 30-32 Farlington Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU

ing naded in an advertisement in the computer games business trade journal (*Computer Trade Weekly*) to advertise a new range of budget software for under a fiver.

The label is to be called 14 888-8 (but you didn't know that that was what they were going for) and The One

magazine, did you?) and will have some damned impressive re-releases in its list of offerings. Watch out for *Tetris*, and *Say It* (amongst a host of others).

STOP PRESS

SHOW'S LAST STAND

If you are reading you this at the PC Show - taking a quick coffee break, pit break, or stale, plastic-clad sandwich break, and feeling completely frustrated and wondering why you bothered in the first place then worry no more. This is likely to be the last PC Show you will have to attend.

The show organisers - Microdeal, are not running a PC Show next year and VNU (publishers of *Personal Computer World* magazine) do not have access to either Cate Court or Olympia next September - the month in which the show is traditionally held.

But just in case this news might make you go home happy I am sad to have to inform you that there are plans afoot - as you say, chomp, and wonder how you are going to get home to stage the event again next year.

EMAP International Exhibition - (part of the same company that owns ACE) plan to step in with a rescue bid. Informal sources suggest that EMAP are prepared to stump up a whopping £300,000 to spend on advertising for a new games only show. The working title for the new show is 'The European Computer Leisure Show'.

If EMAP can pull the show off it will be a considerable achievement as only two years ago they ended up with huge crumles on their faces after a

disastrous attempt to sell an alternative show at Ally Pally in North London.

The new PC show - at EMAP are calling it, is believed to have the backing of a national newspaper group. EMAP sources will not confirm which newspaper group - though it is unlikely to be the Mirror Group.

MAXWELL CLOSES MICRODEALER

The long established Microdealer distributor has ceased trading as of the week before the PC Show.

The Maxwell owned distributor was one of the longest established firms in the computer games industry and the shock waves of their closure are only just becoming known.

Tongues have been wagging throughout the PC Show of the effect the closure will have on Microsoft - publishers of *Spectrum Hoobyde, Image Works, and Dinosaurs Games*.

The Maxwell Group have already disposed of a number of companies in order to fund a £2 billion expansion plan.

16 BIT GAMES FOR LESS THAN A FIVER

These industry worthies last week covered a bit by appear-

EPYX CONSOLE THEMSELVES AFTER MASSIVE JOB CUTS

The one time leading Californian software house - Epyx - have laid off 80 staff and announced that they will cease publishing computer games. The company will now concentrate on developing games for other publishers - particularly Nintendo titles, and on the development of the Atari Lynx

hand held, originally an Epyx design.

Meanwhile the latest trade gossip from the US suggests that the Nintendo Game Boy is streaking ahead of the Lynx in the popularly budget - with both trade and public alike.

EUROPEAN COMPUTER ZOO

Former UK boss of Microdealer, Stuart Bell, has quit the company to set up his own computer games company - interestingly named *European Computer Zoo*. The turnout will see it that Bell will be taking with him certain key staff at Microscope.

Bell claims that the company have ten new games ready

to publish.

Microscope have yet to announce a replacement to head up their five-label, hobby-based games company. Labels include *Miami Status, Microstyle, Microscope, Firebird*, and *Rainbird* (at the last count).

BILLY THE FISH IS FULL OF WIND

Amongst a deluge of new *Wiz Comic* merchandise is the *Billy the Fish* inflatable. A definite must for any trendy lager lout on the terrace this Winter. If *Billy the Fish* is not to your taste you might like to put the following items on your Christ-

mas list: *Wiz Book of Cops Jones, Fat Slags T Shirt, Wiz 1990 Calendar, Johnny Farnham's Boogie Shorts, and Wiz The Seaside Comedies*. The next edition of *Wiz Comic* will be in sale in mid-October.

WINNING STREAK!

Mad Surgeon Competition

Adding to the large number of entries for our Mad Surgeon Competition, this month we've got a pretty bloody thirdly batch also showing & can't wait to start taking things away with the trophy

and they're Robertson of Lincolnshire.
 Your games are being won their way to you come join Goodwin's without school CD, and try not to make too much of a mess on the carpet...

and they're Robertson of Lincolnshire.

and they're Robertson of Lincolnshire.
 Your games are being won their way to you come join Goodwin's without school CD, and try not to make too much of a mess on the carpet...



Lifetime Drive Camps

It's quite amazing just what you can do with a publicity shot if you try hard. Here's what the five lucky winners of MIRA's Lifetime Drive made of this one.

Neil Miles, I know it was impossible to sell me the idea drive through 'Liberty' - 5 Year, London.

"And all because the lady loves Software Centers" - Steve Reid, Water Hampton.

"And all because the lady loves... other ladies dressed as me" - Jason Foster, Heywood.

"When they said Winona's Lifetime Drive I instantly thought of a Red Convertible and a wing man!" - Eric Cox, Plymouth.

"Can I get my Reano into your Lifetime Drive Race?" And well I've seen the result of your lifetime!" - Steve, Kent.

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Alexander 4	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 5	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 6	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 7	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 8	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 9	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 10	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 11	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 12	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 13	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 14	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 15	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
Alexander 16	2.99	Book of Days	2.99	English 1000	1.99	English 1000	1.99
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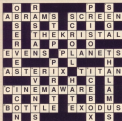
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CROSSWORD 17



CROSSWORD CRAZY

You might have noticed that Crossword Solutions in recent issues have been, well, lacking really. Sorry! We've been so busy here at AOL, and our master (SMP) that some clever readers have got a little behind. But, as you can see, we are celebrating November with a special offering. So here goes with the solutions and answers for crosswords 15, 16, and 17.

Crossword 15

ACROSS: 5. KIDS; 7. NEBULUS; 9. TREE; 10. RENEGADE;
11. ROBERT; 14. SUMMIT; 17. PACMAN; 18. STOP; 19. TRAWLER;
20. TONON

DOWN: 1. ENTERTAINMENT; 2. BEAN; 3. DUNGEON MASTER;
4. MUDDY; 6. CURSOR; 8. BRAVE; 12. KIMM; 13. @; HERO; 15. BARD;
16. ANTON

The answer to Shady from Don Partridge, Middlesex.

Crossword 16 (A)

ACROSS: 5. HYSTERA; 7. ATOM; 8. METRE; 9. EDUCATE; 10. MALL-
STROM; 11. LUDICROUS; 14. EPISODE; 15. AIRRA; 17. MEAN;
18. EXTENSOR

DOWN: 1. BITE; 2. RAZOR; 3. CAROOM; 4. HOSTAGES;
12. MALARIA; 13. INSANE; 14. UNDES; 15. ROMAN

The answer to Steve Wood of Walsingham.

Crossword 16 (B)

ACROSS: 5. VROOM; 7. TYPHOON; 8. OCEAN; 9. FERRAR; 11. FLOOD;
MONEY; 13. VERMINATOR; 16. PREDICT; 17. RAMBO; 18. DETOURS;
19. ITTUS

DOWN: 1. DRACULA; 2. MONACO; 3. CYBERNOIDS; 4. CHERRY;
5. CORBA; 10. SMART CARD; 12. MOEBIUS; 13. MOOSE; 14. APRIC;
15. DROCK

All these answers will qualify for receiving a cheque for £25 which you can cash out and buy away on their favourite piece of software.

PRIZE PUZZLES

Now that we've cleared the backlog of Crosswords, here are a few outstanding prize puzzles and solutions.

Puzzle 16

Answer:

$$\begin{array}{r} 423 \\ \times 21 \\ \hline 846 \\ 8460 \\ \hline 8922 \end{array}$$

Solution:

The problem is to find two three-digit numbers which have a product in which the second digit is a '7'. Further, all digits used, including those in the three substrains, must consist of only digits from 1 to 6 inclusive (i.e. those numbers which can be represented by the dots on a standard die).

For the purposes of the problem the subroutine at line 1000 tests a given variable (Z) to determine if it contains digits other than those permitted. The subroutine returns a variable FLAG which has a value of zero if the string under test contains only the digits 1 to 6. A value of 1 indicates that the test has failed.

The initial variables are generated by the four loops A and B. Each is tested by the subroutine and line 140 also checks that the product will have six digits, as required by the puzzle, once a possible pair of numbers has been found the three substrains are calculated (E5, D5, and C5) at lines 170 to 200. Each of these is also tested by the subroutine in turn. Should any value fail then the next value of B is taken. Finally, the product is tested, first by the subroutine and secondly to check that the second digit is a '7'. Line 290 then prints out the values which pass all of these tests.

```

100 FOR B=111 TO 999:GOTO 0700
110 Z=0:GOTO 0800
120 IF FLAG=1 THEN GOTO 0800
130 FOR A=111 TO 999:GOTO 0700
140 IF A*B<111111 THEN GOTO 0800
150 Z=0:GOTO 0800
160 IF FLAG=1 THEN GOTO 0800
170 C=0:GOTO 0800
180 Z=0:GOTO 0800
190 IF FLAG=1 THEN GOTO 0800
200 D=0:GOTO 0800
210 Z=0:GOTO 0800
220 IF FLAG=1 THEN GOTO 0800
230 E=0:GOTO 0800
240 IF FLAG=1 THEN GOTO 0800
250 Z=0:GOTO 0800
260 IF FLAG=1 THEN GOTO 0800
270 D=0:GOTO 0800
280 IF FLAG=1 THEN GOTO 0800
290 PRINT A,B,C,D,E

```


CD ROM EXTRAVAGANZA

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for — the results of our grand CD-ROM giveaway! We had a rough minute without reading all of your entries, and went through yours trying to make a decision. But here it is: The lucky winner of a Commodore 64 CD with *Hearts-On* (1992) and a copy of the CD *Defender of the Crown*, is T. Bentley of Reed, Somerset.

Twenty winners, all who receive copies of *Commodore's* 16-bit *Madhattan*. Lords of the Morning Sun are Jason Burgess, the tall Gordon Hayes, Peter Parker, Richard Taylor, Bradford Oscar Mills, Birmingham; Matthew Tootal wall, Cheshire; Ian McGeehan, 4yr; Ben Gary, Leek, Staffs; Conrad, 16yr; Mrs David Gray, Southall; Peter Nugent, Bicester; Simon Collins, Swerley, 20th; Margaret, Swerley; Andrew J. Reader, Maccleson; R.J. East, Oxford; Craig Wheeler,

Here for your delight and delectation is the winning entry:

"I couldn't wait to get home and load my latest Commodore CD ROM game, and I wasn't disappointed it was the latest licensing deal: 'Dallas — The Computer Game.'" I controlled the hero, Bobby, as he raced to the rescue of his wife Pam. She was in the clutches of an evil plastic surgeon, intent on changing her into someone completely different. This horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up had plenty of buddies to contend with — runaway cars, gun-toting, double-crossed thieves and a sticky kid who could cause suffocation by clogging or tightly round the throat and loping I love you Dancer! But what I liked best was that it was impossible to die. Every time I lost a life, I found myself back in the slower. It was almost like a dream."

Taivork, S.E. Sutton, Bristol; Stephen Parsons, West; Neil Luckman, Birmingham; Ian King, Lough water; and A. J. Page, Glasgow.

Solution: The problem involves finding all possible combinations of two two-digit numbers, the product of which in each case comprises of the same digit (9). In the listing the two initial values are held by the variables A and B. To avoid duplication of answers the value of B is always the greater of the two. The product of these two numbers is calculated (line 120) and this value and the values of A and B are converted to string variables.

To determine if the product consists of the same digits as its generating values a simple technique is used. First, the strings AS and BS are combined into a single string ZS and this is passed to the subroutine of Lines 1000 to 1060. The purpose of the subroutine is to rearrange the contents of the string ZS into numerical order (strictly determined by the ASCII codes of each character in the string). This is done by using a modified 'bubble sort' in which each character in the string is compared with the next character along (line 1010). If these two characters are out of order line 1020 transposes them. When this happens a flag (F) is reset to 1 (line 1030). This procedure is repeated along the length of the string until no further switches of characters are made. This is indicated by the flag remaining at its initial value of zero. When this happens the subroutine is terminated.

The 're-order' digits returned from the subroutine are stored in variable CS and the digits of the product are sent to the subroutine (line 1060). If the string CS returned is identical with that in CS then the contents of variables A and B are printed out.

```
100 FOR A=10 TO 99:AS=STR$(A)
110 FOR B=A TO 99:BS=STR$(B)
120 P=A*B:PS=STR$(P)
130 IF P=1000 THEN 180
140 ZS=AS+BS:GOSUB 1000
150 CS=ZS
160 ZS=PS:GOSUB 1000
170 IF CS=ZS THEN PRINT A;" ";B
180 NEXT B
190 NEXT A
200 END
1000 Q=Q FOR G=1 TO 3
110 IF
MDSGS,G,1)=MDSGS,G+1,1) THEN
1200
1300 ZS=LEFT$(ZS,G)
1400 ZS=ZS+MDSGS,G,1)+MDSGS,G,1)+MDSGS,G,1)+MDSGS,G,1)
1500 G=G+1
1600 IF G=3
1700 RETURN
1800 NEXT G
1900 IF F=1 THEN GOTO 1000
2000 RETURN
```

SPANISH FLY

Getting off with a bang for this year's Spanish Grand Prix is Gregory Alexander of North London, who correctly named five Accolyde games in our Spain Quiz.

congratulations to Alexander, and congratulations to the rest of you who'll just have to wait it out on the telly...

PUZZLE 17

Oh dear, puzzle 17 seems to have got lost somewhere along the line. No prizes for spotting that there wasn't one!

PUZZLE 18

Answer: Apart from the example given (15 x 93 = 1395) there are six other ways to do the same trick:

21 x 60 = 1260
21 x 87 = 1827
27 x 81 = 2187
30 x 51 = 1530
35 x 41 = 1435
and 80 x 80 = 6400

FUN, FAME, AND FERRARIS

Winner of our System 1 competition is C. Anthony of Maidenhead. This lucky person received a free ride in one of the Ferraris belonging to System 1's Mark Cate, as well as a 50% next and other goodies. There is just

one catch: we need a full report on the Editor's desk by next Monday (26 night), so can have it in the longer then...

The winner is G.J. Kelly of Swanton, Vermont.

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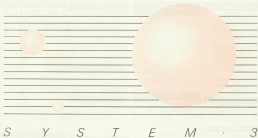
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YOUR PAGES

THIS IS THE SECTION WHERE YOU COMMUNICATE WITH OTHER READERS, BUY GAMES, FIND PENPALS, FORM CLUBS, SELL YOUR MICRO, BUY SOMEONE ELSE'S MICRO, AND GET YOUR NAME IN PRINT! IF YOU WANT TO TO TELL THE WORLD WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER, FILL IN THE FORM ON PAGE 145...

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Help wanted with all aspects of programming Java, machine code, etc., for my Amiga. Also how to make demos, and help and tips would be gratefully accepted for all Amiga games. If you can help me, please write to: Ted Miel, 11 Station Road, Haverhill, MA 01830.

PRM-OS/2, Lonsdale. For computer contacts from all over the world with you computer, get in touch with me and I will send you a list. Send details of your computer system together with your name, address and telephone number, and a stamped addressed envelope, as well as a separate first class stamp to: A-F Starling, 1 Meriton Close, Marston Road, Exeter, EX2 0L.

Amiga 500 owner needs list and version 'Virus Files'. I will pay off any name of my software for it (large collection of both HD and original). Write to: Rich, 77 Apple-Croft Road, Wincoburgh, 88 (Stafford-upon-Avon), CV37 9NR with any form of help.

Amiga tips, cheats and facts. If you want to know more, send SAE for details to: John Smith, 45 Maplecroft Crescent, Sheffield, S18 1DN. Please choose that covers the following game: Monaco, Patagon, Whirl, Matrix, Better Dead than Blue, Dits, Amnaco (88 version), Speedball (Emulator), Rocket Ranger, Road Station, Sawyers, Chuck-a-Rag 2, Quantum 2, Power Rangers, Poodus, Miles on 2-2, Scorpan, other name? Phoenix, Poland, Blood Money, Castle Command, Castle Dragon, Revolution, Thunderblade, Flying Shark, Scapple, Bomblud, Madagas, Super Hang On, International Karate +, Test Drive 1, Pegasus, Tommy's Probe, Hope of Ice, Battosai, Fightman, Morlok, Barbarian (PSP), Mages, Vigilans, Demons, Space Harrier, The Real

Blackboard, Cyberseed 2, Freneticist road 26, Cyberseed 3, Empire Strikes Back, Phoenix, Sheriff of Sages, Star Wars, Baby Thompson, Falcon, Voyager, Defender of the Crown, Goldrunner 3, Paradise, Lonsdale/RAC Rats, Football Director 2, Star in Mobile Case, Drag you! Last Minute Fight, Operator 902, Last Out, Street and 9-9.

ST Data Recovery. All types of disk recovery attempted, no success, no fee! Please Fax Invoice Ref: 01-868-2489.

Wrote to Steve Harris, 23 Fy Day Drive, Bakers, Suffolk, 011-61. If you want help with the following games: 6-64 (some otherwise stable), Car Wars, Battle Foot (Amiga), Soccer/Overlord, Astro English and American version, The Great Gatsby, Freedom Street, Spoons, Battle of Camelot and Star Wars (Amiga), Star Empire, Software House, Battle Heals (160 Amiga), Area, Power of Sea, Rhapsody (Amiga), Ice Jinx, Lady of Locust, London (cheap, no reset switch required), Site (Amiga - cheap), Johnny Jet 2.

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Amiga contacts wanted all over the world. Write to John, 200000 181, Bellevue 98000, Belgium. Guaranteed reply to: 01-409837.

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HELP WANTED: a computer or software engineer or speech synthesizer for a full-time career in-UK role. Possibly an Amiga 500 with colour monitor and games (48- bit is A good asset). Please Fax to: 01-644 1916. 7am-1:00pm on one day. Contact Anthony Good, 175 Gboro Road, Loughborough Leicestershire. 100% reply.

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664 contacts wanted to swap hard stuff. Write now for immediate reply to: John Lines, 50 Caroline Drive, Eglinton Gardens, South Australia 5014.

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The BLITTER END

JACK INTO THAT BOOM BOX, MIKE



When faced with subliminal advertising, but this is ridiculous. The little things - sorry, BIG things - patented above is the DynaMike. According to the press release, the DynaMike "...lets you do really funny things with your voice. It also ...comes with a special jack so you can use it with a boom box." What really convinced us, however, was the promise that with the DynaMike we could "...sound like Michael Jackson when he hits a high note." Wouldn't you be hitting the high notes with something like that? We probably won't break the seal...

Blitter will not be appearing in his usual spot next month. He will instead be retiring graciously to the Bahamas. The reason? By next month, he will be striking rich, thanks to a program from IBM of Warwick. The item in question is the ...official computer version of the newly released Greyhound Calculator. This program saves out five fast each dog it...and calculates the final result of the race. It's retail cost at \$34.99 which, considering how accurate it is, is a very cheap price. "Sounded rather risky to us, until we were told that 'in one test, starting off with just \$5, we made nearly \$200.' We've now ordered six copies and is eagerly expecting six winners in every race, with \$5 on each dog. See you on the track, racetrack...

Having success like success. The month we were profoundly moved by the tributes inspired by Mike Carlo Casini - a budget file from Calcuttians. The Casini also features a testimonial. But declare: This is probably the most realistic, most playable casino game ever - It's absolutely brilliant! The testimonial is credited to one David Dering, who is a director of... Calcuttians. Perhaps they should take out a license on MPH's Greyhound Calculator.

And talking of budget labels, we've just come across one of the least budget features ever. The R&D label features the company's logo in blistering primary colours on the reverse of the cassette tape. Beneath the logo, in tiny print, reads the immortal message: "Create your own R&D label! Cut around the above and stick a safety pin to the back of the card using sticky tape. Sales are booming..."

Success stories are laughing all the way to the bank these days, thanks to over-enthusiastic software companies. Games I recently announced proudly that I had signed up Windows of Leeds United and that it would be launching the Windows Soccer Spectacular in November of this year. This is a revolutionary marketing approach. It comes very, very hot on the heels of Football Virgility, Manchester United, Liamson FC, Gary Linkin, Gator, Gascoigne, Kenny Dalglish, and Linkin Hughes, to name a... few. Windows Soccer? The horse has not just bolted, it has now passed into myth and legend. No more talk, PLEASE...

Blitter would like to welcome some new hands to the ACE Team. You'll be getting to know these guys very well over the next few months.

THE ACE CHALLENGE!

Find out more about the ACE Challenge on page 12 - whatever others might say, we're putting our money where our mouth is!

We're also determined to carry on the ACE tradition by giving you a magazine that respects your burning obsession with the best things in life - so tell us more about yourself on page 96 - and maybe win a prize into the bargain!

So we felt it only right to give you an introduction to you know what you're letting yourself in for.

Taking the Deputy Editor's chair is Rick Hayden, previously Senior Editor on New Computer Express. Rick celebrated his appointment by immediately leaving for Disneyland and investigating the technology behind the rides there - and you can find out more about his experiences next month.

Bringing his acute game judgement to bear on new releases from now on will be Laurence Scottford. Laurence had to make a tough decision: should he follow the family business, or should he play it type. The family business, perhaps we should mention, is entertaining. Say no more, except that Laurence has just a more focus on computer games across more machines than most people, which gives the alternative a handy surprise.

You're going to see a big change in the way the magazine looks over the next few months as Brian Lister Jim fills gaps to grip with the advanced technology we use to produce the magazine. A nice lot of pencils have been ordered, and the staff have had work to do the transcriptionists. Jim has an unhealthy addiction to the PC Engine...and he supports Centre.

Finally, Boyd Emery joins our crew of regular contributors. Boyd's specialty is console technology - at home he has, amongst other things, a PC Engine plus CD-ROM, Megadrive, Nintendo and a host of other surprises. We're so pleased that we won't tell you anything about him...

THE UNTOUCHABLES



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