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BIG TIME

EDITOR'S BLURB by Joe Santulli

When I sat down and finished the last draft of the issue you're holding now, I was *completely burnt out*. We've definitely had the BUSIEST two-month period in Digital Press history. The main reason for this is the now-available Digital Press Collector's Guide, which is the next step up from our Checklist Central Master. I wanted to put together a quality product - something that I would really be able to use - daily. The months of compiling information from other collectors, price lists, and catalogs, spending hours of time fine-tuning the prices, and then getting it all together in under fifty pages was a lofty task! But you know something, it was worth it. This is the kind of item that I wish I could've had years ago. Fast forward to Digital Press Products for more info!

Secondly, we've joined the Prodigy network. We've already been in contact with some of our readers there, and we've made more connections in the past two weeks than we've made in a year. If you're a Prodigy member, or plan to be one, you can reach us at VFWH47A.

Finally, we've made the decision to change our desktop publisher for next issue. Look for changes in issue #11 - although I promise the same high standards, the 'zine might even look a little better. I'm also not going to QUIETLY change the price of this fanzine. Yes, it's going up to \$1.50, and our subscriptions are being raised to \$8.00 a year.

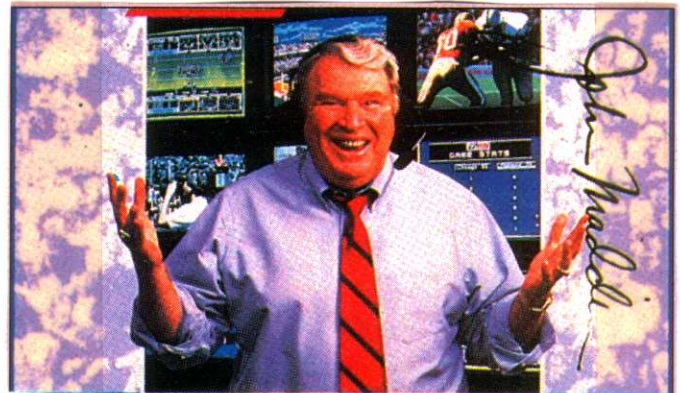
Alright, off to the good stuff, now! Super sequels! Science projects! Information! Entertainment! Nude pictures of Princess Di! (that got your attention) All inside at your fingertips!

SEQUELS, DP STYLE

foreword by Joe Santulli

How many times have you been disappointed by a sequel?! You would think that developers "the second

time around" would gather up all of the negative criticism and go to work at making them positives. When the game is already a winner (as is the case with John Madden Football), you figure out ways to SIGNIFICANTLY improve the game so that owners of the last version feel like they can step right into the new version and get their money's worth at the same time.



IN MADDEN '94 THE GAMER IS THE ONE THAT SMILES

We picked some popular Genesis games that have already been done in sequels and produced the specs that we feel would make the game the penultimate

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version, with no need for additional sequels. We tried to keep the requirements feasible - It would've been easy to ask for John Madden '94 with full-motion video of real football players, but we'll never see that in '94! This issue is also going out to the software companies responsible for programming the sequels, hoping that they will hear the plea of the common gamer. So what would we want in the upcoming versions of these games?

JOE SANTULLI

HOW I WANT TO SEE IT:

TITLE: John Madden NFLPA '94
MANUFACTURER: Electronic Arts
FORMAT: Sega Genesis
MEG: 12

NEW FEATURES:

- Full 16 game schedule
- Real NFL players with individual statistics in 12 abilities
- League Statistics: Check out the top rushers, pass receivers and more at a glance!
- New defensive moves: Bat the ball away midair, catch deflected passes!
- New playbook "strategies": Kill the Clock Offense, Precious Seconds Offense/Defense
- Save up to five Instant Replays on battery backup!
- Improved Graphics: "See" the snow and rain fall, watch refs get into the action.
- New Condition: Fog
- Player Injuries: Players can be hurt for a quarter, game, or up to 6 weeks!
- All New - Halftime Show
- "Sports Page" gives Madden's line on the game plus insightful stats on the game's stars!

WHAT IT MEANS:

I don't want Electronic Arts to hold back on anything this time. There shouldn't have to be a Madden '95 unless it's on CD. In this version, we finally get a sixteen game schedule with playoffs. Like NHLPA Hockey, there needs to be individual player statistics and the option to select players to switch in and out of the game. It may be a tough job to save statistics for all of those players, but it's been done before (Tecmo Super Bowl). Before each game, I want more than a generic description of the teams and a few checkmarks. Put in an analysis of the matchup - like "What Tampa Bay has to do to win this game against Chicago". I want to save a few of those instant replays on the cart, too. How many times have you executed a great play that you wanted to show everyone you played the game against? I wouldn't change the gameplay itself very much, but I want to see that ref get knocked down every once in awhile. I want to see a deflected pass fly five yards into a free safety's hands... and let's "see" some snow, rain, fog! How about changing conditions - like the snow starting early in the second quarter? Finally, I'd like to see at least two

more blocks on the offensive and defensive setup with kill-the-clock type plays (end-around runs, halfback options, etc.) and "precious seconds"-type plays when you need to score fast (lots of sideline plays) or need to get the ball back fast (maybe forcing the ball carrier out-of-bounds). Do all of these things, Electronic Arts, and you've made the greatest football videogame into the perfect football videogame.

BILL SCHULTZ

HOW I WANT TO SEE IT:

TITLE: Streets of Rage III
MANUFACTURER: Sega
FORMAT: Sega Genesis
MEG: 16

NEW FEATURES:

- Combatants are able to carry weapons into the next stage.
- More varied henchmen, not the same guys with different names.
- Guns can now be picked up and used.
- Toughest final boss ever in a cartridge game.
- Ride the vehicles of destruction after dismounting the driver.
- Password Save feature.
- Improved VS. mode allows solo play against computer opponent.
- More cinema intermissions than ever before.

WHAT IT MEANS:

Streets of Rage III should be a no-holds barred, broken jaw type of game. The action should be completely over the top. If your character is great swinging a pipe, he should be allowed to bring it into the next level with him. I feel a password is necessary in a game this long. Suffice to say that if you combined all the things that made Golden Axe such a standout cart, with all of the things that make Streets of Rage II so awesome, you would have the greatest action cart of all time. If Sega went to CD-ROM for this game, add scaling attackers to the list. Imagine a knife thrown at you, scaling towards you unless you move! Awesome!

HOWARD HIRSCH

HOW I WANT TO SEE IT:

TITLE: Golden Axe III
MANUFACTURER: Sega
FORMAT: Sega Genesis
MEG: 8

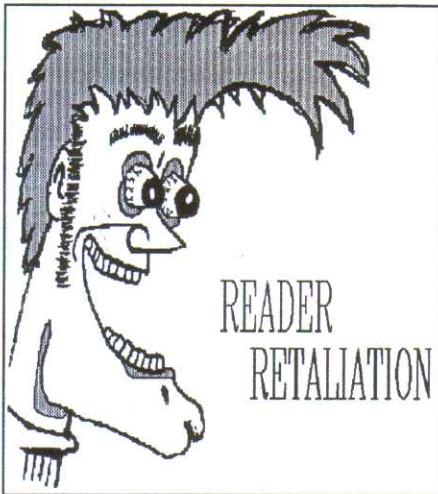
NEW FEATURES:

- Fierce battles include dismemberment, streams of blood, and twitching corpses!
- Witness real digitized death screams!
- Lively soundtrack features music from Conan and other adventure movies!
- New mini-bosses that make previous Golden Axe bosses look like wimps!
- Large-scale wars against spectacular, screen-filling end-level bosses!
- Not recommended for children or adults with weak stomachs!

WHAT IT MEANS:

The original *Golden Axe* was, in my opinion, the perfect game to take out your frustrations. Unfortunately, I was rather disappointed with *Golden Axe II*. The control was top-notch, but the sound effects were poor and the overall impact was not satisfying. As of this writing, Sega is supposedly working on *GA III*. I have a few suggestions that would make this one superior to the first two. First, have a higher quality background music. Using the soundtrack from the first Conan movie should

give you an idea. Second, bring back the real screams of pain, torture, and death that made the first *GA* a hit. Third, while in combat, have the usual blood and dismemberment of various body parts - things like that DO happen. Fourth, have tough mini-bosses, then include the extremely hard final bosses. By the way, I don't give a rat's ass about the graphic violence suggested here. Put a warning label on the game that gives the description of said violence. If you don't like it, don't buy it.

**LET'S TALK SEGA CD**

Joe,

Firstly, congrats on gettin' hitched! Your "Video Fanzine #8" was a big improvement over the first few. Your added voices and (rather humorous) running commentary were most appreciated. Now onto the Sega CD.

- Is it me, or is Sol-Feace too damn hard?!?
- At the final battle in Blackhole Assault, does anybody else's BGM sort of skip/sputter at one point about 30 seconds into the fight? I noticed some skipping in the intro to Sewer Shark, too.
- The control for Prince of Persia sucks!! The SNES version is much better!
- Any insights as to why there is no two-player mode for Golden Axe on the classics disc? Memory restrictions? I think not! Also, why the slowdown on Streets of Rage?

Thanks, first of all, for the kind words. I agree with you on the Sol-Feace thing (although shooters were never my strong area), and the horrible Prince of Persia controls. There are three buttons on the controller, dammit! Use them! I haven't got a clue why Golden Axe doesn't have a two-player mode, though. Anyway, I didn't expect

much from the initial releases for the Sega CD. Let's talk again mid-year.

LET'S TALK BUSINESS

Joe,

Americans want entertainment, and have always been willing to pay a reasonable price for it. Naturally, there's always going to be those companies who will sacrifice quality in a bid to make a fast buck. However, I feel that most software developers today realize that their future ultimately lies in producing quality products time after time after time.

One major gripe I do have is with the prices on most videogames. I understand full well that there are tremendous costs associated with developing a game from scratch, but companies should commit themselves to making their profits from increased sales, not higher prices. I know that there have been many, many times when I have gone to buy a game, only to be deterred by what I felt were exorbitant prices. Eventually, I draw a line on what I'm willing to pay, rather than get suckered into paying outrageous prices for a product which, whether I ultimately like it or not, I'm stuck with once I open that package. I don't mind spending my hard-earned money on a videogame, but I've been burned many times by products which don't live up to their claims, or which look good on a box cover, but plain out suck when you try them out ("Gain Ground" for the Genesis comes to mind off-hand).

If the high prices and misleading advertising of cartridge-based games bothers you, wait until you get into CD-ROM! Not only are CD's cheaper to produce, but they should boast tens of times more graphics and volume than their cartridge counterparts. Yet I have already seen lackluster development and high prices.

LET'S TALK PLEASANT VALLEY

Hey guys,

I just heard about a "new" game coming out for the Atari 2600! It's called "Redd-face". One the first screen, you are given \$500 with which to buy stamps and envelopes and order game cartridges. Your man takes his envelope to a little mailbox and waits there for his order to arrive. On the bottom right of the screen is a patience meter, and on the lower left is a six month calendar. While you're waiting to see which runs out first, a pleasant little rendition of "WE'RE IN THE MONEY" plays in the background. If you wait long enough, a secret message appears on the screen that states "YOUR ORDER HAS BEEN SENT", and you go to the second screen.

In this level, you take matters into your own hands and search for Redd-face yourself. You journey through a maze of buildings, including a travel agency, several banks, and a lost and found. Throughout the maze, Redd-face appears and disappears, but try as you will, you just can't find him. They claim "Redd-face" is coming soon. All you have to do is WAIT!

P.S. If you fry the game, the screen fills with angry Atari collectors, who surround Redd-face and plug joysticks into some pretty interesting places!

Annoyed
Parts Unknown, USA

Joe,

On Nov 26, 1992 I received Pleasant Valley Video's new listing and promises. Taking him at his word and thinking that he had repented and asked forgiveness for his sins I placed a \$45 order with him on 30 Nov 1992. I waited until 11 Jan 1993, not having received my order or even a letter from Jim. I wrote to him and asked about my order. As of this date I have not heard from him. He is a liar and thief or a poor businessman. I wish someone could figure it out.

#9 was a good one, don't see how it could get much better. Hope you have a good new year, am looking forward to #10.

Earl Carsner
Mesa, AZ

Dear Mr. Santulli,

Thank you for your recent efforts in attempting to resolve my conflict with Jim Redd of Pleasant Valley Video. As of the date above I have not received my merchandise or a refund for an order I originally placed back in June 1991. You are already well informed of my situation so I will not reiterate my experiences. Attached are copies of: 1. my letter to the Attorney General of Ohio; 2. my latest letter of complaint to Tim Duarte; 3. my latest letter to Jim Redd; 4. my original letter and order form; 5. the front and back of my cancelled money order and 6. my certified receipt displaying Jim Redd's signature.

You are free to mention my name and distribute copies of the attached material to anyone whom you believe may be able to provide aid. Individuals like Mr. Redd should not continue to operate and under NO circumstances should be handed another opportunity to deceive the public. I would greatly appreciate any further attempts to provide an acceptable compromise in my behalf.

Kevin Oleniacz
Ringwood, NJ

In reply to the countless letters complaining about Jim Redd and Pleasant Valley Video, I am offering a service to remove this wart on the buttocks of videogaming. Simply send me a self-addressed stamped envelope, and I will send you all of the materials you need to get your message to the right people. All you have to do is sign the papers. Jim has partially filled my most recent order, explaining that a family member has recently passed away, so you might want to let your conscience be your guide. On the other hand,

there are only so many family members in a family, and it has been two years since Kevin Oleniacz has heard from Jim Redd. See the Digital Press Products section for more details.

LET'S TALK REBUTTAL

Joe,

The one reason to write letters to editors is to divulge opinions about magazine's subject matter, and to forward felicitous greetings.

Okay, the TWO reasons to write letters to editors is to divulge opinions about magazine's subject matter, forward felicitous greetings, and congratulate editor on the merits of his periodical.

OKAY, the THREE reasons (redundant, but humorous in an overdone, pedantic sort-of-way)...

The opinions that I write to you in Reader Retaliation are an open display of my viewpoint. You are free to read and agree or disagree with me. I find that, on selected subject matter (video games, for instance), any opinion presented to me in an intelligent manner is valuable to me. I can collate similar opinions, or support my viewpoint by studying the divergence of opinion, thus discovering what precisely the inverse opinion possesses, and solidifying my own idea. I enjoy using my Reader Retaliation letters to: incite thoughts; foment debate on an issue. I present my viewpoint with conviction and clarity, I feel. I contemplate, develop, and present my idea in a clear, concise manner. If I appear adamant in my support of an idea, I can only say that I have presented my idea more than adequately.

Your attempt to describe my character as "feisty" was inappropriate, as you had no basis on which to judge how quarrelsome or quick-tempered I am. I read or listen to viewpoints supportive or contrary with certain alacrity. My temper is well in check. My last Reader Retaliation letter contained no anger, only calm, assured conviction of intellect. How tritely you termed my letter (which was a direct response to YOUR article in Issue #8 of DP, page 5, third pp: "Terrible, non-centering controllers, the 5200...") as "feisty". How conveniently you dismissed my letter as an isolated idea, neglecting to recall that you, Joe Santulli, introduced the basis of my thesis in the aforementioned article. Please be assured that I am simply presenting this letter. I am not angry or offended, etc.

You wonder why I own 5 controllers for a system that I said "sucked". Those 5 controllers are worth more to me in my possession than if I threw them away, or sold them for beans (the current market rate). I plan on keeping the extensive (and I mean extensive) collection of Coleco, Intellivision, and Atari 2600, 5200, 7800 hardware and software. None are worth much money, and besides, I don't need the money. Beside that, there are quite a few that warrant interest and invoke desire to play them.

Baltimore, MD

Wow! You really ARE feisty!

Comments? Questions? Answers? Denials? Referrals? Keep those letters coming! Write: Digital Press Reader Retaliation, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442-2037

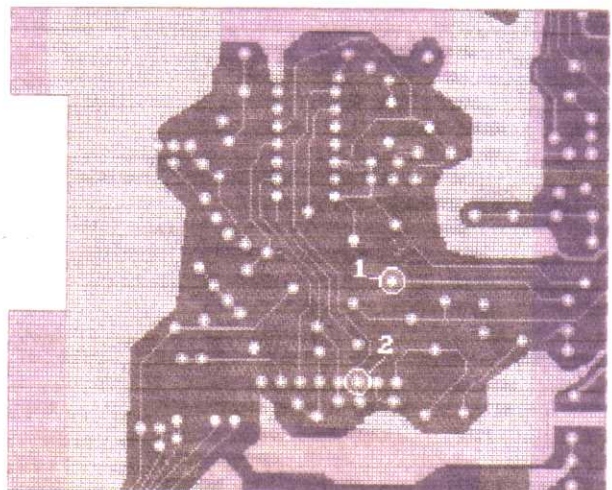
COLECOVISION A/V OUTPUTS (OR, HOW TO CONNECT YOUR COLECOVISION TO A MONITOR AND SEPARATE SOUND SOURCE)

by Sean Kelly

This article is written so that even someone with little or no experience with electronics should be able to do this project without difficulty. However, you will be taking apart your system and putting something in it that was not designed to be there, therefore, neither myself nor Digital Press will be held accountable if you botch it!

This project gives the onscreen images a much crisper look. Audio is generally poor on the ColecoVision, and this hack doesn't do much to help that situation. If it turns out that you're not happy with the results, the

regular RF out RCA plug in the back of your system will still function normally.



The circuit board diagram shown here was taken from a digitized image of the actual circuit board on my system that has the modification done to it. This is not a perfect scale, and represents only a section of the motherboard. You can easily locate the section as being directly under the RF modulator (the big silver box on the top side of the motherboard) and also by a 1.5" notch which is the only one of its kind and size on the motherboard. The drawing should show you exactly where to connect the wires.

The following parts are needed for this project:

- **Transistor** - Radio Shack part #276-1617.
- **Capacitor** - Radio Shack part #272-1030.
- **Capacitor** - Radio Shack part #272-121.
- **Resistor** - 330 OHMS (Stripes: Orange, Orange, Brown, Gold)
- **5 Lug Tie Points** - Radio Shack part #274-688.
- **A/V Cable** - one Audio/Video cable with the RCA plugs cut off on one end.
- **5 small pieces of wire**, 4" long each.
- **A Phillips-head screwdriver.**
- **A soldering iron and solder.**
- **Electrical tape.**

1) Open the ColecoVision by removing the 8 screws on the bottom of the case. Carefully remove the casing, then remove the screws from the motherboard itself and take it out of the case. If the aluminum casing is soldered on, you will have to de-solder it to remove the motherboard. Set everything but the motherboard aside.

2) The center lug on your terminal will be the ground for all the components because it is the only one that sticks out on both sides of the block. The part that extends on the bottom will be used to mount the terminal to the ColecoVision motherboard. Directly to the right of the RF modulator (big silver box on the motherboard) right under the letter of the revision of the motherboard (the one I am looking at is "J") you will have to scrape off a section of the green coating so that the grounding lug can make contact with the solder underneath. Solder the terminal onto the motherboard.

3) Bend the terminal block so that it's standing straight up from the motherboard.

4) Hold the terminal block so that you're looking at it from the back of the motherboard. You should see the Channel 3-4 switch and the RCA plug that is used to connect the ColecoVision to the TV/Game switch. You should also see five posts running left to right. We'll call

these posts 1-5, from left-most to right-most. Since many of the components are "tied" together, we'll connect them to the posts first and solder them later.

5) On post 1, connect the left lead of the transistor (looking at it from the curved side). Also, connect one of the small pieces of wire to the right lead of the disc capacitor on the underside of the motherboard (it's marked "C22").

6) Connect the center lead of the same transistor to post 2. Connect a lead (doesn't matter which) from the disc capacitor to post 2. Also, connect one of the small pieces of wire from post 2 to the underside of the motherboard, marked "1" on the picture of the motherboard.

7) Post 3 is the ground post. Connect one side of the resistor here. Connect the two ground wires from the RCA cables here as well. Each Audio/Video wire has two wires inside of it, one shielded in plastic and the other unshielded. Connect the unshielded wire from each cable to this post.

8) Connect the NEGATIVE lead of the electrolytic capacitor (the lead with the arrow pointing to it) to post 4. Determine which of the RCA cables you want to be the video cable. Take the plastic shielded wire from that cable and connect it to post 4 as well.

9) Connect the shielded wire from the other cable (that's your audio now) and connect it to post 5. Connect one of the small pieces of wire from post 5 to the underside of the motherboard marked "2" on the picture of the motherboard.

10) You should have one lead of the transistor, one lead of the resistor, and one lead of each capacitor just hanging there. Connect all of these leads together, then tape up this "junction" so that none of the exposed leads touch the motherboard.

11) Cut a small hole in the back of the ColecoVision case to feed the A/V wires from. Re-assemble your ColecoVision and connect the wires to your monitor and/or sound source. You can connect it to a VCR or a computer monitor. I've tried it with a Commodore 1084S monitor and a Sony Video Walkman, both with exceptional results.

If you have any questions about this process, you can contact me in any way described in the classified section at the back of this fanzine.

Psychopedia

PARTS E thru G

By Joe Santulli

The Pre-Nintendo Psychopedia documents the highlights, big names, big games, and general lunacy that took place in the videogame industry from 1972-1984. When Nintendo brought their 8-bit to these shores, "classic" became the term for the entries described here.

E

Electronic Games - The premiere videogaming magazine during this era, the creative team of Arnie Katz, Bill Kunkel, and Joyce Worley and a stable of competent game reviewers elevated the hobby substantially. When the "Great Videogame Shake-Out" was over, *Electronic Games* magazine moved primarily to computer software coverage. In 1992, the magazine made a successful comeback with Katz, Kunkel, and Worley returning.

Emerson - Jumping on the bandwagon, Emerson, primarily known for its electronic equipment and audio / video components entered the videogaming realm. Their highly unsuccessful *Arcadia 2001* barely scratched the surface, and most people who ended up with one got it as a promotional item. Fortunately, Emerson jumped back off the bandwagon and continued its success in other areas.

SOFTWARE INFORMATION:

OF TITLES: 23 for *Arcadia 2001*.

TITLE LIST: 3D Bowling, Alien Invaders, American Football, Baseball, Brain Quiz, Breakaway, Capture, Cat Trax, Escape, Funky Fish, Grand Slam Tennis, Jungler, Missile War, Ocean Battle, Pleiades, Red Clash, Soccer, Space Attack, Space Chess, Space Mission, Space Raiders, Space Vultures, Tanks A Lot. DIGITAL PRESS FAVORITE: Jungler. DIGITAL PRESS DUD: Breakaway.

Emerson Arcadia 2001 - Certainly not one of the more impressive videogame systems of all time, and fast becoming the most obscure. All of the games for this system were produced by Emerson.

There were a few arcade translations for the system, which is impressive considering their minimal market share at the time. Sleepers like *Pleiades* and *Space Vultures* in crude, blocky graphics didn't really win customers over, though. The cartridges themselves are bulky, too - about twice the size of an Atari 2600 cart.

SOFTWARE INFORMATION:

OF CARTS: 23. LICENSEES: Emerson. BEST TITLES: Jungler, Tanks A Lot. WORST TITLES: Most of them, but most notably Breakaway, Capture, Space Mission.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION:

Processor: ? (8 bit)

Screen Resolution: 192 x 160

Color Palette: 16 colors

Max Sprites: N/A; player-missile graphics (5 max)

Sound: 2 sound channels

Enduro- (by Activision for 2600) A breakthrough title from Activision, and one of the best driving games of the classic system era. Reminiscent of the arcade classic *Turbo*, your goal is to pass an increasing number of cars with each "day" that goes by. Weather conditions change as the day goes by, and even night driving is incorporated into the gameplay. Sophisticated for its time. Graphics: 8, Sound: 8, Gameplay: 9, Overall: 8.

Expansion Module #1 - A peripheral developed by Coleco for the ColecoVision system that allows its owner to play Atari 2600 games as well. This created interesting new possibilities in videogaming as well as in court disputes. Nevertheless, it helped boost the sales of the Coleco machine while the Atari 2600 slowly lost ground. Coleco never followed up with the rumored expansion module that would allow Mattel Intellivision games to be compatible as well.

Expansion Module #2 - A peripheral developed by Coleco for the ColecoVision system that resembles a steering wheel and gas pedal. Packaged with the arcade classic *Turbo*, the "Driving Module" wasn't well supported. Only *Dukes of Hazzard*, *Destructor*, and *Bump N Jump* were created with this module in mind.

F

Fairchild - A second rate electronics company that decided to halfheartedly produce a home "programmable" videogame system. Good idea, bad timing, and very bad

marketing. By the time Fairchild realized that they could never catch up to the Atari 2600, a company called Zircon bought the rights to the system. All of the games for this system were produced by Fairchild but were marketed for a longer period of time by Zircon.

SOFTWARE INFORMATION:

OF TITLES: 26 for Fairchild Channel F. **TITLE LIST:** Backgammon/Acey Ducey, Baseball, Blackjack, Bowling, Casino Royale, Checkers, Dodge-it, Drag Strip, Galactic Space Wars, Hangman, Magic Numbers, Math Quiz (add & subtract), Math Quiz (divide & multiply), Maze/Cat and Mouse, Memory Match, Pinball Challenge, Pro Football, Shooting Gallery/Desert Fox, Slot Machine, Sonar Search, Space War, Spitfire, Tennis/Hockey, Tic Tac Toe/Shooting Gallery/Doodle/Quadroodle, Torpedo Alley/Robot War, Video Whizball. **DIGITAL PRESS FAVORITE:** Video Whizball. **DIGITAL PRESS DUD:** Tennis/Hockey, which came with the system!

Fairchild Channel F - Although Fairchild Channel F could have been a worthy competitor to the Atari 2600, bad marketing and unimaginative software kept this console in the dark. Released around the same time as the 2600, Fairchild's unit had controllers much like the Bally Astrocade - a "do it all" that combined stick, paddle, and pushbutton control in a compact design. One shortcoming was the sound, which came from the console rather than the TV itself.

Fairchild stuck it out for about a year, but sold the outfit to Zircon. Zircon enhanced the Channel F and released a model II, complete with television sound and detachable controllers. Needless to say, this wasn't enough, as the software just didn't cut it - and Atari had already run away with the market share.

SOFTWARE INFORMATION:

OF TITLES: 26. **LICENSEES:** Fairchild, Zircon. **BEST TITLES:** Video Whizball, Sonar Search, Bowling. **WORST TITLES:** Baseball, Drag Strip, Tennis/Hockey.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION:

Processor: ? (8 bit)

Screen Resolution: 192 x 160

Color Palette: 16 colors

Max Sprites: N/A; player-missile graphics (5 max)

Sound: 2 sound channels

Frankenstein's Monster - (by Data Age for 2600) The only notable Data Age release, Frankenstein's Monster mimics the play mechanics of Activision's Pitfall. Great, creepy game sounds, graphics that seem impossibly unlike earlier Data Age games, and solid controls make this one of the best ever for the 2600. Graphics: 10, Sound: 10, Gameplay: 9, Overall: 9.

Frogger- (by Parker Bros. for 2600, 5200, ColecoVision, Intellivision. "The Official Frogger" by Starpath for Atari 2600) - A very popular title centering on the concept that a frog has a tough life. You have to maneuver him through

traffic, and onto moving logs (and wildlife creatures) to reach his home at the top of the screen. This game relies on good controls rather than splashy graphics and sound, so it was relatively successful on all formats. ColecoVision, 5200, and Starpath version: Graphics: 9, Sound: 8, Gameplay: 9, Overall: 9. Intellivision & Parker Bros 2600 version: Graphics: 7, Sound: 7, Gameplay: 9, Overall: 8.

Froggo - What's embarrassing about Froggo is not the fact that all of their titles for the Atari 2600 are duds, and it's not even the fact that they have a silly name. What's really embarrassing is that most of their games are ripoff variations of already released software. Bad software, at that.

Look at this track record: Cruise Missile, Sea Hawk, and Sea Hunt are the same games as Panda's Exocet, Sea Hawk, and Sea Hunt, respectively. They renamed Spectravision's Gangster Alley to Task Force, and took one of the worst 2600 games of all time, Parker Bros' Amidar, and made it even worse in Spiderdroid. Their only original title for the 2600 is Karate, where two blobs battle it out in a not at all very exciting slugfest.

What is interesting to note is that their two 7800 releases are quite good, and they are original titles as well. One rumored title, Pyromania (for the 7800) is not listed here.

SOFTWARE INFORMATION:

OF TITLES: 6 for Atari 2600, 2 for Atari 7800 **TITLE LIST:** Cruise Missile (2600), Karate (2600), Sea Hawk (2600), Sea Hunt (2600), Spider Droid (2600), Tank Command (7800), Task Force (2600), Water Ski (7800). **DIGITAL PRESS FAVORITE:** Water Ski. **DIGITAL PRESS DUD:** Spider Droid.

G

Galaxian- (by Atari for 2600, 5200; by Atarisoft for ColecoVision, Intellivision; by Bally for Bally Home Arcade) Well known as the descendant of Space Invaders. In this game, the aliens wildly attack, sometimes in formation. Converted to the just about every home system, each was done with style. All versions: Graphics: 7, Sound: 7, Gameplay: 8, Overall: 7.

GCE - The electronics company that decided to try their hand at home videogaming. Their inspired effort, the Vectrex, is a home gamer's dream, as it doesn't require the dedicated use of a television set. GCE sold the business to Milton Bradley after only two years in the field. Many believe that had GCE hung on, they may have profited from the experience.

All of the software for the Vectrex bears the GCE label, although some of the later titles (Polar Rescue, Pole Position) were actually distributed by Milton Bradley. Some of their

games were based on arcade translations (the best of them being *Star Castle*, *Pole Position*, and *Armor Attack*), while others were very original - and imaginative - uses of 3D vector graphics. There was a token game in just about every category: Sports: *Blitz!* & *Heads-Up Soccer*; Maze Game: *Clean Sweep*; Driving Game: *Hyperchase*; Jumping Game: *Spike*, Simulation: *Polar Rescue*; Pinball Game: *Spinball*.

SOFTWARE INFORMATION:

OF TITLES: 28, as well as three known prototypes.

TITLE LIST: 3D *Minestorm*, *Animaction*, *Armor..Attack*, *Art Master*, *Bedlam*, *Berzerk*, *Blitz!* *Clean Sweep*, *Cosmic Chasm*, *Crazy Coaster*, *Fortress of Narzod*, *Heads Up Soccer*, *Hyperchase*, *Melody Master*, *Minestorm*, *Narrow Escape*, *Polar Rescue*, *Pole Position*, *Rip Off*, *Scramble*, *Solar Quest*, *Space Wars*, *Spike*, *Spinball*, *Star Castle*, *Star Hawk*, *Star Trek*, *Web Wars*.

DIGITAL PRESS FAVORITE: *Star Castle*. **DIGITAL PRESS**

DUD: *Blitz!*

GCE Vectrex - A vector-graphics home videogame system that played on its own monitor. By pressing on a colored overlay and inserting the cartridge, you virtually had a home

arcade machine. The Vectrex featured smooth, fast screen movement, and above-average sounds. The controllers consist of a tiny stick and four buttons, the description of each was contained on each game's overlay for ease-of-use.

In addition, GCE produced a 3-D imager, a device similar to the one Sega made for its Master System years later. There were no overlays for these games, but the 3-D effect was nicely done. There was also a light pen, allowing direct interaction with the screen. Both items are extremely rare and valuable finds today.

SOFTWARE INFORMATION:

OF TITLES: 28, as well as 3 known prototypes.

LICENSEES: GCE, Milton Bradley **BEST TITLES:** *Armor..Attack*, *Cosmic Chasm*, *Fortress of Narzod*, *Narrow Escape*, *Polar Rescue*, *Star Castle*, *Web Wars*. **WORST TITLES:** *Blitz!*, *Rip Off*, *Solar Quest*.

Gemini - See Coleco Gemini.

Special Thanks to Edward Villalpando for his research into many of the entries listed here.



ATARI 2600 RE-RELEASES, PART 1

by Kevin Oleniacz

The Atari 2600 is the most popular classic system and a true die-hard collector's favorite, consisting of the widest selection of carts. Part of the confusion in collecting these are the many remakes, reissues, and pirated versions of other games which cluttered the market. Let's take a look at some...

Atari initially released two of their early kid-oriented titles as *Basic Math* and *Hunt & Score*, but they disappeared from the catalog for awhile and resurfaced as *Fun With Numbers* and *A Game of Concentration*, respectively. *Stargate*, a popular arcade translation, was repackaged as *Defender II*. The third installment in Atari's excellent "adventure" line was to be titled *Nightmare Manor*, but it appeared in production with the title *Haunted House*. Atari's original soccer offering appeared under THREE titles: *Pele's Soccer*, *Championship Soccer*, and *Pele's Championship*

Soccer. It appears they wanted us to know that it was a Pele-endorsed game, and didn't know how they wanted to word the rest of it! *Atari Video Cube*, which was only available through the Atari Age Club, is even scarcer in its second release, titled *Rubik's Cube*.

Many of Atari's offerings were repackaged and marketed by Sears, and most of them featured new titles to add to the confusion. A few exceptions - *Super Breakout* was originally a Sears exclusive, until 1981, when Atari began to offer it under their name. Sears' *Steeplechase*, another exclusive involving horse racing was distributed in Europe by Video Gems.

Coleco ported over some of their successful ColecoVision titles to the 2600 as well. Most of these were marketed overseas as well by CBS Electronics. Later, Atari purchased the rights to several Coleco titles *Donkey Kong*, *Donkey Kong Jr.*, *Mouse Trap*, and

Venture, as well as Parker Bros'. Q*Bert and TNT Games' *BMX Airmaster*. Atari was not shy about making money off of other people's success.

Telegames' catalog comprised of many M-Network releases, but some, such as *Bump 'N Jump*, also bear the Telegames mark. *Adventures of GX-12* (M-Network's *Adventures of TRON*), *Deadly Discs* (*TRON Deadly Discs*), and *Night Stalker* (*Dark Cavern*) were also available from Telegames in England. *Air Raiders* was renamed *Bogey Blaster*. They also renamed Xonox' *Chuck Norris Superkicks* to *Kung-Fu Superkicks*, and marketed Sunrise's *Glacier Patrol* and *Quest For Quintana Roo* as their own!

The trio of U.S. titles by Konami, *Marine Wars*, *Pooyan*, and *Strategy X* (reviewed in these very pages) were sold under the Gakken corporate heading in Europe. Two of the most horribly conceived games by England's Sancho - *Sea Hawk* and *Skin Diver* - were converted to the U.S. system by Panda for a limited time, and then mass marketed by Froggo. *Skin Diver* was retitled *Scuba Diver* by Panda, *Sea Hunt* by Froggo, and *Bi! Bi!* by Rainbow Vision in Australia, but they're all the exact same MISERABLE game.

Parker Bros. released the U.S. title *G.I. Joe* in Europe as *Action Force*. *My Golf* is available by HES in Australia and by Salu in England. Even obscure companies which produced X-rated games jumped on the bandwagon. *Bachelor Party* and *Beat 'Em and Eat 'Em*, originally by Mystique, were later duplicated in two-sided "double ender" carts by Playaround. Both male and female versions of these two titles, along with three original concepts were offered by Playaround. Speaking of "double enders", many of Xonox's games are available in single and "double ender" formats.

Other identical offerings from lesser known companies are: *Space Monster* (Funvision) and *Vulture Attack* (K-Tel Vision); *Assault* (Bomb) and *Super Ray* (unknown); *Astrowar* (Dimax) and *Meteor Defense* (ITT); *Combat* (Atari) and *Frontline* (unknown); *Z-Tack* (Bomb) and *Flying Saucer* (unknown); and *Challenge* by both Funvision and HES.

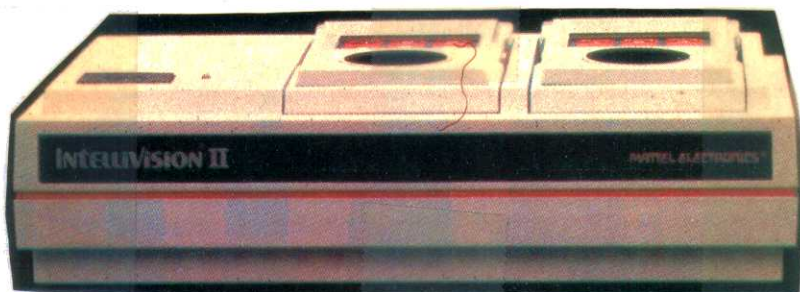
In part 2, I'll discuss pirated versions by anonymous companies, multiple games programmed into one cart, and obvious clones of popular games but with altered graphics. 'Til then, happy collecting!

Checklist Central

INTELLIVISION CHECKLIST, Part 2 of 2

by Joe Santulli

Last issue, I raved about how this system was so far ahead of its time... computer, music synthesizer, voice, blah blah blah... you remember, right? Well, I'll be brief about what I consider the best and worst software,



INTELLIVISION, CIRCA 1982

since the worst is basically the same as what you saw in the "Worst of Intellivision" article we ran back in DP #4. The BEST, however, is much harder for me. I find

the quality of Intellivision titles on the average much higher than those of the competition (Atari 2600, Odyssey2) - whoa, that's just my opinion, don't lynch me! So if I ask myself the question (no one else is going to, dammit) "If I were stranded on a desert island with my Intellivision and ten games, what games would I want there?"

First, may I recommend that you carry a flare gun with you at all times and do not sacrifice this for an Intellivision. Ever. My first four are undoubtedly my favorites, as I still play them quite frequently. Those are: *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, *Horse Racing*, *Microsurgeon*, and *Stadium Mud Buggies*. I know a few Intellivisionaries that don't even LIKE *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, let alone bring it to a desert isle. My argument is this: it's challenging (on the harder levels), you never know what's around the corner, and the game is different every time you play. That's my kind of game. I can't explain my fascination with *Horse*

Racing, I've just never seen a gambling game done quite as well. Throw in the one-on-one jockeying, and you have an excellent all-around game. *Microsurgeon* is another of those two-player simultaneous games that can get two friends into a fray in no time flat: "What are you doing? Shoot the damn tumor, will you?" "I'd shoot it if you got me into better position, aspirin-breath!" *Stadium Mud Buggies* is a quality INTV cart with ten different events and optional head-to-head gameplay (seeing a pattern here?). Unfortunately, on a

desert isle, head-to-head is useless, but I'm schizophrenic, so this isn't a problem.

The last six I'd take is a much tougher decision, but I'd go with *B-17 Bomber*, *Body Slam Super Pro Wrestling*, *Diner*, *Mountain Madness Super Pro Skiing*, *Safecracker*, and *Super Pro Football*. The TEN I'D THROW TO THE SHARKS: *Boxing*, *Star Wars Empire Strikes Back*, *TRON Maze-a-Tron*, *Truckin'*, *Sharp Shot*, *Astrosplash*, *Donkey Kong*, *Lock 'n Chase*, *Demon Attack*, and *Checkers*. See issue #4 to find out why!

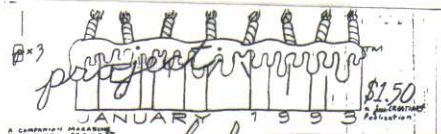
[] NASL Soccer (Soccer)	Mattel	[] Stadium Mud Buggies {No O}	INTV
[] NBA Basketball (Basketball)	Mattel	[] Stampede	Activision
[] NFL Football (Football)	Mattel	[] Star Strike	Mattel/INTV
[] NHL Hockey (Hockey)	Mattel	[] Star Wars: Empire Strikes Back {No O}	Parker Bros.
[] Night Stalker	Mattel/INTV	[] Sub Hunt	Mattel/INTV
[] Nova Blast	Imagic	[] Super Cobra {No O}	Parker Bros.
[] Pac-Man	Atarisoft	[] Super Pro Decathlon {No O}	INTV
[] PBA Bowling (Bowling)	Mattel	[] Super Pro Football {No O}	INTV
[] PGA Golf (Golf)	Mattel	[] Swords N Serpents	Imagic
[] Pinball	Mattel/INTV	[] Tennis	Mattel/INTV
[] Pitfall	Activision	[] Tennis	Sears
[] Popeye {No O}	Parker Bros.	[] Thin Ice {No O}	INTV
[] Pole Position	Atarisoft	[] Thunder Castle (Mystic Castle) {No O}	Mattel/INTV
[] Q*Bert	Parker Bros.	[] Tower of Doom {No O}	INTV
[] Reversi	Mattel/INTV	[] Triple Action	Mattel/INTV
[] River Raid	Activision	[] Triple Challenge Album	INTV
[] Royal Dealer	Mattel/INTV	[] Tron Deadly Discs	Mattel/INTV
[] Scooby Doo Maze Chase {C!}	Mattel/INTV	[] Tron Maze-a-Tron	Mattel/INTV
[] Safecracker	Imagic	[] Tron Solar Sailer {V!}	Mattel/INTV
[] Sea Battle	Mattel/INTV	[] Tropical Trouble	Imagic
[] Sea Battle	Sears	[] Truckin'	Imagic
[] Sewer Sam	Interphase	[] Turbo	Coleco
[] Shark! Shark!	Mattel/INTV	[] Tutankham {No O}	Parker Bros.
[] Sharp Shot	Mattel/INTV	[] USCF Chess (Chess)	Mattel
[] Skiing (US Ski Tam Skiing, Alpine Skiing)	INTV	[] US Ski Team Skiing (Alpine Skiin, Skiing)	Mattel
[] Slam Dunk Super Pro Basketball {No O}	INTV	[] Utopia	Mattel/INTV
[] Slap Shot Super Pro Hockey {No O}	INTV	[] Vectron	Mattel/INTV
[] Snafu	Mattel/INTV	[] Venture	Coleco
[] Soccer (MLSA Soccer)	Sears	[] White Water!	Imagic
[] Space Armada	Mattel/INTV	[] Word Fun	Mattel/INTV
[] Space Battle	Mattel/INTV	[] World Championship Baseball	Mattel/INTV
[] Space Battle	Sears	[] World Cup Soccer	Nice Ideas
[] Space Hawk	Mattel/INTV	[] World Series Major League Baseball {C!,V}	Mattel/INTV
[] Space Spartans {V!}	Mattel/INTV	[] Worm Whomper	Activision
[] Spiker! Super Pro Volleyball {No O}	INTV	[] Zaxxon	Coleco

KEY:

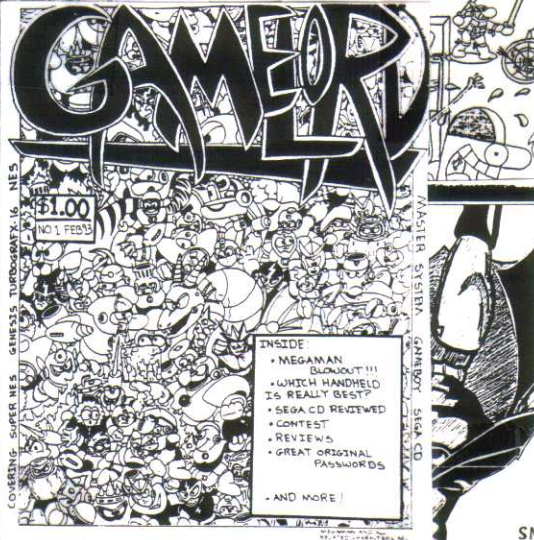
Italics=rumored or prototype game (parens)=Game also produced as... **Bold**=Digital Press recommends
 {C}=Computer add-on {M}=Musical Synthesizer add-on {O}=Overlay (all games have overlays unless otherwise noted) {V}=IntelliVoice module !=Required

NEXT ISSUE: Checklist Central moves into the contemporary age for a few issues, as we begin a multi-part series on the NES 8-Bit system!

FANTASIA MAGAZINE



IN THIS ISSUE
History of Intellivision-Part V
...
SEPT/OCT/NOV/DEC 1992 \$1.25 @ Single Copy Issue No. 6



CRITICAL DATA

- 2600 Connection #14/Tim Duarte/PO Box N 664/Westport, MA 02790/8 pgs/\$1.50
- Codename:MegaZine #2/Chris Larson/1209 Frisina/Pawnee, IL 62558/26 pgs/\$1.50
- Gamelord #1/Pat Reynolds/1740 Millbrook SE/Grand Rapids, MI 49508/18 pgs/\$1.00
- Intellivision Lines #6/Ralph Linne/8385 Findley Dr./Mentor, OH 44060-3811/8 pgs/\$1.25
- New World News #10/James Thomas/3200 Laurelhurst Dr./Rancho Cordova, CA 95670/20 pgs/\$3.50
- Project: Ignition #2/Jess Ragan/707 W. Randall St./Tekonsha, MI 49092/17 pgs/\$1.00
- The Shape of Gaming to Come/Darren A. Krolewski/38150 Mt. Kisco/Sterling Heights, MI 48310/18 pgs/\$1.00
- Video Views #15/Ulrich Kempf/Patterson Rd RR5 #212/Watertown, NY 13601/20 pgs/\$1.50

What a selection I had to feast on this time 'round. Just when you think fandom is getting set in its ways, there are FOUR new fanzines on my desk, another classic returns, and the good ones keep getting better! Of these, the **MOST IMPROVED** is *Codename: Megazine*, edited by six of the most well-known writers in this gaming underground. *CNMZ* is improved, but still wins the **MOST DISJOINTED** - I thought the first few half was excellent, but the second half was loaded with advertisements and full-page fanzine plugs! What the...? On the other hand, **CONSISTENT EXCELLENCE AWARD** goes easily to *Video Views*. Look, It's one of the few fanzines you can count on in a timely manner, it's always up to date, and the quality is consistently top-notch. Kudos!

I mentioned a classic returning to the fanzine realm, and that is no other than **COMEBACK OF THE YEAR** candidate *The Shape of Gaming to Come*. Editor Darren Krolewski is back, and *TSOGTC* is looking good. Ralph Linne is also back, after a brief hiatus from *Intellivision Lines*, but just in time to snag the **MOST INFORMATIVE COLUMN** honors for his work in "The History of Intellivision Part V", answering some burning questions as easily as you or I would tie our shoelaces. Well, as easily as YOU would tie your shoelaces.

While on the subject of "classic systems", what does Digital Press dub the **BEST CLASSIC SYSTEM ZINE** this time? Uh-Oh, Tim Duarte is running away with it again! *2600 Connection #14* was great! How can you go wrong when you get videogame programmers to interview? Tim, you also get the **ONE ISSUE TOO LATE AWARD** for the Starpath Supercharger coverage. Didn't we beat that thing to death already? *Project: Ignition* continues its steady improvement, covering systems both old and new. They're our "companion magazine", and that's why they win the **BEST FANZINE WHILE DRUNK AND PISSING IN THE SINK** award. Jess, you asked for it!

Now for some real important categories. **BEST NEW FANZINE** goes, easily, to *Gamelord*, covering most major systems. Pat Reynolds, this Bud's for you! How long did it take you to draw your **BEST COVER ART** winner? Geez, if I only had that kind of time....! And now, what everybody has been waiting for.... well, the one or two of you that have read this far have been waiting for.... well, OKAY, here goes, Mom and Dad! **EDITOR'S CHOICE** is second-time winner *New World News*, that Neo-Geo ama-zine with excellent artwork, smooth layout, and quality writing! James "Floater" Thomas is a force to be reckoned with! His reviews are both informative and entertaining, the scanned

images are even better than past issues, and he really gives you the low-down on the games. Let's face it - if you're going to shell out \$169 for a game, you want to be well informed. This is the place to go.

OTHER QUALITY FANZINES

Classic Systems & Games Monthly/Jeff Adkins/11 Windsor/Attica, NY 14011/26 pgs/\$1.75
HyperZine/Matt Lotti/3251 Camelot Drive/Bethlehem, PA 18017-1707/16 pgs/\$1.25
Megaforce/AJ Ramos/33022 Lake Huron St./Fremont, CA 94555/16 pgs/\$1.00
Mindstorm/Aaron Buckner/9474 Fallson Court/Blue Ash, OH 45242/24 pgs/\$1.00
Paradox/Chris Johnston/316 E. 11th Ave/Naperville, IL 60563/28 pgs/\$1.00
Phanzine Star/Noah Dziobecki/4436 E 5th St./Long Beach, CA 90814/35 pgs/\$2.00
Super Power Bi-Monthly/Andrew McNaughton/201 Hibbard Rd./Wilmette, IL 60091/11 pgs/\$1.00
Video Game Review/Travis Scott/8 Peppertree/Anderson, SC 29621/22 pgs/\$1.00
Video Universe/George Wilson/7640 Woodbine Rd./Macungie, PA 18062/30 pgs/\$1.50
Zapp!/Scott Weller/135 Ten Rod Rd./Exeter, RI 02822/20 pgs/\$1.25

DIGITAL PRESS PRODUCTS!

VIDEO FANZINE #10

Want to see this edition IN YOUR FACE? On video #10, Random Reviews, first looks at newly discovered 5200 prototypes Battlezone, Micro-Gammon, and Xari Arena, and more Closet Classics in action are shown. We're using *Mario Paint* for the intermissions and although you still can't see us, we've dubbed our voices in to add "color commentary" to the video as you watch. A bargain at double this price! Approx. 70 mins. \$8.00. Also available: *Digital Press Video #5, #6, #7, #8, #9.*

*** N E W ***

PLEASANT VALLEY COMPLAINT KIT

So you're one of the many who've been burned by this "business", but don't know where to turn? Send a

SASE and we'll get you all of the materials you need: complete typed letters to the Better Business Bureau, the Attorney General, and several influential publications. All you have to do is sign your name. FREE with SASE.

ATARI 7800 "COMPLEAT" VIDEO REVIEW

It's hard to beat the overall quality of this system's games, and this video shows you why. ALL of the Atari 7800's games are reviewed here (2-3 mins. each). Approx. 120 mins. \$8.00.

**ATARI 5200 VIDEO REVIEW
OR**

COLECOVISION VIDEO REVIEW

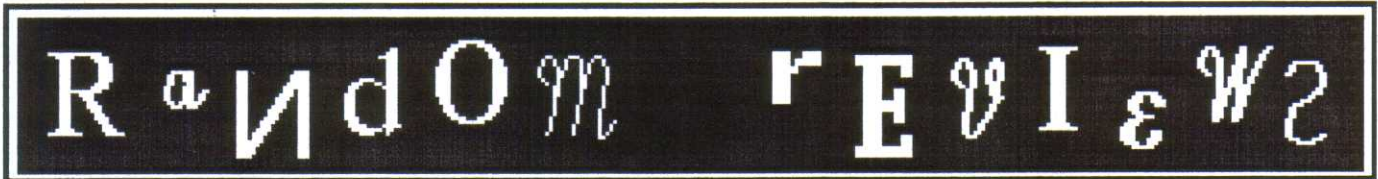
If ever there were comprehensive looks at these classic systems, it has to be here. 50 to 60 games are shown on each tape (2-3 mins. each game). Approx. 120 mins. \$8.00.

NEW

DIGITAL PRESS COLLECTOR'S GUIDE

It's finally here - the first comprehensive collector's guide to classic videogames! Yes - a complete price guide for all of the cartridges from the classic era, with illustrations and commentary. DP staff has compiled over two years' worth of collector's price lists and mail order catalogs, consulted with "experts" Al Backiel, Steve Bender, Jeff Cooper, Sean Kelly, and Edward Villalpando, and produced this 40+ page extravaganza! Includes listings for Arcadia 2001, Astrocade, Atari 2600, 5200, 7800, ColecoVision, Channel F, Intellivision, Odyssey2, and Vectrex! Offers insightful information on collectability by cartridge! Highlights recommended software! Everything a collector could want! 40+ pages. \$5.00.

To order, send check, money order, or cash (we're easy) to DIGITAL PRESS PRODUCTS, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442-2037. Make checks payable to Joe Santulli, if you'd be so kind. Thank you.



by DIGITAL PRESS STAFF

Here's this installment's sampling of various games: old ones, new ones, it just doesn't matter. All games are rated on a scale of 1-10 in several categories, but remember that an 8 for an Atari 2600 game does not equal an 8 for a Neo-Geo game. All ratings are based on comparative software for that system. 'Nuff said!

**DEADLY MOVES
KANEKO, FOR GENESIS**

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LS	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	6	-	5	7	-	-
SOUND	4	-	3	4	-	-
GAMEPLAY	4	-	3	4	-	-
OVERALL	4	-	3	5	-	-

Okay people, I'm not going to mince words about this cart. It's BAD. I know there are people who won't agree with me, but this *Street Fighter II* wanna-be is lame. Kaneko took the fight right out of *Street Fighter II* - I mean, if you're going to copy at least pay homage to the original!

Like *Street Fighter II*, your options include selecting the level of difficulty, number of continues, and the configuration of the attack buttons. This is where the similarities end.



**YOU KNOW THERE'S PROBLEMS WHEN
THE ADVERTISEMENT PHOTOS ARE
HAND DRAWN!**

In *Deadly Moves* you basically skip to the opponent you want to fight and after you defeat him (or her as the case may be), that character is erased from the choices. Well, they're more like

blacked out. After defeating your opponent, you increase (in small increments) your strength, speed, and stamina. That's all there is to satisfy your curiosity. One decent feature is the password you receive after winning a fight, but then again, who wants to go back and fight these guys anyway?

The graphics are much less detailed than *SFII*. Whereas in *SFII* you get the bright lights of Vegas, in *Deadly Moves*, you get the washed out hills of Japan. I'm not even going to get into the sound area - it's that bad. One thing I did like is the fact that it's easier to pull a special move with only three buttons than it is on the SNES. The final disappointment was that you can't choose which character you want to be. You're stuck as a Ryu clone (These guys didn't even include a Ken imitation).

I think it's pretty safe to say that I didn't enjoy this game at all, hence, I cannot in good faith recommend it to my fellow gamers. Play SNES *SFII* or wait for the Sega CD Version. The most fun I had with this game was returning it to Blockbuster Video.

IDENTITY CRISIS: Similar games on this system include Treco's *Street Smart*, Treco's *Fighting Masters*, Renovation's *Beast Wrestler*. Obviously, however, the game is an attempt at capturing the *Street Fighter II* audience.



-Bill Schultz



L. SANTULLI

"YUCK. Nobody will be fooled by this game, I hope. And nobody needs to have every fighting game made for the Genesis, because there are better ones out there. Play *Streets of Rage II* and pass on this."

STRATEGY X
KONAMI, FOR ATARI 2600

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LS	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	3	4	-	2	3	-
SOUND	5	6	-	4	5	-
GAMEPLAY	5	5	-	2	3	-
OVERALL	5	5	-	3	4	-

Konami built their reputation in the arcades, but this adaptation of a generic concept did not leave a favorable impression in the home videogame medium. Direct a tank by vertically scrolling through two battlegrounds. In the first scenario, destroy stationary guns, shoot up barriers, gain fuel, and arrive at the triumphal ark which marks the conclusion of the level. Fuel is consumed while firing or when your tank ventures onto the "green zone", patches of slippery terrain which also restricts control.

In scene two, zig-zagging bomb-dropping planes replace gun installations, and an orange slip zone is displayed.

A two player competitive mode is the only option offered here. Sound effects are minimal and extremely basic. Every graphic is plain and blocky. Enemy guns have the ability to shoot diagonally while your tank is restricted to four directions. In contrast to the misleading title, hardly any strategy is involved at all. It's a pure action cart which seems to have been rushed onto store shelves. I'd rather spend my time playing Coleco's *Front Line* or Activision's *Commando*, two games in very much the same genre.

TIP: If you come across a fuel tank but your gauge is nearly full, shoot the fuel tank for bonus points.

IDENTITY CRISIS: Similar games on this system include Activision's *River Raid*, Tigervision's *Polaris*, Activision's *Commando*. You can trace this game back to Atari's *Combat* to find its roots.

COLLECTOR'S GUIDE NOTES: This game's present value according to the Digital Press Collector's Guide is \$20.00, a semi-rare find.



-Kevin Oleniacz



YOUNGMAN

"The most basic of shoot 'em up games. There wasn't even an attempt at making the landscape resemble any type of real terrain."

CHAKAN: THE FOREVER MAN
SEGA, FOR GENESIS

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LS	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	7	-	7	-	-	-
SOUND	6	-	4	-	-	-
GAMEPLAY	7	-	6	-	-	-
OVERALL	7	-	6	-	-	-

The main objective of most videogames is to keep the hero of the game alive, right? Sega does a little twist with its new action/adventure cart *Chakan: The Forever Man*. The premise of this one is to help Chakan reach his final resting place after centuries of fighting mystic evil. This is all explained in a nifty little framing sequence at the beginning of the game. Chakan receives the Forever Man title by beating Death in a duel and only you can free him from his cruel fate.

Chakan is a solid entry into the action cart genre. To begin the game you are placed on an astral platform. From this platform you must find the portals which take you to the evils that Chakan must defeat to earn his final rest (and believe me, he wants it). Each portal gives a description of the evil land you must enter and the rulers of this land are wholly EVIL.



ENEMIES REMINISCENT OF
SPLATTERHOUSE

Chakan is definitely not one of the easiest games to master, control-wise. It's difficult to make him kill enemies because you control each of his swords by moving the directional pad and tap the attack

button (you can determine the configuration of your A, B, C: attack, jump, weapon select buttons on the option screen). This gets crazy when you are attacked by

multiple opponents like swarms of insects or killer bats. Chakan is able to pick up various elixirs to help him along, such as stamina improvements, temporary invincibility, etc. One thing you may want to keep in mind is that if you do not like games where there is a lot of jumping around, you probably won't like this cart. Most of the action involves jumping up, over, and on top of columns and ledges. There are not passwords because Chakan can't die until you pull out the cart. Instead, you are offered continues ad infinitum.

The graphics are decent and definitely give the cart a creepy feel. Chakan is a cross between Wilt Chamberlain and Iron Maiden's mascot Eddie. The worlds of evil have unusual graphics, the best being in the Spider Queen's hive, whose appearance seems lifted from the movie *Alien*: dark, gooey, and hordes of attacking nasties. Neat, huh? The sound is a little disappointing - not terrible, but I would've liked better background themes and Chakan's scream seems like it was taken right from *Altered Beast* (don't hold me to that).

Chakan: The Forever Man is a lot of fun to play, but its controls make it frustrating. The opening graphics and the astral plane level are excellent and get you into the mood of the game. If you like a challenge and don't normally destroy your controllers, this game should give you hours of slashing fun. R.I.P. for now.

IDENTITY CRISIS: Similar games on this system include Sega's *E-Swat* and *Revenge of Shinobi*. Trace the roots back as far as *Contra*.



-Bill Schultz



J. SANTULLI

"I really like the theme of this game, and the fact that you can take on any of the four 'worlds' in any order you like. The character graphics are very good, but the backgrounds are pretty weak - so is the music, come to think of it."

MECHWARRIOR

ACTIVISION, FOR SUPER NINTENDO

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LS	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	9	7	-	-	8	-
SOUND	8	7	-	-	6	-
GAMEPLAY	5	5	-	-	7	-
OVERALL	7	6	-	-	7	-

I was pounding on the assault vehicle, when suddenly, a shot fired from behind sailed past me. Check the RADAR. DAMN! Another one behind me! Do I finish off this one and take a few more hits, or wheel around and fight off whatever's behind me? How do I know what it's packing - and do I want to turn my back on an injured assault vehicle?



BATTLE SEQUENCES PUT YOU IN THE DRIVER SEAT

environment, while maintaining a fast-paced, engage-and-destroy mission that will keep you addicted for hours!

Although I'm playing on an EPROM prototype version of the game (without instructions, I might add), the good people at Activision have made a potentially complicated game very easy to figure out. Start out by choosing Practice, a quick-play scenario to get your hands dirty and learn the controls. Then move on to the full game, where revenge is your motive, as you travel from planet to planet with your Mech, holding down the fort, seeking alien artifacts, invading enemy strongholds, or just plain cleaning house!

You have many weapons at your disposal, which you choose before going into battle. Careful! You can only take what your steel warrior can carry. If you exceed the maximum weight, you'll be sorry! Once you talk to the locals in the planet's tavern, you'll pick up clues, and head off to the mission of your choice. The plot is somewhat linear, although you can take on missions in any order you want. On the planet surface, you're given your objective. From there, it's all action.

And that's where the fun really starts. Especially in later levels, when you have to watch out from all sides, as hordes of enemy robots lock in on your position.

WOW - this game really gets you into the action! Based on Activision's computer hit *Battletech*: *MechWarrior*, the SNES version is outstanding in that it captures the virtuality of the

The 360 degree, first person perspective comes courtesy of mode 7, although the enemy does not "scale" towards you. Turn your stereo or TV up loud. The battles are noisy - from the clamoring of metal on the ground to the blasts of missiles and particle cannons, it's full-tilt WAR every step of the way!



A REVENGE-RELATED PLOT IS GOING ON THE GAME, BUT IT'S PRETTY THIN

So you're thinking, "why didn't he give it a 10?" and the answer is that the game itself is repetitious, and way too easy for the first two months of the simulated campaign. It

wasn't until I got to the end of February-that I began to lose my Mech regularly in battle. I would've liked the difficulty turned up a notch.

Otherwise, this is an very good game, and *Mechwarrior* is a must for battle action fans!

TIP: Save, save, save! You get opportunities to save your game all the time. Do it! Also, when negotiating the commission for each scenario, raise the \$\$\$ once each time you bargain. If you raise it too high, the Federation will get insulted and LOWER the original price by half!

IDENTITY CRISIS: This game is the most recent update to the classic Atari game, *Battlezone*.



-Joe Santulli



OLENIACZ

"Visually pleasing graphics and various weapons and missions provide variety to an otherwise repetitious game."

GOPHER
US GAMES, FOR ATARI 2600

ELEMENT	JS	KY	BS	LS	KO	HH
GRAPHICS	7	6	-	6	8	-
SOUND	6	6	-	6	7	-
GAMEPLAY	8	8	-	8	8	-
OVERALL	7	7	-	7	8	-

Joe and I were looking for a game that was easy to learn, tough to master, and "cute" enough for me to play. Although I'd rather land a kick to an opponent's head in *Streets of Rage II*, we picked *Gopher*, an easy to learn, tough to master "cute" game, and the perfect partner to US Games' *Eggomania*, reviewed by Kevin last issue.

In *Gopher*, you have to keep the critter from eating your garden carrots by filling in the holes he digs but at the same time protecting what you have and catching seeds dropped by a bird in order to plant new ones. I found the game easy to play at first, but the pace picks up and it takes quick reflexes to cover all of the ground the gopher digs up.

The graphics are basic. You have a farmer, a garden, a bird that drops seeds, and of course, the gopher. While there are only a few objects on the screen, what is there is very well detailed. The characters are large so there's no mistaking the task at hand. Sounds are scarce as well: the farmer's shovel filling the holes, the bird's entry tune, and the gopher making a "nyah nyah na nyah nyah" noise whenever he pops up from a hole.

I really "dug" this game. Its simple object makes it the kind of game you can jump right into, and the frustrating varmint's action keeps you coming back for more and more and more. A very "playable" collectable!

TIP: Don't bother filling in the holes at the far ends of the screen. If you go too far from your carrots, the gopher is sure to steal one. Instead, let him emerge from the hole and smack him with the shovel when he runs toward the carrots.

COLLECTOR'S GUIDE NOTES: This game's present value according to the Digital Press Collector's Guide is \$5.00, a commonly found cartridge.



-Liz Santulli



YOUNGMAN

"A very challenging game. That damn gopher knows just when you've strayed too far from your carrots."

"A lack of gameplay elements does not always constitute a dud. The fun factor is what counts, and this cart has plenty of that."



OLENIACZ

R a n d o m r e v i e w s

LITE

A few words on games we played at the last minute, didn't find interesting enough to review in full, or just wanted to fill you in on...

ROAD AVENGER
RENOVATION, FOR SEGA CD

Ever play a game that you "seem" to be enjoying, but when you walk away from it you can't remember why? That's how I felt about *Road Avenger* by Renovation. The game is reminiscent of *Cobra Command* (and it's no surprise, the same team produced both), in that you play "Simon Says" with the CPU. In the hard mode, this game is impossible unless you memorize the patterns by making mistakes. In the Normal mode, it's too easy, as there are only four possible responses to every situation. Very nice, full-motion video, decent sound effects, but mediocre at best overall. (JS)

OUTLANDER
MINDSCAPE, FOR GENESIS

This game had all the makings of a classic. Graphics techniques taken right out of the *Road Rash* program, lots of violence, a long haul across the wasteland... and from the box, it looks like a good cross between

Technocop and *Road Rash*. I'm here to report that *Outlander* is more *Technocop* than *Road Rash*, and nobody was too crazy about *Technocop*. The problem is that the repetition can "drive" you crazy! There are 28 different towns, but it seems like you're visiting the same four over and over. The driving sequences are fun, but the cast of characters doesn't really change as you progress, making town 28 no more difficult than town 2. Could've been a contender. (JS)

CAL RIPKEN JR. BASEBALL MINDSCAPE, FOR SNES

Oh, with Electronic Arts' *Tony La Russa Baseball* so close, how does the most recent release shape up? Well, this falls into the category of most baseball games on the home systems: they look pretty good, they don't do enough statistically, and there's a certain "feel" to it that doesn't seem quite right. I struck out Kevin sixteen times in our first game, and I was laying them right over the plate. Kevin has played, easily, twenty five different baseball games. So something's wrong. Actually, a lot is wrong. The batter's timing is off, the fielders aren't all under your control, the diving and jumping is poorly executed, and the baserunning is a nightmare. There are a few nice bells & whistles, but that stuff goes in AFTER the gameplay is flawless. (JS)

FINAL FANTASY: THE MYSTIC QUEST SQUARE, FOR SNES

If you recall, I dubbed Square's *Final Fantasy II* for Super Nintendo "The best RPG ever for any system". I stand by that to this day. Knowing full well that this game was not intended to be a sequel, but rather a pared down version for intermediate RPGers, I plunged into the mystic quest. I found even this game to be a delight in execution, with terrific monsters, orchestral themes, and - what's this - a plot? I absolutely cannot wait for *Final Fantasy III*. These guys know how to do RPG's. My highest recommendation if your kid is looking for an adventure that won't bog him/her down with stupid inventory tricks. (JS)

NEW ATARI 5200 PROTOTYPES DISCOVERED!

by Joe Santulli

It's been awhile since a new "classic game" has surfaced from the dust, but now, all at once, THREE new ones have been discovered, by Steve Bender of Kent, WA.

The three games are *Battlezone*, *Micro-Gammon*, and *Xari Arena*. Each is labeled with a bona-fide Atari Labs Prototype label, and dated between 8/15/83 and 8/30/83. These games were found amongst twelve other prototype games, in a small box in a pawn shop in Washington. Steve immediately shipped the carts our way to validate and document. All three seem complete, ready to play.

Battlezone is a disappointment, I wouldn't be surprised if Atari realized that this game was a dud and just scrapped its release entirely. The perspective is terrible: objects in the distance come at you very quickly, then seem to take forever to get the last few feet until you reach them. Furthermore, the targeting system is weak. Instead of 360-points to fire at, there are probably half that many, meaning that targets in the distance can actually fall inbetween two possible points, making it IMpossible to hit them. The sounds are pretty good, but the graphics are shoddy. The foregrounds consist of vector-style line graphics, but the backgrounds are detailed, and in color!

Micro-Gammon is the 5200 version of Backgammon. I don't know if this game was completed, there are no colors, only black and white. The graphics are sharp, but why bother, for a game like Backgammon? Apparently, Atari realized the same thing.

Finally, *Xari Arena*, the best of the three. *Xari Arena* is similar to Atari 2600 *Warlords*, in that you must protect your wall from being destroyed by the other player. There are only two players in *Xari Arena*, however, one on each side of the screen. You can deflect particles that appear from a generator in the middle of the screen. There are also exploding particles, and you can overheat your paddle, but we haven't had enough time to fully figure the game out. It is fun to play, though, and there are even intermissions every third wave, with dancing, rotating particles putting on a show.

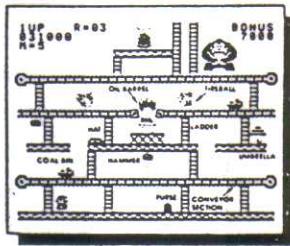
If you're REALLY interested, we've included the three prototypes on the Digital Press Video Fanzine (#10), where you can see them for yourself. Owners of Checklist Central Master, make your adjustments!

THE COLECO ADAM: THE EVE OF DESTRUCTION

by Edward Villalpando

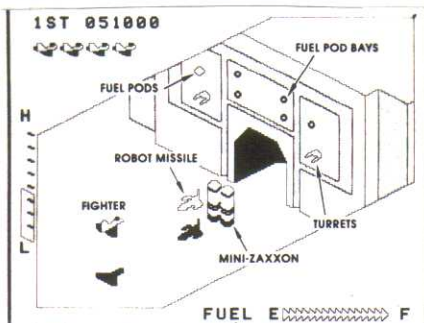
The Coleco Adam: The "Everything you need in one box" computer system. A system that played a great part in the downfall of Coleco Industries. What happened? What went wrong?

The origin of the Adam can be traced back to the introduction of the ColecoVision in 1982. Coleco said that the ColecoVision could be expanded into a computer thru its expansion module interface. In



February '83, Coleco announced the Super Game module, an add-on for the ColecoVision. This device was to have added 16K bytes of RAM to the ColecoVision, allowing more screens, complex gameplay, and intermissions. It used a wafer drive, which is also known as a stringy-floppy. The wafer tape, which is a continuous loop tape much like an 8-track, was to have the ability to store games up to 128K bytes of code. Coleco obviously ran into problems with the wafer system, so the Super Game module was put on hold.

In June '83, the Adam was introduced. This computer system was to have something for the whole family, from education to entertainment. It came packaged with a letter-quality printer capable of printing 120 words a minute, and a digital data drive. The digital data drive was basically a high-speed cassette drive, boasting higher retrieval/storage than a standard cassette drive. The data pack could hold 500K bytes of information, and had a special high-strength tape for durability. All of this, along with a *Super Buck Rogers* super game, *Smart BASIC* data pack, and a blank data pack for "under \$600".



At the introduction, the Adam was being used by Coleco only and you could not try it out yourself. Coleco also claimed to support Adam with "super" versions of *Donkey Kong*, *Zaxxon*, *Gorf*, *Turbo*, *Smurf*, *Time Pilot*, *Front Line*, etc. Only a handful of these ever came. The Adam was very hard to find in 1983, because Coleco literally had to stop its ColecoVision production line to make way for it. Also, many of the first Adams had bugs ranging from printers freezing up to data drives that would not stop spinning. Coleco further hampered the product by raising the price to \$700 for the standalone Adam and \$500 for the ColecoVision add-on version.

Many people were getting fed up with Coleco and their release schedule. Most who were in the market for a home computer looked to Atari, Commodore, and IBM for their needs. In a last-ditch effort to sell their machine, Coleco gave a \$500 scholarship with the purchase of Adam. Coleco lost a great deal of money on this and many people complained that they did not fulfill this promise. In January '85 it was learned that they had dropped the Adam but would continue to support it with software.

The Adam "super games" are really "super" ColecoVision games. The Adam has the same graphics abilities as the ColecoVision. The digital data pack could supposedly store 500K bytes



of information, while Coleco never made a cartridge larger than 32K. I like to think of Adam games as "a cartridge every screen", meaning each screen could have 32K bytes of memory.

Super Donkey Kong has all of the intro and intermissions screens from the arcade version and even contains the conveyor belt screen. Much the same could be said about *Super Donkey Kong Jr.*, which has the ape kicking Mario off the screen, and the "Mario's Hideout" screen from the arcade. *Super Zaxxon* has many new screens, 8 skill levels, a continue, and a save feature - allowing you to come back and pick up where you left off. *Dragon's Lair* tried to mimic the coin-op, but Coleco made some changes so that the game was more playable. While some screens require the 1-click decision movement, others let you move as you wish. Some of the best graphics can be found on this game. *Family Feud* has large character graphics and a nice looking answer board.


Super Dam Busters and *Best of Broderbund: A.E. and Choplifter* are basically cartridge games on data pack.

Some prototypes exist for Adam as well. *Super Sub-roc* has an underwater sequence as well as an octopus boss. *Jeopardy!* plays much like *Family Feud*. A *Super Donkey Kong Jr.* prototype has a fifth screen, "Mario's Kitchen". A large mixing bowl with a mixer running centered in the screen has dough plopping out and seeking Jr., while Mario turns on the toaster and also throws pies. *The Best of Electronic Arts: Hard Hat Mack and Pinball Construction Set* are basically complete and could have been released. The Adam can also play all ColecoVision cartridges. Some games, such as *Super Cobra* and *The Heist* cannot be

played on Adam. *Defender* seems to work on Adam only if you use the Roller Controller.

That's my view of the Adam. It's not the best computer ever made, but it's not the worst. I know many people who are very happy with Adam and have had no problems. There are 100's of programs available for it, and there are still people developing new ones. The standard Adam is a very easy to learn computer that can be expanded in any way you want to go. For game players, the Adam offers a handful of arcade-type games that would let you see what could have been done on ColecoVision had they made cartridges with 1 or 2 meg. The Adam can be a good computer for a good price, but be careful - try before you buy!

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WANTED: (for the Atari 2600) Spy Hunter, Shootin' Gallery, Track & Field, Master Builder, Fatal Run, many others; (for the 5200) Beamrider, Frogger II, Xari Arena; (for the 7800) Pyromania. **ALSO WANTED:** My order from Pleasant Valley Video. **FOR SALE:** Lots of 2600 carts, C-64 software, and 7800 games. **FOR TRADE:** Atari 2600 prototypes and Snail Against Squirrel. Call (201) 835-8156 after 7PM weeknights, anytime on weekends. Kevin Oleniacz, 96 Buena Vista Dr, Ringwood, NJ 07456.

WANTED: (2600) Gauntlet, River Patrol, Road Runner, Ikari Warriors, Motorodeo, River Raid II, others. (7800) Basketbrawl, Mat Challenge,

Pyromania, Scrapyard Dog, others. (Atari Home Computer) Crossbow, Dark Chambers, Into the Eagle's Nest, Oil's Well, Sky Warrior, Boulder and Bombs, others. (Coleco) Evolution, Boulder Dash, Jungle Hunt, Tank War, Mountain King, others. (Vectrex) Dark Tower, Flip-Out Pinball, Pole Position, Star Castle, others. **FOR TRADE:** Over 300 carts for all classic systems. Send your excess list and want list for mine. Earl Carsner, 738 N. Bermuda St, Mesa, AZ 85205.

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FOR SALE: Master System games: Maze Hunter 3-D, Psycho Fox, Super Monaco GP, Ghouls 'n Ghosts, etc. Most under \$20. Call (215) 966-3069 and ask for Ulrich.

WANTED: Starpath Supercharger, XE Light Gun, Assorted games for the Atari 2600 and 7800 systems, ColecoVision games. Please write and let me know what you have and the prices. Michael Hayes, 5300 Yellow Knife Ct, Virginia Beach, VA 23464.

WANTED: 2600 Halloween, Quadrun, Exocet, Earth Dies Screaming, Tanks But No Tanks, Gremlins, Chase the Chuckwagon, Submarine Commander, Texas Chainsaw Massacre, Bachelor Party, Others. Instruction books needed: (original or photocopied) MASH, Robin Hood, Survival Run, Atari Video Cube, Fantastic Voyage, Others. Coleco Carts needed: Evolution, Mr. Do's Castle, Pitfall II, Nova Blast, Up N Down. **FOR SALE:** 2600 systems, accessories, and over 100 different carts. Also ColecoVision systems, accessories and carts. Intv, 7800 and Odyssey2 carts. Willing to sell or trade. Ron Milford, 64 B St, Avenel, NJ 07001.

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2 WRITERS NEEDED: Writers needed to write reviews or articles for the following systems: T-16, Genesis, NES, and SNES. Also, portables and arcade reviews needed. Please send a sample review or article and tell me how much you can write per issue. Send to: Video Game Review, 8 Peppertree, Anderson, SC 29611.

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- Nintendo Software List
- "Worst Of..." ColecoVision
- Fighting Games, Side by Side
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- Random Reviews, and more

Shipping last Monday in April! Order now!

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#4: Whatever Happened To...?, Vectrex Checklist, Worst of Intellivision, Videogame Mags Side-by-Side, 2600 Rarities pt 1.
#5: "Life of the Party" Videogames, Channel F Checklist, 2600 Rarities pt 2, Gamepro TV Review, Scavenger Hunt Contest.
#6: Weird Games, Summer CES '92, Buyer's Guide to Classic Systems, SNES Golf Side-by-Side, Astrocade Checklist, 2600 Rarities pt 3.
#7: What If?... , Worst of Genesis Vol I, Atari 5200 Checklist, Atari 5200 Vs. ColecoVision Side by Side, 2600 Rarities pt 4.
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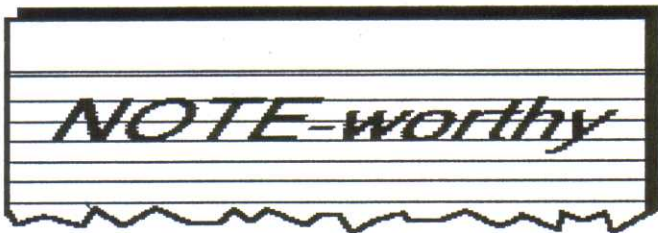


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A MOST EXCELLENT ROAD RASH II CODE

I don't know if this has been printed anywhere yet, and although I don't like printing them, this one really makes the game come alive! Yes, with this trick, you get the WILD THING 2000, a bike with no listed HP or price, but you own it! I've been able to get the WILD THING to go as fast as 225 MPH - making it the fastest bike in the game. Not only that, but it's very responsive, and loaded with nitro bursts! Okay, stop drooling - just pop the game in, and at the title screen, HOLD DOWN A, C, UP (on the pad) and then press START. Go immediately to the Bike Shop and check it out! You'll be able to fly over whole hills when you jump, and no cop can catch you. Great!

GREAT SOURCE FOR CLASSIC GAMES

Telegames USA seems on the brink of closing shop to "classic system" owners, but Telegames in England is loaded with carts! Rare Atari games like Boing!, Dice Puzzle, Quest for Quintana Roo, and Subterranea are in stock! They also carry ColecoVision games. Careful, though - Atari 2600 games sold in England are in PAL format, meaning you'll have to have a TV or VCR that can do the "vertical hold" thing. ColecoVision games, however, do not have this flaw. To get their most current catalog, write: TELEGAMES, Kilby Bridge, Wigston, Leicester LE8 1TE.

ATTENTION FANZINE EDITORS

We're trying to do crossovers with other fanzines to give our readers a peek at other 'zine's styles. In exchange, you print a Digital Press written column. Check issue #9, "Fanzine X-ing" to see what I mean. If you're interested in a crossover for May/June, drop me a line or send me a column (not an advertisement!) Much obliged!



FANDOM CENTRAL

Opening the Mail Bag

by Amie Katz

Electronic gamers send me a lot of mail for one reason and the other. Oh, maybe not the pages of gaily decorated envelopes my buddy the Game Doctor hauls out of the office every day, but I get a large number, nonetheless.

Some are about this column. There aren't enough hours to answer them and do my part on **EG**, but guilt has mounted. I read all those letters, and I wish there were a way to respond to some of the points they raise. I hope this month's column will both fill this breach and answer questions for others who may have wondered about the same things, but have never written.

Most comments relate to the selection of zines for review. Some wonder why certain titles get repeated mention, and another batch complain that their fanzine wasn't covered.

The space limitations are obvious, but there's also a question of intent. This column is fandom's crucial contact point with the legions of non-fan gamers. Highlighting the best-written, most intelligent fanzines increases the chance that an **EG** reader will enjoy his or her first encounter with fandom.

First issues also get preference, especially if they are promising. New faneds (fanzine editors) need encouragement and nurturing.

A few correspondents take me to task for being too lenient in my reviews. These opinions are nicely balanced by those who whine that I am cruel to find any imperfections in their efforts. One or two have even explained to me how very hard it is to publish a fanzine, so that I might understand why I should praise every fanzine, especially theirs, to the skies.

First, I should admit to some familiarity with fanzine publishing. I did my first one in the 1960s, and about 500 others have followed over the years. I do it because I enjoy the process of creating

such a personalized publication. If it's too much work, then consider other ways of participating in fandom, such as contributing to others' fanzines.

I strive for a positive tone when reviewing fanzines. I'm enthusiastic about fanzines, and good ones always evoke my praise. Yet it's important to inject realism into the critiques, so that prospective readers won't feel misled when they behold the actual fanzines.

I understand the pride of a faned in his zine, but that shouldn't blind them to imperfections. Otherwise, how will it improve from issue to issue?

Why aren't there any killer reviews, like in the video and computer game sections? Those are commercial products by people who want your money, and so are fair game. Fanzines are primarily vehicles for communication and personal expression, with little thought to the cash, so I gauge their quality relative to the whole electronic gaming fanzine field.

And yes, that means gradually raising the standards as the quality of zines rises.

And it *is* rising. Which brings me to this month's selection of new fanzines.

Digital Press Collector's Guide

Edited by Joe Santulli

44 Hunter Pl.

Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442

Semi-annual, \$5.00 per issue, 40 pages

This special publication is practically indispensable for anyone who is seriously interested in old video games, and it's a slick item for those who simply have a little nostalgia about the subject.

Among the systems covered are Atari 2600, ColecoVision, Intellivision and Atari 5200. The back of the booklet contains excellent black and white photographs of old-time game boxes.

Internal evidence indicates that this is the first of a series of twice-yearly guides. I look forward to the sequels, and I enthusiastically recommend this one. Congratulations to Joe and his staff for a fine job.

Game Force #1

Edited by Jeff Beedhan

P.O. Box 1610, Belen, NM 87002-1610

Frequent, \$1.50 per issue, 12 pages

Jeff devotes several pages in this fairly typical first issue to a listing of his 60 favorite video games across all major cartridge systems. It has some value as a checklist of important titles, but I hope he'll follow up next issue with a discussion of what he likes in games, and why these specific ones appeal to him.

A short news column, tips, a few reviews, and a short editorial round out **Game Force #1**. Jeff has made a good start, though he should drop the pseudo-pro pretensions. Jeff pleads for material for future issues, so would-be fanwriters take note.

Power Play #3

Edited by Shawn Surmick

25 Truman Ct., Boyertown, PA 19412

Frequent, \$1.00 per issue, 13 pages

This enthusiastic reviewzine concentrates on the latest cartridges, augmented by a flash of coin-op coverage. Other attractions this issue include a pleasant editorial, a list of the editor's 10 favorite games, a little news, and a few playing tips.

Although **Power Play** is still in its formative stage, the improvement since the first issue is heartening. The youthful editor knows, and loves, the games, and his comments on them make informative reading.

This is a very well reproduced fanzine, entirely legible throughout, but Shawn might want to think about tinkering with the physical appearance a bit in future issues. Better use of page space and a switch to two-sided copying would both improve the presentation.

And this is a good place to remind Shawn, as well as all other current and future fanzine editors, that a colophon is probably the single most important component of every fanzine. That little box with the editor's name and address, price per copy, and other vital